

# OVERSEAS CONNECTIONS OF KNOSSOS AND CRETE IN THE SIXTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES BC: INSIGHTS FROM THE UNEXPLORED MANSION

by Eirini Paizi 

University of Graz

*In relation to previous periods, Archaic and Classical Crete presents a contraction in the material record and the evidence for overseas connections. This phenomenon has attracted wide-ranging attention in the scholarship, much of which focuses upon the major Cretan city of Knossos. The present article reviews the evidence from Knossos which suggests a decline in overseas connections and revisits the problem in the light of Archaic and Classical pottery from abroad found at the settlement site of the 'Unexplored Mansion'. On the basis of these finds, I argue that the impression of decline has been exaggerated, and has been partly shaped by methodological problems in the study of ceramics.*

## INTRODUCTION

### Crete in the Orientalising vis-à-vis Archaic and Classical periods

The Early Iron Age is known as a period of prosperity for Crete, with overseas imports peaking at different sites, especially the cemeteries of Knossos and Eleutherna.<sup>1</sup> This wealth is also evident at sanctuaries: at the interregional sanctuary of Syme Viannou, decorated pottery and bronze cut-out votive plaques are copiously attested in the seventh century BC (Kotsonas 2017, 20; Prent 2005, 345–6). At the shrine of the Idaean Cave, ivory, bronze and faience artefacts of Egyptian, Near Eastern and local craftsmanship are attested from the ninth to seventh centuries BC (Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2013). Cretan pottery and gold jewelry of the late eighth to early seventh century BC were also exported to sites in the Aegean and beyond (Kotsonas 2008a, 271; 2017, 21). Consequently, the first half of the Orientalising period represents 'a peak in the mobility within Crete and in the development of a complex pattern of connectivity overseas' (Kotsonas 2017, 17).

Rather than targeting the question of why these early phases of the Iron Age have yielded such rich finds for the island, what has been hitherto deemed as a much more perplexing and interesting question by Classical archaeologists working on Crete is a vivid contrast between this documented earlier wealth and the absence of excavated, well-stratified deposits for the final decades of the seventh century, as well as for the subsequent 200-year period.<sup>2</sup> Brice Erickson, a scholar who has shed new light on Archaic and Classical Crete (Erickson 2000; 2010), has stressed that all evidence for affluence such as bronze and monumental offerings, imports, terracotta votives and elaborately decorated ceramics gradually disappears from the island around 600 BC (Erickson 2010, 1–22), and he has noted that 'nearly every facet of the craft and artistic production ... points to a decline or changed priorities in the sixth century' (Erickson 2010, 9). Hence, the

<sup>1</sup> Brock 1957; Coldstream and Catling 1996; Kotsonas 2008a; 2008b. All dates are BC unless otherwise specified. The terms 'Orientalising', 'Archaic' and 'Classical' stand for the 7th, 6th and 5th centuries BC respectively. The abbreviations 'EC', 'MC', and 'LC' refer to the 'Early Corinthian', 'Middle Corinthian' and 'Late Corinthian' periods. Similarly, 'CA' and 'CC' denote the Cypro-Archaic and Cypro-Classical eras. 'Suppl. Cat.' and 'Suppl. Fig.' refer to the catalogue and figures of this article published as Supplementary Material.

<sup>2</sup> Erickson 2010, 1; 2014, 80; cf. Kotsonas 2017, 17, 23. An exception constitutes Brisart 2011, 87–113.

sixth century BC on Crete is seen as the epitome of decline in the island's ancient history. It has been characterised as an era of 'substantial cultural discontinuity' and 'a catastrophic decline in population' (Erickson 2010, 11), as a 'period of silence' (Stampolidis 1990, 400), as 'the inevitable Cretan terminus' (S. Morris 1992, 157, 169) and as a 'Dark Age' (Prent 1996–7) or the period of the 'Archaic gap' (Coldstream and Huxley 1999).

The periods around the end of the sixth and, mainly, fifth centuries BC are generally regarded as eras of resumed activity, and finds appear to be more numerous than those of the previous 75-year period (Erickson 2010, 41). In practice, however, the archaeology of Late Archaic and Classical Crete shares many problems with that of the Archaic era, since most dated contexts concentrate either around 500 or 400 BC.

The apparently dire need to explain the dearth of material from sixth-century Crete has given rise to scenarios that portray the island or specific cities of it as victims of military, environmental or economic catastrophes (Watrous 1982, 21–3; S. Morris 1992, 169–72; I. Morris 1998, 65–6; Huxley 1994, 128–9; Viviers 1994, 252–8; Prent 1996–7; Coldstream and Huxley 1999, 303–4; Erickson 2000, 332 n. 4, 333–49; 2002, 82–7; 2010, 235–45, 298–345). While it is highly likely that armed conflicts took place in various parts of the island (cf. Haggis 2014, 14–16, 36), no stratigraphical evidence of such destructions and subsequent abandonments has been identified. Thus, the only thing that scenarios of destruction and abandonment have in common with narratives that depict Archaic and Classical Crete as growing and restructuring itself (cf. Wallace 2010, 231–347; Haggis 2014; contra: Erickson 2014, 69), while at the same time being the site of regular military conflicts, is the absence of evidence for such detailed social processes in the form of excavated deposits. Furthermore, theories of possible droughts, floods or natural catastrophes which could supposedly bring about a demographic decline also seem hard to prove, owing to the rarity of available environmental data regarding climatic conditions in Archaic and Classical Crete (Ghilardi et al. 2019). Emigration of the island's population owing to colonisation, mercenary service overseas or piracy have also been suggested (S. Morris 1992, 170–1; I. Morris 1998, 68).

What is inadequate about most of these traditional explanations favouring a chronological lacuna is that they do not account for all facets of the problem (Whitley 2001, 245–52) and that they usually do not apply a consistent set of logic from a methodological and argumentative point of view.<sup>3</sup> To begin with, the picture of decline does not apply across the entire island. Recent excavations on the hill of Azoria near Kavousi revealed a thriving community of the sixth to early fifth centuries BC with a monumental civic centre.<sup>4</sup> Thirteen building complexes were revealed, erected on a series of terraces and built against a massive, stone-built spine wall that dates back to c. 600 BC (Haggis et al. 2004, 351–2, 390; 2011a, 2; Mook and Haggis 2013, 60–1). These multi-room buildings have yielded evidence for the communal consumption of food and drink, the storage and display of armour, the performance of sacrifices, the segregation of social groups during communal feasts (Haggis et al. 2004, 373–8, 380–2; 2007, 246–301; 2011a, 4–41), the centralised production of wine, olive oil and textiles, and the large-scale storage of cereals, pulses, almonds, olive oil and wine.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Common logic or Occam's razor suggests that, in a series of competing theories or explanations, the one with the fewest hypothetical parameters is to be preferred (Schaffer 2015). For the paradox of the accepted presence of inscriptions at the end of a period of a hypothetical occupational gap cf. Whitley 2001, 248–50; Perlman 2004; Erickson 2010, 20; Gaignerot-Driessen 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Imported fine ware, cooking ware and transport amphorae from Attica, Aegina, East Greece, and the Northern Aegean date the abandonment and destruction phase of the settlement to c. 500–475 BC (Haggis et al. 2004, 358–9, fig. 13, 360, fig. 14, 377; 2007, 249, fig. 4, 251, fig. 6:5, 258, fig. 11, 260–2, fig. 15, 284, fig. 30:1–2, 285, fig. 31:1–3; 2011a, 36, fig. 25; 2011b, 442 n. 26).

<sup>5</sup> Haggis et al. 2011a, 43–62; Haggis and Mook 2017, 2–8. Some sceptics, however, warn against 'enshrining Azoria as a new type site and inferring from it a healthy picture of the island in the 6th century' (Erickson 2014, 69) and claim that the meticulously excavated evidence from this site 'would matter more if the controversy [of the Archaic lacuna] involved botanical or faunal remains' (Erickson 2014, 80). This is part of more recent rhetorical attempts to bring 'the 6th century gap back into play', albeit for specific sites of the island (Erickson 2014, 74).

New evidence from cemeteries corroborates the assumption that a uniform impression of recession in the sixth century is lacking. The latest excavations at the North Necropolis of Itanos uncovered lavish funerary architectural complexes of the seventh, sixth and fifth centuries BC and produced ceramic imports from mainland Greece and the Aegean (Tsingarida and Viviers 2019). These findings seem to contradict conventional ideas on the society and economy of Archaic Crete and are casting doubts on the hypothesis that the eastern part of the island was in decline during the sixth century.

#### *Overseas connections of Crete in the Archaic and Classical periods*

Part of the problem with identifying Archaic and Classical deposits, dating them and constructing local stylistic sequences, is the absence of well-dated imports from overseas. This difficulty is itself triggered by the fact, that in Greek archaeology, the most closely datable artefacts in a given stratigraphic context of the Archaic and Classical periods are considered to be decorated fine-ware ceramics produced in Attica or Corinth. The absolute chronology of these ceramic classes is traditionally used to date all other classes of evidence, including Cretan pottery of the sixth and fifth centuries BC. This disciplinary convention can, if used at face value, overshadow the fact that the absence or presence of imports is indicative of consumption patterns and not of the existence or non-existence of occupation at a site.

The absence of imports capable of defining Archaic and Classical Cretan deposits as such contrasts the abundance of pottery and artefacts brought from Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Levant, and the Aegean, which is already attested on Early Iron Age Crete. Agency for these activities is usually denied to the indigenous population and is attributed to inhabitants of the southern Levant, identified as the Phoenicians by Greek authors, considered as the merchants *per excellence* of the eastern Mediterranean during the first half of the first millennium BC. These Levantine merchants are thought to have used Crete as a stopping point on their route from North Syria to North Africa. Earlier scholarship believed that these activities declined sharply after 573 BC, when military upheavals led to the rise of Babylon and the siege of Tyre (Erickson 2005, 627). The decline of Phoenician power is thought to have caused eastern long-distance mercantile networks to collapse during the Archaic period (S. Morris 1992, 150–70; Whitley 2001, 121; Stampolidis 2003, 43–4; Erickson 2005, 625–7; 2010, 279).

The loss of the eastern trade routes in the sixth century is interpreted as a catalyst for the reorientation of Cretan trade towards the Aegean. Crete is thought to have become part of an exchange network which connected the Peloponnese with North Africa. Evidence for the existence of such a trade route constitutes, inter alia, Laconian pottery discovered in Libya, Samos and Crete from the end of the seventh to the beginning of the fifth century, as well as sixth-century Cretan pottery at Tocra and Cyrene (Erickson 2005, 627–36; 2010, 281–98).

Archaeological remains of the fifth century BC are supposed to be more numerous than those of the previous century (Erickson 2010, 41). Nonetheless, recent studies have set up a hypothesis that off-island ceramic imports disappear from Crete between 460 and 400. The rich Late Archaic Attic and Laconian imports of western Crete are taken to cease abruptly between 470/450 and 410/400, with imports disappearing at the necropolis of Eleutherna between 460 and 425–400 (Erickson 2000, 175–7, 260 n. 104, 262; 2005, 637; 2010, 291–6). For Knossos, an extreme scarcity of imported pottery has been proposed for the interval between 475 and 425 BC (Erickson 2000, 112–15; 2005, 637–8).

To contend with this apparent disappearance of mainland Greek and other imports to Crete in roughly the second until the final quarter of the fifth century, Erickson examined two main hypotheses. The first was centred on the possibility of an import ban against Athenian products imposed by Cretan cities on their citizens in the context of the Peloponnesian War and its prelude (Erickson 2005, 643–5; 2010, 296). The second hypothesis, which Erickson found more likely, has the Athenians undermine Peloponnesian trade with Egypt during the *Pentakontaetia* by sending ‘informal patrols ... on an ad hoc basis to discourage Peloponnesian merchant vessels from sailing’ (Erickson 2005, 648–58, esp. 655; 2010, 297). Thus, during that 50-year period paving the way to the Peloponnesian War, Crete is said to have been completely cut-off from its contacts with the outside world. Since Erickson’s argument is founded primarily on the

evidence of pottery, the re-examination of fifth-century ceramic imports to Knossos presented below can have considerable implications for this theory.

