

DENEIA: A MIDDLE CYPRIOT SITE IN ITS REGIONAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

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INTRODUCTION

Manning and others have noted that regionalism, as a dominant theme in studies of Cypriot prehistory, is entirely derived from ceramic evidence.¹ This paper, too, will focus on ceramic data but will also look at other aspects of material culture and attempt to place these in their social and historical as well as chronological and geographical context. One of the reasons for taking this approach is to address a criticism levelled by Manning at studies of regionalism in Cyprus: their frequent failure to distinguish differences in ceramic decoration and form arising from factors centred in local production and small-scale kin-based interaction and those which are the result of higher level socio-political or geographic separation.² This suggests, among other things, that we need to understand specific production contexts and site histories before we can establish broader patterns of interaction and association.

This paper will propose that differences in material culture within and between regions in the Middle Cypriot period may be the result of historically contingent as well as or rather than geographical, chronological or other scalar factors; and even a reaction to 'regionalism' rather than a manifestation of it. It will shift the focus from differences which arise from geography and chronology to those which are responses to particular historical circumstances. While the latter operate within the constraints of a regional environment, they might take different forms at different sites within a region and reflect community identity at the site rather than regional level.

Deneia is located in the Ovgos valley in north-western Cyprus. Although only looted cemetery evidence is available, it offers a substantial basis for considering the broader history of the site.³ Deneia was settled during the Philia phase of the Early Cypriot Bronze Age and continued in use on a small scale through the Early Cypriot period.⁴ By far the greatest amount of tomb construction, however, is dated to MC I and II and there can be no doubt that these were the most dynamic phases in the history of the settlement. They are also distinguished by marked peculiarities in the material record.

THE CERAMIC RECORD

The peculiar nature of the Middle Cypriot Red Polished III tradition at Deneia has long been recognised. In J.R. Stewart's words, Deneia Red Polished tells 'a clear story of a rather specialised relief and incised ornamentation ... amongst its features [are] the use of rather heavy lines and a preference for concentric circles divorced from the sling pattern. There is a sort of *horror vacui* which leads to over-ornamentation. At the same time there are variations in the shapes which tend to be less graceful than elsewhere'.⁵ This distinctive style was considered highly unusual by Stewart and suggestive of a 'regional school'.⁶ The prevalence and broad grooving of concentric circles (Fig. 1a), 'the boldness of the relief work' (Fig. 1b) and the manufacture of large vessels decorated in 'a grandiose manner', were also viewed as markers of a regional style by Merrillees⁷ and Åström⁸ and identified, alternatively, by Hennessy (in the case of the incised work) as the output of an indi-

¹ MANNING 2001, 80.

² MANNING 2001, 80.

³ Deneia (alt. Dhenia) has long been known as a major Bronze Age settlement. Unfortunately the cemeteries at *Kafkalla, Mali* and *Kafkalla tis Malis* are amongst the most thoroughly looted on the island. For reports on fieldwork undertaken in the cemeteries see: ÅSTRÖM and WRIGHT 1962; HADJISAVVAS 1985; NICOLAOU and NICOLAOU 1988; WEBB and FRANKEL 2001; FRANKEL and WEBB 2007. The associated settlement(s) have not been located.

⁴ For evidence of site use during the Philia and EC I see NICOLAOU and NICOLAOU 1988, 103–105, figs. 13, 17, pl. XIX; WEBB 1997, nos. 345–347; STEWART 1988, 33, 121, figs. 6.3, 25.10 (wrongly attributed to RP III); FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 41–44, figs. 4.1–4.2; also WEBB and FRANKEL 1999, 8.

⁵ STEWART 1988, 105.

⁶ STEWART 1948, 136–137.

⁷ MERRILLEES 1965, 141.

⁸ In: ÅSTRÖM and WRIGHT 1962, 272, 274.

