THE ICONOGRAPHY AND USE OF MINOAN VERSUS MYCENAEAN WALL PAINTINGS

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ABSTRACT

Sarah L. Hilker: The Iconography and Use of Minoan versus Mycenaean Wall Paintings
(Under the direction of Donald Haggis)

Wall painting is an important aspect of Middle to Late Bronze Age art in the Aegean. The Mycenaean frescoes on the mainland are typically portrayed as a decadent form of art, declined in quality from their Minoan predecessors. Furthermore, Mycenaeans are often thought to have misunderstood Minoan motifs. In this thesis, following description and analysis of the Minoan frescoes from Knossos and Akrotiri, and the Mycenaean frescoes from Pylos and Mycenae, I argue that Mycenaean elites consciously made Minoan art their own. The technology and iconography of wall painting was adapted for use within their own culture and social structure. Wall paintings are also situated within broader discourses on the function of palaces and the transfer of culture.
To my Grandfather, who always encouraged the pursuit of learning.
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<td>LBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>LC</td>
<td>Late Cycladic</td>
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<td>LH</td>
<td>Late Helladic</td>
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<tr>
<td>LM</td>
<td>Late Minoan</td>
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<td>MM</td>
<td>Middle Minoan</td>
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### Journal and Book Abbreviations

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<td>AA</td>
<td>Archäologischer Anzeiger</td>
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<tr>
<td>AJA</td>
<td>American Journal of Archaeology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSA</td>
<td>The Annual of the British School at Athens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>Corpus der minoischen und mykenischen Siegel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Classical Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>JHS</td>
<td>The Journal of Hellenic Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCPS</td>
<td>Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td>Palace of Minos (Evans 1921-1935).</td>
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<tr>
<td>ProcBritAc</td>
<td>Proceedings of the British Academy</td>
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<td>Marinatos, S. 1999</td>
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I. INTRODUCTION

One of the elite features of many Aegean palace sites was the elaborate frescoes decorating the walls, which trace their roots to the Pre-palatial period on Crete. Wall paintings, however, were not only confined to the “palace,” but existed in other places, such as the houses or villas around Knossos. Figural decoration is often thought by scholars to give us some insight into the society where it was used. Thus, differences in figural decoration may convey differences in societal values, whether or not they show any differences in the reality of conditions.

Discussion of frescoes typically centers around Minoan paintings, since the technique was Minoan, and the early frescoes represented the emergence of large scale figurative decoration to the Aegean, as well as a certain degree of naturalism and an emphasis on nature.\(^1\) Compared to these, Mycenaean paintings are often more neglected and sometimes seen as simply derivative and involving a misunderstanding of Minoan motifs and techniques. The aim of this paper is not only to argue against this portrayal, but to examine the ways in which wall paintings were used and how Mycenaean frescoes co-opted and modified Minoan motifs.

Due to the constraints of this paper, a full analysis of all known Bronze Age wall paintings is not possible. Instead, I will focus on some of the best preserved and published sites: Knossos, Pylos, and Mycenae (see map, fig. 1). Akrotiri will also be included, on account of its preservation and the fact that the site is the basis for many interpretations of Minoan fresco

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\(^1\) Another common thread of discussion is the relationship between Minoan and Near Eastern art.
painting. Even within the limited range of sites, an exhaustive study of fresco fragments is not possible. Thus, the focus will be on the major elements of the painting programs. Fragments with good contexts will be privileged over those lacking context and those from dump sites. Other frescos and fragments are known from: Amnisos, Archanes, Ayia Triada, Chania, Epano Zakros, Kommos, Palaikastro, Pseira, and Tylissos, all on Crete; Phylakopi on Melos; Aiya Irini on Keos; Trianda on Rhodes; the palace of Yarim-Lim at Alalakh, the Canaanite palace at Tell Kabri; Royal Palace at Qatna in Syria; Tell el-Dab’a (ancient Avaris), Egypt; Tiryns, Argos, Nichoria, Sparta, Zygouries, Gla, Prosymna, Kokla, and Thebes. Across all sites, the majority of the frescoes date from the end of the Middle Bronze Age through much of the Late Bronze Age. For convenience and accuracy, relative rather than absolute dating will be used in most cases. Since Crete and the Greek mainland have slightly different systems of relative dating, a comparison of these is provided in fig. 2.

**History of Research**

There are very few large studies concerning Aegean Wall Painting. The primary publications for the megaron at Mycenae are nearly a century old and poorly illustrated. Evans’ publication of Knossos has the frescoes interspersed throughout, but it is difficult to navigate and nearly as outdated at the publication of the megaron frescoes at Mycenae. Lang’s catalogue and

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2 See Chapin (2012) for bibliography.

3 Absolute dating in the Aegean falls into two main sets of chronology, high and low, which are also shown in fig. 3. Excavation dates are C.E. All other dates are B.C.E.

4 Lamb 1921-1923; Rodenwaldt 1921.

5 PM I-IV.
publication of the fragments from Pylos is certainly a great asset to Mycenaean studies. Cameron’s dissertation compiled the frescoes at Knossos and dealt with the entire site, where he identified various “schools” of painters, but it is also difficult to navigate. The frescoes from Akrotiri are the most recently excavated and best published of those in this study. Immerwahr produced the first comprehensive study of Aegean painting in 1990, which includes a substantial catalogue of the major (and many minor) fragments known at the time from across the Aegean, but even this is now outdated. Although her work touches upon issues of function and interpretation of frescoes, I, like Barber, do not find it wholly satisfying. Since Immerwahr’s seminal book, the majority of work has been confined to individual papers or collections of papers, and a few specialized topical studies.

Problems of the Study

Several difficulties ought to be noted. As with much of Aegean archaeology, the vast majority of wall paintings are likely to come from a relatively short time period preceding destruction, since they would not have retained their appearance indefinitely. That is not to say, however, that they could not have been touched up in order to remain on the walls for a longer period of time. The rebuilding of sites following destruction obviously places the emphasis on

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6 Lang 1969.
7 Cameron 1976a-c.
8 E.g. Thera I-VII; Doumas 1992.
9 Immerwahr 1990.
10 Barber 1991.
11 Some of the most notable collections are Eikon: Aegean Bronze Age Iconography (Laffineur and Crowley 1992); Xapiç: essays in honor of Sara A. Immerwahr (Chapin 2004a); and Aegean Wall Painting (Morgan 2005a).
the later periods, especially at Knossos, although there are some remains of earlier wall paintings for which we do not have secure context, and there were likely many others that have not been preserved. Even for the final phase of sites, what we do have is rather fragmentary, albeit less so at Akrotiri. Furthermore, we often have to deal with reconstructions. Although most reconstructions are now only done on paper or digitally, many of those at Knossos incorporate the original fragments, so re-analysis is especially difficult.

Additionally, dating of the frescoes often proves problematic. Most of the dating is based on style and composition, which is believed to follow the general trend of naturalism fading to abstraction over time, and a declining quality of painting. Even given a clear destruction level and in situ remains, we only really have a terminus ante quem. Furthermore, even if the fresco was still on the wall at the time of destruction, archaeological evidence does not tell us exactly when it was originally painted. Thus, there are cases in which frescoes are stylistically dated earlier than the date of associated material. Unless otherwise noted, I have accepted the dates proposed by Immerwahr. Although I argue against the view that later (Mycenaean) painting is inferior, this is not the place to present a style-based argument, especially without a thorough in-person examination of the extant fragments.

There are also several issues related to the actual interpretation of the images. For one, both Minoan and Mycenaean wall paintings are thought to generally follow Egyptian painting conventions regarding gender, where red skin denotes males and white skin denotes females. There are several frescoes where the strict adherence to color conventions raises more questions than answers (e.g. see Chapter II for the ‘Priest-King’ Fresco and the Taureador Paintings). Alberti argues that figures can only be clearly identified as female when breasts are depicted.
The converse, that a lack of breasts indicates a male, however, need not be true.\textsuperscript{12} He further argues that sex need not be a primary aspect of identity.\textsuperscript{13}

Interpretation of fresco painting often has a large religious component, which may be posited on account of the iconography or on account of the architectural space and associated finds. There is often room for debate, however, and Doumas notes that there is not enough known about what constitutes sacred, domestic, and public space to establish objective criteria for associating rooms with cult.\textsuperscript{14} There is also debate over whether some fresco themes, especially nature, sometimes or always carry religious connotations. Ideally, the spaces in which frescoes were displayed would aid in the identification of ritual themes. Unfortunately, the difficulty in identifying functions of space based on other criteria often leads to circular arguments regarding the religious nature of paintings.

**Origins and Technology of Wall Painting**

Colored plastered walls are known on Crete from as early as EM II.\textsuperscript{15} This early plaster, however, was mud-clay based, as opposed to the later white lime plaster walls, which characterize the Minoan tradition of fresco painting.\textsuperscript{16} At Vasiliki, the plaster consisted of light brownish-orange clay mixed with lime and straw, with added pebbles and potsherds. A finer

\textsuperscript{12} Alberti 2002.

\textsuperscript{13} Alberti 2002, 114.

\textsuperscript{14} Doumas (1992, 100) is specifically referencing the Spring Fresco from Delta 2 at Akrotiri, but the difficulty in identifying cultic places is certainly not confined to this room. Chapin (2004b, 51) follows Doumas and notes several other instances where this difficulty arises.

\textsuperscript{15} Cameron (1976a, 11) notes that the earliest evidence for undecorated plaster on walls comes from the Middle Neolithic House A at Knossos (c. 4000 BCE), where it was used as a protective layer over the soft pisé walls.

\textsuperscript{16} Shaw 2009, 142.
darker clay mixture was layered on top of this, which could be painted red-orange.17 The red walls at Myrtos Fournou Korifi and grey-yellow walls of the First Palace of Phaistos were formed similarly.18 As Shaw notes, the earliest pure lime plaster was used, not for walls, but for floors at Knossos. True lime plaster is not mixed with mud or clay as with earlier plaster walls. Instead, limestone is burned and crushed into a powder form (quicklime). It is then mixed with water and termed slaked lime.19

Abstract decoration only appeared on wall paintings in the Protopalatial period, and figural decoration became widespread in the Neopalatial period.20 By this time, the tradition of figural decoration had already appeared on pottery and seal stones, so the spread is not surprising, although it is unlikely to have been done for the simple reason of decoration. Gates argues that “the sudden arrival of pictorial imagery on Crete, then, is a pictorial act that builds upon the stylistic precedents of Protopalatial art and takes advantage of large scale Egyptian and Near Eastern figural imagery already well known to the Minoans.”21 He believes that this happens during the transition from the Protopalatial to the Neopalatial period, when he sees the island coming under the control of an oligarchic or theocratic regime at Knossos “because of the need or desirability of such imagery in an evolved sociopolitical framework of newly centralized

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17 Shaw 2009, 142.
18 Shaw 2009, 142-143. Myrtos Fournou Korifi, however, had a higher proportion of lime in relation to the mud content of the plaster than was the case at Vasiliki (Cameron 1976a, 12).
19 Shaw 2009, 144.
20 Immerwahr 1990, 39.
21 Gates 2004, 42.
authority for which the veneration of nature and the importance of religious ritual have become its metaphysical foundation.\textsuperscript{22}

Painted plaster appears rarely on the mainland during Early and Middle Helladic periods, and certainly does not contain figural decoration until after ca. 1550 (mid. LH IIA).\textsuperscript{23} It need not have been directly influenced by Crete, as the technology may also have come by way of the Cycladic Islands.\textsuperscript{24} Jones finds that even the early lime plasters of Minoan Crete “were prepared to fulfill a basic structural function to which the factors of textures and colour made only limited contribution.”\textsuperscript{25}

The color schemes and materials used to create them were relatively consistent. Black, red, yellow, and brown tended to be made up of carbon and ochres, which were all in use by the Neolithic. The more interesting choices come with colors like blue and green, as well as with the choice between whether to leave plaster unpainted for white or to use a separate white pigment. Although it is generally agreed that both Minoans and Mycenaeans used lime plaster, there is less agreement over the exact technique that was used to adhere the pigment to the surface of the plaster. In the \textit{al fresco (buon fresco)} technique, the pigment, where the grains are suspended in water, is applied to the moist surface of fresh lime plaster. In this case, the drying of the plaster and the absorption of CO\textsubscript{2} from the atmosphere helps seal the surface and trap the pigment grains. The \textit{al secco} method involves applying pigment to a dry support of any material. In this case, the pigments must be mixed with either lime water or an organic binding material. When

\textsuperscript{22} Gates 2004, 27, 42.
\textsuperscript{23} Cameron 1978, 590.
\textsuperscript{24} Cameron 1978, 590.
\textsuperscript{25} Jones and Photos-Jones 2005, 208.
the binding material is egg, it may be called _tempera_.\textsuperscript{26} Finally, Brysbaert defines _fresco-secco_ as either the technique where part of the painting is done _al fresco_ and part _al secco_ or when the pigments are mixed with water or slaked lime, which has the effect of re-wetting the plaster.\textsuperscript{27}

**General Differences between Minoan and Mycenaean Painting**

The different groups of people in the Aegean used wall paintings in their own ways, not only as a reflection of the importance of certain aspects of society, but likely as a way of negotiating or demonstrating one’s place within it. Broadly speaking, Minoan art, centered at Knossos, is thought to be focused on religious iconography, which may be seen as including nature scenes in addition to processions, dancing, and possibly bull leaping. Immerwahr divides the earliest phase of wall paintings of Knossos and Thera into three types: those that are predominately of nature scenes, usually without human figures; those where the focus is on human figures; and the miniature frescoes, which involve humans within architectural or nature settings.

Although Theran frescoes are often grouped as Minoan, several scholars have noted certain attributes that give them an independent style. Höckman discusses similarities and differences specifically related to floral motifs.\textsuperscript{28} Two other features are their increased use of the white background space, and the scarcity of the convention of a wavy line through a solid colored background.\textsuperscript{29} Regardless of the method by which the technology was introduced (by

\textsuperscript{26} Asminos 1978; Brysbaert 2008, 17.

\textsuperscript{27} Brysbaert 2008, 17. Note that some confusion arises from the fact that the term _fresco secco_ has been used in the past to refer to _al secco_ painting.

\textsuperscript{28} Höckman 1978.

\textsuperscript{29} Cameron 1980; Davis 1990.
emulation or by force), it was certainly something that the Cycladic islands made their own. The Theran frescoes provide an important intermediary between Crete and the mainland.

Immerwahr sees Mycenaean fresco painting as “primarily a continuation of Minoan,” although she acknowledges many problems with this statement.\(^30\) Like Akrotiri, the mainland shares a great deal of iconography with Crete, including some of the religious scenes, but emphasizes elements that may be more relevant to Mycenaean culture. Mycenaean wall paintings do include many processional frescoes and others with religious iconography, as was common in Minoan wall paintings.\(^31\) Even aspects such as the use of heraldic griffins and lions at Pylos are sometimes thought to have a Cretan origin, although the “Throne Room” at Knossos is largely reconstructed and the decoration may date to a period of Mycenaean presence (see below). The greatest difference in iconography relates to the scenes of hunts and battles, which are more oriented toward power than their Cretan predecessors; although one could understand bull leaping, even as a ritual, as also related to power. Mycenaean wall painting may have also used the Cyclades as a source of inspiration. Cameron argues that the later Mycenaean paintings have much in common with motifs in the Theran miniature frescoes that are not found in the paintings from Crete itself.\(^32\)

**Framework for the Study**

I hope to situate this discussion of Aegean wall paintings within two broader frameworks of study. First, wall paintings can be seen as related to the function of Minoan and Mycenaean

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\(^{30}\) Immerwahr 1990, 105.

\(^{31}\) Immerwahr 1990, 114-121.

\(^{32}\) Cameron 1980.
palaces.\textsuperscript{33} It is worth considering where and how they are used within their architectural framework. Secondly, the issue of adapting technology and motifs could be related to issues of Minoanization or Mycenaeanization. Thus, a brief overview of scholarship in these areas is warranted.

