

ABSTRACT

Title of thesis: THE HAGIA TRIADA SARCOPHAGUS:
INTERCONNECTIONS BETWEEN CRETE AND
EGYPT IN THE LATE BRONZE AGE

Paula Lynne Martino, Master of Arts, 2005

Thesis directed by: Professor Marjorie S. Venit
Department of Art History and Archaeology

The Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, a painted limestone larnax, has been an enigma in the Minoan artistic canon since the time of its discovery in 1903. It is the only larnax found to date made of limestone, and the only one to contain a series of narrative scenes of Minoan funerary rituals. Conversely, most contemporaneous Aegean larnake are decorated with randomly arranged abstract designs and figures.

The late twentieth century re-excavations at the site of its discovery have, at last, allowed scholars to assign a date (1370-1320 BC) to the sarcophagus. This period coincides with the late Eighteenth Dynasty in Egypt; a time when interconnections between Crete and Egypt were extensive. This development now permits a re-examination of the artistic and technical elements on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus that seem closely related to the Egyptian techniques used to decorate temples and tombs since the third millennium, BC.

THE HAGIA TRIADA SARCOPHAGUS: INTERCONNECTIONS BETWEEN
CRETE AND EGYPT IN THE LATE BRONZE AGE

by

Paula Lynne Martino

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Advisory Committee:

Professor Majorie S. Venit
Professor Renée Ater
Professor Joanne Pillsbury

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Chapter I: The Hagia Triada Sarcophagus

The Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, circa 1370- 1320 BC (LM IIIA2), is a painted limestone sarcophagus discovered by R. Paribeni on June 23, 1903 in the hilltop cemetery near the site of Hagia Triada, a Minoan/Mycenaean religious and bureaucratic center located in the Mesara plain of south-central Crete (Map 1).¹ Among known Minoan and Mycenaean containers for the interment of the dead, this sarcophagus is unique in terms of its material, polychromy, iconography, narrative and decorative elements, overall composition, technique and style.²

The painted limestone larnax was discovered in the early twentieth century in the Late Bronze Age cemetery at the Minoan palatial center known as Hagia Triada located in south-central Crete. A larnax is a small tub- or chest-shaped coffin with a gable-topped (fig. 1) lid usually made of terracotta that emerged as a popular form of burial container during the LM III period (1430-1200 BC) in Minoan Crete and at major Mycenaean sites on the Greek mainland. Among this type, the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus (fig. 2) stands as an anomaly. It is the only larnax found to date that was manufactured from limestone and the only one to contain a decorative program of coherent narrative scenes of funerary rituals executed using a painting technique, tempera on a ground of fine, smooth plaster, normally found in wall painting.

¹ *Ancient Crete* 1984, 174, fig. 251.

² Watrous 1991, 290; Marinatos 1997, 281-292

The sarcophagus measures 0.895 meters in height and is 1.375-1.385 meters long and 0.45 meters wide and is one of the largest known larnake ever found on Crete or the Greek mainland.³ The decorative program on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus encompasses all four sides and the four legs on which the object rests. The major narrative scenes occur on the long sides of the sarcophagus, which will be referred to in this thesis as Side A and Side B. Side A (fig. 3) contains the scene that is most complete and shows a funerary procession of offering bearers and a libation ceremony. There are seven figures in this scene consisting of two females and five males. At the left side of the narrative, the scene contains the image of a female figure in full profile and facing to the left. She is dressed in a white calf-length skirt with a red S-shaped pattern on the field that most scholars read as a signifier for hide and a white bodice decorated with a blue border that runs along her shoulder, arm, and torso and red streamers that appear to fall from her right sleeve. Her black hair is short on top, but curly tendrils cascade along the nape of her neck to the top of her shoulders. She is shown slightly bent at the waist holding a small vessel in both hands while pouring the contents of this vessel into a larger one that rests on a stone platform between two poles on stone platforms each topped by the symbol of the double axe and upon which rests a bird. Behind the first female, and also facing left, is another female followed by a male in a processional line. This female, in full profile, carries on her shoulders a pole that supports two vessels identical to the one being used by the female in the hide skirt. She wears an ankle-length blue robe with horizontal and vertical decorative bands in black, red, and white; as with the first female, red streamers appear to fall from the sleeve of her right arm. This woman also wears a

³ Long's table of larnax dimensions documents three other larnake that have at least two dimensions equal to or greater than the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus. See, Long 1974, 75-77, Appendix I.

red cap with flat crown from which red streamers fall behind her head to her shoulders. Her black hair appears to be similar in style and length to the figure in front of her. Behind her stands a male lyre player in full profile also facing left. He wears a robe identical to the female in front of him but his robe is an orange-red color with black and white horizontal and vertical decorative bands and red streamers that seem to fall from the right sleeve. His black hair is curly and cropped closed to the head. These three figures are set against a white background.

Behind the male musician, but facing to the right, is a group of three male offering bearers set against a blue background. Each of the three wears a hide skirt identical to the female pouring libations. They are all bare from the waist up but wear necklaces and bracelets and have red streamers falling from behind them though it is not clear how they are attached to the bodies. Their black curly hair is close cropped like that of the lyre player. These figures are rendered in a composite profile with their feet, legs, hips, arms, and head in profile and their torso and shoulders shown frontally. The first two figures from the left hold in their arms bovine figures that are taken as statuettes while the next figure holds a model of a boat without mast, oars, or sail. These figures stand in a processional line facing the fifth male figure, which is agreed is an image of the deceased, set against a white background.

In this section of the narrative, the deceased male faces to the right toward the offering bearers. He is set before a stepped architectural feature rendered as if it were made of red stone blocks and is, perhaps, a stepped altar. This feature may either be topped or flanked by the adjacent tree (there is a large lacuna in this section making the actual location of the tree difficult to determine). Behind the deceased male is a larger

architectural motif also rendered as if made of stone blocks. It is painted with red, white, and yellows decorative S-spirals, diagonal bands and dentil borders. This motif is meant to symbolize the tomb where the deceased male would be put to rest. The deceased male is the smallest figure in the scene and he is shown in full profile wearing a hide wrap that probably falls to the ankles (again the large lacuna in this section makes an accurate determination impossible) and is decorated with a black and yellow band that extends along the shoulders and down the front of the garment. The figure has the same black curly hair in a style identical to the other males in this scene. The most unusual feature about this male figure is his lack of arms making him appear as if he is wrapped in mummiform fashion.

All the figures are set on the same ground line and the entire scene is framed on the top and bottom by a compound border that consists of solid bands of red or white, followed by two denticulated bands in blue, yellow, and red, on the top and bottom and a row of rosettes in blue, red, and white filling the center. On the sides the scene is framed by the decorative panels that run from the top of the sarcophagus to the bottom of each of its four legs. This panel consists of vertical bands of blue and yellow that frame on each side a running blue and white S-spiral with rosettes of white and red filling the center.

On the opposite long side, Side B, (fig. 4) the scene contains seven figures of which six are female and one is male. A large lacuna where four of the figures are located prevents a description beyond the type of garment they wear. That they are female can be determined by the color of their feet. The use of white for the skin color of females and red for the skin of males was a convention of the Minoan artistic canon. The feet of these figures are white which signifies them as females. Starting from the left, all of the

figures face right and are in arranged in a processional line. The scene is framed by the same decorative elements described for Side A.

At the left side of the narrative, four females, standing two by two, appear to walk forward in procession behind the fifth female are set in a yellow background. Their ankle length robes are similar to the garments worn by the vessel carrier and the lyre player on Side A, except that two of the robes contain diagonal bars in the field of the skirts in addition to the horizontal and vertical bands some of which are filled with vertical or diagonal hatching. The major color of two of the robes is blue, while one is white with yellow diagonal bars, and the other is a combination of blue, red, and white diagonal bars giving them a more ornate appearance in comparison to the garments on Side A. The female leading this group is the only one completely intact. She stands in full profile with her arms outstretched at angle pointing toward the ground in front of her. The sleeves of her robe come down to the elbow and she wears a bracelet on each wrist. Her hair is close cropped on top and longer in the back falling to the top of her shoulders. The hair color is yellow but it is delineated by a heavy black outline and may represent a covering that keeps the hair in place. This figure wears a cap that is similar to the one worn by the vessel carrier on Side A that also contains a plume of red streamers emerging from the center of the flat crown. In front of this figure and set in a white background is a male musician playing the double flute. He is shown in full profile wearing a blue calf-length robe with red and white horizontal bands around the hem. His black hair is close cropped on the top and sides but falls in long wavy tendrils to the waist in back. This figure is partially obscured by the offering table that he walks behind.

On this yellow table lies a trussed bull on its side with its head facing frontally toward the viewer. The bull is white with black and red mottled spots. Two large red bands forming an X across the body and red lines across the front and hind legs shown together in a cluster signify the restraints placed on the bull to keep it in place. Faint red streaks representing blood lead from the bull's neck to a vessel that sits next to the right table leg and inform the viewer that this is a scene of animal sacrifice. Lying under the table in full profile are two small Cretan goats, one painted in a light red and the other with blue apparently awaiting the same fate as the bull on the table over their heads.

Beyond the table, farther to the right of the narrative and set in a blue background, a female stands before a low altar. She wears the same costume and hairstyle as the female performing the libation ceremony on Side A and may be meant to represent the same person. Her arms are outstretched in the same gesture as the lead female in the processional behind her. The altar is decorated on the sides with red, yellow, and white horizontal and vertical bands and a white running S-spiral down its center; on it stands a shallow gray bowl. In front of the female and above the altar a beaked ewer and a two-handled bowl of fruit seem to float in the air. The placement of these objects within the composition in such an unnatural manner may indicate the importance in informing the viewer of the type of offerings presented during this ritual act. In front of this low altar stands another pole with a stone base, rendered in a red and white checked pattern, topped by a double axe upon which a black bird is perched. The pole is placed between the low altar being used by the female and taller structure that appears to be a shrine. This rectangular structure is topped by the Minoan horns of consecration and from its center emerges a tree. The structure is very similar to tree shrines found on Minoan seals

and rings (fig. 5). It contains yellow and white bands which frame the top and sides. In the center of the top, there is a row of circles in red, white, and blue that probably represents the ends of wooden beams that would have made up the roof structure of a real building. A vertical, running S-spiral motif, painted white, fills the center of the structure in manner similar to that found on the low altar.

On the short sides are individual scenes framed on the top and bottom with decorative horizontal borders similar to those found on the long sides of the sarcophagus. On the legs a series of diagonal fields of yellow, red, blue, and white each delineated with thin wavy diagonal lines of a contrasting color, is meant to represent a veined stone such as marble. On the short side that I shall call Side C, (fig. 6) the composition is divided into two registers. The scene on the top register is almost completely lost but what remains is enough to describe this as a procession of males wearing short, pointed kilts made of richly patterned textile. This scene is set against a yellow background. The registers are separated by a horizontal compound border of solid bands of blue and white framing a series of blue rosettes. In the lower register of Side C set against a white background is a goat-drawn chariot set on a thick yellow ground line. The chariot contains two female figures wearing garment and caps similar to the robed females on Sides A and B. All the figures on this side of the sarcophagus face to the left.

On the opposite short side, Side D, (fig. 7) there is a single chariot scene set in a red background. The decorative borders that frame this scene are different from those found on the opposite side. Three of the four horizontal rows of dentil bands framing the blue rosettes on this side are yellow and red while the other is yellow and white. Each of the dentil bands are topped by a series of blue and white horizontal bars filled with thin

horizontal lines in a contrasting color making these bars appear striped. The chariot on this side is griffin-drawn and contains two women in similar garb to those found on the opposite side. The griffin is painted with bold sections of blue, white, and yellow that may be crude attempts at modeling and shading to achieve a sense of volume. It is, nevertheless, the most abstract figure on the sarcophagus. It contains some of the characteristic elements of the Minoan-style griffin with its bird head, leonine body, and notched wings, but it lacks the running spirals on its neck and wings like the griffins found in Xeste 3 on the Cycladic island of Thera or in the Throne Room at Knossos (fig 9). Above the griffin is a bird shown in profile and painted in shades of yellow, blue, and white in a pose that could either be read as about to land or just taking flight. This bird faces the two women in the chariot who both face left.

In 1974, the narrative scenes on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus underwent an extensive iconographical analysis by Charlotte Long, who finds numerous parallels for them in individual motifs and objects found in the Minoan and Mycenaean archaeological record⁴. However, many of the technical and artistic elements, including both the overall organization of the motifs as well as a few of the individual elements, have few to no parallels in Minoan or Mycenaean art. While many scholars have alluded to the similarities between the scenes on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus and those found in Egyptian tomb paintings, Long discounts an artistic connection between the Aegean and Egyptian worlds. In her defense, the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus was not securely dated by stratigraphic evidence from an archaeological context in 1974. At the time, its date of the sarcophagus was merely an educated guess based solely on stylistic parallels to other

⁴ Long 1974

paintings whose own dates are insecure.⁵ In addition, the prevailing school of thought at the time held that Mycenaean domination of Crete occurred about 1500 BC leading to a cultural change that brought with it a new form of artistic expression emphasizing power and rulership through scenes of ritual processions in palatial contexts.

However, archaeological finds both in Crete and Egypt that have been published over the last 30 years have resulted in a shift in the way scholars now view the Aegean in the Late Bronze Age as more evidence points to greater direct contact between Crete and Egypt through trade, diplomacy and, perhaps even royal exogamy that precedes the arrival of the Mycenaeans. Coupled with the new finds are the sites on Crete, like Hagia Triada, that have been re-excavated and re-studied using modern archaeological methods and recording practices over the past thirty years that brought new information to light and permitted the reevaluation of evidence that already exists. Most important for the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus is the recent work of Dr. Vincenzo La Rosa under the auspices of the Italian Archaeological School at Athens that found evidence at the site of its tomb to, at long last, securely date the sarcophagus to the LM IIIA2 period (1370-1320 BC) of the Late Bronze Age on Crete.

Now that the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus can be placed within a specific temporal context, it is time for it to be reexamined within the broader historic and geographic context of the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean region. This thesis will develop a framework of interconnections between Crete and Egypt during the Late Bronze Age with an emphasis on the evidence for contact during the LM II-III/Eighteenth Dynasty (1490-1320 BC) and place the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus within this context. The goal

⁵ For example, the Procession Frescoes at Knossos are dated solely on stylistic grounds to the LM II-III period due to a complete lack of stratigraphic evidence. See, Rehak 1996, 44.

of this thesis is not to reiterate what is Minoan about the sarcophagus but rather to identify and support with comparative evidence from Egypt what cannot be found in the Minoan canon and to show how these deviances from Minoan technique and iconography were borrowed or transferred from Egypt.

In contrast to the narrative scenes of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, most contemporaneous larnake, whether Minoan or Mycenaean, are decorated with abstract designs like spirals and zigzags or stylized animal and marine motifs. A few of the clay coffins contain schematic figural forms, arranged randomly, that symbolize female mourners or males engaged in hunt or argonautic scenes. Rarer still are the geometric figural forms lying on a couch or bier symbolizing the deceased.⁶ Not one of the larnake, found to date, contain the elements of narrative. Compared to the random compositions of highly abstract decorative programs found on terracotta larnake, the naturalistic and carefully organized narrative scenes of funerary rites on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus make it anomalous within this category of funerary furnishings.

The closest Cretan stylistic parallels to the figural decoration adorning the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus are found in wall paintings from Knossos, Phaistos, and Hagia Triada that suddenly emerge in the LM II/LM IIIA era (circa 1500-1320 BC). In fact, for decades scholars have alluded to the compositional and stylistic connection between the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, the Cretan wall paintings, and contemporaneous wall paintings found in Egypt where offering processions and animal sacrifice were conventional themes in tomb paintings dating back to the Old Kingdom (2630 BC)⁷ On

⁶ Watrous (1991) 289, 294, 296; Marinatos (1997) 282-284.

⁷See, Evans, 1928, *PMII*, 734; Long 1974, 47; Watrous 1991, 285-306; Hiller 1999, 361-369.

Crete, however, narrative scenes of processions and ritual activities that emphasize human activities over nature seem to occur spontaneously because there is little evidence to connect them to a style that developed from earlier forms of Minoan art.⁸ The sudden appearance of a painting style in palatial complexes and on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus with close similarities to Egyptian wall paintings has long given scholars reason to believe that interconnections with Egypt through trade, migration, exogamy, or diplomatic gift exchange should be viewed as possibilities for the transference of Egyptian artistic ideas to Crete leading to its assimilation into the Minoan canon. In contrast, the only major iconographic study, published in 1974, found little evidence to support these hypotheses, concluding instead that it was the Post-Palatial period of Mycenaean control on Crete that influenced the composition and iconography found on the sarcophagus. Long's exemplary iconographic analysis of the pictorial program on the Hagia Triada sarcophagus relates almost all aspects of the ritual iconography depicted to objects containing similar, but not exact, iconographic parallels found in Cretan funerary contexts be they of Minoan or Mycenaean origin. Long consistently excludes the possibility for the transference of technical, stylistic, compositional, iconographic and symbolic ideas from anywhere outside the island if the parallels are not exactly identical or those of the island's Mycenaean overlords.⁹ At the time of her publication, most Aegean scholars viewed the influence of a perceived conquering Mycenaean hegemony as responsible for the widespread destruction, the shift in the centers of power, and the

⁸Immerwahr 1990, 34-37.

⁹Long 1974.

sudden appearance of the processional wall paintings on Crete around 1500 BC which forms Long's conceptual framework.

More recent archaeological finds and the re-examination of many sites and materials excavated earlier in the twentieth century in Crete and in Egypt has produced a new direction in Aegean prehistoric scholarship that now allows for stronger hypotheses regarding the transference and assimilation of technologies, artistic strategies, and spiritual ideologies in ways unassociated with Mycenaean conquest.¹⁰ Intercultural contact through means other than total domination also provides a basis for the exchange of ideas that are more often adapted rather than adopted by the receiving culture.¹¹ For example, the archaeological excavations carried out in the later part of the twentieth century by the Italian Archaeological School at Athens suggests that during the LM IIIA-2 period (1370-1320 BC), Hagia Triada, the small Minoan outpost located in south-central Crete, underwent a physical redevelopment and expansion complete with new building types combining Minoan and Mycenaean architectural features and elite goods as evidence for a brief period of prominence among religious and bureaucratic centers.¹²

¹⁰ The framework for these ideas is formalized during the First International Colloquium on Aegean Prehistory in 1970. See the introductory papers by Crossland and Evans 1970, 5-15 and 17-26, respectively. See also La Rosa 1995, 881-891 for an analysis of the archaeological evidence at Phaistos and Hagia Triada that refutes the idea of conquest in light of evidence that points to shifts in power in the wake of a natural disaster on Crete.

¹¹ For a detailed study of cultural transmission and adaptation of ideas between Crete and Egypt, see Weingarten 1991, 3-32; On the idea of adaptation versus adoption Christos Doumas writes, "Iconographic elements in the Thera wall-paintings may also be encountered in the art of Crete, Egypt and Mesopotamia, but they are simply elements in a common artistic vocabulary, revealing nothing more than the close contacts between the peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that even if these traits were borrowed by one culture from another, they may have been used to express different ideas or to serve different ends in each case." See, Doumas 1992, 29.

¹² The presence of a Mycenaean hegemony at Hagia Triada during the Late Minoan period continues to be debated. See, Preston 2004, 336-337 and La Rosa 1997, 255-264.

One of the most exciting finds resulting from the re-examination of Hagia Triada and its necropolis that began in 1977 is the *in situ* evidence necessary to securely date the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus and the tomb in which it was found to the early LM IIIA2 period (1370-1320 BC).¹³ For the first time since its discovery, the sarcophagus can be firmly situated within a specific chronological framework. This new information therefore calls for a re-examination of the sarcophagus against other archaeological evidence from this period and within the broader context of cultural exchanges between Crete and Egypt during the LM IIIA2 period (1370-1320 BC), a time that seems to be one of great political and ideological transition on the island and one when trade and other interconnections with Egypt were pronounced.

This study, therefore, explores the recent scholarship on the interconnection between Crete during its Neo and Final Palatial periods and Egypt from Hyksos rule of the 15th Dynasty to the 18th Dynasty from the reign of Ahmose I, the pharaoh responsible for expelling the Hyksos from Egypt through that of Amenhotep III, a span of 317 years between 1637 and 1320 BC in order to place the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus within its correct temporal position.¹⁴

¹³La Rosa 1999, 177-188.