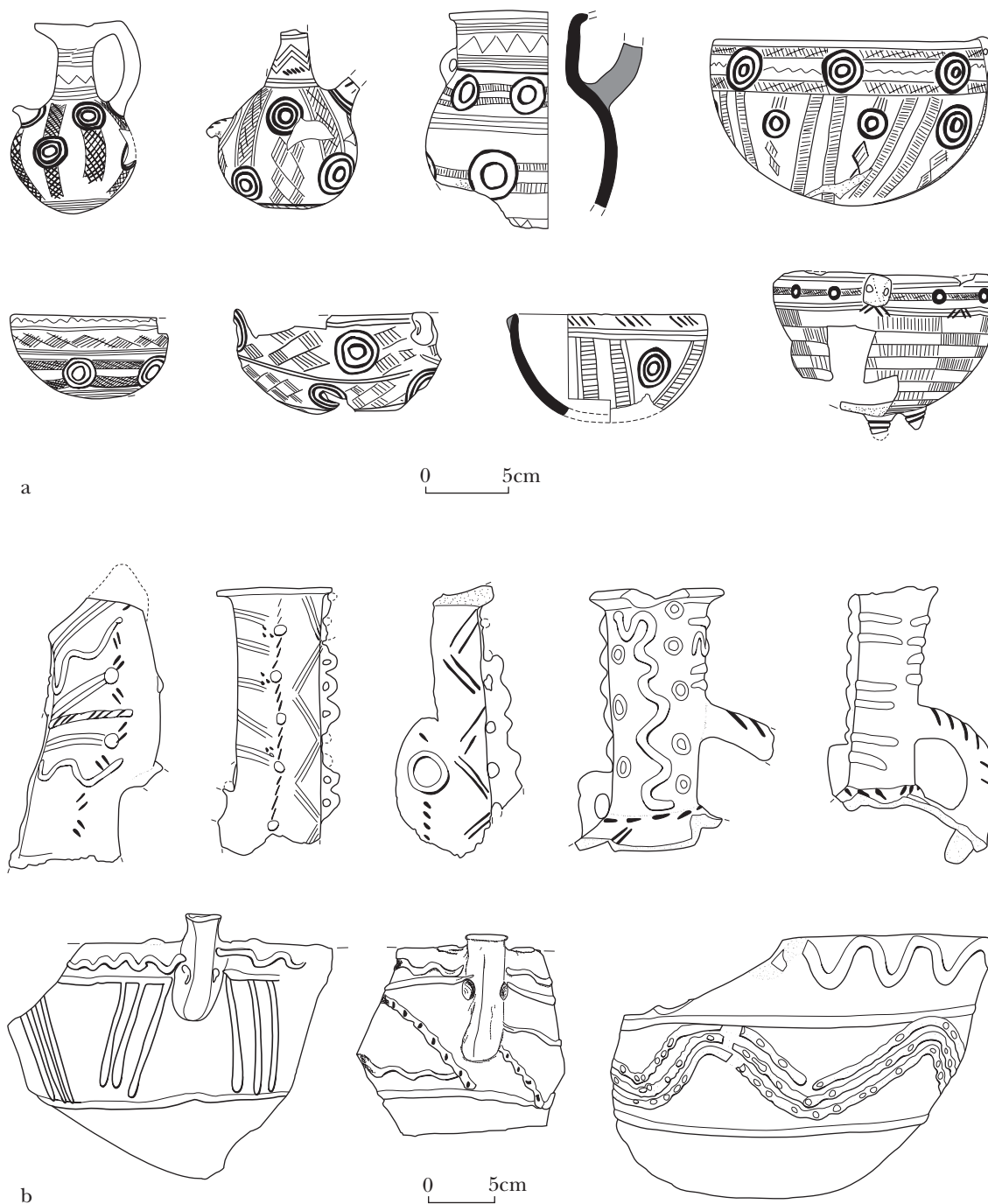


Fig. 1 Vessels from Deneia decorated with a. broadly incised concentric circles and b. bold relief work (selected from WEBB and FRANKEL 2001; FRANKEL and WEBB 2007)

vidual potter, whom he named the 'Dhenia Artist'.⁹ The sheer quantity of material, however, makes it clear that we are dealing with a style rather than the work of one or two highly idiosyncratic potters.

Specifically local Red Polished III vessels¹⁰ include 'Deneia basins' and 'monster jugs', certain types of jug and gourd juglets and various elaborate and composite shapes, such as askoid jugs and a side-

⁹ HENNESSY 1974, 22.

¹⁰ For a more detailed discussion of these vessel types, with

reference to examples, see FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 48–55, 154; WEBB and FRANKEL 2001, 7–9.

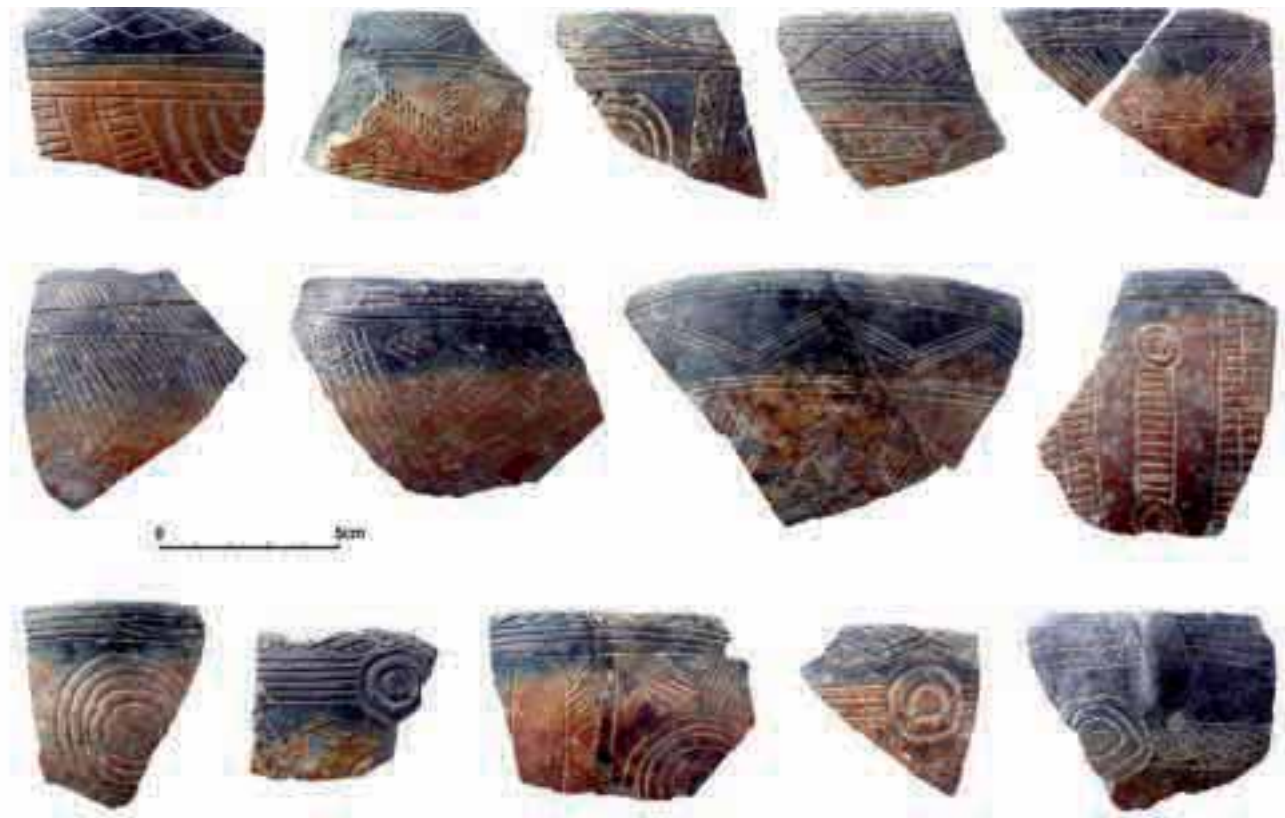


Fig. 2 Incised Red Polished Black-topped bowls from Deneia (selected from FRANKEL and WEBB 2007)

spouted vessel in the Louvre, the latter likened by Stewart to a steam super-heater on an Emmett cartoon locomotive.¹¹