\textit{Function of the Palaces}

There has been much debate over the last century concerning the function of Minoan and Mycenaean palaces. The term “palace” itself goes back to Arthur Evans and his identification of Knossos as the residence of the king.\textsuperscript{34} In this case, the palace may be seen as a symbol of the increasing stratification of society. Since Crete lacks the huge temples of Egypt and the Near East, a religious aspect was also attributed to the palaces, such that their inhabitants would be priest-kings.\textsuperscript{35} Marinatos follows this, arguing that palaces were religious centers where a ruling elite, who was in charge of religious, economic, and political matters, resided.\textsuperscript{36} Given the fact that the domestic nature of these “palaces” has been called into question and the fact that more and more similar structures have been excavated, sometimes in close proximity to one another, these may not be proper “palaces.”\textsuperscript{37} Driessen sees the “role of the ‘palaces’ in Minoan society as communal buildings without a \textit{primary} political and residential function but still serving as the

\textsuperscript{33} Although Akrotiri was not a palatial site, it is included because it seems to be an important place of cultural interaction.

\textsuperscript{34} Schoep 2012.

\textsuperscript{35} Schoep (2012) citing PM I, 26; Hood 1995.

\textsuperscript{36} Marinatos 1993, 38-73.

\textsuperscript{37} Schoep 2012.
main political arena, erected by a community for the fulfilling of religious and ritual tasks.” 38

Both he and Schoep, therefore, argue for the renaming of these sites as “court-centered”
structures (vel sim), but such terms have yet to catch on. 39 Furthermore, opponents of the idea
that Knossos functioned as a monarchical power center stress the lack of clear ruler iconography,
which is in stark contrast to Egypt and the Near East. 40 Gates argues that the Minoan government
was likely an oligarchy with theocratic orientation. 41

A further aspect of the palaces that has often been argued is that they were redistributive
in nature. Although this had already been suggested based on analogy with the Near East, the
economic role was further emphasized following the decipherment of Linear B tablets. 42 Thus,
the palace could be seen as an all-purpose building: the home of an elite personage who
controlled political, economic, and religious realms, as well as a center for religious practices.
This identification, in turn, leads to the identification of a state-level society. 43 Wiener believes
that Crete was unified in the Neopalatial period and that Knossos was the seat of power. 44
Schoep, however, argues that “even though evidence that points toward production, storage,
consumption, and recordkeeping is found in the court buildings, we cannot simply conclude that
the latter controlled these activities in society.” 45

41 Gates 2004, 41.
42 Schoep 2012. It should be noted, however, the Linear B documents should be associated primarily with the
Mycenaean administration at Knossos, rather than with the Neopalatial period.
45 Schoep 2012, 122.
Many of these possible functions have been questioned in recent years. One issue at hand is whether the palaces were primarily producers or consumers of goods. Although they had storage magazines, these would not likely hold enough for redistribution on a large scale. While the Linear B documents point to some control over certain aspects of the economy, these do not generally relate to everyday products, of which the palace would likely have been primarily a consumer rather than a producer. Prestige items may have been the focus of elite or palatial control.

Physically speaking, Mycenaean palaces were quite different from what we call palaces on Crete. One architectural definition of a Mycenaean palace is “a large ashlar construction centered on a megaron unit: a rectangular room with four columns surrounding a hearth, its long walls extending to form a porch and a vestibule.”\textsuperscript{46} Furthermore, the Mycenaean centers were often very well fortified, which is not the case for Neopalatial Crete. Not only was the architecture different, but Galaty and Parkinson argue that “Mycenaean states were very different from Minoan states, as well as most other states in the Eastern Aegean.”\textsuperscript{47}

Kilian defines the Mycenaean palace more functionally as “\textit{le domicile du Wanax}.”\textsuperscript{48} Although the palace may have housed a Mycenaean ruler, perhaps the wanax, Galaty and Parkinson argue that it was “certainly more than a royal residence.”\textsuperscript{49} Rehak points out the fact that although the main megaron \textit{probably} served as a throne room, this is by no means indisputable.\textsuperscript{50} He further argues that the megaron more likely served as communal center for

\textsuperscript{46} Galaty and Parkinson (1999, 5) citing Shelmerdine 1997, 558.
\textsuperscript{47} Galaty and Parkinson 2007, 3.
\textsuperscript{48} Kilian 1987, 203.
\textsuperscript{49} Galaty and Parkinson 1999, 5.
\textsuperscript{50} Rehak 1995, 96.
feasting and drinking, where women might play an important role, than as the great hall of an enthroned male *wanax*.\(^{51}\) Other activities attributed to palatial centers included: sacred rites in ritual spaces; craft activities in workshop areas; storage of goods, especially in magazines; and record keeping in archives.\(^{52}\) Galaty and Parkinson emphasize the lack of evidence for state-wide redistribution of goods as being one of the functions of palatial centers, as it was in the Near East.\(^{53}\) Furthermore, it would not have been cost effective to use a staple financed economy beyond the immediate vicinity of the palatial centers.\(^{54}\) The *wanax* likely exercised some control, especially over the production of high value or prestige items, but they still must have relied, in part, on a network of exchanges.\(^{55}\) Galaty and Parkinson follow Halstead’s view of Mycenaean resource mobilization: “the picture emerging of palatial economy is not of a coherent and efficient system of resource mobilization….Rather, resources were raised through a variety of methods, including “taxation” of local communities, share-cropping, and exchange, which might be understood in terms of survival or transformation of a series of customary arrangements of varying antiquity.”\(^{56}\)

Two final points must be kept in mind regarding the function of both Minoan and Mycenaean palaces. It is important to remember that these structures were not static entities, and did not necessarily have the same function in all time periods. The form and function of palaces may have evolved in response to changing societal needs in different eras. This would

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\(^{51}\) Rehak 1995, 117.

\(^{52}\) Galaty and Parkinson 1999, 5.

\(^{53}\) Galaty and Parkinson 1999, 7.


\(^{55}\) Galaty and Parkinson 2007, 4.

\(^{56}\) Galaty and Parkinson (2007, 4) citing Halstead 2003, 260.
particularly apply to differences at Knossos between the Neopalatial and Monopalatial periods. Secondly, as Galaty and Parkinson emphasize (albeit only in reference to Mycenaean sites), we must “cease conflating data from individual Mycenaean states, as though all functioned similarly.”57 Finally, if the palaces did not function in the same way, we should not expect the frescoes to necessarily have the same function in each location.

Minoanization and Mycenaeanization

The “x-ization” of an area generally refers to the spread of cultural aspects of a dominant or central group to groups which are inferior or peripheral. More specifically, Broodbank has defined “Minoanization” as

“a modern term of sometimes deceptive convenience for a heterogeneous range of ancient material culture traits and practices that indicate the adoption in places beyond Crete, through whatever means, of ways of doing things that originated directly or indirectly within the island. Examples include artefact styles and consumption, cooking habits, writing, weight systems, weaving, wall-paintings, design and use of built space, burial practices and ritual action.”58

Minoanization is often seen as a rather peaceful process involving the expansion of Cretan diplomatic control over otherwise independent islands.59 During the Neopalatial period, Minoan trade increased throughout the Mediterranean and many sites have produced Minoan or Minoan-looking pottery.60 Yet, with the exception of Kythera, no Cretan “settlement colonies” have been found.61 Nevertheless, Wiener argues that there was Minoan control and presence in the

57 Galaty and Parkinson 1999, 4.
58 Broodbank 2004, 46.
59 Niemeier 2009, 12.
61 Niemeier 2009.
Cyclades and Dodecanese. He does not, however, suggest the same mechanism for the spread of Minoan culture to the Greek mainland. In this case, he suggests the “Versailles Effect,” which involves adoption of culture and close similarities between “two or more societies without political control, economic domination or a major movement of people from the culturally more dominant society.” Many of the sites with the greatest degree of “Minoanizing” elements are located along trade routes between Crete and regions with metal sources. Although he acknowledges the material aspect of “Minoanization,” Niemeier stresses the need to “keep in mind the question of political and military supremacy of New Palace period Crete.”

Thus, if Minoanization is the process of a site gaining more Minoan qualities, iconography, or technology, then Mycenaeanization would be the process of a site (like Knossos) gaining Mycenaean qualities or iconography. This will be discussed primarily as it relates to fresco iconography, but Mycenaean elements are seen in many other aspects of society, including pottery, burial, and administration. The Mycenaeanization of Knossos could theoretically be based on either direct or indirect contact with Mycenaean traders or goods. Alternatively, it could be due to the actual presence of mainlanders at Knossos, which is often thought to be the case. Due to the iconography of warfare on the mainland, the spread of Mycenaean culture is unlikely to be seen as peaceful in the way that Minoanization is often characterized.

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62 Wiener 1990.

63 Wiener 1984, 17; 1990.

64 Niemeier 2009, 17.


66 Hallager (2012, 154-5) stresses the fact that we cannot be certain of the presence of a “Mycenaean administrative elite in Crete” during the Monopalatial period. The presence of Mycenaens is not certain until the time of the Linear B tablets, which he sees as the Final Palatial period or LM IIIA2:LMIIIB:1.
II. FRESCO PROGRAM AT KNOSSOS

Knossos provides a good starting point for a comparison of Minoan and Mycenaean painting programs. The palace at Knossos has both the earliest examples of figural fresco decoration and the widest range of decoration of any of the Minoan palace sites. The majority of the paintings at Knossos have been dated throughout the Neopalatial and Monopalatial periods (MM III-LM IIIA), but a few examples may be from the Protopalatial period (see fig. 4 for main locations of frescoes within the palace). Immerwahr suggests that the earliest frescoes outside of Crete, those from Melos and Thera, were painted about a century after the earliest phase of fresco painting at Knossos. Those on the mainland are suggested to be at least another century later.67 She further attributes the relative lack of paintings at Phaistos, Mallia, and Zakros to a Knossian palatial monopoly of painters, although Ayia Triada provides an exception to this pattern.68

Protopalatial examples

Two clear examples of decorative painted plaster have been found at Knossos that likely date to the Protopalatial period. In the first case, there is a white plaster fragment from a townhouse at Hood’s Royal Road South site that shows a clear striped red border, which

67 Immerwahr 1990, 2.
68 Immerwahr 1990, 2.
Cameron dates to MM IB (see fig. 5). The second example is a more elaborate Dado design, from the “Loomweights Basement” of the palace, which he dates to MM IIB or earlier (see fig. 6). The curved bands are gray, red, white, and yellow, but there is not enough preserved to get a clear idea of the full pattern.

Neopalatial

The Palace Frescoes

The Neopalatial period on Crete (MM III – LM IA) saw the spread of Minoan painting techniques and the widespread use of figural decoration. This period is often seen as the acme of Aegean wall painting, which includes the “finest examples of Aegean mural art,” such that Mycenaean influence brings a decadence and degradation of the art form. Immerwahr divides frescoes of this period into three broad categories:

1. Nature Paintings – These frescoes primarily include floral and faunal motifs and only very rarely include the presence of humans. These are associated with “the beauty of nature as part of a mystic communion with the great Minoan Goddess of Nature, who occasionally appears in these paintings.”

2. The Human Figure – Frescoes in this category consist almost exclusively of human figures, generally on a very large scale, and use nature motifs to a very limited extent.

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69 Cameron 1976; II Plate 3C; III, 7.

70 Cameron 1976, II, Plate 4E.

71 Cameron 1976, III, 7.

72 Immerwahr 1990, 39.

73 Immerwahr 1990, 40-50.

74 Immerwahr 1990, 46.
extent. The humans do not appear to be rulers, but rather dedicants, religious officials, everyday people, or occasionally a goddess.

3. Miniature Wall Paintings – Immerwahr confines this category to small paintings which show humans (of ca. 6-10 cm in height) in environmental or architectural settings of the same scale.

Although these categories are useful for looking at the frescoes, I will not organize this section in that way. Instead, the organization will focus on the location of the frescoes in an attempt to understand how they worked within the palace structure.

Although there is little certain evidence for frescoes of the Neopalatial entrance systems, there may have been earlier painting in the famous Corridor of the Procession. Beneath the later corridor, there was painted lime plaster with the filling stones and carbonized wood. There were several pieces showing skirt fragments of approximately life-size women. Another fragment, which Evans associates with these, but which came from the northwest fresco heap, shows the upper torso, arm, and hair of a female (fig. 7). She is depicted similarly to the “Ladies in Blue” (fig. 8, discussed below), with an open blue embroidered bodice. She not only wears a beaded necklace, but she appears to have beaded jewelry in her hair. Evans suggested that these fragments came from a group of seated, conversing women; however, Immerwahr suggests an earlier procession scene.

Room 8, just north of the central court is also known as the Room of the Saffron Gatherer on account of its decoration. The Saffron-Gatherer fresco (Kn. No. 1, MM IIIB/LM IA, fig. 9),

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75 Immerwahr 1990, 50-62.
76 Immerwahr 1990, 63-75. This is intentionally more specific than just referencing any painting on a small scale.
77 PM II, 2, 680.
78 PM II, 2, 182; Immerwahr 1990, 54.
originally believed to be a blue boy arranging white crocuses in stone containers, has since been identified as a blue monkey, a motif that stems from the grey-green Sudanese monkeys depicted in Egyptian painting. In the foreground, freely drawn crocuses, sprouting from rocks, sway both above and below the monkey. There is no ground line and the monkeys themselves are depicted against a solid red background. Immerwahr sees the red background and the veined rocks as decorative, but the swaying crocuses as the source of naturalism.

In Room 9, or the Room of Spiral Cornice, also just north of the central court, several miniature frescoes were found, but they have been heavily restored. Immerwahr dates them to LM I, perhaps slightly after the Thera eruption. As restored, the Grandstand Fresco (Kn. No. 15; MM IIIB; fig. 10) is about 30 cm in height by 90 cm long. Seated women appear on either side of the so called “tri-partite shrine.” They wear what becomes identified as typical Minoan dresses in a variety of colors. With the exception of a few strands, their hair is long and tied back. On either side of the women, there are more architectural features, the “grandstands,” with beam-end decoration on the square impost capitals. Within these, more women are either seated (far right) or standing (far left). In what Evans termed “shorthand perspective,” which includes only an outline of profile features, including hair, a dot for an eye, and neck bands, a crowd surrounds the main scene against a solid background of either red or (less often) white. Those on the white background are identified as female, whereas those against a red background

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79 Immerwahr 1990, 41. The original identification as a boy was based on Arthur Evans’ reconstructions.

80 Immerwahr 1990, 41-2.

81 Immerwahr 1990, 64. She further argues that there “must have been earlier examples at Knossos to have inspired the Thera paintings.”

82 See Immerwahr (1990, 65) for identification of the architectural features.

83 Immerwahr (1990, 64) cites Evans without specific reference.
are male. Immerwahr uses this to argue that there was “no rigid separation of the sexes in Minoan times;” however, I would point out that the women seem to form a segregated group within the mass of males. Furthermore, if the masses of people at the bottom are seen as people standing opposite the court from where grandstands were constructed, the fresco involves a combination of bird’s eye and straight-on perspective. The context for the gathering is typically argued to be religious in nature, and possibly related to bull games, but the subject of the crowd’s attention is not shown.

The miniature “Sacred Grove and Dance Fresco” (Kn. No. 16; MIIIB/LM IA, fig.11) comes from the same location. It is somewhat taller (70 cm), and the figures are correspondingly larger. The natural setting is shown by the gray-blue olive trees, portions of at least two of which are preserved. The blue above the figures at the top and around the females at the bottom right, as well as the stone causeways, further suggests the outdoor setting. Similar shorthand conventions are used here, where profile outlines are placed against red or white backgrounds, with the latter closer to the trees. Many of the men at the top reach upwards and most figures face left. There are additional rows of men closer to the foreground. They are still shown against a red background, but they are standing and wear black boots, white belts, and white codpieces. Dancing women, wearing typical Minoan dress, are reconstructed in the lower right corner. Their arms are in a variety of positions, but they are all generally facing left. Their hair falls in a

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84 Immerwahr 1990, 64.
85 Immerwahr 1990, 65. Due to the poor preservation, it is impossible to determine the ratio of males to females.
86 Immerwahr 1990, 65.
87 Immerwahr 1990, 65.
88 Immerwahr 1990, 65.
89 Immerwahr 1990, 66.
number of strands behind them. Immerwahr calls the movement “stately and rhythmical rather than orgiastic.” ⁹⁰ She further argues that the emphasis on facing left between the dancing women and the men above suggest a ritual awaiting the epiphany of the goddess. ⁹¹

The most interesting of the less preserved fragments from the same room (Kn. No. 17; MM IIIIB/LM IA) are those which Evans identified as a military exploit. In one pair of fragments (fig. 12), there are warriors who appear to be holding (left) and throwing (right) javelins. Another fragment (fig. 13) was identified as that of the warriors’ youthful officer. ⁹² There is not enough preserved to be confident in the identification of a military theme. Cameron added other fragments to the former (fig. 14), and Immerwahr suggests that “the military aspect of the scene [is] now doubted,” but does not elaborate on the reason behind the revised interpretation. ⁹³

The “Ladies in Blue” fragments (Kn. No. 11; MM IIIIB/LM IA, fig. 8) provide us with some of the few Neopalatial examples of life-size female figures. They come from a deposit by the north wall of the “Royal Magazines,” but likely decorated the East Hall. ⁹⁴ Portions of three torsos and/or arms of three women are preserved outlined on the white ground. They are depicted frontally, with richly embroidered open blue jackets. ⁹⁵ The women wear jewelry, and one delicately grasps a string of beads. Evans called the execution “nobler and less mannered” than that of the miniature frescoes. ⁹⁶ Immerwahr suggests that their frontal depiction, and the

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⁹⁰ Immerwahr 1990, 66.
⁹¹ Immerwahr 1990, 65.
⁹² PM III, 81-84; fig. 45-46.
⁹⁴ PM I, 546.
⁹⁵ The profile view of their heads is presumed by analogy.
⁹⁶ PM I, 547. Other examples of life-sized females include the “Lady in Red,” whose exact provenance is unknown, and the skirt fragments from lower levels of the Corridor of the Procession.
overlapping of their shoulders, means that they were seated. She further suggests that their
dress is not secular, but the ‘court dress’ of the Minoan goddess (when she appears) and her
votaries.