¹⁴ According to the chronological table proposed by Rehak and Younger 2001, 383-473.

Chapter II: The Chronology of the Aegean Bronze Age

Finding an object's place within the appropriate temporal and historical context is a fundamental goal of an ancient art historian or archaeologist. The chronology of Minoan civilization, the discussion of which is exacerbated by the conflicting dating of the volcanic eruption that destroyed Akrotiri, the Bronze Age town on the Cycladic island of Thera (modern Santorini), has been the subject of great debate among scholars of Aegean pre-history for the past fifteen years.¹⁵ Those who relate the eruption of the Thera volcano to the widespread destruction of the palatial complexes all over Crete, including Knossos, Phaistos and Hagia Triada circa 1500 BC use this date as the terminus for the Neo-Palatial Period and the beginning of the Post-Palatial era and Mycenaean control over Crete.¹⁶ Scholars who view the Thera volcano and the Cretan destructions as simultaneous events prefer what is known as the Aegean low chronology.

The high Aegean chronology is advocated by those who use the evidence found in tree-ring dating (dendrochronology)¹⁷ and who argue for an earlier date for the volcanic eruption --- circa 1628 BC (LM IA) --- one that was independent of the widespread destruction of palatial centers on Crete, which occurred later around 1500 BC (LM IB/LM II). The cause of the Cretan destructions have been variously interpreted by these scholars as the result of earthquake activity followed by fires, an invasion of Mycenaeans

¹⁵ For a good summary on the subject, see: Davis 1992, 735-36.

¹⁶ This is the chronology followed by Long.

¹⁷ The Aegean Dendrochronology Project has established a master tree ring sequence that supports this date. The project reports are available on line: <http://www.arts.cornell.edu/dendro/>. See also, Renfrew, 1996, 780-783.

from the Greek mainland, or by a Knossian takeover of the island. Whatever the cause of the destructions, the palatial/administrative center at Knossos as well as the activities at the port town of Kommos, located on the southern coast of Crete were largely unaffected by the great turmoil experienced elsewhere.¹⁸ The LM IB destructions are still recognized by Aegean scholars as a period of significant disruption to the Minoan cultural framework and the time when evidence of a Mycenaean presence emerges. Nevertheless, a cultural shift from Minoan to Mycenaean seems to occur more gradually,¹⁹ as will be demonstrated by the hybrid nature of the palatial and funerary architecture at Hagia Triada and Kommos, a nearby town on the south coast of Crete, built during the LM III period. Under this scenario, the Post-Palatial Mycenaean era does not occur until much later---that is, until around 1300 BC (early LM IIIB).

This study will use the Modified High Minoan (Aegean) and Low Egyptian Chronology (Table 1) proposed by Paul Rehak and John G. Younger in their article, "Review of Aegean Prehistory VII: Neopalatial, Final Palatial and Postpalatial Crete", first published in *AJA* 102 (1998) 91-173.²⁰ In this chronology, the volcanic eruption that destroyed Akrotiri on Thera circa 1628 BC occurred during the last half of the Neo-Palatial Period in LM IA prior to the widespread Cretan destructions that took place circa 1500 BC. It is during the late Neo-Palatial period that the sudden appearance of

¹⁸ Rehak and Younger 2001, 440; The archaeological evidence shows that Knossos and Kommos were spared from the major destruction found at Chania, Phaistos, Hagia Triada, Gournia, Mochlos, Palaikaistro, Archanes and other major Minoan administrative centers throughout the island.

¹⁹ See, Driessen 1997 for a thorough examination of the role of the Mycenaeans on Crete during the LMII period. In this volume, the articles by Andrikou, 9-22; Cucuzza, 73-84; Haskell, 187-193; Kallitsaki, 213-227; La Rosa, 249-266; Shaw, 423-434; Watrous and Blitzer, 511-516 discuss the level of Mycenaean influence on Crete, which is especially evident during the LMIIIA2 period. Only Cucuzza and La Rosa argue strongly for Mycenaean dominance.

²⁰ Rehak and Younger 2001, 383-473

Egyptian-like iconography and compositional elements in monumental processional scenes appear in the wall paintings at Knossos, that is, prior to 1500 BC.²¹ The comparative Egyptian Low Chronology proposed by Kitchen²² for Egypt, permits interchanges between Crete and Egypt from the seventeenth through the fourteenth century BC. It places the construction of a palace-like building with Minoan-style wall paintings built by a Hyksos ruler from the Egyptian Fifteenth Dynasty (1637-1529 BC) at Avaris (modern Tel el-Dab'a) contemporaneous to late Neo-Palatial period on Crete (LM IA 1700-1580 BC) and the volcanic eruption on Thera. The wall paintings from Avaris, found in Tel el-Dab'a, Egypt during the penultimate decade of our last century is particularly relevant to this study. The archaeological record there provides strong evidence for the presence of Minoan painters in Egypt during the earlier Hyksos period and at the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty strengthening the argument for the transmission of artistic ideas between Crete and Egypt early in the period when interconnections with Crete appear to be the most intense.²³ Concurrently, at Knossos, believed to be the island's most significant administrative and religious center at this time, late Neo-Palatial paintings dating to the sixteenth century BC give primacy to the representation of the human figure as do Egyptian paintings in opposition to the earlier themes where flora and fauna dominate which bear close stylistic similarities to the seventeenth century BC wall paintings of Thera (figs. 8-10). In Egypt, later in the Eighteenth Dynasty, during the reigns of Hatshepsut, Tuthmosis III, and Amenhotep II,

²¹ Immerwahr 1991, 84-103.

²² The Egyptian Low Chronology was developed and published by Kitchen 1987, 37-55. It is included in Rehak and Younger 2001, 301, Table 1.

²³ For discussions of the evidence for increased trade and contact between Egypt and Crete during this period see, Cline 1987, 17-23; Watrous 1992, 169-183; Cline 1994, 31-47.

between circa 1479-1392 BC, images of the Keftiu (the Egyptian word for the people from Crete) appear in processional scenes on the walls of Theban tombs in the same posture and dress as those found on wall paintings from Knossos and later during the LM IIIA1 period, circa 1430 BC, on the wall paintings of buildings at Hagia Triada, and, later still, in the LM IIIA2 period, circa 1370 BC, on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus.²⁴ In the Aegean Modified High Chronology, the Hagia Triada sarcophagus dates between 1370-1320 BC and its fabrication is contemporaneous to the reign of Amenhotep III and his son, Akhenaten (1392-1336 B.C), according to Kitchen's Egyptian Low Chronology.

It is during the reign of Amenhotep III that Egypt was at its most powerful. From this position of strength, Egypt engaged in diplomatic relations with the rest of the known world through exogamy, gift exchange, and other means of persuasion including intimidation.²⁵ The reign of Amenhotep III coincides with another phase of destruction at Knossos that seems to weaken its role as the dominant administrative and artistic center in the Aegean. The decline of Knossos during the transition between LM IIIA1 and LM IIIA2, circa 1370 BC, is juxtaposed against the parallel evidence for a cultural and architectural renaissance in the south-central Mesara, the region on Crete that includes the sites of Hagia Triada and the harbor town of Kommos.²⁶ The architectural expansion at Hagia Triada is viewed by scholars as a signifier of its rising prominence as a major

²⁴See, Davies 1973, 20-25, pls. XVIII-XX; Hodel-Hoernes 2000, 146 and fig. 105. The tomb of this vizier, who served the Eighteenth Dynasty Pharaohs Tuthmosis III and Amenhotep II about 1445-1426 BC, contains detailed representations of foreign peoples bringing tribute to Egypt. Among these foreign peoples are the "Princes of Crete and the island of the Mediterranean."

²⁵Cline 1987, 21.

²⁶Betancourt 1985, 33; Shaw 1997, 431-434.

administrative center²⁷ and is linked, at least architecturally, to the contemporaneous construction of Building P at Kommos, the largest storage facility so far found on Crete.²⁸ At this time in Cretan history, Hagia Triada emerges as the perfect destination for a “Knossian” school of painters in search of a new center of power replete with an elite society for whom to practice their craft.²⁹

²⁷Rehak and Younger 2001, 443; La Rosa 1997, 255-264.

²⁸ Shaw 1997, 432.

²⁹ Philip Betancourt makes note of the great extent to which the pottery styles at Hagia Triada are informed by contemporaneous Knossian ware. See, Betancourt 1985, 42.

Table 1 Modified High Minoan (Aegean) Chronology and Low Egyptian Chronology³⁰

- 1750	-----		
	N	<i>neopalatial palaces rise</i>	
	E	MM III	
	O	1750-1700	
- 1700	-----		13th Dynasty - 1759-1606
	P		
	A	LM IA	
	L	1700-1580	
	A		
	T.	<i>Thera eruption ca. 1628</i>	
			15th (Hyksos) Dynasty
			1637-1529
- 1600	-----		17th Dynasty (Thebes)
			1606-1539
		LM IB	
		1580-1490	
			18th Dynasty - 1539-1296
- 1500	-----		
		<i>Cretan destructions</i>	
	F	LM II	<i>Mycenaean</i>
	I	1490-1430	<i>presence?</i>
	N		
	A		
	L		<i>transition</i>
		LM IIIA1	<i>period</i>
- 1400	-----	1430-1370	
	P		
	A	LM IIIA2	<i>Knossos destruction</i>
	L	1370-1320	
	A		
	T.		
- 1300	-----	early	<i>Knossos final</i>
		<i>palatial administration ends</i>	<i>destruction</i>
	P	LM IIIB	
	O	1320-1200	
	S		
	T	late	
- 1200	-----		
	P	early	
	A		
	L	LM IIIC	1200-1100
	A		
	T.	late	
- 1100	-----		
		Subminoan	
		(transition to Iron Age)	
		1100-1000/975	
			19th Dynasty - 1295-1186
			Ramses I 1295-1294; Seti I 1294-1279
			Ramses II 1279-1213
			Merenptah 1213-1203 <i>Libyans attack Delta</i>
			Amenmesses 1203-1200
			Seti II, Siptah, Tewosret 1200-1186
			20th Dynasty - 1186-1069
			Setnakht 1186-1184
			Ramses III 1184-1153 <i>Sea Peoples</i>
			Ramses IV - VI 1153-1136
			Ramses VII 1136-29; Ramses VIII 1129-26
			Ramses IX 1126-1108
			Ramses X 1108-1099
			Ramses XI 1099-1070/69

³⁰ Rehak and Younger 2001, 391, Table 1.

Chapter III: Bronze Age Interconnections between Crete and Egypt

Comparisons between compositional and stylistic elements of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, wall paintings at major palatial centers like Knossos and Hagia Triada, and contemporaneous wall paintings found in Egypt where processions were a consistent theme on wall paintings dating back to the Old Kingdom (2630 BC) have been noted in the scholarship for decades.³¹ Until the last two decades of the twentieth century, however, there had been very little scholarship regarding the means by which interconnections and the exchange of artistic and other ideas traveled, directly and indirectly, between Mediterranean societies during the Bronze Age (Map 2). Yet cultural exchanges such as those that occur through trade,³² diplomatic relations,³³ and even migrating populations³⁴ have been widely documented and should be immersed in the scholarship that explores the transference of ideas between regions. These threads of evidence expand upon the more traditional view that favors *a priori* transference through hegemonic dominance by an invasive culture either through colonization or conquest.³⁵ This latter view is particularly problematic for discussions of contact between Egypt and

³¹ See Evans, 1928, *PMII*, 734; Long 1974, 47; Watrous 1991, 285-306; Hiller 1999, 361-369.

³² The role of the Minoan port town of Kommos as a transshipment hub for goods imported from Egypt, Cyprus, Mycenae, Anatolia, Canaan, the Levant and Italy during the Late Bronze Age is one such documented case. See, Watrous 1992, 169-183.

³³ The famous “Aegean List” found on the fifth statue base at the mortuary temple of Amenhotep III at Kom el-Hatan, Egypt lists Keftiu (Crete) twice. Eric Cline has convincingly argued these “captive ovals” at the base of the statue symbolize, not an Egyptian hegemony in the Aegean but the diplomatic and commercial relationship that had long existed between the two lands. See, Cline 1998, 236-239 and 244.

³⁴ Bietak 1995, 26; Bloedow 1997, 439-447.

³⁵ This is the approach taken by Long in her extensive publication on the iconographic and symbolic elements found on the Hagia Triada sarcophagus. See Long 1974, 72-74.

the Aegean where there is no historical evidence for the existence of an Egyptian hegemony over the lands of this region. In this case, the transference of ideas, including forms of artistic expression, between Crete and Egypt must have occurred through other more peaceful exchanges.

Chronologically, evidence for contact between Crete and Egypt begins early. Peter Warren's extensive research into the acquisition and adaptation of Egyptian lapidary art The Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, circa 1370- 1320 BC (LM IIIA2), is a painted limestone sarcophagus discovered by R. Paribeni on June 23, 1903 in the hilltop cemetery near the site of Hagia Triada, a Minoan/Mycenaean religious and bureaucratic center located in the Mesara plain of south-central Crete (Map 1).³⁶ Among known Minoan and Mycenaean containers for the interment of the dead, this sarcophagus is unique in terms of its material, polychromy, iconography, narrative and decorative elements, overall composition, technique and style.³⁷ The sarcophagus is manufactured from a single block of limestone, where all other larnake are made from terracotta. Its unusual narrative scenes of funerary rituals were applied to the sarcophagus in painted plaster, a technique normally reserved in the Aegean for wall painting. The experimental nature of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, an object that exists within the normally conservative funerary realm, is demonstrated by the anomalous use of limestone and artistic strategies normally found in ceremonial wall paintings from major bureaucratic/religious complexes on Crete and in wall paintings from tombs in Egypt,

³⁶ *Ancient Crete* 1984, 174, fig. 251.

³⁷ Watrous 1991, 290; Marinatos 1997, 281-292

and is viewed here as evidence for a patron who had, perhaps, developed a world view that extended beyond the cultural norms and traditions of an Aegean culture.

by Minoan Crete shows that the manufacture of stone vessels in Egypt occurred with the greatest frequency during First through Fourth Dynasties and again in the Eighteenth Dynasty³⁸ (these periods correspond to the EM I/EM II³⁹ the LM IIIA periods on Crete). At Knossos, Sir Arthur Evans found fragments of Egyptian stone vases⁴⁰ in EM I (3500-2900 BC) contexts beneath the Central Court of the Palace. In the LM II^B (1580 -1490 BC) shrine treasury from the Cretan palatial center, Zakros, Warren documents Egyptian stone vessels dated to the Pre- and Early Dynastic eras that had been modified on Crete into Minoan forms.⁴¹ Later still in LM IIIA contexts⁴² from the Central Shrine Treasury at Knossos, Evans documents an Egyptian stone, baggy alabastron⁴³ that dates to the Middle Kingdom or the Second Intermediate Period.⁴⁴ These examples and others, in original or Minoan modified forms, were found in elite contexts on Crete and give the impression they were objects of high status and value.⁴⁵ Adding support to this argument for Egyptian stone vessels as objects of status and value is the fact that many vessels

³⁸ Warren 1997, 209.

³⁹ Watrous states the EM I period is now estimated to range from 3500 to 2900 BC with EM II from 2900-2150 BC. This is roughly contemporaneous to the pre-Dynastic and Old Kingdom eras in Egypt. See, Watrous 2001, 159.

⁴⁰ Evans 1928, *PM II*, 30, fig. 12.

⁴¹ Warren 1997, 211-212.

⁴² This period is contemporaneous to the last half of the Eighteenth Dynasty in Egypt (circa 1427-1295 BC).

⁴³ Evans 1928, *PM II*, 823-824 and fig. 537 K.

⁴⁴ Warren 1997, 214.

⁴⁵ Warren 1997, 222.

made much earlier have been found in later elite contexts, including tombs, on Crete⁴⁶ signifying their importance as heirlooms⁴⁷ and, perhaps, commemorations of diplomatic exchanges between elite members of Egyptian and Minoan culture.

In addition to the lapidary arts, the technology for the manufacture of faience was transferred from Egypt to Crete at an early date. Faience, a self-glazing composite material is made by the high -heat firing of silicates like sand or powdered quartz combined with natron, a sodium carbonate binder.⁴⁸ This attractive material was often used as a substitute for semi-precious stones, especially lapis lazuli, which indicates why it is ubiquitous, exported, and copied.⁴⁹ The process of producing faience seems to have originated independently in Upper Egypt and Mesopotamia during the Neolithic era. In Egypt, faience objects first appear in fourth millennium Predynastic contexts.⁵⁰ From the period of the Old Kingdom, a wall adorned with finely crafted faience tiles⁵¹ was found in the so-called Blue Room of the pyramid and mortuary complex for the Third Dynasty pharaoh Djoser (circa 2630-2611 BC). The artistic and technical mastery demonstrated in this composition of multi-colored tiles inlaid in mosaic-like fashion attests at the beginning of the Pharoanic era to the existence of a long tradition of artisanship and technical expertise in the use of faience as an artistic medium. In fact, hundreds of small

⁴⁶ This is the case with the baggy alabastron from Knossos referenced in note 11 and the vessels found at Zakros referenced in note 9.

⁴⁷ Warren 1995, 1.

⁴⁸ Foster 1979, 1.

⁴⁹ Foster 1979. xxi

⁵⁰ Foster 1979, 26-27.

⁵¹ See, Saleh 1987, pg. 51, fig. 17

faience figurines, pieces of jewelry, and vessels have been found in tombs, temples, and secular contexts in Egypt through the period of Roman rule.

Faience objects, imported from or clearly dependent on Egypt, have been found in a number of sites on Crete from the Early Bronze Age on. Tombs from the EM II (2900-2150 BC) cemeteries at Mochlos⁵² have yielded some of the earliest faience objects, a small collection of beads and a bowl (now lost), that may have been imported.⁵³ The earliest evidence for faience workshops on Crete, which occurs during the MM II (1990-1800 BC),⁵⁴ come from the south wing of the palace of Zakros and possibly from Knossos where Evans found cakes of unfired faience alongside the finished objects of the Temple Repository.⁵⁵ In fact, some of Minoan Crete's finest examples of faience manufacture such as the figurines of snake handlers, animals, plants, fruits, flowers, beads, vessels, and votive robes⁵⁶ come from the MM III (1750-1700 BC)⁵⁷ Temple Repositories at Knossos signify the role of the site as an important center for superior artistic and technical skill in faience production.⁵⁸

The careful examination for foreign motifs, symbols, and images that emerge suddenly in the artistic repertoire of a culture is another method used to sift through the

⁵²Most built during the EM II period (, according to Jeffrey Soles. See, Soles 1992, 41.

⁵³ At the time of publication of Foster's corpus of Aegean faience, the sources for Early Minoan faience could not be determined. See, Foster 1979, 56.

⁵⁴ Watrous 2001, 160.

⁵⁵Foster 1979, 59-60.

⁵⁶ Evans, 1928, *PM I*, 490, fig. 351; 498-504, figs. 356-362; 506, fig. 364; 510-512, figs. 366-369; 518, fig. 377.

⁵⁷ This period is roughly contemporaneous to the Egyptian 13th Dynasty Middle Kingdom.

⁵⁸Evans, 1928, *PM I*, 488-506.

evidence for clues that point to the cultural exchange of ideas. On Crete, griffins, mythological animals of Near Eastern source that is possibly Syrian,⁵⁹ found on the LM IA (circa 1700-1628 BC⁶⁰) wall painting in the adyton⁶¹ of Xeste 3 at Akrotiri and on the circa 1500 BC⁶² walls of the Throne Room at Knossos (fig. 9) may speak to this initial interchange. Unlike the Syrian griffin however, the Minoan-style griffin is characteristic for its crest, its notched wings (when winged) and the running spirals on the neck as shown in figure 9. In Egypt, this Minoan-style griffin first appears in the fragments of a wall painting from a building in the Fifteenth Dynasty (1637-1529 BC)⁶³ Hyksos capital of Avaris (fig. 10). Conversely, on Thera and Crete, imagery from the Egyptian artistic canon suddenly appears in the form of life-sized images of papyrus, a species of riverine plant not indigenous to the Aegean, on a seventeenth century, BC wall painting in Room 1 in the House of the Ladies at Akrotiri on Thera (fig.11).⁶⁴ In smaller scale, papyri are

⁵⁹ Morgan 1995, 38.