In addition to the broadly incised circles, Deneia-style decorative features include crosshatched panels and bands with the crosshatching achieved by overlaying angled pairs of lines;¹² concentric circles framed on one side by two hatched bands and on the other by a hatched three-row chequerboard;¹³ handles with crossing zigzags forming vertical rows of diamonds;¹⁴ double and twisted handles;¹⁵ so-called ‘fretwork ornament’¹⁶ and a marked preference on closed vessels for incised zigzags with dots at the angles and vertical rows of short angled lines.¹⁷

Incised Red Polished Black-topped bowls are also a distinctive Middle Cypriot phenomenon at Deneia (Fig. 2).¹⁸ They are far more common at this site than elsewhere and decorated with the same motifs which distinguish local Red Polished III. They show a striking degree of variability. Although there are a relatively small number of motifs, few bowls display the same selection, combination and placement. The range of variation is beyond that which might be attributed to random effects, suggesting that potters set out to create unique vessels.

By MC I, also, high percentages of Black Polished are characteristic of Deneia assemblages (with up to 20% in some tombs) and Deneia was undoubtedly a,

¹¹ STEWART 1992, 33, pl. II.6, 9. See also CAUBET, KARAGEORGHIS and YON 1981, 11–12, no. 10, pl. 3.

¹² e.g. FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, fig. 4.13, Tomb 789, P286; WEBB and FRANKEL 2001, fig. 14, B1.

¹³ Eg. WEBB and FRANKEL 2001, 13, 15, fig. 5, Tomb A.3–4, 11; ANSON and HUBAND 2000, 13, no. 12; WEBB 1997, 78, no. 356; NICOLAOU and NICOLAOU 1988, pl. XVII.2.

¹⁴ e.g. FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, figs. 4.13, T 763, P35; T 789, P281–P282; WEBB and FRANKEL 2001, 32, 37, Tombs C.10, D.7, E.3, figs. 16, 18–19.

¹⁵ Eg. WEBB and FRANKEL 2001, 18–20, 22, figs. 7–8, 10, Tomb A.26–27, 29–30, 32, 42.

¹⁶ e.g. WEBB and FRANKEL 2001, 20–21, 23, 33, figs. 3, 9–11, 16, Tombs A.35, 37, 43, C.12.

¹⁷ e.g. WEBB and FRANKEL 2001, 18–19, 21–25, figs. 7–8, 10–12, Tomb A.26, 29–30, 37–39, 42–43, 49–52.

¹⁸ These are discussed in detail in FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 58–59.

and probably *the*, major production centre of Black Polished at this time.¹⁹ Black Polished is nowhere else as common in MC I and II, occurs in a number of shapes which are not found elsewhere and shares motifs common to Deneia Red Polished III and Red Polished Black-topped.

There is, then, a highly distinctive ceramic ‘signature’ at Deneia in MC I and II; so much so that unprovenanced pots in museums around the world can often be attributed to Deneia with considerable confidence.²⁰ Much of the decoration and some of the more eccentric forms are highly emphatic. Relief decoration and rows of multiple pierced lugs, for example, sometimes cover the whole of the neck and upper body of closed vessels. Incision is applied boldly, especially in the case of concentric circles, and frequently covers the entire vessel. Shapes, as Stewart noted,²¹ border on the baroque. While ‘local ceramic ideas’²² are evident elsewhere in the Middle Cypriot period, this level of assertive, idiosyncratic production is not matched at any other site.

The distinctiveness of Deneia’s ceramic output was largely lost in MC III. This was a period of ceramic hybridisation, with aspects of form, fabric and decoration common to Red Polished IV, Drab Polished, Red Slip and Black Slip, which are often difficult to distinguish and which are less frequently and less elaborately decorated than the monochrome wares of preceding periods. This degeneration of the monochrome tradition in the northwest and centre of the island was no doubt due in large part to the increasing use of White Painted wares, which appear in significant quantities at Deneia in the second half of MC II. Late MC II also saw the introduction of the multiple incising tool, which led to a simplification of decorative styles and a loss of design complexity.²³ Once past the experimental stage (in late Red Polished III and early Red Polished IV), it was never used to execute intricate motifs but rather allowed potters to work more quickly with relatively crude results in Red Polished IV, Black Slip and Red Slip. The introduction of the incising tool coincided with other technical changes in the ceramic industry, which gave

rise to thinner, matter slips and harder fabrics and a standardised and limited array of shapes.

The same technical innovation, interestingly, gave rise to a different outcome in the south of the island. Here regional varieties of Red Polished IV developed in MC III on which multiple-pointed tools were used to create punctured areas as well as groups of lines. In this case, the introduction of the multiple tool led to increased complexity of decoration and the introduction of new motifs and techniques.

The loss of complexity in the incised monochrome tradition at Deneia and elsewhere in the north and centre of the island may be related, as I have suggested, to the increasing dominance of White Painted wares. White Painted is, on the contrary, rare in the south, perhaps providing the impetus for the increased elaboration of late monochrome wares in that region. It seems unlikely, however, that White Painted wares, which lack the distinctiveness of Deneia Red Polished III, Black Polished and Red Polished Black-topped, could have served the same array of symbolic functions as these earlier fabrics. The effects of this ‘aesthetic blunting’²⁴ on the pottery producers and consumers of Deneia must have been significant.

DENEIA CERAMICS BEYOND DENEIA

Deneia’s closest ceramic associations throughout the Middle Cypriot were with Lapithos. Åström notes numerous Red Polished vessels decorated in the Deneia style from tombs excavated by the Swedish Cyprus Expedition, including ‘jugs with beaked mouths’; jugs with flat rims and cylindrical necks decorated with dotted zigzags and gourd juglets.²⁵ To this list may be added several Red Polished III amphorae decorated in Deneia style and a Red Polished Black-topped bowl with broad circles and hatched double-framed lozenges from Tomb 315A which are clearly imports from Deneia.²⁶

There are, in turn, vessels from Deneia which are likely to be imports from Lapithos. These include vessels of White Painted II and probably many if not most of those of White Painted III and IV, as well as

¹⁹ See BREWSTER 2004, 2007.