Nearby, there may have been an early procession scene in the Grand Staircase (fig. 15).
Cameron notes that only the “hairstyle, facial features, overlapping kilts, direction, and possible
offerings of lotus flowers now remain of the original painting,” but that this is enough to show
that these fragments are stylistically more similar to Theran frescoes than to the later and well
known Procession from the opposite side of the palace.

The Dolphin Fresco (Kn. No. 6; LM IA or later, fig. 16-17) comes from the east border of
the east light well of the “Queen’s Megaron,” also on the eastern side of the central court.
Immerwahr notes that there is controversy over the date and original location. Stratigraphically,
she does not think that it can be as early as Evans’ MMIIIB date. Although it has been restored
on the upper part of the north wall of the inner room, others have argued that it may have once
actually decorated the floor. Furthermore, she suggests that it is better associated with the
Monopausal period frescoes. Nevertheless, her dating places it potentially on the wall (or
floor) before the end of the Neopalatial period. The reconstruction of the fresco makes it difficult
to determine exactly what is original versus interpreted. As reconstructed, there are five dolphins
surrounded by a number of smaller fish. The dolphins are largely tricolored with blue backs, a
yellow stripe that splits to go around the eye, and white bellies. Black is used to outline them

97 Immerwahr 1990, 59.
98 See Akrotiri women below.
99 Cameron 1980, 87-88.
100 Immerwahr 1990, 171. She cites Hood (1978, 71) and (Koehl 1986) for the floor location.
against the white background, as well as between the different colors and for the upper portion of their noses. The other fish are a variety of colors, some of which are multi-colored. There is a “coralline border” both above and below the marine scene,\textsuperscript{102} much like occurs with rocky outcroppings. Below the dolphin fresco, a floral decoration has been used to outline the doorways.

The “Priest-King,” (Kn. No. 7, LM IA(?), fig. 18) from just south of the main court, is a somewhat over life-size figure, as he has been reconstructed.\textsuperscript{103} The reconstruction, however, is much debated and may include fragments from several different figures.\textsuperscript{104} As shown, the figure strides left with his right arm to his chest and his left outstretched behind him, which Immerwahr suggests may be to lead a griffin or sphinx.\textsuperscript{105} The torso, thighs, and headdress are rendered in low relief.\textsuperscript{106} He wears a tight belt and codpiece with a loincloth, like those worn by bull leapers.\textsuperscript{107} He is depicted against a flat background that was “apparently red and white with papyrus and butterflies.”\textsuperscript{108} Shaw suggests that the pieces could belong to a single figure, which may be a crowned, and may even be a victorious athlete.\textsuperscript{109}

Although the dating is controversial, several fragments of miniature paintings have been found in the cists of the 13\textsuperscript{th} magazine, which was probably filled in after the MM IIIB

\textsuperscript{102} PM I, fig. 395.

\textsuperscript{103} Immerwahr 1990, 52. Kn. No.7 in her catalog.

\textsuperscript{104} Immerwahr 1990, 53. Shaw (2004) reviews the evidence for and against the reconstruction.

\textsuperscript{105} Immerwahr 1990, 52.

\textsuperscript{106} Immerwahr 1990, 52.

\textsuperscript{107} Immerwahr 1990, 52.

\textsuperscript{108} Immerwahr 1990, 52.

\textsuperscript{109} Shaw 2004.
earthquake. They depict: a crowd of men behind a wall; a bull’s head with locks of hair of an acrobat; a pillar shrine with horns of consecration and double axes; a pillar shrine with imitation stone revetment; and, other architectural scraps. Immerwahr suggests that they could be connected, as they depict people in an architectural setting with religious implications, presumably watching bull leaping.

Various other frescoes date to this period, but have not been described in detail here. Immerwahr notes:

- Flowering Olive (Basement west of Stepped portico)
- Jewel Fresco (Kn. No. 9; MM IIIB; Magazine of the Vase Tablets.
- Textile Fragments of Women’s Skirts (?) (Kn. No. 14; MMIIIB/LM IA; NW fresco heap)
- “Boys playing game?” (Kn. No. 19; MMIIIB/LM I; NW fresco heap)
- Stucco Relief of Quadruple Spirals (Kn. No. 38; MM IIIB/LM IA) gives the name to the Room of the Spiral Cornice
- Stucco Reliefs of Athletes (Kn. No. 8; MMIIIB-LM IB) are from the basement level of the East Corridor near the School Room and Lapidary’s Workshop and are associated with the East Hall.

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110 Immerwahr 1990, 64.
111 Immerwahr 1990, 64.
112 Immerwahr 1990, 173.
113 Immerwahr 1990, 64.
114 Immerwahr 1990,171.
House of the Frescoes

The House of the Frescoes is located a short distance northwest of the main palace (see fig. 19 for location) and contains material that both Immerwahr and Cameron date to MIIIIB/LMIA. Most of the fragments were found in Room E on the ground floor, but have been reconstructed as belonging to rooms on an upper story. Monkeys feature prominently in the main fresco (Kn. No. 2; MIIIIB/LMIA, fig. 20-21) from the House of the Frescoes, but this has a busier look to it than the Saffron Gatherer fresco from the palace. Instead of a solid background with framing vegetation, the whole background has become a “veritable garden of Cretan flora.” Additionally, there are “easter egg rocks,” a motif that becomes more common in Mycenaean painting. In this fresco, the plants almost exclusively grow upward. Cameron argues that the fragments can be reconstructed so as to from a continuous frieze that covered three sides at the eastern end of room Q on the upper floor (see fig. 22). He admits, however, that there is little certainty concerning the order and placement of the fragments, so much of the reconstruction, which includes six monkeys and ten birds, has been “arranged arbitrarily” in his sketch. Neither the length nor the height of the frieze is certain, but the reconstruction is about 5.5m long and 0.85m in height.

115 Immerwahr 1990, 170; Cameron 1968, 26.
116 Immerwahr 1990, 42. Flora include: Madonna and pancratium lilies, wild rose, iris, crocus, vetch, papyrus, reeds, ivy, and myrtle.
117 Cameron 1968. The original reconstruction by E. Gillieron had three “panels”: a blue monkey on a red background in a rocky floral setting, a blue monkey in a papyrus thicket on a buff white ground, and a blue bird on a rock surrounded by wild flowers (Cameron 1968, 1).
118 Cameron 1968, 22. He does not make it clear which fragments are present and what is hypothetical, so it is difficult to fully analyze this reconstruction.
119 Cameron 1968, 22.
The Crocus Panel (Kn. No. 3; MMIIIB/LMIA) has been reconstructed in the next room, which is thought to have been painted by the same group of artists. According to Cameron’s reconstruction (fig. 23), this appears to show two agrimi goats arranged heraldically on either side of an olive tree. Undulating bands are reconstructed as separating this lower portion from the upper portion where crocus plants are placed regularly against a buff background. Cameron suggests that the uncomplicated design of the upper part suggests a “simple and formal treatment of the painting as a whole.” Immerwahr connects this to mountaintop sanctuaries and therefore suggests a religious connotation. Chapin and Shaw have created an alternative reconstruction of the Crocus Panel (fig. 24). They challenge the fragments identified as depicting agrimi horns, so thus reconstruct a panel without the heraldic goats. They further highlight the fact that this reconstruction is free and lively rather than static.

‘Caravanserai’

The Caravanserai is located to the south of the main palace complex (see fig. 19 for location), and was originally thought to be some sort of hostel for travelers, especially those coming from the south. There were traces of painted plaster from several areas of the building, but the major fresco from the Caravanserai is the Partridges and Hoopoes frieze (Kn. No. 20, LM IB, fig. 25-26). It has regularly been reconstructed as running ca. 28 cm in height along the top

120 Cameron 1968, plan, 26.
121 Cameron 1968, 25.
122 Immerwahr 1990, 46.
123 Chapin and Shaw 2006, 88.
125 Shaw 2005, 91.
of three walls of the “dining room of the inn,” the western portion of which has been reconstructed as shown in fig. 25.  
126 There are a number of partridges in various positions and at least two hoopoes amongst foliage and against a background that alternates between white and black. Shaw highlights the naturalistic treatment of the birds, no two of which are the same.  
127 This is in contrast to the more stylized terrain.  
128 Immerwahr describes the landscape as a rocky setting with uneven ground line and easter egg pebbles, but that the alternations of color are more in line with depictions of rivers than rocks. Yet, they function more like rocks, as some of them hang pendant from the upper boarder and others enclose birds.  
129 The rest of the wall is thought to be decorated with pseudo-architecture, including yellow pillars with red bases and blue capitals, supporting a yellow ‘architrave’ below the frieze.  
130

Another portion of frieze has been reconstructed (fig. 27) as belonging to the southern wall.  
131 Very little of this section is preserved, but it seems to consist predominately of landscape and flora. Shaw describes the landscape as rather wild, especially compared to the more ordered landscape of the Partridges and Hoopoes frieze, which may have been a deliberate effect.  
132 The flora is thought to suggest a marshy locale.  
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126 Immerwahr 1990, 78.
127 Shaw 2005, 102.
129 Immerwahr 1990, 79.
130 Immerwahr 1990, 78.
131 Shaw (2005) catalogs all of the fragments belonging to either section. She sees no reason to attribute this frieze to a different date than that of the Partridges and Hoopoes (Shaw 2005, 106).
Immerwahr sees the painting program as LM IB and a good example of the late Minoan habit of “decorative excerpting from the earlier style.”[^134] Shaw, however, suggests that the frieze is LM IA in date and immediately follows the construction of the building[^135]. She argues that the LM IB argument is based on identifying an element of stylization that she thinks is actually “selective and intentional and not a sign of deteriorating style.”[^136] She compares the combination of naturalism and abstraction to the Spring Fresco from Akrotiri (see below), which is securely contemporary with the Neopalatial period[^137]. Although the Partridges and Hoopoes frieze is closely related to the nature paintings, Immerwahr suggests that the architecture highlights an ornamental nature of the frieze and emphasizes it as secular rather than religious or narrative[^138]. Shaw, on the other hand, accepts that it had a partially decorative intent, but that this was in addition to “whatever other mythical or religious meaning the painting conveyed.”[^139] She sees the entire complex as “essentially a paean to the exuberance of nature,” which is tied to the public nature of this part of the building and the fact that the painting would be universally understood and appealing[^140].

[^134]: Immerwahr 1990, 78.
[^135]: Shaw 2005, 102.
[^137]: Shaw 2005, 105.
[^138]: Immerwahr 1990, 79.
[^139]: Shaw 2005, 105.
[^140]: Shaw 2005, 111.
Other Buildings

The Unexplored Mansion at Knossos produced a number of fresco fragments, which are primarily floral in nature (immediately east of where ‘The Little Palace’ is labeled on fig. 19; see fig. 28 for the relationship between the Little Palace and the Unexplored Mansion). The majority of these come from Room P, a small storeroom south of the pillar hall (see fig. 28), but they likely fell from above.\textsuperscript{141} Based on stylistic and technical considerations, Cameron suggests that these once belonged to a single floral pattern on a background of undulating light buff, tan, and grey. The border was a series of bands. Floral fragments include ‘anemones,’ ‘blue plant stems,’ ‘frilled’ flowers,’ ‘osier’ plants’, and rock fragments.\textsuperscript{142} It has been restored according to fig. 29. Chapin provides a somewhat different reconstruction (fig. 30), although the general picture of a floral scene and most of the plant types remain the same.\textsuperscript{143} Among a number of non-diagnostic fragments, at least one of a “couchant animal (?), above dull orange dado” comes from Room A, a small room in the northwest corner, but fragments from this room also likely fell from above.\textsuperscript{144} Thus, there were probably at least two different frescoes on the upper floor of the building. Other rooms had more limited fresco material, but the majority of these pieces also fell from above. In addition to floral pieces, there are some with spiral or zigzag patterns. It is uncertain whether Room H, the pillar hall, was ever painted.\textsuperscript{145}

From the Little Palace North (see fig. 19 for location), which lies just to the east of the Unexplored Mansion (see fig. 28 for the relationship between the two buildings), Evans reported

\textsuperscript{141} Cameron 1984, 127.

\textsuperscript{142} Cameron 1984, 128-32.

\textsuperscript{143} Chapin 1997.

\textsuperscript{144} Cameron 1984, 137.

\textsuperscript{145} Cameron 1984, 139.
two fresco fragments, one of black and red spiral, the other of papyrus in relief, but these have since been lost. Other pieces, including a dress design or miniature fish, a ‘Genius,’ an architectural fragment, and various monochrome pieces of white, red, and blue have been found and dated variously to MM IIIB-LM IA and LM II-IIIA. The preservation and publication does not allow further investigation here.

The South House had nature scenes (Kn. No. 4, see fig. 19 for building location), at least some of which date to MM IIIB-LM IA and therefore likely fell during a LM IA destruction. Immerwahr only notes that there were fragments of papyrus and a bird. Mountjoy suggests that the plant scene is from either the Lustral Basin or a room above the Lustral Basin. The plants may be papyrus or sea lilies. The bird fragment, however, was found in the Lavatory. Mountjoy thinks that it belongs to a later phase of decoration, although perhaps a similar scene replaced the one destroyed in LMIA.

The Southeast house also had nature scenes (Kn. No. 5, see fig. 19 for building location), which Immerwahr lists as MMIIIB/LMIA in date. Immerwahr reports a fragment of white Madonna lilies against a dark red background and a fragment of windblown flowering grasses.

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146 Hatzaki 2005, 72.
147 Hatzaki 2005, 72; Cameron 1976, 1. 237-238.
149 Immerwahr 1990, 45.
151 Mountjoy 2003, 39. She notes that Cameron only photographed two fragments, although there may have been more.
152 Mountjoy 2003, 37. There is only one fragment of a bird, likely with its head turned backwards.
153 Immerwahr 1990, 171.
with what might be the tail of a small mouse curled around one of the stalks.\textsuperscript{154} Again, the preservation and publication does not allow further investigation here.

**Monopalatial Period**

The Monopalatial period at Knossos provides an interesting set of wall paintings. By the time these were painted, there was certainly direct contact with the mainland. The frescoes are often considered to have many Mycenaeanizing elements, including the increasing abstraction of design. Although the exact nature of the Mycenaean influence or possibly control at Knossos is debated, the frescoes will still be considered primarily Minoan. The Mycenaean features will be noted, but an in depth discussion of how they link Minoan and Mycenaean painting will be saved for Chapter VI. Immerwahr dates many of these frescoes to the second quarter of the fourteenth century, prior to the LM IIIA2 destructions, even though there were traces of several frescoes on the walls \textit{in situ} at the time of Evans’ excavations.\textsuperscript{155} On the basis of stylistic considerations, she does not believe that any of the frescoes are nearly as late as the final destruction and the baking of the tables, which has been proposed to be as late as ca. 1200 BCE.\textsuperscript{156}

In the Monopalatial period, both the north and west entrances to the palace had important fresco programs. The West Porch is reported to have had portions of a “Bull Grappling” fresco (Kn. No. 29, fig. 31) preserved \textit{in situ} on the east wall at the time of excavation, but which has

\textsuperscript{154} Immerwahr 1990, 45.

