

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON MINOAN PEAK SANCTUARIES

Many of our current beliefs about Minoan peak sanctuaries were formulated early in this century. It was Arthur Evans, for example, who suggested that the divinity worshipped on Minoan peak sanctuaries was a Mother Goddess, an opinion that is still largely followed today¹. Only in the last 20 years has there been a renewed interest in these sanctuaries, thanks to Karetsou's ongoing excavations at Mt. Jouktas, and Peatfield's articles and excavation at Atsipades south of Rethymnon². Inevitably much of this research on peak sanctuaries has concentrated on defining the important basic field data. This paper will use this new data to focus on two aspects of peak sanctuaries that have been relatively neglected, that is: 1) the wider historical context for the earliest phase of these sanctuaries and 2) the possible religious and social dimensions of the votives themselves.

I would like to begin, however, with a basic topographic observation about peak sanctuaries. Peatfield's studies have recognized a single type of peak sanctuary, defined by its location on a mountaintop high above its surrounding region and by certain finds, specifically animal and human figurines as well as votive limbs³. In addition, Peatfield's excavation has shown that water-worn pebbles were a central feature of the sanctuary at Atsipades. Nowicki's revisitation of peak sanctuaries across the island of Crete has demonstrated that these shrines invariably produce pebbles⁴. Recent surveywork has produced evidence of a second type of "peak sanctuary". In the Mesara, for instance, the major sanctuary on Mt. Kophinas is not the only shrine in the region. At Phaistos the Western Mesara survey found Middle Minoan bovid figurines, the face of a large votary statuette and a concentration of pebbles on the hilltop of Ephendi Christou immediately west of the excavated site (Pl. XLVIa)⁵. At Agia Triada human and animal figurines were found on the low hilltop immediately east of the settlement⁶. On the north coast of Crete,

1 See PM I, 159-162; M.P. NILSSON, *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and its Survival in Greek Religion* (2nd ed. 1950), 76 and more recently, B. RUTKOWSKI, *The Cult Places of the Aegean* (1986), 87-89.

2 Karetsou's excavations at Mt. Jouktas were carried out mainly between 1974 and 1985. Reports of her work were published in the *PraktArchEt* beginning in 1974. A summary of her research between 1974 and 1979 appeared in "The Peak Sanctuary of Mt. Jouktas", in *Sanctuaries and Cults*, 137-153. For Peatfield's work, see "Rural Ritual in Bronze Age Crete: The Peak Sanctuary at Atsipades", *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 2 (1992), 59-87, with earlier references.

3 A. PEATFIELD, "Minoan Peak Sanctuaries: History and Society", *OpAth* 18 (1990), 117-123. See the more comprehensive discussion on the identifying features of peak sanctuaries in K. NOWICKI, "Some Remarks on the Pre- and Protopalatial Peak Sanctuary in Crete", *Aegean Archaeology* 1 (1994) in press. I am grateful to K. Nowicki for showing me his article in advance of publication.

4 Personal communication. I have travelled with Nowicki to several peak sanctuaries in East Crete and I can vouch for the validity of his observation.

5 See L.V. WATROUS *et al.*, "A Survey of the Western Mesara Plain in Crete: Preliminary Report of the 1984, 1986 and 1987 Field Seasons", *Hesperia* 62 (1993), 225.

6 C. LAVIOSA, "Saggi di Scavo ad Haghia Triada", *ASAtene* 31/32 (1969/70), 413-414, fig. 9 with earlier references.

at Mallia, the hillock of Profitis Elias just south of the town produced a figurine of a beetle, a find characteristic of peak sanctuaries⁷. At Gournia, the 1992-1993 survey under the direction of C. Davaras and myself has identified two concentrations of pebbles, pumice and Minoan sherds on the ridgetop to the south of the site (Pl. XLVib). These hilltop cult places do not fit Peatfield's definition of a peak sanctuary, but they clearly served as shrines for the one or more communities immediately adjacent to them. They might better be referred to as "hilltop shrines" rather than as peak sanctuaries. These hilltop shrines probably belonged to their nearby community, whereas peak sanctuaries were rural and served an entire region. Because many of these smaller, hilltop shrines are unexcavated and often produce a restricted range and number of votives, they have not been identified as shrines. Nevertheless, they are part of the same phenomenon that produced the larger peak sanctuaries.

Let us consider the first aspect of peak sanctuaries mentioned above. When were peak sanctuaries first established on Crete? The most reliable evidence for the foundation date of a peak sanctuary comes from Jouktas. Karetsou's excavations have made clear that the earliest certain signs of ritual on Jouktas date to MM IA⁸. The Early Minoan II remains on Jouktas differ from the MM IA finds in two ways: first, they comprise a small number of sherds as compared with the immense amounts of MM IA pottery at the site, and, second, they exhibit no ritual character. The MM IA levels, on the other hand, contain ash, animal bones, figurines, sheepbells, and many conical cups, which leaves little doubt as to their religious nature. Peatfield's excavation of Atsipades is said to have revealed a similar pattern: a small amount of EM I (?) material, no EM II and a major phase of MM IA-II cult activity. The EM sherds on these mountaintops should be no surprise since the prepalatial pattern of settlement throughout Crete includes the intensive use and habitation of mountainous areas. While it is possible that the Early Minoan pottery on these two peaks is cult-related, there is as yet no specific indication that this is the case. Thus it is fair to say that at present existing evidence favors a MM IA date, ca 2100-1900 B.C. for the foundation of peak sanctuaries on Crete.

