

The Role of Religious Painting in the Function of the Minoan Villa: the Case of Ayia Triadha

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Abstract

The role and function of Ayia Triadha during the LM I period have been examined in a number of important studies. L.V. Watrous has made a significant contribution by distinguishing two villas, A and B, from among the extensive remains on the site (*AJA* 88, 1984, 123–134) and by documenting the ways in which villa A functioned as an administrative center related to the larger palatial system on Crete, but he did not explore the considerable evidence there for the role of religion and cult practice in administration.

This paper concentrates on the fresco which once decorated three walls of room 14, and investigates the manner in which religious paintings reinforced certain symbolic messages disseminated by the major palaces, Knossos in particular. The role of programmatic painting in Minoan palaces and villas has already been suggested by R. Hägg (*L'iconographie minoenne* [1985], 209–217), though without specific reference to Ayia Triadha.

The painting from room 14 forms a continuous megalographic frieze including a female in elaborate costume, near an architectural platform; since she raises her hands in an authoritative gesture, she is probably a goddess. The side walls show a rocky landscape dotted by clumps of lilies, crocus, and other flowers. Within this landscape, the fauna include *agrimia*, birds, stalking cats, and one kneeling female figure.

The architectural platform, along with an actual throne at Knossos, is one of two seats used by goddesses in Minoan art before Mycenaean influences become pronounced. K. Krattenmaker has noted that the neopalatial elite used representations of architecture to reinforce their control of major centers (*AJA* 95, 1991, 291). The landscape and animals, however, recall the topography of a peak sanctuary, as depicted on the Zakros rhyton and Knossos House of the Frescoes.

The Ayia Triadha painting thus suggests links with the palaces and peak sanctuaries, and suggests that villas like Ayia Triadha formed an integral link in that system. Besides serving as economic centers supporting the palaces, the villas may have served as local centers for disseminating neopalatial religion, which strongly implies the existence of a theocratic state.

The importance of the LM I villa at Ayia Triadha has been recognized since its excavation by the Italian School early in this century, and the structure has often, if rather imprecisely, been called a “royal villa” or “summer palace”.¹ L.V. Watrous has made a significant contribution by distinguishing two villas, A and B, and by documenting how villa A functioned as an administrative center related to the wider palatial system on Crete (*Fig. 1*).² Villa B has been discussed as a possible “villa annex” in the course of this conference.³ In addition, J. Weingarten has used the sealings to unravel the intricacies of the bureaucracy and its wider connections.⁴ The considerable evidence for religion at the site has been compiled by G. Gesell,⁵ but little interpretive use

has been made of the fresco decoration, which is poorly published despite a concise summary of the evidence by S. Immerwahr.⁶ This last area is the focus of the present paper.

I am grateful to N. Marinatos and R. Hägg for the opportunity to participate in this conference in honor of M. Wiener. The Graduate School of Loyola University of Chicago supported my travel, and the Center for Instructional Design assisted with illustrations. My thoughts on the subject have benefited considerably from the communications with the following individuals: A.P. Chapin, N. Marinatos, and especially J.G. Younger.

The following special abbreviations have been used:

<i>Aegean painting</i>	S. Immerwahr, <i>Aegean painting in the Bronze Age</i> , University Park & London 1990.
<i>Art and religion</i>	N. Marinatos, <i>Art and religion in Thera. Reconstructing a Bronze Age society</i> , Athens 1984.
Poursat & Darcque, <i>Iconographie</i>	<i>L'iconographie minoenne</i> (BCH-S, 11), J.-Cl. Poursat & P. Darcque, eds., Paris 1985.
Warren, <i>MSV</i>	P. Warren, <i>Minoan stone vases</i> , Cambridge 1969.

¹ Basic bibliography is summarized in *Aegean painting*, 180, A.T. no. 1; cf. also F. Halbherr, E. Stefani & L. Banti, ‘Haghia Triada nel periodo tardo-palaziale’, *ASAtene* 55, 1977 (publ. 1980), 63–98, 201. On the architecture, see Graham, *PoC*, 49–51, fig. 68. For neopalatial architecture outside the palaces proper (without discussion of Ayia Triadha), cf. J. McEnroe, ‘A typology of Minoan Neopalatial houses’, *AJA* 86, 1982, 3–19; S. Hood, ‘The “country house” and Minoan society’, in *Minoan society*, 129–135.

² L.V. Watrous, ‘Ayia Triadha: a new perspective on the Minoan villa’, *AJA* 88, 1984, 123–134.

³ L. Hitchcock & D. Preziosi, in this volume.

⁴ J. Weingarten, ‘Seal use at LM I B Ayia Triadha: a Minoan elite in action. I. Administrative considerations’, *Kadmos* 26, 1987, 1–43; *eadem*, ‘Seal use at LM I B Ayia Triadha: a Minoan elite in action. II. Aesthetic considerations’, *Kadmos* 27, 1988, 89–114. Cf. J.H. Betts, ‘New light on Minoan bureaucracy. A re-examination of some Cretan sealings’, *Kadmos* 6, 1967, 15–40; J. Weingarten, ‘Late Bronze Age trade within Crete: the evidence of seals and sealings’, in *Bronze Age trade in the Mediterranean*, ed. by N. Gale (SIMA, 105), Jonsered 1991, 303–324.

⁵ G. Gesell, *Town, palace, and house cult in Minoan Crete* (SIMA, 67), Göteborg 1985, 76 cat. #18 and plan 10.A.

⁶ *Aegean painting*, 49f., 180, A.T. no. 1, pls. 17 (stalking cat), 18 (“goddess at altar”); W.S. Smith, *Interconnections in the ancient Near East*, New Haven, Conn. 1965, 77–79, figs. 106 (goddess), 107 (kneeling woman), 108 (violets and crocus), 109 (lilies), 110 (hunting cat and *agrimia*); Halbherr, Stefani & Banti (supra n. 1), 92, fig. 58, 93 fig. 59 (lilies); M.S.F. Hood, *The arts in prehistoric Greece*, Harmondsworth 1978, 52–53, fig. 34 (stalking cat); L. Morgan, *The miniature wall paintings of Thera*, Cambridge 1988,

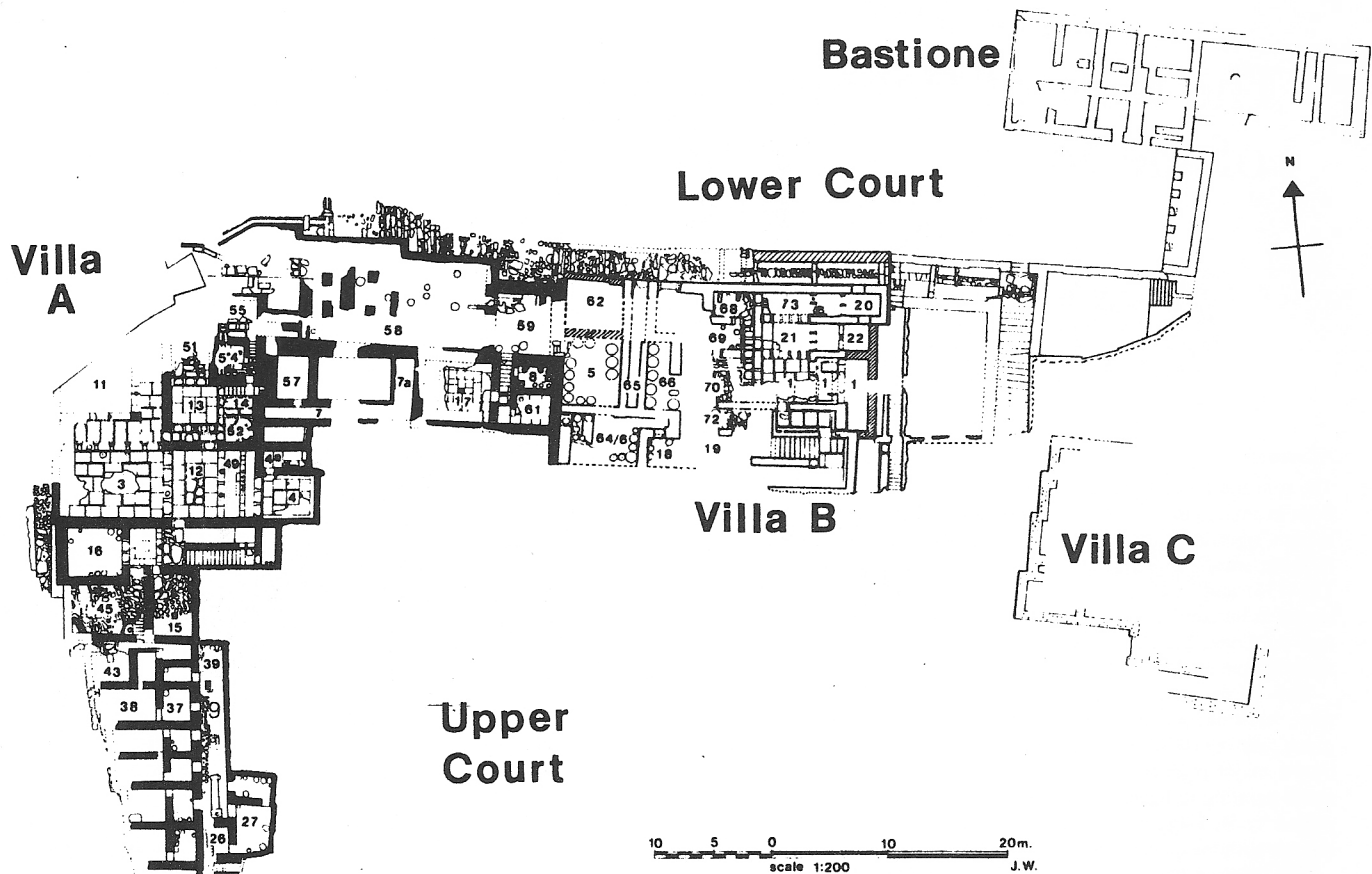


Fig. 1. Ayia Triadha, plan after Watrous (n. 2).

