

HPAH7011



Cult Images in the
Bronze Age Aegean

Study of Ancient Iconography

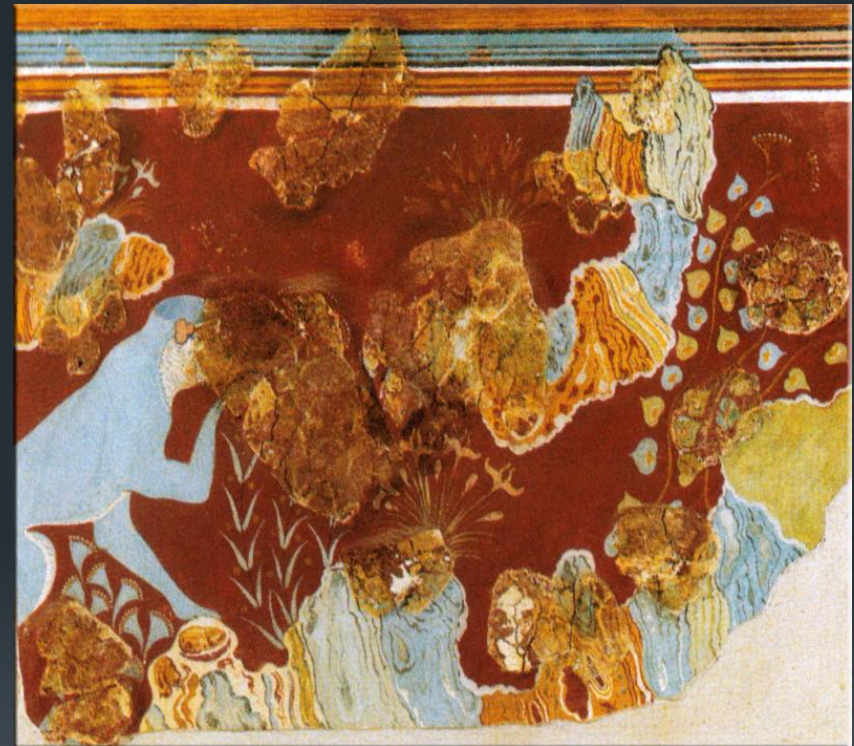
- Art expresses itself through the use of visual images & symbols
- Art object/image: tangible expression of a mental construct expressed according to a culture's conventions of representation
 - Identification of subject matter
 - Understanding, interpreting its cultural significance



Blue bird fresco Knossos

Iconography

- **Iconography:** identification of characteristic motifs employed within a particular artistic tradition
 - Motifs whose imagery is instantly understood by the audience
 - References particular beliefs and ideas
- **Iconology:** examines the cultural context of art & underlying cultural ideas in which the art was created



Blue monkey wall painting
Knossos

Conventions of Painting on Plaster

- Palatial art form
- Technique & artistic conventions:
 - Mix of secco & fresco
 - Colour conventions
 - Scale
- Main themes:
 - Women/goddesses
 - Mythical beasts
 - Natural world
 - Court life



Blue Ladies, Knossos

Religious Symbols in Minoan Art

- Horns of consecration
- Double Axes set in stone bases or as divine epiphany
- Figure of eight shields: divine epiphany
- Birds: divine epiphany
- Altars & sacrificial tables
- Trees
- Libation jug
- Demons/genii



Gold signet ring

Clay seal impression

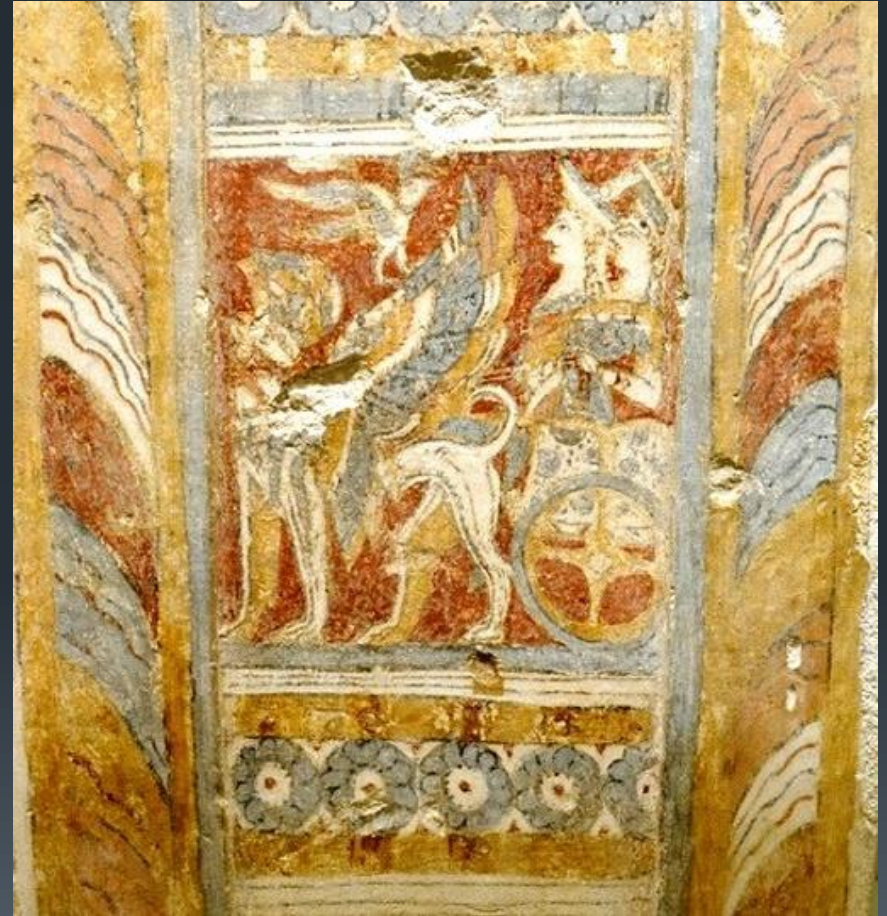
Reading the Ayia Triadha Sarcophagus



Reading the Ayia Triadha Sarcophagus



Reading the Ayia Triadha Sarcophagus



Summary

- Development of complex religious imagery, shared between various elite media in Minoan art including painted plaster
- Certain symbols are short-hand to religious concepts, which are poorly understood by archaeologists
- Ayia Triadha sarcophagus gives us a chance to explore this imagery in a funerary context
- Demonstrates survival of Minoan religious imagery into the Mycenaean period