### *Confining the chronological 'lacuna' to Knossos*

In his doctoral thesis and subsequent publication, Erickson (2000; 2010) pioneeringly suggested a first chronological sequence for the plain fine-ware production of three major Cretan cities between 600 and 400 BC: Eleutherna, Knossos and Gortyn. Moreover, he established that several Cretan sites, including Phalassarna, Kydonia, Eleutherna, Gortyn, the Vrokastro area and Praisos, probably survived the 'collapse' of the sixth century (Erickson 2010, 45–67, 86–95, 104–13, 178–88, 190–2, 199–216). To Erickson, these findings suggest that the purported 'lacuna' might be a mirage caused by the criteria of excavation and publication of Cretan material, the vagaries of preservation, processes of site formation, as well as the difficulties of identifying and dating undecorated fine-ware (Erickson 2005, 632; 2010, vii, 1, 20, 67, 178, 247; cf. Haggis et al. 2004, 345 n. 16). However, Erickson follows traditional scholarship in maintaining that Knossos is the only Cretan site which presents an occupational 'hiatus' between c. 590 and 525 BC (Erickson 2010, 1–3, 235–45).

### *Purpose and scope of the current study*

The present paper revisits established assumptions on Archaic and Classical Knossos by examining published and especially unpublished fine-ware ceramics from the British excavations at the site of the Knossos Unexplored Mansion. I use this highly datable type of evidence to reassess the validity of provocative albeit counterintuitive master narratives of chronological gaps at Knossos during the sixth and fifth centuries BC. Through a case study of intrusive and unstratified material, I hope to problematise, even with non-ideal evidence, how methodological conventions and sampling biases can affect the construction of site histories. Notwithstanding my focus on the pottery from the Unexplored Mansion, I make select references to material from other locations at Knossos, which is relevant to the purposes of my study. Other types of evidence, such as epigraphical, architectural, and sculptural evidence, are not discussed, for reasons of brevity and focus.

A major goal is to re-examine Erickson's hypothesis that Knossos presents a hiatus of activity and especially of overseas imports between 590 and 525 BC (Erickson 2010, 238). Only one excavation has targeted the sixth century at Knossos,<sup>6</sup> and it has proven unsuccessful in tracing good contexts (Erickson 2010, 115). However, relevant material is not missing altogether, as has previously been suggested (Erickson 2014, 79, 80 n. 39). This fact is shown here through the re-examination of ceramic evidence from the Unexplored Mansion, which raises novel insights into activity in sixth-century Knossos and the access of the local community to overseas products.

Another objective of this project is to revisit the existence of an import 'gap' at Knossos between c. 475 and 425 BC, based again on unpublished ceramic imports from the Unexplored Mansion. This material can challenge the notion of a break in overseas imports to Crete during the Classical period and contribute to the discussion of the various scenarios put forward by Erickson in order to explain the alleged absence of foreign products.

## KNOSSOS AND THE UNEXPLORED MANSION IN THE SIXTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES

### **Evidence for human activity at Knossos in the sixth–fifth centuries**

According to traditional scholarly views, Knossos experienced a severe decline in population, if not a wholesale abandonment, during the sixth century.<sup>7</sup> A reduction in all classes of material culture,

<sup>6</sup> A fact that already indicates that our excavation sample for this period is narrow.

<sup>7</sup> Coldstream and Huxley 1999, 289; Erickson 2000, 18–20; 2010, 1, 3, 235. See however Trainor 2019, who illustrates that concentrations of Archaic material in four areas west of the Minoan Palace were recovered in recent years through intensive survey (Knossos Urban Landscape Project) and contradict traditional views of a

especially pottery, is taken to show an economic recession and demographic contraction at the city in the sixth century (Erickson 2010, 235). After exhaustive attempts to identify Archaic Knossian pottery (Erickson 2010, 236), Erickson (2010, 238) concluded that ‘not a single scrap of pottery can be dated within the lean period of *c.* 590–525 BC’. I believe this is not the case, as explained below.

Numerous signs of resumed activity and boom are recognised in Knossos of the Late Archaic period. According to Nicolas Coldstream and George L. Huxley (1999, 296), ‘every major excavation in the town has yielded stratified deposits of Late Archaic times, in which the local pottery can be dated by a steady flow of Attic BF and BG imports’. However, the second and third quarters of the fifth century are viewed as ‘still a dark chapter in the city’s history’ (Erickson 2010, 3; cf. Coldstream and Macdonald 1997, 240). The situation changes again in the end of the Classical era, when a greater number of datable deposits and vestiges of religious architecture appears (Coldstream and Huxley 1999, 296–7; Erickson 2010, 118–19), but a disruption of overseas trade is assumed for 475 to 425 BC (Erickson 2005, 637; 2010, 1, 3, 121).

An important factor that has contributed to the impression of an Archaic lacuna with lasting repercussions in the Classical period is the fact that the rich Early Iron Age cemeteries on the northern and southern outskirts of the city show almost no traces of use after 630/600 BC (Brock 1957, 219; Coldstream 1992, 85; Huxley 1994, 128; Coldstream and Catling 1996, 718; Coldstream and Huxley 1999, 294–6; Kotsonas 2002, 44). The rite of cremation, which had culminated in ostentation and opulence during the Orientalising period, disappears in the following 200 years, along with most funerary evidence.<sup>8</sup> This abrupt disappearance of tombs at the turn of the seventh to the sixth century, which went hand in hand with a simultaneous downturn in the quality and elaboration of local fine-ware pottery, has undoubtedly contributed to the difficulties in the identification of Archaic pottery and the creation of a well-established local typology (Brock 1957, 219; Coldstream and Huxley 1999; Kotsonas 2002, 38–45).

It is not only the evanescence of funerary ostentation that has been blamed for the poor archaeological record of the city. A demise in cultic activity and in the quantity and quality of offerings is often surmised for Archaic Knossos (Coldstream and Huxley 1999, 295; Erickson 2010, 236). Although a modest increase of activity at Knossian sanctuaries is assumed for the Classical period (Coldstream and Huxley 1999, 295, 296), sanctuaries of the fifth century are thought to epitomise the absence of imports between 475 and 425 better than any other type of context (Erickson 2005, 640 n. 156). Despite this impression, excavations of the British School at the sanctuary of Demeter, on the Lower Gypsades hill and the Shrine of Glaukos east of the Minoan Palace of Knossos, have yielded stratified Attic imports from the middle and the end of the fifth century.<sup>9</sup>

Knossian settlement contexts in the form of wells and pits have produced evidence which is restricted to the early sixth, late sixth and early fifth centuries. However, exceptions exist, and their significance has been underestimated. Excavations above the Royal Road, the Minoan monumental paved road which leads from the town to the north entrance of the Minoan Palace of Knossos, have produced unstratified finds which I date to the period of the Archaic ‘gap’: a Corinthian kotyle of Lawrence’s type V (600–575 BC)<sup>10</sup> and a white-style exaleipteron or convex-sided pyxis (550–400 BC; Coldstream 1973b, 62, no. M.11, pl. 26). Additionally, excavations south-west of the Palace of Knossos brought to light a Classical surface with a wall fragment of

sixth-century break of activity in the city. This Archaic material, which has been identified by Conor Trainor and Antonis Kotsonas, even includes Lakonian kraters and local imitations, as well as other imports from mainland Greece (Trainor 2019, 2).

<sup>8</sup> No burial finds are known from *c.* 600–525 BC and only a few date to *c.* 525–475 BC: Brock 1957, 26–7, pl. 17; Boardman 1962, 28–30, pl. 3c; Coldstream and Huxley 1999, 295, 296 n. 45.

<sup>9</sup> Mid-5th: Coldstream 1973a, 22, nos B.2, 25, C.1, 26, C.2, C.11. Late 5th: Coldstream 1973a, 6, 12–14, 22–7, nos B–C, figs 13–14, pls 11–12, 25–7; Erickson 2010, 119 (Demeter Sanctuary); Callaghan 1978, 4–6, nos 1–9, fig. 4 (Shrine of Glaukos).

<sup>10</sup> Coldstream 1973b, 62, no. M.7, fig. 14, pl. 26. For the typology and chronology, see *Corinth* VII 2, 73–8; Bentz 1982, 19.

an Attic red-figure krater, depicting perhaps Oedipus and the sphinx, from *c.* 475–450,<sup>11</sup> as well as an Attic skyphos of *c.* 450.<sup>12</sup> This handful of imports, along with the ones discussed in the present study, suggests that Knossos was not completely unoccupied and cut off from the rest of the world at 600–525 and 475–425 BC.

To sum up, the disappearance of burials and decorated pottery in Knossos of the sixth and fifth centuries is the main reason why the city is believed to have been abandoned during these centuries. However, the large quantity and wealth of Late Archaic deposits with overseas imports and local pottery undermines the hypothesis of a 65-year abandonment of the city in the sixth century, a sudden reoccupation with immediate reestablishment of trade relations with the Aegean around 525–475 BC, and another disruption of overseas connections at 475. Taking into account the fact that cremations had become less numerous, albeit richer, in the seventh century prior to their eclipse in the sixth (Kotsonas 2002; 2011; 2021), the likelihood is that the right to formal burial was gradually becoming more exclusive in the Orientalising period. Social changes – perhaps a redefinition of elite practices and arenas for elite display – may have led to a dramatic reduction of archaeologically visible burials during the Archaic period (cf. Chapman 1981; Morgan 1993). What is more, signs of ritual activity during the sixth and fifth centuries BC at Knossos are present in the form of imported Attic pottery from the sanctuary of Demeter and the shrine of Glaukos, and domestic activity is attested by Late Archaic wells and pits, sporadic sixth- and fifth-century finds, as well as a Classical road surface in the areas of the Royal Road and the South-West Houses.

## The Unexplored Mansion

### *The Site*

The Minoan Unexplored Mansion is a large residential building (14.5 x 24.5 m) of Late Minoan date, situated approximately 400 m north-west of the Minoan Palace of Knossos (Popham and Sackett 1972–3, 51; Popham 1984, 1). The site immediately neighbours the Little Palace and now lies east of the Knossos Stratigraphical Museum. This wider area has yielded extensive traces of domestic activity from the Late Bronze Age to the Roman period. The Mansion was discovered in 1908 by Arthur Evans, who only uncovered its ashlar-built eastern façade (Popham 1984, 14) and south-eastern sector (Popham and Sackett 1972–3, 50; Popham 1984, 1, 41, 88, 95). Systematic excavations were conducted in the 1960s and 1970s by Hugh Sackett and Mervyn Popham and were published in detail (Popham 1984; Sackett 1992; cf. Popham and Sackett 1972–3). Indeed, the Unexplored Mansion is one of the best published excavations in the Knossos valley and a reference work for the archaeology of Crete.

The northern, central and southern parts of the site are dominated by substantial remains of three second-to-third-century AD buildings erected directly above the Minoan Unexplored Mansion: the North House, the East House and the House of the Diamond Frescoes (Popham 1984, 99–126; Sackett 1992, 2, 17–59). No architectural remains of other periods survive. The reason for this is that, in the Late Minoan IB/II and imperial Roman periods building at Knossos involved more substantial walls and foundations. In the intervening periods, flimsier structures erected above the densely built Neopalatial and Final Palatial town seem to have faced stability problems (Coldstream and Huxley 1999, 292; Hatzaki and Kotsonas 2020, 1035). Hence, the notoriously deep foundations of second-century AD buildings damaged all stratigraphic horizons above the monumental Minoan structure (Sackett 1992, xii).

It is not only the intensive building activity of the Late Minoan and Roman periods that has resulted in a very complex stratigraphy. Since the Final and Post-Palatial periods and especially since the Early Iron Age, the site attracted stone robbing and was turned into a quarry of massive dressed blocks (Popham and Sackett 1972–3, 55; Popham 1984, 5–8; Sackett 1992, 2). In addition to quarrying pits, a glut of rubbish pits and abandoned wells filled with debris constitute the main evidence for domestic activity of the Sub-Minoan to the Hellenistic eras

<sup>11</sup> Coldstream and Macdonald 1997, 228, no. N.1, fig. 19 (same dating as here).

<sup>12</sup> Coldstream and Macdonald 1997, 228, 242, no. N.3, fig. 19 (same dating as here).

(Sackett 1992, xii, 2). Such activities disturbed the stratigraphy (Popham 1984, 5). Most of the material from these periods, including the group treated here, is strongly fragmented, but the surface of the fragments tends to be well-preserved. This suggests that the sherds were not moved around or exposed for long before deposition.

*The Archaic and Classical pottery from the Knossos Unexplored Mansion*

Understanding the methodological choices involved in the publication of the Minoan Unexplored Mansion is essential for the comprehension of the excavation contexts and their finds. In the present section I explain the reference systems and the nomenclature of find groups used in Sackett's (1992) edited volume of the Greek and Roman material from the Unexplored Mansion, as well as the stratigraphic contexts which yielded the Archaic and Classical imported pottery examined in the following analysis and catalogue.

