

Preface

This work is the second part of *Kommos I: The Kommos Region and Houses of the Minoan Town*. The first part, published in 1995 with the subtitle *The Kommos Region, Ecology, and Minoan Industries*, introduces Kommos and the history of excavation in the area. It includes chapters on geomorphology, flora, fauna, land use, and the area survey, as well as a substantial chapter on Minoan implements recovered from the site and how they may have been used. The present work begins with a chapter on the development, extent, and nature of the Minoan town. The Minoan Hilltop and Central Hillside houses, along with their finds, are dealt with in the next three chapters. Chapter 5 discusses Kommos house architecture in general. The sixth and final chapter attempts to distill some aspects of Bronze Age Aegean domestic economy, especially subsistence and household activities, from the detailed observations made throughout Volume I and elsewhere. It also attempts to place the Kommos site in a regional perspective. In the various chapters reference is often made to the two published volumes in the Kommos series that concern Minoan pottery: *Kommos II: The Final Neolithic Through Middle Minoan III Pottery*, by Philip P. Betancourt (1990), and *Kommos III: The Late Bronze Age Pottery*, by Livingston Vance Watrous (1992).

Volumes I–III are the product of a decision to study the Kommos site and its material remains from various points of view, an approach that was gaining favor in Greece during the early 1970s, especially through the work of the Minnesota Messenia Expedition. As events occurred, we were confronted with two choices concerning publication. One was to publish our results as separate, perhaps somewhat unrelated, monographs as individual projects were completed. The other was to publish the relevant, cross-referenced studies as parts of a single production. The second choice was the more hazardous one, given the complexity of coordinating contributions. Because each section of a study relied to some extent upon the other sections, the authors whose contributions were completed earlier would be held up by the authors whose contributions arrived later. Despite the difficulties, we decided to take the second road, in the belief that it was better suited to the original philosophical approach that informed the project design.

Some mention is made in Volume I of the Kommos Civic Center, especially Late Minoan I Building T with its great rectangular court and Late Minoan III Building P with its six huge

east-west galleries. We are, however, reserving the detailed study of these structures for another volume of the Kommos series. Yet another volume is planned for House X, a large dwelling found late in the excavations just north of the Civic Center.

Volumes I–III deal with Kommos during the Middle Minoan and Late Minoan periods, when the settled area consisted of houses bordered on the south by civic buildings. There was, however, a later period of site use. Beginning in the Sub-Minoan period, a small temple was established in what was once the western wing of LM I Building T. This temple was succeeded by another and then another, with the result that the Kommos site, at least as we understand it, underwent a substantial change in character. From a Minoan town with a civic hub, Kommos became an otherwise largely deserted shoreside area with a rural shrine destined for occasional, and then more frequent, pilgrimages. This was the pattern for over a millennium until the site was deserted ca. A.D. 250. The study of that period, the temples, and their attendant rites and associated structures will be detailed in Volume IV: *The Greek Sanctuary*, the next volume to be published in the Kommos series.

Many people and institutions have helped our project to prosper, and they are acknowledged in our longer preface to Volume I, Part 1. There will be many more people and agencies to thank as work continues. For now, special recognition should be given to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (Grant 410-94-1091), the Institute for Aegean Prehistory, the University of Toronto, Lorne Wickerson, and Polly Scribner Ames for their help in funding final excavation and continuing study for publication during 1994–96. Thanks to their generous support, work has progressed on the Greek Sanctuary, the Minoan ashlar buildings, and Minoan House X.

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