Scholars have varied in their attitudes toward the interpretation of Aegean wall paintings in recent years. One extreme is represented by those who interpret Aegean frescoes as primarily religious, and another by those who see wall paintings as primarily decorative.⁷ Most scholars fall somewhere in between. It is clear, however, that large scale figural frescoes of the type found at Ayia Triadha in its LM I A phase are primarily a feature of neopalatial Knossos, and now Thera.⁸ Though much of the Cretan evidence has undoubtedly been lost, *none* of the other palaces seems to have had figural paintings in quantities approaching Knossos.⁹ The existence of extensive mural decoration at Knossos led M. Cameron and others to argue that the paintings of the palace were directed generally to the worship of a great Minoan goddess of nature and the performance of rituals in her honor.¹⁰ This programmatic role of mural painting in Minoan palaces and villas has been supported by R. Hägg, though without specific reference to Ayia Triadha.¹¹

At Ayia Triadha, wall paintings originally decorated parts of at least two rooms, 13 and 14, in a suite which included an adjacent room (52) (Fig. 2). Room 13 is a large, nearly square polythyron (3.50 x 4.50 m), with the piers on the south side connected to form storage cists.¹² Room 14 is much smaller (1.55 x 2.35 m), with its entrance occupying the short west end and a low platform at the other short, east, end facing the entrance.¹³ The complex as a whole has occasionally been considered domestic, but the use of poly-

thyra as ritual areas has been convincingly argued by N. Marinatos and R. Hägg,¹⁴ and the raised dais at the east end of 14 is better interpreted as a focussing device than as the

passim, pl. 54 (detail of cat); E.J.W. Barber, *Prehistoric textiles. The development of cloth in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages, with special reference to the Aegean*, Princeton 1991, 318–319, col. pl. 2, E. Sapouna-Sakellarakis, 'Συμβολή εις την μελέτην τοῦ μινωϊκοῦ ἀναγλύφου', *AAA* 2, 1969, 399–406.

⁷ W.-D. Niemeier, 'Iconography and context: the Thera frescoes', in *EIKON. Aegean Bronze Age iconography: shaping a methodology* (= *Aegaeum*, 10), Liège 1992, 97–104.

⁸ Large scale frescoes, some in relief, appear at several Minoan sites; the relief technique has connections with Knossos (cf. Fig. 3).

⁹ Noted by Immerwahr: 'The people in the frescoes', in *Minoan society*, 143.

¹⁰ M.A.S. Cameron, 'Theoretical interrelations among Thera, Cretan and mainland frescoes', in *TAW* II:1, 1978, 579–592; *idem*, 'The "palatial" thematic system in the Knossos murals', in *FMP*, 320–328; cf. G. Gesell, 'The place of the goddess in Minoan society', in *Minoan society*, 93–99.

¹¹ R. Hägg, 'Pictorial programmes in Minoan houses and villas?', in Poursat & Darcque, *Iconographie*, 209–217.

¹² Halbherr, Stefani & Banti (supra n. 1), 86–91. Storage cists have been found in the palaces at Zakros and Knossos on Crete, and on Thera in the West House and House of the Ladies.

¹³ Halbherr, Stefani & Banti (supra n. 1), 91–95.

¹⁴ N. Marinatos & R. Hägg, 'On the ceremonial function of the Minoan polythyron', *OpAth* 16, 1986, 57–73.

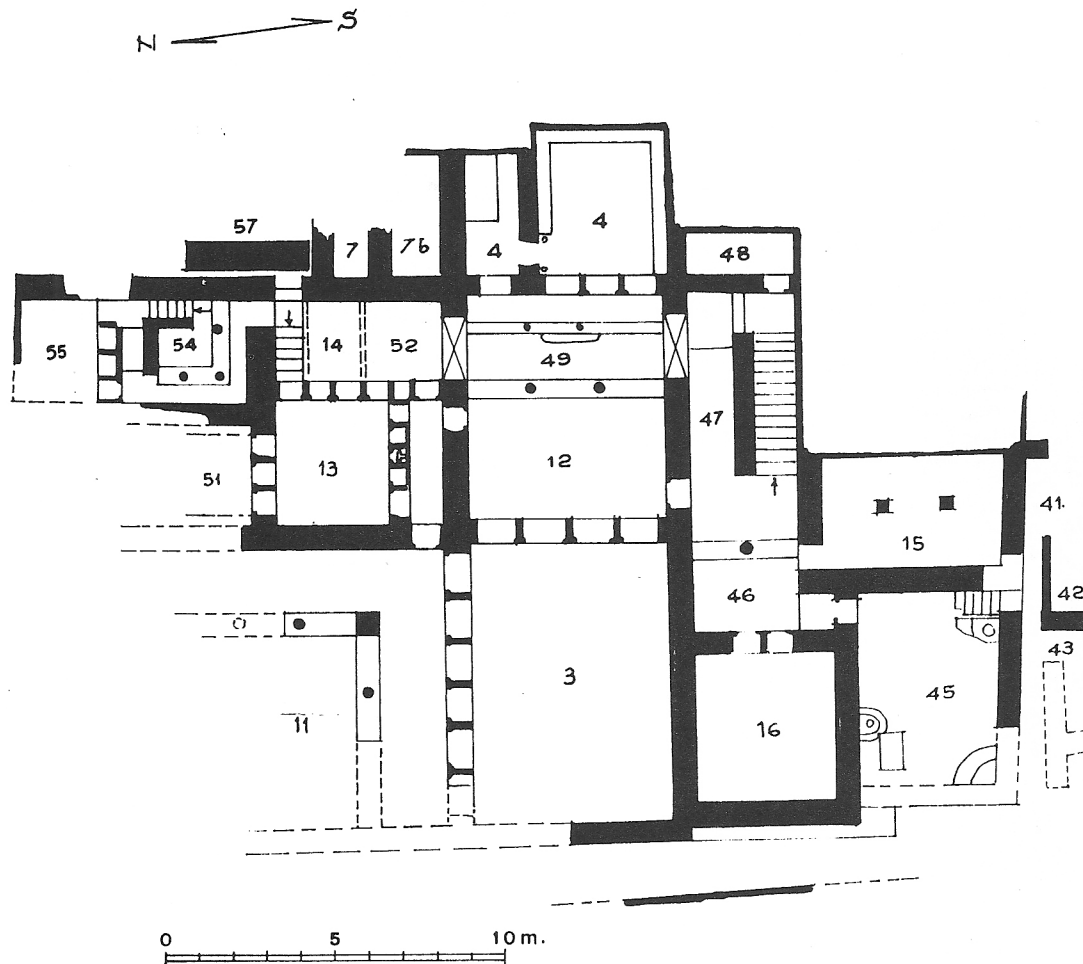


Fig. 2. Ayia Triadha, detail, plan, after *ASAtene* 55, 1977 (1980), 64 fig. 29.

platform for a bed.¹⁵ Thus *prima facie*, the possibility exists that the extensive murals that once covered the walls of both 13 and 14 had a special significance. Some of the portable finds in these rooms suggest cult use but may have fallen from above, and thus can not be associated definitively with the function of 13 and 14.¹⁶

The scanty traces of painting from room 13 included vegetation, non-figural decoration,¹⁷ and a fragment of relief fresco, perhaps part of a seashore or river landscape like those found in the "Cult Basement" at Knossos and in the West House at Akrotiri.¹⁸ Although so little of the Ayia Triadha relief decoration survives, it is important because its use is primarily a Knossian feature found at only a few other Aegean sites in LM IA-B (Fig. 3: chart and distribution map). Much more can be said about the extensive fresco decoration from room 14.

