



EGYPTIAN IDEAS, MINOAN RITUALS: EVIDENCE OF INTERCONNECTIONS BETWEEN CRETE AND EGYPT IN THE BRONZE AGE ON THE HAGIA TRIADA SARCOPHAGUS

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ABSTRACT

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 tentative 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 reexamination 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.

INTRODUCTION

The enigmatic Hagia Triada Sarcophagus was discovered in 1903 by the Italian archaeologist, R. Paribeni during excavations of the hilltop cemetery near the site of Hagia Triada,¹ a transitional Minoan/Mycenaean religious and bureaucratic center located in south-central Crete. Among known examples of the Minoan and Mycenaean larnake, this sarcophagus from the Late Bronze Age is exceptional in terms of its material, iconography, choice of paint pigment, funerary ritual narrative, decorative elements, overall composition, technique and style.²

The larnax is a small coffin with a gable-topped lid (Figure 1) that emerged as a popular form of burial container during the Late Bronze Age (circa 1430-1200 BC) at major sites on Crete and the Greek mainland. The favored technique and material for the manufacture of larnake, based on examples known to date, is slip painted terracotta. In fact, the vast majority of Minoan and Mycenaean are terracotta chest- or tub-shaped larnake decorated with abstract designs such as spirals and zigzags, stylized animal and marine motifs randomly arranged, and schematic figural forms that symbolize female mourners, males engaged in hunting, or argonautic scenes. Rarer still are the schematic figural forms lying on a couch or bier symbolizing the deceased and not one of the larnake contain the elements of narrative. Compared to the



Figure 1: Chest larnax (1430-1320 BC), Herakleion Museum, Crete (Author)

random compositions and highly abstract decorative programs found on terracotta larnaxe, the naturalistic and carefully organized narrative scenes of funerary rites on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus (Figure 2) make it anomalous within this category of funerary furnishings. Moreover, it is the only larnaxe found to date that was manufactured from limestone and the only one executed in al fresco, a painted plaster technique normally found in wall painting and that originated on Crete.³ For decades, scholars have alluded to the compositional and stylistic connection between the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, Knossian wall paintings, and contemporaneous wall paintings found in Egypt where processions were a popular theme in tomb paintings dating back to the Old Kingdom (circa 2630 BC). On

Crete, narrative scenes of processions and ritual activities that emphasize human activities over nature seem to occur spontaneously as there is little evidence to connect them to a style that developed from earlier Minoan art.⁴ The sudden appearance of a painting style in Minoan 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, conquest, exogamy, diplomatic gift exchange, or traveling artisans should be viewed as possibilities for the transference and exchange of Egyptian artistic ideas with Crete and hybridized into the Minoan canon (and vice versa).



Figure 2: Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, painted limestone. Herakleion Museum, Crete (Author).

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE HAGIA TRIADA SARCOPHAGUS

Finding an object's place within the appropriate temporal and historical context is a fundamental goal of the art historian and the archaeologist. This article employs the Aegean High Chronology. In this chronology, current scientific evidence such as dendrochronology, ice-core dating, and the recent radiocarbon dating of an olive branch found in volcanic ash on Thera (modern Santorini) date the eruption that destroyed Akrotiri, circa 1665-1595 BC, during the LM IA period.⁵ Using this chronology, Manfred Bietak's recent re-dating of the Minoan

wall paintings found at Avaris (Tell el-Dab'a) to the reigning periods of Thutmose III through Amenhotep II (circa last half of the 15th century BC) is particularly relevant to this study.⁶ In addition, La Rosa's dating of the sarcophagus to 1370-1360 BC⁷ establishes the fabrication contemporaneous to the reign of the Eighteenth Dynasty pharaoh Amenhotep III (circa 1388-1350 BC) when Egypt was perhaps at its most powerful. This is the period in the Late Bronze Age when evidence of trade and cultural interconnections between Crete and the Eighteenth Dynasty rulers abounds. It is also during this period on Crete when monumental wall paintings of rituals and processions in the palatial complexes seem to suddenly appear and, conversely,

images of Minoans in processional scenes appear on the walls of Theban tombs.⁸ These Minoans in Egypt are rendered in the same posture and dress as those found on wall paintings from Knossos and later on one side of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus.

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 have been noted in the academic writings for decades.⁹ 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. Yet, cultural exchanges such as those that occur through trade,¹⁰ diplomatic relations,¹¹ and even migrating populations¹² have been widely documented and need to 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 an *a priori* transference through conquest and cultural dominance.¹³

Chronologically, evidence for contact between Crete and Egypt begins early. Peter Warren's extensive research into the acquisition and adaptation of Egyptian lapidary art 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 Dynasty¹⁴ (corresponding to the EM I-II and the LM II-III A2 periods on Crete).¹⁵

At Knossos, Arthur Evans found fragments of Egyptian stone vases¹⁶ in EM I contexts beneath the Central Court of the Palace. In the LM IB 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.¹⁷ Later still, in LM IIIA contexts from the Central Shrine Treasury at Knossos, Evans documents an Egyptian stone, baggy alabastron¹⁸ that dates to the Middle Kingdom or the Second Intermediate Period.¹⁹ 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.²⁰ Adding support to this argument for Egyptian stone vessels as objects of status and value is the fact that many vessels made much earlier have been found in later elite contexts, including tombs, on Crete²¹ signifying their importance as heirlooms²² and, perhaps, commemorations of diplomatic exchange 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.²³ 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.²⁴ 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.²⁵ From the Old Kingdom, a wall adorned with finely crafted



Figure 3: Above: detail of griffin from Xeste 3, Akrotiri, Thera, from C. Doumas, *The Wall Paintings of Thera* (Athens: The Thera Foundation, 1992), fig. 128; below: griffins in the restored Throne Room at Knossos (Author).



faience tiles²⁶ was found in the so-called Blue Room of the pyramid and mortuary complex for the Third Dynasty pharaoh. The artistic and technical mastery demonstrated in this composition of multi-colored tiles inlaid in mosaic-like fashion attests at the beginning of the Pharaonic 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 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 inspired by Egypt, have been found in a number of sites on Crete from the Early Bronze Age on. Tombs from the EM II (circa 2700-2200 BC) cemeteries at Mochlos²⁷ have yielded some of the earliest faience objects on Crete. The earliest evidence for faience workshops on Crete, which occurs during the MM II (circa 1810-1740 BC) comes 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.²⁸ 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 robes) come from the MM IIB Temple Repositories at Knossos²⁹ and signify the role of the site as an important center for superior artistic and technical skill in faience production.³⁰



Figure 4: Part of wings of a griffin from the wall paintings at Avaris, from M. Bietak, *Egypt, the Aegean and the Levant, Interconnections in the Second Millennium, BC* (London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1992), pl. 4, fig. 3.