\textsuperscript{155} Immerwahr 1990, 84. Those with portions \textit{in situ} include Kn. No 22 (from the Corridor of the Procession), Kn. No. 28 (Throne Room Griffins); Kn. No. 29 (Large Bull from the West Porch), and Kn. No. 30 (Bull from Antechamber of the Throne Room).

\textsuperscript{156} Immerwahr 1990, 84. MacDonald (2010, 540) suggests the final destruction of the Linear B palace to be around 1325-1300, or prior to the LMIIBB pottery styles. He admits, however, that there is no adequate or accepted solution to the controversy. If the final destruction were not until late in LM IIIB, I would note that it would be surprising for frescoes to remain \textit{in situ} without change for over a century. As previously noted, there are problems with dating based primarily on style.
since been lost. This is dated by Immerwahr generally to LH III, but possibly to a post palatial period. It is thus one of the few that she thinks may have been painted during the developed Mycenaean period rather than painted earlier, but remaining on the walls in a partially destroyed state.

The Corridor of the Procession (Kn. No. 22, LM II/IIIA, fig. 33) leads from the West Porch of the palace south east and then north toward the South Propylon, where the cupbearer was found. The majority of the procession is only preserved at the level of the feet, much of which was *in situ*, but there are several figures that can be reconstructed further. Figures were life-size, but situated at ground level. The Cupbearer (fig. 34) is the best preserved figure and the only one with his head preserved. He has dark red skin; wears a patterned kilt, a tight belt, and an arm band; and carries a large rhyton. He is shown against a blue to whitish background, divided by a wavy black line. Blue and red wavy stripes also hang from the top of the painting, which Immerwahr suggests may be descending rock work in the manner of the Caravanserai. A similar pattern is seen with the other preserved males – patterned kilts, belts, nude torsos, and some jewelry. The position of their arms (where preserved) suggests that they too were carrying objects, identified as offerings. They are partially set against a third background color, this

157 Immerwahr 1990, 176; PMII, 2, 676.

158 Immerwahr 1990, 98, 176.

159 Immerwahr 1990, 98. Another late and small scale bull grappling scene (Kn. No. 31; LM II/III) comes from near the Northwest Treasury, which includes at tree and the locks of an acrobat (fig. 32), and reportedly had a charging bull to the left.

160 Immerwahr 1990, 88.

161 Immerwahr 1990, 89.

162 Immerwahr 1990, 89.

163 Immerwahr 1990, 88.
time yellow, which is again separated (from the blue above it) by a wavy black line. The cupbearer faces left while most of the others seem to be proceeding to the right. Immerwahr suggests that the males would generally have been clean shaven with long flowing hair. The blue jewelry may represent silver and the conical rhyton may have been silver inlaid with gold.\textsuperscript{164} Although the majority of the figures appear to be male, there are at least two females present. The seventh figure from the left, with the white feet, appears to be wearing a standard Minoan flounced skirt. The figures behind her have red feet, so may be men in long ceremonial robes. There is evidence neither for the musical instruments the men are reconstructed as carrying nor for the double axes held by the woman.\textsuperscript{165} I follow Immerwahr in disagreeing with Evans’ identification of her as a goddess, but she may be a priestess.\textsuperscript{166} The other female is only preserved to the level of her feet and the very bottom of a skirt. Portions of at least 24 figures have been preserved, but the full procession probably included many more, although perhaps not as many as the 500 that Evans suggested.\textsuperscript{167}

The north entrance had frescoes in relief, and a reconstruction of the charging bull (Kn. No. 21, LM IB/II, fig. 35) can be found on site. The bull is life-size and appears to have his head tilted down as though he is charging. The reconstruction also takes into account fragments of olive trees with relief foliage, a pebbly foreground, and a background of blue and red, separated along a wavy line. Immerwahr notes that there are also fragments of the bull’s piebald body, although he is entirely red in Evans’ reconstruction. She further notes that there are fragments of

\textsuperscript{164} Immerwahr 1990, 88.
\textsuperscript{165} Immerwahr 1990, 89.
\textsuperscript{166} Immerwahr 1990, 89.
\textsuperscript{167} PM II, 2, 720.
a second bull and the lower portion of a female leg. The original composition was suggested to include a “cowgirl” chasing charging bulls. The Monopalatial period dating comes from the fact that Immerwahr finds them to be stylistically bolder and simpler than Neopalatial frescoes, although they are closely tied to earlier antecedents depicting bulls.

The area of throne room was another very important location for fresco painting of the Monopalatial period. The hind foot of what is likely a bull was preserved above a dado of imitation marble in the anteroom (Kn. No. 30; LM II/III, fig. 36). This is another one of the few frescoes that Immerwahr suggests may actually be Postpalatial in date and more truly Mycenaean in style. She highlights, however, that this and the bull from the West Porch are continuations of a much earlier iconography of bull games, and likely follow the tradition of the North Entrance bull reliefs.

The Throne Room itself (Kn. No. 28, LM II/IIIA, fig. 37) has caused a certain amount of controversy. The room has been reconstructed as having life-size couchant griffins flanking the throne, as well as the doorway to the “inner shrine.” They are wingless and white, and have colorful spiral patterns on their shoulders and spiral plumes. Amongst them are pairs of tall plants, which Immerwahr identifies as papyrus. The background varies (from bottom to top) from white to red to white and red again along wavy horizontal lines. Above this are two pairs of thin bands of white against a red background. Above the benches, there is a narrow section of dado that imitates marble. Immerwahr highlights the fact that an excavation photo (fig. 38)

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168 Immerwahr 1990, 85.
169 Immerwahr (1990, 85) citing Evans.
170 Immerwahr 1990, 85-86.
171 Immerwahr 1990, 98.
172 Immerwahr 1990, 96.
shows the presence of a palm tree to the right of the throne, which does not appear in the reconstruction.\textsuperscript{173} She does, however, accept the griffins flanking the west doorway, and she notes that Cameron did find evidence of a griffin paw to the right of the throne.\textsuperscript{174} Since antithetical griffins were common on seals, where they flanked either a goddess or a column, another griffin to the left of the throne seems quite likely.\textsuperscript{175} The question of whether the griffins were designed to flank a priestess, perhaps acting as the epiphany of a goddess, or a priest-king, remains unresolved. As Immerwahr notes, the paintings may be a continuation of earlier nature paintings, but humans are now included by the central location of the throne. She argues that this gives the fresco a “more symbolic function,”\textsuperscript{176} although earlier nature frescoes were also certainly symbolic.

The Throne Room frescoes have much in common with later Mycenaean painting, but Immerwahr contends that they are not any more Mycenaean in style than those of the entrance systems and that they are Minoan products, even if their “final form took place in a period in which Mycenaeans were present at the palace.”\textsuperscript{177} The marbled dado is common in later mainland paintings, but the dado from the West House at Akrotiri is also similar. The red and white background also appears in both earlier and later paintings. Finally, the antithetic griffins, although there is the well known example from Pylos, are said to occur in miniature as textile patterns on the dresses of life-sized women from Knossos.\textsuperscript{178}

\textsuperscript{173} Immerwahr 1990, 97.
\textsuperscript{174} Immerwahr 1990, 97.
\textsuperscript{175} Immerwahr 1990, 97.
\textsuperscript{176} Immerwahr 1990, 96.
\textsuperscript{177} Immerwahr 1990, 97-98.
\textsuperscript{178} Immerwahr 1990, 98.
Various other frescoes come from rooms around the central court. The Shield Fresco (Kn. No. 33; LM II, fig. 39) is the best known example of what Immerwahr categorizes among her “Friezes and Abstract Decoration.”179 The fragments were found in the area of the Room of the Demon Seals behind the second flight of service stairs in the Domestic Quarter.180 It has been restored in the Hall of Colonnades next to the Grand Staircase.181 The figure eight shields are various colors with red or black double outlines. Although they are said to be spotted ox hide,182 they actually seem to be covered with slightly wavy black lines and have a long oval down the center. They are set against a background that is plain yellow except for a spiral frieze, which runs through the center. The spirals are white and outlined in black with colored surroundings and flowers at their center. Immerwahr suggests that this fresco was destroyed at the end of LM IIIA and that it was the inspiration for Shield Frescoes at Mycenae and Tiryns.183

The “Palanquin”-Charioteer Frescos (Kn. No. 25; LM II/IIIA, fig. 40-42) are actually two separate panels that may or may not be associated as part of single composition. Evans found at least some of the fragments of what he termed the Palanquin Fresco in the Room of the Clay Matrix. Others may have come from a room next to the Lapidary’s Workshop.184 The fragments are ca. 1/8 life-size and include men wearing long white robes, which he identified as priests, and another man seated with a dagger, which he identifies as of someone particular importance.185

180 Immerwahr 1990, 177.
183 Immerwahr 1990. 99.
184 Cameron 1967, 338.
185 PM II, 2, 770-772.
He reconstructs the scene as one where priests bear a Palanquin with the seated figure (fig. 41). Cameron suggests that the architectural pieces that Evans identified as part of a Palanquin may actually be part of a shrine. He further adds that the pair of men may be priests in procession or military figures in a chariot, and may even be chanting or singing. The fragments of the Chariot fresco come from at least three different locations, including the Lapidary’s Workshop. Cameron builds on Alexiou’s work to produce the reconstruction shown in fig. 42. A long robed charioteer with a whip drives a double chariot and a bull follows behind. Immerwahr adds that there are striped “easter egg rocks” at the top and a background of solid blue. Cameron associates the two groups of fragments as perhaps belonging to a set based on the similar “style, brushwork, and color schemes,” which suggests to him that they were painted by the same ‘school.’ Thus, there may be a chariot procession leading the bull towards a shrine where the priests will perform the sacrifice. He then sees the overall depiction as one of Mycenaean warriors and a Mycenaean ritual.

From the east light well of the Queen’s megaron comes a fragment referred to as the Dancing Lady (Kn. No 24; LM II, fig. 43). The figure is relatively small in scale and outlined

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186 Cameron 1967, 340.
188 Cameron 1967, 336.
189 The drawing originally contained a fragment attributed to the chariot wheel, but this has since been modified.
190 Immerwahr (1990, 95) notes that this is the first attestation of the dual chariot.
191 Immerwahr 1990, 92.
192 Cameron 1967, 340-341.
193 Cameron 1967, 341.
194 Cameron 1967, 343.
against a white background. Her hair is flowing upwards in a manner suggesting motion. Immerwahr identified the style as looking forward to Mycenaean hairdressing on account of the formality of its arrangement.\textsuperscript{195} She wears an open bodice, but it does not appear to be elaborately decorated. Immerwahr describes it as yellow with a blue border, and identifies a thin chemise under her jacket.\textsuperscript{196} There is little evidence for its precise original location or whether there was more to the composition.

The Taureador Paintings (Kn. No. 23; LM II/IIIA) were found in the Court of the Stone Spout in the eastern portion of the palace, although they likely fell from an upper room.\textsuperscript{197} They have figures on a small scale, but are not considered truly miniature because of their lack of a setting. Portions of at least three panels have been preserved, but only one (fig. 44) can be fully reconstructed. This panel shows a spotted bull with a red acrobat flipping over his back. The red portions of the bull have the same black lines as on the shields from the Shield Fresco. The acrobat has long flowing hair and wears the short kilt and codpiece of earlier paintings,\textsuperscript{198} rather than the longer kilt like the males in Corridor of the Procession. There are white figures in front of and behind the bull, which Immerwahr considers female on account of the color convention.\textsuperscript{199} She sees this as outranking the clothing, but the white figures are shown wearing kilts and codpieces. Both of these figures have long flowing hair, red jewelry (or wrist bindings),\textsuperscript{200} and likely some sort of boots. The one on the left grasps the bull’s horn. The scene is depicted

\textsuperscript{195} Immerwahr 1990, 92.
\textsuperscript{196} Immerwahr 1990, 92.
\textsuperscript{197} Immerwahr 1990, 90.
\textsuperscript{198} Immerwahr 1990, 91.
\textsuperscript{199} Immerwahr 1990, 91.
\textsuperscript{200} Immerwahr 1990, 91.
against a blue background, which is elaborately framed, but is abstract in nature instead of depicting a setting. Immerwahr reports that the panel from the Ashmolean Museum (fig. 45) has a yellow background with another female (based on the white skin) alighting in a twisted position, with her legs in profile and her torso in ¾ view, after a jump.\textsuperscript{201} Immerwahr further suggests that the lack of breast development means that adolescent girls participated in the bull games. The third panel, with a blue background, is reported to have included a male figure with a halter on his neck alighting. Another fragment of female grasping a horn and may be from the same panel.\textsuperscript{202}

The “Campstool Fresco” (Kn. No. 26; LM II/IIIA, fig. 46) probably decorated an upper room on the far western side of the palace.\textsuperscript{203} Evans identified fragments of at least twelve figures, perhaps nine of which were seated.\textsuperscript{204} Portions of three seats, which appear to be metal and folding, were preserved, leading to the fresco’s name. Where preserved, all of the figures appear to be wearing very similar clothing – long decorated robes that appear rather feminine. The figures are both white and red, however, so Evans identified the group as being of mixed gender, with the males likely being quite young and there being some ritual significance.\textsuperscript{205} One pair exchanges a two handled kylix, which is a Mycenaean shape, but another figure holds what Immerwahr identifies as a chalice of Minoan ancestry.\textsuperscript{206} The vessels being exchanged are

\textsuperscript{201} Immerwahr 1990, 91.
\textsuperscript{202} Immerwahr 1990, 91.
\textsuperscript{203} Immerwahr 1990, 95. Fragments were found both inside and outside the outer wall in the area of Magazines 13-15. Immerwahr suggests a date in the first half of the fourteenth century.
\textsuperscript{204} PM IV, 2, 384.
\textsuperscript{205} PM IV, 2, 386.
\textsuperscript{206} Immerwahr 1990, 95.
sometimes thought to be “loving cups” or libation vases. The idea that the depiction is one of a religious situation may be supported by the figure of “La Parisienne,” (fig. 47) who may be a priestess on account of the blue (sacral) knot behind her neck. The figures were depicted in profile on at least two registers, as two fragments show feet against a blue or yellow background and scenes below against the opposite color, divided along a straight horizontal line. Further change in color can be seen horizontally, as in “La Parisienne” fragment. The upper and lower borders consisted of horizontal bands of black, red, and white.

A final important fresco of the Monopalatial period is the so-called “Captain of the Blacks” (Kn. No 27; LM II/IIIA, fig. 48), from a deposit outside the palace, near the House of the Frescoes. Here, the figure on the right is depicted in standard Minoan fashion, with red skin and a kilt. He carries what Evans identifies as two spears and wears a “goat-skin headpiece,” which is not standard apparel. Behind him are figures whose skin is painted black, which Evans identifies as hired mercenaries, perhaps for Minoan aggression on the mainland. On account of the late date, could these figures instead be more defensive in nature? Alternatively, perhaps a Minoan officer could lead a group of mercenaries fighting on behalf of Mycenaeans.

207 Immerwahr 1990, 95
208 Immerwahr 1990, 95. Immerwahr (1990, 176) also notes, however, that based on a new join, her head may be too large for the scale of the rest of the image, so “La Parisienne” may actually belong to a related panel.
209 PM IV, 2, 886-87.
210 PM IV, 2, 887.
III. FRESCO PROGRAM AT AKROTIRI

Akrotiri, on Thera, is one of the most important Bronze Age sites for the study of Minoan Fresco Painting (see fig. 49 for a plan of the site). Due to their high degree of preservation, largely in situ, and their similarity of subject matter and technique to those at Knossos, the frescoes are sometimes used to interpret the religious iconography of the paintings at Knossos. Furthermore, they can give us an idea of how different sizes and types of frescoes could be laid out. These all date to prior to the LC I volcanic eruption, so they are largely contemporary with the Neopalatial frescoes at Knossos and predate both the Knossian Monopalatial Frescoes and all the mainland frescoes. Nevertheless, some of the iconography forms a bridge between what are largely regarded as Minoan and Mycenaean motifs. In stark contrast to the other sites analyzed, these frescos do not come from either a court centered or megaron centered palatial site. Instead, they are from a series of domestic or religious buildings.