ROOM 14

Despite its now fragmentary and burnt condition, the painting from 14 must have been a masterpiece originally, as the pieces on display in the Heraklion Museum attest. Unfortunately, because of its poor preservation and the darkening of the once brilliant pigments, many of my com-

ments here will refer to Cameron's rather extensive reconstruction (Fig. 4), which is clearly in need of reevaluation.¹⁹ A new study of the fragments, in preparation by P. Militello of the Italian School, should clarify a number of problem-

¹⁵ Halbherr, Stefani & Banti (supra n. 1), 92: "forse ... un basamento di letto". Cf. Watrous (supra n. 2), 125: "a second bedroom with a raised dais". Immerwahr is undecided: *Aegean painting*, 49: "Shrine or bedchamber?". For the same identification recently, C. Kopaka, 'Des pièces de repos dans l'habitat minoen du II^e millénaire avant J.-C?', in *L'habitat égéen préhistorique*, ed. by P. Darcque & R. Treuil (BCH-S, 19), Paris 1990, 220, 221 fig. 4 (plan). On the symbolic use of architectural settings, see C. Renfrew *et al.*, *The archaeology of cult. The sanctuary at Phylakopi* (BSA-S, 18), London 1985, 11–26, esp. 19.

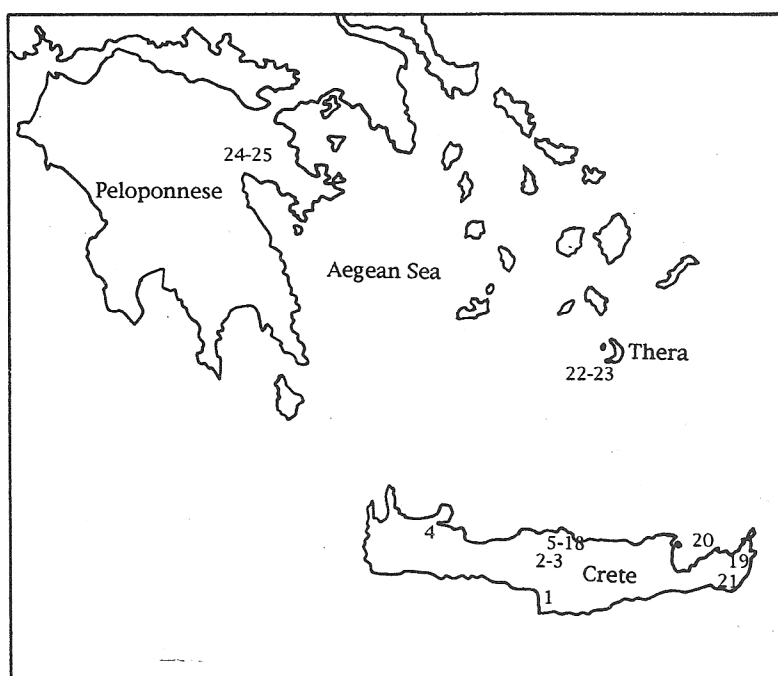
¹⁶ Finds from the rooms are listed by Halbherr, Stefani & Banti (supra n. 1), 86–95, though some of these may have fallen from upper-storey rooms. Cf. Gesell (supra n. 5).

¹⁷ Halbherr, Stefani & Banti (supra n. 1), 88, 89 fig. 54a, b, 55 (left).

¹⁸ Halbherr, Stefani & Banti (supra n. 1), 86–91, 89 fig. 55 (right); B. Kaiser, *Untersuchungen zum minoischen Relief*, Bonn 1976, 304. For the Cult Basement painting, see P. Warren, 'The fresco of the garlands from Knossos', in Poursat & Darcque, *Iconographie*, 187–208. On the Thera "Nile landscape", see Morgan (supra n. 6), 146–150.

¹⁹ Cameron, in *FMP* (supra n. 10).

Distribution of Relief Frescoes



site	subject	reference
Crete:		
1. Ayia Triadha	landscape	Halbherr, Stefani and Banti, <i>ASAtene</i> 55, 1977 (1980), 89 fig. 55.
2. Archanes, Tourkogeitonia	shells	Sakellarakis, <i>Archanes</i> , 1991, 51.
3. Archanes, Tourkogeitonia	women	Sakellarakis, <i>Archanes</i> , 1991, 45, 50
4. Khania	lifesized woman	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 181 Ch No. 1.
5. Knossos palace	Lily Prince	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 171 Kn No. 7.
6. Knossos palace	athletes	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 171 Kn No. 8a.
7. Knossos palace	taureadors	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 171 Kn No. 8b.
8. Knossos palace	bulls	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 171 Kn No. 8c.
9. Knossos palace	female figures	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 171 Kn No. 8d.
10. Knossos palace	griffins	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 171 Kn No. 8e.
11. Knossos palace	Jewel Fresco	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 172 Kn No. 9.
12. Knossos palace	charging bulls	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 174 Kn No. 21.
13. Knossos palace	lion's mane?	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 177 Kn No. 34.
14. Knossos palace	spiral relief	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 178 Kn No. 38.
15. Knossos palace	papyrus	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 178 Kn No. 39.
16. Knossos palace	seated woman	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 179 uncatalogued. 1.
17. Knossos palace	boar?	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 179 uncatalogued. 8.
18. Knossos, House of the Sacrificed Oxen	bull	<i>PM</i> II.1.355 n. 1.
19. Palaikastro	arm of woman	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 181-2 Pa No. 1.
20. Pseira	seated women	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 184 Ps No. 1.
21. Zakro	spiral frieze	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 184 Za No. 1.
Cyclades:		
22. Akrotiri, Xeste 3	framed rosettes	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 188 uncatalogued. 16.
23. Akrotiri, Xeste 4	relief animal (panther?)	C. Televantou, personal communication.
Mainland:		
24. Mycenae	seated woman	<i>Aegean Painting</i> , 194 uncatalogued. 1.
25. Tiryns	seated woman	Kaiser, <i>AM</i> 95, 1980, 19#M69:48.

Fig. 3. Distribution map of relief frescoes.



Fig. 4. Ayia Triadha, fresco from room 14, reconstruction after Cameron (n. 10).

atic details and make the paintings available to a wider audience.²⁰

The painting formed a continuous megalographic frieze around the three walls of room 14: at its east end, above the low dais, was a female figure in flounced skirt, close to an architectural platform or facade in a meadow of myrtle or dittany; she raises her hands in a gesture interpreted as hieratic or epiphanic.²¹ Both long side walls show a rocky landscape dotted by clumps of lilies, crocus, ivy, and violets, one kneeling female figure (a "votary" or "flower-picker"), and some representations of fauna, including stalking cats, birds, and agrimia.

The two landscape compositions on the north and south side walls are differently structured. The south wall to the right of the entrance shows a rough landscape with variegated rocks. Rocky masses pointing up from the bottom of the scene, and down from the top, coupled with detached masses in the center of the wall, create the impression of a mountainous hillside.²²

The background of the north side wall to the left of the entrance, by contrast, is painted with undulating red bands which encircle irregular white reserved areas. The convention of wavy red and white bands is seen in the Knossos throneroom (now redated by E. Davis from LM II/III A to LM I B),²³ but there the red bands alternate horizontally with the white, rather than enclosing them. The changes in background color and the view of landscape and animals are so close to those in the contemporary House of the Frescoes at Knossos that S. Immerwahr has suggested Knossian artists were active at Ayia Triadha.²⁴



Fig. 5. Isopata ring, CMS II.3, no. 51.

FEMALE FIGURE ASSOCIATED WITH ARCHITECTONIC PLATFORM

Several compositional features point to the important status and function of the woman at the east end of the room: her placement opposite the door, on the main axis of room 14, her association with an architectural facade or seat, and the location of this part of the composition above the low dais.

One problem is her pose. The preserved lower half of her body appears nearly frontal, but since frontal faces are rare in Minoan art²⁵ it is usually assumed that her head was in profile, though even this creates difficulties.²⁶ The swaying outline of her skirt and the downturned toes make it unclear

²⁰ I am grateful to A.L. D'Agata for providing this information.

²¹ The exact nature of her pose is not quite clear. But at least one of her arms was raised, as indicated by the position of a preserved blue dress tassel hanging from her elbow. Cf. the tassel of the necklace-carrier on the adyton fresco from Xeste 3: S. Marinatos, *Excavations at Thera VII*, Athens 1976, col. pl. F. On costumes, cf. C. Televantou, "Η γυναικεία ένδυμασία στην προϊστορική Θήρα", *ArchEph* 121, 1982, 113–135.

²² A.P. Chapin, *Perspective in Minoan pictorial art* (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1988). I am grateful to the author for allowing me to read her study in 1991.