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 evidence for clues that point to the cultural exchange of ideas. On Crete, mythological griffins of a Near Eastern source that is possibly Syrian³¹ are found on the LM IA (circa 1700-1600 BC) wall painting in the adyton (lustral basin) of Xeste 3 at Akrotiri and on the LM IB (circa 1600-1525 BC) walls of the Throne Room at Knossos (Figure 3), and they may speak to this initial interchange. Unlike the Syrian griffin, however, the Minoan-style griffin has a crest along the head and neck, and notched wings with running spirals (when winged). In Egypt, this Minoan-style griffin first appears in the fragments of a wall painting from a palace at Avaris (Figure 4). 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 the LM IA wall painting in Room 1 in the House of the Ladies at Akrotiri on Thera.³² In smaller scale, papyri are found on LM IB Palace Style vessels from Cretan contexts (Figure 5).



Figure 5a: papyrus fresco in Room 1, House of the Ladies (Thera), Thera Museum (Author)

Another fabricated creature from the Egyptian canon, the sphinx, appears on a MM period seal stone³³ 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.³⁴

Judith Weingarten's careful study of the transference and transformation of the Egyptian hippopotamus goddess Tawaret, who first appeared in Egypt no later than Sixth Dynasty, into the figure of the Minoan "genie" first found on sealings from Phaistos and Knossos that date to the MM II period³⁵ adds to the body of evidence for long-standing contact between Crete and Egypt.

Archaeology also documents the transference of paint technology between Egypt and Crete. As early as the Old Kingdom, the Egyptians discovered a process for making a synthetic form of blue pigment. The "recipe" for making the pigment, known to scholars as cuprorivaite or Egyptian Blue, was

exported from Egypt to Crete and in use there at Knossos as early as the MM IIA period and on the LM IA wall paintings found at Akrotiri on Thera³⁶ even though the same color could have been obtained by using azurite or amphiboles, minerals indigenous to the Cyclades.³⁷ The painted plaster technique *al fresco* originated on Crete at MM II Knossos in the Bronze Age and transferred eastward throughout much of the Mediterranean and on wall paintings at sites in the Cyclades, Egypt, and the Levant.³⁸

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 are among the unique characteristics of Minoan *al fresco* wall painting technology.³⁹ That the presence of Minoan and Aegean iconography and painting technique found on fragments of painted plaster at Avaris (Tell el-Dab'a) has been confirmed (and recently redated to the early Eighteenth Dynasty⁴⁰) provides even stronger evidence for the exchange and transference of technology and artistic strategies between Crete and Egypt, further adding to the body of evidence that helps to explain the “sudden” appearance of processional themes at Knossos and Hagia Triada,⁴¹ Minoans in Theban tombs (Figure 6), and bull-leaping motifs at Avaris.⁴²

The time of the manufacture of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus in LM IIIA2 also coincides with the LM IIIA physical expansions of Hagia Triada and the neighboring port town of Kommos⁴³ on Crete. 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 Age⁴⁴ is one such documented case of the extensive international contacts that existed during the reign of Amenhotep III. In Egypt among the ruins of Amenhotep III's mortuary temple at Kom el-Hatan 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 crenellated ovals, surmounted by the figure of a bound prisoner. These inscriptions, sometimes known as “fortified” or “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.⁴⁵ 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.⁴⁶ The ways in which Crete and Egypt transmitted goods, technology, and artistic strategies involved a variety of means of contact. Where the presence of Old Kingdom stone vessels in the later tombs of elite members of Minoan society signifies the transmission of artistic strategies through diplomatic gifts or other forms of exchange, the transference of technologies and techniques signifies the presence

of traveling or migrating populations.

For example, the recipes for the manufacture of faience or Egyptian Blue on Crete or Thera or the technique for Minoan *al fresco* wall painting in Egypt could not be transmitted through the mere visual analysis of finished products. The right combinations of the right materials as well as the precise ways to process and execute would have to be exchanged by means of direct human interaction and this could only occur through travel, migration, diplomacy, and political exchange. If Egypt had long established a relationship with Crete, is it not plausible that a political marriage as suggested by Bietak⁴⁷ could be a reason for the existence of Minoan-style wall paintings in an Eighteenth Dynasty palace at Avaris?



Figure 5b: palace style jar with abstract papyrus motif from Knossos, Herakleion Museum, Crete (Author)

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 growing scholarly argument that focuses on migrating populations, traveling artisans, and diplomatic missions, rather than the reductive discourse in support of bands of marauding conquerors, as the more likely sources for the hybridization of foreign and domestic ideas of artistic expression that inspired the LM IIIA2 creation of a sarcophagus unique among known Minoan or Mycenaean

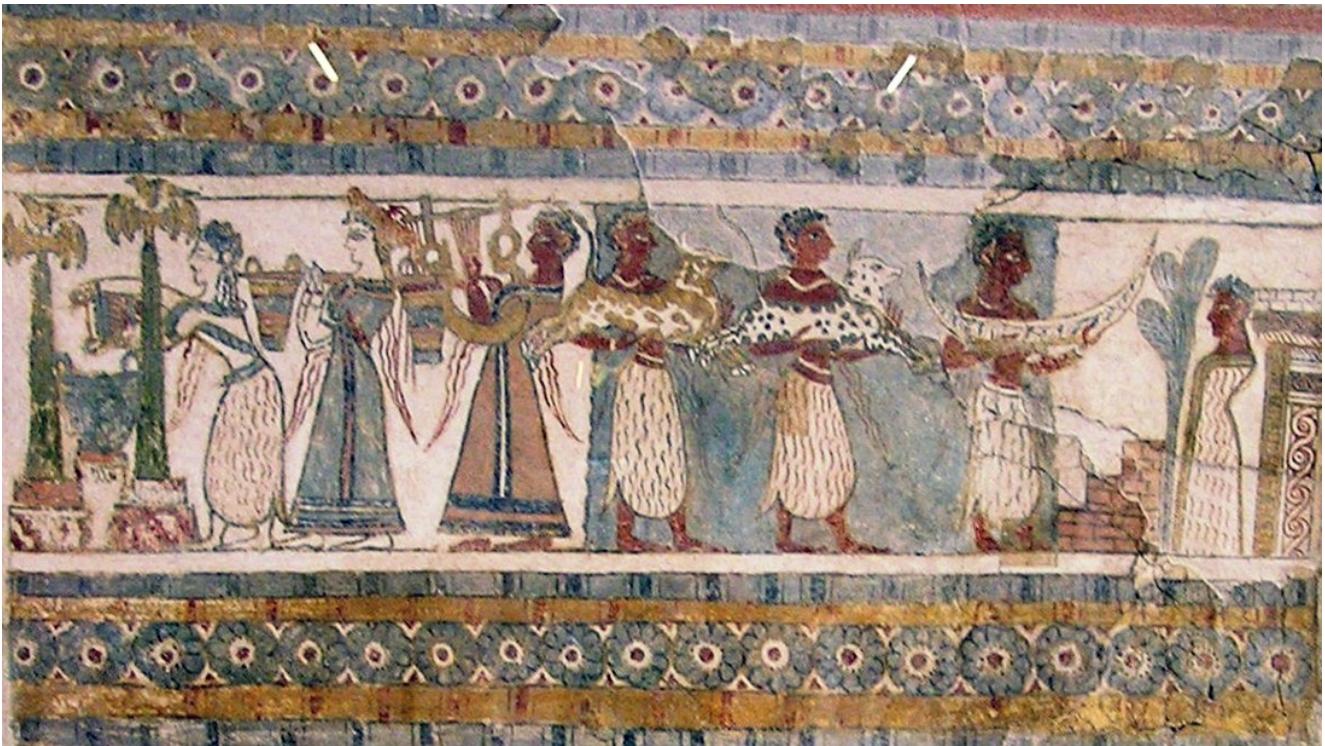


Figure 6: Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, Side A. Funerary procession and libation ceremony. Heraklion Museum, Crete (Author).