Archaic and Classical pottery recovered from the area of the Unexplored Mansion can be identified into 10 groups, conventionally christened as 'deposits'. They were defined as such by Nicolas Coldstream, who worked on the Early Iron Age ceramics from the Unexplored Mansion, and Peter Callaghan, who studied the Archaic to Hellenistic finds from the site. The term 'deposit' is not always to be understood in its strict sense (cf. Schiffer 1987, 265–7). Most of the groups represent pit fills or parts of them, often contaminated with later material. Nonetheless, there are also assortments of material which have been grouped together as 'deposits' even though they do not come from the same stratigraphic horizon (Coldstream 1992, 67; Callaghan 1992, 89–91). Because of these problems, I will not use the expression 'deposit' in the rest of this article. Instead, I will refer to agglomerations of pottery which come from the same archaeological context as 'stratigraphic units' and to chronological or random groupings of ceramic finds from different contexts as 'pottery groups'.

Coldstream generally dealt with the Early Iron Age material, but his 'pottery group' GH is a collection of ceramic finds of miscellaneous dates. Indeed, fragments of finely decorated Corinthian pottery were included in this assemblage, some of which fall between the Transitional (630–620/610 BC) and the Middle Corinthian periods (595/590–570).<sup>13</sup> Two fragments from this 'pottery group' – GH.136 (Suppl. Cat. 19 here: Coldstream 1992, 79, no. GH.136, pls 59, 73) and an unpublished piece (Suppl. Cat. 21) – are re-examined in the catalogue and analysis that follow.

Callaghan claimed that all the Archaic material from the Unexplored Mansion is confined to the last quarter of the sixth and the first quarter of the fifth centuries (Callaghan 1992, 89–98), observing the purported lacuna of c. 590–525 BC. The Late Archaic material he published comprises 'stratigraphic units' H2–H4, which are all pit fills, and the 'pottery group' H1, which consists of three different stratigraphic assemblages. The chronology seems to be based on individual Attic imports and thus, by questioning the date of a single imported piece, one can cast doubts on the dating of the 'stratigraphic unit' it belongs to. For instance, 'stratigraphic unit' H2 is based on the dating of rim fragment no. 1 to 490–480 BC (Callaghan 1992, 91, no. H.1, pl. 74). The piece is designated as an Attic skyphos, though it is actually a cup-skyphos. The parallel Callaghan offers is a bolsal of c. 425 (*Agora* XII, no. 537). In fact, Attic skyphoi of this type can date as early as 480 (*Agora* XII, no. 577). In my view, the concave inset lip of the specimen from Knossos suggests a date around 470 (*Agora* XII, 276, no. 579), which undermines the absolute conviction that stratigraphic unit H2 is no later than 480–475. Comparable chronological issues are raised by two unpublished fragments from 'stratigraphic units' H2 and H4, which are examined below (Suppl. Cat. 15 and 17).

The Classical period is represented in the Unexplored Mansion only by 'stratigraphic unit' H6 and 'pottery group' H11. The former (H6) constitutes the fill of Well 5 in the northern sector of the excavation. The well was abandoned when a level of hard rock was reached below the Minoan floor, and it was subsequently filled with debris (Callaghan 1992, 94). The sherds most useful for dating

<sup>13</sup> Coldstream 1992, 79, nos GH.126–GH.137. Coldstream suggested a date in the EC period following Payne's chronological scheme (c. 620–600 BC).

are five fragments of the fourth century, including two Attic cup-kantharoi (Callaghan 1992, 94, no. H6.1–5, pl. 77). Nonetheless, the well also yielded significant amounts of residual, fifth-century pottery (Callaghan 1992, 94). Unpublished ceramics from this fill, which belong to the period of the Archaic ‘gap’ and the Classical ‘break’ in imports, will be discussed in the following section (Suppl. Cat. 1 and 5). The second body of material, ‘pottery group’ H11, is a collection of Archaic and Classical sherds from different contexts. I consider here three unpublished Archaic fragments of H11 (Suppl. Cat. 2–4), which represent residual Classical material in later levels.

Most of the pottery pieces given in the present catalogue and analysis were not included in the publication of 1992. The reason is that they derive from fills of chronologically non-homogeneous material or constitute residual material of later, Hellenistic and Roman, layers (Suppl. Cat. 2–4, 6–12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21–26).<sup>14</sup> Beside the aforementioned specimens from pit fills H2, H4 and H6, there are two further fragments that come from interesting stratigraphic horizons. These include: import Suppl. Cat. 13, from an earth floor (GF) dated by Coldstream (1992, 74) to the seventh century. Moreover, Suppl. Cat. 20 is a Corinthian import and derives from Trench I Pit XI. This is a massive layer, the upper fill of which contained the ‘stratigraphic unit’ H8, which is assigned to the Late Classical period (Callaghan 1992, 95, no. H8, pls 77–8). Last but not least, another fragment out of context is Suppl. Cat. 25, a Cypriot import published under Hellenistic ‘pottery group’ H38 (Callaghan 1992, 132, no. H38.78, pl. 117). Certain characteristics of the decoration of this piece indicate that a different date should be attributed to it than to the rest of the assemblage.

#### ARCHAIC AND CLASSICAL POTTERY FROM THE UNEXPLORED MANSION

The present section discusses in detail the provenance, style and chronology of select published and unpublished imported pottery from the Knossos Unexplored Mansion which dates to *c.* 600/590–525 and 475–425 BC. As noted above, these periods are represented poorly in the published ceramic record of Knossos and the rest of Crete.

The material includes pottery which I identify as Attic, Corinthian, Laconian and Cypriot fine ware. Provenance is assigned on the basis of macroscopic inspection of the fabric and other technical features. Stylistic and morphological analyses are used to address typological and chronological questions.

#### Attic ware

Sixteen Attic fragments can be assigned, on stylistic grounds, to the assumed lacunae of the Archaic and Classical periods at Knossos (*c.* 600/590–525 and 475–425 BC). They comprise five black-figure pieces (Suppl. Cat. 1–5), three red-figure fragments (Suppl. Cat. 6–8) and eight black-glazed fragments (Suppl. Cat. 9–16), which mostly come from open shapes. The arrangement of the material in the catalogue and the following analysis is based on the criteria of ware, shape and date.

The first black-figure fragment (Suppl. Cat. 1) comes from the base of a Little Master cup (Suppl. Fig. 1). This is suggested by the tall, all-black stem, the high hollow cone that runs from the base up inside the stem, the carination of the interior cone’s walls and the sharp angle (‘heel’) at the transition from the cone to the foot’s underside (cf. *CVA*: New York 2 (11), 4, 8; Heesen 2011, 4–6). The main production period of Little Master cups is usually placed between *c.* 550 and 510 (Ure 1953, 51; Fellmann 1990, 19; Heesen 2011, 1, 7, 13–14). The solid stem of

<sup>14</sup> Contexts: VII 7; XIV 12; VIII 33 #736; V Pit 9; XII 27; XIII 30A floor packing (= Hellenistic, cf. Sackett 1992, 394); II 18; VII 35; XIV 21; XII 34; II 4; SW 29; XIV Pit 1a; XIII 16; II RE II; V 4; RH I 32 Pit XIc; I 23c; VI 10; VIII unknown level.

fragment **1**, as well as the abrupt change of angle from the lower to the upper interior part of the stem advocate for a date of manufacture between 550 and 525 BC.<sup>15</sup>

Fragment Suppl. Cat. **2** is a Cassel cup (Suppl. Fig. 2). Only a small part of the cup's floor with rays on the outside is preserved, but the following features are typical of this shape: the solid black disc surrounding the stem of the cup; the added red circle on the top of a slightly wider, white circle at the edge of the solid disc, just below the rays; and the reserved medallion on the inside.<sup>16</sup> The best parallels for the form of the rays on this specimen (thin, closely spaced and a little hastily drawn judging from their irregular widths and heights), as well as for its combination of circles of added colours, are assigned to the third quarter of the sixth century BC.<sup>17</sup> According to the comparanda and the conventional floruit of Cassel cups<sup>18</sup> – of which Suppl. Cat. **2** seems to be a standard example – I suggest a date between *c.* 530 and 520 BC.

Black-figure fragment Suppl. Cat. **3** constitutes the upper part of the bowl and beginning of the rim of a Droop cup (Suppl. Fig. 3). This identification is facilitated by the sharply offset, concave lip and the reserved thin band below the rim, on the inside.<sup>19</sup> The fragment also preserves a figural zone at the handle level (cf. Ure 1932, 56, 63–8, class III). Since the lower chronological limit for the production of Droop cups is still a matter of debate,<sup>20</sup> the date of the piece can be best judged from the style of the figures. The figural scene shows a horse and its rider in silhouette technique. The silhouette figures are schematically rendered, except for the anatomical details and swelling joints of the rear legs of the horse. The hasty drawing without incision suggests a date in the Late Archaic period, even though the attention paid to the anatomical joints may suggest a dating to the period just before the simplification of black-figure forms on drinking vessels between 525 and 475.<sup>21</sup> Taking into account the production dates suggested by scholars for its shape and the combination of both progressive and regressive characteristics in its drawing style, I believe it is safest to ascribe a date between 530 and 475 BC to this sherd.

Fragment **4** comes from the wall of a black-figure krater (Suppl. Fig. 4). It depicts part of a draped figure moving to the right and raising its angled right arm upwards. The figure wears a short-sleeved chiton with white points on the hem and has a very thin waist, forming a sharp contrast to its broad, frontally depicted chest. Long, straight locks of hair fall on part of the right shoulder and are indicated by straight, densely incised lines. Although the chronological range of the parallels rests within the second half of the sixth century,<sup>22</sup> most of them come from the earlier part of this time span. Additionally, some characteristics of the sherd, such as the detailed

<sup>15</sup> On the thickness and breadth of the stem as a chronological feature see Heesen 2011, 4. Comparanda for the angular profile of the stem of cup **1** include: Heesen 2011, 103, no. 137, fig. 59 (555–535 BC); *CVA*: Kassel I (35), 51–2, fig. 11, pl. 30[704]:3 (*c.* 540); *CVA*: Munich 10 (56), 46–7, pl. 28[2170], appendix 8.1; 55–6, pl. 34[2147]:5–6, appendix 10.3; 58, pl. 36[2262]:5–7, appendix 11.1; 58–9, pl. 37[2260]:1–3, appendix 11.2 (550–525 BC).

<sup>16</sup> On form see *ABV*<sup>2</sup>, 197; Heesen 2011, 7. On the decorative syntax: Beazley and Payne 1929, 271; Beazley 1932, 191–2; Villard 1946, 169; Boardman 1974, 62; Brijder 1993, 140–5; Heesen 2011, 7.

<sup>17</sup> *CVA*: Kassel I (35), 52, pl. 30[487]:4 (*c.* 530 BC); *CVA*: Munich 10 (56), 58, pl. 36[2262]:5–7, appendix 11.1; 59, pl. 37[2261]:4–6, appendix 11.3 (550–525 BC); Brijder 1993, 139, fig. 23, 143, fig. 27 (*c.* 530).

<sup>18</sup> I adopt here Herman A.J. Brijder's chronology, which limits their production to between *c.* 540 and 510 BC and deems 530–520 as the decade of their highest popularity (Brijder 1993, 142; contra Villard 1946, 180; Fellmann 1990, 23). These dates have also been accepted by Peter Heesen (2011, 8; contra Boardman 1974, 62).

<sup>19</sup> On the form and decoration of Droop cups: Droop 1910, 21–5; Ure 1932, 55–68, esp. 55; 1953, 45; *Agora* XXIII, 65–6; Heesen 2011, 8.

<sup>20</sup> Ure (1953, 51) placed the production of these cups between 540 and 510 BC, while Villard (1946, 180) suggested 530–520 as their period of fluorescence. According to Ure (1953, 51), cups with 'at least some Droop cup features' continue into the 5th century, and Boardman (1974, 62) even referred to some obscure 'Haimonian' examples, but Heesen (2011, 8, no. 56) is sceptical. Pipili (2009, 137) also considers a production date 'even' after 510 as possible. The latest pieces from Rhitsona come from graves of *c.* 515 BC (Ure 1953, 51), and Callipolitis-Feytmans ends the chronology of the most advanced, standard Droop cups from the National Archaeological Museum at Athens at 520–515 BC: *CVA*: Athens 3 (3), 55–6, pl. 46[660]:3–4.

