

# South by Southeast

The History and Archaeology of Southeast Crete  
from Myrtos to Kato Zakros

Edited by

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## Preface and Acknowledgements

Emilia Oddo and Konstantinos Chalikias

This volume represents the publication of the proceedings of the conference *South by Southeast: The History and Archaeology of Southeast Crete from Myrtos to Kato Zakros*, held in Pacheia Ammos (Crete) from July 1–2, 2017. After the publication of *Exploring a Terra Incognita on Crete, Recent Research on the Bronze Age Habitation in the Southern Ierapetra Isthmus* it is our second collaboration in editing a volume centered on the exploration and collection of knowledge on the archaeology of southeast Crete. Far from being a volume one and two of the same saga, the two volumes start with different research questions, both geographically and chronologically. *Exploring a Terra Incognita on Crete* focused specifically on the southern part of the Isthmus of Ierapetra in the Bronze Age, presenting results from recent archaeological projects in the area. Building on this knowledge, *South by Southeast* had a more ambitious aim: to investigate the settlement patterns, maritime connectivity, and material culture of the Southeast in a diachronic fashion, in an attempt to define it as a region and trace its history. The title *South by Southeast*, an ironic spin on Alfred Hitchcock's movie *North by Northwest*, encapsulates this uncertainty of what exactly the Southeast<sup>1</sup> means and our need to clarify its geographical limits and cultural span.

The papers presented in this volume focus primarily on the archaeology of the sites along the coastal strip spanning between the Myrtos valley and Kato Zakros. The coastal area under consideration has produced time and again evidence of interconnection. Indeed, one of the most important aspects surfacing from the many contributions in this volume is the evidence for a diachronic existence of the Southeast as a distinct cultural entity. The elements that tied the region together shifted, at times, as it is discussed in the conclusive chapter of the volume.

Several studies, however, discuss sites that are located further inland; these sites demonstrate strong ties to the Southeast and must have been incorporated into the socio-economic fabric of the southeastern coast. Conversely, some papers draw data from archaeological projects of the northern coast, especially the Mirabello Bay in order to better understand the social processes that took place in the southeastern coast of Crete. This is a testament to the fact of how little we know about southeast Crete and how much we still rely on the vast amount of information derived from numerous projects on the north and northeastern coast of Crete.

Work on the editing of this volume started promptly in the months following the conference. Yet, its completion and publication has been long in the making, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent challenges that we all endured, as well as the disaster brought about Hurricane Ida on the latest stretch of this work. For these reasons, we are extremely grateful to our contributors and to the editors and staff at Archaeopress for bearing with us, showing us patience and understanding. We would like to thank in particular David Davison for his support and assistance throughout this journey.

Further, we owe our sincere gratitude to Tom Brogan for his enthusiasm and help in letting us use the resources and infrastructure of the INSTAP-SCEC in Pacheia Ammos. His constant support was crucial for the success of the conference. Moreover, the conference was embraced by the head of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Lasithi, Chrysa Sofianou, who offered her assistance from the very beginning. We are also grateful for all of the support we received from the Ierapetra municipality and the community of Pacheia Ammos for allowing us to use the building of the old Customs House for our event. Furthermore, we would like to thank Metaxia Tsiopoulou for gladly accepting to introduce the volume, enriching it with her perspective and experience.

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<sup>1</sup> In this volume, the word 'southeast' will be capitalised when used as a noun, as in the Southeast vs southeast Crete.

Two funding bodies need to be acknowledged, here: the INSTAP publication grant, which provided funding to cover costs of copy-editing and color photos, and the Newcomb College grants, at Tulane University, to further support both the conference and the volume.

Further, we are grateful to our friends and colleagues, who have seen us through the multiple drafts, and to Carol Hershenson for copy-editing the contributions. Last, but not least, we are tremendously thankful to our families for their encouragement and unconditional support, especially through the extreme challenges we faced in 2020.