²⁰ Eg. KARAGEORGHIS and OLENIK 1997, nos. 1, 3–5, 15–20; KARAGEORGHIS 2003a, 15, 18–19, nos. 16, 25; KARAGEORGHIS 2003b, 19, no. 3; FORTIN 1996, nos. 34–41, 65, 70–71, 73–74; ANSON and HUBAND 2000, nos. 2, 12, 17; MORRIS 1985, pls. 10a, 11b, 68.

²¹ STEWART 1988, 105.

²² STEWART 1948, 137.

²³ For a discussion of the use of multiple incising tools at Deneia and elsewhere see FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 103–106.

²⁴ MORRIS 1985, 323.

²⁵ ÅSTRÖM 1972, 175, 183–184. See FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 155 for a more detailed discussion.

²⁶ STEWART 1962a, figs. CXVII.4–5, CXLI.24; 1992, 142, pl. XX.4.

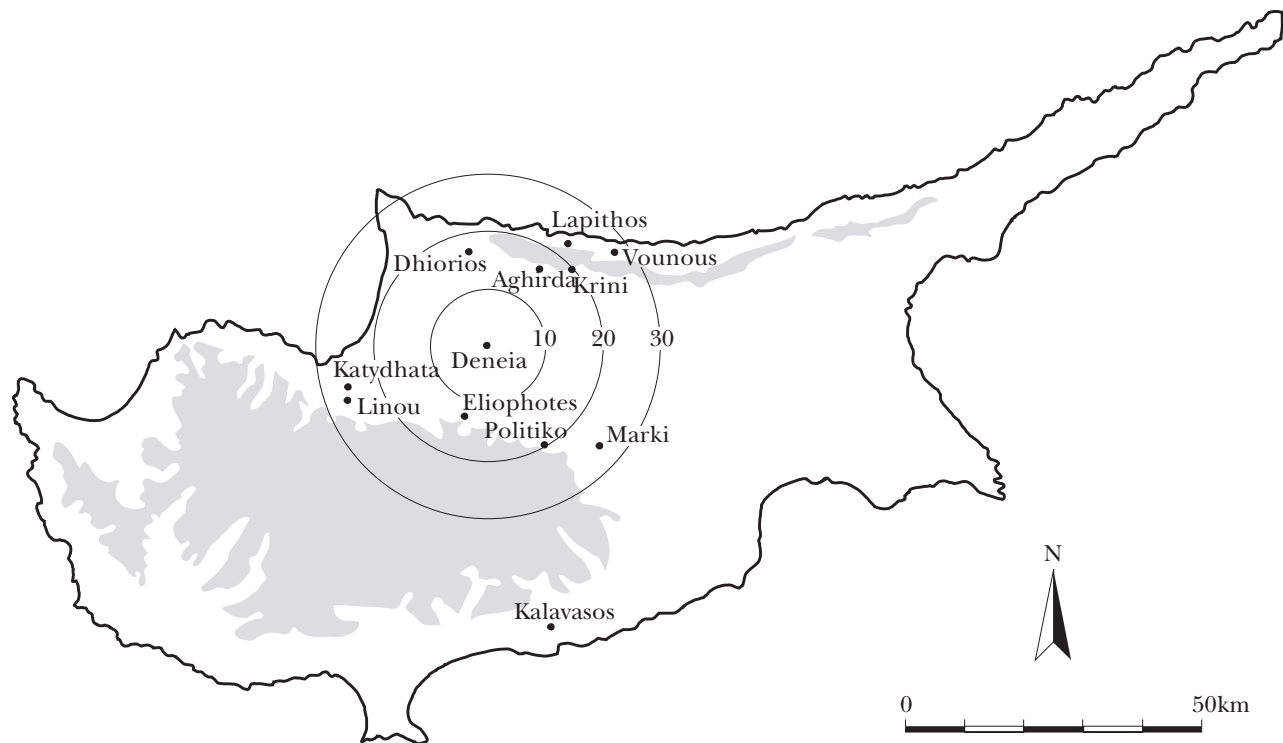


Fig. 3 Sites with evidence of Deneia ceramics in MC I–II (after FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, text fig. 8.8)

Red Polished III gourd juglets.²⁷ They suggest a reciprocal southward movement of pots, primarily of White Painted wares, from Lapithos and perhaps other north coast centres.

Deneia style Red Polished III is also occasionally found at other sites (Fig. 3), most notably and in the most significant quantities at Aghirda and Krini, both located at the southern end of the Aghirda pass.²⁸ Isolated Red Polished III vessels of Deneia type have also been found at Katydhata, Linou, Politiko and Marki.²⁹ Deneia Black Polished, similarly, was moving northward to Lapithos, *Vounous*, Karmi and the Aghirda pass sites and occasionally further afield, with one probable example from Kalavassos.³⁰ Both the Red Polished and Black Polished data suggest limited interaction beyond these regions prior to MC III.

Ceramic connections with Lapithos continued into MC III in Red Polished IV, Black Slip II and Red

Slip. The distributional data and distinctions between Black Slip II from northwestern and eastern sites, such as Kalopsidha, suggest several broad regional areas of production in MC II and III, while the rarity of Black Slip more generally in the south and west suggests that Black Slip, like White Painted, was not moving far beyond these production centres.³¹

The connections with Lapithos diminish, however, toward the end of MC III with the abandonment of the *Vrysi tou Barba* cemetery. The later Red Polished IV parallels are primarily with Pendayia, Akhera and Myrtou to the west and northwest (Fig. 4).³² These connections are apparent also in the early Monochrome, Proto White Slip and Proto Base Ring fabrics which show greatest similarity with material from other northwestern sites in LC IA.³³

By the end of MC III there are also increasing indications of contact with the east. Several White Paint-

²⁷ FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 54, 155, Tombs 763, P55, 789, P294, P300, figs. 4.11–12.

²⁸ DES GAGNIERS and KARAGEORGHIS 1976, 20–21, pl. IX.2; FRANKEL 1983, 108–110, nos. 1138–1154, pls. 49C–49D.