⁶⁰ 1700 BC marks the beginning of the LM IA period according to the chronology proposed by Rehak and Younger and used in this thesis. 1628 BC is the date most scholars agree corresponds to the eruption of the Thera volcano that buried Akrotiri. See, Rehak and Younger 2001, 389-390.

⁶¹ An adyton, also referred to as a lustral basin, is a sunken room accessed by a winding stair adjacent to a larger room that seems to have been designed for ritual and ceremonial function. Adytons are found only in palatial contexts on Crete such as those at Knossos and Phaistos. At Akrotiri a large structure known as Xeste 3 contains a similar arrangement of rooms where the frescos of young women before a seated mature woman with a winged griffin painted on the walls of the adyton suggest a ritual purpose for this room. See, Marinatos 1984, 73ff.

⁶² Immerwahr notes the date for the painting of the griffins in the Throne Room at Knossos is controversial because scholars disagree on the interpretation of the stratigraphic evidence. Evans assigned them to LM II, while Blegen and Palmer implied contemporaneity with the LH IIIB Throne Room at Pylos on the Greek mainland. As a compromise, Immerwahr dates them broadly to LM II/III. See, Immerwahr 1990, 176.

⁶³ This is contemporaneous to the LM IA period (1700-1580 BC) in the Aegean.

⁶⁴ Dumas 1992, 34; Dumas calls the plants in Room 1, House of the Ladies sea or sand daffodils, *Pancreatium Maritimum*, a plant with small, white daffodil-like flowers that grows 12-15 inches in height and is indigenous to the sandy beaches on Thera. The plants depicted in this wall painting are 5-6 feet in height. If they are in fact this species, the artist has significantly magnified their actual size and chosen an extremely abstract way of representing them for they hardly resemble sea daffodils found in nature.

found on LMII/III (1490-1370 BC) Palace Style vessels⁶⁵ from Cretan contexts (fig.11) and on at least one LMIII Minoan seal.⁶⁶

Another fabricated creature from the Egyptian canon, the sphinx, appears on a MM period seal stone⁶⁷ found at Arkhanes in Northern Crete where it is set on a ground line, a compositional element rarely found on Minoan seals. Another sphinx, this one in the form of a terracotta plaque, comes from the MM II context at Quartier Mu at the palace complex at Mallia.⁶⁸ A sistrum, a rattle that carries ritual value and that is integral to Egyptian cult is imitated in terracotta version,⁶⁹ presumably made on Crete and found in the EM cemetery at Arkhanes, and another sistrum is pictured on the famous MM III/LM I⁷⁰ era Harvester Vase⁷¹ being shaken by a male member of the processional that surrounds the body of this stone vessel from Hagia Triada.

Judith Weingarten's careful study of the transference and transformation of the Egyptian hippopotamus goddess Tawaret, who first appeared in Egypt no later than Dynasty VI, into the Minoan genie first found on sealings from Phaistos and Knossos that

Doumas bases his assertion on an illustration of a pressed sea daffodil head and its resemblance to the yellow flowers shown on the House of the Ladies wall paintings. It seems implausible that Theran artists, who otherwise painted in an expressively naturalistic style, would manipulate the sea daffodil first by pressing its flower and then representing the plant in such an abstract and monumental fashion. On the other hand, Warren has argued the plants in Room 1 are papyrus, a motif not uncommon in Minoan art. Papyrus *Cyperus papyrus*, a plant native to Egypt but not to the Cyclades or Crete, grows to heights greater than 5 feet. It is this plant, with its fan-like heads and small yellow blossoms, that more closely resemble the plants depicted on the walls of Room 1, House of the Ladies.

⁶⁵ Evans 1928, *PM II*, 401, fig. 231.

⁶⁶ Kenna 1960, Pl. 14, No. 357.

⁶⁷ Kenna 1960, Pl. 6, No. 122.

⁶⁸ See, Warren 1995, Pl. 11, fig. 2.

⁶⁹ Warren 1995, Pl. 11, fig. 1.

⁷⁰ Rehak 1996, 43-44.

⁷¹ Vasilakis, pg. 130

date to the MM II period⁷² adds to the body of evidence for long-standing contact between Crete and Egypt.

Archaeology also documents the transference of technique from Egypt to Crete in the wake of trade between the two lands. In the art of painting, the Egyptians discovered, during the Old Kingdom, a process for making a synthetic form of blue pigment by heating a combination of silicon, copper oxide and calcium oxide. The “recipe” for making the pigment, known to scholars as Egyptian Blue, was exported from Egypt to Crete as early as 2,000 BC.⁷³ The earliest known fresco fragments on Crete with Egyptian Blue⁷⁴ were found at Knossos in context with MM II⁷⁵ Kamares-ware sherds, an elite polychrome pottery that was widely exported to Egypt during the Middle Kingdom.⁷⁶ The transference of Egyptian Blue to Crete and Kamares-ware to Egypt during the MM II/Middle Kingdom era indicates established interconnections necessary for the friendly transmission of technology and artistic ideas between these two lands.⁷⁷

Elsewhere in the Aegean, the technique and material used by the masterful artists who executed the wall paintings found at Akrotiri, the seventeenth century BC Bronze Age town on the Cycladic island of Thera, is the same as those found on Crete. For the color blue, Thera artists also used Egyptian Blue even though the same color could have

⁷² Weingarten 1991, 3-15 and Pls. 1-19.

⁷³ Immerwahr 1990, 16.

⁷⁴ Immerwahr 1990, 16; Evans 1928, *PM I*, 251, fig. 188.

⁷⁵ This period is contemporaneous to the Egyptian 12th Dynasty Middle Kingdom.

⁷⁶ Kamares-ware has been found in the workmen’s villages of Kahun and Haraga in the Faiyum which were connected to the construction of the pyramids of the Dynasty XII pharaohs and in tomb deposits at Abydos and Aswan. See, Immerwahr 1990, 6.

⁷⁷ Immerwahr 1990, 16.

been obtained by using azurite, a mineral indigenous to the Cyclades.⁷⁸ The painting technique used on both islands is a combination of buon fresco and tempera. In addition, both Cretan and Thera painters employed the use of taut string to vertically mark the upper and lower limits of the painted surfaces. String impressions and incisions into the damp plaster were also used for details.⁷⁹ Conversely, the technique used to execute the paintings on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus does not follow any aspect of this Aegean tradition.⁸⁰

In the late Hyksos period and that of early New Kingdom period, for a single moment, Egypt also adopted Aegean techniques and Aegean imagery into their paintings. In Egypt, the tradition of executing wall paintings employed the use of a preliminary freehand cartoon upon a system of vertical and horizontal grid lines, often with the outlines of figures and major elements carved in low relief, followed by the final painting in tempera changed very little from the Old to the New Kingdom.⁸¹ The exception is the wall paintings found at Tell el-Dab'a, ancient Avaris. The technique, as well as the motifs employed at Tell el-Dab'a, is distinctly Aegean. At Tell el-Dab'a, the paintings are executed without the use of grids or carved relief and set on a layer of lime plaster using a combination of buon fresco and tempera methods just as found on Crete and

⁷⁸ Dumas 1992, 18.

⁷⁹ Dumas 1992, 17-18.

⁸⁰ Levi 1956, 196, "Excluding, therefore (at least in regard to this sarcophagus), the technique of fresco, one might assume a binding medium of organic matter used in a tempera technique.....That the color still adheres to the lime undercoating is due, we believe, to the use of a lime tempera.....This would account for the variance of opinion that has risen among scholars, because the substances are chemically like those used in fresco while in reality the technique is tempera."

⁸¹ Stevenson Smith 1978, 246-247; Terrace 1968, 37-38; Davies 1975, 4-5.

Thera.⁸² The imagery found in these paintings includes scenes of bull-leapers⁸³, a Minoan sport and a Minoan motif well known from Crete, and acrobats in Minoan dress⁸⁴, the Minoan griffin mentioned earlier, and a leopard in flying gallop⁸⁵, the first time this position is used to depict running animals in Egyptian art.⁸⁶ The discovery of Minoan-style painting in a Hyksos palace in Egypt is one of the most important contributions to the evidence for the exchange of ideas by way of traveling groups of artisans between Crete and Egypt during the Bronze Age. These paintings would have allowed both Egyptians and Minoans an opportunity to observe the styles and techniques used by their respective cultures.⁸⁷

The reason for the presence of Minoan artists in Egypt remains highly speculative at the time of this writing. A cautious hypothesis for exogamy through interdynastic marriage between a Hyksos foreign ruler of Egypt during the Late Second Intermediate period, and a Minoan princess was forwarded in 1995 by Manfred Bietak, the chief archaeologist at Tell el-Dab'a.⁸⁸ Given the frequency of interdynastic marriages between

⁸²Morgan 1995, 30.

⁸³ Bietak 1995, Pl. 1, fig. 1

⁸⁴ Bietak 1995, Pl. 3, fig. 1

⁸⁵ Bietak 1995, Pl. 4, fig. 2

⁸⁶ Morgan notes the presence of an isolated example of a dog chasing a hare both in flying gallop in an Egyptian tomb painting from the First Intermediate Period at Moalla, pre-dating the earliest Aegean examples. However, this motif does not recur again in Egypt until the period of the Tell el-Dab'a paintings over 450 years later. See, Morgan 1995, 36.

⁸⁷ Morgan 1995, 30.

⁸⁸ Bietak 1995, 26.

Egyptian pharaohs and princesses from Near Eastern centers of power this hypothesis is quite plausible.⁸⁹

The defeat of the Hyksos by Ahmose I, the first pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty, returned rule to Egyptians, and the connections between Crete and Egypt were uninterrupted. At Tell el-Dab'a, a second series of fragments in the Minoan-style are found in the excavation level for the palatial complex built by Ahmose I (1539-1514 BC) on top of the ruins of the Hyksos capital after his armies drove the Near Eastern invaders from Egypt at beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty (1529-1296 BC).⁹⁰ The presence of Keftiu⁹¹ emissaries in the processional scenes found in the Egyptian tomb paintings of court officials (figs. 12-15) during the New Kingdom reigns of Hatshepsut (1479-1457 BC), Tuthmosis III (1479-1425 BC), and Amenhotep II (1427-1392 BC)⁹² indicate that interconnections between these two lands continued to exist well into the Eighteenth Dynasty.

Egypt was at its most powerful during the New Kingdom reign of Amenhotep III (1382-1344 BC), the period contemporaneous with the LM IIIA2 (1370-1320 BC) physical expansions of Hagia Triada and the neighboring port town of Kommos on Crete. The borders of the Egyptian empire extended from northern Syria to the Fifth Nile

⁸⁹ The Amarna letters are a collection of more than 300 cuneiform tablets found among the ruins of Akhetaten, the capital of Egypt for a brief time in the 14th century BC (Eighteenth Dynasty). Most of the international correspondence between Egyptian and Near Eastern heads of state involves declarations of friendship, proposals of marriage and lists of gifts exchanged in association. For example, EA 5 is a letter from Amenhotep III (1382-1344 BC) to the Babylonian ruler Kadašman-Enlil describing the gifts of Egyptian furniture for the Babylonian palace to be given upon the arrival of a Babylonian princess. See, Moran 1992, xxii-xxvi and 10-11.

⁹⁰ Bietak 1995, 23.

⁹¹ The term *Keftiu* is most likely the Ancient Egyptian name for Crete. Clines 1998, 238, note 75.

⁹² Rehak and Younger 2001, 391.

Cataract in the Sudan.⁹³ Among the ruins of Amenhotep III's mortuary temple at Kom el-Hatan in Egypt are five statue bases, all that remains of the ten original statues of the pharaoh. The bases are inscribed with a series of place-names inside an oval, surmounted by the figure of a bound prisoner. These inscriptions, sometimes known as "captive ovals," bear the names of countries or regions believed to have been in contact in some way with Egypt during the reign of Amenhotep III. The list on the fifth base is known as the Aegean list and it is the only known example of Aegean place-names found in Egypt.⁹⁴ The Aegean names are: Keftiu (most likely the Minoans of Crete), Tanaja or Tinay (likely Mycenaeans of the Peloponnese), Amnisos a port on the north shore of Crete, listed twice, Phaistos, Kydonia, Mycenae, Boeotian Thebes or Kato Zakro, Methana (Argolid), Nauplion, Kythera, Ilios (Troy), Knossos, and Lyktos (Map 3).⁹⁵ Most scholars today favor the hypothesis that the list is contemporary with the pharaoh's reign and not anachronistic as argued by scholars immediately following Elmar Edel's 1966 initial publication of the list.⁹⁶ In other contexts during the reign of this pharaoh, the image of a Keftiu is found in a conventionalized painting in the tomb of Anen, the brother of Queen Tiye, the wife of Amenhotep III, and the Keftiu are mentioned in a medical papyrus now in London that lists words in the "Keftiu language" for a variety of ailments.⁹⁷

⁹³Cline 1998, 1.

⁹⁴ Cline 1998, 236.

⁹⁵ Cline 1998, 238.

⁹⁶ Cline 1998, 239.

⁹⁷ Cline 1998, 240.

In the Aegean, the evidence for contact with Egypt during the Late Bronze Age has become completely reversed by the last sixty years of excavations.⁹⁸ At present, most of the Egyptian objects discovered in the Aegean are found on the island of Crete.⁹⁹ Whereas in 1930, only two Egyptian objects were found in Cretan LM III contexts, there exists fifty-three today. Significantly, the period when Hagia Triada and Kommos were most prominent and connected to one another, based on their similar architecture, twenty objects from Egypt were found at the Minoan trading port.¹⁰⁰ This period, LM IIIA (1430-1320 BC), spans the period in the Eighteenth Dynasty when the Keftiu appear as foreign emissaries in the tomb painting of Theban nobility and the reigns of Tuthmosis III (1479-1425 BC), Amenhotep II (1427-1392 BC), Tuthmosis IV (1392-1382 BC), Amenhotep III (1382-1344 BC), Akhenaten (1352-1336 BC), Smenkhkare (1338-1336 BC) and Tutankhamen (1336-1327 BC).¹⁰¹

The ways in which Crete and Egypt transmitted goods, technology, and artistic strategies involve a variety of means of contact. Where the presence of Old Kingdom stone vessels in the later tombs of elite members of Minoan society signify the transmission of artistic strategies through diplomatic gift or other forms of exchanges, the transference of technologies and techniques signify the presence of traveling artisans. The recipes for the manufacture of faience or Egyptian Blue on Crete or Thera could not be transmitted through the mere visual analysis of imported finished products. The right

⁹⁸ Cline 1994, 32. Also see the figures and tables on 43-47 for a quantitative analysis of all Egyptian objects found in LBA Aegean contexts.

⁹⁹ Cline 1994, 43, Table 25.

¹⁰⁰ Cline 1994, 47, Table 29.

¹⁰¹The dates for the LM IIIA period and the regnal dates of the pharaohs mentioned are taken from the chronology in Table 1 of this paper.

combinations of the right materials as well as the precise ways to process them would have to be exchanged by means of human interaction. In addition, the sudden and brief appearance of the distinctly Aegean technique for wall painting in Egypt is best explained by the presence of Minoan painters in Egypt during the period of Hyksos rule (1637-1529 BC) when the first figural paintings appear in the Aegean.¹⁰² The current lack of human remains in the archaeological evidence from Thera supports an abandonment of Akrotiri before the eruption of 1628 BC. Where did these sea-faring people go? In times of economic decline, political turmoil, or in anticipation of catastrophic events like earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, groups often migrate to places that hold promise for economic prosperity, political stability, and safety.¹⁰³ If the Hyksos had established a relationship with Crete, through interdynastic marriage as suggested by Bietak, could it also be plausible that some of the inhabitants of Thera, a population with loose cultural and political connections to Crete¹⁰⁴ sought Egypt as another place of refuge? The Minoan-style wall paintings at Tell el-Dab'a speak conclusively to direct contact between Egypt and the Aegean just prior to the eruption on Thera and allude to this possibility.

Finally, the existence of mythical creatures derived from Near Eastern and Egyptian sources as well as a "foreign" plant, the papyrus, and musical instrument, the sistrum, found in archaeological contexts from Thera and Knossos are further evidence for the extent to which contact existed and ideas were exchanged between the Aegean

¹⁰² Morgan 1995, 30.

¹⁰³ La Rosa's compelling hypothesis which attributes the political decline and de-population of Phaistos and the simultaneous rise of Hagia Triada and Kommos to seismic activity is viewed here as relevant to the final abandonment of Akrotiri prior to the volcanic eruption on Thera. See, La Rosa 1995, 881-891.

¹⁰⁴ Architecturally, the buildings on Thera were constructed using ashlar masonry blocks at corners and around openings, pier and door partitions, and adytions similar to those found at Knosso and Phaistos on Crete. This is a note of personal observation made by the author during visits to these sites in August, 2004.

and Egypt. The body of evidence presented here does not represent the entire corpus of art historical and archaeological research into contact between Crete and Egypt during the Late Bronze Age. Yet what is offered supports the scholarly argument set out above that focuses on migrating populations, traveling artisans, and diplomatic missions, rather than bands of marauding conquerors, as more likely sources for the combination of foreign and domestic ideas of artistic expression that inspired the creation of a sarcophagus unique among known Minoan or Mycenaean funerary containers for the bodies of the deceased.

Chapter IV: Hagia Triada During the LM IIA2 Period

The late twentieth century excavations at Hagia Triada (Map 4) by the Italian Archaeological School in Athens, led by Dr. Vincenzo La Rosa, greatly expand the previously slight body of knowledge that pertains to the various phases of development at this site.¹⁰⁵ In addition to new excavations, the team, led by Dr. Vincenzo La Rosa, re-cleaned and examined many areas of the site excavated during the early twentieth century that were poorly or, in some cases, never completely published.¹⁰⁶ Similar to other regions on Crete, the LM II period at Hagia Triada appears from the archaeological evidence to be a phase of demographic and urban decline in the wake of the widespread destructions that brought the earlier LM IB period to a close. It is not until the LM IIIA period, that Hagia Triada begins to expand from a small outpost to a major administrative and religious center in the south-central Mesara region of Crete even if only for a brief period of time. The construction and reconstruction activity at Hagia Triada, hypothesized by La Rosa to continue without interruption during the LM IIIA2 period, is a progression of expanding urbanization unmatched at contemporaneous Phaistos, its palatial neighbor just 3 km away.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ For a history and bibliography of the early 20th century excavations at Hagia Triada see, *Creta Antica* 1984, 161-194.

¹⁰⁶ La Rosa 1997, 249-266.

¹⁰⁷ Betancourt 1985, see note 22; Rehak and Younger 2001, 443, n. 413.

During LM IIIA, while Knossos suffers a second phase of destruction that reduces its position of dominance over other island settlements,¹⁰⁸ many other sites on Crete, including Hagia Triada, begin to show signs of recovery and reoccupation although smaller and less urbanized in scope as compared to the LM I period.¹⁰⁹ The intense and monumental campaign of redevelopment at Hagia Triada, described by La Rosa as “feverish” is seen as a marker for the presence of an elite class that possessed the socio-political dominance necessary to commission, organize, and oversee such a large scale building and artistic program.

Many of the fragments from the LM IIIA1 (1430-1370 BC) wall paintings at Hagia Triada¹¹⁰ bear processional scenes that are closely similar, from a figural, compositional, and stylistic point of view, to the processions shown on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus (figs. 3-4 and 22). At Knossos, where the only other processional scenes on Crete are found, they appear earlier on the east wall of the Corridor of Procession (figs. 16-17) and have been broadly dated by Sara Immerwahr to between 1490-1370 BC (LMII/III A1).¹¹¹ All of these scenes, in turn, bear compositional and stylistic similarities to those found on the walls of Theban tombs from the Eighteenth Dynasty in Egypt (1539-1296 BC). Importantly, those with images of Keftiu in scenes that depict processions of foreign emissaries (fig. 12-15) correspond in date to LM II/LMIII A1 (1490-1370 BC) on Crete

¹⁰⁸ La Rosa 1997, 255-258; Preston 2004, 323.

¹⁰⁹ Rehak and Younger 2001, 442.

¹¹⁰ Militello 1998, 305.