funerary containers for the bodies of the deceased. The question is: why was the only finely crafted elite burial object of its kind found at a small administrative outpost rather than at a much larger palatial center such as nearby Phaistos or at Knossos, the earliest, wealthiest, and most politically dominant of Minoan palatial complexes?

HAGIA TRIADA DURING THE LM IIIA PERIOD

The late twentieth century excavations at Hagia Triada by the Italian Archaeological School in Athens, led by Vincenzo La Rosa, greatly expanded the previously slight body of knowledge that pertains to the various phases of development at this site.⁴⁸ In addition to new excavations, the team 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.⁴⁹ 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.⁵⁰

During LM IIIA, Knossos suffered a second phase of destruction that reduced its position of dominance over other island settlements,⁵¹ while many other sites on Crete, including Hagia Triada, began to show signs of recovery and reoccupation although smaller and less urbanized in scope as compared to the LM I period.⁵² 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 sociopolitical dominance necessary to desire, 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 Triada⁵³ 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. The only other processional scenes on Crete appear earlier on the east wall of the Corridor of Procession at Knossos. 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. Importantly, those with images of Keftiu (Minoans) in scenes that depict processions of foreign emissaries correspond in date to LM II/LM IIIA1 on Crete making them contemporaneous with the appearance of processions at Knossos and Hagia Triada. The processional

scenes that appear in the LM IIIA1 period at Hagia Triada, similar in artistic mastery, style and composition to those from Knossos, are evidence that the elite inhabitants there 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 a declining 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, the 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 megaron⁵⁴ 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,⁵⁵ may have served political and

religious purposes. The buildings in the northwest sector appear to have served a bureaucratic and commercial function,⁵⁶ particularly evident by the 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 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.⁵⁷ 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.⁵⁸



Figure 7: Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, Side B. Procession and animal sacrifice. Herakleion Museum, Crete (Author)

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 IIIA2.⁵⁹ For example, the two stoas at Hagia Triada mixed Mycenaean architecture with Minoan stylistic features influenced by buildings from earlier palatial contexts found there.⁶⁰

From the architectural evidence, LM IIIA2 Hagia Triada appears to have been a newly prosperous complex, surpassing in

size neighboring Phaistos.⁶¹ 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.⁶² 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 Crete⁶³ 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 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 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. 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 Immerwahr. The work of 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 more secure 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. The careful archaeological and recording methods employed during the excavations paid off for at the northwest corner and at the north half of the eastern foundation trenches were found minute fragments of two cups, probably discarded by workers during the building of the tomb, at the base of its walls.⁶⁴ The date of the cups was subsequently established “with good approximation” to the beginning of the LM IIIA2 period (circa 1370 BC), 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.”⁶⁵

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.⁶⁶ Two of the tomb structures, the EM II tholos Tomb Beta and the Neopalatial period Tomb 5 (also known as the Tomb of the Gold Objects),⁶⁷ 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.⁶⁸

The semi-subterranean tomb⁶⁹ is a nearly square arrangement built with unusually thick, carefully constructed rubble walls⁷⁰ that are viewed by several scholars as foundation walls for a superstructure made of perishable material.⁷¹ 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 period⁷² 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. The use of this tomb type by members of an elite class was, perhaps, intended to express dynastic connections to an earlier, pre-palatial Crete.⁷³ At Hagia Triada, this traditional form of burial structure is reflected in an updated version in the LM IIIA2 period. The tomb of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus is a hybridization of traditional forms and new ideas in what Jeffrey Soles refers to as “the last house tomb built on Crete.”⁷⁴ It was here that Paribeni found a very unusual larnax adorned with a form of funerary art as unique in terms of its material, polychromy, iconography, narrative and decorative elements, overall composition and style⁷⁵ as the building that was intended to be its eternal resting place.

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)⁷⁶ first appear in burial contexts on Crete at the beginning of the fourteenth century BC⁷⁷ as a popular method of corpse deposition. Most of them are topped with a gabled lid, are rectangular in form with inset side panels, rest on four squat legs, and contain vertical handles or holes drilled through the upper edge, possibly for transporting them with a rope or pole (Figure 1).

The first appearance of this coffin type appeared on Crete in the LM II-III period and was made of wood and served as the prototype for the later clay 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 for the storage of linens entombed with the deceased for use in the afterlife.⁷⁸ In the Late Bronze Age when Aegean terracotta larnake were being manufactured, one made from a single piece of limestone⁷⁹ (Figure 2) was created for a burial at Hagia Triada. To date, it is the only one of its kind that has been found on Crete, or the mainland and islands of

Greece.⁸⁰ The sudden popularity of this Egyptian form for the LM II-III wooden coffins, the later LM III clay types, and the limestone Hagia Triada Sarcophagus on Crete coincide with contemporaneous evidence of contact found in the presence of Egyptian vessels at the Minoan port of Kommos, and the Keftiu emissaries in Theban tomb paintings. Coupled with the lack of earlier evidence on Crete for burial containers that take this form the chest-shaped coffins found on Crete between 1490 and 1320 BC are viewed by many scholars, including this writer, as derivatives of ideas transferred from Egypt.⁸¹

The narrative scenes found on the long and short sides of Hagia Triada Sarcophagus (Figures 6, 7, 8 and 9) have been considered one of the most coherent sources for information pertaining to Cretan funerary rites. 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 more crudely manufactured terracotta coffins.⁸² My personal survey of the extensive collection of Minoan larnake on display at the Herakleion Archaeological Museum (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.⁸³

Most of the larnake,⁸⁴ like the sarcophagus, have holes drilled through the bottoms in order for body fluids to drain from the decomposing corpse (or corpses),⁸⁵ are rectangular in shape, rest on four squat legs and contain painted decoration⁸⁶ 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.