<sup>21</sup> For comparisons see Heesen 2011, no. 658, pl. 164a, no. 664, pl. 166b; *CVA*: Athens 3 (3), 46–7, pl. 38[21027]; all are assigned to the 520s.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *CVA*: Munich 9 (48), 14–15, pl. 1[1550]:4, 11–12, pl. 2[1510]:1–2 (*c.* 510 BC). On the posture of the arm: *CVA*: Kassel I (35), 42, pls 19–20[679] (*c.* 540 BC); *Agora* XXIII, 214, no. 884, pl. 80 (*c.* 500). On the treatment of

and careful incision at the border of the sleeve and the hair locks, the clearly drawn white dots, the stiff posture of the figure with the chest twisted to the front and the articulation of the body as a sum of distinct parts that stand on their own, are more typical for the style of the third rather than the fourth quarter of the sixth century BC.

The only closed Attic black-figure specimen in the current catalogue is fragment Suppl. Cat. 5, from the central body zone of a white-ground lekythos decorated with palmettes and a human figure who is striding between them (Suppl. Fig. 5). The palmette frieze is bounded below by a checkerboard and can thus be classified among the small lekythoi attributed to the Beldam Painter's workshop. These were produced mainly in the second through third quarters of the fifth century (*ABL*, 170–91, esp. 181–2, 187; Kurtz 1975, 153–5, 231; Boulter 1953, 71–2). Despite the acknowledged scarcity of examples with human figures in the palmette zone of such lekythoi, a great number of pieces which recall 5 with reference to their decorative syntax, the style of the palmettes, as well as the secondary ornaments, come from graves of Kerameikos and the North Cemetery of Corinth and are dated between 475 and 425 BC.<sup>23</sup>

Fragments Suppl. Cat. 6 and 7 constitute Attic red-figure column kraters. Suppl. Cat. 6 is a rim (and neck) fragment and is decorated with a reserved band with interlaced lotus buds on the top (Suppl. Figs 6 and 7). The decoration and the profile can be assigned broadly to the fifth century BC. The lotus-buds on the lips of early kraters are attested since the Late Archaic period (*Agora* XXX, 21; Mannack 2001, 61), when, however, they present a stout form, are widely spaced and have large crude dots in the interstices between them (*Agora* XII, 54; *Agora* XXX, 21; Mannack 2001, 50). Conversely, from 500 BC, the mouth and neck of red-figure column kraters acquired a canonical form that shows little change until 425 (*Agora* XXX, 21–2; *CVA*: Berlin 11 (86), 15; Mannack 2001, 50–5, 61–3). From 425 on, the rim of red-figure column kraters is more commonly adorned with an ivy berry (*CVA*: Berlin 11 (86), 15; Campenon 1994, 31–3). Taking into account the closest parallels for the style of the lotus buds<sup>24</sup> and for the rim profile,<sup>25</sup> the most probable date for fragment 6 is 500–425.

Similarly, fragment Suppl. Cat. 7 comes from the handle plate of a red-figure column krater (Suppl. Figs 8 and 9). It is glazed on all sides except the top, which is decorated with a palmette flanked by tendrils. Again, the profile allows only for a broad dating to 500–425.<sup>26</sup> Handle plates of column kraters adorned with a black lyre palmette are developed already in the late sixth century (Mannack 2001, 61; cf. *Agora* XXX, 22), but the following details of the palmette on the piece from Knossos point to a slightly later date: the palm leaf has a reserved semi-circular heart, four instead of two volutes on its base and 12 well-sized, broadly spaced petals. These features recur on kraters painted by the Earlier Mannerists, who were active from the 480s to the 440s.<sup>27</sup> The palmettes on their work diverge from canonical palmettes, which have a black heart and two volutes at the base (Mannack 2001, 61–3). Accordingly, the decorative details of fragment 7 suggest a date between 480 and 440.

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the hair and other similarities: *CVA*: Munich 1 (3), 18, pl. 23[1383] (c. 550), 13, pl. 10[1379]:4, pl. 28[1379]:3 (c. 540 BC).

<sup>23</sup> *Corinth* XIII, 253, no. 363.5, pl. 58 (450–425 BC); *Kerameikos* VII.2, 103, no. 403.1, pl. 71:6; 136–7, no. 525.2, pl. 91 (460 BC), 140, no. 543.1, pl. 93 (470–450 BC), 97, no. 382.1, pl. 63:7 (475–450 BC); Kurtz 1975, pl. 71:1.

<sup>24</sup> For the style of the lotus buds see *CVA*: Tübingen 4 (52), pl. 15[67.5806]:4–5, figs 10–11 (c. 460 BC); *CVA*: Baltimore (28), 14, pls 17 and 19:3 (c. 440 BC); *CVA*: Berlin 11 (86), pl. 12[4027]:1–6, appendix 4.2, (c. 470–460 BC).

<sup>25</sup> *CVA*: Berlin 11 (86), pl. 5[31404]:1–3, appendix 2.1 (c. 480), pl. 7[V.I. 3155]:1–3, appendix 2.2 (c. 475), pl. 9 [V.I. 3163]:1–4, appendix 3.1 (475–470 BC), pl. 11[V.I. 3206]:1–7, appendix 4.1 (c. 470), pl. 14[V.I.3172]:1–3, appendix 5.1 (c. 440), pl. 78[L 31]:1–6, appendix 15.1 (440–430 BC); Mannack 2001, 51–5, fig. 6:1–47 (500–425 BC); Rotroff and Oakley 1992, no. 204, fig. 12 (460–450 BC).

<sup>26</sup> Comparable to the profile of 7 are the following: *CVA*: Tübingen 4 (52), 42–4, pl. 15[67.5806]:4–5, figs 10–11 (c. 460); *CVA*: Yale (38), fig. 8[1933.175] (c. 475–470 BC). On the standardisation of the shape from 500 to 425, see again *CVA*: Berlin 11 (86), 16; Mannack 2001, 50–5.

<sup>27</sup> Particularly the Leningrad and Agrigento Painters: Mannack 2001, 62–3, 117–19. Counterparts for the palmette on 7: *CVA*: Baltimore 1 (28), 11, pl. 19[48.71]:1 (c. 470–460); Mannack 2001, 62, fig. 7:6a–c.

Rim fragment 8 represents a red-figure bell krater (Suppl. Figs 10 and 11). Late Archaic specimens of the shape are differentiated from later ones through their square flaring rims, their small lug-handles and their massive form (*Agora* XXX, 31–2; Mannack 2001, 56; cf. *Agora* XII, fig. 2, no. 59; Rotroff and Oakley 1992, no. 27, fig. 2, no. 202, fig. 12). These features are missing from 8, thus an early fifth-century date can be excluded. In the ensuing quarter of the century, a second type of bell-krater is introduced and shows upwards-curved loop handles and a flaring rounded mouth. A variety of these early loop-handled bell kraters, produced between 475 and 425, has a quite distinct rounded rim, furnished with a sharp edge on the top of its inside, as well as a series of protruding exterior mouldings just below the lip.<sup>28</sup> This is exactly the class to which the fragment from Knossos belongs. This class can be easily distinguished from the continuous profile of late fifth- and fourth-century examples (*CVA*: Berlin 11 (86), pls 44[F 264I]:1–3, 45:1–6, 76:3 [about 420 BC]; *CVA*: Louvre 25 (38), pl. 7[G 500]:1–3, fig. 2 [430–420 BC]). The sherd must therefore date between 475 and 425.

Fragments Suppl. Cat. 9 and 10 are bases of Corinthian skyphoi with a reserved band of parallel vertical lines on their lower body. Since no traces of a figured zone survive, the fragments are included in the category of black-glazed ware. The low-flaring ring foot of these skyphoi and the reserved band of rays above the base is very suggestive of a date within the fifth century BC.<sup>29</sup> In particular, fragment Suppl. Cat. 9 has a very wide base (about 9 cm in diameter) and sturdy walls, which can be contrasted to the stubby examples from the beginning of the fifth century (*Agora* XII, 82; *Kerameikos* IX, 46; Oakley 1988, 168), as well as to the delicate specimens which occur from c. 425 (Suppl. Figs 12 and 13).<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, the lower body of the piece from Knossos shows no sign of the gradual contraction that gives late fifth- and fourth-century Corinthian skyphoi an egg-shaped profile (Talcott 1935, 506; 1936, 341; Boulter 1953, 74; *Agora* XII, 83; Oakley 1988, 169). The vertical lines above the foot are tightly crammed, as opposed to the rather widely spaced rays on skyphoi from the first half of the fifth century;<sup>31</sup> but they are still more neatly drawn than on some late fifth-century pieces.<sup>32</sup> Hence, the base rays on this vessel poise on the brink of the final stage, before the replacement of vertical lines by hasty crosshatching (cf. Talcott 1935, 506; *Agora* XII, 83; Oakley 1988, 170). Given its substantial foot, the thick straight lower walls, and the rather later fifth-century appearance of its base rays, Corinthian skyphos Suppl. Cat. 9 can be dated to 450–420.

Fragment Suppl. Cat. 10 is less perplexing (Suppl. Fig. 14). Its estimated base diameter is not very narrow (about 5 cm) in proportion to the rest of the skyphos, which seems to have been of small size in general. Its foot is mildly flaring and has the concave outer profile that is common from c. 500 BC (*Agora* XII, 82); additionally, it is not as shallow and widely splaying as in late fifth- and fourth-century examples (cf. Talcott 1935, 506; *Agora* XII, 83; Oakley 1988, 169). Moreover, the walls are neither too delicate nor too thick, and they find parallels from the third

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Rotroff and Oakley 1992, 20; Mannack 2001, 56. Some examples have a fascia of vertical section decorated with ovolo combined with the reserved ornament band below the rim (e.g. *Agora* XXX, 32, 185, no. 296, pl. 40 [c. 470]; Rotroff and Oakley 1992, 76–7, no. 48, fig. 5, pls 20–1 [c. 450]), others have a triangular ledge below the reserved zone (Mannack 2001, 56, fig. 6:48–53; Rotroff and Oakley 1992, 105–6, no. 203, fig. 12, pl. 48 [c. 460–440 BC]), while very few, including fragment 8, have a triple moulding of alternating sloping and concave zones decorated with various patterns (cf. Mannack 2001, 56–7, fig. 6.49–50).

<sup>29</sup> On the flaring ring foot of the 5th century, see *Agora* XII, 82, fig. 4, nos 318, 322; Oakley 1988, 166–7, 169, nos 11, 15, 17, 33, 41, 54, figs 1–2; Rotroff and Oakley 1992, 98–9, nos 146–51, fig. 9. On the rays, compare Boulter 1953, 72–4; *Agora* XII, 81–3; Oakley 1988, 170; Rotroff and Oakley 1992, 16, no. 148, pl. 43.

<sup>30</sup> At this time, the bases start becoming extremely narrow in proportion to the body and the walls grow exceptionally thin: Boulter 1953, 74; *Agora* XII, 83; Oakley 1988, 169–70.

<sup>31</sup> On the appearance of the base rays earlier in the 5th century BC compare 9 with Oakley 1988, 176–7, nos 10–1, pl. 54 (480 BC); *Kerameikos* IX, 267, no. 267.2, pl. 62:7 (around 450 BC).

<sup>32</sup> Towards the end of the 3rd and throughout the last quarter of the 5th century BC the base rays gradually become more sketchy: they are not parallel to each other, and are very closely packed and can cross over each other. See *Agora* XII, nos 319 (450–430 BC) and 320 (425 BC), 257, pl. 15; Oakley 1988, 182–3, no. 41, fig. 2, pl. 51 (440–430 BC), 183, no. 43, pl. 53 (440–430 BC), 183, no. 44, pl. 53 (440–425 BC), 185, no. 52, pl. 54 (c. 430 BC), 185, no. 54, fig. 2, pl. 51 (c. 440 BC).

quarter of the fifth century (*Agora* XII, nos 318–19, fig. 4 [450–430 BC], no. 320 [c. 425 BC]). The rays above the foot are identical in style with those of the previously discussed Corinthian skyphos: they are tidy, but closely spaced. Hence, the traits of base Suppl. Cat. **10** indicate that it dates to the same period as Suppl. Cat. **9** (c. 450–420).