# Introduction

Metaxia Tsipopoulou

In recent years many archaeological symposia have been organized to examine the archaeology of a particular region of Greece, smaller or larger, either in a specific chronological phase or diachronically. The initiative by the organizers of this Symposium represented an excellent opportunity for the presentation of recent finds of ongoing research projects as well as the re-examination and re-appraisal of older excavations, which deal with the area of the southern and eastern parts of East Crete in a diachronic fashion. This initiative for the 'South by Southeast Symposium' came from two archaeologists who have studied thoroughly for their PhD dissertations various aspects of the archaeology of the Ierapetra area. Emilia Oddo studied the Neopalatial pottery of Myrtos-Pyrgos and Kostas Chalikias investigated the human presence on Chryssi Island diachronically. The contribution of the Institute for Aegean Prehistory and the INSTAP Study Center for Eastern Crete were crucial for the success of the Symposium.

The Symposium's venue was the Old Custom house at Pacheia Ammos. This building has been very nicely restored for use for public cultural events. The very successful and well attended archaeological lectures organized by the INSTAP Study Center are often held here. This former custom house, erected around 1920, testifies to the change in the importance of various areas, in accordance with the general changes in the economic priorities of the societies. In the first half of the 20th century Pacheia Ammos, the only natural harbor in the gulf of Mirabello was a center for export and economic maritime activity for local products such as the carobs, probably the most important agricultural product in the area. It should be noted in this context that land transports were not up to then easy, as they were not easy in antiquity, in Minoan and later ancient times. This particular building served for temporary storage of produce waiting to be transported by caiques to other places of the Aegean. Concurrently, in Minoan times, small boats transported various products, typical is the case of the large quantities of pottery, produced at Gournia, and transported to many sites, mostly, but not exclusively to the far East of Crete. Thus, this modest

custom house at Pacheia Ammos is a good example of its similar use to serve similar needs in two different periods with completely different socio-economic organization, the Minoan period and the modern-traditional one.

The theme of the Pacheia Ammos Symposium was a regional one; it attracted a group of scholars working in Eastern Crete who discussed many aspects of the archaeology of south and eastern Crete diachronically. In order to understand the term 'regional', the term 'region' must be defined, and the criteria used for this definition need to be explained. The first, and most obvious criterium is the topography; a region has to be defined by clear geographical boundaries, such as mountains, the sea, a river drainage or a passage like an isthmus. Thus, a region can be more or less extensive, depending on the surrounding topographical factors. Geography and topography have influenced the activities of human societies diachronically, as they can restrict, or allow, communication and interactions with other areas, close or remote. In the case of Crete a large part of the communication between regions was maritime. One can easily observe that in certain periods maritime contacts between different areas of the island were frequent and easy (such as in the Minoan, the Hellenistic and the Graeco-Roman periods) and in others were rare and almost non-existent (as in the Early Iron Age).

As far as the region that is the subject of the discussed Symposium is concerned, it is known, for example, that, from the Final Neolithic to the end of the Protopalatial times Petras was a gateway community for relations with the Cyclades, the Dodecanese, the wider area of the Aegean, the south-west Asia Minor, the Near East and Egypt, as shown the settlement at Kephala and the very rich finds of the Pre- and Proto-palatial unplundered cemetery in the same area. Yet, in the Neopalatial period there was a shift in the administrative and economic balance and the leading role in the far east of Crete, for the trade with the Eastern Mediterranean was transferred to Zakros, despite the fact that the anchorage there was not as good and safe as the one

at Petras. Zakros was equipped with a Neopalatial palace, probably in order to serve the interests of Knossos, although there is evidence for an important building in the same area in the Protopalatial period. The palace of Zakros was introduced into a pre-existing developed urban settlement, and certain changes in the arrangement were necessary in order to accommodate the new imposing structure. Geography and topography cannot, consequently be the strongest criterium for determining the boundaries of a region.