What was the historical context for the establishment of these sanctuaries? In order to answer this question one must begin by looking at the Eastern Mediterranean as a whole. The end of the third millennium B.C. was a period marked by strife, destruction and social chaos in Egypt, Syria-Palestine, Anatolia and the Aegean. Evidence of international trade during this period is sparse. Following the stabilization of the Near East after ca 2000 B.C. the situation changes radically. Assyrian trading colonies were set up in Anatolia. Egyptian and Levantine trade became active along the eastern seaboard of the Mediterranean. This is especially obvious at Byblos where many Egyptian and Egyptianizing objects appear during the XII Dynasty. It is at this time, that is during MM IA, that Cretan sites first exhibit evidence of widespread trade with the East, and it seems likely that these signs of foreign contact in Crete are part of this wider Eastern Mediterranean pattern.

Imports into MM IA Crete from the east are many and varied⁹, including Egyptian scarabs, the ivory or bone from which seals were made, daggers, copper and probably tin

7 See RUTKOWSKI (*supra* n. 1), 98, no. 29a for bibliography.

8 I would like to thank the excavator, A. Karetsou, who discussed with me her finds from Jouktas and her interpretation of them. My description above follows her account.

9 See the recent catalogue by C. LAMBROU-PHILLIPSON, *Hellenorientalia* (1990), 51-54.

bronze ¹⁰. Cretan imitations of eastern objects found in MM IA contexts are signs of the same interconnections. This is especially obvious in Near Eastern and Egyptian details discernible in pottery and seal motifs, as well as the many Egyptianizing stone vases, types of jewelry, and amulets found in tombs ¹¹. Miniature stone and clay vases imitating Egyptian unguent vessels are common in Cretan cemeteries ¹². These artifacts can be safely dated as early as the MM IA period, but no earlier. For example, Weinstein has now assigned the crucial Egyptian scarabs in secure MM IA levels at Lebena to the early XII Dynasty, not earlier as had been previously supposed ¹³.

Thus we can say that Minoan peak sanctuaries were established during a period when Crete was involved in international trade. We must also remember that the foundation of these sanctuaries represents only one development among many that took place in MM IA. During this same period, Minoan settlements grew in size and were probably fortified, the first palaces were built, literacy was introduced, and conspicuous wealth appeared in many tombs. Before we can explain how peak sanctuaries began on Crete, we must be able to understand how their appearance relates to these other developments.

- 10 Copper, Platanos A dagger 9402; see N. GALE, "The Provenance of Metals for Early Bronze Age Crete", in *Πεπραγμένα τοῦ ΣΤ Διεθνoῦς Κρητολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου*, Chania 1986 (1990), 313. Daggers, see K. BRANIGAN, "Byblite Daggers in Cyprus and Crete", *AJA* 70 (1966), 115-27 and S. DIETZ, "Aegean and Near Eastern Metal Daggers in Early and Middle Bronze Age Greece", *ActaArch* 42 (1971), 1-22. Tin bronze, see Z. STOS-GALE and C. MACDONALD, "Sources of Metals and Trade in the Bronze Age Aegean", in *Bronze Age Trade*, 267. The dating of Egyptian scarabs in Crete is central to the problem of Cretan-Egyptian contacts, so a list (based on P. YULE, *BSA* 78 [1983], 359-367) of scarabs follows:

Scarabs in certain early contexts (EM-MM II) in Crete:

Arkanes	CMS II1, 395	"EM III-MM IA" probably MM IA.
Lebena	CMS II1, 180	"EM II-MM IA" but now dated to the XII Dynasty by Weinstein, so = late MM IA.
Lebena	CMS II1, 201	"EM I" but dated to the XII Dynasty by Weinstein, so = MM IA.
Lebena	CMS II1, 204	"MM IA" but dated to the XII Dynasty by Weinstein, so = late MM IA.
Gournes	CMS II1, 405	"MM IA-B" but XII Dynasty, so = late MM IA-B.
Marathokephalon	CMS II1, 238	"MM IA-B".
Platanos B	CMS II1, 267	"MM IA-B" but XII Dynasty, so = late MM IA-B.
Platanos B	CMS II1, 283	"MM IA-B" but XII Dynasty, so = late MM IA-B.
Agia Triada A	CMS II1, 95	"EM-MM II" but early XII Dynasty, so = MM IA-II.
Agios Onouphrios	CMS II1, 119	"EM-LM I" but XII Dynasty, so = MM IA-LM I.
Tsoutsouros	CMS IV2, 98	"MM I".
Knossos	CMS II2, 34	"MM II".
Trapeza Cave	CMS II1, 434	Unstratified.

Dates for Egyptian scarabs in Crete:

MM IA: 4; MM IA-B: 5; MM IA-II: 1; MM IB-II: 0; MM II: 1.