Xeste 3

Xeste 3 has substantial fresco preservation and several of the scenes strongly evoke their Minoan influence. This building has the largest assemblage of wall paintings, but it has very limited evidence for domestic use (the exception being a few pithoi). This, combined with the themes of the frescoes, leads to the hypothesis that the building was used for initiation rituals.211 One of the most well known frescoes is the “Saffron-Gatherer” scene (LM IA) from the Lustral

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211 Doumas 1992, 128.
Basin (Room 3a).\textsuperscript{212} It has been restored in four panels on two levels (perhaps with a floor in between) on the north and east walls (see fig. 50).\textsuperscript{213} In the upper east panel (fig. 51), two young girls pick crocuses, some of which sprout from the multi-colored rocky terrain, on which the girls stand. Other crocuses are floating on the white background. The girls are outlined on the white background and wear open-fronted jackets and flounced skirts, as well as jewelry. The figure on the right has the blue scalp thought to be indicative of a shaved head and young age. Immerwahr highlights the correlation between blue heads and less visible breasts.\textsuperscript{214} The scene continues slightly around the corner, with another female carrying her basket left (fig. 52).

Immerwahr sees the depiction of the terrain as indicative of a mountainous locale, and possibly a typical Minoan peak sanctuary.\textsuperscript{215} She suggests that the lower east panel represents the entrance to the sanctuary. The panel represents an architectural façade, which has horns of consecration that drip red, which is presumably blood.\textsuperscript{216} Doumas also suggests that this could be an alter or a shrine.\textsuperscript{217}

The lower panel on the north wall has three more female figures (fig. 53), which Doumas interprets as an initiation scene, with ‘adorants’ proceeding right towards the shrine.\textsuperscript{218} These females wear similar clothing and are shown in a similar landscape to those in the upper east panel, but do not carry baskets. One carries a beaded necklace (perhaps as an offering); another

\textsuperscript{212} The lustral basin itself is unique at Thera, although it is a common Minoan architectural element (Doumas 1992, 128).

\textsuperscript{213} Immerwahr 1990, 186.

\textsuperscript{214} Immerwahr 1990, 61.

\textsuperscript{215} Immerwahr 1990, 60.

\textsuperscript{216} Doumas 1992, 129.

\textsuperscript{217} Doumas 1992, 129.

\textsuperscript{218} Doumas 1992, 129-130.
sits on a rock grasping her foot, which might indicate an injury; the third is blue-haired, veiled and actually faces left although her head looks right. Doumas notes several inadequacies in representation, including the incorrect depiction of breasts in profile of the left figure, and the disproportionate arm of the central figure.\(^ {219}\)

The upper north panel seems to depict the epiphany of a seated Minoan goddess as Mistress of Animals, with a winged griffin at her side (fig. 54). A blue monkey offers her crocus flowers from the wide low basket behind him. Another female in a yellow open bodice and flounced skirt empties a basket of collected flowers into the communal basket, which serves to tie this scene to the collection on the east wall. The goddess is depicted as a mature woman, who wears a blue and white Minoan dress, which Immerwahr identifies as more lavish than the dresses of the crocus gatherers.\(^ {220}\) Doumas identifies the beads of her necklace as being in the form of ducks and dragonflies. He also identifies the possibility that the dotted, serpentine band in or above her hair is, in fact, a live snake.\(^ {221}\)

The lustral basin frescoes, as a group, likely depict a religious scene, and may in fact reflect a particular passage of rites for girls entering womanhood. Immerwahr sees the goddess as representing nature and fertility, and serving as a protector of young women and girls in their role as child bearers.\(^ {222}\) Doumas stresses the completeness of the representation of the animal kingdom, including the chthonic, terrestrial, aerial, and imaginary. Rehak sees the crocus as a unifying theme across the age groups, since he identifies it not only as a plant form, but as a

\(^ {219}\) Doumas 1992, 130.

\(^ {220}\) Immerwahr 1990, 61.

\(^ {221}\) Doumas 1992, 130-131.

\(^ {222}\) Immerwahr (1990, 62) following S. Marinatos.
decorative element on clothing. The overall scene changes a potentially routine economic event into a major ceremony, one which crosses between the realms of reality and imagination.

Room 3b may have had a complementary scene of male initiation (fig. 55). Doumas identifies four males, three of which are nude and have shaven (blue) heads, as participating in some sort of ritual. One of the young boys carries a colorful strip of cloth and looks back towards a much smaller boy, who is painted in yellow (instead of red) ochre. The boys appear to approach the fourth male (center), who is older, seated, and wears a white Minoan loincloth. He holds a large closed vessel, whose contents he may be about to empty. Doumas interprets the scene as an initiation rite in which at least one of the figures will don the polychrome textile, a loincloth, which symbolizes his manhood.

Xeste 3 produced several other frescoes, but they are less complete and less commonly discussed than the Saffron-Gathering scenes. The vestibule-staircase had a life-size male, which has been identified as a hunter. Room 2 had wall paintings of “purely decorative” nature, including rosettes and a running spiral, which likely ran above the lintels of the pier and door partitions. Three more life-size women were found in either room 3 or the service staircase.

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225 Doumas 1992, 130.


228 Doumas 1992, 130.

229 Doumas 1992, 128.

(fig. 56 shows two that Doumas labels as from Room 3b). Immerwahr identifies them as more mature than the saffron gathering girls. Two are carrying bunches of red roses or cistos, which may be offerings, and which may suggest that the women are processional votaries. She thus links them with later Mycenaean female processions. Room 4 has scenes of swallows feeding their young and blue monkeys participating in human activities, such as harp playing and sword play (see fig. 57). Such activities, Doumas notes, are common for the monkeys’ Eastern Mediterranean counterparts, and constitute evidence for eastern connections. Rehak suggests that their position on the ground floor creates a transitional space designed to prepare visitors for the other paintings. Room 9 is the only room at Akrotiri that Doumas identifies as having “purely decorative composition” on a large scale. The majority of an otherwise red wall was taken up by a large-scale network of “lozenges,” which each enclose four blue or yellow rosettes (fig. 58). There may also have been a procession of males, including a nude male which a shaved head, and two kilted males with offerings.

**West House**

The West House at Akrotiri is one of the best studied buildings on site, and has substantial fresco preservation on the upper floor in its western wing (Rooms 4 and 5), but many

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233 Immerwahr 1990, 62.
235 Rehak 1999, 707.
236 Doumas 1992, 131.
of the motifs shown are uncommon in Minoan contexts. The overall theme of the program is much more masculine, maritime, and potentially warlike than the theme of Xeste 3. The preservation also aids in better understanding the configuration of the paintings. While the fishermen and priestess filled narrow panels above the dado course, the miniature frieze ran above the level of the doors and windows. Furthermore, Doumas highlights several stylistic conventions that are found in Egypt, including lateral layering for moving figures, vertical layering for static figures, and the representation of scenes in successive tiers without overlapping.

Room 4 is conventionally divided into three sub-areas. The lower zone of Room 4 and 4b had imitation marble dado (as did room 5, see fig. 59), and colored bands characterized the upper zone. The middle zones had variations of what are identified as ships’ cabins or ikria (fig. 60). These seem to be free-standing and portable wooden framed structures that are partially covered with ox hide, possibly for the protection or comfort of a ship’s captain. Each of the 7-8 ikria is depicted slightly differently in terms of their decoration and embellishment. Doumas notes that several similar shields are also depicted in the west house. He thus suggests that these may represent the number of captains who took part in the overseas expedition that he believes is depicted in the miniature frieze. On the window jambs, there are frescoes depicting polychrome marble vases with red lily blossoms sprouting from blue stems (fig. 61). Room 4a, in the southwest corner seems to have been a lavatory, which is undecorated except for some

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238 Immerwahr 1990, 63.

239 Doumas 1992, 46.

240 Doumas 1992, 49.

241 Doumas 1992, 49.
yellow-ochre plaster on the lower portion of the walls. The so-called priestess is depicted on the east jamb of the doorway moving left from Room 4 to Room 5 (fig. 62). She wears a heavy, sleeved robe, unlike typical Minoan female ‘court dress.’ Her blue, mostly shaved head is crowned by a "snake-like band." She holds what may be an incense burner. Doumas finds her presence “completely arbitrary.”

The miniature frieze in Room 5 is preserved to over 7m in length and ran above door/window level across at least three of the walls. They are reconstructed as three different heights, between 20 cm and 40 cm. Although the landscapes vary, the three preserved friezes are unified by their maritime theme. The frieze is especially important for its combination of Minoan and Mycenaean elements.

Two portions of the north frieze have been preserved, the “Meeting on the Hill” (fig. 63) and the “Shipwreck and Landing Party” (fig. 64). The former consists of a number of red figures, presumably male, clad in long white robes or short white kilts with limited decoration. Poorly preserved elements of yellow, brown, and blue below the figures suggest a mountain peak, which the men ascend to meet facing each other. The background remains white. Warren suggests that the “Meeting on the Hill” takes place at a Minoan Peak Sanctuary. The “Shipwreck and

242 Doumas 1992, 49.
243 Doumas 1992, 47.
244 Doumas 1992, 47.
245 Immerwahr (1990 70) suggests that it was probably at least twice as long due to the damage from the pyroclastic flow. Warren (1979, 116), however, suggested that it may not have decorated the west wall.
246 Immerwahr 1990, 70.
247 Warren (1979, 118) notes that those wearing kilts have their arms raised bent at the elbow in a specific gesture.
248 Warren 1979, 118.
249 Warren 1979, 125.
“Landing Party” is the next scene to the east. At the bottom, numerous men are shown falling from their ship; and both Warren and Immerwahr identify one of the ships as having a damaged prow. These men are depicted as nearly nude, and seem to represent the defeated, drowning defense. Warren identifies their accoutrements as tower shields and possibly grappling hooks. On the shore, there is a building with men in front and on the roof. To the right, men march upwards and to the right with long spears, full body length shields in a variety of patterns, and are wearing what has been identified as boars’ tusk helmets. Marinatos links the fact that there are 8-10 warriors shown as meaning that only one of the ships of a size like those in the south frieze could have landed, as each should hold 15-16 warriors. Above the marching warriors, men appear to be bringing their goat herds to and from the fold, while two women are carrying water in jars. The various groups are depicted on different levels, which suggests depth and distance.

Much of the east wall is made up of a Nilotic scene without human presence (fig. 65). A wavy blue band between two narrower brown bands, representing a river and its shore, runs the length of the frieze with flora and fauna above and below set against a white background. On the shore, there are the “easter egg rocks” that are common in later Mycenaean painting. Plants include palm trees, reeds, papyri, and a spiky shrub. Animals include a duck, a winged griffin,

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250 Immerwahr 1990, 72; Warren 1979, 118.

251 Warren 1979, 118.

252 Warren 1979, 118.

253 Thera VI, 47.

254 Warren 1979, 118.

255 Immerwahr 1990, 73

256 Warren 1979, 118. Immerwahr (1990, 73) suggests that it is a Nile landscape depicted in Aegean terms by someone who has never seen the Nile.
a deer, a spotted large cat (leopard or panther), and geese. Although many are running or flying, the animals do not seem to interact with each other. There is again a combination of perspective where the river is seen from a bird’s eye view, but the flora and fauna are in profile.

The frieze from the south wall is the best preserved portion of the miniature frieze (fig. 66). At the eastern side is the second town scene, more peaceful than the first. Behind the town is a colorful mountainous scene with somewhat stylized trees, where a lion chases three deer. Again this is set off against a white background, representing the sky. The town itself primarily consists of one large building on different levels constructed of stone masonry, but there are a couple smaller detached buildings to the left. Humans, mostly robed males, are depicted on top of the large building, to the right of it, or walking along the marshy shore. The majority of them are watching the scene of ships to the right. Only one pair by the smaller buildings appears to be conversing instead. One small ship, with five rowers and a standing helmsman is in the foreground here. They all appear nude with short black hair. The landmass extends to the right of the town as a rocky promontory.

Beyond the promontory are seven large ships, the so called “Departure of the Fleet,” surrounded by leaping dolphins, which Warren suggests to mean that there is tranquility to the scene. The dolphins are not depicted in quite the same way as those from Knossos (Kn. No. 6). Although similar, these typically appear to have yellow or blue rather than white undersides. In a couple cases, they appear to have some red on their back or dorsal fin. There is a great deal

257 Warren 1979, 118.

258 Immerwahr 1990, 72; Warren 1979, 118. Alternatively, the river could be splitting and going off behind the town. Immerwahr suggests that the trees may not be drawn as carefully as one would expect for a Minoan artist.

259 Immerwahr 1990, 72-73. She notes that it is unclear whether the scale is a matter of the relative size of the building or related to perspective.

of variation among the ships. Most of the ships are being paddled rather than rowed by a crew that is implied to be below deck.\textsuperscript{261} One however, the third one from the right, is under sail, so there are not paddlers and three heads appear to face backward. The ships being paddled have what Marinatos calls a “ram-like instrument” on their sterns, but which he suggests relates more to landing and support than battle.\textsuperscript{262} Generally, the ships have a steersman with what may be a captain under an \textit{ikria} behind him. No two of these \textit{ikria} look the same. Above deck, some of the ships carry what Warren identifies as passengers, some of which wear white robes and those on the center (most elaborate) ship wear colored robes. The passengers sit under flat topped canopies with various decorations. Two of the ships have a tall central mast with further hanging decoration which extends to either the edge of the canopy or the bow and stern of the ship. Although this looks largely peaceful in nature, Warren identifies boar’s head helmets hanging behind some of the passengers, which he takes to mean that they expected fighting at some point during the journey.\textsuperscript{263} The ships also have decorated hulls, with the center one again the most elaborate, with lions and dolphins depicted, while another has birds. Combined, land, sea, and sky are all represented.

The ships approach the third town, where a small boat rows out to meet them with several others in the harbor. This too is a peaceful interaction, in which Warren suggests that the small boats are rowing out to help the larger ships into the harbor, as no one is armored. A crowd of nude, or perhaps red-kilted, men align the shore.\textsuperscript{264} Other men and women watch from windows or the roof, much like the departure scene. The town is not the same as the second one, but it is

\textsuperscript{261} Warren 1979, 119.

\textsuperscript{262} Thera VI, 50.

\textsuperscript{263} Warren 1979, 119.

\textsuperscript{264} Warren 1979, 119.
depicted similarly, with building(s) on various levels and extending to different heights. The construction again appears to be largely one of ashlar masonry. Marinatos identifies the poorly visible remains of two sets of Horns of Consecration at the far left and far right of the town.²⁶⁵

Marinatos tends to situate the scene in Libya, although this is largely based on the (much later) descriptions of Herodotus.²⁶⁶ He identifies maned sheep as from North Africa. Additionally, he sees an ostrich wing hanging from one of the shipwrecked youth and the presence of claws from possibly the same family of bird. He also associates the protrusions from one of the buildings of the first town as beam ends in North African fashion.²⁶⁷ Red clothing becomes associated with Herodotus’ Libyan women wearing goatskins dyed with red madder.²⁶⁸ Furthermore, Marinatos associates the awnings of the ships in the south frieze with a trip to Libya, where they would be necessary on account of the sun.²⁶⁹ Marinatos sees the third town as either a strongly Minoanized Libyan town or a strongly Libyanized Minoan town. It has Minoan associations from its horns of consecration, but Marinatos also identifies a ‘great lady’ with her child, who wears his hair in Libyan fashion, crested and on end.²⁷⁰ The captain of the fleet is seen as Aegean, but perhaps commanding troops of Aegeo-Libyans. The voyage is generally friendly, signifying a cordial relationship with the Libyans. The single battle and death of some

²⁶⁵ Thera VI, 52-53.
²⁶⁶ Thera VI, 44.
²⁶⁷ Thera VI, 45.
²⁶⁸ Thera VI, 46.
²⁶⁹ Thera VI, 49.
²⁷⁰ Thera VI, 53.
Libyans is then seen as keeping peace, probably caused by “the[m] annoy[ing] friendly towns.”

Warren, on the other hand, locates scene in the Aegean, rather than North Africa, for a number of reasons. Paddling from the Aegean to Libya would not be feasible. He identifies the type of sheep as also appearing on Minoan seals and the sheep folds as Minoan. The “ostrich feather” is seen instead as a skin cloak. The papyrus in the river scene is more difficult, but even it would support a more Nilotic or general location over something specifically Libyan. This may not be necessary, as there is a possibility that papyrus grew in the Aegean during the Bronze Age. Warren argues that the architecture is faithfully Minoan, without Libyan or North African influence. Furthermore, he does not see the skin robes as necessarily Libyan, as there are Cretan parallels and red madder was obtainable in the Aegean. Neither does he see the crested hair as indicative of Libyans, as there are warriors with boars tusk helmets with such a hair style, who are better seen as Mycenaean in style. Yet, Warren does not suggest that this is a Mycenaean fleet. Instead, it may be a Theran Fleet with Mycenaean warriors. He further suggests that the flora are Cretan, as well as the destination of the trip, and that the ships are returning home to Thera.