Also, smaller regions can be defined within a larger one (sub-regions). These sub-regions often have special characteristics that are worthy of a separate study, in order to acquire a better understanding of the historical conditions and changes there. An additional issue for the definition and the study of a particular region is that we have not and we will never have all the data necessary for the reconstruction and the study of the past of a particular area in order to identifying continuities and discontinuities. For example, the study of Neopalatial Petras showed that the so-called villas in the hinterland of Siteia, excavated by Nikolaos Platon in the 1950s, are connected with the palace there, and not with the one at Zakros, as their excavator had suggested. With this established can one postulate a tripartite organization in the hinterland of the palace of Zakros as the one we can see around Petras? It cannot be excluded, as research conducted at Azokeramos, Ano Zakros, Karoumes and Choiromandres indicated. Yet, this evidence seems in various ways different from what is known from the hinterland of Petras. This could be the result either of the – admittedly – different topography in the two areas, or of a different economic and administrative situation.

Furthermore, we have very little evidence about the political or economic organization of the south coast. It is probable that there was a palace (a ‘court-centered administrative complex’) in the Ierapetra area, and we can hope that it is preserved in some fashion, so it can be identified and excavated soon. Maybe, it was situated on a low hill very close to the seashore, as Gournia and Petras are. Or, alternatively maybe it was by the sea, as Zakros is. If a palace really existed in the area, was it exclusively Neopalatial, or both Protopalatial and Neopalatial like Petras? And if it was exclusively Neopalatial was it erected on an area never occupied before, or on an area with a previous history as the palatial buildings at Gournia and Zakros? One can go on posing questions such as ‘what sort of relationship had this supposed palace with Knossos?’ Or even how was it connected with Gournia, given the easy access to the north coast through the Ierapetra Isthmus? In the framework of a similar reconstruction of the administrative and economic situations what was the role played by other important centers on the south coast, such as Diaskari and Myrtos-Pyrgos?

If one proceeds to the Postpalatial period, one would like to have more data about the organization of the area, the type of interconnections among the many settlements situated on higher areas of the mountains and the hills. Is it possible to identify any hierarchical organization among them, or was there simply communication between them? Is it possible that the settlements equipped with sanctuaries of the so-called ‘goddesses with upraised arms’, such as at Vrondas, Halasmenos and Kephala-Vassiliki, held a superior place in the cluster, as opposed to others that did not have these sanctuaries? Did any of these settlements have direct contacts with other regions of the Aegean? Furthermore, in the period immediately before the foundation of these new sites what was the role that Gournia played in LM IIIA and IIIB, and how important was Diaskari in LM III? What do we know about the influence of Mycenaean Greece on the south coast, both at the period of the Mycenaean palaces and after their destruction? As much evidence about this issue comes from the northern and the eastern parts of the modern Lasithi prefecture, i.e. from Mochlos, Petras, Palaikastro and Zakros, can we identify a model of interaction between the Ierapetra area and these better-known sites?

If one continues to pose further questions for future research, during the Early Iron Age, a crucial issue would be to establish how many of these LM IIIC settlements continued to be occupied in this period and how many were abandoned, and for what possible reasons. And, more importantly, why some of them continued to prosper and became *poleis*, while others, like Azoria, ceased to be occupied around the beginning of the 6th century BC?

What was the situation among the *poleis* in the Hellenistic period in eastern Crete, and what were the reasons for the continuous upheavals and battles among them? As for the Roman occupation it is well known that it started on the south coast and Ierapetra became a very important and prosperous city with a good harbor. The city was decorated with statues and monumental buildings. It is quite obvious that for the Romans the center of gravity moved away from the communications within the Aegean and continental Greece toward North Africa and Egypt. What was the situation during the Early Medieval period, the Byzantine empire, the Arab invasions, the Venetian occupation or the Ottoman control of the region, when one sees certain areas developing, while others were abandoned and deserted?