- 11 Both Pini and Yule have commented on the high proportion of Egyptian details in seals of this period. I. Pini ("Ein Beitrag zur chronologischen Ordnung der frühkretischen Siegel", in *Πεπραγμένα τοῦ Δ Διεθνoῦς Κρητολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου* [1981], 430) observes how the lions' manes and hair imitate Egyptian types. See also P. YULE, *Early Cretan Seals: A Study of Chronology* (1980), 209. Nearly all 60 seals of the EM III-MM I Parading Lions/Spiral Group are said to be ivory, perhaps hippo tusk imported from the east (O. KRZYSZKOWSKA, "Ivory in the Aegean Bronze Age: Elephant Tusk or Hippopotamus Ivory?", *BSA* 83 [1988], 229).
- 12 Many of these vases are gathered and discussed in L.V. WATROUS, "Annual Review of Aegean Prehistory III: Crete from Earliest Prehistory through the Protopalatial Period", *AJA* 98 (1994) in press.
- 13 I thank J. Weinstein for this information.

The tangible effects of international trade can be seen most clearly in the amount and variety of eastern artifacts found in Cretan tombs beginning in the MM IA period. Clay conical objects at Koumasa and Platanos probably represent votive loaves of bread, as in Egypt. Stone cosmetic palettes at Koumasa, Porti and Drakones imitate the Egyptian type ¹⁴. In the Early Bronze Age, virtually all figurines were female and evidence for cult seems to have been exclusively funerary and familial in context. Generally, the earlier Koumasa type of figurine is replaced by a number of new versions, Branigan's Agia Triada, Mallia, Trapeza, Siva, and Giophrakia types, the last of which is based on Egyptian models (Pl. XLVII) ¹⁵. This probably happened during MM IA when other forms of material culture in Crete exhibit such marked regionalism. Late prepalatial seals also exhibit a diverse array of eastern shapes and motifs (Pl. XLVIII). Shapes include: ape, monkey and double monkey, lion, double lion (Egyptian *aker* motif), duck with turned back head, bee, scorpion and hedgehog. Motifs include the goddess Taweret, lions, scorpions and apes. The two major seal groups of this period, the Parading Lions/Spiral Group and the Border/Leaf Group exhibit Egyptian influence in their shapes, motifs and material ¹⁶. Amulets of the MM IA-MM II period also feature Egyptian shapes, including a frog, foot, bee, heart, and a claw (Pl. XLVIII) ¹⁷. Pl. XLVII and XLVIII illustrate the dynamic intellectual growth that took place in MM I Crete at the same time when the peak sanctuaries were established on Crete. The foundation of these shrines, then, was part of a larger pattern of cultural ferment in MM I Crete.

While many new amulets and figurine types appear in MM IA-II Crete, we cannot be certain what religious ideas they represent. It is only in Egypt where written accounts describe cults and deities, that we can securely identify the specific deities or powers associated with these amulets.

Let us look at the Egyptian significance of some of the types of amulets found in MM IA-II Crete:

Scarab beetle: Khepera, a god of creation, identified with Ra; a popular symbol of resurrection and fertility. In Egypt, the scarab amulet represented Khepera, the god of creation. As such it was worn for protection and placed on the dead to affect resurrection ¹⁸.

14 Stone palettes, see S. XANTHOUDIDES, *The Vaulted Tombs of Mesara* (1924), pls. 21b, 31, 37 and 43. Clay conical objects at Koumasa and Platanos (*Ibid.*, pls. 29a and 51b). These, however, are not the same shape as votive phalloi (cf. PEATFIELD [*supra* n. 2], 72, fig. 23) and probably represent votive loaves of bread, as in Egypt (cf. A. WILKINSON, *Reading Egyptian Art* [1992], 206-207 and N. de GARIS DAVIS, *Five Theban Tombs* [1913], pl. 38, lower right, from the XII Dynasty). Ann Foster drew my attention to this latter reference.

15 See K. BRANIGAN, "Cycladic Figurines and their Derivatives in Crete", *BSA* 66 (1977), 57-78. For the Egyptian parallels of Branigan's Giophrakia type, see *PM* I, 83-84 and fig. 52.

16 See note 11 above.

17 Cretan amulets in the shape of a frog (XANTHOUDIDES [*supra* n. 14], pl. 4: 386), foot (*Ibid.*, pls. 26, 58), bee (*Ibid.*, 57: 487), heart (*Ibid.*, pl. 57: 488), claw (*Ibid.*, pl. 57: 489) are either MM IA or MM IB-II. The Egyptian parallels for these forms are given in the footnotes below. Some examples of Egyptianizing motifs in Crete are: *CMS* I, 423 (cat); *CMS* III, 20 (ape), 25 (double lions), 130 (lion), 248 (scorpion), 296 (hoof), 283 (Taweret), 357 (hedgehog), 379 (fly), 391 (sistrum and foot); *CMS* II2, 77 (hippo); *CMS* II5, 20 (sphinx), 315 (bee), 317 (griffin), 268 (bull as on the Narmer palette), 322 (Taweret); *CMS* IV, 7D (recumbant lion), 20D (duck with folded back head), and 32D (crocodile).

18 A. MERCATANTE, *Who's Who in Egyptian Mythology* (1978), 137; W. BUDGE, *Amulets and Talismans* (Reprint 1961), 83.

Standing Hippopotamus: Taweret, goddess of protection in childbirth¹⁹.

Double lion: Aker (also depicted on jewelry). This lion god guarded the gate through which the sun(god) rose and set²⁰.

Scorpion: Serqet, goddess associated with the maternal deity Isis and thus not harmful to women²¹.