²³ E. Davis, 'The Cycladic style of the Thera frescoes', in *TAW* III:1, 1990, 214f.; the later date is argued by Immerwahr, *Aegean painting*, 176, Kn no. 8.

²⁴ *Aegean painting*, 49. On the murals of the House of the Frescoes, see *PM* II.2, 431–467, 479 fig. 286, 501 fig. 305; M.A.S. Cameron, 'Unpublished paintings from the "House of the Frescoes" at Knossos', *BSA* 63, 1968, 1–31; Hood (supra n. 6), 51f., figs. 51–53.

²⁵ A frontal "gorgoneion" appears on an unusual pithoid amphora found in the "Cult Basement" at Knossos: P. Warren, 'Knossos: Stratigraphical Museum excavations, 1978–1980. Part I', *AR* 27, 1980–81, 79–92, esp. 83, 84 figs. 33, 34. Cf. the gorgoneion on a MM II pithos from Mallia: J-C. Poursat, 'Iconographie minoenne: continuités et ruptures', in Poursat & Darcque, *Iconographie*, 52, 53 fig. 3. Cf. now L. Morgan, 'Frontal face and the symbolism of death in Aegean glyptic', in *Sceaux minoens et mycéniens* (CMS Beiheft, 5), W. Müller, ed., Berlin 1995.

²⁶ Even if she faced right, in the direction her toes point, she would be turning away from the kneeling woman on the north wall. I thank N. Marinatos for emphasizing this. If she faced left, away from the direction of her feet, she would find parallels among a few seals, e.g., *CMS* II.3, no. 198.

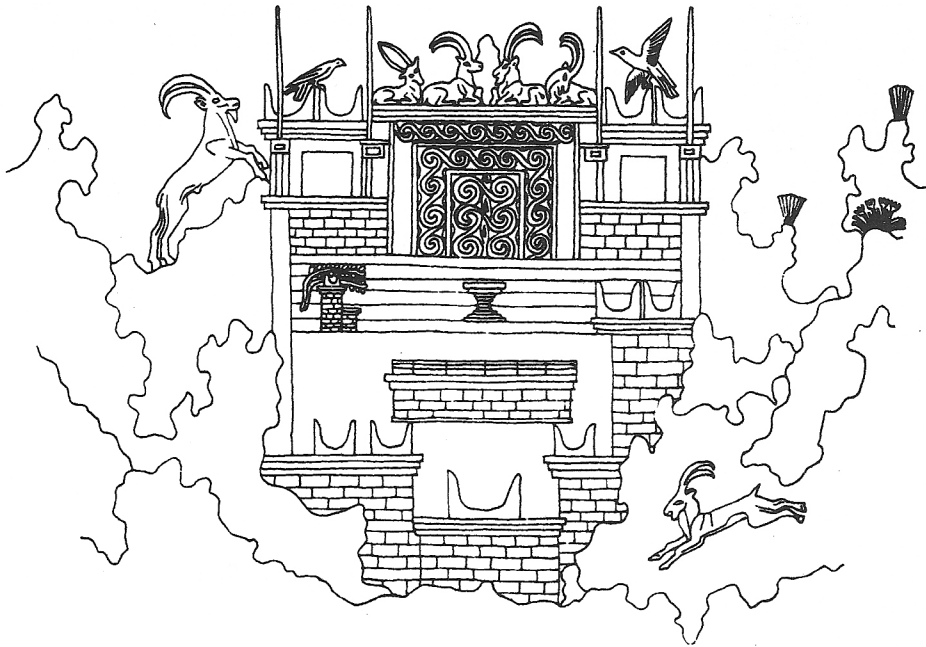


Fig. 6. Zakros rhyton, after Shaw (n. 41).

whether she was meant to be seated,²⁷ standing, or somewhere in between. The dress outline may even suggest that she is dancing.²⁸

Her arms are raised, like those of a female usually interpreted as a divinity on a gold ring found at Isopata (Fig. 5).²⁹

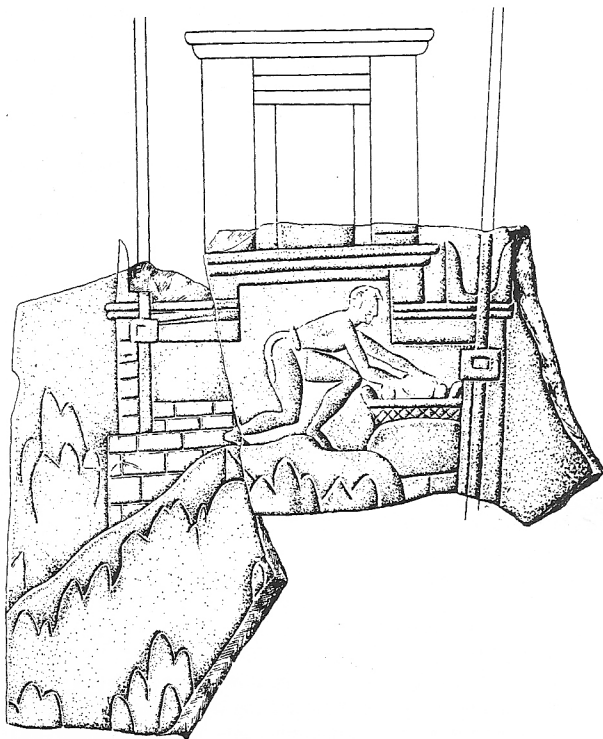


Fig. 7. Knossos stone rhyton fragment, after Smith (n. 42).

That the woman on the gold ring also appears to sway, helps to clarify the pose of the figure in the fresco, and suggests for the ring an origin in mural painting. Both the pose and placement of the Ayia Triadha female make it reasonable to designate her a goddess, presiding over her natural realm, rather than a human being or priestess.³⁰

She also appears at a time when important female figures, many of them lifesized and in relief, appear in Minoan frescoes. Examples include the fragments of relief women from the decoration restored to the walls of the "Great East Hall" at Knossos³¹ and from the "North

²⁷ *Aegean painting*, 49: "seated at an altar or shrine".

²⁸ Cf. the central figure on the Vapheio ring (*CMS* I, no. 219), who seems to be dancing since her hair flies out from her head. The large terracotta figurines from the Kea temple have their hands on their hips but the profile of the skirts curves as if the knees are flexed, and they may be dancing: M.E. Caskey, *The temple at Ayia Irini*, 1: *The statues* (Keos II.1), Princeton 1986.

²⁹ *Heraklion Museum 424*: from Isopata tomb 1, LM I B-II context: *CMS* II.3, no. 51; J. Younger, 'Aegean seals of the Late Bronze Age: masters and workshops. II. The first generation Minoan masters', *Kadmos* 22, 1983, 134f., 115 fig. 53 (drawing); *idem*, *The iconography of Late Minoan and Mycenaean sealstones and finger rings*, Bristol 1988, 138 (II.3.51), fig. 104. I have difficulties accepting W.-D. Niemeier's identification of the central figure on a higher level as a divinity: 'Cult scenes on gold rings from the Argolid', in *Celebrations of death and divinity in the Bronze Age Argolid* (*ActaAth-4*^o, 40), R. Hägg & G. Nordquist, eds., Stockholm 1990, 168 and fig. 2.

³⁰ Implied by Immerwahr, *Aegean painting*, 50, and stated by Hood (*supra* n. 6), 52. Smith (*supra* n. 6), 77–79, calls her a woman. Criteria for identifying divinities are outlined by Renfrew *et al.* (*supra* n. 15), 22–24.

³¹ *Aegean painting*, 171, Kn no. 8 d.

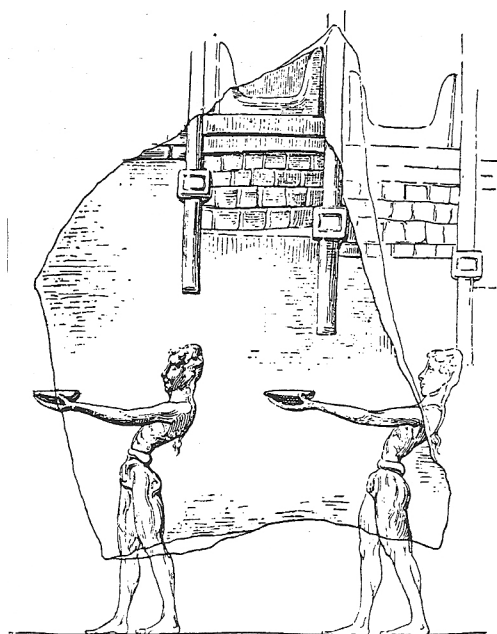


Fig. 8. Knossos stone rhyton fragment, after Smith (n. 42).