¹¹¹ Immerwahr 1990, 174-175. However, Paul Rehak has stressed that there is no stratigraphic evidence for dating the Knossos processions and suggests they could be earlier than LMII/III. Immerwahr, Cameron and others have dated these paintings on the basis of a stylistic chronology alone that, when compared to a secure archaeological context, is a less confident method. See, Rehak 1996, 44.

making them contemporaneous with their appearance at Knossos and Hagia Triada. The processional scenes that appear in the LM IIIA1¹¹² period at Hagia Triada, similar in style and composition to those from Knossos, are evidence that the elite inhabitants had important political connections with the functionaries who remained at a weakened Knossos. In addition, a rising elite class at Hagia Triada would have made the site an attractive destination for artisans migrating from Knossos in search of work.

The most significant architectural features built (or rebuilt) during the LM IIIA1/2 period of expansion at Hagia Triada are the very large megaron, its adjacent stoa, and nearby chapel located in the southwest sector, and the Northwest/Building P complex and Grand Stoa in the northwest sector. While the function of these buildings cannot be specifically established, the megaron¹¹³ and stoa of the southwest sector, built over the ruins of the LM IB Royal Villa, where LM IB wall frescoes of nature scenes and goddesses were found,¹¹⁴ may have served political and religious purposes. The buildings in the northwest sector appear to have served a bureaucratic and commercial function,¹¹⁵ particularly evident by configuration of the Grand Stoa with eight adjoining rectangular stalls each with an opening to the columned plaza. The buildings in the northwest sector were constructed over the remains of a LM IIIA2 building called the Casa delle Camere Decapitate. Most interesting about the Casa delle Camere Decapitate is that it was

¹¹² Pietro Militello suggests the fresco fragments found in a dump by the first excavators at Hagia Triada came from one of three buildings identified as the megaron, the stoa and the Camere Decapitate. Militello 1998, 303.

¹¹³ The foundation dimensions of this megaron are larger than any found to date on the mainland. See, Rehak and Younger 2001, 443.

¹¹⁴ Immerwahr 1990, Pls. 17-18.

¹¹⁵ La Rosa 1997, 263.

demolished almost immediately after its initial completion and subsequently rebuilt on a grander scale. This process is significant for its emphasis on the rapid transition of Hagia Triada from a small Knossian administrative outpost to a major regional religious and administrative center in the southern part of Crete.¹¹⁶ This transformation may be due, in part, to a political reorganization that resulted from a second destructive event in the early LM IIIA2 period at Knossos that weakened its sociopolitical hegemony over the other settlements on the island.¹¹⁷

In addition to the physical and socio-political expansions evident at Hagia Triada, the LM IIIA2 monumental buildings in the North sector of the site also show evidence of a culture in transition. Nicola Cucuzza describes the formal style of these structures as one of “hybrid character” combining Minoan and Mycenaean architectural characteristics, a phenomenon found at sites all over Crete in LM IIIA2.¹¹⁸ For example, the two stoas at Hagia Triada mixed Mycenaean architecture with Minoan stylistic features influenced by buildings from earlier palatial contexts found there.¹¹⁹

From the architectural evidence, LM IIIA2 Hagia Triada appears to have been a newly prosperous complex, surpassing in size neighboring Phaistos,¹²⁰ located only about

¹¹⁶ La Rosa 1997, 263-265.

¹¹⁷ Preston 2004, 337.

¹¹⁸ The LM IIIA2 period seems to be one of eclecticism in architectural styles at many palatial centers. A pattern of mixing Minoan and Mycenaean traditions in monumental buildings is found during this period at Hagia Triada, Malia, Chania, Kommos and Tylissos. For Hagia Triada, see n. 5 above; for Malia, see, Pelon, 1997, 354-355; for Chania, see Hallager 1997, 185; for Kommos, see Shaw 1997, 431-434; for Tylissos, see Hayden 1987, 199-233.

¹¹⁹ Cucuzza 1997, 74. It should be noted that despite Cucuzza's observations of the hybrid nature found in the LM IIIA2 architecture at Hagia Triada he considers the site to be evidence in support of total Mycenaean hegemony over Crete at this time.

¹²⁰ Betancourt, see note 22; Shaw 1997, 432.

3 km away. The hybrid character of some of the major buildings noted by its excavators echoes the observations made by others excavating in LM IIIA2 contexts at nearby Kommos, where evidence exists for a similar and contemporaneous expansion.¹²¹ From the evidence found in LM III at a number of sites on Crete, including Hagia Triada, there emerges the image of a culture in the midst of transition with an elite class in search of new ways to express their identity. Perhaps these factors help to explain the diversity found in LM IIIA mortuary practices throughout Crete¹²² of which the necropolis at Hagia Triada and its famous painted sarcophagus stands as an exemplar.

The original discovery of the tomb of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus by Roberto Paribeni on June 23, 1903 resulted only in the most schematic of ground plans. Robbed in antiquity, the tomb was almost devoid of burial goods. Despite three separate excavation campaigns earlier in the early twentieth century, the lack of *in situ* objects that could serve as chronological markers combined with a series of poorly published finds have, until only recently, prevented the establishment of a specific date for the construction of the tomb and the manufacture of its famous sarcophagus. As a result of these unfortunate events, the dates proposed for the sarcophagus have fluctuated substantially from the LM II period (1490-1430 BC) proposed by Sir Arthur Evans to the LM IIIA1 period (1430-1370 BC) hypothesized by Long and Immerwahr.¹²³ Without a firm chronological context in which to embed the sarcophagus, the scholarship could go no further than the excellent iconographical and stylistic analyses published by Long and

¹²¹ See note 37.

¹²² Preston 2004, 321-348.

¹²³ La Rosa 1998, 177.

Immerwahr. The work of Dr. La Rosa and his team at Hagia Triada during the late twentieth century now permit us to give the tomb and its painted sarcophagus a sense of place and time within the broader context of the Mediterranean Late Bronze Age world.

The excavations carried out under the auspices of the Italian Archaeological School of Athens uncovered the tomb for the fourth time. Using modern archaeological excavation and recording methods, the excavation team set out to uncover evidence that would at long last assign a precise date to the structure and sarcophagus. Their careful diligence paid off at the northwest corner and at the north half of the eastern foundation trenches where the minute fragments of two cups, probably discarded by workers during the building of the tomb, were found at the base of its walls.¹²⁴ The date of the cups was subsequently established “with good approximation” to the beginning of the LM IIIA-2 period, leading La Rosa to conclude the same date for the construction of the tomb and the fabrication of the painted sarcophagus, an object he describes as “‘politically’ Mycenaean with the weight of Minoan tradition.”¹²⁵

The evidence for a culture in the midst of socio-political transition found during the LM IIIA2 period suggests an environment receptive to experimentations with new and possibly imported ideas and forms of expression. The use of older traditions combined with new ideas to create a stylistically eclectic blend is also found in the cemetery adjacent to the settlement at Hagia Triada.¹²⁶ Two of the tomb structures, the EM II tholos Tomb Beta and the Neopalatial period Tomb 5 (also known as the Tomb of the

¹²⁴ La Rosa 1998, 182, figs. 5-6.

¹²⁵ La Rosa 1998, 181. La Rosa views the LM IIIA2 as a period of Mycenaean cultural dominance on Crete.

¹²⁶ Preston 2004, 336.

Gold Objects),¹²⁷ were reused during the LM IIIA period. In contrast, the tomb from which the painted sarcophagus emerged, constructed in early LM IIIA2 is, so far, a structure unique among known tomb types on Crete.¹²⁸

The semi-subterranean tomb¹²⁹ is a nearly square arrangement built with unusually thick, carefully constructed rubble walls¹³⁰ that are viewed by several scholars as foundation walls for a superstructure made of perishable material (fig 18).¹³¹ Despite its temporally unique architectural characteristics, the tomb is not without parallels from earlier burial contexts on Crete. Minoan house tombs, a burial structure that populated Cretan cemeteries as early as the EM II period¹³² (ca. 2900-2300/2150 BC),¹³³ had gone out of general use by the Late Bronze Age. The few that continued to be in use were sited at Cretan palatial centers, including Hagia Triada, signifying their use by members of an elite class which, perhaps, intended to express dynastic connections to an earlier, pre-palatial Crete.¹³⁴ At Hagia Triada, this traditional form of burial structure is reflected in an updated version in the LMII IA2 period. The tomb of the Hagia Triada

¹²⁷Soles 1992, 116; The deposits in Tomb 5, including burials, were found disturbed and many cannot be securely dated. Soles dates the structure to the Neopalatial period (1750-1490 BC) based upon its structural similarities to the Neopalatial Temple Tomb at Knossos and the prevailing wealth of deposits belonging to the same era.

¹²⁸ Long 1974, 11, “The building was unique at the time of its discovery, and it still is seventy years later...;” This is still the case thirty years after Long’s publication. See, Preston 2004, 336.

¹²⁹ La Rosa 1998, 187.

¹³⁰ Soles 1992, 125.

¹³¹ Paribeni 1903, 714; Long 1974, 12; Soles 1992, 25; L Rosa 1998, 187.

¹³² Soles 1992, v.

¹³³ For the expanded chronology of the Early Minoan II period, see: Watrous 2001, 159.

¹³⁴ Preston 2004, 336, “At Agia Triada, the received idea of exploiting the strategic potential of tomb burial was embraced as wholeheartedly as at the other cemeteries, but all externally derived tomb types were rejected.....”

Sarcophagus is an eclectic mix of traditional forms and new ideas in what Jeffrey Soles refers to as “the last house tomb built on Crete,”¹³⁵ and within its walls was found the very unusual burial container adorned with a form of funerary art as unique in terms of its material, polychromy, iconography, narrative and decorative elements, overall composition and stylistic characteristics¹³⁶ as the building that was intended to be its eternal resting place.

¹³⁵ Soles 1992, 116.

¹³⁶ Watrous 1991, 290; Marinatos 1997, 281-292.

Chapter V: A Place for the Body –

The Appearance of Clay Larnake and a Limestone Sarcophagus in LM III Crete

Larnake, chest-, or the less common tub-shaped coffins made of painted terracotta (used in residential and funerary contexts on Crete)¹³⁷ first appear in burial contexts on Crete at the beginning of the fourteenth century, BC¹³⁸ as a popular method of corpse deposition. Most of them are topped with a gabled lid, are rectangular in form with inset side panels and vertical handles or holes drilled through the upper edge, possibly for transporting them with a rope or pole, and rest on four squat legs (fig.20).

Contemporaneous with the period when terracotta larnake were being manufactured, a rectangular shaped painted coffin inset side panels and four squat legs¹³⁹ made from a single piece of limestone¹⁴⁰ (fig. 2) is created for a burial at Hagia Triada. To date, it is the only one of its kind that has been found on Bronze Age Crete, or the mainland and islands of Greece.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ This thesis will use the chest-shaped larnake for comparison to the Hagia Triada sarcophagus because of the similarities they share in terms of shape, and consistency of use.

¹³⁸ Preston 2004, 336; Marinatos 1997, 281; Watrous 1991, 285; Long 1974.

¹³⁹ No trace of the sarcophagus lid was ever found during the original or four subsequent excavations of the tomb. La Rosa 1998, 181 n. 20; Long 1974, 16 and 18 n. 3.

¹⁴⁰ Militello 1998, 154.

¹⁴¹ In her publication, Long includes the fragments of a Late Helladic III B-C limestone sarcophagus found by Professor Spyridon Marinatos on the Greek island of Kefallenia as a parallel to the Hagia Triada sarcophagus. The Kefallenia sarcophagus is shorter, longer, and narrower with no trace of plaster or paint. Its excavator described the workmanship that went into its manufacture as careless. In my view, this object is a distant and younger cousin to the Hagia Triada sarcophagus and not its close relative. See, Long 1974, 16 and Pl. 5, fig. 16.

The first coffins on Crete appear in the LM II-III period and are wooden prototypes for the later clay and limestone versions. They were four-legged, rectangular in shape, of the same approximate size but due to their fragmentary condition little is known of their decoration except for the traces of red, blue, yellow, and white pigment noted in the excavation reports. Beginning with Stephanos Xanthoudides and Evans in the early twentieth century, scholars have argued that these wooden coffins were derived from Egyptian funerary chests used primarily for the storage of linens entombed with the deceased for use in the afterlife (fig. 19).¹⁴² The sudden popularity of this form for wooden coffins during the LM II-III period and later LM III clay types and the limestone Hagia Triada Sarcophagus found on Crete coincides with the evidence for contact between Crete and Egypt shown by the large deposit of Egyptian vessels at Kommos, by the Keftiu emissaries in the Theban tomb paintings, and the presence of these chests in Eighteenth Dynasty Egyptian tombs.¹⁴³ Coupled with the lack of earlier evidence on Crete for burial containers that take this form, wooden, clay, and limestone chest-shaped coffins found on Crete between 1490 and 1320 BC are viewed by scholars, including this writer, as derivatives of ideas transferred from Egypt.¹⁴⁴

Since the time of its discovery in 1903 the narrative scenes found on the long and short sides of Hagia Triada Sarcophagus (fig. 3-4 and 6-7) have been considered one of the most coherent source for information pertaining on Cretan funerary rites.

¹⁴² Watrous fully develops this idea in his publication on the origins of the Late Minoan painted larnax. See Watrous 1991, 287-288.

¹⁴³ Watrous cites thirteen examples of wooden chests found in the Eighteenth Dynasty tombs of Sedment, Cha and his wife, Meryt and the tomb of Tutankhamun. Watrous notes that one of the chests was used as a coffin. See, Watrous 1991, 287-288

¹⁴⁴ Hiller 1999, 362; Watrous 1991, 287-288; Long 1974, 17-18.

Paradoxically, the object itself has been viewed as a kind of “larnax of a different color” and is usually mentioned as a part of the inventory of LM III larnake from Crete despite the overwhelming number of characteristics that set it apart from the crudely manufactured terracotta coffins.¹⁴⁵ My personal survey of the extensive collection of Minoan larnake on display at the Herakleion Archaeological Museum (fig. 20) and at the Archaeological Collection of the Ministry of Culture in Ierápetra on Crete reveals many fundamental differences between terracotta larnake and the Hagia Triada sarcophagus.¹⁴⁶ Most of the larnake,¹⁴⁷ like the sarcophagus, have holes drilled through the bottoms in order for body fluids to drain from the decomposing corpse (or corpses),¹⁴⁸ are rectangular in shape, rest on four squat legs and contain painted decoration¹⁴⁹ but this is the extent to which they share similarities with the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus. In fact, the choice of location within the Herakleion Museum for the installation of the sarcophagus among the exhibits of Minoan wall paintings from the major palatial centers on Crete seems to place emphasis on its otherness vis à vis the more common clay larnax.

¹⁴⁵ For example see, Preston 2004, 336; Marinatos 1997, 291; Watrous 1991, 290; Long 1974.

¹⁴⁶ Personal observations were made while visiting Greece, Crete, and Santorini in August, 2004.

¹⁴⁷ Not all larnake had holes in the bottoms. My personal observations of the bottoms of the larnake installed in the Herakleion Museum reveal that most but not all of the clay containers have holes drilled in the bottoms. Unfortunately, poor lighting and the awkward angle prevented me from taking clear photographs of the bottoms of the larnake. Also, see Long 1974, 16.

¹⁴⁸ Most LM III chest larnake contained a single burial, but at the time of Long’s publication there were thirteen LM III from Crete known to contain multiple human remains. See, Long 1974, 18 and 20 n. 29. The writer sees this phenomenon as more evidence for the characterization of the LM III period as one of great social and political transition on Crete.

¹⁴⁹ Many of the tub-shaped larnake contained painted decoration on their interiors as well as on the outside. The Hagia Triada sarcophagus was painted only on the exterior. This can be seen easily from its display in the Herakleion Museum but this fact is also mentioned in Militello 1998, 154.

Stylistically, the decoration and motifs found on terracotta larnake seem to be borrowed from the repertory of vase painters.¹⁵⁰ The range of color used on the larnake is limited to the same palette used in Minoan vase painting. The background, when it is painted, is limited to white or buff slip and the motifs and decorative elements are completed in a red or brownish-black paint. The iconography on the clay larnake are comprised mostly of marine and floral motifs executed as highly stylized abstractions of their natural appearance, and decorative elements such as zigzags, running spirals and checkerboards that are used as borders or filler. Humans and animals, where they do appear, are sketched in silhouette or outline form with little regard for small details, proportion or scale. The majority of the decorations found on the larnake randomly arranged as conceptual land and seascapes. Where a funerary element is present, the scene is one of prothesis or mourning.¹⁵¹ The motifs are typically applied on the larnake using the all-over composition distinctive of Marine and Palace Style pottery (fig. 11) as well as amphoroid kraters and terracotta bathtubs.¹⁵² Although some of the long sides of the larnake are divided into one or two panels surrounded by decorative borders, most of the motifs applied inside these panels adhere to the same all-over compositional technique. Although some may find the abstract style and haphazard organization used on the larnake amateur what they lack in realism or artistic “mastery” is compensated by their extremely expressive and whimsical appearance.

¹⁵⁰ N. Marinatos, 1997, 282; Watrous 1991, 303; Long 1974, 24. According to Watrous this view originates with Rutkowski 1966.

¹⁵¹ In her article that compares Minoan and Mycenaean larnake, Marinatos demonstrates that scenes of prothesis or mourning appear on clay larnake found on the Greek mainland while the Cretan type is mostly limited to land (which includes scenes of animals and hunting) and sea themes. See, Marinatos 1997, 282.

¹⁵² Watrous 1991, 303-304.

The manufacture and painting of the Hagia Triada sarcophagus is, on the contrary, a technical and artistic tour-de-force by comparison. Created from a single block of limestone, the narrative panels on the long and short sides were carved as inset from the borders and corner posts adorned with decorative elements that surround them. On the side of the sarcophagus with the scene of offering bearers and the deceased before his tomb (fig. 3) the object's chief restorer, Franca Callori, discovered that under the plaster undercoat the top border had first been carved in relief on the bare stone. After the sarcophagus was carved, the artist(s) had spread a layer of very pure lime plaster over the bare stone to serve as the support for the polychromatic painted decoration that adorns all the exterior surfaces of the sarcophagus. According to Callori, the medium used on the sarcophagus was tempera, but pigments were not mixed with a protein based binder, as in the usual manner, but with limewater and applied over the dry plaster support. Over time, the paint reacted with a buildup of calcium carbonate that had encrusted the entire surface causing the color to become permanently affixed to the plaster support.¹⁵³ This application of pigment to a dry surface is a departure from the common technique found in Aegean painting that is best described as an early form of true fresco where the larger fields of paint, consisting of pigment mixed with a lime binder, was applied when the plaster was wet while painted details were added after the plaster had dried.¹⁵⁴ Conversely, in Egypt, the painting technique of choice from the Old to New Kingdom, a period of almost three thousand years, was the application of gypsum plaster on the bare stone walls where it was allowed to dry before the painter executed the scenes in

¹⁵³Levi 1956, 196-198.

¹⁵⁴Immerwahr 1990, 14-15.

tempera.¹⁵⁵ To date, the sole exception to this tradition is the Minoan style wall paintings at Tell el-Dab'a.

Callori's close examination of the Hagia Triada sarcophagus led her to conclude, in the mid-1950s that the application of plaster and paint was executed by more than one artisan. The application of plaster and the painting technique used on Side A is considered to be of finer quality than the opposite Side B (fig. 4) bearing the scene of animal sacrifice where the stone was not well smoothed, the plaster unevenly applied, and the painting of lesser quality.¹⁵⁶ In August, 2004, I was able to observe the difference in painting quality between Sides A & B while viewing the Hagia Triada sarcophagus in the Herakleion Museum and found it is most readily apparent by comparing the borders of decorative rosettes. Those on Side B are less uniform in shape and size and the painting is more amateur in appearance when compared to the uniformity and precision of the rosettes on Side A that appear to have been executed with a surer hand. This visually distinct difference in artistic proficiency alone alludes to the presence of more than one artisan at work, perhaps, a master and apprentice. Yet despite the varied quality in preparation of the sarcophagus and execution of the scenes painted using a polychromatic palette, the use of limestone, the precision of workmanship, and the complete departure from the artistic imagery found on Cretan pottery greatly differentiates the sarcophagus from the rugged clay larnake, with their limited palette, and indigenous vase painting.

¹⁵⁵ Stevenson Smith 1978, 256-257; Terrace 1968, 37-38; Davies 1975, 4-5.

¹⁵⁶ Levi 1956, 198. Militello came to the same conclusion after examining the painted sarcophagus for his 1998 publication. See, Militello 1998, 154.