Recumbant Lion: Protective sentinel and solar animal, associated with Ra and Horus²².

Fly: Amuletic and jewelry form from Middle Kingdom in Egypt²³.

Claw: Used as an amulet because of its protective power²⁴.

Sistrum: Musical instrument associated with the great maternal goddess Hathor. The sound of the sistrum was regarded as protective and symbolic of divine blessing²⁵.

Frog: Sacred to Heket, the goddess of birth and fertility²⁶.

Cat: Animal of Bast, the goddess who protected women during pregnancy and men from disease²⁷.

Snake: Identified with Buto, goddess protector of Lower Egypt. Buto protected Isis from the evil Set during her childbirth²⁸.

Bee: Bit, the emblem of Lower Egypt. Associated with the maternal and warlike goddess Neith. Patron of the city of Sais²⁹.

Ox foreleg/Hoof: Khepresh, symbol of royal and divine strength³⁰.

Foot: Popular amulet in Egypt, believed to protect or represent the strength of the feet³¹.

Motifs associated with Egyptian deities and powers continue to appear on Minoan seals during the MM IB-II period, including: the sphinx, a protective deity connected with the sun and the king³², and the crocodile, linked with the Fayum god Sobek³³, and the hippopotamus, associated with the maternal goddesses Isis, Hathor and Nut³⁴.

The motifs cited above are not a representative sample of Egyptian religious or amuletic imagery. Missing from the Cretan group are royal, funerary and many divine attributes (*e.g.* *djed* column of Osiris, Ma'at feather, Horus eye). The Egyptianizing Minoan motifs cluster to a great extent around animals and magical objects which probably indicates that they were thought of as either possessing protection/strength or as help with maternity/childbirth.

19 WILKINSON (*supra* n. 14), 71; J. BOURRIAU, *Pharaohs and Mortals: Egyptian Art in the Middle Kingdom* (1988), 119. See also J. WEINGARTEN, *The Transformation of the Egyptian Taweret into the Minoan Genius* (1991).

20 WILKINSON (*supra* n. 14), 134-135.

21 MERCATANTE (*supra* n. 18), 138.

22 BOURRIAU (*supra* n. 19), 116-117; WILKINSON (*supra* n. 14), 69.

23 See C. ALDRED, *Jewels of the Pharaohs* (1971), 187 and pl. 29.

24 BOURRIAU (*supra* n. 19), 149.

25 WILKINSON (*supra* n. 14), 213; MERCATANTE (*supra* n. 18), 53-55.

26 MERCATANTE (*supra* n. 18), 47; WILKINSON (*supra* n. 14), 104.

27 MERCATANTE (*supra* n. 18), 20 and 29; WILKINSON (*supra* n. 19), 23.

28 MERCATANTE (*supra* n. 18), 25; WILKINSON (*supra* n. 19), 109.

29 WILKINSON (*supra* n. 14), 115; ALDRED (*supra* n. 23).

30 WILKINSON (*supra* n. 14), 75.

31 See K. BRANIGAN, "Minoan Foot Amulets and their Near Eastern Counterparts", *SMEA* 11 (1970), 7-23 which must be read with I. PINI, "Weitere Bemerkung zu den Minoischen Fußamuletten", *SMEA* 15 (1972), 179-188.

32 MERCATANTE (*supra* n. 18), 169.

33 WILKINSON (*supra* n. 14), 105; BOURRIAU (*supra* n. 19), 118.

34 WILKINSON (*supra* n. 14), 71; BOURRIAU (*supra* n. 19), 119-120.

With the exception of the *kheper*, the scarab beetle, these images did not normally appear as votive dedications at Minoan peak sanctuaries but were primarily private religious possessions. This strengthens the hypothesis that these objects were amuletic in nature and represent a belief in protective forces or deities, a form of popular religion. These objects then do not bear directly on peak sanctuaries, but they do establish the fact that in the early MBA at least one aspect of Minoan religion was actually changing under foreign influence.

If such changes were taking place in MM I funerary cult, one must ask whether similar influences are not discernible at protopalatial peak sanctuaries. The answer is that evidence for paraphernalia of non-Minoan origin on peak sanctuaries is much more restricted than in Minoan funerary cult. The only votives with foreign prototypes are model beetles and horns of consecration; the rest of the cult material on peak sanctuaries looks local in inspiration. Consequently I do not believe that peak sanctuary cult was introduced from the east, but I do think that the concept on which these Minoan shrines were based, that is, a belief that the gods live on mountains and can be approached there, is in origin an eastern concept. In other words, the idea responsible for the establishment of Minoan peak sanctuaries may have been the result of stimulus diffusion from the east. Whether the deities worshipped on peak sanctuaries were completely local or were partly the product of eastern stimulus cannot be decided on present evidence. There are, however, two facts which suggest that the cult on peak sanctuaries as it occurs in the Middle Minoan period may actually owe something to foreign contact. The first is the lack of Early Minoan precedents for the overwhelming mass of peak sanctuary votives, and the second is the absence of any clear evolution in the Early Minoan period for the peak sanctuaries themselves.