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271 Thera VI, 54.
272 Warren 1979, 122.
273 Warren 1979, 124.
274 Warren 1979, 123.
275 Warren 1979, 125.
276 Warren 1979, 124.
277 Warren 1979, 128.
Immerwahr highlights that fact that “the paintings illustrate and emphasize the importance of seafaring in the Aegean Bronze Age and show the types of ships used, and the presence of soldiers as well as sailors aboard.”278 For her, if one reads the scene from north to west to south, the Nilotic scene may indicate the distance traveled. The scenes may pertain to the settlement of far away colonies and associated dangers. Thus, the south wall is again the joyous return of the fleet.279 Additionally, this could be a nautical festival, either at the beginning of the sailing season, or, perhaps, to celebrate the return after a successful trip.280 Such a festival could explain the decorated hulls, paddling, and landing platforms.

The miniature fresco was not the only decoration in Room 5. There are two large fisherman positioned diagonally opposite one another, in the northeast and southwest corners (fig. 67). Both are nude and depicted mostly in profile, although the upper torso of one is more frontal. Each holds a string of yellow and blue fish in either hand. They have dark red skin, blue shaved heads with black locks and are depicted against a solid white background.281 They do not resemble any of the extant figures from Knossos. Their hairstyle is peculiar to Akrotiri, as are their “offerings” of fish.282 The fishermen both face the northwest corner of the room, where an offering table was found, which supports a religious identification.283

278 Immerwahr 1990, 74.
279 Immerwahr 1990, 74.
280 Immerwahr 1990, 74.
281 Immerwahr 1990, 51.
282 Immerwahr (1990, 5) calls the fish offerings, but with little explanation. She sees the quantity of fish as a “superhuman catch.” She also notes that fishermen are depicted on Minoan seals.
283 Immerwahr 1990, 51.
Marinatos identifies the West House as the home of the captain of the “ship in colors” and the admiral of the whole fleet. He sees the room with the *ikria* as “his bedroom, painted with the *ikria* from where, perhaps, he had directed the whole adventure.” 284 Immerwahr seems to follow a line of argument associating the building with a ritual involving seafaring, especially since the miniature fresco is not the only one with a nautical theme. The fishermen’s catch may be seen as votive offerings and she links the ‘Priestess with Incense Burner’ to an Egyptian ritual of preparing a ship for voyage. 285 Finally, she suggests that there are seven (not eight) *ikria* and that this corresponds with the seven large vessels from the scene on the south wall. 286 Morgan also suggests that the number of *ikria* in Room 4 likely matched the number shown on the south wall, although she suggests that there were eight and that a poorly preserved vessel may have belonged on the south wall to bring that total to eight. 287

**Other Buildings**

The House of the Ladies, so named for the fresco paintings found in Room 1, but likely fallen from an upper story, is located to the north of the West House. 288 Portions of three women, two of them nearly complete, in Minoan ‘court dress’ are preserved (fig. 68). On the north wall, one woman appears to be bent forward picking up a skirt and helping another woman with her

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284 Thera VI, 54.

285 Immerwahr 1990, 74. See also Morgan 1988, 143-145.

286 Immerwahr 1990, 75.

287 Morgan 1988, 143.

288 Immerwahr 1990, 186. This room has also been called a possible shrine.
dress.\textsuperscript{289} Her own costume is white with stripes of blue and red.\textsuperscript{290} The upper portion is also outlined in blue. The second skirt is very similar but the striping is not identical. Although shown in profile, her bodice is depicted as open through her escaping breast. She has dark flowing hair and wears earrings and at least one bracelet. She stands upon a thick black ground line, upon which the other skirt also sits. The figures are depicted against a white background, but a set of wavy blue lines sets them apart from the upper portions of the wall which had blue stars connected by dotted red lines on a white background, before coming to the striped top border.

Only one figure is preserved from the south wall. She is fully upright and walking to the left. She wears a somewhat more elaborate dress, which is mainly a light brownish color rather than white, but with a much darker lower portion of the skirt. The bodice is outlined with red instead of blue. It has similar dark red and blue curved stripes, but also horizontal blue stripes at the bottom of the dress. She has a similar hairstyle and earrings as the lady on the opposite wall. Immerwahr emphasizes the outward emphasis of the action of the figures and suggests that it may represent that the women would proceed elsewhere after dressing.\textsuperscript{291}

The western portion of the room, including the west wall and portions of the north and south walls, is devoted to triple papyrus plants (fig. 69). They grow out of a wavy brown ground line and are depicted against a white background, reaching nearly to the upper striped border. The various panels have the same border pattern, with parallel stripes of black, blue, and red,

\textsuperscript{289} Immerwahr 1990, 54. She emphasizes the importance of this fresco for understanding that Minoan dress was made up of several pieces.

\textsuperscript{290} It looks to be the same white as the background and only outlined in black.

\textsuperscript{291} Immerwahr 1990, 55.
although they are on different walls, which Immerwahr suggests indicates that the decoration of
the room was planned to be “thought of as a whole rather than as a series of separate walls.”

Building Delta 2 boasts perhaps the most natural frieze at Akrotiri, the Spring Fresco,
whose vivid colors and lifelike movement seem to epitomize Minoan nature painting (fig. 70). The continuous frieze covered three sides of the small room and was preserved up to 2m in
height. Groups of lilies grow from rocks, which all originate at the bottom of the painting
and are striped in blue, red, and yellow. Both the rocks and the flowers are arranged in groups of
three, yet there remains a great deal of variety. Against a white back ground, swallows dart
between the groups of flowers. Immerwahr contrasts the flatness of the landscape with the depth
created by the swallow. A thick black band separates the nature scene from the solid red wall
above it. This room is often seen to be a shrine. Although many of the artifacts found in it were
likely moved in immediately before abandoning the site, much of the pottery and the bronze
sickle for cutting grain may have been cultic. Immerwahr links these artifacts to the fertility of
the land. Thus, this fresco glorifying spring can be connected to religion, so other scenes of
nature may be by analogy.

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292 Immerwahr 1990, 49.
293 Immerwahr 1990, 48.
294 Immerwahr 1990, 46. The room measures 2.62 m x 2.3 m and the fourth (eastern) side had a door and double
window.
295 Immerwaher 1990, 46. The room measures 2.62 m x 2.3 m and the fourth (eastern) side had a door and double
window.
296 Immerwahr 1990, 46. She again calls the landscape “decorative.”
297 Immerwahr 1990, 46. She again calls the landscape “decorative.”
298 Immerwahar 1990, 47.
Room B1 has been identified as another possible shrine. The boxing boys are depicted in profile against a primarily white background (fig. 71-72). Above their heads, a wavy line divides the white from a solid red background before meeting the conventionalized blue ivy that runs around the corner. They stand on a straight level ground line. The boys are young, perhaps six or seven, and have shaved blue heads with some black hair. Each wears a boxing glove on his right hand and a belt, and the one on the left wears some jewelry, but they are otherwise nude (fig. 72). Immerwahr considers the boxing to be a ritual sport and potentially comparable to the bull leaping depicted at Knossos. Furthermore, she suggests that the iconography is likely symbolic or mythical, rather than depicting an actual contest. Marinatos, along the same line of reasoning, suggests that the choice of boxing boys as decoration is not biographical, but involves “plugging into a pool of culturally shared ideas concerning manhood, into which his own sons might aspire.”

The antelope from the same room are painted as outlines against the white background (fig. 71). They seem to be shown in motion and the one on the left turns back, which is typical of hunted animals, but there is no hunter, either human or animal, present. Their feet are just above the ground line that is level with that of the boxing boys on the other side of the doorway. The antelope are also depicted against a two-tiered white and red background, which is divided with a

299 Marinatos 1984.
300 Immerwahr 1990, 52.
301 Immerwahr 1990, 51-52. Both (adult) boxers and bull leapers are depicted on a vase from Ayia Triada.
302 Immerwahr 1990, 52.
303 Marinatos 2005, 155.
wavy line. Only their horns encroach into the red space. As in the Room of the Ladies, the
different panes of decoration are connected by their border and the red and white backgrounds.\textsuperscript{304}

Although poorly preserved from collapsing into B6, the Monkey Fresco (fig. 73) at
Akrotiri is a good example of rather realistic nature depictions. Immerwahr argues that the
variety of poses suggests actual observations of monkeys in nature.\textsuperscript{305} She further suggests that
these monkeys have predatory intentions based on the way they climb over rock formations,
apparently in search of food.\textsuperscript{306} They are depicted against a white background. The multicolored
wavy bands at the bottom may depict a river, adding to the nature theme. At the top of the wall,
however, is a decorative band of spirals separated from the nature scene by a set of parallel lines,
which is mirrored above the spirals. The room also had fragments of what may be bovines, in a
rocky setting. Doumas does not think that they are associated with the monkey fresco, but their
exact find spots are unknown.\textsuperscript{307}

Finally, Xeste 4 also had frescoes, but less attention has been given to them and they
remain unpublished. The building seems to have had a procession with life-size males ascending
a staircase. They wear kilts with spiral decoration.\textsuperscript{308} There may have also been a frieze of boar’s
tusk helmets.

\textsuperscript{304} Immerwahr 1990, 49.

\textsuperscript{305} Immerwahr 1990, 42. She notes that this is made even more probable by the fact that the skeleton of an ape was
found under volcanic debris on the island.

\textsuperscript{306} Immerwahr 1990, 42.

\textsuperscript{307} Doumas 1992, 111. He also notes that Marinatos had originally thought that the fragments represented dogs
pursuing the monkeys.

\textsuperscript{308} Doumas 1992, 139.
IV. FRESCO PROGRAM AT PYLOS

Pylos has some of the best published examples of wall painting from the mainland. Lang dates nearly all of the frescoes to LH IIIB, or after the Monpalatial period frescoes at Knossos. Nevertheless, there are several important parallels. Some of the most important contexts in the palace include the megaron hall (6 on fig. 74) and associated vestibule (5) and propylon (2), as well as Hall 46 to the east and Hall 64 to the southwest.309 It is particularly interesting that there were other artistic connections between Crete and the mainland as early as the Shaft Grave Era (LH I), but that there is no evidence for fresco painting before LH III.310

Early Material

Immerwahr identifies several fragments from Pylos as preceding the 13th c. (LH IIIB) palace.311 Perhaps the most important among these is the Pylos Taureador (36 H 105, fig. 75), which was found in a drain beneath Magazine 105.312 Immerwahr sees it as not far removed chronologically from the Knossos taureadors, and Lang classifies it as the “most nearly Cretan

309 All numbers for fresco fragments are those of Lang’s (1969) catalog.
310 Immerwahr 1990, 106.
311 Immerwahr 1990, 111.
312 Immerwahr 1990, 196.
painting and subject matter of all the frescoes at Pylos.”313 The figure is reconstructed to about 13 cm in height, larger than true miniature paintings.314 Thus, it is suggested to be a reduced version of the sort of panel paintings from Knossos. A dark red figure, wearing a Minoan belt and loincloth, is shown in profile against a solid blue background. Immerwahr suggests that his bent arms and hair flowing downwards indicates that he may have just landed on the ground.315

The rest of the potentially early material comes from dump contexts. Only a few examples will be mentioned here. There is a Minoan daimon against a dark blue background with its paws raised to a sacral knot. Immerwahr argues that it is likely early on account of the fact that it is more finely drawn and has more unusual iconography than the one from the Mycenae Cult Center.316 There are also two fragments of a ship with similar dimensions and proportions to the largest one from the Akrotiri fleet fresco (fig. 76).317 Both are depicted against a solid blue background, but there is not enough preserved of the Pylos example to identify a scenic quality in true miniature form. Additionally, a checkerboard pattern runs just above the mast. Immerwahr suggests that the ships may have simply been repeated schematically as a kind of statement of naval power.318 Finally, there are heads of two warriors in profile, wearing boar’s tusks helmets, which were possibly part of a larger battle scene (fig. 77).319

313 Immerwahr 1990, 111; Lang 1969, 49.
314 Immerwahr 1990, 111.
315 Immerwahr 1990, 111.
316 Immerwahr 1990, 111.
317 Immerwahr 1990, 112.
318 Immerwahr 1990, 112. She also compares this to the use of Ikria. From the drawing, it is not possible to thoroughly compare this ship fragment to the ships at Akrotiri.
319 Immerwahr (1990, 112) does not make it clear if there is any reason other than their dump context for the early date.
Megaron Complex

One approaches the megaron (6) from the southeast along its NW-SE axis, first passing through the outer propylon (1) and inner propylon (2) before moving through the open court (3), the portico (4) and finally the vestibule (5). The outer propylon may have been decorated with a life-size procession, but few fragments remain. This interpretation is based largely on a single fragment (46 H 1, fig. 78) that Lang says represents a life-size male head against a blue background that is similar to heads from the northwest slope dump.\(^{320}\) Portions of the northwest and northeast walls have a regular arc dado \textit{in situ} with panels of white, blue, and red arcs. Other fragments of arc dado or other bands of color were found fallen. Some of the blue pieces have various red shapes on them.\(^{321}\) Finally, pieces of the ceiling and the floor of the upper story had fallen in. Fragments of red, sometimes with white, are suggested to be from the ceiling, whereas those of blue are likely from the upper floor.\(^{322}\)

The next room, the inner propylon (2), has more figural decoration. Again there is some \textit{in situ} evidence for an arc dado course (fig. 79), as well as fallen floor (blue or white, sometimes with red patches) and ceiling (blue or black).\(^{323}\) Above the dado course was a band with stripes of white, brown, blue, and brown again. Above that was a frieze (ca. 18 cm in height) of alternating blue and yellow nautili against a white background followed by another set of stripes in mirror image to the ones below them. A variety of motifs against solid backgrounds of blue,

\(^{320}\) Lang 1969, 190. Comparative material is cataloged as 54-57 H nws.

\(^{321}\) Lang 1969, 190.

\(^{322}\) Lang 1969, 190.

\(^{323}\) Lang 1969, 190. There are some unburned pieces which are likely from the fill of the robbed southwest wall, and include a piece of a miniature male procession (35 H 7) and rosettes.
tan, or white appear on the somewhat wider (ca. 26 cm) frieze above, which Lang terms a “wallpaper frieze.” The horses seem to be attested only by their hooves. Fig. 80 shows a reconstruction of the horses above the nautilus frieze. Two architectural units appear to have recumbent creatures on top of them. In the first case (1 A 2, fig. 81), two sphinxes face each other atop the façade and may be seen in a guardian or heraldic capacity. The façade itself depicts ashlar masonry, a beam end frieze of alternating orange-brown and black, and a central column with a wide capital. In the second case (2 A 2, fig. 82), there appear to be lions atop an architectural façade. Here, the creatures are facing away from each other, rather than towards each other like the sphinxes. A large portion of the lion on the right is preserved, as well as the tail of the one on the left. Very little of the architecture itself is preserved, but it seems to depict similar ashlar masonry and cornice as in 1 A 2. The top of the section also preserves part of another set of striped bands, which Lang takes to suggest that there would have been another nautilus frieze above.

Portions of two different pairs of deer are also preserved from the inner propylon (fig. 83). In 1 C 2, they are depicted against a background of blue and white separated by vertical wavy lines. They are reconstructed as standing or perhaps walking at a leisurely pace based on the pair of haunches, as well as the neck and part of a forelimb of one. The deer are light tan, outlined in a darker brown, and have hair-like markings, also in brown. The figure whose neck

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325 Lang 1969, 137.
326 Lang 1969, 137.
328 Lang 1969, 104.
and head are partially preserved is said to be reaching towards a brownish plant. The other pair of deer is represented by a single fragment (2 C 2), which includes the midsection of a tan deer with white underbelly in the foreground and the legs of his companion, whose hooves appear to be resting on rocks. The background changes from blue (above) to white (below) along a horizontal double wavy line. In both of these instances, there seems to have been an attempt to show the deer in a natural setting, although this is only to a very limited extent.

The last set of decoration from this room is a pair of seated women in profile, both wearing Minoan style garments (1-2 H 2, fig. 84). The two fragments are not securely linked to one another, but since there is one woman (2 H 2) facing right, and another (1 H 2) facing left, they are reconstructed as facing one another. The woman on the right wears a brown jacket with dark red-tan trim, a blue skirt with leaf shaped decoration, and a red belt. Her midriff is bare. She reaches forward with her elbow bent upwards at a right angle. The woman on the left wears a blue jacket with psi decoration and dark barred trim, as well as a tan skirt with leaf decoration. Her right hand is outstretched and her hair falls in locks across her shoulders. Neither the exact activity of the women nor their status (women, priestesses, or even goddesses) is clear. Furthermore, there may have been 2-3 other women in the frieze.