²⁹ ÅSTRÖM 1989, 59, fig. 75, no. 49; FLOURENTZOS 1989, 61, fig. 79, Tomb 1.40; ÅSTRÖM 1972, 176; FRANKEL and WEBB 1996, 141–142, fig. 7.15, P431; 2006, 125–126, fig. 4.36, P9453.

³⁰ See BREWSTER 2004: nos. 130, 134, 210, 377, 383, 415 (from Lapithos and *Vounous*); CULLEN and WHEELER 1986, 155, K-PC 140.

³¹ FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 140.

³² See FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 59–64, 138.

³³ See FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 86, 90–93.

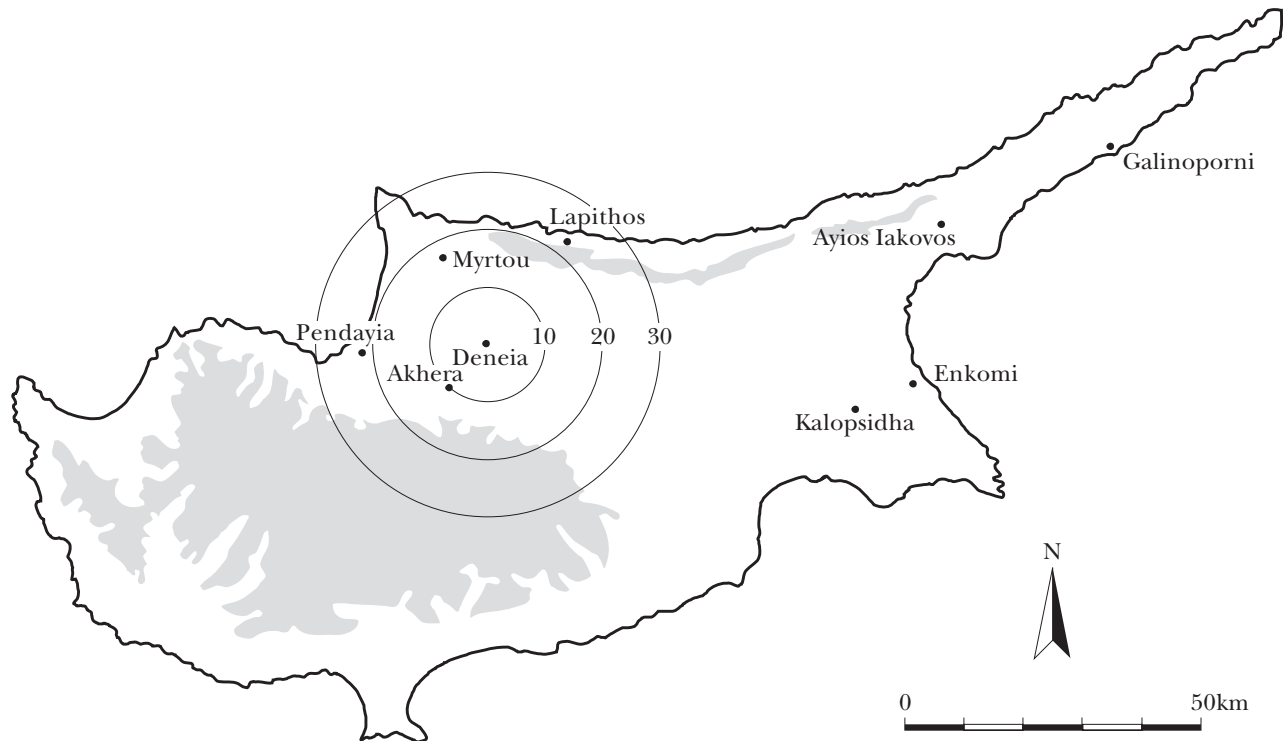


Fig. 4 Sites with evidence of Deneia ceramics in MC III-LC IA (after FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, text fig. 8.9)

ed IV Wavy Line and Cross Line Style pots from Deneia are best compared with vessels from Ayios Iakovos, Galinoporni and Kalopsidha.³⁴ Similarly, a White Painted VI Cross Line Style jug has parallels at Kalopsidha and Enkomi and is certainly an eastern import.³⁵ The same is true of the few vessels of Red on Black which reached Deneia and other northwest sites from the Karpas in late Middle Cypriot and LC I.³⁶ A Red Polished IV Punctured jar suggests connections also with the south.³⁷

To sum up this brief survey of the pottery evidence: in MC I and II Deneia was home to a thriving ceramic industry, producing forms, fabrics and motifs which are highly distinctive at the site level. With the exception of Kalavassos, all sites with Deneia style MC I-II pottery are located within 30km to the north, northwest, southwest and southeast of Deneia. They suggest regular movement of pots and people between Deneia and the north coast, via the Aghirda pass, and contact with Middle Cypriot communities in the copper-bearing zones in the northwestern and

central northern foothills of the Troodos. There are, notably, few indications of significant contact with Nicosia *Ayia Paraskevi* and other sites to the east. This changed during MC III when Deneia pottery lost its idiosyncratic character, consumers became more reliant on imported White Painted ware and the site assumed a broader ceramic identity, that of the northwest region.

BEYOND THE CERAMIC RECORD

MC I-II mortuary practice at Deneia also stands significantly apart from contemporary cemeteries. Perhaps most obvious is the sheer size of the burial grounds. With 764 Middle Cypriot tombs identified on the plateaux at *Kafkalla* and *Mali*, there are many more tombs than at any other known Bronze Age site on the island and the real figure must have been significantly higher.³⁸ The number of burials per tomb also appears to have been much higher than elsewhere. The presence of ten individuals in Tomb 48³⁹ and a minimum of 46 in Tomb 789⁴⁰ is radically at

³⁴ FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 72, text fig. 5.18, fig. 4.39 (Tombs 34, P31, P110, 789, P56).

³⁵ FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 77, fig. 4.43 (Tomb 781, P37).

³⁶ FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 84, 140-141, fig. 4.48.

³⁷ FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 64, fig. 4.27 (Tomb 55, P41).

³⁸ FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 18, 149.

