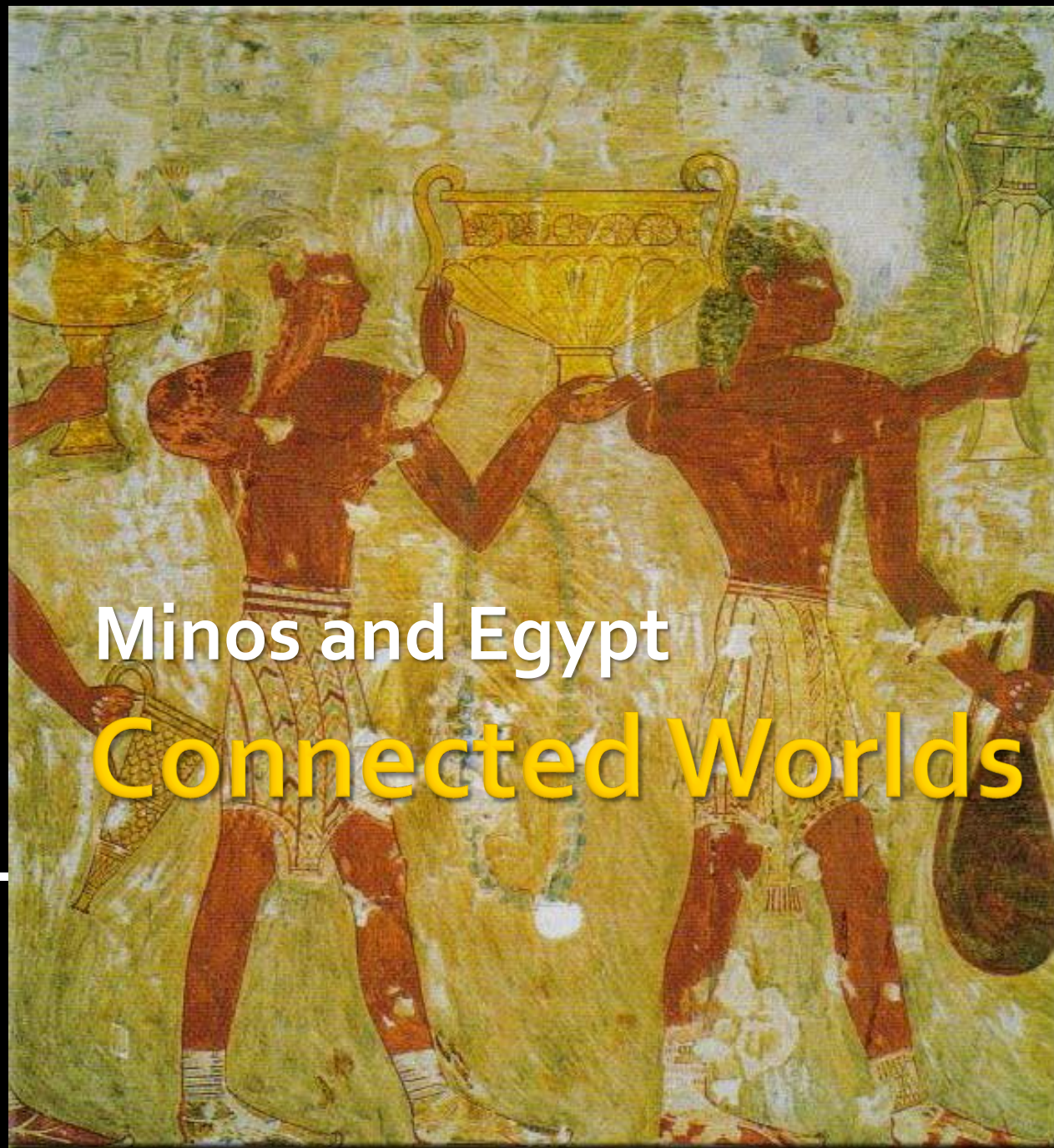




Minos and Egypt

Connected Worlds

Three Phases of Contact

- Prepalatial trade:
 - From Early Dynastic to First Intermediate Period
 - Sporadic, small-scale exchange
- Cretan Palace Period (MM IB-LM IB):
 - From Middle Kingdom to early New Kingdom Egypt (reign of Tuthmosis III)
 - Elite level gift exchange
- LBA Trade (14th-13th century):
 - Mycenaean Greece & late New Kingdom Egypt (to end of XIX Dynasty)
 - Large-scale commodity trade

Evidence for Contacts/Trade

- Archaeological evidence
- Egyptian textual & representational evidence
- Minoan iconography – close cultural relations
 - Exchange of goods & movement of ideas, symbolic material & esoteric knowledge
 - What is the impact on Minoan society?