The above introduction was meant to show that geography is often not the most significant factor for the definition of a region, many other can be responsible for the formation of clusters of occupation,

hierarchical relations, alliances or hostilities. Also, all of these factors change continuously over time, because of particular historical reasons and situations. These changes produced often unpredictable results. In other words, the definition of a region cannot be based only on local features, or the landscape alone, but is a complex phenomenon, based on a combination of a multitude of factors, including, primarily, cultural ones, which can be fluid and ever changing and even random and unpredictable, such as natural disasters or the personalities of the principal agents.

Therefore, a region should be defined not exclusively or not principally as a geographical concept, but also, as a historical and cultural one. Admittedly it is not easy, or even desirable to include all of the above factors and research questions into one symposium. We can wish for such a future all-encompassing conference to deal with the myriad of historical factors and situations diachronically, for a well-defined region. The aim of the present symposium, however, was less 'ambitious'. There are some shortcomings in its vision. For instance, Zakros at the far east was presented but not Petras, a palatial site excavated and studied for the last 37 years. Also Choïromandres was presented but not Palaikastro, although they are rather close on the east coast. Although the north-east coast is absent a new research project at Mochlos was presented by Natalia Poulou, but not included in the publication. I believe that it is not possible to understand adequately the far east of Crete if the evidence of the isthmus of Ierapetra, the gulf of Mirabello, as well as the Siteia bay area and its hinterland are not included in the discussion. For example, Weingarten and Ferrara examined the hieroglyphic archive of Petras and the seals (paper not included in the publication), together with the rest of the data from the general area, but the excavation of the palace and the cemetery of Petras are absent from the discussions. Also, significant is that Carl Knappett, given the lack of adequate data from the south coast starts his analysis from important sites of the north coast, from Malia to Petras, including Sisi, Priniatikos Pyrgos, Gournia, Pseira and Papadiokampos, and he continues to include even the area to the east and southeast of Petras, around Kavos Sidero down to Palaikastro. In any case, I believe that a discussion about Zakros, Choïromandres and Azokeramos should include also Palaikastro. The intense interaction of the south and east coasts with the northeast through the Ierapetra Isthmus is also evidenced by the paper by Eleni Nodarou on the petrographic analyses. She is considering together and comparing the evidence from sites of the north coast, namely Mochlos and Petras and also sites on the isthmus of Ierapetra, such as Halasmenos and Kephala-Vassiliki, and beyond, Gournia and Kavousi (Kastro, Vrondas and Azoria).

What follows are brief thematic analyses of the papers included in the volume.

### **Chronological overview**

Tatiana Frangopoulou, offers an overview of the evidence of sea activity, the sea and coastal environment in the southeast coast of Crete, including the islands of Chryssi and Lefki, from the Early Minoan to the Roman Imperial period. Her area of research is defined from Xerokambos to the east to Myrtos to the west. The marine culture is defined as a parallel of the landscape archeology and is explored in this way for the first time. No unity is observed in the coastal environment. On the contrary there is a pronounced fragmentation. In prehistoric times, the relationship of the various communities to the sea is characterized by fishing and the processing of murex shells for dye production. On the other hand, imports of obsidian from the Aegean connected southeastern Crete to the islands of Nisyros, Antiparos, and Melos. She also suggests that this connection with the sea is to be seen on the use of marine motifs on seal iconography. The exploitation of marine resources was intensive during the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods. Fish tanks, salt pans and purple dye production areas, were established along the south coast, along with, for the first time, artificial harbor installations, moles, etc. to serve an increase in sea traffic. Furthermore, ceramic workshops along the coast, were producing amphorae for the export of Cretan wine. Southeastern Crete was also inserted into networks occasioned by the alliances of Itanos with the Ptolemaic kingdom, and Hierapytna with the Seleucids and in the Roman period the province of Creta and Cyrenaica. In the Roman Imperial period various luxurious villas were built at Myrtos, Ierapetra, Makrygialos and also on Lefki island. The sea route from North Africa to Rome was a very important one for commerce in the Mediterranean, as it is also mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the journey of St. Paul to Rome.