The court (3) had comparatively little material. A large part of regular arc dado is probably from the inner propylon (2). Pieces of red, white, and blue dado from southeast of the portico are likely from the portico itself (4). Finally, there is an architectural fragment (8 A 3, fig. 85) with horns of consecration, which is a very Minoan motif. Otherwise, the architecture is

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329 Lang 1969, 104.

330 The reconstruction of this figure as seated is due to its similarity to the figure on the right who must be seated (Lang, 1969, 63).

331 Lang 1969, 36-37.
quite similar to that depicted in 1 A 2. This fragment is well preserved and unburnt, so it is unlikely to be from the final phase of wall paintings at the time of destruction.332

The portico (4) also had limited fresco material. It primarily consisted of material from a dado course. Fragments included regular arc dado in blue/black, red, white, and yellow. Other pieces had more undefined red and blue areas. The upper walls may have been painted to depict wood beams. There is only some red with black graining, which Lang suggests represents wood.333

A procession scene was found partially in situ against the northeast wall of the vestibule (room 5 on fig. 74; reconstruction shown in fig. 86).334 The fresco was badly burnt in the final destruction of the palace. The figures, 30-40 cm in height, are mostly male, wearing either kilts or long ceremonial robes with various patterns. There is evidence for at least one flounced Minoan skirt. The figures are shown in profile carrying offerings and proceeding left toward what may be a shrine.335 Also present is the head of a bull on a larger scale, but Lang argues that the difference in scale is no larger than that seen in the Taureador fresco at Knossos.336 Based on the location and orientation, Lang suggests that this scene represents a procession, proceeding towards the Throne Room (6). Lang further suggests the differences in attire signify the wearer’s position. Those in kilts bring equipment, and those in robes are religious officials. The females present are seen as privileged, either priestesses or members of the royal family. The males in

332 Lang 1969, 192.
333 Lang 1969, 192.
334 Immerwahr 1990, 197.
335 Alternatively, the architectural wall fragment may have come from the rubble of wall fill (Lang 1969, 193).
robes form pairs of figures in similarly decorated dress, although they differ in scale. Lang suggests the larger and smaller figures may represent men and boys, or priests and acolytes.\textsuperscript{337}

As the main room of the Megaron and center of the entire complex, is it unsurprising that the “Throne Room” (6) had substantial evidence of wall painting. Most of the fragments from the room were found by the northeast wall, the eastern portion of which has been reconstructed (fig. 87).\textsuperscript{338} To the left of the center of the wall, fragments were discovered that could be reconstructed as a griffin-lion pair.\textsuperscript{339} In this group, the head of a griffin facing right is best preserved (fig. 88). The point of the eye is towards the rear of the head in typical non-animal, non-human fashion.\textsuperscript{340} A small portion of its plumage, in a spiral pattern, is also preserved. Part of the couchant griffin’s hind quarters are also preserved (fig. 89). Black lines along the profile line show that the white ground represents fur. Behind the griffin, the forequarters of a tan animal are preserved, which is likely a lion. Lang proposes the possibility that rocks can be identified at the bottom of the image.\textsuperscript{341} There are no fragments to suggest that the griffin was winged, and the angle of its head is unclear.\textsuperscript{342} There are several small fragments that appear to preserve animal hair, likely that of a lion, from the adjacent section of the wall to the southwest. This supports the reconstruction (fig. 87), which features a lion-griffin pair facing left. This section also partially preserves a depiction of a stone vase (2 M 6) in black, white, and tan. It is not depicted in the reconstruction, and Lang suggests that it may have been part of the dado next

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{337}] The background style is unclear from the available black and white photos and description in Lang 1969.
\item[\textsuperscript{338}] Lang 1969, 194-196. This is the wall on which the “throne” is found.
\item[\textsuperscript{339}] A second pair is thought to flank the other side of the “throne.” This is what is shown in the reconstruction.
\item[\textsuperscript{340}] Lang 1969, 110.
\item[\textsuperscript{341}] Lang 1969, 110.
\item[\textsuperscript{342}] Lang 1969, 111.
\end{itemize}
to the throne, which uses the same color scheme, and depicts libation equipment. Another, less likely possibility is that it could have been above the throne, between the two pairs of heraldic animals. There is not strong evidence for the location of “the Wavy Junction of Red and White” (1M 6) but Lang suggests it would form a good division between the heraldic animals, on a white background, and the scene to the right, which is against a red background. Finally, one piece of running spiral was found in this area, which may have been above the figural frieze.

On the other side of the Wavy Junction, a life-size bull is reconstructed. This is based on a group of fragments of “a large white mass, along the edges of which appear to be blobs and clusters of blobs, which are seen as characteristic of bull hide representations in the frescoes,” which is interpreted as part of the shoulder and neck area. Lang sees this bull as “listening” to the lyre player to the right, and serving as a link between the banqueting scene and the heraldic animals. Two groups of frescoes, the “Lyre-Player and Bird” and the “Two Men at Table,” make up a larger group which Lang dubs “The Bard at the Banquet” (fig. 87, 90). The Lyre Player is one of the most well-known pieces from the room. The first of two non-joining fragment groups includes the upper border of the frieze, which consists of gray, brown and white striped bands, as well as most of the bird, the upper part of the lyre, and the upper torso and head of the lyre player. The other group of fragments preserves the lyre player’s skirt and feet, as well as the rocks on which he sits. The fragments are largely set against a red background, except for an

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343 Lang 1969, 179, 195.
344 Lang (1969, 195) says this could be “appealing to those who think the King’s wealth came from the pottery trade.”
346 Lang (1969, 109-110) suggests the pale yellow blobs were once black or brown.
347 The head is barely visible, as it is the same color as the background.
irregular section of white at the top, divided along a horizontal wavy line. Some darker bands of decoration can be seen on the lyre player’s skirt, but it is unclear whether this continued onto his torso. Lang sees his garment as most closely resembling those worn by figures in the Campstool fresco and the charioteer from Knossos.\(^{348}\) The bird, although mostly white, has bands of color.\(^{349}\) There is a fragment (24.5 cm x 21 cm), which preserves portions of two men seated at a table, which Lang associates with the lyre player, although they are about two-thirds the scale. Only the skirts and feet of the two men are preserved, as well as the three-legged table at which they sit. They appear to be clothed similarly to the lyre player. The edge of what may be an hourglass stool is partially preserved with the figure on the left.\(^{350}\) There is another, smaller fragment (15 cm x 16 cm), which preserves part of a table, with a figure to the left. This fragment also depicts the change in the background from red to white along a wavy line.\(^{351}\)

The preservation of the other walls of the room is much more limited. The northwest wall would have been the first to be seen by someone entering from the vestibule. Although the fragments are very poorly preserved, it was possible for Lang to determine that there were most likely large scale animals on the wall. She proposes that there may have been a Master of Animals flanked by beasts against a rocky background.\(^{352}\) There were also fragments of a running spiral frieze like that on the northeast wall.\(^{353}\) The side with the doorway (the southeast

\(^{348}\) Lang 1969, 80.

\(^{349}\) Lang (1969, 80) says that the color is brown.

\(^{350}\) Lang 1969, 80.

\(^{351}\) Lang 1969, 80.

\(^{352}\) Lang 1969, 126, 195-196. She reports fragments of a red animal with black-outlined white leaf markings like 21 C 46. The identification of a possible human comes only from a fragment with the possibility of two windblown strands of hair amongst jagged rocks.

\(^{353}\) Lang 1969, 196.
wall) was also very poorly preserved. One fragment (45 H 6, fig. 91) from the southwest side of the wall may show two men in a procession to the right, or away from the door.\textsuperscript{354} The figures would be ca. 40 cm tall and seem to be wearing white robes with lavender and brown stripes.\textsuperscript{355}

The southwest wall, directly across from the side with the throne and good preservation, is thought to have fallen outward, such that the plaster in Room 17, a small room on the other side of the corridor, may belong to this wall.\textsuperscript{356} The Deer and Papyrus fresco (36 C 17, fig. 92) come from Room 17. The three fragments together measure about 1.07m by 0.73m, which Lang suggests is too large to have fallen from an upper story.\textsuperscript{357} One fragment preserves the hindquarters of a life-size red deer against a white background, with papyrus to the right. It is a white-tailed deer with hatched white on the edge of the tail and the inside of the hind legs.\textsuperscript{358} The blue papyrus has red and blue leaves as well as a dark red flower along the stem. This is unlike the papyrus from the Throne Room at Knossos, which does not have any flowers.\textsuperscript{359} Another fragment shows the upper portion of this plant. Lang suggests that the dots and dashes below the upper leaves represent flowers sprouting from the stem.\textsuperscript{360}

\textsuperscript{354} Lang 1969, 195.

\textsuperscript{355} Lang 1969, 81. These would be roughly the same height as the taller figures from the Vestibule (room 5).

\textsuperscript{356} Lang 1969, 195. Since the fresco pieces from the northeast wall fell inward, the opposite wall is thought to have fallen in the same direction, so outward.

\textsuperscript{357} Lang 1969, 118, 195. The room does have some \textit{in situ} plaster near the floor and was likely decorated, but she suggests that the scale is much too large for such a small room. On the other hand, she admits that the finished right edge would only be necessary this far south in the throne room if there had been an exposed vertical beam.

\textsuperscript{358} Lang 1969, 118.

\textsuperscript{359} Lang 1969, 119.

\textsuperscript{360} Lang 118-119. She says that there are other pieces (unphotographed) that show pieces of papyrus, as well as possible the eye of the deer and part of an antler.
Room 20 also deserves a brief mention on account of the material found here that likely fell from above.\textsuperscript{361} There are several fragments of various animals. One of the most interesting is 3 C 20 (fig. 93), which depicts the hoof of an animal at the base of what may be an altar. Under the hoof and in front of or under the altar are homogenous groups of rocks. The animal is reconstructed as a deer,\textsuperscript{362} but there is no clear evidence of a human leading it to sacrifice. There are also fragments of horses' legs (7 C 20, fig. 94), likely belonging to at least two different animals. They are depicted above a similar rocky ground line. Finally, there is a fragment that shows the rumps of two animals that are reconstructed as wild boars (9 C 20, fig. 95).

**Hall 46**

After passing through the outer and inner propylaia into the courtyard, one may turn right to approach Hall 46 instead of continuing straight in to the megaron (see plan, fig. 74). Stoa 44 is the first ‘room’ that would be encountered. There was a limited amount of plaster \textit{in situ}, but a fair amount of plaster appears to have fallen from above. The fragments appear to represent a beam end frieze at the top, and variegated dado with a variety of motifs connected above by bands of grey or black, red or orange, and white.\textsuperscript{363} There is less evidence for the middle portion of the wall. A large scale figural scene is possible, but the “shoe with a curled toe” (9 M 44) may actually be a griffin’s chest ornament, and the “possible drapery” (10 M 44, fig. 96) could have come from inside the walls.\textsuperscript{364} The “Flame-Pattern Frieze” (11 F 44) may either be from the dado

\textsuperscript{361} Lang 1969, 199.

\textsuperscript{362} Lang 1969, 199.

\textsuperscript{363} The motifs included barred diamonds, horizontal ripple lines, an amoebic net pattern, easter egg rocks, diagonal waves, and various rosettes.

\textsuperscript{364} Lang 1969, 207.
or part of the wings of a large griffin.\textsuperscript{365} After passing through the stoa, one would turn right to enter the corridor (Rooms 45, 51, and 52), where some calcinated plaster was preserved on the walls.\textsuperscript{366} A beam end frieze appears to have run along the top. Other material is likely to have come from a neighboring room, Hall 46.

Hall 46 itself has traces of two phases of decoration preserved, with the later phase plastered over the previous one. The earlier phase seems to have had a dado decoration of red lines on a white ground. There is also a section \textit{in situ} with in-growing hairs and trefoil blobs (16 D 46, fig. 97), which are characteristic of animal hide. This leads Lang to suggest an earlier painting program for the southwest and northwest walls as “realistically rendered hide hangings on imitation stone.”\textsuperscript{367} She further suggests that the northeast wall had an “early and elegant” form of arc dado that gave way to a later form that was coarser, and therefore, something similar may have happened on the walls with the hangings, where the decoration “gave way to something both more coarse and less understood.”\textsuperscript{368}

For the overall decoration of the room in its final phase, Lang suggests a rock and hide dado (with border), a horizontal “beam” as a finished lower edge for a lion and griffin frieze with another one above (which also serves as a lintel for the doorways), and finally a running spiral frieze at the top.\textsuperscript{369} This takes into account both the material from the hall itself and the corresponding material that has fallen into neighboring rooms. The individual pieces of dado (18-24 D 46) either have clusters of blobs, curving bands or zones of contrasting color, but the

\textsuperscript{365} Lang 1969, 207.
\textsuperscript{366} Lang 1969, 208.
\textsuperscript{367} Lang 1969, 208.
\textsuperscript{368} Lang 1969, 208.
\textsuperscript{369} Lang 1969, 211.
overall message is not decipherable. The blobs are characteristic of bull hides, black spots on brown may be from other animals, and the various other patterns are typical of rock work.\footnote{Lang 1969, 211.} Thus, Lang suggests that the designs are more stylized than in previous phases of decoration, and the combination represents “in almost debased fashion and with almost complete lack of understanding, animal hides hung on stone walls.”\footnote{Lang 1969, 211.} In part, this may be because she cannot restore it to be symmetrical like the shield frescoes from Knossos or Tiryns, and therefore finds it less meaningful.

The greatest number of the animal fragments comes from the west corner, although this is more likely due to taphonomy than based on the original layout.\footnote{Fragments 21-27 C 46 come from this room.} There are at least a few fragments of lions and griffins near each wall, indicating that such depictions likely decorated the whole room, including at least two lions and a griffin from the northeast wall.\footnote{Lang 1969, 209.} There is some overlapping and some variation in size of the animals.\footnote{Lang 1969, 210.} The animals are all outlined in heavy black against a plain white background.\footnote{Lang 1969, 111.} The yellow lion of 21 C 46 has leaf decoration and the griffin has a purple body.\footnote{Lang 1969, 111.} Their reconstruction is shown in fig. 98.

There is very little evidence for decoration from the other rooms in this area, but a number of fragments did come from Room 43, which shares the northwest wall of Hall 46, although there is no connection between the rooms. Many of the fragments seem to belong to the

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\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{Lang 1969, 211.}
\item \footnote{Lang 1969, 211.}
\item \footnote{Fragments 21-27 C 46 come from this room.}
\item \footnote{Lang 1969, 209.}
\item \footnote{Lang 1969, 210.}
\item \footnote{Lang 1969, 111.}
\item \footnote{Lang 1969, 111.}
\end{itemize}
decoration of Hall 46, but there also appears to have been a hunting scene in a room lying above
Rooms 43, 46 and 48, a portion of which is reconstructed as fig. 99. At least three dogs and
seven hunters appear (16-20 H 43), one of whom is throwing his spear at a stag (16 H 43, fig.
100). The dogs are disproportionately large compared to the humans (who are only ca. 20cm
tall). The stag, on the other hand, is disproportionately small. \(^{377}\) The hunters are set on different
levels and wear tunics of various colors, including white, white with black spots, yellow, and a
dark color. \(^{378}\) Each wears white greaves and pointed-toed shoes, and carries a spear. One (in 19
H 43, lower right in fig, 99) may carry a circular shield, but not enough is preserved to
confidently make this identification. \(^{379}\) The figure in 18 H 43 is also reconstructed as holding a
circular shield (fig. 101). The dogs (e.g. 12 C 43, fig. 102) are solid white, solid black, or
yellowish tan with lines for hair. \(^{380}\) Lang describes them as elegant creatures with very long legs
and long tails curling over their backs. \(^{381}\) They have large eyes, flat heads, and long, laid back
ears, and probably wore collars. \(^{382}\) The whole scene is set against a background of light tan or
brownish black, sections of which are divided by wavy lines of black on a white strip. \(^{383}\) There
may have been some limited depiction of vegetation, which is suggested by pieces with green
and lavender along the same border. Lang suggests that the northwest wall of this upper room
depicted the actual hunt and the opposite side would have shown the return from the hunt and

\(^{377}\) Lang 1969, 206.