The Attic black-glazed ware Suppl. Cat. **11** and **12** are bases of Attic skyphoi of type A with horizontal handles (Suppl. Figs 15 and 16; *Agora* XII, 84–6). They have features typical of the fifth century: a projecting torus foot with a black outer edge and a reserved underside with small circles and a dot in the centre (*Agora* XII, 84–5). Additionally, their lower body shows the gentle concave curve which appears after 480 BC, but not the pronounced S-shaped profile of late fifth- and fourth-century Attic skyphoi (Talcott 1936, 341; *Agora* XII, 84; Rotroff and Oakley 1992, 15). Since this double curve is not yet as prominent as on examples from 425–400 BC,<sup>33</sup> the two pieces from Knossos can be assigned to the third quarter of the fifth century, with Suppl. Cat. **12** perhaps to be placed later than Suppl. Cat. **11** because of its slightly more developed lower body curve.<sup>34</sup>

Fragments Suppl. Cat. **13** to **15** are rims of one-handlers of the all-glazed variety (Suppl. Figs 17 and 19; *Agora* XII, 124; *Kerameikos* IX, 49). The thickened rims of this sub-class are very characteristic because of their top surface, which is usually flat, slightly rounded or inwards sloping (*Agora* XII, 126; Rotroff and Oakley 1992, 20). This type of rim seems to have been popular mostly during the second and third quarters of the fifth century.<sup>35</sup> Earlier specimens from about 490–480 BC are attested, but they are extremely few and their rims tend to have a little projection or overhang to the inside (Rotroff and Oakley 1992, 20; cf. *Agora* XII, 289, no. 744, fig. 20 [c. 490], 289, no. 747, fig. 8 [c. 480]). In addition, the earliest pieces are a little shallower than the fully developed ones,<sup>36</sup> and the sherds from the Unexplored Mansion, despite their fragmentation, seem substantially deeper than the earliest form. On the other hand, towards the end of the fifth and the beginning of the fourth centuries, rims of black one-handlers start to evert outwards.<sup>37</sup> The three pieces selected here are probably from the middle stage of this morphological development. The completely flat rim of Suppl. Cat. **13** (*Kerameikos* VII.2, no. 96.2, appendix 1 [480–460 BC]; *Kerameikos* IX, GS 11, pl. 112 [before 433/2 BC]) and the slightly round ones of Suppl. Cat. **14** and **15** (Boulter 1953, 82, no. 62, fig. 3 [460–440 BC]; Rotroff and Oakley 1992, no. 207, fig. 13, pl. 48 [475–450]; *Kerameikos* VII.2, no. 383.3, appendix 1 [450–425 BC]; *Kerameikos* IX, pl. 112, no. 12 [before 433/2]) find numerous parallels from the Athenian Agora and the Kerameikos from contexts dated between 480 and 420 BC. Another important indication that these one-handlers date before the last quarter of the fifth century is the profile of their wall: both Suppl. Cat. **14** and **15** have a substantial part of their bodies preserved and show no trace of the double curve that starts forming on the outside wall of these bowls after c. 425 (*Agora* XII, 126; Rotroff and Oakley 1992, 20). Based on the comparable vases mentioned above, fragments Suppl. Cat. **14** and **15** can be dated to about 460–425 BC, with Suppl. Cat. **15** possibly dating from the later 420s due to the vestigial outturning of its rim.

Lastly, fragment Suppl. Cat. **16** shares some characteristics of a subcategory of black-glazed bowls with deep wall and convex-concave profile and may therefore be identified as such (Suppl. Fig. 20). These characteristics are the projecting ring foot, the sharp contrast between its concave outer foot edge and the gently convex curve of the body, as well as its rounded inner

<sup>33</sup> Compare them with Corbett 1949, 319, no. 138, fig. 1; *Agora* XII, fig. 4, nos 349, 352.

<sup>34</sup> Suppl. Cat. **11** and **12** have two further features that might be chronologically significant (Boulter 1953, 75) and corroborate the above suggested date. First, they both have a scraped groove at the junction between the body and the foot. The overwhelming majority of known examples with such a groove are dated between 480 and 425 BC: *Agora* XII, nos 340, 341, 342, 343, 344. Second, the reserved underside of Suppl. Cat. **11** is covered by red wash, a characteristic which Boulter (1953, 75) dates to the mid-5th century.

<sup>35</sup> Rotroff and Oakley (1992, 20) date this type of rim to c. 450–425 BC. But examples from the second quarter of the century are also known: *Kerameikos* VII, 38, no. 96.2, appendix 1 (480–460 BC).

<sup>36</sup> *Kerameikos* IX, 50. Compare *Agora* XII, fig. 8, no. 747 (c. 480) with no. 754 (420–400 BC), which have the same rim diameter but different depth.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *Agora* XII, 290, nos 755 (c. 400 BC) and 757 (c. 375 BC), fig. 4. Compare also the remarks on the development of the rim in *Agora* XII, 126.

foot face and resting surface (*Agora* XII, 130). However, the foot of Suppl. Cat. 16 is considerably lower and less projecting than that of other published examples from this class. The best comparison is a bowl from the Athenian Agora dated to 450–430 (*Agora* XII, 294, no. 814, fig. 8). A further feature that might speak for a similar date range for Suppl. Cat. 16 is the circle of dilute glaze around the solid black disc at the centre of the bowl's underside, a decorative trend that does not appear on the undersides of various drinking vessels before the second quarter of the fifth century BC and is characteristic of the third quarter of the same century.<sup>38</sup> In view of these considerations, I suggest a date for fragment Suppl. Cat. 16 to 450–425.

To recapitulate, 16 unpublished but diagnostic Attic fragments from the Unexplored Mansion have been discussed above and most date from the purported gaps of c. 600/590–525 and 475–425 BC. The black-figure Little Master (Suppl. Cat. 1) and Cassel cups (Suppl. Cat. 2) were produced in the third quarter of the sixth century. The Droop cup (Suppl. Cat. 3) and the wall fragment of a krater (Suppl. Cat. 4) are also black-figure but have a wider range of possible dates within the late sixth to early fifth centuries and the second half of the sixth century respectively. The black-figure and white ground pattern lekythos belongs to the second to third quarters of the fifth century. The two column kraters (Suppl. Cat. 6–7) and the loop-handled bell krater (Suppl. Cat. 8) are red-figure and were produced in 500–440 (Suppl. Cat. 6–7) and 475–425 (Suppl. Cat. 8) respectively. The black-glazed pieces come from 475–420 BC. They comprise Corinthian (Suppl. Cat. 9, 10) and Attic skyphoi (Suppl. Cat. 11, 12) datable to 450–420, one-handlers (Suppl. Cat. 13–15) from 475–425, and a fragment of a deep bowl with convex-concave profile (Suppl. Cat. 16) probably from 450–425 BC.

All in all, the present assemblage, in juxtaposition with Coldstream and Callaghan's deposits from the Unexplored Mansion and other sites in the Knossos valley, conveys the impression that Attic pottery was present in Knossos from the beginning of the sixth century to the end of the fifth century, with imports peaking around 525–475 and from 425 BC onwards. The diagnostic material which is assignable to the alleged period of interrupted overseas relations in 600/590–525 and 475–425 BC seems to have been previously overlooked. This can be justified by the fact that the appealing notion of mysterious occupation gaps has inhibited the identification of the pieces in question, as has the residual or intrusive nature of most of those fragments.

### Corinthian ware

This section treats five Corinthian imports from the Unexplored Mansion datable to the sixth and fifth centuries BC. They consist of one open drinking vessel (Suppl. Cat. 17) and four closed vessels, particularly pyxides (Suppl. Cat. 18–21). Two of the fragments (Suppl. Cat. 20, 21) can be assigned to the class of Conventionalising ware,<sup>39</sup> a style which encompasses vases with linear, patterned or stylised floral ornaments and ranges from c. 550 to 400 BC (Newhall 1931, 16; *Corinth* VII 1, 83; *Corinth* VII 5, 1–3; Bentz 1982, 1–3, 11 n. 38). The remaining three vases (Suppl. Cat. 17–19) are adorned with similar motifs but cannot be classified as Conventionalising, due to their earlier date (600–550 BC; cf. *Corinth* VII 5, 3; Bentz 1982, 11–12). The chronological development of shapes in the Conventionalising style – and of non-figured Archaic and Classical Corinthian pottery in general – is still not fully understood (Bentz 1982, 3), and this makes it hard to establish a narrow range of production dates. Nonetheless, available studies and comparisons strongly indicate dates which fall into the alleged gaps of 600/590–525 and 475–425 BC. The fragments are discussed below according to shape and chronological criteria.

Vase Suppl. Cat. 17 consists of three fragments of a Corinthian kotyle of relatively small size (Suppl. Figs 21 and 22).<sup>40</sup> Most of the exterior is reserved and adorned merely with red, orange

<sup>38</sup> Cf. the undersides of the following pieces: *Agora* XII, pl. 16, no. 343 (460–440 BC), pl. 24, no. 532 (c. 430), pl. 30, no. 741 (475–450 BC); Rotroff and Oakley 1992, pl. 45, no. 170 (475–425 BC).

<sup>39</sup> Also known as Pattern ware (*Corinth* XIII, 100–1) or Linear style (*Corinth* XV 3, 269).

<sup>40</sup> The estimated diameter of the base is 7 cm. For the formal distinction between 'small' and 'large' kotylai, see *Corinth* VII 2, 74; Bentz 1982, 15, 28–32.

and black horizontal bands and stripes, a syntax which is typical of Late Corinthian white style (Payne 1931, 322–32; *Corinth* VII 1 83; *Corinth* VII 5, 5; *Corinth* XIII, 101). This type of decoration developed fully in the second quarter of the sixth century (LC I) and persisted for over two centuries (LC II–III; Bentz 1982, 20, 77, 78). Studies of the development of the shape in the Early to Late Corinthian periods emphasise the following chronological criteria: the decorative style, the profile of the foot and the curvature of the underside (*Corinth* VII 2, 73–8; Bentz 1982, 14–36). The decoration of Suppl. Cat. 17 offers only a terminus post quem of c. 575 for its manufacture, but the profile of the foot-ring is reminiscent of Lawrence's type V (cf. *Corinth* VII 2, 74, 77, An 66, fig. 2). Type V was common during the first half of the sixth century and did not survive thereafter (Bentz 1982, 19). Moreover, the flatter bottom (Bentz 1982, 19, fig. 18) and heavier and thicker foot profile developed in the advanced and late fifth century (Rafn 1979, 13–15, no. 1971–8:8, figs 10–11; Bentz 1982, fig. 19) is not observable on kotyle Suppl. Cat. 17. Lastly, the application of red without black undercoat on the exterior of the ring-foot seen on the piece from Knossos first occurs on Corinthian kotylai in the end of the second quarter of the sixth century (Bentz 1982, 18). Thus, a combination of morphological and stylistic details indicates a date between 560 and 540 BC for 17.

Fragments Suppl. Cat. 18 and 19 fall into the category of powder pyxides, a shape which reached its fully blown form – of a low cylinder box with a flat-topped, slip-on cover, grooved mouldings and pattern decoration – in the Early and Middle Corinthian periods (c. 620/615–570 BC) but persisted until Classical times (Payne 1931, 293–4; Amyx 1988, 456; *Corinth* VII 5, 49; *Corinth* XIII, 116). Humfry Payne (1931, 294) argued that the ornaments become 'looser' with time, but Patricia Lawrence (1964, 101) warned that their stylistic development is poorly understood. Below, I try to narrow down the date range of the two pyxides from the Unexplored Mansion (Suppl. Cat. 18, 19).

Powder pyxis Suppl. Cat. 18 is a fragment of the centre of the lid or the floor (Suppl. Fig. 23). The solid disc in the centre of the exterior is painted with purple over black, and the same applies to the circular band separating the two reserved zones with vertical strokes. The use of purple on black undercoating is characteristic of the first half of the sixth century BC. During the second half of the century, not only does the use of purple become occasional and finally extinct, but when any added colours are used, they are applied directly on the clay, not over a black ground (*Corinth* VII 5, 23). The flat surfaces of powder pyxides of the seventh century tend to sport more elaborate and carefully drawn patterns and stylised floral motives<sup>41</sup> than those of the following century and of Suppl. Cat. 18.<sup>42</sup> The latter parameter in combination with the above discussed conventions in the application of added colours suggests a date between 600 and 550 BC for Suppl. Cat. 18.

Fragment Suppl. Cat. 19 is the body sherd of another powder pyxis (Suppl. Figs 24 and 25).<sup>43</sup> It has previously been published as Early Corinthian (Coldstream 1992, 79, no. GH.136, pls 59, 73), but a number of features suggest a later date. Not only is the pattern decoration of Corinthian pottery more elaborate on late seventh-century pieces<sup>44</sup> than on Suppl. Cat. 19, but earlier pyxides also tend to have a slightly convex body, which flares considerably towards the bottom (Payne 1931, 294, no. 672, fig. 131; *Corinth* VII 2, 128, An 151, pl. 73). In the course of the following century, the ridges and mouldings of the lids have the propensity to diminish (*Corinth*

<sup>41</sup> These include multiple zones of continuous or grouped vertical bars or upright zigzags with neat, straight strokes combined with dotted bands, tongues, petals or wheel-motifs. Cf. *CVA*: Oxford 2 (9), IIIc, pl. 2:36 and pl. 3:16.66; Dunbabin 1962, 118, no. 1153, pl. 51; *Corinth* VII 2, 128, An 151, pl. 73; *Corinth* XV 3, nos 1498, 1508, 1509, 1543, pls 62–3.