³⁹ NICOLAOU and NICOLAOU 1988, 73.

⁴⁰ TUCKER and CLEGGETT 2007, 131.

odds with the mean of 4.19 burials recorded for Middle Cypriot tombs at Lapithos by Keswani.⁴¹

The quality, longevity and size of the tombs at Deneia are also remarkable. The mean chamber floor area of Middle Cypriot tombs at Lapithos, estimated by Keswani, is 11.18 square metres, while that recorded for all Middle Cypriot sites is 8.3 square metres.⁴² This may be compared with a mean chamber floor area for 11 Middle Cypriot tombs at Deneia of 26.2 square metres.⁴³ Similarly, the largest chambers at Deneia are much larger than any recorded elsewhere. The largest tomb at Lapithos, for example, has a floor area of approximately 20 square metres,⁴⁴ compared with estimated minimum floor areas of 34 square metres for Tomb 789, 55 square metres for Tomb 787 and 33 square metres for Tomb 6 at Deneia.⁴⁵

The difference in tomb size between Deneia and other sites is no doubt due in part to the opportunities offered by local geology. The hard chalk plateaux at Deneia allowed the construction of large, complex chambers. The Middle Cypriot tombs at Deneia, however, also differ from contemporary tombs in a range of other ways. Apart from the 'tomb complex' in the south-eastern part of *Kafkalla*, which took advantage of natural interconnecting caverns and is itself unique,⁴⁶ all visible Middle Cypriot tombs at Deneia are single-chambered. Each is comprised of a *dromos* with one opening leading to a chamber. There are no instances of multiple openings from a single *dromos*. *Dromoi* with two, three or more openings leading into separate chambers are, however, common at *Vounous*, *Karmi*, *Lapithos* and elsewhere.⁴⁷ At these sites, also, *dromoi* are invariably of similar or larger size than their associated chambers. At Deneia, this situation is reversed, with *dromoi* of comparatively small size relative to the chamber areas. The one *dromos*/one chamber rule at Deneia was never broken and no *dromos* ever gave access to physically unrelated chambers.

There are differences also with regard to specific arrangements. At *Lapithos* niches or 'cupboards' cut into the *dromos* were present in 23% of tombs.⁴⁸ They

are not found in any of the visible *dromoi* at Deneia. At *Lapithos* these cupboards are thought to have held infants. Their absence at Deneia may correlate with the presence of large numbers of sub-adult burials in tombs such as Tomb 789 (in which 58% of the sample of 46 individuals died under 6 years of age),⁴⁹ suggesting differences in practices relating to the disposal of young children. There is, similarly, no evidence at Deneia for the practice of pithos burial for infants, as argued by Keswani for *Lapithos*.⁵⁰

Local peculiarities in mortuary practice are of course visible across the island in the Middle Cypriot period but those at Deneia are more than usually marked. They suggest that Deneia, in MC I and II in particular, was as distinctive in its mortuary behaviour as it was in the form and style of its ceramic industry.

NORTHWESTERN CYPRUS IN THE MIDDLE BRONZE AGE

The EC III–MC II period generally in Cyprus witnessed a significant increase in the number of settlements and the spread of settlement into previously uninhabited regions (Fig. 5).⁵¹ In the northwest new settlements were founded near the north coast, along the southern flanks of the *Kyrenia Range*, in and above the *Aloupos valley*, in the northwest foothills of the *Troodos* and close to Deneia at *Akaki*. The timing of this burgeoning of settlement is hard to pinpoint, as many sites are only known from surface material, but most were fully established by MC I.

At Deneia there was an explosion of tomb construction in MC I–II. The number of adult burials attributable to the Middle Cypriot period may be estimated at between 9000 and 20,000,⁵² implying a very large population which is almost certainly the result of a major influx of people. Such population aggregation was probably not an isolated phenomenon. Eleven new sites with Middle Cypriot material at *Lapithos* appear to have been in use alongside the *Vrysi tou Barba* cemetery and additional sites were also established in EC III or MC I at *Vounous* and *Karmi* and at *Ayia Paraskevi* in the central plain.⁵³

This suggests a complex picture of site growth,

⁴¹ KESWANI 2004, 53, table 4.2.

⁴² KESWANI 2004, 61, 118, table 4.4, fig. 5.5.

⁴³ FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 150, table 8.2.

⁴⁴ KESWANI 2004, 45, Swedish Tomb 322A.

⁴⁵ FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 150, table 8.2.

⁴⁶ FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 34–36, text figs. 3.59–62.

⁴⁷ ÅSTRÖM 1972, fig. 4; STEWART 1962a, fig. 89; 1962b, fig. 1; KESWANI 2004, figs. 4.1E–L, 5A–B. See, also, FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 150–151, text fig. 8.5.

⁴⁸ KESWANI 2004, 52.

⁴⁹ TUCKER and CLEGGETT 2007, 131, table 7.2.

⁵⁰ KESWANI 2004, 44, table 4.1.

⁵¹ For a discussion of the settlement history of this region, see GEORGIU 2007, 447, fig. 11.4.

⁵² See FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 152–154.

⁵³ See GEORGIU 2007, 213–220, 281–285, tables 10.1, 10.5.