Tomb of Rekhmire:
gifts from Keftiu

MM IA

- First Intermediate Period scarabs
- Syrian & Old Babylonian cylinder seals:
 - Silver, lapis lazuli & haematite
- Highly desirable gifts:
 - Portable & decorative
 - Symbolic: messages of ownership, status & identity
 - Personal adornment
 - Proclaim owner's access to the exotic & participation in gift exchanges with peoples from faraway places



Scarabs: Mesara



Cylinder seal,
Archanes

Esoteric Knowledge

- MM IA-II: clay sistra from Archanes & Ayios Charalambos
- Influence of Egyptian iconography (& ideology?)
 - Crocodile, sphinx & crouching ape seal impressions
 - Crouching ape used in Thoth amulets (is this function also transmitted?)

Monkey amulet



Sistra

Reception



- Impact of exotic goods & new ideas?
- Copies of eastern exotica
 - Mochlos: gold jewellery & stone vases
 - Mesara: ivory seals & scarabs
- How are these used to construct a Minoan sense of self?



Reception

- Material culture is socialized & mediates relations between people
- Apparent clustering of imported luxuries in Prepalatial Crete
- Colburn: strategies intended to enhance the prestige of certain individuals:
 - The **exotic** has **value**
 - Manipulation of Near Eastern power symbols

Proto-Palatial Crete

- Major societal changes:
- Increased contacts with Egypt
 - Raw materials
 - Middle Kingdom scarabs imported & imitated in Crete
- Knossos & Malia: apparent control of trade
- Is impetus for exchange Minoan or Egyptian?



Malia, bee pendant

Gifts Between Kings?

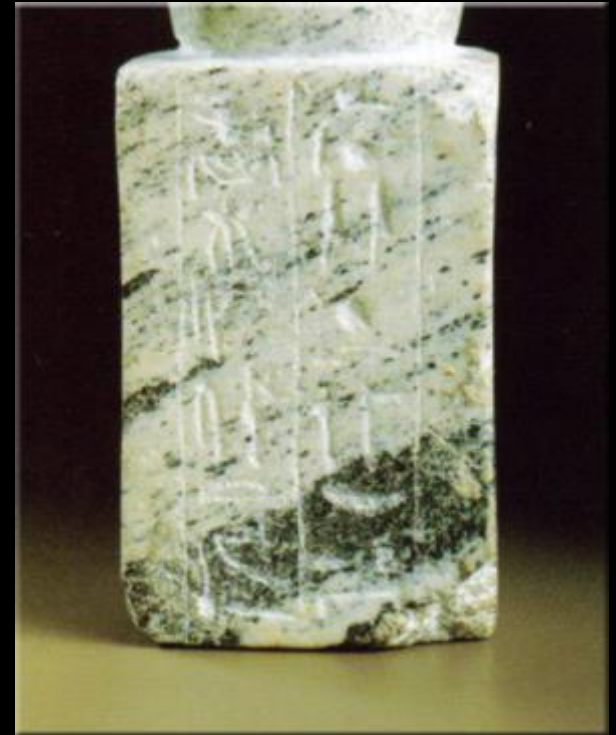
- Finished Egyptian objects unusual
- Were Minoans & Egyptian involved in *jnw* exchange?
- Khyan's lid: Knossos MM IIIA context ?
 - Luxury register: materials & royal inscription
- Royal named objects:
 - Social ties between the rulers &
 - Recipients able to accrue prestige & standing within their own communities



Khyan's lid

Statuette of User

- Palatial location in close proximity to Throne Room
- Highly prized in Crete:
 - Used & displayed in palace
 - Egyptian connotations & esoteric script
- MK funerary statuettes widely distributed in the Near East, in temple locations
- An appropriate item for (royal) gift exchange?