Stylistically, the decoration and motifs found on terracotta larnake seem to be borrowed from the repertory of vase painters.⁸⁷ 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 are used as borders or filler. Humans and animals, where they do appear, are sketched in silhouette or outline form with little regard to detail, proportion, or scale. The majority of the decorations found on the terracotta larnake are randomly arranged as conceptual land and seascapes. Where a funerary element is present, the scene is one of prothesis or mourning.⁸⁸ The motifs are typically applied on the larnake using the all-over composition distinctive of Marine and Palace Style pottery (Figure 5) as well as amphoroid

kraters and terracotta bathtubs.⁸⁹ 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. 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. 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 the exterior surfaces of the sarcophagus. According to object's chief restorer Franca 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 plaster support typical of the *al fresco* technique for painted plaster that originated on Crete.⁹⁰

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 fragments of a scene that has been described as a processional from Xeste 4 at Akrotiri,⁹¹ the Procession fresco at Knossos, and the LM IIIA1 fragments of processional scenes found in 1904 in a fresco dump between the tomb of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus and the villa.⁹² Close similarities in theme, *al fresco* painting technique, realistic style, organization, figural composition, narrative elements, palette, costume details, and decorative motifs clearly demonstrate that the artisan(s) who painted the Hagia Triada sarcophagus were 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. In each of the examples cited herein, these processionals occur contemporaneously with periods where the evidence is strongest for interconnections between Crete and Egypt.⁹³ 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.⁹⁴ The only place in the Aegean where processional and ritual scenes executed with the elements of Egyptian style in a funerary context are found on the exceptional LM IIA2 Hagia Triada Sarcophagus.

WHAT IS SO EGYPTIAN ABOUT THE HAGIA TRIADA SARCOPHAGUS?

Since the time of its discovery, the Egyptian influence in the artistic program on the Hagia Triada sarcophagus has been observed and commented upon by numerous scholars.⁹⁵ 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 have discounted an Egyptian connection. Charlotte Long, who used Minoan iconographic parallels, did exemplary work in what is the initial scholarly publication of the artistic elements of the sarcophagus and argues convincingly that what is depicted on the sarcophagus is informed by traditional Minoan funerary beliefs. Despite her significant contribution,

not to reaffirm what is Minoan or Mycenaean about the sarcophagus but to identify what is not.

To reiterate, the sarcophagus is manufactured from a solid piece of limestone, found in abundance on Crete. Despite this, it is the only sarcophagus of its kind found on the island and the earliest sarcophagus created from limestone found anywhere in the Aegean. 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-



Figure 8: Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, Side C. Male processional in top register and goddesses in agrimi driven chariot in lower register. Herakleion Museum, Crete (Author)

Long, in the final analysis implies that the sarcophagus was created by Minoans who had very little contact with other non-Aegean civilizations. In her defense, this approach represents the school of thought that prevailed at the time of her research in the 1970s. The greatest problem with a Hellenocentric 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



Figure 9: Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, Side D. Goddesses in griffin driven chariot. Herakleion Museum, Crete (Author)

relief on the bare stone. Carved relief, a subtractive sculptural process, is not found in Aegean wall paintings. To achieve a three-dimensional effect in Aegean wall paintings, artisans employed low relief stucco, an additive sculptural process. The technique of bas-relief is frequently found in Egyptian temples and tombs where it dates back to the Old Kingdom.⁹⁶ The carved low relief found by Callori on the bare stone of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus could not have been an idea derived from known Minoan or Mycenaean wall painting techniques, but it certainly could have been an idea transferred by artisans or

someone else familiar with wall paintings in Egypt.

One of the materials employed to decorate the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus also differs from the standard conventions of Aegean wall painting. Egyptian Blue has been identified 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 or amphibole, sources indigenous to the Aegean. The blue pigment on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus is made of powdered lapis lazuli and it is currently only one of two cases of this pigment found in the entire Aegean.⁹⁷ George Bass has argued 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.⁹⁸ Cline's extensive research into international trade during the Late Bronze Age shows that during reign of Amenhotep III, 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,⁹⁹ 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

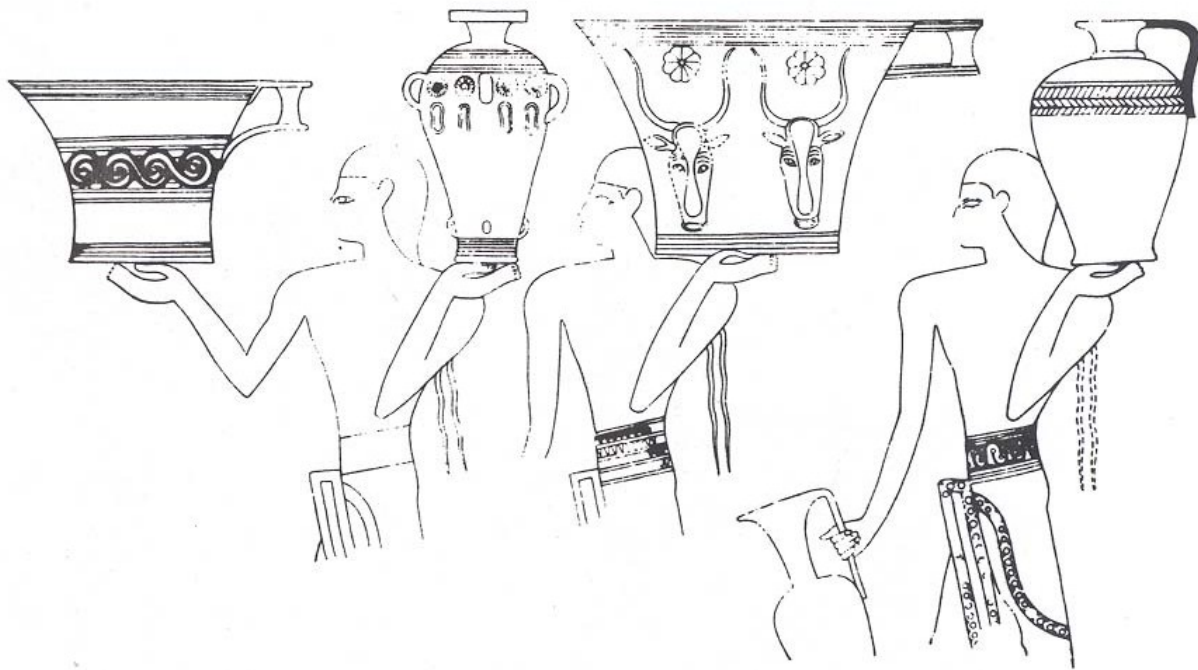


Figure 10: Line drawing from wall painting of Keftiu emissaries in the tomb of Senenmut, reign of Hatshepsut, Eighteenth Dynasty, from S. Wachsmann, *Aegeans in Theban Tombs* (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1987), pl. XXIII A.