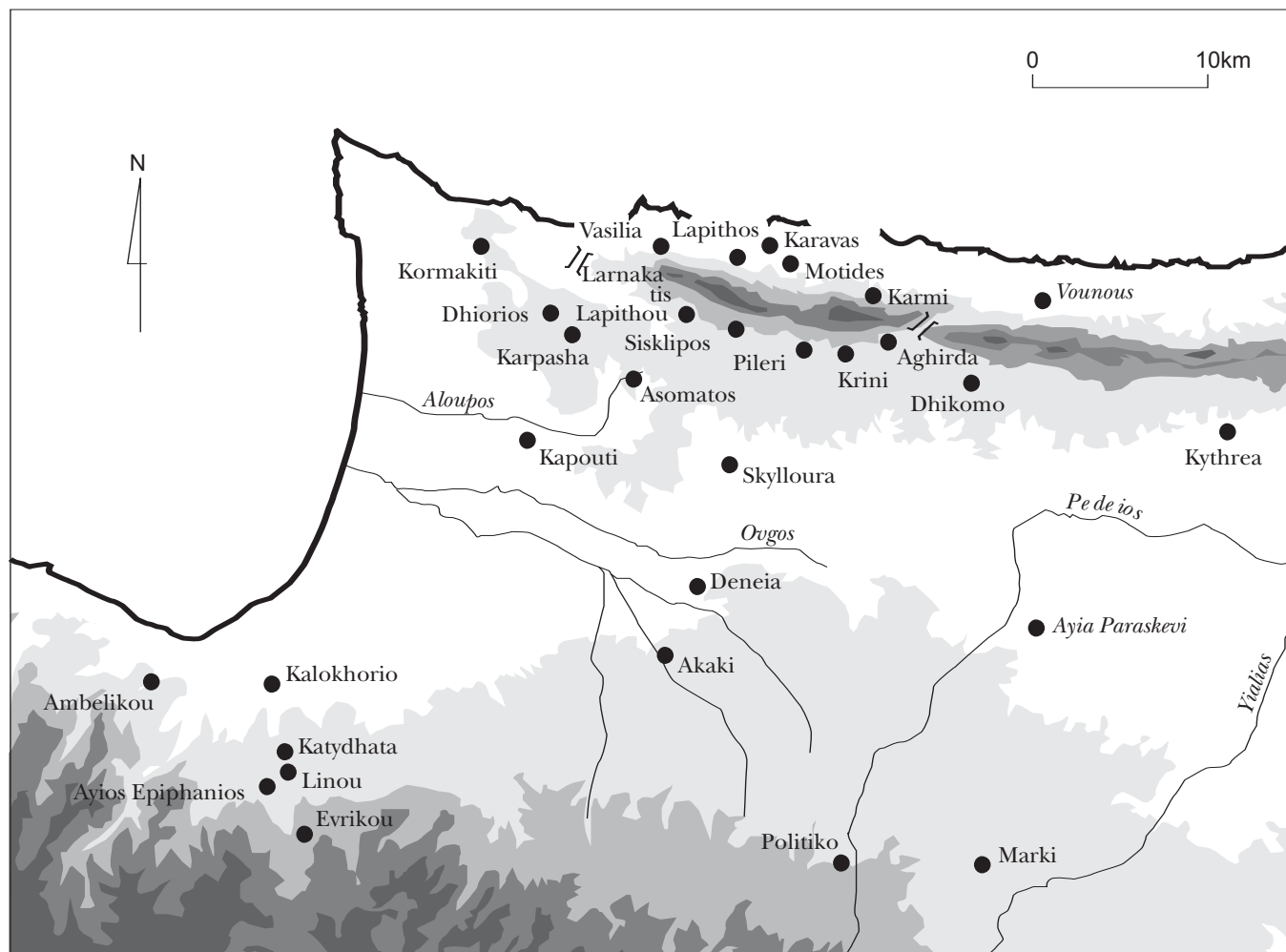


Fig. 5 Northwestern Cyprus in MC I-II (after FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, text fig. 8.12)

the establishment of new sites and aggregation of settlement, which led by the end of MC II to a transformation of the earlier broad distribution of villages in favour of a denser, more concentrated settlement pattern.

Deneia was clearly of key importance in this new system. Located in a favourable environment, it had been one of a chain of Philia sites along the Ovgos and was the only one to continue in EC I and II.⁵⁴ At this time it probably owed its importance to its location *en route* from Vounous, via the Aghirda pass, to the Troodos foothills and central plain. By MC I, however, it was clearly operating in the same sphere as the rapidly expanding centre at Lapithos, where large-scale consumption of metal is implied by quantities of bronze deposited in tombs from late EC III. The presence of Deneia pottery at Aghirda and Krini suggests

that connections between Deneia and Lapithos continued to be directed via the Aghirda pass. Deneia is likely at this time to have played a significant role in the movement of copper to the north: perhaps serving as an organisational outpost in a regional network headed by Lapithos, with authority over dependent settlements south of the Kyrenia Range.

In late MC III the settlement pattern in this region underwent another major restructuring with significant site abandonment (Fig. 6). Almost all the Lapithos sites and those at Bellapais, Karmi, Vasilia and Karavas went out of use and were replaced by new settlements at Elea and Kazaphani and further east at Akanthou, Dhavlos and Phlamoudhi. The southern Kyrenia Range sites were also abandoned. The continued importance, however, of Krini to the south and *Mylos* and *Kapa Kaya* to the north of the Aghirda

⁵⁴ FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 157–158, text figs. 8.10–8.11.