The use of narrative elements and registers to organize and make readable the rituals activities found on the Hagia Triada sarcophagus are derived from processional themes found on the LM IA (1700-1628 BC) fragments of a scene that has been described as a processional from Xeste 4 at Akrotiri¹⁵⁷ (fig. 21), the LM II/IIIA1 (1490-1370 BC) Procession fresco at Knossos (fig. 16-17), and the LM IIIA1 (1430-1370 BC) fragments of processional scenes found in 1904 in a fresco dump between the tomb of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus and the villa¹⁵⁸ (fig. 22). The close similarities in theme, basic technique (a plaster support upon which paint is applied), realistic style, organization, figural composition, narrative elements, palette, costume details, and decorative motifs clearly demonstrate that the artists responsible for the execution of the ritual scenes on the Hagia Triada sarcophagus were artisans trained in the art of wall painting as opposed to the vase painters who decorated the clay larnake.

As Immerwahr has documented in her publication that traces the stylistic development of painting in the Bronze Age Aegean, processional and ritual themes emerge suddenly in the Minoan canon about 1490 BC. In each of the examples cited herein, these processionals occur contemporaneously with periods where the evidence is strongest for interconnections between Crete and Egypt. The Xeste 4 fragments are roughly contemporaneous with the Minoan-style wall paintings at Tell el-Dab'a, and the

¹⁵⁷ The 1974 excavation season at Akrotiri from which these precious few fragments have been brought to light is poorly documented due to the unfortunate demise of the project's chief archaeologist, Spyridon Marinatos. See, Doulas 1992, 176. Despite the limited study they have received, Doulas refers to them as part of a processional of males. These figures wear kilts similar to those found in the *Keftiu* tomb paintings, the Knossos processionals and on one of the short ends of the Hagia Triada sarcophagus. While the subject matter may remain uncertain, the paintings from Xeste 4 predate both the Theban and Knossian paintings and demonstrate that determining Mycenaean "occupation" based upon an a perceived change from codpiece and breechcloth to kilt in the visual record is highly problematic. Paul Rehak's analysis of the early (pre-Mycenaean) use of the kilt in Minoan art emphasizes the difficulties associated with the assumption of change in cultural hegemony based on costume alone. See, Rehak, 1996, 35-51.

¹⁵⁸ Immerwahr 1990, 180-181; Militello 1998, 283-308.

Knossos and Hagia Triada processional correspond chronologically to the images of Keftiu emissaries in Theban tombs during the Eighteenth Dynasty reigns of Hatshepsut (1479-1457 BC), Tuthmosis III (1479-1425 BC), and Amenhotep II (1427-1392 BC). It must be mentioned here that, in addition, processional frescoes are also found on the Greek mainland at Mycenae, Pylos, Thebes, and Tiryns. Immerwahr and others date these Mycenaean wall paintings to the LH IIIA and LH IIIB periods (1430-1200 BC).¹⁵⁹ Given the evidence in support of direct contact between pre-Mycenaean Crete and Egypt, the argument that processional themes were transferred to Crete from the Greek mainland now seems unlikely. But unlike Egypt, the processional and ritual themes on wall paintings on Crete, and later on the Greek mainland, are found only in cultic, palatial, or public ceremonial contexts and never in funerary contexts.¹⁶⁰ The only place in the Aegean where processional and ritual scenes executed in the Egyptian style can be found in a funerary context appear on the exceptional Hagia Triada Sarcophagus found in its unique LM IIIA2 tomb in the cemetery at Hagia Triada.

¹⁵⁹ Point of information for the reader: On the mainland the periods are referred as Early, Middle or Late Helladic. The dates are synchronic to the Minoan chronology. For a complete catalogue of the frescoes from the major sites on the Greek mainland refer to Immerwahr 1990, 190-204.

¹⁶⁰The Xeste 4 frescoes from Akrotiri were found in a large three-story building described by Dumas as public in nature based upon its dimensions and ashlar masonry revetments. See, Dumas 1992, 176. The "Cupbearer" and procession frescoes from Knossos were found by Evans in the south portion of the West Palace in the propylaeum and the adjacent corridor which lead from the west to the central court around the perimeter of the southern section of the Palace. See, Evans, 1928, *PMII*, Plan C. Militello argues the fresco fragments from Hagia Triada, originally found in a dump between the cemetery and the palatial center had been on the walls of the megaron, stoa or Camere dell' Decapitate from the LM IIIA1 period. See, Militello 1998, 304. For sites on the mainland, see Immerwahr 1990, 190-204.

Chapter VI: What Is So Egyptian About The Hagia Triada Sarcophagus?

Since the time of its discovery in the early 1900s, the Egyptian influence in the artistic program on the Hagia Triada sarcophagus has been observed and commented upon by numerous scholars.¹⁶¹ Yet because the aspects of the rites and rituals shown on the sarcophagus can be related to archaeological material from Minoan tombs and elsewhere in Minoan art, such as on seal stones, some scholars, notably Long, have discounted an Egyptian connection.¹⁶² Long, who used Minoan iconographic parallels, has done exemplary work, and it cannot be doubted that what is depicted on the sarcophagus is partly informed by traditional Minoan funerary beliefs. Nevertheless, despite Long's significant contribution, her analysis implies that the sarcophagus was created by a culture which took on very little outside influence from other cultural groups with the lone exception of the Mycenaeans from mainland Greece. In her defense, this approach represents the school of thought that prevailed at the time of her research. Yet it now appears that many Mycenaean artistic strategies, such as the iconographic similarities found in the wall paintings in Mycenaean palatial complexes, mentioned earlier, first appeared on Minoan Crete.¹⁶³ The greatest problem with an

¹⁶¹Scholars continue to disagree as to the extent of Egyptian influence found on the sarcophagus. For example, Long and Militello give it very little weight in their publications. See, Paribeni 1908, 7-86; Evans 1928, *PMII*, 836; Stevenson Smith 1965, 86; Long 1974, 24, 30-32, 37, 47, 49, 78f; Watrous 1991, 285-307, 290f; Militello 1998, 283-308; Hiller 1999, 361-368.

¹⁶² Long 1974; Marinatos 1986

¹⁶³ Hirsch 1977; Blakolmer 1996, 101-102. Also, see note 25

Aegeanocentric¹⁶⁴ approach is that Egyptian influence on this unusual Cretan sarcophagus is artificially minimized due to the failure by scholars to place it within the broader historical and geographical context of the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean. The task at hand, therefore, is not to reaffirm what is Minoan about the sarcophagus but to identify what is not.

As mentioned earlier, the sarcophagus is manufactured from a solid piece of limestone, found in abundance on Crete. To date, it is the only sarcophagus of its kind found on the island and the earliest sarcophagus created from limestone found anywhere in the Aegean.¹⁶⁵ Not only were the inset panels on the sides carved, but Callori discovered during the restoration of the sarcophagus that the decorative rosette border had first been sculpted in bas-relief on the bare stone. Carved relief, a subtractive sculptural process, is not found as part of Aegean wall paintings. To achieve a three-dimensional effect in Aegean wall paintings, artisans employed low relief stucco, an additive sculptural process. The vast majority of relief wall paintings where stucco was used to model figures or decorative elements are found at Knossos.¹⁶⁶ The technique of bas-relief is frequently found in Egyptian temples and tombs where it dates back to the Old Kingdom.¹⁶⁷ The carved low relief found by Callori on the bare stone of the Hagia

¹⁶⁴ I am grateful to George F. Bass for affirming the existence of the kind of scholarly bias I have found in many of the publications and articles concerning the relationship between Mycenae and Minoan Crete. In his article on seagoing exchanges of raw materials in the Aegean, Bass writes, "Evidence for the Levantine nature of much of the seaborne trade in the Aegean in the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries, available to scholars for a third of a century, was not, however, based on shipwrecks. It remains either ignored or misinterpreted by Hellenocentrics who, on blind faith or ignorance of the ancient Near East, continue to believe in Mycenaean domination of sea routes." See, Bass 1996, 169.

¹⁶⁵ See note 141 regarding the limestone sarcophagus found on Kefellonia.

¹⁶⁶ Immerwahr 1990, 40.

¹⁶⁷ Russman (1997) 71; "Egyptians sought to reinforce their painted images with carved underlays. Thus, from the beginning of the dynastic period on, the two-dimensional medium of choice was not paint, but a form of fortified painting – that is to say, painted relief."

Triada Sarcophagus could not have been an idea derived from Minoan or Mycenaean wall painting techniques, but it certainly could have been an idea transferred by artisans familiar with the wall paintings of Egypt.

The painting technique and one of the materials employed to decorate the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus also differ from the conventions of Aegean wall painting. As stated earlier, Aegean artists exclusively used true fresco to execute wall paintings. The lone exception to this rule to be found anywhere in the Aegean is the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, where the use of tempera was determined conclusively during the restoration process carried out by Callori. Tempera is the medium used exclusively in Egypt, except in the case of the Minoan-style wall paintings at Tell el-Dab'a which provides the earliest evidence for the presence of Aegean artisans on Egyptian soil. The use of Egyptian Blue has been found at all sites with wall paintings in the Aegean, but it is not found on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus. An analysis of a sample of blue pigment from the sarcophagus revealed that it is neither Egyptian Blue, nor a pigment made from azurite, a source indigenous to the Aegean. The blue pigment on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus is made of powdered lapis lazuli and it is currently the only case of this pigment found in the entire Aegean.¹⁶⁸ George Bass argues that lapis lazuli, a bright blue, semi-precious stone found in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Tajikistan, was imported to the Aegean from the Near East on Levantine ships.¹⁶⁹ Cline's extensive research into international trade during the Late Bronze Age shows that during reign of Amenhotep III,

¹⁶⁸ Immerwahr 1990, 15. Also, thanks to Dr. Ann Brysbaert who studies Aegean paint pigments at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens for confirming through e-mail correspondence in April, 2004 that this is still the case today.

¹⁶⁹ Bass 1996, 166.

contemporaneous with the LM IIIA2 period on Crete when the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus was manufactured, commercial activity between Egypt, Syria-Palestine, Cyprus, and the Aegean was quite extensive,¹⁷⁰ and though nothing definitive can be determined, it is possible that the lapis lazuli used for the painting arrived at Hagia Triada through an Egyptian intermediary. In fact, the use of the much more expensive lapis, raises the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus above its terracotta counterparts as if its patron intended for it be viewed as “royal”.

The unusual choice of material for the blue pigment found on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus is not the only chromatic evidence for outside influence on the painting technique. The conventional use of red for the skin of males has been found on Aegean wall paintings since the emergence of figural imagery in the LM IA (1700-1580 BC), a period contemporaneous with the appearance of Minoan-style wall painting in Egypt. This convention is used consistently in every known figural wall painting found at Akrotiri on Thera, and at Knossos and fragments of a figural scene found in a fresco dump near the palatial complex (figs. 23-24), as it is on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus. But, by the time this convention appeared in the Aegean, it was already a very old tradition in Egyptian (fig. 25) and Immerwahr has pointed to Egypt as the source for the artistic strategy that was transferred later to the Aegean.¹⁷¹

The conventions employed occasionally by Aegean painters for the full display of the human figure is another technique borrowed from Egypt.¹⁷² In Egypt, the principal

¹⁷⁰ Cline 1998, 229-230.

¹⁷¹ Immerwahr 1990, 51.

¹⁷² Immerwahr 1990, 51; Doulas 1992, 23.

human figures in painting or relief are shown using a composite profile consisting of profile feet, legs, and hips, frontal torso and arms, and profile head with a large frontal eye (figs. 25-26). This convention is not consistently followed in Aegean painting. For example, the Egyptian-style used on only one of the fisherman on the wall painting from Room 5 in West House at Akrotiri,¹⁷³ and is not used on the cup bearers shown in the Procession Fresco at Knossos (fig. 16) at all. On the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, the Egyptian composite profile is found only on the offering bearers on Side A (fig. 27). In Egyptian processions, the composite profile is always used for offering bearers (figs. 12-14 and 26). On the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, it appears that the artist made a conscious decision to select the Egyptian style for the offering bearers because it was the best way to fit all three figures in a small space in the composition and still allow for the full and unobstructed representation of the objects they hold (fig. 27).

As Long has demonstrated, most of the decorative motifs and figural images on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus have parallels and prototypes in earlier forms of Minoan art. Glyptic seals, a rich source of Minoan iconography, are often used by scholars for comparative analysis and were researched by the author for parallels to the images found on the Hagia Triada sarcophagus. However, caution is advised when using Minoan seals as comparisons for two major reasons: 1) the ideograms, most of which appear in isolation or small groupings, are not well understood and the interpretations offered by modern scholars are often debated, and 2) many of the seals lack provenience. For this thesis, Minoan seals were researched with these two significant problems in mind.

¹⁷³ Doumas 1992, 52, fig. 19.

For Minoan seals in general, it is not until the Middle Phase (1700-1550 BC) that seals branch into two different forms of iconography. A more sophisticated version of earlier geometric forms and narrative images of people and animals begin to appear, though very few contain overtly religious themes.¹⁷⁴ Although males on the seals are most frequently beardless and wear their hair closely cropped like the males on the sarcophagus, male figures on the Middle Phase seals have the characteristic Minoan wasp waist and wear the short breechcloth and waistband, or just the waist band (especially in the case of acrobatic bull-leapers), or as in the case of the males identified as priests, they wear long robes with diagonal bands. When women are portrayed on these seals, they wear the open bodice flounced skirt or an A-line skirt with double horizontal bands around the hem and either cross hatching or vertical striations on the skirt meant to represent a patterned textile.¹⁷⁵ The male figures shown on Side A (fig. 3) of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus are similar to those found on Minoan seals on the basis of hairstyle and beardlessness. The garments worn by the woman carrying the vessels and the male musician on Side A, the women in procession and the male musician on Side B, and the female and males in the calf-length “hide” skirts on the sarcophagus bear a only a loose resemblance to some of garments worn by the figures on the Middle Phase seals (fig. 28), but the closest parallels for the robes on the Hagia Triada sarcophagus are found on the Procession Fresco from Knossos (figs. 16-17). As for the “hide” skirts, the only parallels are found in the indistinct images of the seals, but not on wall paintings.¹⁷⁶ Other seal

¹⁷⁴ Younger 1993, x.

¹⁷⁵ Younger 1993, 172

¹⁷⁶ Rehak argues that the bottom peaked corner of a garment shown on a small fragment of the Knossos Procession Fresco is a hide skirt. See, Rehak 1996, 45. I have carefully observed this fragment and compared it to the hide skirts on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus located in the same room in the Herakleion

motifs found on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus include bull sacrifice (fig. 29), the pouring of libations (fig. 30), and females in a processional (fig. 31), but without the guidance of the elements of narrative, like those found on the sarcophagus, multiple interpretations of meaning for the images on seals exist for a broad category of cultic activities.¹⁷⁷ While Long and Nanno Marinatos are correct that parallels in earlier Minoan glyptic imagery can be found for many of the individual elements on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, the organization of these elements into two narrative panels that depict a funerary processions of musicians and offering bearers carrying bovine statuettes and boat models, the image of the deceased standing before an architectonic motif, libation ceremonies, a bull sacrifice, and a female standing before a table loaded with offerings, do not have earlier parallels in Minoan art. Given the current evidence, the arguments repeatedly put forth by Evans, Immerwahr, Watrous, Stefan Hiller,¹⁷⁸ and many other scholars who suggest that the idea for the organization of individual Minoan motifs into coherent funerary narratives comes from the Egyptian artistic canon where processional and ceremonial rites are consistently found on the walls of tombs beginning as early as the Old Kingdom¹⁷⁹ formulate the best possible hypotheses for the source of Minoan processional paintings like those found on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus.

Museum on Crete and am unable to reach the same conclusion. I must, therefore, agree with Long that “there are no good parallels for this garment in wall painting,” Long 1974, 37. See, Evans 1928, *PMII*, 723, fig. 450 B no. 18.

¹⁷⁷ For example, in her review of the elements on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, Marinatos argues that the libating female in the hide skirt shown on both of its long sides can symbolize either death or regeneration and is based upon her observations of these elements within the overall context of the narratives depicted. When similar images are found in relative isolation on Minoan seals, Marinatos comes to the broader conclusion that the skirts were worn “by cultic personnel of both sexes when they officiated during certain festivals.” Marinatos 1993, 35 and 137.

¹⁷⁸ Evans 1928, *PMII*, 736-741; Immerwahr 1990, 53; Watrous 1991, 291; Hiller 1999, 363.

¹⁷⁹ For example, see Saleh (1987), Nos. 37, 92, and 197.

During the late Eighteenth Dynasty/LMII-III period (1490-1320 BC), several Theban tombs in Egypt contained both the conventional funerary processions along with the processions of tribute bearers, which included Keftiu emissaries, which had become popular beginning with the reign of Hatshepsut (1479-1457) (fig. 12). The images of Keftiu tribute bearers found in several Egyptian tomb paintings from the latter Eighteenth Dynasty bear extremely close similarities to the male processional figures found on the wall paintings from Knossos and the fragment of a figure on the upper register on Side C of the Hagia Triada sarcophagus (fig. 32). The astounding resemblance of the Theban Keftiu to those found on wall paintings and on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus from Crete suggests that, at some point, Egyptian artists had to have observed a “live” Keftiu in order to include such an extraordinary likeness among the stock images and scenes¹⁸⁰ that make up the repertoire of subject matter found in Late Eighteenth Dynasty tombs. The presence of Minoans in the paintings of Theban tombs and the sudden emergence of narrative processional scenes at the Palace of Knossos and later, in a unique funerary context, on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus strengthens the argument for the transference and exchange of artistic ideas and motifs between Crete and the Egypt during the Eighteenth Dynasty/LM II-III A period.

The tomb paintings executed in Egypt prior to the manufacture of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus document a rich array of goods carried by Keftiu emissaries as offerings of tribute to the reigning pharaoh. The Keftiu carry on their shoulders, in their hands, or draped over their arms gifts in the form of vessels, textiles, copper ingots, jewelry, and, in two examples, the statuettes of bulls (figs. 13-14). On Crete, the only

¹⁸⁰ On this subject, see Wachsmann 1987, 11-25.

painting where offering bearers are depicted carrying anything other than a vessel occurs on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus. The idea for placing bull statuettes in the arms of offering bearers who are rendered in the Egyptian composite profile on Side A of the Hagia Triada sarcophagus (fig. 27) must be viewed as a transference from Egypt, for it appears nowhere else in Minoan art.

As Long points out, it was not customary to include models of boats in tombs and representations of boats in funerary contexts are extremely rare in Minoan art.¹⁸¹ There are countless representations of ships on Minoan seals, but they are usually represented in isolation with nothing to signify meaning beyond their identification as a waterborne vessel. The boats found on Minoan seals typically include a mast, sail, and a bank of oars or some combination of these elements. In contrast, the boats carried by the offering bearers on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus (fig. 35) bear none of these elements. Again, the closest parallels to these images come from Egypt where boats played an important role in Egyptian funerary rites.¹⁸²

In Egyptian funerary ideology that emphasized eternal life, the deceased traveled in a boat following the barque transporting the sun god Re as he traveled west across the heavens each night to reemerge at dawn in the east.¹⁸³ In Egypt, between the reigns of Hatshepsut and Amenhotep II (1479-1392 BC) in the late Eighteenth Dynasty, images of boats transporting the deceased or goods for the deceased appear on tomb paintings for Theban nobility (figs. 33-34). In royal tombs from the late Eighteenth Dynasty, boat

¹⁸¹ The only example of a boat in a funerary context Crete cited by Long was an incomplete graffito sketch of a Minoan ship found in the Temple Tomb at Knossos. Like the majority of ships found on Minoan seals it is equipped with oars. See, Long 1974, 48.

¹⁸² Hiller 1999, 367.

¹⁸³ Hiller 1999, 367.

models were found among the offerings and objects left for Amenhotep II and Tuthmosis III,¹⁸⁴ who reigned between 1479 and 1392 B.C, and later in the tomb of Tutankhamun,¹⁸⁵ whose brief reign occurred between 1336-1327 BC. Stylistically, the boats depicted in the paintings on the walls of Theban tombs are much closer parallels to the boat models on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus than those found elsewhere in Minoan art.