Threshing Floor area".³² Parts of other relief women have been found at Chania³³ and Palaikastro (perhaps with crocus decoration on her skirt).³⁴ From a possible shrine at Pseira came two more such figures.³⁵ At Phylakopi on Melos, an elaborately costumed seated female with attendant was discovered, though these fragments are not in relief.³⁶ Best preserved among such figures at present is the enthroned woman from the upper floor of Xeste 3 at Akrotiri.³⁷ Small fragments of relief women were even found at Mycenae at Tiryns.³⁸

The architectural seat or facade in the Ayia Triadha painting is also an important element. Minoan architectural representation is the subject of a recent Bryn Mawr College dissertation by K. Krattenmaker,³⁹ who argues that it was used by the ruling elite of the neopalatial period to reinforce their control over Minoan society. She emphasizes that representations of architecture have been found only in three settings: palaces, villas, and the cemeteries associated with these sites. Although architectural representations are scarce at peak sanctuaries, some peaks had extensive neopalatial buildings (e.g., Mt. Juktas, associated with Knossos)⁴⁰ and peak sanctuaries are among the types of architecture chosen for representation, as on the Zakros rhyton (Fig. 6)⁴¹ and on two fragments of stone relief vessels found at Knossos (Figs. 7 and 8).⁴² More important is Krattenmaker's observation that the depiction of architecture is primarily a Knossian phenomenon, with half the catalogued examples coming from there alone.⁴³ P. Warren had argued earlier that stone vessels with relief scenes are the products of a single Knossian workshop.⁴⁴ Thus it can be argued that the relief vessels, particularly those with architecture, are disseminating or imitating the iconography of Knossos.⁴⁵

Although it is not clear whether the woman in the Ayia

Triadha painting is seated or standing, her placement next to the facade also recalls the widespread representation of architectural seats or platforms⁴⁶ in the Minoan world during LM I. Actual thrones, however, are rare outside the

³² PM III, 45 fig. 27; *Aegean painting*, 179, uncatalogued no. 1.

³³ *Aegean painting*, 181, Ch no. 1.

³⁴ Kaiser (supra n. 18), 303; *Aegean painting*, 181f., Pa no. 1.

³⁵ R.B. Seager, *Excavations on the island of Pseira*, Philadelphia 1910, 42–34 pl. 5; B. Kaiser (supra n. 18), 299–302, fig. 469a–c; Hood (supra n. 6), 53 fig. 35 B; *Aegean painting*, 184, Ps no. 1; Barber (supra n. 6), 318 fig. 15.4. Note Seager's comment, p. 34: "That such a thing should have come to light in the ruins of a small town on a barren island is a matter of no small astonishment, and strengthens the idea that this must have been a settlement in close connection with the center of Minoan civilization."

³⁶ Hood (supra n. 6), 53 fig. 35 A; *Art and religion*, 87 col. fig. 59; Barber (supra n. 6), 322 fig. 15.8; L. Morgan, 'Island iconography: Thera, Kea, Milos', in *TAW* III:1, 1990, 259 fig. 8; *Aegean painting*, 189, Ph no. 2.

³⁷ *Art and religion*, 61f., 62 fig. 40, 66f. fig. 44, 70 fig. 49; *Aegean painting*, 60 fig. 20.

³⁸ *Aegean painting*, 194, uncatalogued no. 1; B. Kaiser, 'Mykenische Steingefäße und Verwandtes im Magazin zu Nauplia', *AM* 95, 1980, 19, #M 69:48.

³⁹ K. Krattenmaker, 'Architectural representation: a clue to its place in Minoan society', *AJA* 95, 1991, 291.

⁴⁰ A. Karetsou, 'The peak sanctuary of Mt. Juktas', in *SCABA*, 137–153.

⁴¹ *Heraklion Museum* 2764. On the rhyton generally, see N. Platon, *Zakros*, New York 1971, 164–169, col. figs. on 165, 168; Warren, *MSV*, 87, 174, 175, 178, 179, 181, shape 34 B 2. For discussion and analysis of the scenes, see e.g., J. Shaw, 'Evidence for the Minoan tripartite shrine', *AJA* 82, 1978, 429–448, esp. 432–438 and figs. 5–9. For details, see: S. Marinatos & M. Hirmer, *Kreta, Thera und das mykenische Hellas*, rev. ed., Munich 1986, pls. 108–110; A.P. Chapin, 'The Sanctuary Rhyton from Kato Zakro and the representation of space in Aegean art of the Bronze Age', *AJA* 96, 1992, 334.

⁴² *Heraklion Museum* 2397: Smith (supra n. 6), 71, 76, fig. 93; Warren, *MSV*, 85, 175, 178–181, pl. P476; Kaiser (supra n. 18), 17, Knossos 10, pl. 10a; J. Shaw (supra n. 41), 429–448, esp. 440 and n. 21, 441 fig. 10.

Heraklion Museum 426: Kaiser (supra n. 18), 14, Knossos # 5, pl. 6a; Warren, *MSV*, 175, 181, P474. Suggestion that the fragments belonged to the same vessel originally: Warren, *MSV*, 179 and n. 3; Smith (supra n. 6), 71, fig. 93; Sapouna-Sakellarakis (supra n. 6), 403 n. 24.

⁴³ Krattenmaker (supra n. 39). Cf. the MM III house model found at Archanes; another fragment of an architectural model has been found at Juktas: H.W. Catling, *AR* 33, 1986–87, 55.

⁴⁴ Warren, *MSV*, 174f., 180, based on their geographic distribution.

⁴⁵ This is even the case with the Boxer Rhyton found at Ayia Triadha: *Heraklion Museum* 342, 448, 676: Warren, *MSV*, 85, P 469. Note that the boxers have good parallels on sealings from the Temple Repositories at Knossos: PM I, 689 fig. 509; III, 504 fig. 349. Cf. the stucco relief of pugilists from the 'Great East Hall': *Aegean painting*, 171, Kn no. 8a.

⁴⁶ For shrines on platforms on an ivory pyxis from Ayia Triadha, see Halbherr, Stefani & Banti (supra n. 1), 97f., 97 fig. 65. Cf. a sealing from Ayia Triadha with a woman standing before a garlanded shrine: D. Levi, 'Le cretule di Haghia Triada', *ASAtene* 8–9, 1925–26, 139 #156, fig. 152, pl. XIV. Cf. J. Younger, 'Interactions between Aegean seals and other Minoan-Mycenaean art forms', in *Sceaux minoens et mycéniens* (supra n. 25). Cf. the antithetic genii on a platform on a stone triton shell: C. Baurain & P. Darcque, 'Un triton en pierre à Malia', *BCH* 103, 1983, 3–58.

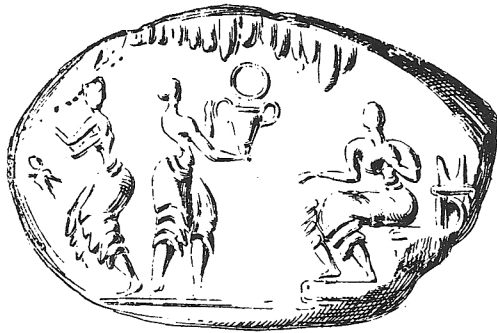


Fig. 9. Knossos sealing, after *PM II*, 767 fig. 498.

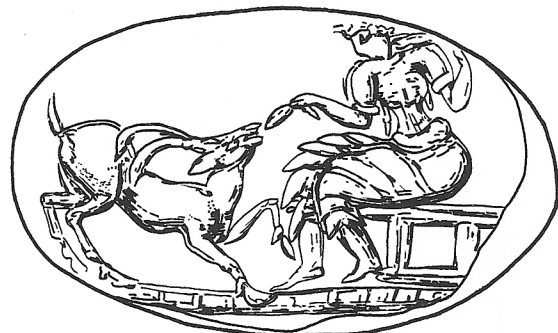


Fig. 12. Chania sealing, after Papapostolou (n. 54), pl. 44.



Fig. 10. Zakros sealing, after *PM II*, 768 fig. 499.