### **Neolithic period**

Lily Bonga writes on the pre-Bronze Age prehistory of southeastern Crete, starting from the study of the Neolithic pottery from the Pelekita cave near Zakros. In fact, she presents a very useful revision of the data over a wide area, including the whole Aegean region, and over a wide period of time from the early Prehistoric times to the end of the Neolithic. In the southwest coast of Crete sites of the Lower Paleolithic have been discovered, while Mesolithic seasonal visitations, if not occupation, has been identified at Livari, Mavroseli near Mochlos and Damnoni. Reexamining recent publications on the Cretan Neolithic especially by P. Tomkins and

K. Nowicki, she criticizes their chronological divisions that are based mainly on Knossos, and stresses the necessity for a revision of the chronological attributions based on ceramic sequences. The cave of Pelekita is dated to the early phase of the Late Neolithic, and she suggests that sites in the isthmus of Ierapetra, attributed by Nowicki in the Final Neolithic such as Pano Horio, Monastiraki-Katalimata, Kephala-Vassiliki and Kavousi-Azoria should be moved earlier.

No C14 dates from the Pelekita cave are available as yet, and the study of the pottery has not been completed, but the occupation is assigned to the 6th millennium BC. An interesting detail is the presence of post firing holes in the pottery, indicating repair. The importance of the Pelekita cave should be stressed, given the lack of open-air settlements of the same period in south-southeastern Crete, and the low visibility of the period in archaeological surveys.

### Minoan period

Carl Knappett writes about the changing face of maritime interaction in southern Crete diachronically. He starts with the examination of the data from the north coast from Malia to Petras and further south to Palaikastro. The reason of the foundation and the prosperity of these important urban settlements and palaces are dependent upon their vicinity to the sea and the possibilities for exchange and communication of any type. The circulation of the pottery is a tangible example of these relationships, along with the export of Minoan pottery to the Cyclades, the Dodecanese, Asia Minor and the northern Aegean. The division crafted by T. Tartaron for Mycenaean maritime networks is applied in the case of eastern Crete to categorize the various scales of interaction: coastscapes, small worlds, intra-cultural maritime interaction spheres and inter-cultural maritime interaction spheres. In this framework, LM III Crete is considered part of an intra-cultural interaction network; yet the earlier periods — Proto- and Neopalatial — especially for southeastern Crete, are less easy to define. In the Protopalatial period there is a surprising scarcity of sites identified between Kommos and Zakros, and most of them are situated on low hills by the sea and not directly on the coastline. The connection with the north coast in the Protopalatial period was probably by land, and it would be interesting to know more about the mountainous routes leading from Kommos and Phaistos to Malia. In the Neopalatial period when a major (palatial?) center was probably established in Ierapetra, and Knossos developed special interest in the south coast, the situation changed, with the totality of Crete becoming a maritime world. Southeastern Crete, consequently, is part of this maritime world, and many more coastal sites were established.

Lefteris Platon presents an overview of the historical development in the district of Kato Zakros. An effort is made to present the rise, flourishing, destruction and abandonment of the site, based on selected archaeological evidence, and offering explanations for them. The reasons proposed for the development of Zakros as a coastal area with contacts to other areas within Crete and beyond the island are: a) its location, b) the local topography, c) adequate water sources, d) and the accessibility of building materials, namely limestone. The earliest human presence in the general area goes back to the Final Neolithic, and is attested in caves and rock shelters. The EM I period is represented only by sherds and some burial contexts. In EM II the first traces of habitation in the valley occur, although no architectural remains have been identified. Objects like Vasiliki pottery and the stone 'dog pyxis' show the first maritime contacts with the south and the north, Vasiliki and Mochlos respectively. In the EM III/MM IA period the life of the settlement starts, and light-on-dark, as well as polychrome pottery are present.