The pouring of libations was a common element in ritual scenes on Crete and in Egypt and there are numerous parallels on Minoan seals for this activity (fig. 30). On Side A of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, a female wearing a hide skirt pours libations from a vessel into a large kantharos set between two poles topped by double axes. What is unusual about this figure in the repertoire of Minoan art is the way in which the artist rendered her body and arm position (fig. 30). She appears in full profile, slightly bent at the waist, and her shoulders appear as if they were squeezed tightly together. One arm is under the vessel while the other is poised over the top and appears to bend backward, as each hand grasps one of the vertical handles on the upper edge of the vessel. The position of the body and the arm gesture of the female is unusual because other figures reaching out or holding objects on the sarcophagus and elsewhere in Minoan art (figs. 16 and 22-23) are portrayed using the more naturalistic style that is a convention of Aegean art. The arm gesture of this female, however, bears a closer resemblance to figures from Egyptian art such as in scenes of workers from the late Eighteenth Dynasty tombs of Rekhmire and Djari (figs. 36-37). The unique arm position of this figure on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus as compared to others in Aegean art is enough to argue that its idea

¹⁸⁴ Long 1974, 49.

¹⁸⁵ Hiller 1999, 367.

transferred from Egypt where figural gestures similar to those shown on the female are also found in funerary art.

The final example of Egyptian influence on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus is found in the figure of the deceased himself (fig. 38). On Side A of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, a male figure stands in front of an architectural element, that I concur with La Rosa is a representation of his tomb.¹⁸⁶ The figure is shown without arms in full profile and appears to be wrapped in a “hide” garment that contains bands of decoration which run along the shoulder and down its front. This armless, or mummiform, figure has no parallel in Aegean art. A careful examination of seals, paintings, pottery, stone vessels, jewelry, plaques, and figurines in Aegean art reveals no other example of an armless figure like the deceased who stands before the tomb on Side A of the Hagia Triada sarcophagus.¹⁸⁷ Images of the deceased, when they occur (albeit rarely) on other clay larnake, are portrayed in prothesis either lying on a bier or within the larnax itself¹⁸⁸ in a way that evokes the idea of the finality of death. In direct contrast to this concept, is the idea of regeneration or eternal life on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus as embodied in a figure that stands in front of his tomb and before his procession of offering bearers (fig. 3). It goes without saying that it is in Egypt where mummiform figures occur in the form

¹⁸⁶ La Rosa 1998, 187.

¹⁸⁷ Rehak and Younger imply the painting fragment known as “La Parisienne” is armless like the figure on the Hagia Triada sarcophagus. See, Rehak and Younger 2001, 448. I have closely observed this fragment in the Herakleion Museum. It is broken off just below the top of the figure’s shoulder making her appear armless but there is no reason to assume that she never had arms. In fact, the watercolor reproduction of this fragment with lacuna restored in Evans’ *Palace of Minos*, Vol. IV, Pl. XXXI E shows the figure holding her arm up but bent at the elbow in a gesture similar to the other figures from the Campstool Fresco of which this fragment is a part.

¹⁸⁸ Marinatos 1997, 283, fig. 1.

of mummiform stone¹⁸⁹ and wooden coffins, shabti figurines, and of course the mummies themselves during the Eighteenth Dynasty (fig. 39). Egyptian tomb paintings and in papyrus scrolls that depict the Egyptian opening of the mouth ceremony (figs. 40-41) by showing images of the deceased in mummiform being supported by a priest or member of the family in front of the tomb where this rite was apparently performed. The image of the deceased male standing in front of his tomb on Side A of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus must borrow this iconography from Egypt, for there is no other example of this motif found anywhere in Aegean art.

Contrary to the argument presented in the prior scholarship, the hybrid nature of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus stands as the embodiment of ideas transferred from outside the Aegean and especially from Egypt. In terms of the many technical material, compositional, and motif elements demonstrated to be derived from Egyptian, and in the case of the lapis lazuli, Near Eastern sources, the otherness of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus as compared to other Minoan funerary art and even other Minoan wall paintings should no longer come as a surprise. The use of tempera and carved low relief were already, by the Late Bronze Age, long held conventions of the Egyptian artistic canon and seemed to be introduced into Aegean painting techniques solely in the case of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus. The medium used on the sarcophagus to achieve the color blue, ground lapis lazuli imported from the Afghan region, emphasizes that the degree of outside contact between Crete and other Mediterranean trading centers, like Egypt and the Levant, was extensive and diverse during the Late Bronze Age. That this blue only on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus not only denotes outside contact, but is

¹⁸⁹The mummiform sarcophagus of Merymose, viceroy of Nubia during the reign of Amenhotep III, was made of stone. See, Andrews 1984, 59, fig. 58.

another example of the otherness embodied in this object. The idea to assemble a variety of Minoan ritual motifs into a coherent narrative used in the only funerary context ever found in the Aegean speaks again to the extent of artistic borrowing that occurred between Crete and Egypt. And finally, the Egyptian compositional elements found in figures of the libating female, the offering bearers, and the deceased, as well as the depiction of objects normally not found in Minoan tombs but shown on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, add to the abundance of evidence that betrays a close relation to Egyptian funerary art.

As demonstrated by the eclecticism found in architecture designed both for the living and the dead, the LM IIIA2 period (1370-1320 BC), when the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus was manufactured on Crete, was a time of transition and change. Knossos, the source of political power and of artistic ideas for so much of Minoan history, was in decline while other sites like Hagia Triada and Kommos were on the rise. In the wake of the decline of Knossos, it would not be unrealistic to assume that artisans who were trained and had worked at Knossos, a place where evidence of interconnections with Egypt appear earlier, would have migrated to new centers of power to work for an emerging elite class seeking new ways to express their social identity. There is also evidence from the earlier LM IA-IB period (1700-1490 BC) where proof of direct contact between Crete and Egypt is found on the Minoan-style wall paintings at Tell el-Dab'a that mark both the end of Hyksos rule and the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty and when, later in the period, wall paintings of Keftiu emissaries appear in Theban tombs. But the evidence for interconnections between Crete and Egypt, no matter how slight, goes back as far as the Middle Kingdom and the MM IB period and is demonstrated by

the early presence of Egyptian stone vessels, faience, and Egyptian blue pigment on Crete as well as the Kamares-ware vessels¹⁹⁰ found in Egyptian tombs. Not only do these exchanges indicate the trade of goods, but they acknowledge the exchange of ideas that could only be accomplished by traveling groups like artisans, craftsmen, emissaries, ambassadors and, perhaps, even the rulers¹⁹¹ themselves. The observations made and the ideas gathered by these groups are not commodities that can be exchanged in the normal sense, but the absence of observations and ideas in the archaeological record should not rule out the possibility that they existed nevertheless. For many of the Egyptian elements found on the Hagia Triada sarcophagus are best accounted for by the idea of the exchange of ideas.

The anomalies inherent in the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus raise the question of why this Aegean funerary vessel alone carries these characteristics. It is likely that both the temporal and geographic position of Hagia Triada combined with its new position as a power center on Crete during the Late Bronze Age provides the answer. Situated as it is near the south coast of Crete, Hagia Triada faced Egypt and, with the interconnections between these two lands that have been demonstrated in this thesis, Hagia Triada, must have benefited most strongly from this contact. The shift in power away from Knossos in the wake of its second phase of destruction in the early LM IIIA2 period was also to the benefit of Hagia Triada. During the LM IIIA2 period, Hagia Triada rapidly evolved into a dominant bureaucratic/religious center with connections to the Minoan trading port at

¹⁹⁰Kemp and Merrillees 1980, 257.

¹⁹¹ Wachsmann 1987, 96 and Pl. LXIX; Cline 1998, 245-248. Both scholars view the “Aegean List” on the statue base of Amenhotep III’s funerary temple at Kom el-Hetan as a topographical list that had its origins in a travel itinerary for a diplomatic mission from Egypt.

nearby Kommos where evidence of trade with Egypt is pronounced during this time. These factors suggest both the presence of a powerful figure at Hagia Triada and his connection with Egypt. Whether the subtle changes in material and medium that mark the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus can be taken as a nod to Egypt, or whether they indicate an emigrant craftsman born in Egypt, a Minoan craftsman trained in Egypt, or a traveling patron, there is no question that Egypt plays a part in the construction of this funerary container.

More striking than the Egyptian technical borrowings of the sarcophagus to those present at the funeral of the deceased would have been the narrative scenes on its sides, and it is clear that its patron wanted those characteristics to take center stage. However, there is no reason to believe the patron of this sarcophagus was an Egyptian for there is, in all, more about the imagery that is Minoan than Egyptian. It seems more likely to me that the patron of the sarcophagus was a Minoan from Hagia Triada, who was in the position to travel to Egypt and who was impressed by the wealth of funerary imagery he saw there. This elite person, who would later commission the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, brought back the idea of an “Egyptian burial” to make his own burial as extravagant as what he witnessed in Egypt. To use a phrase coined by Michael Wedde,¹⁹² the movement of ideas from one culture to the next is like an “intellectual stowaway,” and on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus these ideas are combined with traditional Minoan funerary beliefs to emerge as a hybridized, unique, and meaningful representation of rituals of death and burial for someone who may have experienced, firsthand, the funerary traditions of Egypt during a period of social and cultural transition on Crete.

¹⁹² Wedde 1996, 67-75.



Figure 1 Tub and Chest larnake, terracotta, (1430-1320BC), Herakleion Museum, Crete



Figure 2 Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, painted limestone, (1370-1320 BC), Herakleion Museum, Crete

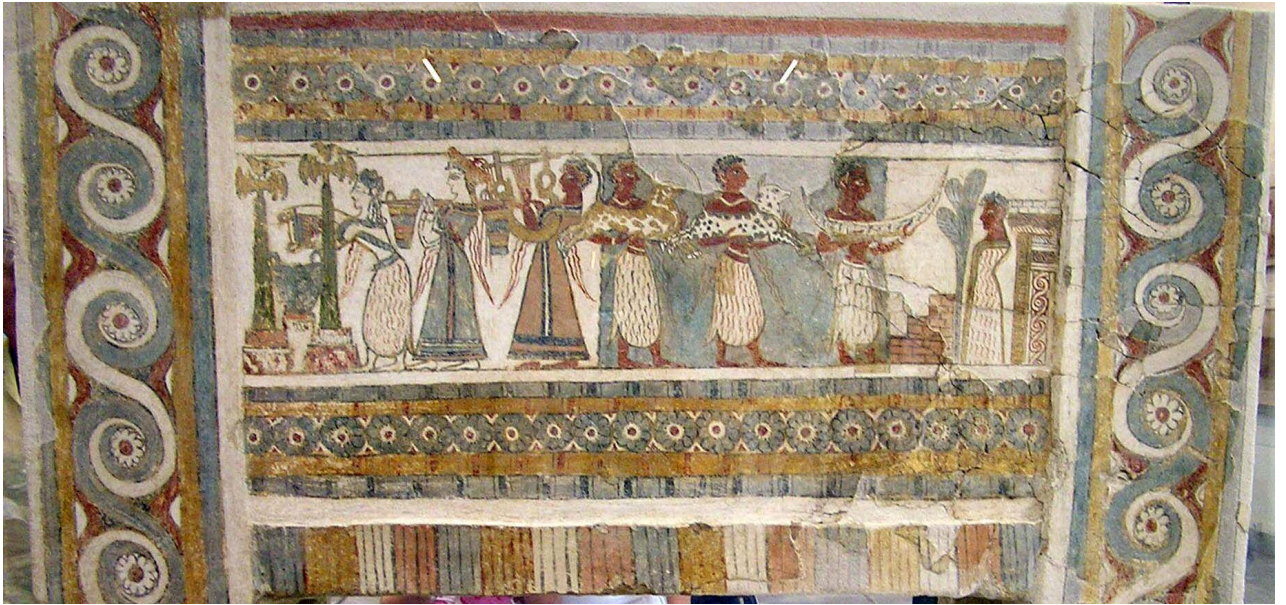


Figure 3 Side A, Funerary Procession and Libation Ceremony, Hagia Triada Sarcophagus

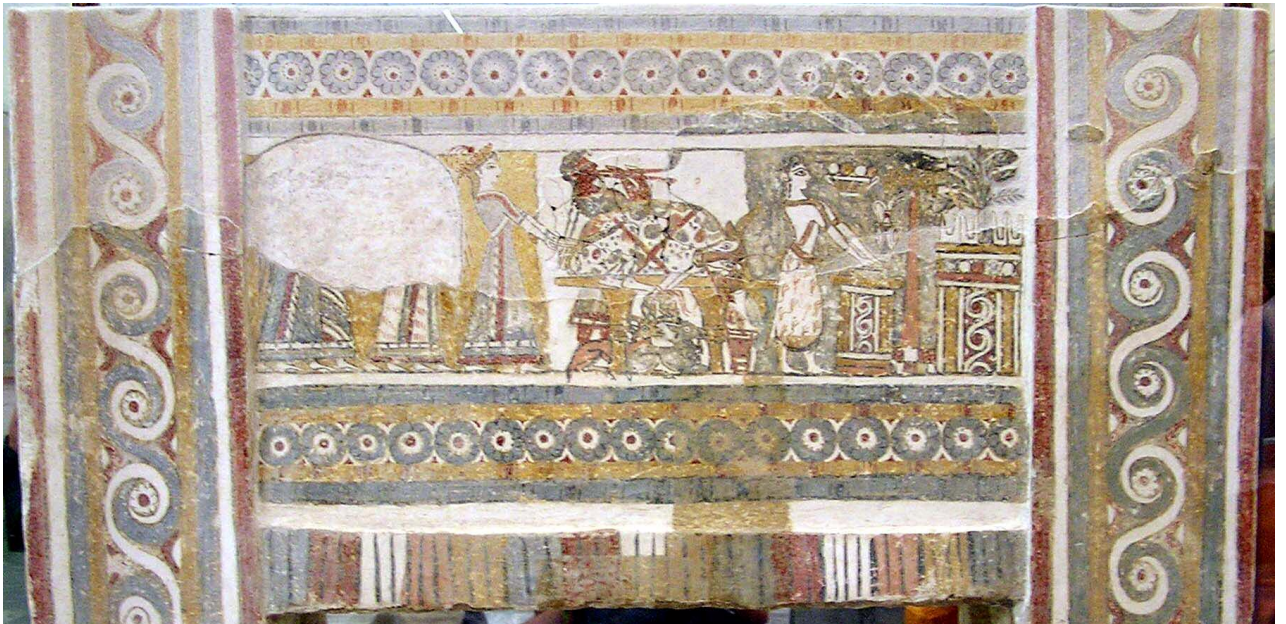


Figure 4 Side B, Procession and Animal Sacrifice, Hagia Triada Sarcophagus



Figure 5 Left, detail of tree shrine on Side B of Hagia Triada Sarcophagus; Right, Minoan gold ring from Archanes, Crete



Figure 6 Side C, Male Processional in top register and goddesses in agrimi driven chariot in lower register, Hagia Triada Sarcophagus



Figure 7 Side D, Goddesses in griffin driven chariot, Hagia Triada Sarcophagus



Figure 8 Left, lily and swallows detail from 'Spring Fresco', Room Delta 2, Thera (circa 1628 BC); Right, lilies detail from the Southeast House at Knossos (1700-1750 BC)



Figure 9 Left, detail of griffin from Xeste 3, Thera (circa 1628 BC); Right, griffins in the restored Throne Room at Knossos (circa 1500 BC)



Figure 10 Part of wings of a griffin from the wall paintings at Avaris



Figure 11 Left, papyrus fresco in Room 1, House of the Ladies, Thera (circa 1628 BC), Thera Museum; Right, palace style jar with abstract papyrus motif from Knossos, Herakleion Museum, Crete (1450-1300 BC)

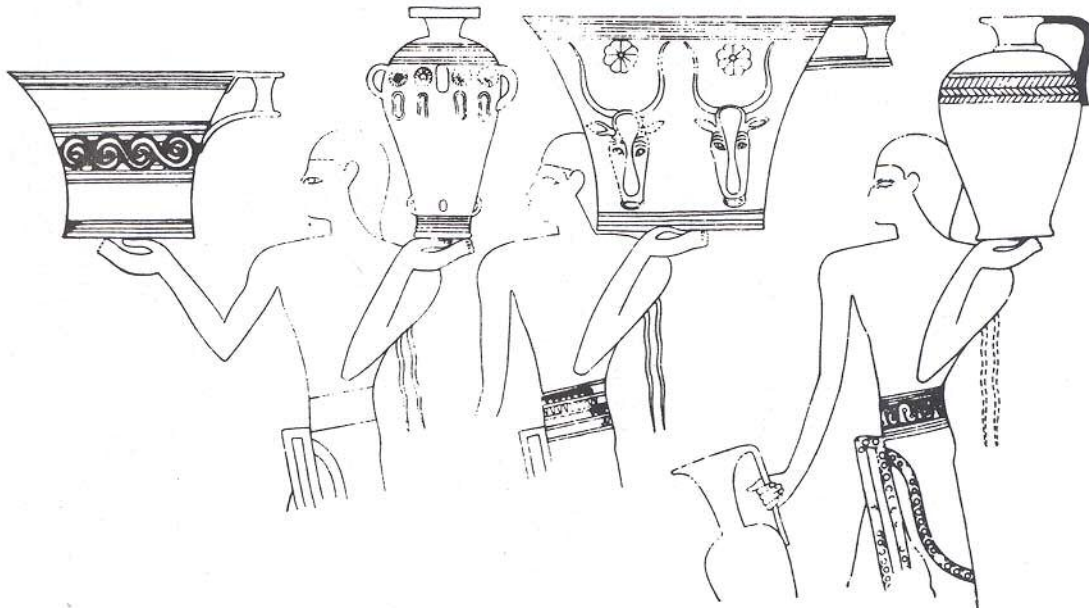


Figure 12 Line drawing from wall painting of Keftiu emissaries in the Tomb of Senenmut, reign of Hatshepsut Eighteenth Dynasty (1479-1457 BC)

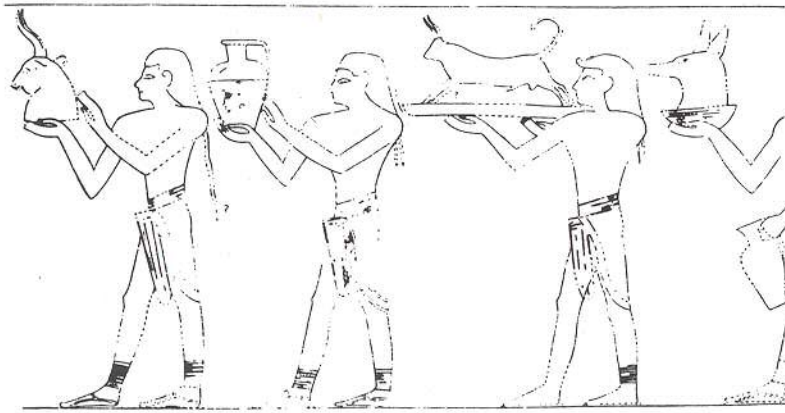


Figure 13 Line drawing from wall painting of Keftiu emissaries in the tomb of Useramun, reign of Tuthmosis III Eighteenth Dynasty (1479-1425 BC)

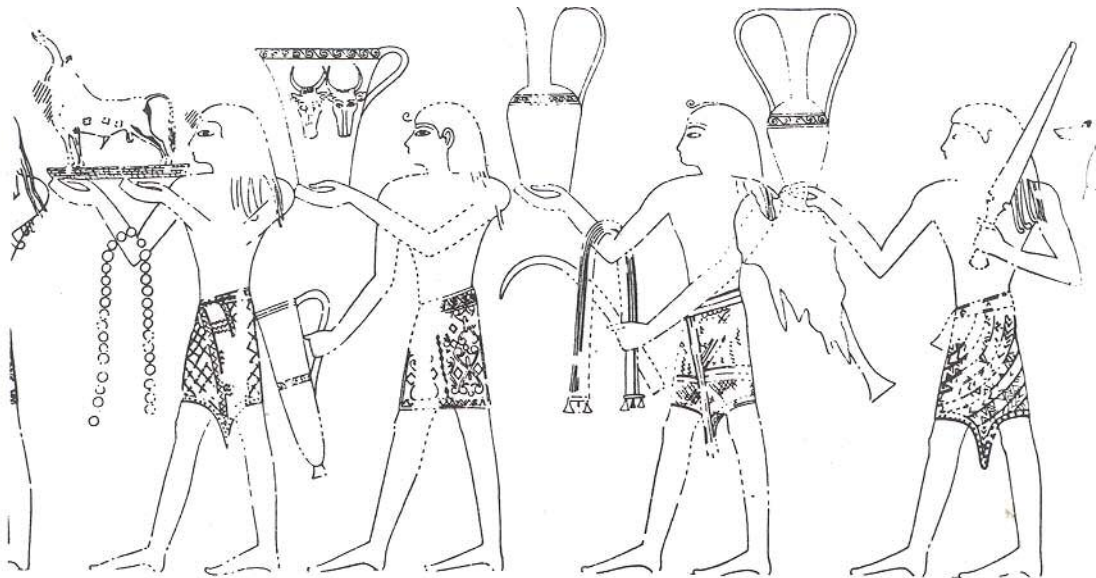


Figure 14 Line drawing from wall painting of Keftiu emissaries in the tomb of Mencheperresonb, reign of Tuthmosis III Eighteenth Dynasty (1479-1425 BC)