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.¹⁰⁰ This convention is used consistently in every known figural wall painting found at Akrotiri on Thera, at Knossos and in fragments of a figural scene found in the fresco dump near the Hagia Triada palatial complex, 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 Egypt and Immerwahr has pointed to Egypt as the source for the artistic strategy that was transferred later to the Aegean.¹⁰¹

The conventions employed occasionally by Aegean painters for the full display of the human figure is another technique

borrowed from Egypt.¹⁰² In Egypt, the principal 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. In Aegean painting, this convention is rarely used. On Crete, the Egyptian composite profile is employed only for the offering bearers on Side A of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus (Figure 6) perhaps because it may have been the best way to fit all three figures in a small space and still allow for the full and unobstructed representation of the objects they hold. On Thera, the Egyptian style is used for one of the fish bearers on the wall painting from Room 5 in West House at Akrotiri. In Egyptian processions, the composite profile is the unwavering standard for offering bearers.

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. Yet, the organization of this imagery into two narrative panels depicting Minoan funerary rites has no earlier parallels in Minoan art. If not indigenous to the Aegean then from where did Aegean painters borrow these artistic strategies? The scholarly discourse offered by Evans, Immerwahr, Watrous, Hiller,¹⁰³ and others have long suggested that the idea for the organization of individual Minoan motifs into coherent narratives comes from the Egyptian canon where narrative scenes are found on the walls of tombs beginning as early as the Old Kingdom.¹⁰⁴ Research by Watrous, Bietak, Cline¹⁰⁵ and others have demonstrated that interconnection through trade, diplomatic gift exchange, traveling artisans, and exogamy during the Late Bronze Age may be the means that made possible the appearance of Egyptian artistic strategies in Minoan scenes found on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus and elsewhere in the Aegean (and vice versa).

During the Eighteenth Dynasty/LMII-III period, 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 (Figure 10). The images of Keftiu tribute bearers found in this and other Egyptian tomb paintings from the Eighteenth Dynasty¹⁰⁶ 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 (Figure 8). 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 scenes¹⁰⁷ that make up the repertoire of subject matter found in 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 Egypt during the Eighteenth

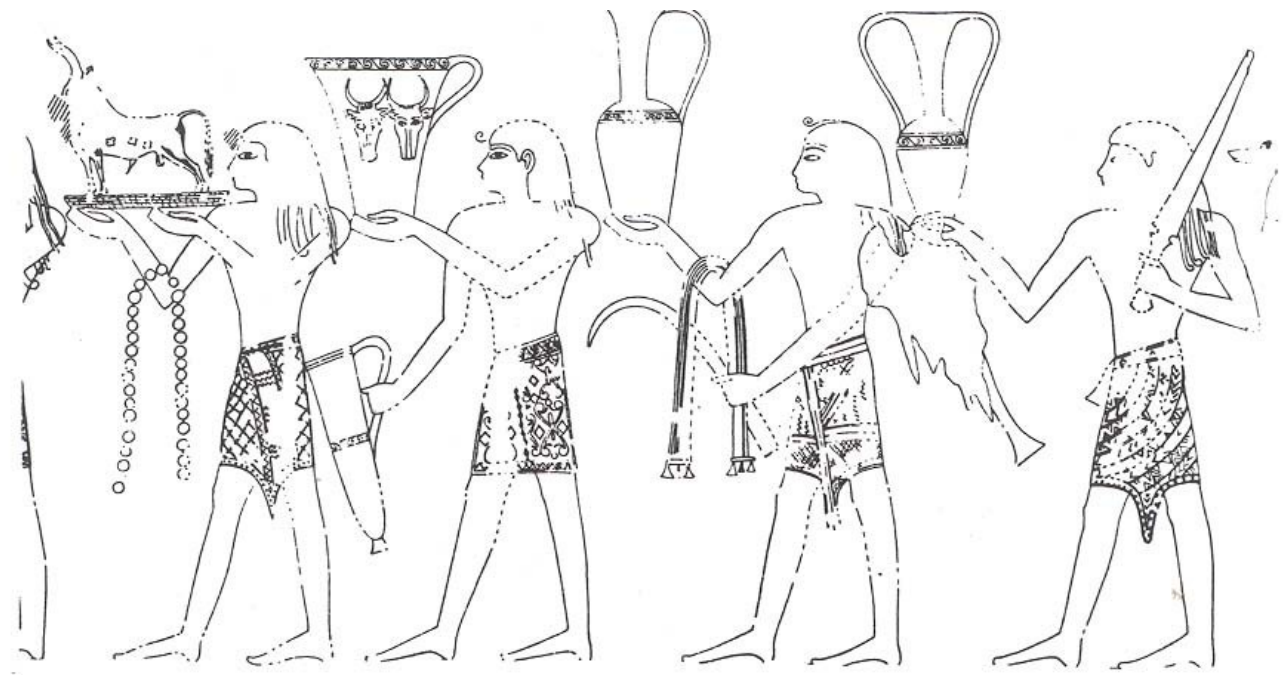


Figure 11: Line drawing from wall painting of Keftiu emissaries in the tomb of Senenmut, Mencheperresonb, reign of Thutmose III, Eighteenth Dynasty, from S. Wachsmann, *Aegeans in Theban Tombs* (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1987), pl. XXIII A.

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, the statuettes of bulls (Figure 11). On Crete, the only painting where offering bearers are depicted carrying anything other than a vessel occurs on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus. The idea for depicting bull statuettes in the arms of offering bearers who are rendered in the Egyptian composite profile on Side A of the Hagia Triada sarcophagus

(Figure 6) must be viewed as 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.¹⁰⁸ 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 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.¹⁰⁹ 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.¹¹⁰ In Egypt, between the reigns of Hatshepsut and Amenhotep II in the Eighteenth Dynasty, images of boats transporting the deceased or goods for the deceased appear on tomb paintings for Theban nobility.¹¹⁰ In royal tombs from the Eighteenth Dynasty, boat models were found among the offerings and objects left for Amenhotep II and Thutmose III,¹¹¹ and later in the tomb of Tutankhamun.¹¹²



Figure 12: Detail of woman working from the Eleventh Dynasty tomb of Djari, after A. Capel and G. Markoe, *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt* (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1996), 14 fig. 3.

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. On Side A of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus (Figure 6), 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. 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 the vertical handles on the upper edge of the vessel. The position of the body and the arm gesture of this figure are unusual because other figures reaching out or holding objects on the sarcophagus and elsewhere in Minoan art are portrayed in the naturalistic convention of Aegean style. The arm gesture of this female, however, bears a closer resemblance to figures from Egyptian art such as in a scene of workers from the Eleventh Dynasty tomb of Djari (Figure 12). The arm position of the figure on Side A of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus as compared to others in Aegean art is unique and should be viewed as further evidence of the transference of strategies from Egypt where similar gestures are found more frequently. The final example of Egyptian influence on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus is found in the figure of the deceased himself (Figure 13). 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.¹¹³ 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.¹¹⁴ Aegean 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 itself 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 before his procession of offering bearers. The closest parallel for this figure comes from Egypt where mummiform figures occur in the form of stone¹¹⁶ and wooden coffins, shabti figurines, and of course the mummies themselves (Figure 14).