<sup>42</sup> In the 6th century, powder pyxides tend to bear simpler combinations with a maximum of two rows of bars or zigzags alternating with bands, lines or painted grooves and ridges. The strokes of the zigzags gradually become more curled, giving a squiggly appearance to the zigzags. Cf. the following MC and LC I–II examples: *Corinth* XIII, no. 157-t, pl. 23, no. 159-12, pl. 24, nos 168-8, 168-9, pl. 27, no. 225-1, pl. 32; Lawrence 1964, nos E24–E26, pl. 19; Boardman and Hayes 1966, 23, 32, no. 230, pl. 15.

<sup>43</sup> The difference of clay colour in Suppl. Cat. 18 and 19 (10YR 8/4 and 10YR 7/4 respectively) suggests they belong to different vessels.

<sup>44</sup> See *CVA*: Oxford 2 (9), IIIc, 66, pls 2:36 and 3:16; Dunbabin 1962, 118, no. 1153, pl. 51; *Corinth* VII 2, 128, An 151, pl. 73; *Corinth* XV 3, nos 1498, 1508, 1509, 1543, pls 62–3.

XIII, 116). Classical examples become higher (*Corinth* XIII, 116), and their walls start to curve slightly inwards (*Corinth* VII 5, 49). In addition, the vertical zigzags on the reserved friezes degenerate into densely packed, elongated wavy lines, with no angled transitions from one stroke to the other (*Corinth* XIII, 225–7, nos 286–2, 286–3, 288–2, 292–1, pl. 41). All things considered, pyxis Suppl. Cat. 19, which has a broad, low cylinder body and is decorated with neat zigzags which are not as angular as those on Early Corinthian examples, is more likely to date within the sixth century BC. Taking also into consideration the fact that the vertical wiggly lines typically appear on the sides of such pyxides during the first half of the sixth century, rather than its second half in which horizontal grooves and ridges prevail (*Corinth* VII 5, 49), a date in the years between 600 and 550 BC seems to be most adequate for the piece.

Vase Suppl. Cat. 20 is a base fragment of a white style convex-sided pyxis of either the unhandled or the handled variety (Suppl. Figs 26 and 27). The unhandled variety became common in the sixth century (Payne 1931, 293) and from c. 550 to 400 it was frequently fashioned in white style (Payne 1931, 331; *Corinth* VII 5, 39) but shows little morphological development (Bentz 1982, 77). Therefore, if pyxis Suppl. Cat. 20 belongs to the convex type without handles, it can be only generally assigned the broad chronological range of 550 to 400.

The same date range applies if Suppl. Cat. 20 is a fragment of a convex-sided pyxis with upright handles. The shape existed in the Corinthian repertoire from c. 600 to 400 (Amyx 1988, 449–50; *Corinth* VII 5, 44), but the first white style specimens appear in the second quarter of the sixth century (Payne 1931, 323, no. 1326, fig. 164; Bentz 1982, 77; *Corinth* XV 3, 300, no. 1634, pl. 65; Amyx 1988, 450). The latest examples come from contexts of 425–400 (Dunbabin 1962, 279, no. 2715, pl. 113). The form of the body of the handled variety is chronologically significant (Bentz 1982, 77–8; *Corinth* XIII, 115; *Corinth* VII 5, 44), but the profile of the body is not well preserved on Suppl. Cat. 20. Therefore, it is not possible to suggest a date of manufacture more precise than 550 to 400.

Fragment Suppl. Cat. 21, which is a shoulder and upper body fragment of a pyxis, has part of an upright cylindrical handle preserved and can be safely assigned to the respective category of convex-sided specimens (Suppl. Fig. 28). Unfortunately, the full profile of the body, which is the most important chronological criterion, does not survive. However, the steepness of the shoulder of Suppl. Cat. 21 suggests it was manufactured around 550 or later. In addition, the white style decoration and the style of the tongues, which are sloppily drawn and petal-shaped (rather than neatly painted scallop-shaped) also support a date in the Late Corinthian period (cf. Payne 1931, 335, nos 1519, fig. 335 [LC II] and 1472, pl. 42 [LC I]). Thus the fragment can be placed between 550 and 400.

Previously, the latest Corinthian imports from the Unexplored Mansion were dated to the Early Corinthian period (c. 625–600; cf. Sackett and Coldstream 1978, 294–5). The discussion of fragments Suppl. Cat. 17–21 has hopefully demonstrated that this impression is not correct. Suppl. Cat. 19, published previously in Coldstream's catalogue of Geometric to Archaic stray finds as late Orientalising (Coldstream 1992, 79, no. GH.136, pls 59, 73), is a powder pyxis from the first half of the sixth century. Fragments Suppl. Cat. 17 and 18 most likely date from 560–540 and 600–550 respectively, while the convex pyxides Suppl. Cat. 20–21 cannot be dated more precisely than 550–400 because of the current state of the research on their shape.

The finds in question show that Corinthian imports to Knossos and its environs from the Middle and Late Corinthian periods are attested. Some of these fragments were produced during the purported chronological lacunae of the sixth and fifth centuries, and there is no compelling reason to obscure the wide date range of the rest in order to observe a hypothetical hiatus, made up of arguments *ex silentio*. Although the number of Conventionalising and pattern Corinthian wares from the sixth to fourth centuries BC known from Knossos remains small and most of them still do not derive from safe contexts, I hope that the above analysis may discourage the creation of an ungrounded argument in which an apparent absence of such imports has to point to a discontinuity of socio-economic connections between Crete and the Peloponnese in the sixth and fifth centuries.

Moreover, it has often been implied or explicitly stated in earlier scholarship that Conventionalising ware was manufactured exclusively for local use and was not exported to

other regions of Greece and the Mediterranean (Salmon 1984, 102; Benson 1985, 18). This assumption has often been based on the ‘aesthetically unappealing’ aspect of this pottery (*Corinth* VII 5, 177; cf. Benson 1953, 108–9; 1985, 18), or predicated on the premise that Corinth lost its foreign markets to Athens during the sixth and fifth centuries.<sup>45</sup> This impression has been challenged by Martha K. Risser, who demonstrated that Corinth did continue to export Conventionalising pottery to regions spanning from the Black Sea to southern France and Spain and from northern Greece to Cyprus and North Africa (*Corinth* VII 5, 175–7). This point is confirmed by my identification of Corinthian Conventionalising pieces at the Unexplored Mansion.

### Laconian ware

Connections between Knossos and the Peloponnese in the sixth century BC are indicated not only by the Corinthian, but also by the Laconian material from the site of the Unexplored Mansion, which consists of a previously unpublished fragment of a stirrup-handled krater of the all-glazed variety (Suppl. Cat. 22, Suppl. Fig. 29).

The fragmentary state of krater Suppl. Cat. 22 presents a challenge for the exact dating of the piece. Primary chronological indicators for this type of krater, Stibbe’s class F, are: the proportion of the vessel’s height to its maximum diameter, the dimensions of the foot, as well as the angle between the upper part of the handle (the ‘strap’) and the lower, column-like part (the ‘grip’; Stibbe 1989, 38–9). These criteria are of little use in the case of Suppl. Cat. 22, since only part of the rim, the neck and the beginning of the strap handle survive. However, a review of the shape’s development can help establish a chronology that places the piece in the times during which Knossos is supposed to have yielded no imports.

Fully developed all-glazed Laconian kraters appear already in the beginning of the sixth century and are distinguishable by the straight vertical contours of their necks, their square or triangular rim profile and the pointed and downward projecting lower end of the strap handle (Stibbe 1989, 38, nos F3–F7, figs 43–5, pl. 9.2–3). In the next 50 years the rims become higher and thicker, as well as slightly concave on the outside; the necks become shorter and, although they are still straight in profile, often show a subtle inclination outward, while the lower end of the strap is usually less protruding and angular (Stibbe 1989, 38–40, nos F8–F36, figs 46–64, pls 9.4–10.1). Finally, around 525–475, the rims of Laconian stirrup kraters develop a distinctive rounded top which slopes outward and downward. This slope affects the point at which the upper end of the rim meets the strap handle, where an angle and downward slant are now formed. Last but not least, the exterior profile of the neck becomes discernibly concave and the neck slopes outward more than before (Stibbe 1989, 40–3, nos F53–F94, figs 71–80).

Taking into consideration the chronological development of the shape, it seems that Suppl. Cat. 22 should be grouped with the kraters of the second and third quarters of the sixth century. This is suggested by the thickness and the profile of the rim, the straight line of the neck, as well as the absence of the sloping top and slant at the junction between the upper rim end and strap handle which characterise Late Archaic kraters. All parallels for Suppl. Cat. 22 are dated in the second and third quarters of the sixth century (Stibbe 1989, 106–8, nos F24, F30, F31, F41, figs 57, 63, 64, 68). Hence, the Laconian krater from the Unexplored Mansion supports the contention that mainland Greek pottery continued to reach Crete and Knossos in the interval of the sixth century BC, which was hitherto regarded as a ‘Dark Age’.

### Cypriot ware

Four fragments of imported Cypriot vessels revealed during the excavations at the Unexplored Mansion of Knossos are of particular interest to the present study (Suppl. Cat. 23–26). A Cypriot origin has been inferred on the basis of the fabric and surface treatment of the

<sup>45</sup> Bentz 1982, 149: ‘It is an indisputable fact that by the middle of the sixth century, Corinth has been replaced by Athens as the principle producer of fine painted pottery for export.’

fragments.<sup>46</sup> They derive from closed shapes (Suppl. Cat. 23–25), except Suppl. Cat. 26, which is a bowl. Three decorative techniques are represented: White Painted (Suppl. Cat. 23), Bichrome (Suppl. Cat. 24, 25) and Black-on-Red (Suppl. Cat. 26).

Cypriot pottery and local imitations of Cypriot inspiration are ubiquitous at Knossos and Crete during the Geometric and Orientalising periods (Coldstream 1984; Bourogiannis 2008, 1.310, 312, 2.237–319; Kotsonas 2008a, 65–9, 164–7, 170–4, 181–2, 284–7; 2012, 165–8; Karageorghis et al. 2014, 16–292). The earliest Cypriot imports on Crete occur around 800 BC (Coldstream 1984, 123, 125–6, nos 1–3; Bourogiannis 2008, 1.295–6), while the earliest imitations might go as far back as the tenth century (Brock 1957, 14, no. 92; Tegou 2001, 129, no. 6; Kotsonas 2008a, 284; Kourou 2016, 61–6). Scholarship sees a sharp reduction if not complete cessation of Cypriot imports to Crete soon after 700 BC (Coldstream 1984, 137; Schreiber 2003, 306; Bourogiannis 2008, 1.95, 297–8, 377) and a disappearance of local reproductions by 600 BC (Coldstream 1984, 137; Kotsonas 2012, 166; Karageorghis et al. 2014, 13). A sole Creto-Cypriot Black-Slip juglet derives from a domestic context of 600 BC: Well 2 of the Unexplored Mansion (Coldstream 1992, 79, no. GH.124, pl. 73).

The most common Cypriot vases imported and copied at Knossos and other Cretan sites were Black-on-Red and Bichrome jugs and juglets (cf. Coldstream 1984, 131; Bourogiannis 2008, 1.312, 2.237–319; Karageorghis et al. 2014, 13, 16–292), usually interpreted as containers of perfumed oils (Coldstream 1984, 136; Schreiber 2003, 62–73; Bourogiannis 2008, 1.65; Kotsonas 2008a, 286). The overwhelming majority are found in cemeteries. In view of these tendencies, the four Cypriot fragments from the Unexplored Mansion that are about to be discussed appear to be quite unusual. Their order has been determined according to ware and chronology.