Let us turn now to the votive objects found on peak sanctuaries, since their iconography may help in interpreting the nature of the cult there. Excavated peak sanctuaries usually contain the following objects: figurines of cattle, sheep, goats, clay balls, models of limbs/torsos, clay figurines of horned beetles, weasels, birds, horns of consecration, figurines of men and women and objects of a sexual nature, such as phalloi and figurines of copulating humans and animals. One must distinguish between conventional sacrificial simulacra (*i.e.* figurines of cattle, sheep, goat) and votives, the imagery of which illustrates religious beliefs. In some cases, separating the two types may be difficult. Bird figurines might represent sacrificed game, or may be divine motifs or attributes as in later Minoan cult³⁵.

We can distinguish six main types of votives on peak sanctuaries that may illustrate specific religious beliefs:

1. The figurines of male and female worshippers. Details in the male figurines, their youthful scalplocks³⁶, their near nudity, slim-waistedness and belted daggers, indicate that these do not represent the general male Minoan population, but specifically young men, of military age and bearing, like ephebes of the classical era. The abbreviated loincloths of these figures may have had a special ritual significance and may not have been typical of Middle Minoan male dress, as has usually been assumed. We cannot be sure on this point because no other class of protopalatial evidence exists. Female

35 NILSSON (*supra* n. 1), 330-340; G. GESELL, *Town, Palace and House Cult in Minoan Crete* (1985), 53.

36 *E.g.* PEATFIELD (*supra* n. 2), 73, fig. 21. See B. MERTZ, *Red Hand, Black Hand* (1966), 47-48 for the similar Egyptian practice.

figurines on the other hand wear long, formal dress and elaborate hairstyles suggestive of ceremony ³⁷.

2. Models of diseased limbs/torsos. These clearly refer to a healing aspect of the cult ³⁸.

3. Beetles. They do not belong to the class of domestic or hunted animals represented in figurines. As an amuletic animal (scarab), the beetle may be better explained symbolically. The gold beetle from Jouktas also points to this conclusion ³⁹. In its amuletic form the beetle had a wide currency in Egypt and Syria-Palestine. In Egypt the beetle *kheper* was associated with the creative and cyclical power of the sun, and the fertility brought by the annual inundation of the Nile and with resurrection.

4. Horns of consecration. The horns of consecration first occur in Crete on peak sanctuaries, at Jouktas, Pyrgos, Petsophas, Vrysinas, and Piskokephalo. By MM II the object/motif appears on altars and on architectural structures and thus is taken to denote the sacredness of its setting ⁴⁰. Earlier researchers connected the Minoan object with the identical Egyptian hieroglyph, *djew* ⁴¹. This hieroglyphic sign for "mountain" had in Egypt a cosmic sense, representing the twin mountains at either edge of the world over which the sun rose and set. Egyptian kings often took a name that included *kheper* and *ra* because of their solar meanings. Thus Egyptian representations often depict the sun (e.g., as *kheper*, the beetle) between the twin peaks of the symbol ⁴².

5. Baked clay balls. These may be interpreted as sling bullets, as Myres originally suggested in 1903 ⁴³. If this is the case, then they are another indication of a military aspect to the cult.

6. Clay representations of what may be copulating figures, women in childbirth and phalloi surely refer to a fertility or regenerative aspect of the peak sanctuary cult. The model of female genitals from Petsophas points to the same concern ⁴⁴.

These votives suggest that peak sanctuary cult may have included several different ideas and/or ceremonies associated with the following: young men of military age, elaborately attired women, sexual fertility, human healing, and perhaps solar or cosmic concepts. If correctly interpreted, the functional diversity of these votives points not to a single cult or deity, but rather to several ceremonies aimed at different divinities.

In what follows I will argue that the ceremonies on peak sanctuaries were dedicated first and foremost to a Zeus-like deity, and probably to his wife, as well as to at least one other goddess. If so, the minimum number of deities worshipped on peak sanctuaries would be 2 or 3, and was probably greater. The importance of individual deities may well

37 See B. RUTKOWSKI, *Petsophas* (1991), 44-47 and pls. 27-40.

38 RUTKOWSKI (*supra* n. 37), pls. 42-46.

39 RUTKOWSKI (*supra* n. 37), 112-113 and pl. 50. Jouktas beetle, A. KARETSOU, *PraktArchEt* 1978, pl. 171a.

40 The example from Mochlos dated to EM I by Seager was found without context on the surface along with MM I-II finds: R. SEAGER, *Explorations on the Island of Mochlos* (1912), fig. 48; see also C. DAVARAS, "Σύνθετα ιερά κέρατα από τὸ Ἱερό Κορυφῆς τοῦ Πετσοφά", in *Πεπραγμένα τοῦ Διεθνoῦς Κρητολογικοῦ Συνεδρίου* (1981), 88-93 and GESELL (*supra* n. 35), 62.

41 NILSSON (*supra* n. 1), 187-189.

42 See WILKINSON (*supra* n. 14), 132-135.

43 J. MYRES, "Excavations at Palaikastro. II", *BSA* 9 (1902/3), 382. See RUTKOWSKI (*supra* n. 37), pl. 51. For sling bullets, see M. KORFMANN, *Schleuder und Bogen in Südwestasien* (1972). Possible Minoan sling bullets have been identified at Myrtos (P. WARREN, *Myrtos* [1972], 215 and 228) and at Pseira (personal communication from P. Betancourt).

