

THE NEW YORK AEGEAN BRONZE AGE COLLOQUIUM

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ISAW
New York University
15 East 84th Street

BRIAN S. KUNKEL

Adjunct Assistant Professor of Classical Studies, Hunter College, CUNY

The Recently Discovered Kiln Complex at Gournia: Its Construction and Operation within the LM IA Settlement

In 2014, a series of ceramic kilns was discovered on the northern edge of the Gournia settlement. Together the kilns formed a large complex that included multiple phases of construction. The complex dates exclusively to the Late Minoan IA period, and the kilns generally conform to the Minoan cross-draught channel type. Although this type is known from other sites in Crete, there are none that represent so many individual phases of construction. In total, 16 separate kilns were identified, which consisted primarily of fragmentary channels and fuel chambers often built over top of one another. While none of the pottery found in or around the kilns comes from an actual firing episode, an examination of the facility's construction and location could help to answer important questions regarding the organization of production. It has long been thought that Gournia was an industrial town where production was dispersed throughout the various households rather than being tightly centralized. Within this general context, it is argued that the kiln complex was not attached to the palace, nor was it fully independent. Instead, it may have operated under the control of a corporate lineage or extended household whose leadership oversaw the production and distribution of ceramics and other products.

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