A probable palatial building existed in Zakros since the Protopalatial period, as stratigraphical trenches in the central Court suggest. Pottery shows affinities with Palaikastro, the main polity in the northeastern end of Crete, but not with Petras. The Protopalatial settlement was completely destroyed and replaced by a new urban one in the Neopalatial period with large, complex buildings. A second major catastrophe occurred in the LM IA period, and the peak of the evolution and prosperity of the town was in the LM IB period, due to a strong interest of Knossos in the area. Zakros then becomes a major center of trade with the eastern Mediterranean. The final destruction of the palace and the town occurred in the LM IB period as in the rest of the island.

During the Postpalatial period the valley was inhabited, albeit on a lesser scale, and in the 14th century BC there was pottery production. The abandonment of the coastal settlement in favor of higher sites in particular into the gorge, seems to have been gradual, unlike others in the same general area, such as Palaikastro [and Petras]. In the late LM IIIB/early IIIC period begins the occupation of new areas, far away from the sea, following the general pattern almost everywhere in the Aegean. In historical times Zakros was never settled again. Only few Hellenistic sherds came to light, and a small Roman farm was established close to the area of the ancient palace. The article includes also the history of the archaeological research in Zakros, starting at the beginning of the 20th century.

Christine Spencer and Todd Whitelaw write on the settlement history in the Ierapetra area, extrapolating from the evidence of the gulf of Mirabello region, which

constitutes probably the most thoroughly investigated area of Crete through systematic surveys and provides the most detailed published documentation of settlement patterns for the whole of the island. The paper is also attempting to identify political/administrative sub-regions, and explain their origin. Three surveys investigated the north Ierapetra/Mirabello region, at Vrokastro, Gournia, and Kavousi, a region which is also at the interface between different models for Cretan political developments. Statistical methods are applied to characterize the special relationships between various sites within the landscape, and the change in the organization of the settlement patterns during the Proto- and the Neopalatial periods (MM IB-LMI).

In the same areas there are many excavated sites which offer a more concrete perspective and a solid ground for comparisons. The basic factors for the choice of an area for habitation by these agricultural communities are elevation, the presence of low slopes in the immediate hinterland, and alluvial soils. These factors have been calculated through scientific statistical methods, in order to offer an understanding of the presence or absence of occupation in different periods, as well as the density of occupation. The results show that in the Prepalatial period high settlement density is encountered in low land coastal areas, while Protopalatial occupation is not significantly different. In Neopalatial times the widest spatial settlement distribution is observed, and occupation densities increase outside the coastal plains. During LM IIIA-B the occupation returns to the coastal plains, although small upland sites continue to be occupied. In the Ierapetra Isthmus there is a decrease of sites occupied between the Protopalatial and the Neopalatial period. The southern part of the Ierapetra Isthmus, has been relatively less studied compared to the northern part. The evidence suggests a shift from dispersed small sites in the Protopalatial period to more nucleated communities in the Neopalatial period. The large settlement on Chryssi Island probably suggests the existence of a major administrative center on the opposite coast, and it will be very interesting to investigate the relation of this – presumed – center to Gournia on the north coast.

The topography of the south coast, from Ierapetra to Diaskari, is more fragmented. The models for both periods suggest significant density along the coast, but there must have been agricultural activity on the low mountainous areas through terracing. The recent discovery of a Protopalatial central building at Gournia suggests a hierarchical settlement system in the area of Gournia-Kavousi, also in that period. The increase of the coastal habitation in Neopalatial times implies a network of connections with the hinterland. The authors conclude that 'bearing in mind the coarse

chronological resolution of the empirical patterns on which our models are based, we can suggest that the processes behind the changing patterns were far more dynamic and locally contingent than the data can directly document'. This is of course a very important point to consider both for the further development of the models applied and for their application in future research.