Middle Kingdom
Statuette of User

Exchange of Ideas

- Egyptian influence on developing Minoan iconography:
- Adoption & adaptation of symbols & motifs
 - Sphinx
 - Tawaret
 - Cats in foliage



Malia: appliqué cat



Malia: appliqué sphinx



Phaistos seal impression
Minoan genius

Exports to Egypt (& the East)

- Kamares ware (MM IB-IIB)
- Egypt:
 - Kahun, el Lisht, Abydos, Tell el-Dab'a
- Syro-Palestine:
 - Ugarit, Qatna, Byblos
- Cyprus:
 - Lapithos, Karmi
- Limited distribution & small quantities & exchange controlled by a few centres



Kamares ware bridge-spouted vase
Byblos

Exports to Egypt (& the East)

- Silver drinking sets mimicking MM IB-II ceramic forms
 - Byblos: silver “teapot” & bowls
 - Egypt: Tôd treasure (153 vessels)
- Minoan craftsmanship highly valued
- How are these objects being exchanged?



Tôd treasure



Byblos “teapot”

Exports to Egypt (& the East)

- Woven woollen textiles?
- Trade to Egypt inferred from Minoan decorative motifs found on ceilings of Middle Kingdom tombs:
- Dramatic impact: contrast with white linen?



Egyptian tomb painting

Neo-Palatial Trade

- MM IIIB-LM IA: trade with early 18th Dynasty
- Height of trade: reigns of Hatshepsut & Tuthmosis III
 - Expansionist policies looking for new sources of luxuries
- Crete: Knossos, Zakros, Ayia Triadha, Katsamba, Kommos



Deir el-Bahri: tribute bearers from Punt

Imports from Egypt

- Wide range of raw materials:
 - Ivory
 - Semi-precious stones: carnelian, alabaster, rock crystal, amethyst
 - Ostrich eggs
 - Live animals: oryx beisa & monkeys



Monkey wall painting, Knossos



Ostrich egg rhyton



Ivory tusk, Zakros

Neo-Palatial Period

- Old Kingdom stone vases found in Neopalatial Crete
 - Exchange contemporary with their manufacture or context of deposition?
- Tuthmosis III alabaster vases found at several sites:
 - Knossos, Katsamba, Ayia Triadha, Malia, Palaikastro



Diorite vase, Knossos



Katsamba
alabaster vase

Esoteric Knowledge

- Transmission & adaptation of iconography
 - Nilotic scenes
 - Taweret transformed into Minoan genii
- Sphinxes and griffons:
- Power of knowledge of distant places



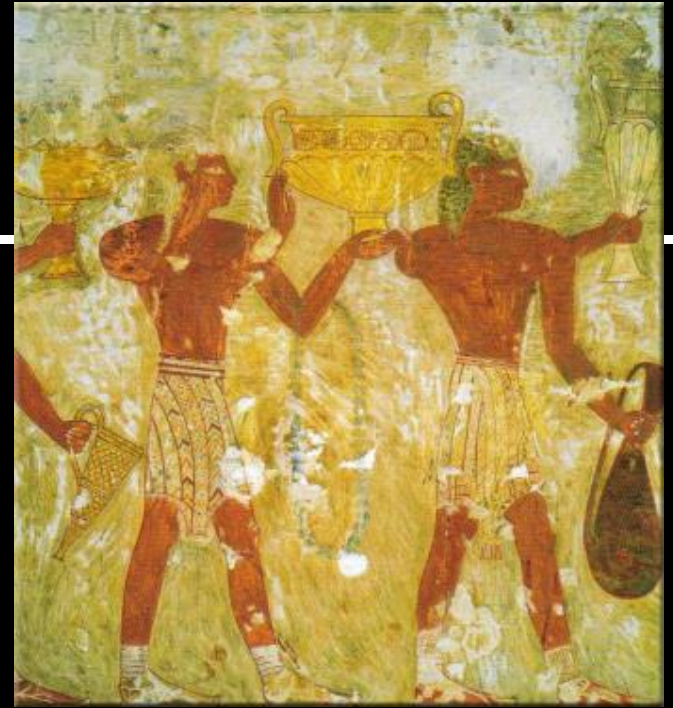
Minoan genius seal impression

Nilotic fresco scene,
Akrotiri



Minoan Exports

- Egyptian texts: references to Keftiu
- Egyptian tomb paintings:
- High status finished artefacts
- Perishables: textiles
 - Minoan designs on tomb of Amenemhet (overseer of the weavers of Amon)
 - Bolts of textiles brought by people from Keftiu



Tomb of Rekhmire



Tomb of Menkheperreseneb

Summary

- Increasing contacts from Proto-Palatial period
- Palace elites actively seeking out luxuries in strategies of power
- Neo-Palatial period: intense level of contacts, especially during reigns of Hatshepsut & Tuthmosis III
- How should we interpret these contacts?
 - Commodity trade
 - Gift exchange
 - Combination