CONCLUSIONS

The hybrid nature of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus stands as the embodiment of ideas transferred from outside the Aegean, especially from Egypt. In terms of the many elements demonstrated to be derived from Egyptian ideas, the otherness of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus as compared to other Minoan funerary art and wall paintings should no longer come as a surprise. The use of carved low relief was already, by the Late Bronze Age, a long held convention of the Egyptian artistic canon and seemed to be introduced into Aegean painting techniques solely in the case of the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus. The ground lapis lazuli for the blue pigment on the sarcophagus may have been imported from the Afghan region emphasizing the degree of outside contact between Crete and Egyptian

controlled trading centers, like the Levant, during the Late Bronze Age. That this blue pigment occurs in only two places in the Aegean; one being the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, not only denotes outside contact, but is 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 the exchange of artistic strategies 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, are further examples of ideas borrowed from Egyptian funerary art.



Figure 13: 1 Hagia Triada Sarcophagus, Side A. Detail of the deceased. Herakleion Museum, Crete (Author).

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 vessels¹¹⁷ 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 ruler¹¹⁸ 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 an 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 article, Hagia Triada, may have strongly benefited 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 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 ideas from Egypt play a part in the construction of this funerary container. More obvious than the Egyptian technical borrowings on the sarcophagus to those who may have witnessed the funerary rites for the deceased would have been the narrative scenes on its side. Given their unique nature, it is clear that its patron wanted his final resting place to stand alone. 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 traditionally Minoan. It seems more likely that the patron of the sarcophagus was a Minoan official at Hagia Triada, who may have traveled to Egypt and admired the elite funerary imagery he saw there. This elite official may have brought back to Crete the idea of an “Egyptian burial” perhaps to make his own as extravagant as those he observed in Egypt as a means to express his elevated social status. To use a phrase coined by Michael Wedde,¹¹⁹ 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.



Figure 14: Left (not to scale): gilded wood mummiform coffin; Center: wooden shabti mummiform figurine; Right: faience shabti mummiform figurine. All from the reign of Amenhotep III. From A. Capel and G. Markoc, *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt* (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1996), 168 no. 91, 149 no. 74, 150 no. 75.

Notes

- ¹ Roberto Paribeni, "Il sarcofago dipinto di Hagia Triada." *Monumenti Antichi* 19 (1908): 7-86.
- ² L. Vance Watrous, "The Origin and Iconography of the Late Minoan Painted Larnax," *Hesperia* 60.3 (1991): 285-320, 290; Nanno Marinatos, "Minoan and Mycenaean Larnakes: A Comparison," in Jan Dreissen (ed.), *La Crète mycénienne: actes de la table ronde internationale organisée par l'École française d'Athènes, 26-28 mars 1991* (Athens: École française d'Athènes; Paris: Dépositaire, De Boccard-Diffusion, 1997), 281-292; Brendan Burke, "Materialization of Mycenaean Ideology," *American Journal of Archaeology* 109.3 (2005): 403-422, 416.
- ³ Ann Brysbaert, *The Power of Technology in the Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean: The Case of the Painted Plaster* (London: Equinox Publishing Ltd., 2008), 104, table 5.1; see also Brysbaert, 156 for a discussion of the scientific evidence.
- ⁴ Sara Anderson Immerwahr, *Aegean Painting in the Bronze Age* (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), 21.
- ⁵ Brysbaert, 109-110.
- ⁶ Manfred Bietak, Nanno Marinatos, and Clairly Palyivou, *Taureador Scenes in Tell el-Dab'a (Avaris) and Knossos*. (Wein: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007), 21.
- ⁷ Vincenzo La Rosa, "Nuovo dati sulla tomba del sarcofago dipinto di H. Triada," in Vincenzo La Rosa, Dario Palermo, and Lucia Vagnetti (eds.), *Simposio italiano di Studi egei dedicato a Luigi Bernabò e Giovanni Pugliese Carratelli, Roma, 18-20 febbraio 1998* (Rome: Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene, 1998), 177-188, 181.
- ⁸ Norman de G. Davies, *The Tomb of Rekh-mi-re at Thebes* (New York: Arno Press, 1973), 20-25, pls. XVIII-XX; Sigrid Hodel-Hoernes, *Life and Death in Ancient Egypt: Scenes from Private Tombs in New Kingdom Thebes* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2000), 146 and fig. 105. The tomb of a vizier, who served the Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs Thutmose 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."
- ⁹ Arthur Evans, *The Palace of Minos at Knossos I-IV* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1928), II.734; Charlotte R. Long, *The Ayia Triada Sarcophagus: A Study of Late Minoan and Mycenaean Funerary Practices and Beliefs*. (Göteborg: P. Åström, 1974), 47; Watrous 1991, 285-306; Stefan Hiller, "Egyptian Elements on the Hagia Triada Sarcophagus," *Aegaeum* 20 (1999): 361-369.
- ¹⁰ 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 L. Vance Watrous, *Kommos III: The Late Bronze Age Pottery* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 169-183.