Tina Kalantzopoulou writes about a less well-known aspect of the Minoan settlement patterns, the subject of her PhD dissertation entitled, 'Habitation and exploitation of the mountains in east Crete during prehistory: an analysis based on architectural remains and movable finds studied on the upland areas of Zakros and Ierapetra'. It was well known that the Minoans visited the mountains where sacred caves and peak sanctuaries are situated, but actual habitation in the higher locales is a different issue. On the uplands of Zakros there is evidence for habitation in the Final Neolithic and in the Neopalatial periods, while no habitation has been observed in the Protopalatial period. The Neopalatial architectural remains, on the other hand, consist of large rectangular free-standing buildings with megalithic facades, which often had open spaces and terraces around them. On the semi-mountainous areas above Ierapetra there are more rectangular Neopalatial megalithic buildings, similar to those in the Zakros area. It is important to understand the relationship between these buildings and the large building at Gaidourophas. An explanation for this would be that the central administration in Ierapetra, based on a palatial building, existed only in the Neopalatial period, as was the one in Zakros. It would be very interesting in this framework to have a similar investigation in the hinterland of Siteia, where we know that there was an important Protopalatial palace, in order to establish whether we deal with an exclusively Neopalatial system of organization.

In the Ierapetra semi-mountainous area there are few Neopalatial buildings, similar to those in the Zakros area, but smaller. Yet, in a higher altitude, up to 1100m asl, a cluster of 12 buildings was identified, with a distance of about 200m. between them, situated on both sides of a ravine. The large building at Gaidourophas is considered slightly later than them and its purpose was to regulate a pre-existing situation, playing the role of an intermediate secondary administrative center. Questions remain concerning the type of economy practiced here and the administration of the production. Future excavation could shed light on them.

Leonidas Vokotopoulos writes about the periods of use and the character of the occupation at Choiromandres in the hinterland of Zakros. This is one of the few extensively investigated rural areas, through both

excavation and survey. The meticulous stratigraphical excavation revealed architecture, and brought to light pottery, and other movable finds. Also, the survey identified terraces, dams, etc. which the archaeologists had the rare chance to date through small scale excavations. The author takes the opportunity to present more or less the totality of the data available to date, concerning eight buildings and their immediate contexts containing agricultural installations of various types, dated from the Protopalatial to LM III periods. Furthermore, it was established that the so-called megalithic farmsteads and the so-called guard houses are a feature of the late Protopalatial and Neopalatial periods, reflecting socio-economic and political circumstances particular to these periods.

An important and original contribution of this project to the archaeology of the far east of Crete, was the possibility of conducting various excavations of different scale on features identified during the intensive survey. This led the team to a thorough understanding of the various periods of occupation, as well as of the changes in the settlement and land-use patterns and their nature. In fact, this project opens a new path in the investigation of rural Crete in prehistory, and one can wish that other teams, in other areas, will also be able to combine intensive survey and small-scale excavations.

Eleni Nodarou writes on south coast fabrics and pottery production in southeastern Crete. She points out that site-specific fabrics are established in the area diachronically, starting already in the EM period, and continue down to Hellenistic times. The publication of Myrtos-Phournou Koryphi pottery identified for the first time what is now known as south coast fabric(s), and the first reference to the mineralogical composition came 25 years later, establishing that there was 'a range of fabrics with a variety of rounded sand or angular rock fragments, largely of basaltic and serpentiferous rocks'. In 2019 Emilia Oddo, in her publication of the detailed study of LM IA pottery from Myrtos-Pyrgos, identified a real 'ceramic region' in the area. The present article contains a part on the geology and a very useful survey of the south coast fabrics based on the analyzed excavated deposits of the south coast, namely Symi-Viannou, Myrtos-Phournou Koryphi and Pyrgos, as well as Bramiana. Pottery connected with the geology of the south coast fabrics was also encountered in the EM I site of Aphrodite's Kephali, in the isthmus of Ierapetra, as well as in large proportions in the two LM IIIC excavated settlements at Halasmenos and Vasiliki-Kephala, on the northern part of the Ierapetra Isthmus.