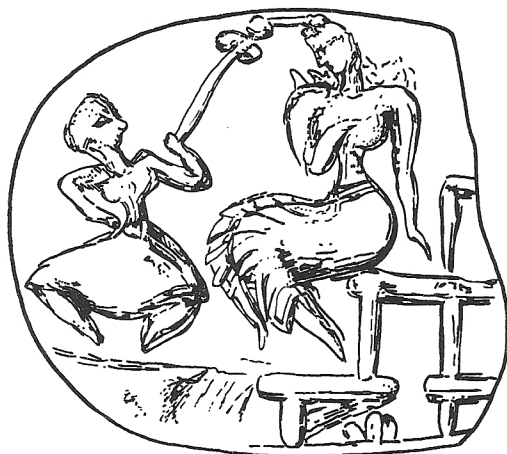


Fig. 11. Chania sealing, after Papapostolou (n. 54), pl. 42.

stone and wooden seats from the Knossos palace.⁴⁷ Also, no other Minoan palace has a recognizable throneroom, though areas devoted to cult were found in each one.⁴⁸

In pictorial art an architectural platform is one of two seats commonly used by Minoan goddesses before Mycenaean influences become pronounced; the other is a rocky peak or outcrop.⁴⁹ The Mycenaeans apparently continued to make use of the rocky seat,⁵⁰ but also depicted "campstools" with crossed legs, perhaps under Egyptian influence.⁵¹

The Ayia Triadha facade closely resembles the constructions supporting female figures on related sealings found at Knossos (Fig. 9),⁵² Zakros (Fig. 10),⁵³ Chania (Figs. 11 and 12),⁵⁴ and at Thebes a sealing⁵⁵ and a gold ring thought to come from there (Fig. 13).⁵⁶ The composition on a ring said to have been found at Amari is related (Fig. 14),⁵⁷ as is the

⁴⁷ J. and E. Sakellarakis mention a backless stone example from Myristis: *Archanes*, Athens 1991, 25; cf. N. Platon, 'Μινωικοί θρόνοι', *KretChron* 5, 1951, 385–412.

⁴⁸ See, e.g., Gesell (supra n. 5).

⁴⁹ E.g., *CMS II.3*, no. 103; *PM II*, 769 and fig. 500; *CMS X*, no. 261; *CMS V*, no. 253.

⁵⁰ E.g., *CMS I*, no. 17; ivory plaque from Mycenae: J.-C. Poursat, *Catalogue des ivoires mycéniens du Musée National d'Athènes*, Paris 1977, 19 #48, pl. IV.

⁵¹ E.g., on the Tiryns ring, *CMS I*, no. 179. The banqueters from the "Campstool fresco" at Knossos belong to a period of supposed Mycenaean supremacy: *PM IV.2*, 379–390; *Aegean painting*, 176, Kn no. 26. Egyptian thrones with crossed legs are common in the New Kingdom; for the "ecclesiastical throne" of Tutankhamun, see H. Carter, *The tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen*, New York 1963, vol. 3, 111f., pl. XXXIII.

⁵² *Heraklion Museum sealings 277–282 + Ashmolean 1938.1015 a, b*: *PM II*, 767 fig. 498 (matrix); IV, figs. 331, 591 (ring impression); Betts (supra n. 4), 38 fig. 10a; W.-D. Niemeier, 'Zur Ikonographie von Gottheiten und Adoranten in den Kultszenen', in *Fragen und Probleme der bronzezeitlichen ägäischen Glyptik* (*CMS Beiheft*, 3), Berlin 1989, 173 fig. 4.11; N. Marinatos, 'Minoan-Cycladic syncretism', in *TAW III*:1, 1990, 373, 374 fig. 5; Weingarten 1991 (supra n. 4), 308, 322, pl. 8.

⁵³ *PM II*, 768 fig. 499; Betts (supra n. 4), 38 fig. 10b; Weingarten 1991 (supra n. 4), 308, 322, pl. 8:Z3. Both Betts and Weingarten note that the Zakros sealing is smaller than the Knossos example and is not from the same ring or matrix; the former suggests that this impression was sent to Zakros from elsewhere.

⁵⁴ I.A. Papapostolou, *Tà σφραγίσματα τῶν Χανίων*, Athens 1977, 78–80 #30, pl. 42 #30, pl. 43 a, b; 85–87 #32, pl. 44 #32, 45 d.

⁵⁵ Marinatos (supra n. 52), 273. She is flanked by griffins and genii. J. Younger kindly sent me his sketch of the impression, and W.-D. Niemeier has added details.

⁵⁶ *Benaki Museum 2075*: *CMS V*, no. 199; Niemeier (supra n. 52), 173 fig. 4.7. Younger (supra n. 29), 135. His attribution of the ring to a Minoan artist would make it an import or commission on the mainland, and probably an heirloom as well.

⁵⁷ Forthcoming in *CMS V Suppl.*; Marinatos (supra n. 52), 374 fig. 6. The ring is now lost but an impression is preserved at the British School in Athens. I thank J. Younger for additional information and illustrations.

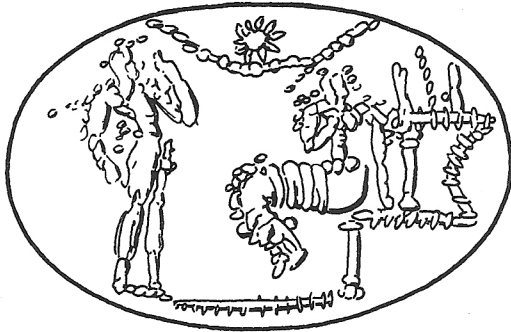


Fig. 13. Thebes gold ring, after CMS V, no. 199.

"Ring of Minos", if genuine.⁵⁸ Closely resembling the glyptic examples is the seat of the mural goddess from the upper floor of Xeste 3 at Akrotiri, mentioned above.⁵⁹ The close connection between the Ayia Triadha and the Xeste 3 paintings is further indicated by common stylistic details such as the graining on the wooden "beams" of the platform and the blue tassels or ribbons attached to the sleeves of women's dresses at the elbow.⁶⁰

Present as supports for a number of these seats (though apparently lacking in the Ayia Triadha painting) is the incurved altar, actual examples of which have been found mostly in the Knossos area:⁶¹ a schematized pair of altars was painted flanking the Knossos throne,⁶² and the Zakros rhyton illustrates such an altar in front of the tripartite shrine on a mountain peak.⁶³

N. Marinatos has taken the appearance of a Minoan-style architectural seat in a Thera painting as an indication that Minoan religious ideas spread into the Cyclades during LM I A.⁶⁴ While such artistic imitation does not always translate as evidence for political or cultural domination (as J. Davis has sensibly warned),⁶⁵ the Minoan elements in both the architecture and decoration of Xeste 3 seem particularly strong.⁶⁶ The widespread evidence for the depiction of architectural seats for divinities during LM I A could result either from the deliberate imitation of Knossos and its images of power by local elites, or the expansion of Knossos and its influence inside and outside of Crete during this time.⁶⁷

LANDSCAPE: ANIMALS AND VEGETATION

The landscape and animals provide one of the richest surviving glimpses into the Minoan world of nature, though the religious associations often suggested for these need to be treated cautiously, as in several recent studies by G. Walberg⁶⁸ and by P. Warren.⁶⁹ We are on firmest ground noting simply that the importance of animal and plant fertility in nature seems to be a concern of Minoan religion.⁷⁰ Without surveying all the plants⁷¹ and fauna in the Ayia Triadha painting, one should note that their variety and abundance are closely paralleled in the murals from the House of the Frescoes at Knossos.⁷²

Of the existing *flora*, the crocus clumps⁷³ have the best

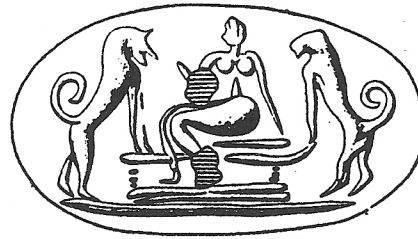


Fig. 14. Amari ring, after Marinatos (n. 57).

claim to a religious significance, although the gathering of the blossoms for the production of saffron seems to have had a clear economic significance as well as cultic importance.⁷⁴ The kneeling flowerpicker at Ayia Triadha is also now more readily understandable in light of the better-preserved composition with the same activity from Xeste 3, though the pose of the Cretan woman differs from that of the Cycladic girls.⁷⁵ The Ayia Triadha goddess, however,

⁵⁸ See recently, I. Pini, 'Zum "Ring des Minos"', in *Eilapini* (Festschrift Platon), Heraklion 1987, 441–455; P. Warren, 'The Ring of Minos', *ibid.*, 485–500.

⁵⁹ *Supra* n. 37.

⁶⁰ I was able to confirm these details during an examination of the Thera and Ayia Triadha frescoes in 1991 and 1992.

⁶¹ E.g., four stone examples from the porch of the palatial building at Archanes: J. & E. Sakellarakis (*supra* n. 47), 32 and fig. 16.

⁶² *Supra* n. 47. For a recent discussion of the throneroom bases, M. Shaw, 'The Lion Gate relief of Mycenae reconsidered', in *Philia epi* (Festschrift Mylonas), Athens 1986, 108–123, esp. 119, 120 fig. 15.

⁶³ *Supra* n. 41.

⁶⁴ Marinatos & Hägg (*supra* n. 14), 70; Marinatos (*supra* n. 52), 373.

⁶⁵ J.L. Davis, 'Cultural innovation and the Minoan thalassocracy at Ayia Irini, Keos', in *Thalassocracy*, 159–165.

⁶⁶ Polythyron, lustral basin or adyton, benches like those in Knossos throneroom, ashlar facade, blue monkeys and fresco with a relief frame.