- ¹¹ 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 Eric H. Cline, “Amenhotep III, the Aegean and Anatolia,” in David O’Connor and Eric H. Cline (eds.), *Amenhotep III: Perspectives on His Reign* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 236-250, 236-239, 244.
- ¹² Manfred Bietak, “Connections between Egypt and the Minoan World: New Results from Tell el-Dab’a/Avaris,” in W. Vivian Davies and Louise Schofield (eds.), *Egypt, the Aegean and the Levant, Interconnections in the Second Millennium B.C.*, (London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1995) 19-28, 26; Eric Cline, *Sailing the Wine-Dark Sea: International Trade and the Late Bronze Age Aegean* (Oxford: Tempus Reparatum, 1994), 265-287; Edmund Bloedow, “Itinerant Craftsmen and Trade in the Aegean Bronze Age,” in Robert Laffineur and Philip Betancourt (eds.), *Texnb: Craftsmen, Craftswomen and Craftsmanship in the Aegean Bronze Age, Proceedings of the 6th International Aegean Conference, Philadelphia, Temple University, 18-21 April 1996* (Liège: Université de Liège; Austin: University of Texas at Austin, 1997), 439-447.
- ¹³ 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, 72-74.
- ¹⁴ Peter Warren, “The Lapidary Art – Minoan Adaptations of Egyptian Stone Vessels,” in Robert Laffineur and Philip Betancourt (eds.), *Texnb: Craftsmen, Craftswomen and Craftsmanship in the Aegean Bronze Age, Proceedings of the 6th International Aegean Conference, Philadelphia, Temple University, 18-21 April 1996* (Liège: Université de Liège; Austin: University of Texas at Austin, 1997), 209-223, 209.
- ¹⁵ Brysbaert, 104, table 1.
- ¹⁶ Evans, II, 30, fig. 12.
- ¹⁷ Warren 1997, 211-212.
- ¹⁸ Evans, II, 823-824 and fig. 537 K.
- ¹⁹ Warren 1997, 214.
- ²⁰ Warren 1997, 222.
- ²¹ This is the case with the porphyry vessel found at Knossos. See Evans, 30, fig. 12.
- ²² Peter Warren, “Minoan Crete and Pharaonic Egypt,” in W. Vivian Davies and Louise Schofield (eds.), *Egypt, the Aegean and the Levant, Interconnections in the Second Millennium B.C.*, (London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1995), 1-18, 1.
- ²³ Karen Polinger Foster, *Aegean Faience of the Bronze Age* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979), 1.
- ²⁴ Foster, xxi
- ²⁵ Foster, 26-27.
- ²⁶ See Mohamed Saleh, *The Egyptian Museum Cairo Official Catalogue* (Mainz: Phillip van Zabern, 1987), 51, fig. 17.
- ²⁷ See Mohamed Saleh, *The Egyptian Museum Cairo Official Catalogue* (Mainz: Phillip van Zabern, 1987), 51, fig. 17.
- ²⁸ Foster, 59-60.
- ²⁹ Evans, I, 490, fig. 351; I, 498-504, figs. 356-362; I, 506, fig. 364; I, 510-512, figs. 366-369; I, 518, fig. 377.
- ³⁰ Evans, I, 488-506.
- ³¹ Lyvia Morgan, “Minoan Painting and Egypt: The Case of Tell el-Dab’a,” in W. Vivian Davies and Louise Schofield (eds.), *Egypt, the Aegean and the Levant, Interconnections in the Second Millennium B.C.* (London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1995), 29-52.
- ³² Christos Doumas, *The Wall Paintings of Thera* (Athens: The Thera Foundation, 1992), 34; However, it should be noted that Doumas calls the plants in Room 1, House of the Ladies sea or sand daffodils, *Pancreatum 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 (modern Santorini). 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 to represent them in an extremely abstract way contrary to the stylistic conventions of the period for this culture. Moreover, they hardly resemble the sea daffodils I observed in the landscape while on Santorini in 2004.
- ³³ Victor E. G. Kenna, *Cretan Seals with a Catalogue of the Minoan Gems in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), pl. 6, no. 122.
- ³⁴ Warren 1995, pl. 11, fig. 2.
- ³⁵ Judith Weingarten, *The Transformation of Egyptian Taweret into the Minoan Genius: A Study in Cultural Transmission in the Middle Bronze Age*, *Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology* 88 (Partille: P. Åström, 1988) 3-15 and pls. 1-19.
- ³⁶ Brysbaert, 134; The author also notes that at Knossos and Akrotiri Egyptian Blue was mixed with amphibole blue to create a darker shade of blue. Immerwahr, 16; Evans, I, 251, fig. 188.
- ³⁷ Doumas, 18.
- ³⁸ Brysbaert, 2, map 1.1, 155-156.
- ³⁹ Doumas, 17-18.
- ⁴⁰ Bietak et al., 20-40.
- ⁴¹ See Evans, II, supplementary pls. XXV and XXVII, and Pietro Militello, *Hagia Triada I: Gli Affreschi*. (Padova: Aldo Ausilio, 1998), pl. I.
- ⁴² Bietak et al., 94-95, F4, 1:1
- ⁴³ Philip Betancourt, “A Great Minoan Triangle: The Changing Character of Phaistos, Hagia Triadha, and Kommos during the Middle Minoan IB-Late Minoan III Periods,” in James Walter Graham, Nikolaos Platon, Joseph W. Shaw, and Maria C. Shaw (eds.), *A Great Minoan Triangle in Southcentral Crete: Kommos, Hagia Triadha, Phaistos* (Mississauga: Benben Publications, 1985), 33-42; Paul Rehak and John G. Younger, “Review of Aegean Prehistory VII: Neopalatial, Final Palatial and Postpalatial Crete,” in Tracey Cullen (ed.), *Aegean Prehistory: A Review, American Journal of Archaeology Supplement 1* (Boston:

- Archaeological Institute of America, 2001) 383-473, 443, n. 413.
- ⁴⁴ Watrous 1992, 169-183.
- ⁴⁵ Cline 1998, 236-239 and 244. The famous “Aegean List” found on the fifth statue base at the mortuary temple of Amenhotep III at Kom el-Hatan, Egypt lists Kefriu (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 also Eric Cline and Steven Stannish, “Sailing the Great Green Sea: Amenhotep III’s ‘Aegean List’ from Kom el-Hetal, Once More,” *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 3.2 (2011): 6-16.
- ⁴⁶ Cline 1998, 238.
- ⁴⁷ Bietak, 28.
- ⁴⁸ For a history and bibliography of the early 20th century excavations at Hagia Triada see, *Ancient Crete: One hundred years of Italian archaeology (1884-1984) Italian Archaeological School at Athens* (1984) 161-194.
- ⁴⁹ Vincenzo La Rosa, “Hagia Triada à l’Époque Mycénienne,” in Jan Driessen (ed.), *La Crète mycénienne: actes de la table ronde internationale organisée par l’École française d’Athènes, 26-28 mars 1991* (Athens: École française d’Athènes; Paris: Dépositaire, De Boccard-Diffusion, 1997), 249-266.
- ⁵⁰ Rehak and Younger, 443, n. 413.
- ⁵¹ La Rosa 1997, 255-258; Laura Preston, “A Mortuary Perspective on Late Minoan Crete,” *American Journal of Archaeology* 108.3 (2004): 321-348, 323.
- ⁵² Rehak and Younger, 442.
- ⁵³ Militello, 305.
- ⁵⁴ Rehak and Younger, 443. The foundation dimensions of this megaron are larger than any found to date on the mainland.
- ⁵⁵ Immerwahr, pls. 17-18.
- ⁵⁶ La Rosa 1997, 263.
- ⁵⁷ La Rosa 1997, 263-265.
- ⁵⁸ Preston, 337.
- ⁵⁹ 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 Olivier Pelon, “Le Palais Post-Palatial à Malia,” in Jan Driessen (ed.), *La Crète mycénienne: actes de la table ronde internationale organisée par l’École française d’Athènes, 26-28 mars 1991* (Athens: École française d’Athènes; Paris: Dépositaire, De Boccard-Diffusion, 1997), 341-355; for Chania, see Erik Hallager, “Architecture of the LMII/III settlement in Khania,” in Jan Driessen (ed.), *La Crète mycénienne: actes de la table ronde internationale organisée par l’École française d’Athènes, 26-28 mars 1991* (Athens: École française d’Athènes; Paris: Dépositaire, De Boccard-Diffusion, 1997), 175-185.
- ⁶⁰ Nicola Cucuzza, 1997 “The North Sector Buildings of Hagia Triada,” in Jan Driessen (ed.), *La Crète mycénienne: actes de la table ronde internationale organisée par l’École française d’Athènes, 26-28 mars 1991* (Athens: École française d’Athènes; Paris: Dépositaire, De Boccard-Diffusion, 1997), 73-84, 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.
- ⁶¹ Joseph W. Shaw and Maria C. Shaw 1997 “Mycenaean Kommos,” in Jan Driessen (ed.), *La Crète mycénienne: actes de la table ronde internationale organisée par l’École française d’Athènes, 26-28 mars 1991* (Athens: École française d’Athènes; Paris: Dépositaire, De Boccard-Diffusion, 1997), 423-434, 432.
- ⁶² Watrous 1991, 290; Marinatos, 281-292.
- ⁶³ Preston, 321-348.
- ⁶⁴ La Rosa 1998, 182, figs. 5-6.
- ⁶⁵ La Rosa 1998, 181. La Rosa views the LM IIIA2 as a period of Mycenaean cultural dominance on Crete.
- ⁶⁶ Preston, 336.
- ⁶⁷ Soles, 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.
- ⁶⁸ Long, 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, 336.
- ⁶⁹ La Rosa 1998, 187.
- ⁷⁰ Soles, 125.
- ⁷¹ Paribeni 1908, 714; Long, 12; Soles, 125; La Rosa 1998, 187.
- ⁷² Soles, v.
- ⁷³ Preston, 336, “At Hagia 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...”
- ⁷⁴ Soles, 116; La Rosa 1998, 187.
- ⁷⁵ Watrous 1991, 290; Marinatos, 281-292.
- ⁷⁶ In this article, I 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.
- ⁷⁷ Preston, 336; Marinatos, 281; Watrous 1991, 285.
- ⁷⁸ Watrous 1991, 287-288.
- ⁷⁹ Militello, 154.
- ⁸⁰ Long, 16 and pl. 5, fig. 16; 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.
- ⁸¹ Hiller, 362; Watrous 1991, 287-288; Long, 17-18.
- ⁸² For example, see Preston, 336; Marinatos, 291; Watrous 1991, 290.