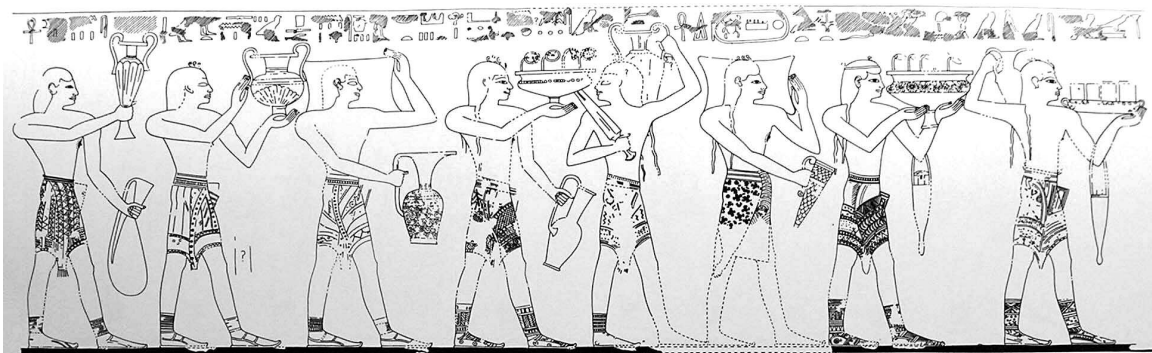
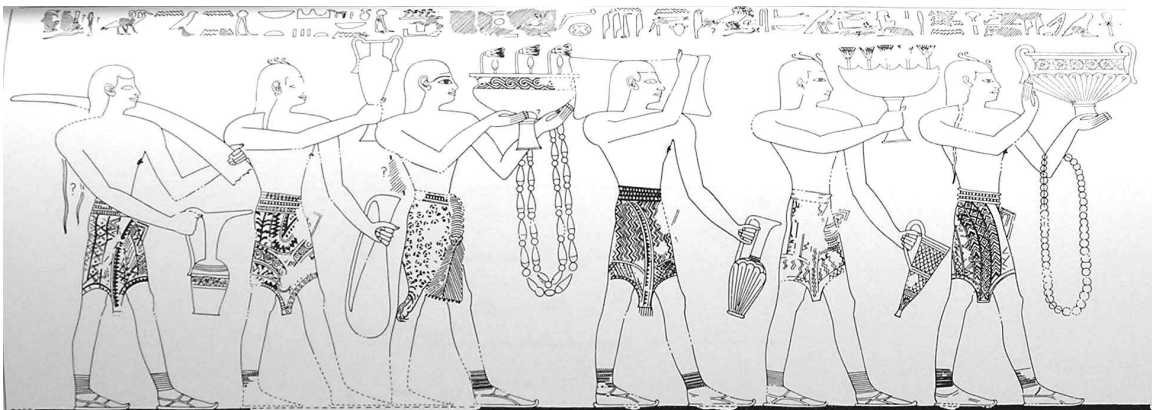
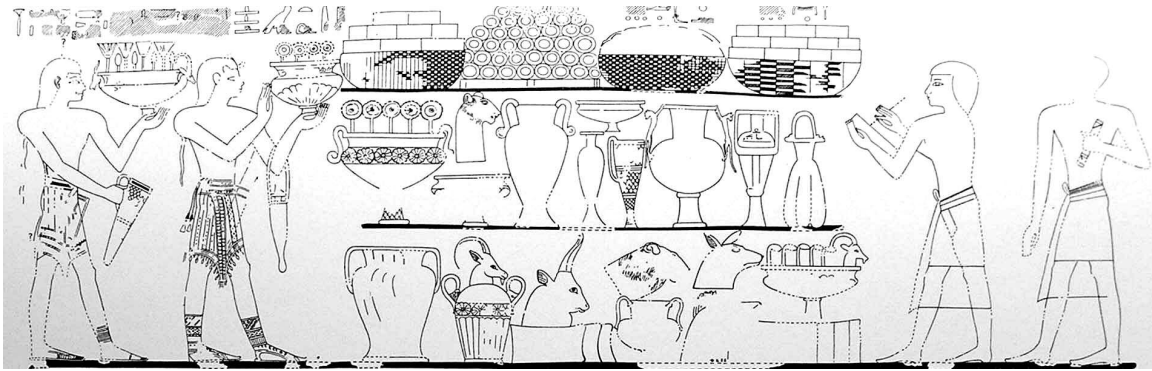


Figure 15 Line drawings from the wall paintings of Keftiu emissaries in the tomb of Rekhmire, reign of Amenhotep II Eighteenth Dynasty (1427-1392 BC)

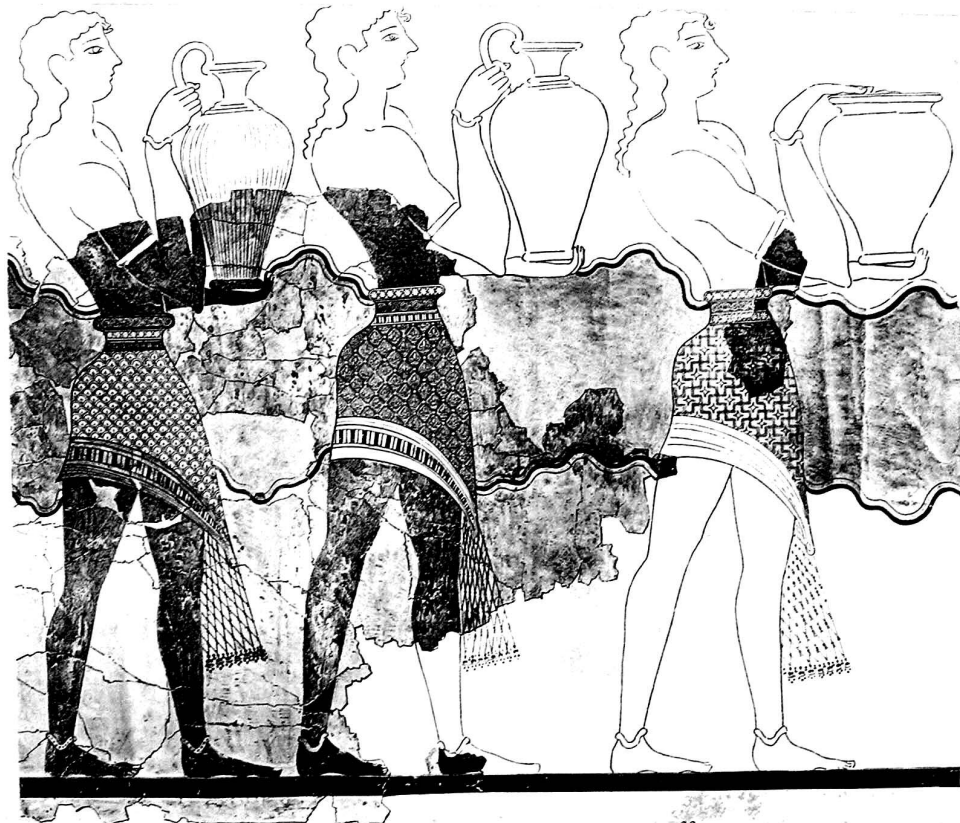


Figure 16 Restored drawings of the Procession Fresco at Knossos (1490-1370 BC)

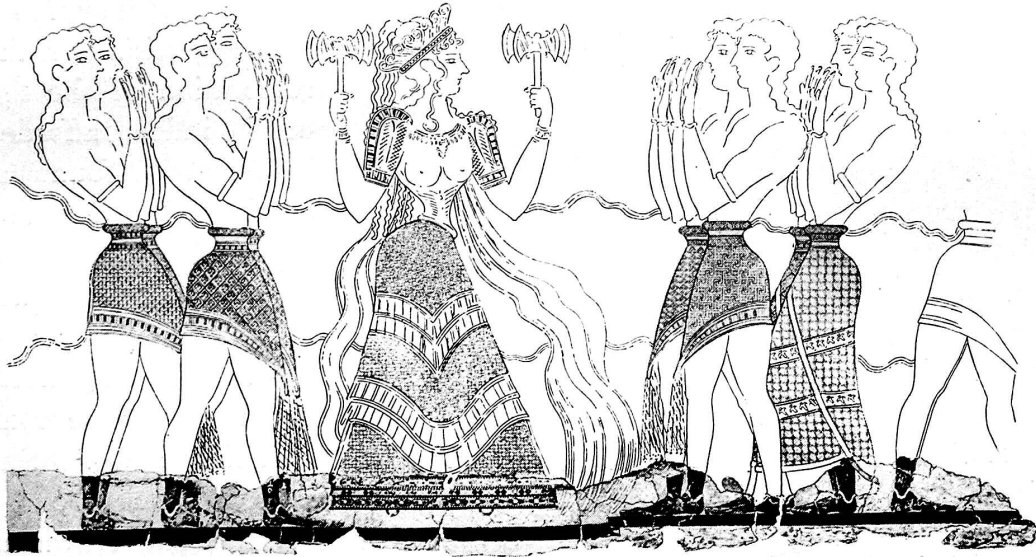


Figure 17 Restored drawing of the Procession Fresco at Knossos (1490-1370 BC)

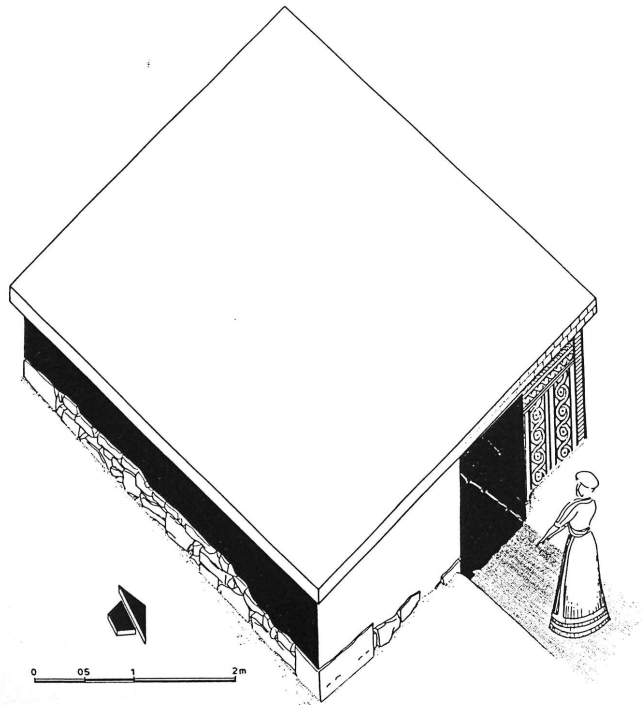
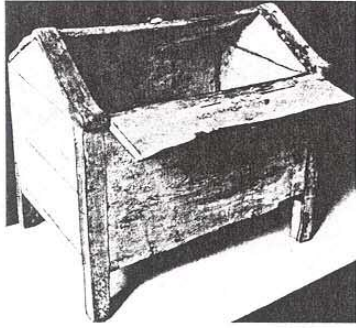
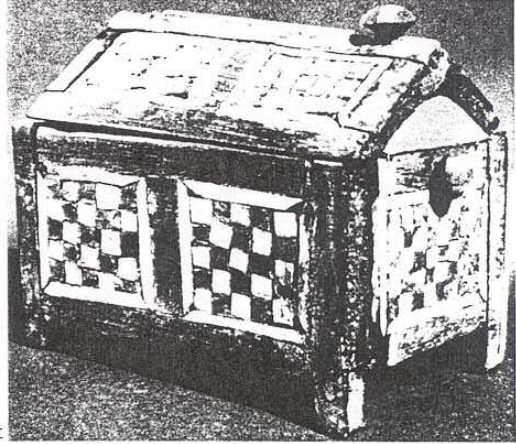


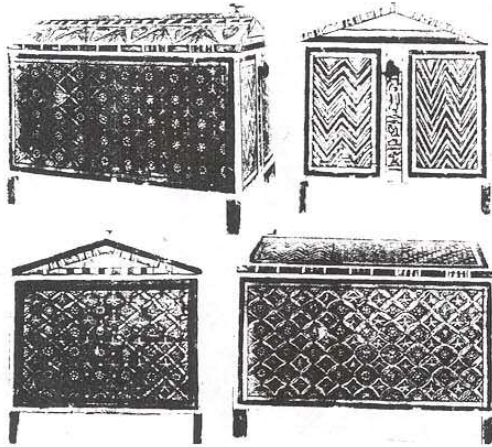
Figure 18 Proposed reconstruction drawing of the tomb of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus (1370-1320 BC)



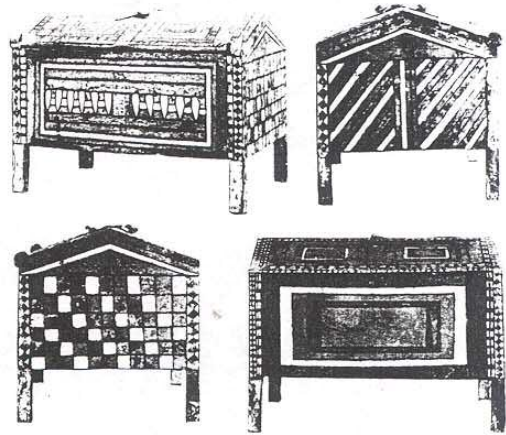
a. Coffin from Sedment



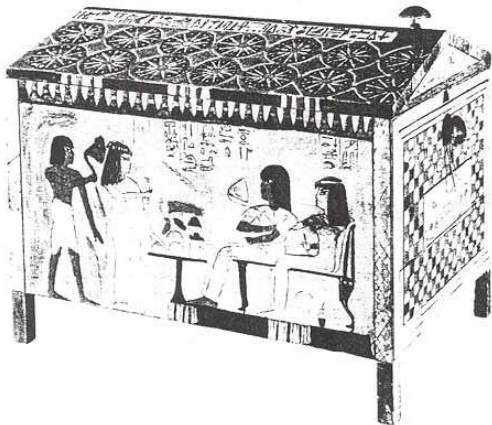
b. Chest from Sedment



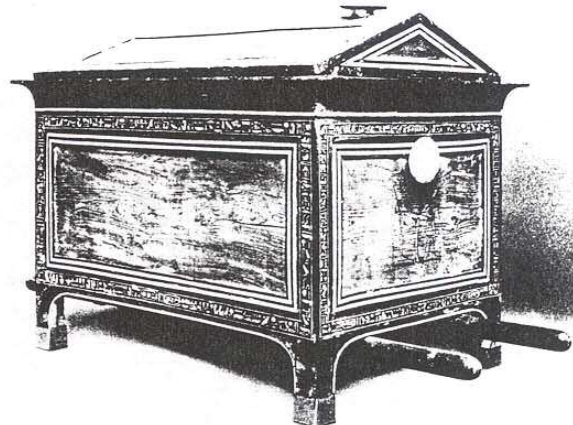
c. Funerary chest from Tomb of Cha and Meryt, Thebes



d. Funerary chest from Tomb of Cha and Meryt, Thebes



e. Funerary chest from Tomb of Cha and Meryt, Thebes



f. Funerary chest from Tomb of Tutankhamen

Figure 19 Egyptian funerary chests from Eighteenth Dynasty tombs



Figure 20 Chest larnake (1430-1320 BC), Herakleion Museum, Crete



Figure 21 Fresco fragments of men in procession from Xeste 4, Thera (circa 1628 BC)

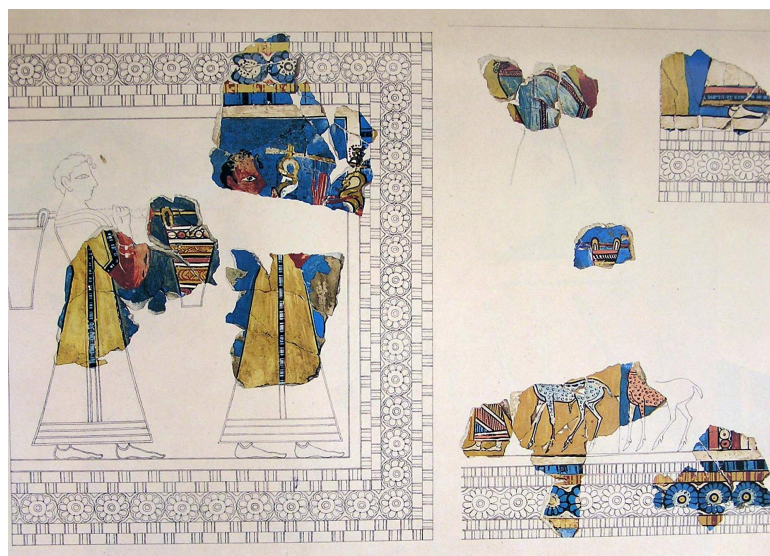


Figure 22 Fresco fragments from the site of Hagia Triada (1430-1370 BC)



Figure 23 Details of males with dark red skin in Aegean paintings; Left, from Xeste 4, Thera (circa 1628 BC); Center, from Palace at Knossos, Crete (1490-1370 BC); Right, from Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, Crete (1370-1320 BC)

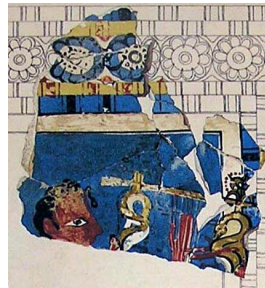


Figure 24 Detail of male with dark red skin from fresco fragments found at the site of Hagia Triada, Crete (1430-1370 BC)



Figure 25 Details of males with dark red skin in Egyptian paintings; Left, from the Fifth Dynasty (2471-2355 BC) mastaba of Ptahhetep at Saqqara; Right, from the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Senenmut (1479-1457 BC) at Thebes

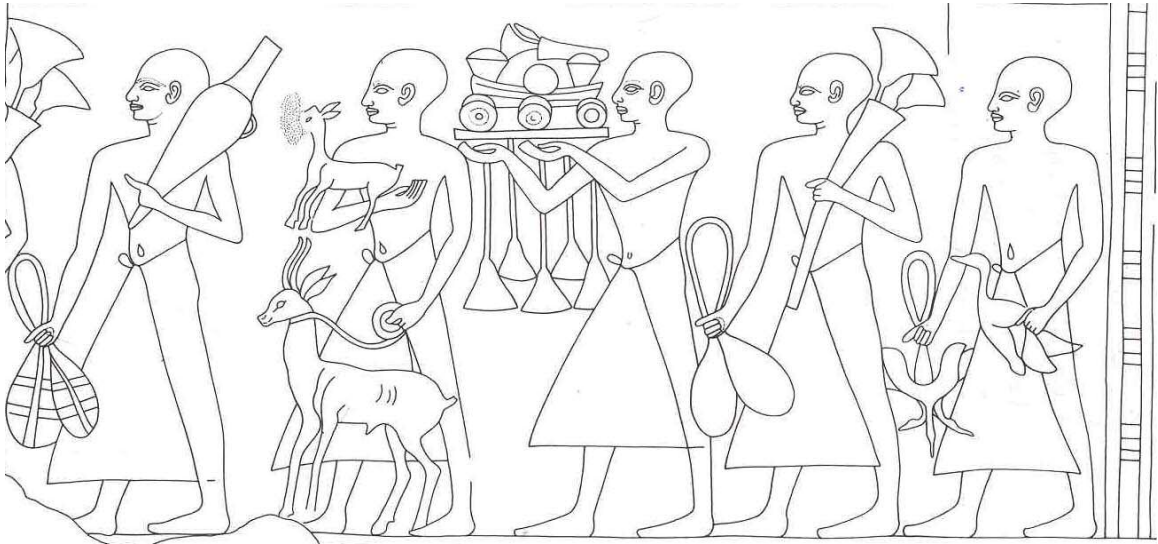


Figure 26 Line drawing of a procession of offering bearers from a wall relief in a Late Eighteenth Dynasty tomb at Saqqara, Egypt