⁶⁷ See the summary of opinions by W.-D. Niemeier, 'The character of the Knossian palace society in the second half of the fifteenth century B.C.: Mycenaean or Minoan?' in *Minoan society*, 217–236.

⁶⁸ E.g., G. Walberg, 'Problems in the interpretation of some Minoan and Mycenaean cult symbols', in *Problems in Greek prehistory*, 211–217; *eadem*, 'Minoan floral iconography', in *EIKΩN* (*supra* n. 7), 241–246.

⁶⁹ Warren (*supra* n. 18).

⁷⁰ Gesell (*supra* n. 10), 95.

⁷¹ Comparanda for the plants can be found in Walberg (*supra* n. 68); Warren (*supra* n. 18); *Aegean painting, passim*; *Art and religion, passim*. Cf. also J. Younger, 'Representations of Minoan-Mycenaean jewelry', in *EIKΩN* (*supra* n. 7), 257–293.

⁷² *Supra* n. 24.

⁷³ For crocus, cf. also the Anemospilia bucket with a bull in relief: J. & E. Sakellarakis (*supra* n. 47), 148f. figs. 126–127.

⁷⁴ See recently S. Amigues, 'Le crocus et le safran sur un fresque de Théra', *RA* 1988, 227–242. Cf. articles by Marinatos (*infra* n. 76).

⁷⁵ This connection was noted by Marinatos and Hägg (*supra* n. 14), 70. For the girls from Xeste 3, see *Art and religion*, 61f., 62 fig. 40, 66f. fig. 44.



Fig. 15. Temple Repository dresses, after *PM I*, 506 fig. 364.

lacks the attendant monkey and griffin of her Thera counterpart, perhaps because of the limited space in the panel (1.55 m wide) or as a result of accidents of preservation. At least two blue monkeys from the Knossos palace ape human behavior by gathering crocuses.⁷⁶

There is another significant aspect of the crocuses in the Ayia Triadha painting: elsewhere, they seem clearly linked to the goddess associated with the Knossos palace and with peak sanctuaries. The mountainous setting on both the Xeste 3 and the Ayia Triadha paintings is generally suggestive of the topography of peak sanctuaries. The Zakros rhyton—found in a palace but depicting a peak sanctuary—clearly includes the representation of a clump of crocus and other plants.

These flowers recur, moreover, on the votive faience dresses and a girdle from the Knossos Temple Repositories (Fig. 15),⁷⁷ and S. Immerwahr has suggested that the wavy

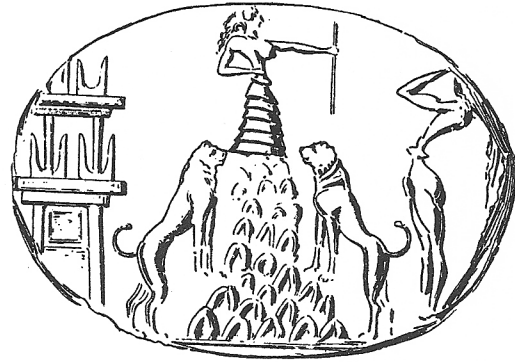


Fig. 16. Heraklion Museum sealing, after *PM II*, 809 fig. 528.

framing line around them represents a stylized mountain.⁷⁸

The undulating outline of the back of the Knossos throne, comparable to the peak above the shrine on the Zakros rhyton, also emphasizes the link between palace and peak sanctuary.⁷⁹ This connection is subsequently made explicit by a LM II sealing from Knossos with the representation of a goddess standing on a peak, flanked by lions and framed by a male votary and an architectural facade (Fig. 16).⁸⁰

Of the fauna, the cats stalking birds on the south wall recall another fragment with a cat and bird from Knossos⁸¹ and may be of direct Egyptian inspiration.⁸² At the same time, cats may have a relatively early significance in Minoan cult, since a small feline head in terracotta has been found in the Middle Minoan peak sanctuary at Prinias (Fig. 17).⁸³

Quadrupeds leaping among the rocks on the south wall have been identified as deer or goats, but are probably fer-

⁷⁶ *Aegean painting*, 170, Kn. no. 1. The role of monkeys has been discussed recently by N. Marinatos, *Art and religion*, 112–116; *eadem*, 'An offering of saffron to the Minoan goddess of nature: the role of the monkey and the importance of saffron', in *Gifts to the gods. Proceedings of the Uppsala Symposium 1985* (Boreas, 15), T. Linders & G. Nordquist, eds., Uppsala 1987, 123–132; *eadem*, 'The monkey in the shrine: a fresco fragment from Thera', in *Eilapini* (supra n. 58), 417–421.

⁷⁷ *PM I*, 506 fig. 364; Barber (supra n. 6), 320 fig. 15.6; K.P. Foster, *Aegean faience of the Bronze Age*, New Haven, Conn. 1979, 86–89 and figs. 17, 18.

⁷⁸ *Aegean painting*, 46, 59.

⁷⁹ Noted by W.-D. Niemeier, 'On the function of the "Throne Room" in the palace at Knossos', in *FMP*, 163–168; *idem*, 'Zur Deutung des Thronraumes im Palast von Knossos', *AM* 101, 1986, 63–95; cf. R. Hägg, 'Die göttliche Epiphonie im minoischen Ritual', *AM* 101, 1986, 41–62.

⁸⁰ *Heraklion Museum # 141: PM II.2*, 809 fig. 528; IV.2, fig. 597 A e; M.A.V. Gill, 'The Knossos sealings: provenance and identification', *BSA* 60, 1965, 71, M 1–5, pl. 11; Hood (supra n. 6), 229 fig. 234; C. Sourvinou-Inwood, 'Space in Late Minoan religious glyptic—some remarks', in *Fragen und Probleme der bronzezeitlichen*

ägäischen Glyptik (CMS Beiheft, 3), Berlin 1989, 247 and fig. 1, 250f., n. 31.

⁸¹ *PM I*, 540 fig. 392; *Aegean painting*, 179 #12 (Immerwahr notes that Cameron challenged the comparison with Ayia Triadha).

⁸² For MM II cat appliqués, see S. Immerwahr, 'A possible influence of Egyptian art in the creation of Minoan wall painting', in Poursat & Darcque, *Iconographie*, 41–50.

⁸³ C. Davaras, *Hagios Nikolaos Museum*, Athens n.d., col. fig. 40. For other felines, cf. the MM III B faience snake handler from the Temple Repositories (leopard on cap): *PM I*, 500–504, 504 fig. 362; Foster (supra n. 77), 70–76, pls. 10–11. For the Mallia "leopard-axe" see: *PM II.2*, 274 and fig. 164; Hood (supra n. 6), 174 and fig. 70. Clay rhyta from Thera: S. Marinatos, *Excavations at Thera II*, Athens 1969, pl. 27.1–2; *Thera V*, Athens 1972, pl. 80. Cf. the terracotta head from the domestic quarter: Platon (supra n. 41), 262, and a faience "wild-cat" rhyton from Zakros: Foster (supra n. 77), 68–70, 69 fig. 9, 70 pl. 6, and stone examples from Knossos: Warren, *MSV*, 90; *PM II.2*, 827–833, figs. 542–545, 549. A lentoid sealstone with a cat stalking birds was found at Archanes: V. Kenna, *Cretan seals*, Oxford 1960, 137 #344. On cat iconography, cf. Morgan (supra n. 6), 41–44. A. Blasingham is preparing a catalogue and thorough discussion of feline representations.



Fig. 17. Prinias cat head, after Davaras (n. 83).

ile agrimia, whose iconography has been summarized by C. Long.⁸⁴ On the Zakros rhyton, they are directly associated with the shrine in the peak sanctuary.⁸⁵ Others appear in the decoration of the House of the Frescoes at Knossos, where Cameron restored them antithetically flanking an olive tree in a landscape strewn with crocuses.⁸⁶ Agrimia are linked with crocuses on the decoration of several rhyta found at Palaikastro (Fig. 18),⁸⁷ and a pair of bronze agrimia were found within the Ayia Triadha villa.⁸⁸ Agrimia appear with seated women in glyptic (e.g., Fig. 12), and they have also been identified as attendants of a Minoan goddess.⁸⁹

INTERPRETATION

In terms of subject matter (including the prominent female figure, architecture, and nature scenes) and style of execution, the closest links of the villa painting seem to point toward the palaces and peak sanctuaries. The palatial link is strongest with the Knossos area and the House of the Frescoes in particular.