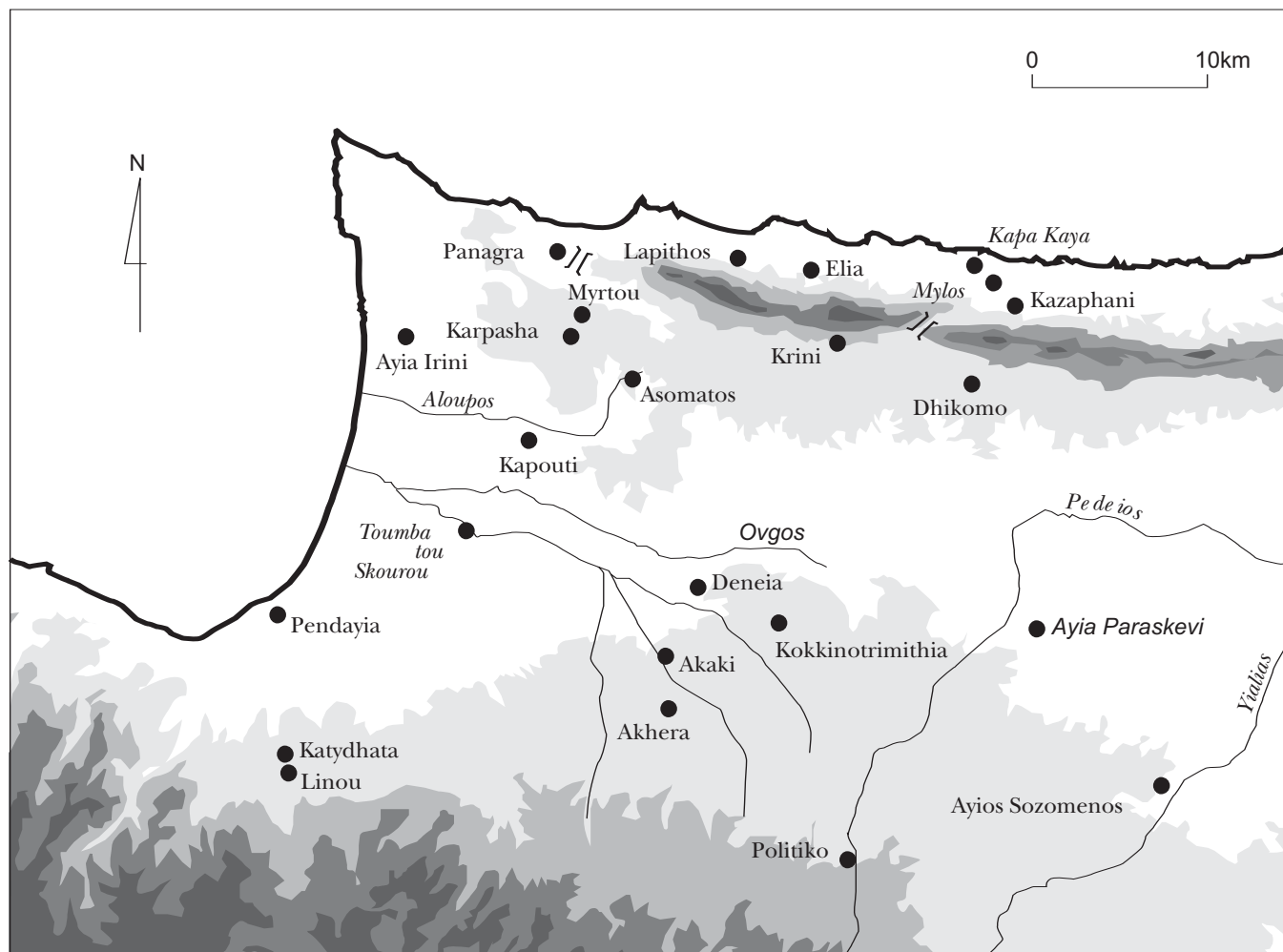


Fig. 6 Northwestern Cyprus in MC III-LC IA (after FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, text fig. 8.13)

pass may be attributed to their positions along this route from the central plain to the north coast. Further to the west the Panagra pass, immediately north of a major new settlement at Myrtou, provided a means of communication from Morphou to the north coast. In the Morphou Bay area new coastal or near coastal sites were established at Ayia Irini, Morphou *Toumba tou Skourou* and Pendaria.

Deneia survived this restructuring but began to decline and the cutting of new tombs ceased at *Kafkalla* before the transition to LC IA. Unfinished tombs in the northwest part of this cemetery⁵⁵ suggest a sudden, possibly catastrophic event; or at least a decisive movement of people away from the site toward the end of MC III. With the demise of Lapithos, the old alliance with this site came to an end.

In its place there are indications of increasing contact with Pendaria, Myrtou and Akhera.

The geopolitical configuration established in late MC III has long been attributed to an increasing external demand for Cypriot copper, resulting in the establishment of new coastal outlets and a movement of people from central sites to coastal areas. In the course of these developments, Lapithos and *Vounous*, which had previously been important in the overseas movement of copper, lost ground to Morphou, Enkomi, Hala Sultan Tekke, Maroni and Kalavassos. Along with this increased competition and a possible shift in market focus toward Egypt and the Levant, the demise of the north coast sites may be due, as Peltenburg has suggested,⁵⁶ to their location in a narrow coastal plain which prohibited population

⁵⁵ FRANKEL and WEBB 2007, 23–28, text figs. 3.28–3.41, fig. 3.33.

⁵⁶ PELTENBURG 1996, 32, no. 19.

growth and systems elaboration, in favour of sites with larger sustaining areas. At the same time a lowering of sea levels may have enabled low-lying areas around Morphou Bay to be occupied for the first time.⁵⁷ Sites now established in this area also undoubtedly provided a more efficient outlet for copper from Skouriotissa than the more distant north coast settlements.⁵⁸

CONCLUSION

It is clear that interaction between Deneia and surrounding sites varied considerably through time. Relationships were dynamic and shifting, in part actively created and assertively managed by the people of Deneia, in part dependent on their privileged connection with Lapithos. While influenced by geography and topography, these relationships have a strong historical and socio-political dimension, which at all times appears to have been the driving force in defining and redefining Deneia's regional and cultural affiliations.

The story of Deneia was not prescribed by geography and topography, although clearly its location was a critical factor. Historical process and external forces determined the importance of the north coast from

Philia to late in Middle Cypriot and led, probably by late EC III, to the establishment of a strong bilateral relationship between Lapithos and Deneia, with Deneia perhaps serving an administrative role in a system of multilateral relationships south of the Kyrenia range. In the Middle Cypriot period it was large enough to develop a distinctive cultural identity, readily visible in its ceramic output, a distinctive, perhaps unique set of mortuary practices and possibly satellite communities at Aghirda and Krini. Inevitably, Deneia declined in significance and size when Lapithos lost its economic dominance in favour of new settlement configurations in Morphou Bay and on the south and east coasts.

Clearly we need more localised histories, such as we have been able to construct for Deneia, to be able to understand networks of interaction within and between settlements over time and get beyond broad generalisations of regionalism as 'a mosaic of local regional patterns'.⁵⁹ Some, perhaps all, sites show distinctly variant behaviours which suggest specific responses to particular histories and changes in size, function and complexity, as well as, and sometimes perhaps in defiance of, 'natural' regional and resource boundaries.

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⁵⁷ FRANKEL 1974, 10.

⁵⁸ See KESWANI and KNAPP 2003, 215.

⁵⁹ MANNING 2001, 80.

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