Suppl. Cat. 23 derives from a White Painted, large closed vessel, possibly a belly-handled amphora with a wide, straight neck and a swollen annular rim (Suppl. Figs 30 and 31). This form occurs in Cypriot White Painted types IV to VI (Gjerstad 1960, 119–20). Bichrome Red II (V) parallels exist from Kition-Bamboula, with a rounded outer rim profile and banded decoration on both the outside and inside of the lip and neck (Salles 1983, 61, no. 160, fig. 23). Further comparisons for types IV and V derive from contexts of the sixth and early fifth centuries BC (Karageorghis and Raptou 2014, 18, 102, 108, tomb 135, nos 2 and 120, pl. LXVI; Karageorghis 1970, 152, 155, tomb 105, no. 16, pl. CCXLVI; Fourrier 2009, 6–7, 49, fig. 118, 54–5). Despite the general adequacy of the aforementioned parallels, the discernible downward flare of the neck on fragment Suppl. Cat. 23 is untypical for types IV–V amphorae, the necks of which are usually straight and upright or tapering downward. Alternatively, Suppl. Cat. 23 could represent a large oval jug with an erect neck and vertical handle from rim to shoulder (cf. Gjerstad 1948, 59, fig. LXIV:11). To conclude, I suggest that the fragment could be identified as a White Painted amphora or a large, oval, vertical-handled jug of Einar Gjerstad's types V, VI or VII and can be thus dated between the Cypro-Archaic II (600–500 BC) and Cypro-Classical II (400–325 BC) periods.

The site of the Unexplored Mansion has also yielded two fragments of Cypriot Bichrome vases (Suppl. Cat. 24–25). Vessel Suppl. Cat. 24 is from a barrel-shaped jug, a form attested for the first time in Knossos and Crete (Suppl. Fig. 32). Barrel-shaped jugs exist in White Painted and Bichrome wares I–V (Gjerstad 1960, 114) but the early bobbin-shaped types I–III – with rounded sides and a raised nipple at the end of each body half – can be easily distinguished from later specimens (Gjerstad 1960, fig. 7:1–3). From type IV onwards the cylindrical body becomes markedly more elongated and tapering towards the ends of each side, resembling the shape of an ostrich egg (Gjerstad 1960, 114; see also Gjerstad 1948, figs XLVI:7 [White Painted V], XLIX:1–2 [Bichrome V]; Karageorghis 1970, 10, tomb 7, no. 11, pl. CCIV [White Painted

<sup>46</sup> The White Painted sherd (23) is covered with a white slip on which the black banded decoration is applied. The Bichrome (24–25) fragments have a white undercoating as well, but the linear designs and circles with which they are adorned are in black and red colour. The Black-on-Red fragment (Suppl. Cat. 26) has a matte red glaze as a ground for its black lines and bands. The black on both the Bichrome and the Black-on-Red is of violet or purple colour, while on the White Painted piece it varies from matte black to matte brown.

IV]), and these are the stages to which vessel Suppl. Cat. **24** belongs, as suggested by its tapering preserved sides.

The decoration points to a similar conclusion: concentric circles of different thickness and colour fill most of the jug's rounded sides and leave little unadorned space, a characteristic of the 'circle style' types IV and V. The violet hue of the black paint is also in congruence with these stages (Gjerstad 1948, 56–8, 62, 64–7; 1960, 105). Comparisons for the decoration and the tapering sides of Suppl. Cat. **24** are found among Gjerstad's Bichrome V jugs (Gjerstad 1948, fig. XLIX:1,2; 1960, fig. 7:5) and Bichrome IV specimens from the necropolis of Salamis (Karageorghis 1970, 10, tomb 7, no. 11, pl. CCIV, 153, tomb 105, no. 23, pl. CCLVI). Taking into consideration potential inaccuracies in the relative and absolute chronology of the shape and the contexts of its parallels, I believe that it is best to attribute jug Suppl. Cat. **24** to the categories Bichrome IV–V of the Cypro-Archaic period (750–475 BC).

The other Bichrome fragment (Suppl. Cat. **25**) is from the shoulder of a medium-sized closed vessel, perhaps a pinched-rim jug (Suppl. Fig. 33). A diagnostic portion of the profile is not preserved, but the light purple to brownish hue of the dark paint characterises Bichrome V to VII vessels (Gjerstad 1948, 57–9, 66–8). Furthermore, the lotus or trefoil ornament that is located on the shoulder zone, below a series of black and red lines and bands covering the neck, becomes much more common in this highly simplified form of types V and VI (Gjerstad 1948, 67). The stylistic parallels include numerous Bichrome V juglets from Cypro-Archaic II (Karageorghis 1970, 71–2, tomb 41, nos 5 and 23, pl. CXXIII, 101–2, tomb 62, no. 5 from within the chamber, pl. CXLVI, 132–3, tomb 85A, nos 5–6, pl. CLXVII) through Cypro-Classical IA contexts in Salamis (Karageorghis 1970, 84, no. 1 from the dromos, pl. CXXXIV, 128, tomb 84, no. 15, pl. CCXLVI). All things considered, Suppl. Cat. **25** probably represents a Bichrome V–VI vessel of Cypro-Archaic II to Cypro-Classical I date (600–400 BC).

The final Cypriot piece (Suppl. Cat. **26**) is a large Black-on-Red bowl with an offset or raised, contracted rim (Suppl. Figs 34 and 35). The oblique, straight and upwards flaring profile of the rim is comparable to Gjerstad's handled Black-on-Red II (IV) bowls (Gjerstad 1948, pl. XXXVII: 25–6). The decoration agrees with this classification: a black band covers the inside and outside of the rim, continues below the junction of the rim and shoulder on the exterior and is replaced by a reserved zone with dark vertical stripes on the preserved exterior part of the body. Hence, the bowl is dateable to the Cypro-Archaic period (750–475 BC). The carination on the shoulder of Suppl. Cat. **4** is a vexing characteristic, which is uncommon on type IV bowls.

To summarise, the excavations at the Unexplored Mansion have produced four Cypriot sherds that do not exactly fit established views regarding the disappearance of Cypriot imports to Knossos and Crete. Cypriot pottery post-dating 700 BC has rarely been recognised before. The above discussed fragments seem to break that pattern, as well as represent a new range of Cypriot shapes attested on Crete.

The Bichrome barrel-shaped jug (Suppl. Cat. **24**) and the Black-on-Red bowl (Suppl. Cat. **26**) belong stylistically to types of the Cypro-Archaic period (750–475 BC). One cannot assert with certainty that those vessels were imported to Knossos during the lacunae of 600–525 and 480–425, but this should also not be excluded. The White Painted piece (Suppl. Cat. **23**) is a puzzle, but since most of the parallels are of later types (V–VII), it may be wiser to group it chronologically with the Bichrome jug (Suppl. Cat. **25**), which is certainly of type V or VI and can be reasonably placed in the Cypro-Archaic II or the Cypro-Classical I period (currently 600–400 BC).

It is noteworthy that vessels Suppl. Cat. **24** and **25** were published by Peter J. Callaghan under the Hellenistic 'pottery group' H38 (Callaghan 1992, 132, no. H38.77–8, pl. 117). Callaghan compared Suppl. Cat. **25** to a Bichrome V amphora from the pre-Persian levels of Olynthos (*Olynthos* V, 34, no. P.50, pl. 32, colour pl. xxxiii). The parallel indeed bears a very similar decoration and has been grouped by the excavators among Late Archaic finds (*Olynthos* V, 59). Nevertheless, Callaghan's inclusion of vases Suppl. Cat. **24** and **25** in a Hellenistic assortment of sherds can be misleading. I argue that Suppl. Cat. **24** is of Cypro-Archaic style and Suppl. Cat. **25** is a product of the Cypro-Archaic II to Cypro-Classical I periods.

Leaving the discussion on absolute chronology aside, the Cypriot imports from Knossos identified above add to our knowledge of Cypriot shapes imported to the site. Earlier imports

largely consist of the commonly attested Black-on-Red and Bichrome juglets with concentric circles which appear in Cretan Early Iron Age cemeteries and have been associated with the perfume trade (Coldstream and Catling 1996, 406; Schreiber 2003, 298–9; Kotsonas 2008a, 68–9). The amphora (Suppl. Cat. 23) and the bowl (Suppl. Cat. 26) correspond to Cypriot shapes that were more commonly exported to the Levant during the Early Iron Age (Georgiadou 2016, 92–7) and perhaps indicate the transportation of such shapes to Crete through Levantine middlemen. The barrel jug (Suppl. Cat. 24) and pinched rim jug (Suppl. Cat. 25) attest to the importation of Cypriot slow-pouring vessels to Crete during the Cypro-Archaic and Cypro-Classical periods, as well as their use in domestic sites.

### COMPARABLE MATERIAL FROM KNOSSOS

Notwithstanding the emphasis of this study on the material from the Unexplored Mansion, I think it is worth mentioning select comparable pieces which derive from other excavations of the British School in the Knossos valley and have been re-examined by the author. These pieces demonstrate that some well-known settlement contexts of Archaic and Classical Knossos might extend into the purported lacunae of the sixth and fifth centuries BC and that the relevant evidence may have been overlooked owing to the entrenched belief in the ‘gaps’.

#### Attic ware

Several Attic fragments of the present catalogue, from the Unexplored Mansion, find parallels among the ceramic corpus of significant Archaic and Classical stratigraphic contexts at Knossos. Starting with the black-figure shapes, a Band cup from 550–525 BC, which is contemporary to Suppl. Cat. 1, is a sporadic find of the Royal Road excavations (Coldstream 1973b, 63, pl. 26). What is more, a Cassel cup fragment, like Suppl. Cat. 2, which preserves part of its base rays and myrtle band, was uncovered in the south-east drain of the Roman Villa Dionysos and was dated to the last quarter of the sixth century (Coldstream and Hatzaki 2003, 305, no. S.51, pl. 27). This production date was probably predicated on the assumption that Attic imports do not reach Knossos before 525/520 BC, but the sherd in question is very close stylistically to fragment Suppl. Cat. 2 and probably belongs to c. 530–520 as well. Turning to red-figure, column kraters are the commonest shape of this ware at Knossos. They begin to appear already around 500 BC in the Royal Road, where they have lotus buds of distinctively early (triangular and stiff) form on the top of their rims (Coldstream 1973b, 62–3, no. M.15, pl. 26). However, the lotus-and-chain pattern on the rim fragment of a red-figure column krater from Pit X of Trench 6 in the area of the South-West Houses (Coldstream and Macdonald 1997, 227, no. K.69, fig. 18, pl. 46) resembles 6 very closely and should be placed within the same date range (c. 500–425).

#### Corinthian ware

Corinthian pottery of the sixth and fifth centuries BC is attested not only at the Unexplored Mansion, but also among other Knossian contexts. The shapes which are attested comprise kotylae and powder pyxides.

A Corinthian kotyle, like Suppl. Cat. 17, has base rays and was recovered in the upper fill of a well by Villa Ariadne in 1958 (Coldstream 1973b, 41, no. H.68, pl. 14). Although it was published as Early Corinthian, the loose form of its vertical squiggles does not find parallels before the Middle Corinthian period (*Corinth* XV 3, no. 521, pl. 25). Furthermore, a Corinthianising black-glazed kotyle from Well H of the Royal Road, which was treated as an intrusion by Coldstream,<sup>47</sup> has the low splaying foot of Corinthian kotylai of Lawrence’s type V (*Corinth* VII 2, 77, fig. 2),

<sup>47</sup> Coldstream 1973b, 62, fig. 14, pl. 26. The suggested date of late 7th–early 6th century BC is somewhat too early in my view.

which were produced during the first half of the sixth century (*Corinth* VII 2, 78). Our fragment Suppl. Cat. 17 also has a type V foot.

A powder pyxis with reserved zones decorated with groups of vertical zigzags, which recalls fragment Suppl. Cat. 19, derives from the Villa Ariadne well (Coldstream 1973b, 41, no. H.66, fig. 3, pl. 14). It finds very close comparisons among the Middle Corinthian pyxides of the Examilia grave published by Lawrence (1964, nos E24–E26, pl. 19), just as pyxis Suppl. Cat. 19, and it undoubtedly falls in the purported sixth-century ‘gap’.

### **Laconian ware**

Knossos is rich in Laconian pottery and local imitations and constitutes the only site on Crete that currently competes with the cemetery of Orthi Petra at Eleutherna, where Laconian kraters and cups are attested from the beginning of the sixth century down to the Late Archaic period.<sup>48</sup> The present section addresses Knossian finds, besides fragment Suppl. Cat. 22, which fall into the category of Laconian stirrup kraters.

A Laconian krater has surfaced during rescue work in Well 2 at the area of the Venizeleion hospital and is ascribed a broad date within the sixth century (Erickson 2010, 122, no. 239, fig. 4:2). No excavation records survive for the well (Coldstream 1973b, 44; Coldstream and Huxley 1999, 322). After inspection of the sherd, I believe it is a close counterpart of Suppl. Cat. 22 of the present catalogue and its date can be narrowed down to *c.* 575–525 BC.