44 Copulating figurine, on display in the Herakleion Museum; women in childbirth, *PraktArchEt* 1978, pl. 170 a. Genitals: male, PEATFIELD (*supra* n. 2), 75, fig. 23; female, RUTKOWSKI (*supra* n. 37), pl. 44.

have varied from locale to locale on Crete. The differences between the finds on Jouktas and Atsipades certainly might be interpreted in this way. At Atsipades, for example, hundreds of clay phalloi were found; they are rare at Jouktas and Petsophas. Small animal figurines and votive limbs are numerous at Jouktas and Petsophas, but are said to be rare at Atsipades. This regional variation may be similar to the relative prominence of certain deities among different classical city-states.

One method that may help us to understand what ceremonies took place on peak sanctuaries is to look at later, similarly-oriented cult. In attempting to use classical sources to learn about Minoan cult practice, one must acknowledge a number of obstacles. A chronological and cultural gulf lies between the Minoan and the Dorian periods on Crete. In addition, the development of religion is notoriously complex and difficult to reconstruct. Nevertheless, the effort at speculation is worthwhile because the similarity of cult evidence from Minoan and Dorian shrines (such as at Kato Syme) suggests that there was some continuity between Minoan and Dorian Crete, especially in the area of cult.

The evidence for associating the Zeus of classical Crete with a similar predecessor on Minoan peak sanctuaries is indirect but fairly strong. In classical Crete, mountaintops were sacred to the god Zeus, *e.g.* on Jouktas, Ida, Keratas (near Viannos), Dicte, and Asterousias⁴⁵. This deity whose Indo-European name is thought to mean "the Bright One", was in origin a sky god who controlled the weather, storms (thunder and lightning) and rain. According to tradition, Zeus was born from Kronos (Sky) and Rhea (Earth) on a mountain in Crete. He spent his youth there and was married there⁴⁶. The Cretan Zeus was also believed to have died and been buried on a mountaintop (on Ida, Dicte and Jouktas). Cook, who studied the cult of Zeus most thoroughly, suggested that the Greek Zeus had replaced a similar Minoan deity, known as Kronos in later Greek sources⁴⁷.

Studies of the Cretan Zeus have discerned two broad aspects to his non urban cult, one dealing with natural phenomena and the other with social order⁴⁸. In his first capacity, Zeus was a god of the sky (*Zeus Asterios*). As *Zeus Epopsios* he looked down on and watched humanity. As *Zeus Brontaios* (and perhaps *Welchanos*), he was also the god of thunder and lightning and as *Zeus Epirnytiōs*, the source of fertility-producing rain.

In his second capacity, Zeus was responsible for overseeing the upbringing of young men in Dorian society. Greek myths explain this responsibility by telling the story of how Zeus himself grew to manhood on a mountain. Several of Zeus' epithets (*Dicte*, *Arbios*) refer to his youth. Practically, this meant that in Dorian Crete the initiation of young men into manhood was carried out under the care of Zeus *Hetaireios*. Upon reaching military age, young men left behind their adolescent status as members of a "herd" (*agela*) and joined an adult tribe (*hetaireia*, the equivalent of the Athenian phratry). In Dorian society, this took place at the festival called *Apellai*. At this point the young men cast aside their boys' clothes and hairlock and took up warriors' garb. They then entered a period of military training that consisted of camping out and hunting in the mountains. The Cretan Zeus was also concerned with warriors and war spoils as his epithets (*Zeus Makaneus* and *Skylios*) make clear.

45 A.B. COOK, *Zeus* III (1925), 117-186; *Zeus* II2 (1925), 868-987; H. VERBRUGGEN, *Le Zeus crétois* (1981).

46 A.B. COOK, *Zeus* III (1925), 155, collects the many myths of Zeus' "marriage" to female deities on the mountaintops of Greece.

47 A.B. COOK, *Zeus* II2 (1925), 554-558.

48 R. WILLETTS, *Cretan Cults and Festivals* (1962), 231-251; VERBRUGGEN (*supra* n. 45).

At Phaistos the ceremony of casting aside of boys' clothes was called the *Ekdysia* ⁴⁹. According to Strabo (10. 482) and the Gortyn Law Code, the Phaistian and Gortynian young men who graduated from "herds" were at this point obliged to marry as a group, in a public ceremony ⁵⁰. We do not know where this ceremony took place. According to Greek myth, however, the marriage of the gods Zeus and Hera was said to have originally taken place on a mountaintop ⁵¹. In classical Greek society, myths of the gods often function not as literal reflections of societal practice but as prototypes from an earlier age that explain contemporary custom. If this is so, then the Dorian marriage ceremony, whatever form it actually took, may have been descended from a Minoan ceremony that involved mountaintop cult.

In the classical Greek world, the maturation of boys and girls was an important event marked by elaborate ritual ⁵². When boys reached the age of puberty, they were formally introduced to their kinship group. Among the Ionian Greeks, the boy was introduced during the festival of the *Apatouria*. The boy's transition to adolescence was marked by his offering of a lock of hair (*koureion*). Shortly thereafter the boy would begin his two year service as an ephebe. Athenian ephebes swore an oath to protect the crops and boundary stones of Attica and were sent out to man the border forts. During the equivalent Spartan phase (*krypteia*) of a young man's training the youths camped out in the mountains and hunted. In both societies, the final stage of a boy's transition was reached when he returned from his training and married. At the ceremony of the *Gamelia* (during the *Apatouria*) he then entered his phratry as a full fledged member.