- ⁸³ Personal observations were made while visiting Greece, Crete, and Santorini in August, 2004.
- ⁸⁴ It should be noted that 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. Also, see Long, 16.
- ⁸⁵ While most LM III chest larnake contained a single burial, at the time of Long's publication there were thirteen LM III from Crete known to contain multiple human remains. See Long, 18 and 20 n. 29. I view this phenomenon as more evidence for the characterization of the LM III period as one of great social and political transition on Crete.
- ⁸⁶ 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, 154.
- ⁸⁷ Marinatos, 282; Watrous 1991, 303; Long, 24.
- ⁸⁸ Marinatos 1997, 282; 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.
- ⁸⁹ Watrous 1991, 303-304.
- ⁹⁰ Doro Levi, "The Sarcophagus of Hagia Triada Restored," *Archaeology* 9.3 (1956): 192-199, 196-198; In this article, Callori concludes the sarcophagus was executed using a combination of *al secco* (tempera) and *al fresco* technique despite the lack of a protein binder typically found in the paint used in the tempera method. After the publication of my master's thesis in 2005, scientific studies of Aegean painted plaster published by Brysbaert et al. have concluded that *al fresco* was the painted plaster technique originated and used exclusively on Crete in the Bronze Age and transferred from there to the wider Mediterranean region, including Avaris in Egypt. For a thorough and extensive discussion of these findings, see Brysbaert.
- ⁹¹ 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 Dumas, 176. Despite the limited study they have received, Dumas 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 processional and on one of the short ends of the Hagia Triada sarcophagus.
- ⁹² Immerwahr, 180-181; Militello, 283-308.
- ⁹³ Given the vast body of 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 seem unlikely to this author.
- ⁹⁴ The 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, 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, II, 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, 304. For sites on the mainland, see Immerwahr, 190-204.
- ⁹⁵ Roberto Paribeni, "Il sarcofago dipinto di Hagia Triada," *Monumenti Antichi* 19 (1908), 7-86; Evans, II.836; William Stevenson Smith, 1965 *Interconnections in the Ancient Near East* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1965), 86; Long, 24, 30-32, 37, 47, 49, 78f; Watrous 1991, 285-307, 290f; Militello, 283-308; Hiller, 361-368.
- ⁹⁶ Edna R. Russman, "The Egyptian Character of Certain Egyptian Painting Techniques," in Susan Sherratt (ed.), *The Wall Paintings of Thera, Proceedings of the First International Symposium, Vol. 1* (Athens: The Thera Foundation, 1997), 71-76, 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."
- ⁹⁷ Immerwahr, 15. Also, thanks to 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 the blue pigment on the sarcophagus is ground lapis lazuli. In 2006, Brysbaert found the second example at Gla, a later LH IIIB Mycenaean administrative center in Boeotia. See Brysbaert, 95-96 and 134.
- ⁹⁸ Bass 1997, 166.
- ⁹⁹ Cline 1998, 229-230.
- ¹⁰⁰ Recently however, Marinatos argues that skin color on the bull-leaping fresco at Knossos denotes specialization of task and status rather than gender. See Bietak 2007, 127-128.
- ¹⁰¹ Immerwahr, 51.
- ¹⁰² Immerwahr, 51; Dumas, 23.
- ¹⁰³ Evans, II.736-741; Immerwahr, 53; Watrous 1991, 291; Hiller, 363.
- ¹⁰⁴ For example, see Saleh, nos. 37, 92, and 197.
- ¹⁰⁵ Watrous 1992, 169-183; Bietak, 28; Cline 1994, 265-287 and Cline 1998, 245-248.
- ¹⁰⁶ See also Davies, pls. XIX and XX for line drawings from the wall paintings of Keftiu emissaries in the Tomb of Rekhmire, reign of Amenhotep II (1427-1392 BC).
- ¹⁰⁷ On this subject, see Shelley Wachsmann, *Aegeans in Theban Tombs* (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1987), 11-25.
- ¹⁰⁸ 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, 48.
- ¹⁰⁹ Hiller, 367.
- ¹¹⁰ Hiller, 367.
- ¹¹¹ Wachsmann, pl. XXXVI, A.
- ¹¹² Long, 49.

¹¹³ Hiller, 367.

¹¹⁴ La Rosa 1998, 187.

¹¹⁵ 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, 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, 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.

¹¹⁶ The mummiform sarcophagus of Merymose, viceroy of Nubia during the reign of Amenhotep III, was made of stone. See Carol R. Andrews, *Egyptian Mummies* (London: The British Museum Press, 1984), 59, fig. 58.

¹¹⁷ Barry J. Kemp, Robert S. Merrillees, and Elmer Edel, *Minoan Pottery in Second Millenium Egypt* (Mainz am Rhein: P. von Zabern, 1980), 257.

¹¹⁸ Wachsmann, 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.

¹¹⁹ Michael Wedde, “The Intellectual Stowaway: On the Movement of Ideas Within Exchange Systems – A Minoan Case Study,” in Robert Laffineur and Philip Betancourt (eds.), *Texnb: Craftsmen, Craftswomen and Craftsmanship in the Aegean Bronze Age, Proceedings of the 6th International Aegean Conference, Philadelphia, Temple University, 18-21 April 1996* (Liège: Université of Liège; Austin: University of Texas at Austin, 1997), 67-75.