Apparently Knossos and other Cretan cities could have engaged in an exchange of ceramic goods manufactured in Laconia during the period in question, and it is not unlikely that the island belonged to the same exchange network that linked mainland Greece with North Africa in the same years – as already suggested by Erickson (2005). In fact, Tocra and the extramural sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Cyrene have also produced Laconian stirrup kraters in the period of 575–525 BC, to which Suppl. Cat. 22 and its aforementioned parallel are dated (Boardman and Hayes 1966, nos 973–4, pl. 66; Schaus 1985, 24–8, nos 85–124, pls 6–8).

### **Cypriot ware**

Pottery of Cypriot origin postdating 700 BC and deriving from settlement contexts has rarely been recognised at Knossos, but two exceptions exist: two Black-on-Red II juglets, one from the Little Palace and one from the Unexplored Mansion. The former was found in a scrappy Orientalising layer (Hatzaki et al. 2008, 247, no. B5.19, pl. 33*d*). The latter piece, a jug unearthed in Room 10 of the Minoan Unexplored Mansion, is obviously an intrusion to the Minoan strata (Coldstream 1992, 79, no. GH.124, pl. 73). Although it has been classified as Black-on-Red II, its decoration does not necessarily exclude a Black-on-Red III (V) date (cf. Gjerstad 1948, figs XXXVIII:7,12 [Black-on-Red II] and LII:6 [Black-on-Red III]). Thus, the two fragments are Cypro-Archaic, like vases Suppl. Cat. 24 and 26 of the present study.

## SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSIONS

### **The Unexplored Mansion, Knossos and Crete in the sixth century BC**

The Unexplored Mansion, one of the best published projects at Knossos, was used here to test hypotheses on the Archaic period of the site. Based on the rarity of known well-stratified contexts, it has previously been argued that the area has yielded hardly any evidence for activity, including overseas imports, for the first three quarters of the sixth century BC. Nevertheless, my above analysis of a select group of mostly residual and intrusive Archaic overseas imports from the Unexplored Mansion supports the notion that the site might not have been completely abandoned between 590 and 525 BC. On the contrary, residents of the area seem to have

<sup>48</sup> On Eleutherna: Erickson 2010, 56–62, nos 22–45, fig. 3:4–5.

imported and consumed dining equipment (Suppl. Cat. **1–4**, **17**, **22**) and cosmetic containers (Suppl. Cat. **18**, **19**) from mainland Greece (Attica, Corinth and Laconia), which were manufactured between the first and third quarters of the sixth century. Additionally, tableware and slow-pouring vessels from the eastern Mediterranean (Cyprus) (Suppl. Cat. **24**, **26**) may have reached the site at any time during the Cypro-Archaic period, which spans from the mid-eighth to the early fifth century BC.

The previous treatment of some of the material from the Unexplored Mansion also raises important methodological issues. It was formerly thought that the latest imports at the site comprised a number of Corinthian sherds in black-figure and pattern decoration. These were designated as Early Corinthian and squeezed in the last quarter of the seventh century on the basis of Payne's chronological scheme. However, the present study has demonstrated that the date for some of these sherds, such as the published fragment Suppl. Cat. **19**, needs to be revised as Middle Corinthian. In addition, I have identified a number of further Middle Corinthian imports from the Unexplored Mansion, such as Suppl. Cat. **17**, **18**, which were previously unpublished. My study has also shown that the final publication of the site excluded a Laconian stirrup krater (Suppl. Cat. **22**), which can be dated between the second and third quarters of the sixth century, and Attic black-figure pottery of *c.* 550–525/520 BC (Suppl. Cat. **1–4**). Last but not least, I have demonstrated that previously unpublished pieces, which can be dated only broadly, such as the Corinthian Conventionalising fragments Suppl. Cat. **20–21** and the Cypro-Archaic fragments Suppl. Cat. **24** and **26**, may fall within the assumed 'lacuna' of 590–525 BC.

The ways in which scholarly choices made in the study and publication of the material may have obscured the understanding of the archaeology of the sixth century in Knossos are also identifiable in the case of other excavated contexts in the Knossos valley. I have mentioned that comparisons for Attic Suppl. Cat. **1–2** and **6** appear in the Royal Road, as well as in mixed levels above the Villa Dionysos. The date range previously attributed to these Archaic pieces has been compressed to help maintain the 'hiatus' of 590–525 devoid of finds. Likewise, I have argued that a black-glazed Laconian stirrup krater from Well 2 of the Venizeleion area, which is comparable to fragment Suppl. Cat. **22**, was dated broadly, thus implicitly undermining the possibility that any finds derive from the 'critically lean' period of 590–525 BC. These examples suggest how questionable methodological choices in the publication of Archaic remains from Knossos have reaffirmed the notion of the 'gap' of 590–525 BC and the associated traditional views of Archaic Crete.

Notwithstanding the new identification of mainland Greek imports to Knossos, the re-examination of previously published deposits from the Royal Road, the area of the South-West Houses, Well 2 at the Venizeleion and the Unexplored Mansion confirms that Attic pottery is thinly attested before 525–425 BC.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, this cannot be taken to confirm the hypothesis that Knossos presents the most extreme case of decline or abandonment during the Archaic period. Knossos has yielded Archaic material of the same quantity and unstratified nature as Gortyn, the major city of the Messara valley that is thought to have destroyed Knossos in the sixth century (Erickson 2010, 240–2). In arguing for the floruit of Archaic Gortyn, Erickson (2010, 178) has observed that the 'the complicated building history of Gortyn makes one suspect damage to Archaic and Classical structures, which might account for the disproportionately slight survival of material from these periods'. I find this argument convincing, and I think it also applies to Knossos.

This discussion has considerable implications for the archaeology of Crete and the notion of the island's 'Archaic gap'. Few scholars still believe that sixth-century Crete was struck by natural catastrophes (Boardman 1982, 230; Erickson 2010, 13–15, 238), was paralysed by internal warfare or was afflicted by changes in economic opportunities and in the exchange networks of the Mediterranean. Despite more nuanced understandings of the problem promoted by the

<sup>49</sup> The influx of Attic imports to Knossos in the Late Archaic era (525–475 BC) could be explained by marked changes in social practices of the local community (e.g. adoption of sympotic practices) or in the patterns of exchange during the period in question.

excavation of a rich Archaic settlement at Azoria and by numerous recent publications, the notion of the 'Archaic gap' has not been abolished. The results of the present study, combined with sixth-century evidence from sites like Praisos, Itanos, Azoria, Axos and Kato Syme, enhance the impression that the Archaic 'hiatus' is not uniform and should encourage scholars to seek sub-regional and site-specific explanations for the short-term boom of some sites and the bust of others in the sixth century, rather than generalising scenarios which cover the entire island.

### **The fifth century BC at the Unexplored Mansion, Knossos and Crete**

The Unexplored Mansion has produced significant evidence that militates against the disappearance of overseas products at Knossos in 475–425 BC. The overwhelming majority of off-island imports discussed here represent Attic dining vessels and belong to the fifth century. The red-figure column kraters Suppl. Cat. 6–7 are datable to the first to third quarters of the fifth century and may or may not have entered Crete during the purported 'break' in imports. However, the white-ground pattern lekythos Suppl. Cat. 5, the red-figure bell krater Suppl. Cat. 8, the black-glazed one-handlers Suppl. Cat. 13–15 and bowl Suppl. Cat. 16, and the Corinthian and Attic skyphoi (Suppl. Cat. 9–12) can be placed with confidence between 475 and 425 BC. In addition to the Attic pieces, the Unexplored Mansion has yielded two Corinthian Conventionalising pyxides (Suppl. Cat. 20–21), which cannot be more closely dated within the time span of *c.* 550–400 BC, but may well fall into the part of the Classical period which is under-represented at the site. The same is true for the White-Painted Cypriot Suppl. Cat. 23, which is broadly dated to the Cypro-Archaic II–Cypro-Classical II period (600–325 BC) and the Bichrome Cypriot Suppl. Cat. 25 which is Cypro-Archaic II or Cypro-Classical I (600–400 BC).

The choice to exclude these pieces from the publication of the post-Bronze Age remains of the Unexplored Mansion has enhanced the impression that the fifth century, especially its second to third quarters, is virtually unattested at the site. I have sought to correct this impression and show that the Unexplored Mansion has produced imports which challenge the notion of a 50-year break in overseas imports to Knossos starting *c.* 475 BC.

Imported material that falls within the assumed import 'lacuna' of the fifth century has also been unearthed at other sites within the Knossos valley. The Classical road in the area of the South-West Houses yielded Attic pottery of the second quarter of the fifth century, including a loop-handled bell krater like Suppl. Cat. 8, which was decorated with a red-figure scene (Coldstream and Macdonald 1997, 228, no. N.1, fig. 19) and a red-figure column krater comparable to Suppl. Cat. 6. Also, the Sanctuary of Demeter has produced Attic pottery of the second and third quarters of the fifth century (Coldstream 1973a, 23, 26, no. C.2, fig. 13 [450–425 BC], 40–1, no. H.34–7 [*c.* 450 BC]). These finds suggest a continuation of overseas contacts between Knossos and mainland Greece throughout the Classical period.

Notwithstanding this evidence, imported finds dating from 475 to 425 BC seem to be less copiously attested at Knossos than overseas imports dating to the first and fourth quarters of the fifth century. I am reluctant to follow Erickson in interpreting the paucity of overseas imports at Knossos in 475–425 and, more broadly, on Crete in 460–400 (Erickson 2005, 637–8) as a result of measures taken by Athens against the Peloponnesian trade with Crete and North Africa in the context of the Peloponnesian War and its prelude. My scepticism derives from the lack of alignment in the chronological limits of the 'break' in foreign products in the different parts of Crete, which was established by Erickson himself. After an influx of Attic and Laconian fine-ware in the cemeteries and settlements of western Crete during 500–475, off-island pottery is taken to cease there between 460 and 400 (Erickson 2005, 637). For the cemetery of Orthi Petra, at Eleutherna, Erickson (2005, 637–8) proposes a temporary 'hiatus' in foreign products around 475–425, contemporary to the purported 'lacuna' at Knossos. For the cemetery of Itanos, he claims that the Attic and Cycladic imports cease at about 460, but reappear around 425–400 (Erickson 2005, 639). I prefer to interpret these patterns in the light of regional fluctuations in the demand and supply of foreign products, especially since Attic pottery circulated throughout the Mediterranean mainly due to its good quality (Cook 1997, 264) and

irrespective of military events (MacDonald 1982, 113–14, 118, 121–2). Also, given the analysis above, I wonder on the possible impact of the vagaries of preservation or of methodological choices in the documentation of the material on the shaping of the patterns in question.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

To view supplementary material for this article, please visit <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0068245423000011>.

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[eirini.paizi@uni-graz.at](mailto:eirini.paizi@uni-graz.at)

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### Διαθαλάσσιες επαφές της Κνωσού και της Κρήτης κατά τον 6ο και 5ο αιώνα π.Χ.: Πορίσματα από την Ανεξερεύνητη Έπαυλη

Για την Κρήτη, οι αρχαϊκοί και κλασικοί χρόνοι έχουν χαρακτηριστεί ως περίοδοι μειωμένων αρχαιολογικών ευρημάτων και ύφεσης στις διαθαλάσσιες επαφές του νησιού ειδικά σε σύγκριση με τις αμέσως προηγούμενες περιόδους. Αυτό το φαινόμενο έχει προσελκύσει το ενδιαφέρον των ερευνητών και οι περισσότερες μελέτες επικεντρώνονται στη σημαντικότερη κρητική πόλη της Κνωσού. Η Κνωσός αποτελεί και το κεντρικό θέμα του παρόντος άρθρου, το οποίο επανεξετάζει τα στοιχεία που υποδηλώνουν μείωση στις διαθαλάσσιες επικοινωνίες της πόλης και επιχειρεί να αναθεωρήσει την παραπάνω προβληματική με βάση αρχαιϊκή και κλασική επείσκακτη κεραμική από τη περιοχή της "Ανεξερεύνητης Έπαυλης" της Κνωσού, μια θέση πλούσια σε οικιστικά κατάλοιπα ελληνικών και ρωμαϊκών χρόνων. Με βάση αυτά τα ευρήματα υποστηρίζεται ότι τα σενάρια που παρουσιάζουν τον 6ο και 5ο αι. ως περιόδους αναταραχών και κρίσεως αποτελούν υπεραπλοποιήσεις των αρχαιολογικών δεδομένων και ότι η εντύπωση αυτή έχει διαμορφωθεί εν μέρει λόγω μεθοδολογικών προβλημάτων στους συμβατικούς τρόπους μελέτης και ερμηνείας της κεραμικής.