The equivalent rite for girls in the classical world prepared them for the duties of marriage. As Vernant has noted, in Greek society, marriage was for a girl what war was for a boy ⁵³. The best known Athenian rite of this type, the *arkteia*, took place at the sanctuary of Artemis *Brauronia* where girls dedicated their toys (including their dolls), and women left a wide range of offerings related to marriage, domestic activities and childbirth ⁵⁴. Classical Maenadic ritual involved women travelling to the mountains where animals were sacrificed and eaten amidst music and dancing. Maenadism may originally have been a pre-matrimonial ceremony, as several mythic maenads married after the rite ⁵⁵.

Certain aspects of the Minoan peak sanctuary cult find obvious parallels in classical religion and thus may represent early forms of the later cult. The siting of the peak sanctuaries points to a concept similar to that of Zeus *Epopsios*, the overseer of humanity. Minoan votives suggestive of a cosmic ruler and solar deity responsible for natural phenomena also find parallels in the classical figure of Zeus. Minoan kernoi (linked to the offerings of first fruits in later religion), miniature offering vessels and tables and models of fruit and floral branches, all found on peak sanctuaries, would be appropriate as dedications for agricultural fertility, another aspect of Zeus the classical rain god. Minoan male figurines of armed youths (with hairlocks) as well as model weapons depict crucial features also found in classical male initiation rites; thus they could have been dedications

49 R. WILLETTS, *Aristocratic Society in Ancient Crete* (1955), 120-123.

50 See WILLETTS (*supra* n. 48), 112 and 176.

51 A.B. COOK, *Zeus* III (1925), 154-157.

52 See S. COLE, "The Social Function of Rituals of Maturation: the Koureion and the Arkteia", *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 55 (1984), 233-244. I would like to thank Susan Cole for showing me this reference.

53 Cited by P. VIDAL-NAQUET, *The Black Hunter* (1986), 146.

54 COLE (*supra* n. 52), 238-244.

55 J. BREMMER, "Greek Maenadism Reconsidered", *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 55 (1984), 267-286.

of young Minoan males in connection with military training. Ellen Davis' examination of the crocus-gathering fresco in Xeste 3 at Thera led her to suggest that girls shed their scalplocks at puberty and when married wore their hair long and wrapped in cloth⁵⁶. The most common type of female figurine on Minoan peak sanctuaries depicts similarly dressed women and might therefore be a representation of a formally dressed bride, dedicated by a young woman at her marriage. The visitation of mountain tops by young women may have echoes in the cult of classical maenadism. If the cult on peak sanctuaries was concerned with male and female maturation, the presence of votives concerned with sexual fertility would also not be surprising.

Not all peak sanctuary votives, however, can be explained in the terms outlined above. On the basis of the sexual votives, one could just as easily posit the existence of cult aimed at a goddess of marriage, like the later Hera, or a goddess of childbirth, like the Cretan goddess Eileutheia, who received similar votives during the Iron Age. In addition, seashells and clay figurines of birds found on peak sanctuaries are reasonably linked with "the goddess with the upraised arms" whose shrine was located in the Minoan palaces. The relationship between this divinity and the other deities mentioned above is unknown. Finally, the votives connected with healing may or may not indicate the worship of yet another divinity on peak sanctuaries. Since such a diversity of divine functions could rarely be found in a single Near Eastern or Egyptian deity, the variety of concerns discernible in the peak sanctuary votives is probably evidence of worship of not one divinity, as Evans thought, but of several.

Thanks largely to recent research, we are now in a better position to understand peak sanctuary cult than we were 20 years ago. The newly published data suggests that this cult was complex, polytheistic and, to a certain extent, regionally diverse. In other words, these three features, which we usually associate with the religion of the Linear B tablets and the classical *polis*, were probably already present in the cult of Middle Minoan peak sanctuaries on Crete.

L. Vance WATROUS

56 E. DAVIS, "Youth and Age in the Thera Frescoes", *AJA* 90 (1986), 399-406.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Pl. XLVIa View of hill of Ephendi Christou (left) and Phaistos (right) from the south.
Pl. XLVIb View of Gournia from the East. Hilltop shrine is located on ridge to the left of the site.
Pl. XLVII Religious Objects from Minoan Settlements and Tombs: Egyptianizing Amulets/Seals and Egyptian and Minoan Scarabs.
Pl. XLVIII Religious Objects from Minoan Settlements and Tombs: Pendants, Figurines, Rhyta and Statuettes.



