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**The funerary landscape at Knossos**  
A diachronic study of Minoan burial customs  
with special reference to the warrior graves

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**ABSTRACT**

Madelaine, Miller: *The funerary landscape at Knossos – A diachronic study of Minoan burial customs with special reference to the warrior graves*

This study investigates the mortuary customs at Knossos in Crete during the Middle and Late Bronze Age through a diachronic perspective. The Late Bronze Age burial data at Knossos show strong mainland influences, particularly in a number of tombs with weapons, the so-called warrior graves. The aim is to understand to what degree the funerary practices changed during these periods, but also to what degree they can be traced to the Mycenaean Greek mainland. The study deals with the kinds of material that have been put forward in earlier discussions as indications of a new burial practice at Knossos in the LM II and LM III periods: weapons, bronzes, special types of pottery, wooden biers or coffins, and types of tombs. Each category is treated separately and followed by comparisons of similar material in tombs in the Argolid on the mainland. Throughout the work, discussions are conducted regarding to what degree it can be substantiated, in the light of the tomb evidence and existing theories, that Mycenaean had in fact arrived at Knossos.

The results suggest that the mortuary customs at Knossos were changing already in the end of the Neopalatial period, and the material reflects incipient tensions between different groups of people. In the beginning of the final palatial period, the burial data reveal increased competition and it is suggested that old power relations were transformed into new associations. The mortuary customs display an amalgamation of mainland and native traits, not the introduction of a new burial tradition. The tombs in the latest period investigated, LM IIIA, indicate that a stabilisation of power had been reached in the area.

*Keywords:* Crete, Knossos, Minoan, Mycenaean, warrior grave, weapons, bronze vessels, Palace Style, mortuary customs, funerary rites, competition, ethnic belonging.