On the other hand, the analysis of the pottery assemblage from the Minoan villa at Makrygialos, is

different from the ones mentioned above, as it contains large additions of serpentinite. It also shows up in some imports to sites on the north coast such as Petras and Chrysokamino. At the Prepalatial cemetery of Livari there were two fabrics connected with the south coast. At Zakros the south coast fabrics are represented in different percentages, but, overall they are not as frequent. At Azokeramos, only 4km from Zakros, only a few of the jars are made in such fabrics, probably imported from Zakros. The materials from Karoumes (MM IIB-LM IIIA) and Choiromandres (MM IIIB-LM IA) are in accordance with the whole picture of the eastern coast, and contain only few specimens of south coast fabrics.

In order to identify the exact origin of the various south coast fabrics further study is necessary, combining stylistic and petrographic analysis. Also, when this type of pottery fabrics is encountered as imports in sites on the north coast it is not easy to define the exact provenance of production.

### Archaic – Hellenistic periods

Brice Erickson writes on southeastern Crete in the Archaic through Hellenistic periods. He points out the fact that in the recent past the archaeology of southeastern Crete in these periods was almost non-existent, contrary to the many discoveries produced by excavations and surveys from the north-northeastern coast. Thus, he proposes a model for the conceptualization of the history of southeastern Crete starting from the 6th century BC. Archaic Crete has been considered in light of extant historical sources as a marginal area outside of the major developments in other areas of the Greek world, as it remained militaristic and with oligarchic administration. Yet, recent research, especially based on the study of inscriptions, tends to see Archaic Crete as an area with market economy. In any case, the society was conservative and the most important economic activities were agriculture and herding.

The case study for the advancement of this model is Azoria, the only extensively excavated settlement on the island, dated primarily to the 6th century BC. By the end of the 7th and beginning of 6th centuries BC there was a large-scale communal reorganization and planning of the settlement, with the arrival of population from neighboring abandoned settlements. The new urban plan included new architectural forms, not only for public buildings but also for private large ones. The new ideas of social organization were expressed by the abandonment of the agglutinative plan, which characterized the Early Iron Age settlements. This mirrored a social change towards nuclear family organization and *polis* administration.

### **Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods**

Scott Gallimore writes about Ierapetra's position within the economic networks of Hellenistic and Roman Mediterranean from the 2nd century BC through the 2nd century AD. The period is understudied. Despite the lack of exports from Crete in the Hellenistic period at major commercial centers such as Delos, with the exception of few Hadra-style hydriae, amphorae with stamped handles in Egypt, and honey listed on a papyrus, southern Crete was part of a very dynamic network at the time. The territory of Ierapetra in Hellenistic times is calculated, according to the written sources at about 1050 sqkm and it had an aggressive attitude towards its neighbors. It is noteworthy that more than half of the isopolity treaties on Crete involve Ierapetra. As for trade, Ierapetra shows a large number of imported wares from areas of southeastern Asia Minor, such as Knidos, Halicarnassus and also from Rhodes and Cyprus. The situation changed after the Roman conquest of Crete in 69–67 BC, when Ierapetra was integrated into the wider Roman economy. Its harbor

was expanded and improved, to accommodate larger ships. It was important for the transport of grain from the Egypt to Italy. It should also be stressed that during the Early Roman period the Ierapetra Isthmus played a significant role for the movement of goods to the north coast.

Chrysa Sofianou describes a female head, made of Thasian marble, which was given to the Archaeological Collection of Ierapetra in 2017. It was initially part of a statue dated to the first half of the second century AD. Parallels are given from various areas of the empire. The author also presents an overview of the history of Ierapetra from the Bronze Age to the era of the Venetian occupation through the monuments and the written sources.

The contributions in this volume highlight the significance of the landscape as a central cultural factor in the habitation of eastern Crete from the 5th millennium BC through the 1st millennium AD. Complex phenomena shaped these interactions and developments.