a



b

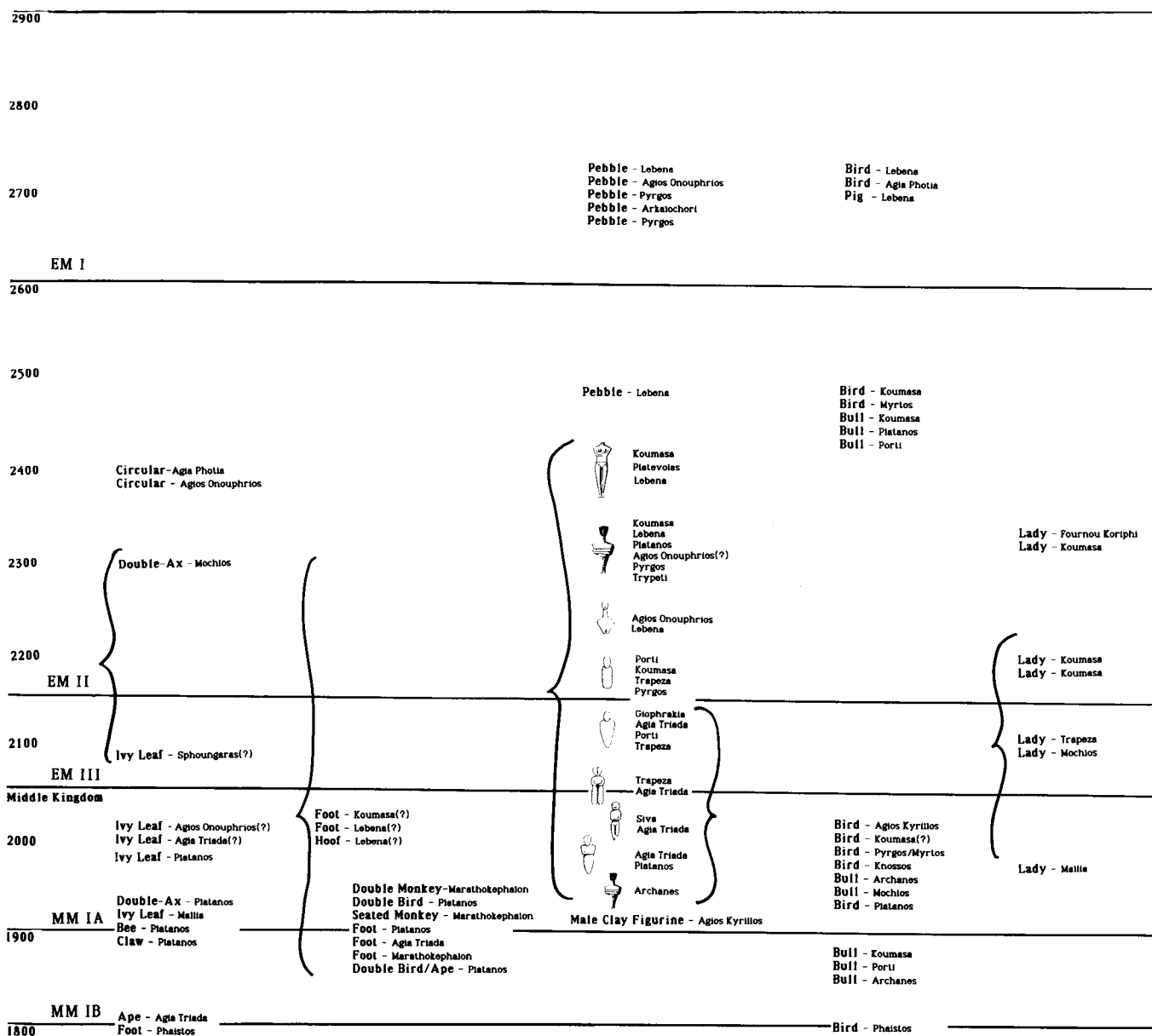
RELIGIOUS OBJECTS FROM SETTLEMENTS AND TOMBS

PENDANTS

FIGURINES

RHYTA

STATUETTES



RELIGIOUS OBJECTS FROM SETTLEMENTS AND TOMBS

	EGYPTIANIZING REPRESENTATIONS ON AMULETS/SEALS	EGYPTIANIZING SHAPES OF AMULETS/SEALS	EGYPTIAN SCARABS	MINOAN SCARABS
2600				
2500				
2400				
2300				
2200				
EM II				
2100				
EM III				
Middle Kingdom	Leg - Archanes Sistrum - Archanes Lion/Scorpion - Piatanos	Double Monkeys - Kaloi Limenes Ape - Agia Triada Duck - Kaloi Limenes Fly - Archanes	Scarab - Archanes Scarab - Lebena Scarab - Lebena Scarab - Marathokephalon	
2000	Ape - Piatanos Scorpion - Piatanos Scorpion - Marathokephalon Lion - Marathokephalon			
MM IA		Hedgehog - Porti Lion - Kaloi Limenes Lion - Kalathiana Monkey - Kaloi Limenes	Scarab - Lebena Scarab - Agia Triada Scarab - Piatanos Scarab - Piatanos Scarab - Piatanos Scarab - Gournes Scarab - Agios Onouphrios Scarab - Tsoutsouros	Scarab - Archanes Scarab - Lebena Scarab - Lebena Scarab - Aspri Petra Scarab - Antiskari Scarab - Kaloi Limenes Scarab - Kaloi Limenes Scarab - Koumasa Scarab - Gournes Scarab - Agios Onouphrios Scarab - Agios Onouphrios Scarab - Piatanos Scarab - Knossos Scarab - Mallia
1900	Tuart - Piatanos			
MM IB	Scorpion - Piatanos	Hoof - Kamilar Double Lion - Agia Triada		
1800	Hippo - Mallia Crocodile - Tsoutsouros Sphinx - Knossos Griffin - Phaistos Monkey - Phaistos Bee - Phaistos Scorpion - Mallia Cat - Mallia	Hoof - Phaistos Hoof - Phaistos	Scarab - Knossos Scarab - Tsoutsouros	Scarab - Mallia
MM II				