A ladle of the type inscribed for use in peak sanctuaries was a chance find at the Ayia Triadha villa,⁹⁰ while the House of the Frescoes at Knossos also included paraphernalia of the type used in peak sanctuaries (e.g., ladles, tables inscribed in Linear A).⁹¹ A fragment of a stone relief rhyton from Knossos, mentioned above, shows such ladles being carried to a shrine in a mountainous setting (Fig. 8).⁹² Another possible sign of Knossian influence at Ayia Triadha is the presence of several well-known relief rhyta.⁹³

The importance of the palace/peak link during LM I is paramount. A. Peatfield notes a significant change in the use of peak sanctuaries between the protopalatial and the neopalatial period.⁹⁴ Of the 25 peak sanctuaries he accepts as existing during the protopalatial period, he emphasizes that only six survive into the neopalatial period but that these receive a wealth of offerings in an apparent process of religious consolidation controlled by a palatial elite. Of these neopalatial sanctuaries, Juktas—as focus of the Knossos area—is preeminent.⁹⁵



Fig. 18. Palaikastro rhyton, after Sackett & Popham (n. 87).

At all of the major neopalatial peak sanctuaries, there are some characteristics shared with major administrative sites at this time, both palaces and villas: the use of Linear A, the creation, storage and disposal of prestige objects in precious materials, and the use of elaborate architecture or its representation.⁹⁶ If the major center of control in LM I is the Knossos/Juktas link, it is not surprising that we find a major concentration of palace and peak iconography in precisely this region. That we are also finding such elements both at Ayia Triadha and at Thera⁹⁷ adds support to the idea that

⁸⁴ *Aegean painting*, 180, A.T. no. 1 c: "leaping deer"; restored as agrimia by Cameron. The animals lack the dappled hide characteristic of deer. Cf. C. Long, *The Ayia Triadha sarcophagus* (SIMA, 61), Göteborg 1974, 55–57.

⁸⁵ *Supra* n. 41.

⁸⁶ *PM* II.2, 459, fig. 271 (crocus); *Aegean painting*, 46. Cameron has completed the scene with antithetic goats and an olive tree (*supra* n. 24).

⁸⁷ *PM* II.2, fig. 431; H. Sackett & M. Popham, 'Excavations at Palaikastro, VII', *BSA* 65, 1970, 218 fig. 9, pl. 17; K.P. Foster, *Minoan ceramic relief* (SIMA, 64), Göteborg 1982, 49f., pl. 31.

⁸⁸ Halbherr, Stefani & Banti (*supra* n. 1), 126 fig. 87.

⁸⁹ Cameron 1978 (*supra* n. 10), 582. For a glyptic example from Khania, see n. 54.

⁹⁰ Warren, *MSV*, 49.

⁹¹ *PM* II.2, 434 fig. 251 (plan), 438, 439 fig. 256 A (table), C (ladle).

⁹² *Supra* n. 42: *Heraklion Museum* 426.

⁹³ *Supra* n. 44.

⁹⁴ A. Peatfield, 'Minoan peak sanctuaries: history and society', *OpAth* 18, 1990, 117–131.

⁹⁵ Peatfield (*supra* n. 94), 127, 129.

⁹⁶ Peatfield (*supra* n. 94), 128.

⁹⁷ A rectangular stone table of offerings with a central depression, resembling Cretan examples, has been found in the House of the Ladies: *BCH* 115, 1991, 928 fig. 138.

either the local elites were imitating Knossos in LM I, or that the rulers of Knossos were actively engaged in establishing their dominance during this period.⁹⁸

But if the Ayia Triadha goddess in her re-creation of the natural world is meant to represent the major Minoan goddess connected with peaks and with palaces, what is her function at this particular villa site? Although the polythyron (room 13), with its pier and door partitions, is suitable for fairly large gatherings, room 14 is too small for more than one or two people and there are no auxiliary doors to expand the space, unlike the Knossos throneroom with its adjoining service areas and lustral basin.⁹⁹ Within room 14, however, one could imagine a single worshipper being in the presence of the goddess, an effect similar to that of entering a small, highly decorated chapel. Was entry into room 14 at Ayia Triadha meant to conjure up visually the experience one would have while watching a ritual performance on Mt. Juktas or within the Knossos palace? Or was it meant to recall, at a distance, the power and religious authority of the elite centered on the north shore of Crete?

Despite the lack of firm answers to these questions, the iconography of the Ayia Triadha painting reinforces the neopalatial relationship between palace and peak, and suggests that some villas, like Ayia Triadha, formed an integral link in that relationship. In addition to serving as economic and administrative centers subsidiary to the palaces, the villas may have served as local "missions" for disseminating neopalatial religion, a suggestion which strongly implies the existence of a theocratic state.¹⁰⁰ Why Ayia Triadha fulfilled this role when a major palace site existed nearby at Phaistos,

and what the relationship was between the two centers, remains a subject for further investigation.¹⁰¹

Addendum

Since this article was submitted, another study has appeared: P. Militello, 'Uno *hieron* nella villa di Haghia Triada?', *Sileno, Rivista di studi classici e cristiani* 18:1-2, 1992, 101-113.

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⁹⁸ Betts (supra n. 4), and Hood (supra n. 1), 130: "It looks very much as if during the LM I period the rulers of Knossos controlled a large area of Crete, if not the whole island." But Weingarten 1988 (supra n. 4) notes that many of the seal designs in use at Ayia Triadha appear to be local.

⁹⁹ The lack of a lustral basin at Ayia Triadha is odd. On the Knossos throneroom, see R. Hägg and W.-D. Niemeier (supra n. 79).

¹⁰⁰ On interpretations of a theocratic state, see suggestions by N. Platon, 'The Minoan palaces: centres of organization of a theocratic social and political system', in *Minoan society*, 273-276.

¹⁰¹ V. La Rosa, 'Preliminary considerations on the problem of the relationship between Phaistos and Hagia Triadha', *Scripta Mediterranea* 6, 1985, 45-54.

Discussion

D. Preziosi: We tend to assume that there was uniformity of religion and cults in Crete, whereas it may be that particular sites had their own versions. Perhaps the religious aspects of Hagia Triada represent a Knossian version, as opposed to what went on at Phaistos.

P. Rehak: I agree.

P. Kuhlmann: Some minor remarks from the Egyptological side. The close relationship between wall representation and functions of rooms has long been established in Egyptology (cf. D. Arnold, *Wandrelief und Raumfunktion in ägyptischen Tempeln des Neuen Reiches*, Berlin 1962). As far as architectural seats and thrones are concerned, two of the major forms of Egyptian thrones do, in fact, represent architecture: one is the palace facade and the other is the Egyptian hieroglyphic denoting sacred enclosure.

L. Hitchcock: There is a nature-culture opposition in the way the animal scene is juxtaposed with the flower-gathering women.

N. Marinatos: We have to take the restoration by M.

Cameron with a grain of salt, although he has undoubtedly got the general idea. There is something wrong with the goddess turning her back on her actual worshippers, the women picking flowers. I would not base too many conclusions on the restoration.

P. Rehak: Yes, this may be so. There are also some close correspondences with the flower-gatherers from Xeste 3 which I didn't have time to mention in my paper.

R. Koehl: Why do you say that the goddess is seated? She may be swaying or dancing.

P. Rehak: You are right; it is not entirely clear that she is seated, but I am not sure that she is standing either. The curve in her pose and the downward turn to her feet make me think that she is dancing.

W. Niemeier: She seems to be in movement, either standing up or sitting down. There are comparanda from seals on which a female figure is either seated next to or moving next to a construction like this. I don't think she is dancing.

J. Driessen: A few comments on the religious aspects from the point of view of Linear A tablets. The Linear A formulae may conceivably suggest that a single religious system may have existed throughout Crete. I would, however, be extremely cautious about inferring theocracy on the basis of frescoes; otherwise Minoans would be ruling as far as the Delta, now that M. Bietak has found frescoes there!

J.A. MacGillivray: You see these representations as a Knossian intrusion. Intrusion into what? What was local cult like?

P. Rehak: We don't really know what the "local" cult was like. But, in LM I, we start to see elements like figural frescoes at some—but not all—sites outside Knossos. I am presently gathering different bits of evidence like the frescoes, the relief rhyta and the marine-style pottery which seem to have originated in Knossos.

J.A. MacGillivray: Wouldn't this confirm J. Driessen's point, that we have a unified culture and religion?

S. Hood: To complete what J. Driessen said. If one is to call Crete a theocracy, one should call all the regimes of the Near East theocracies. Rulers were either divine or high priests.

G. Walberg: If the villas represent a delegation of palatial power, it is natural that we should see the manifestation of the same religion in a place like Hagia Triada.

G. Cadogan: The unified ideology is perfectly concomitant with the introduction of Knossian ideas and control.

T. Whitelaw: I am concerned that in the past few days, the hegemony of Knossos has been repeatedly assumed, but without critical appraisal. What particularly worries me about the fresco evidence is that our sample is so dominated by examples from Knossos—that is bound to be the site with which parallels are most directly drawn. A different approach to the problem would be to ask why Knossos in particular is investing so much in iconography when other sites are not.