Figure 27 Detail of offering bearers and lyre player on Side A of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus

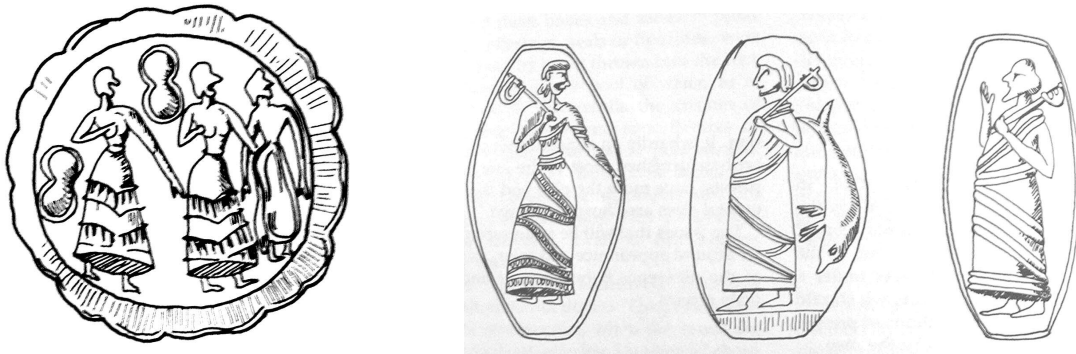


Figure 28 Line drawings of Middle Phase Minoan seals (1700-1550 BC); Left, two dancing women wearing open bodices and flounced skirts and one dancing woman wearing a hide skirt; Right, male priests wearing long robes with horizontal and diagonal bands



Figure 29 Left, line drawing of a Minoan seal from Malia depicting a sacrificial bull lying on a table; Right, detail of the bull sacrifice on Side B of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus



Figure 30 Left, line drawing of a Minoan seal from Knossos depicting a libation scene; Right, detail of the libation scene on Side A of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus

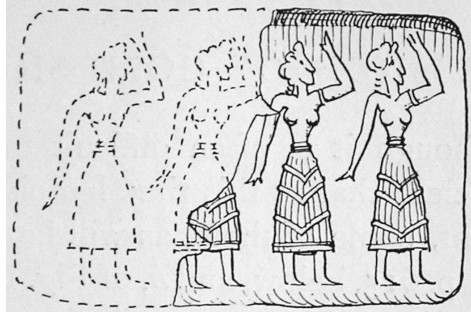


Figure 31 Left, line drawing of a Minoan cylinder seal from Knossos showing females in procession; Right, detail of females in procession on Side B of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus

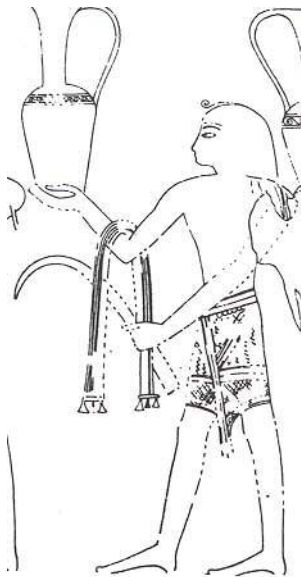
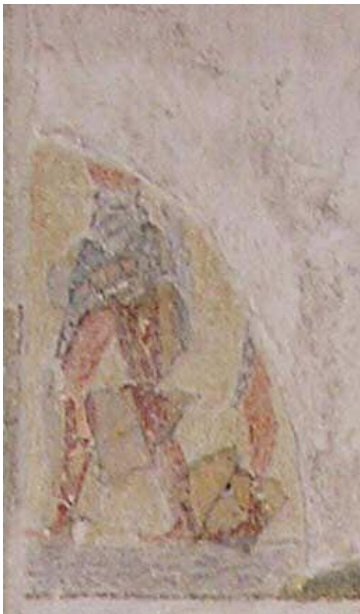


Figure 32 Left, detail of male in procession on Side C of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus; Center, detail of Keftiu emissary in the tomb painting of Mencheperresonb; Right, detail of Keftiu emissary in the tomb painting of Rekhmire

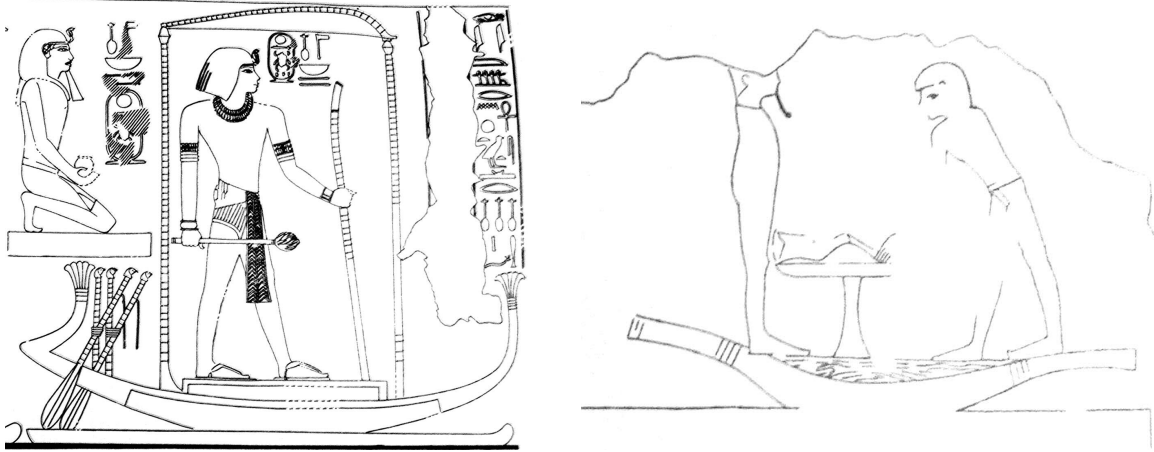


Figure 33 Left, line drawing of funerary boat from the wall painting in the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Kenamun; Right, line drawing of funerary boat from the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of User

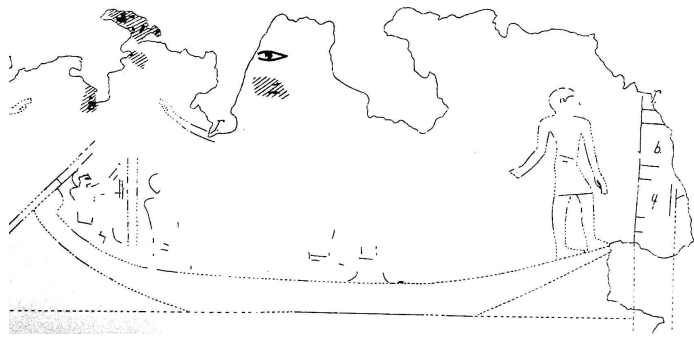


Figure 34 Line drawing of a funerary boat from the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Daga



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Figure 35 Left, Minoan seal with the image of a boat equipped with mast, sail and bank of oars; Right, detail of the offering bearer with a funerary boat model from Side A of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus



Figure 36 Left, detail of female pouring libations on Side A of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus; Right, detail of woman working from the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Djari



Figure 37 Detail of men working from the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Rekhmire



Figure 38 Detail of the deceased on Side A of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus



Figure 39 Left, gilded wood mummiform coffin; Center, wooden shabti wooden mummiform figurine; Right, faience shabti mummiform figurine; all from the reign of Amenhotep III (1382-1344 BC)



Figure 40 Detail of the opening of the mouth ceremony from the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Nebamun

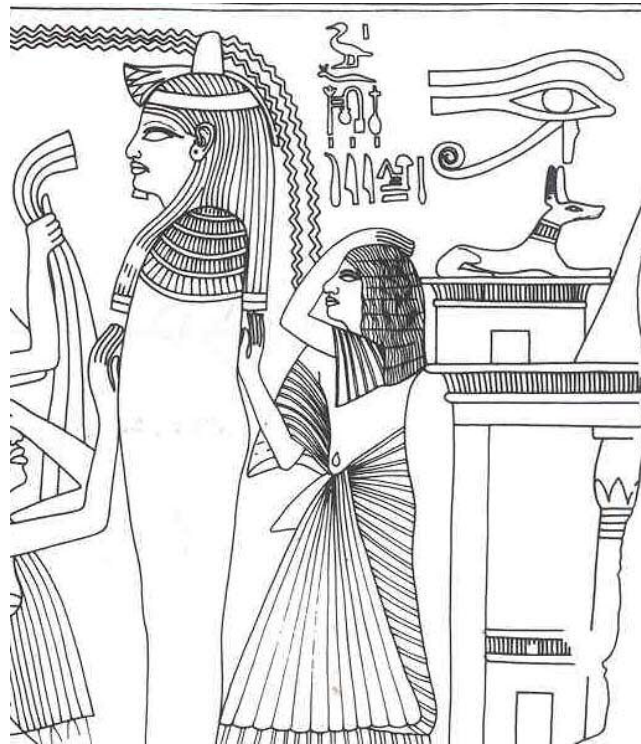
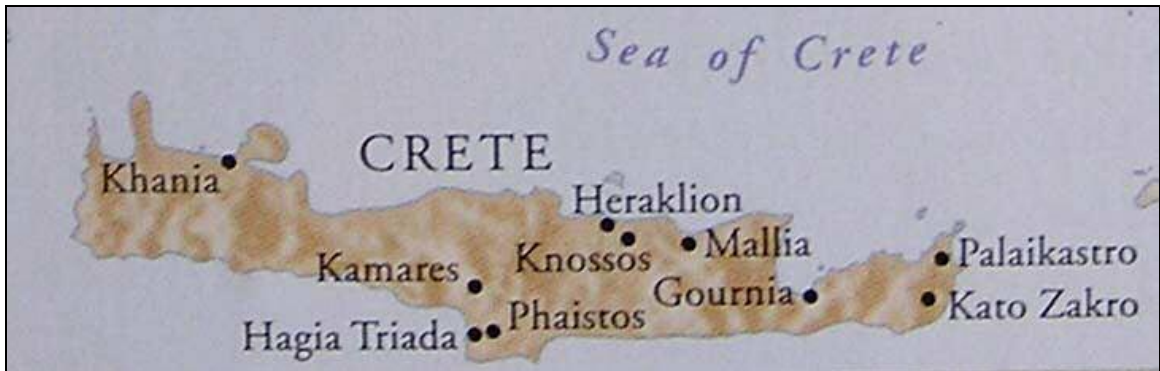
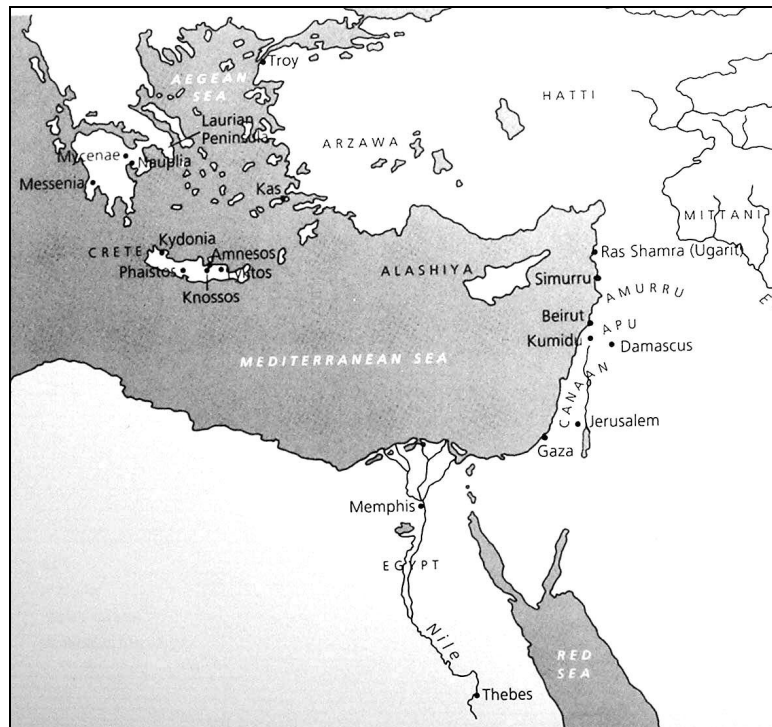


Figure 41 Detail of the opening of the mouth ceremony from a wall relief in an Eighteenth Dynasty tomb at Saqqara

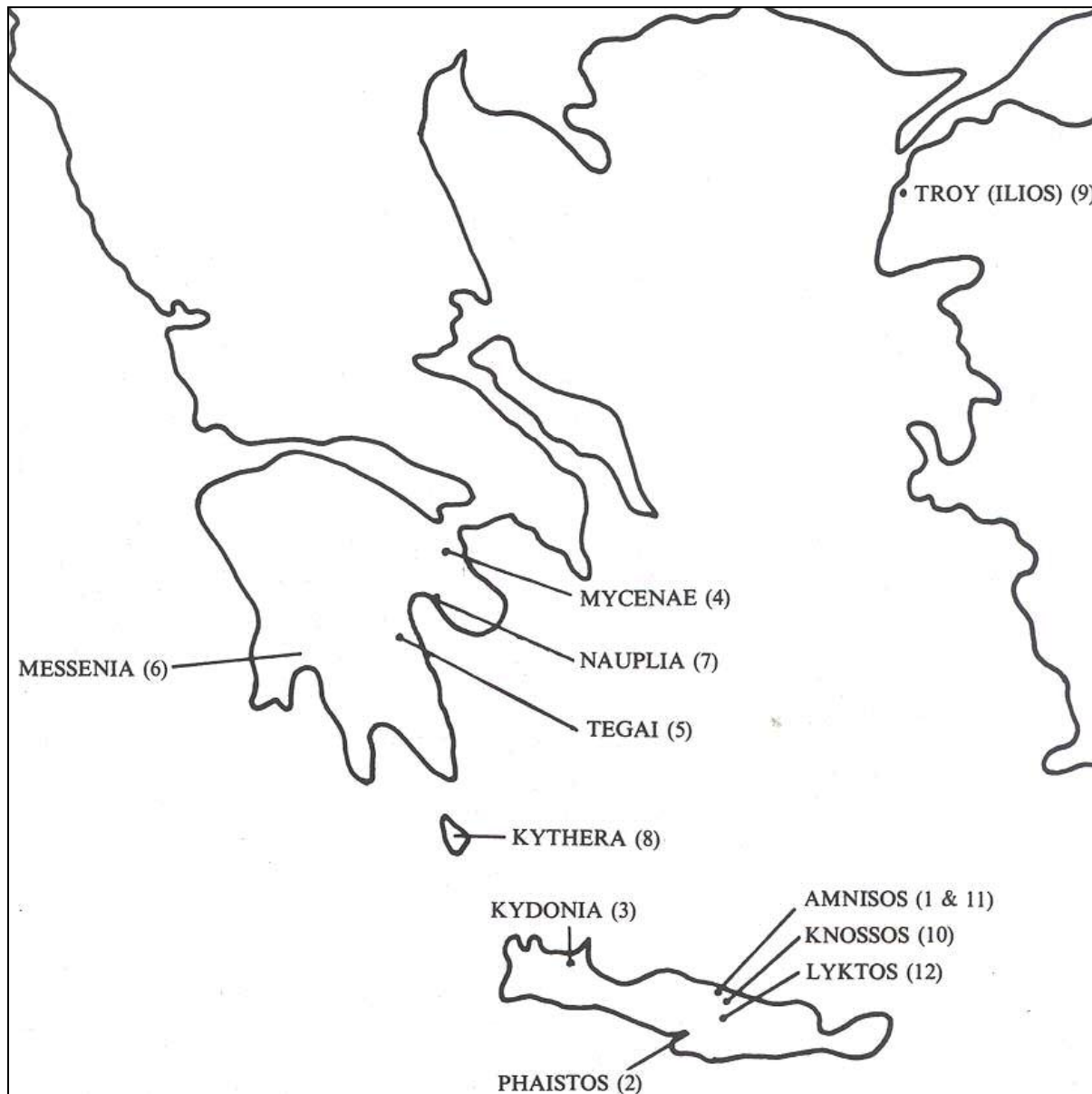
Map 1: Major Minoan sites on Crete



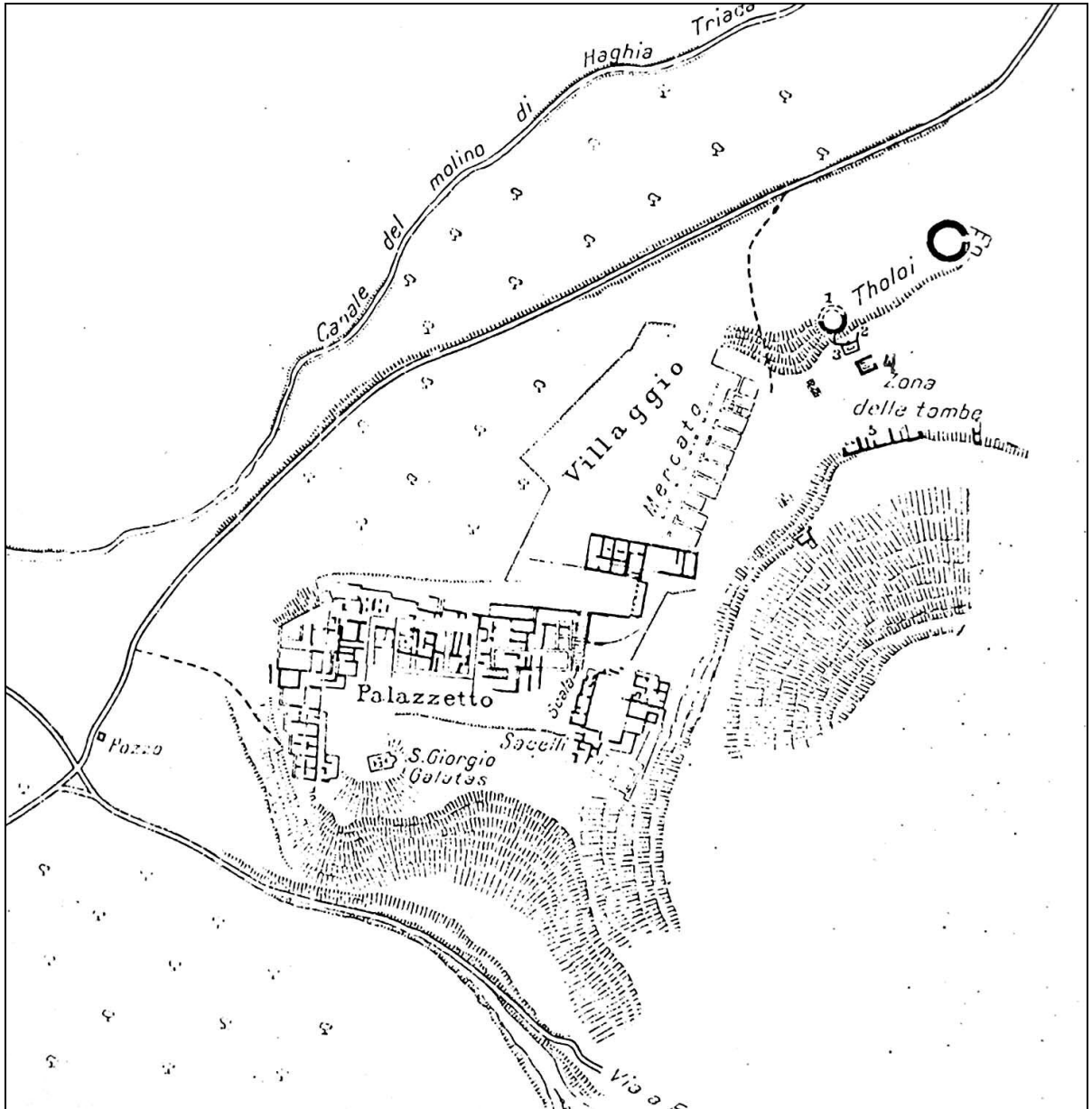
Map 2: Egypt and the Aegean



Map 3: Sites in the Aegean listed on the statue base at Amenhotep III's mortuary temple at Kom el-Hatan, Egypt



Map 4: General plan of Hagia Triada, Crete



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