\(^{378}\) Lang 1969, 68-72.

\(^{379}\) Lang 1969, 169.


\(^{381}\) Lang 1969, 107.

\(^{382}\) Lang 1969, 170.

\(^{383}\) Lang 1969, 206.
sacrifice. The fragments cataloged as 21 H 48 show hunters (who wear greaves), dogs on leashes, and tripod stands (fig. 103). Thus, upon returning from the hunt, there may have been some sort of sacrifice.

Two small rooms (53 and 50) lie just to the south east of Hall 46, on the other side of corridor 48. The more northeastern of these (Room 50) was likely decorated. Lang reports a “fine and elegant floor” and catalogs two fresco fragments. A life-sized flounced skirt (48 H 50), which was found low in the debris, is similar to other female figures from the site. Less typical, and therefore more questionable, is the fragment of “Large Scale Windows,” but it is plausible that a life-sized female was depicted in an architectural setting. The stairway (Room 54), to the southwest of Hall 64 seems to have had some non-figural decoration. There are fragments of “Rosettes with Streamers” (13 F 54), which Lang suggests may have been mid-wall.

Hall 64

Hall 64 in the southwestern building is the final room with a substantial amount of reconstructable figural decoration (ca. 10m found in situ). From bottom to top of the northeastern wall, Lang suggests an arc dado course (1 D 64), three bands at lintel level, the dog frieze, a beam, the battle scene, at eye level another beam, and possibly a nautilus frieze at the very top. Additional fragments, possibly from elsewhere in the room, included a chariot wheel, part

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384 Lang 1969, 206.
385 Lang 1969, 212.
386 Lang 1969, 212.
387 Lang 1969, 213.
of a man in a knee length tunic, and various appendages.\textsuperscript{389} There are also pieces with checkerboard patterns or bands of color that likely formed top and/or bottom borders.\textsuperscript{390}

The dog frieze included about 20 overlapping dogs, some of which are identified as open-mouthed and yapping (see fig. 104 for partial reconstruction).\textsuperscript{391} Although these are identified as hunting dogs,\textsuperscript{392} they are not depicted the same as those from the room above Hall 46. They have more pointed, alert ears, as well as different facial shapes. Furthermore, they are depicted as lying down, so their full height and proportions are not obvious. There are also no humans depicted for relative size comparisons. Most of the dogs are red-brown, but there is also the occasional white dog with black and brown spots.\textsuperscript{393} The spotted dog shown in fig. 101 is shown without a tail, but Lang suggests that this is more likely a matter of artistic convenience than an attempt at differentiating breeds.\textsuperscript{394} At least some of the dogs wore collars. They all rest on the striped border below. There is also some evidence for multicolored rocks hanging above them.

The battle scene shows “a kaleidoscopic series of duels between our well-equipped Mycenaeans and sheep-skin clad barbarians.”\textsuperscript{395} Although the entire frieze cannot be reconstructed as such, several different scenes can be identified. The largest group of fragments is Lang’s 22 H 64 (fig. 105), her “duomachy and mass murder,” although I do not find “mass murder” to be a certain interpretation. The duomachy appears in the upper right, against a blue

\begin{footnotes}
\item[389] Lang 1969, 215.
\item[390] Lang 1969, 215.
\item[391] Lang 1969, 215.
\item[392] Lang 1969, 215.
\item[393] Lang 1969, 119-122, 215.
\item[394] Lang 1969, 121.
\item[395] Lang 1969, 215.
\end{footnotes}
background. A red-skinned male, identified as Mycenaean, wears a black and white kilt, white greaves, and a helmet likely of boar tusk. Lang suggests that the black triangles on the kilt represent some sort of metal armor.\(^{396}\) This Mycenaean stabs another red-skinned male, who attempts to stab him back. This second male wears a white outfit, which Lang identifies as sheepskin and reconstructs as more draped than clothed.\(^{397}\) Other males are shown at various angles, not standing on a common or even necessarily horizontal ground line. To the left of the duomachy, there appears to be a falling barbarian, identified by his un-greaved foot and a bit of possible sheepskin clothing. The Mycenaean reconstructed with a spear appears to be only attested to by his partially greaved leg, although his foot is not covered (as it is in the reconstruction). A helmeted warrior appears below, but he is perpendicular to the action above. Lang identifies him as victorious over the skin clad male below him, who is horizontal in the other direction.\(^{398}\) If so, this is an unconvincing rendering of a “flying tackle.” Alternatively, the figure may also be falling. The men to the right are more clearly falling or fallen. I would suggest, however, that the horizontal barbarians to the right need not all be dead, as implied by the idea of a “mass murder.” In fact, the angle and bending of their bodies makes them look more like they are falling, although this could suggest their impending death. Furthermore, the horizontal Mycenaean is not clearly alive. The right portion of the scene is against a blue background. This gives way, along a triple set of black lines, to a white background. There is evidence for a checkerboard pattern along the top, which is also reconstructed as a bottom border.

\(^{396}\) Lang 1969, 71.

\(^{397}\) Lang 1969, 215.

\(^{398}\) Lang 1969, 215. She describes the move as a “flying tackle.”
The helmeted male figure of 23 H 64 (fig. 106) is depicted most similarly to the Mycenaean warriors of 22 H 64. He is only preserved from his nude torso up, but he too wears a boar’s tusk helmet and a black baldric. He carries a spear instead of a dagger, which provides a comparandum for the restoration of the man with a spear in 22 H 64. He is also depicted against a similar background of blue changing to white along wavy black lines. This fragment does show, however, that the checkerboard border may not have been continuous.

The men in 24 H 64 (fig. 107) may be dressed slightly differently. Only the shadows of portions of five men remain. Although poorly preserved, all three figures that have their waists preserved seem to wear the same kind of kilt (at least as restored), which is different from the kilts of the men in 22-23 H 64. Only one head is preserved, which may wear a helmet with a straight nose-piece.\(^{399}\) This depiction is also unlike the helmets of the Mycenaeans in 22 H 64 and 23 H 64. It is thus not possible to distinguish different groups battling, and it is unclear which figures are Mycenaean. The men at the top appear to share a common unmarked horizontal ground line, while those at the bottom (including the helmeted figure) may be falling. They are reconstructed against a solid background that changes from light to dark and back along pairs of wavy black lines.

The figures of 25 H 64 are also very poorly preserved. The ghosts of the painting are reconstructed, similar to those of 24 H 64, as mostly nude males with short plain kilts (fig. 108). Lang suggests, however, that there is some white paint near the loins of two men and the torso of another, such that it was a battle between those wearing metal kilts and those in sheepskin (like 22 H 64).\(^{400}\) The evidence is scant either way, but Davis and Bennet reconstruct the scene in the

\(^{399}\) Lang 1969, 73.

\(^{400}\) Lang 1969, 73.
latter manner (fig. 109). Figures are mostly shown against a white background, which seems to switch to a darker color, perhaps blue, on the right. There are also traces of a black and white checkerboard and colored bands as a lower border. Another poorly preserved scene (28 H 64) shows one man holding another by the heel.401 Somewhat better preserved is the head of another warrior wearing a boar’s tusk helmet (29 H 64). His arm is stretched up behind him, such that Lang suggests that he is leaning on his spear.402 A knot at his shoulder may represent a baldric. He is shown against a reddish background.

A chariot with charioteer has been identified as partially preserved in 26 H 64 (fig. 110). The reconstruction shows a rounded chariot body, with a four-spoked wheel and pole forward to the horses’ rumps. There are very faint traces of the driver, standing in the chariot and holding the reins. Another soldier with a spear stands to the left, perhaps following the chariot.403 The reconstruction of the tunics is only hypothetical.404 It is unclear whether traces of the boar’s tusk helmets are actually visible. Lang suggests that the incised diagonal line may be the guide line for an architectural setting.405 The background seems to have been solid, and may have changed along wavy black lines. The top border was checkered with bands above it. Fragment 27 H 64 may also have included a charioteer, based on the ghosts of arms reaching forward, as if holding reins.406 There is clearly a bulls’ hide covering in 30 H 64 (fig. 111), with trefoil black blobs

401 Lang 1979, 74.
402 Lang 1969, 74.
403 Lang (1969, 73) also mentions another soldiers’ spear to the lower right that is not shown in the reconstruction, so it is unclear exactly how it fits with the rest of the scene.
404 Lang 1969, 73.
405 Lang 1969, 73.
against a white background. It may represent either a large shield or the box of a chariot,\textsuperscript{407} but there is neither a head above to signify a shield, nor a body or wheel to signify a chariot.

\textsuperscript{407} Lang 1969, 74.
V. FRESCO PROGRAM AT MYCENAE

Although Mycenae may be the namesake for the Late Bronze Age culture group on mainland Greece, the majority of the frescoes from the site are less well preserved and published than those from Pylos, and thus are secondary in the study of Mycenaean frescoes (see fig. 112 for plan of site with major fresco locations marked). One notable exception, however, is the Room of the Frescoes, which will be discussed along with the other frescoes from the area of the “Cult Center.”

Early Frescoes

The earliest phase of decoration is largely known from the Ramp House deposit. Although these fragments were not in situ, there is some suggestion that they were cultic and possibly related to Grave Circle (A) or ancestor cult. One of the rare Mycenaean examples of bull leaping comes from the Ramp House deposit (fig. 113). Taureadors and bulls are depicted against a plain blue or ochre background, but there is not enough preserved to reconstruct the whole scene. The fragments seem to come from multiple panels. Female acrobats may also be present. Shaw considers the fresco to be of very fine quality and one of the earliest on the

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408 Note that Thebes has some material that may be older, but that is beyond the scope of this paper (Immerwahr 1990, 106).


410 Immerwahr 1990, 110.

411 Immerwahr 1990, 110.
mainland, so dates it to LH II or early LH IIIA.\textsuperscript{412} Furthermore, she feels that the motif was not indicative of a mainland practice of bull leaping, but rather that the motif was used as a “powerful symbol of the authority that had once resided in the palace of Knossos.”\textsuperscript{413} There are also women in an architectural scene (fig. 114). They are shown with their bodies in three-quarter view and head in relative profile, looking to the left. Each has one arm partially out the window. This window is decorated with double axes in the upper corners from which festoons hang. Immerwahr describes the architecture as more simplified and symbolic than the architecture in true miniature form frescoes from Knossos.\textsuperscript{414} This panel might have been associated with the bull leaping panel, such that the women would have been observing the bull games.\textsuperscript{415} The last group of important reliefs from this deposit is one of life-size women, which most likely formed part of a processional frieze. The background changes from blue to yellow at wavy intersections. Additional fragments included striped easter egg rocks and a few fragments of flora painting.\textsuperscript{416}

**Megaron**

As with Pylos, we begin with the frescoes from the megaron complex (My. No. 11, LH IIIB), which may have decorated all four sides of the main room for a length of ca. 46 meters.\textsuperscript{417}

\textsuperscript{412} Shaw 1996, 190.
\textsuperscript{413} Shaw 1996, 190.
\textsuperscript{414} Immerwahr 1990, 110.
\textsuperscript{415} Shaw 1996, 176-177.
\textsuperscript{416} Immerwahr 1990, 110. The deposit may also have contained now lost fragments of seated women in stucco.
\textsuperscript{417} Immerwahr 1990, 123; L. 1922, 281; Rodenwaldt 1921. Immerwahr notes that south and east walls had already collapsed down the slope prior to excavation. L. (1922) criticizes Rodenwaldt’s (1921, 282) dating them to contemporary with LM I Crete based on the fineness of technique and composition and on account of the fact.
It was probably at approximately eye level and may have been as much as a meter in height.\textsuperscript{418} Although a number of fragments have been discovered, few are well published. Most of the fragments are poorly preserved and barely legible on account of fading and fire/smoke damage.\textsuperscript{419} The best published pair of fragments depicts a portion of a battle scene in an architectural setting from the northwest corner of the room, although the people and setting are not on the same scale (fig. 115).\textsuperscript{420} At the top of the scene, there is a man who appears to be falling off of the architecture. He wears white greaves similar to those of the Mycenaeans in the Pylos paintings, but his kilt is plain, rather than having the black and white triangles thought to represent metal. It is interesting to note that if Mycenae is using similar Mycenaean versus non-Mycenaean conventions as at Pylos, this should be identified as a falling (and therefore likely dying) Mycenaean. At Pylos, the Mycenaeans are usually interpreted to be in victorious positions.

As published, the background changes from blue, around the man’s left leg, to red further down along a horizontal undulating line. Above him is the body of an animal, which Rodenwaldt reconstructed as a galloping horse drawing a chariot (fig. 116). Thomas, however, suggests that the animal is a lion rather than a horse, which adds to the symbolic meaning (fig. 117).\textsuperscript{421} The architecture seems to occur on different levels and have people in the windows, at least one of which has been identified as female, which is similar to the depiction of towns in the West House

\textsuperscript{418} Immerwahr 1990, 123.

\textsuperscript{419} Immerwahr 1990, 123. She notes that even the warrior and architecture scene is barely legible today.

\textsuperscript{420} Immerwahr 1990, 192.

\textsuperscript{421} Thomas 1999, 305.
Miniature Fresco from Akrotiri. The checkerboard patterns and the column best resemble depictions in the Grandstand Fresco from Knossos. Beam ends are also visible, as with the architectural fragments from Pylos. Similar black decoration outside the windows is found both in the Grandstand Fresco and from Pylos (cf. fig. 10, 81, 82). Although the man appears to be falling off the architecture, he is shown on a much larger scale, which is unlike other depictions from Knossos and Akrotiri with figures in architectural settings. This may suggest that the architecture is further in the background or that the battle scene is the more important part of the depiction.

Immerwahr suggests that the entrance wall may have had frescoes depicting the preparations for battle, a scene which might include horses led by grooms and an unyoked chariot. She further suggests that this might resemble the slightly earlier groom fresco (My. No. 10; LH IIIA/IIIB1, fig. 118) that had been removed before the final destruction of the palace and was discarded in the Pithos Area. The Groom Fresco is reconstructed from several associated fragments. The man standing by the left horse is wearing neither a helmet nor greaves (if the legs are correctly associated). More of the next horse than human is preserved, but he may be wearing a white tunic. The right portion of the scene is the most complex. It is unclear why the man to the left of the pair of horses (a light in front of a dark) is reconstructed as wearing greaves if the others are not. A warrior stands behind the horses. The chin strap for a helmet and his spear are clearly visible. Immerwahr reports that both this and the megaron frieze change

422 The person visible in the color image available looks more red than white, although white would follow the typical color convention for a female. Another figure is also reconstructed in a lower window.

423 Pylos 1 A 2 also has a column inside other architectural framing, but the capital of the Mycenae Megaron fresco better resembles the one from Knossos than the one from Pylos.

424 Immerwahr 1990, 123.
from blue to yellow along straight vertical lines. She further suggests that the descending rock work is stylistically connected to the 14th century, but need not imply such an early date for the fresco.

Only line drawings of the other fresco fragments from the megaron (My. No. 11) are available. The preparations for battle (fig. 119), which may have been near the entrance, include a standing greaved man who may be holding the reins of an unyoked horse. Behind him stands another greaved man, but the reconstruction with the spear does not appear to be certain. At a lower level, only the (unhelmeted) head and shoulder of another person is visible. Thus the scene may have occurred on multiple levels, which could give a sense of busyness or people milling around. There is also a fragment of a chariot that has not yet been attached to a horse, as well as a horse that is being held (fig. 120). There is a fragment of two men with spears at a lower level than horse’s feet and finally another spear-bearing soldier’s body (fig. 121). None of these figures are clearly participating in a battle scene, although the last one may be fully equipped for battle or proceeding towards battle.

There are two fragment groups that clearly depict chariots that are yoked (fig. 122). The horses are standing or walking quietly, so these may depict the trip to the battle, rather than being part of the battle scene itself. The driver(s) is not depicted in either case. The reconstruction of an archer in the second fragment does not appear to be substantiated. He may be running backward, but this would be a very awkward shooting position. Very little of the actual battle scene is preserved. Immerwahr associates a fragment of architecture (fig. 123) from the northeast

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425 Immerwahr 1990, 124.

426 L. (1922) finds the line drawings to be poorly executed and un-Mycenaean in appearance.

427 Immerwahr 1990, 124. She also suggests that the fact that chariots in the Aegean in this period are not being used as hunting/shooting platforms means that they likely had “special importance as status symbols for the warrior elite.”
part with the battle and sees a tradition at Mycenae of representing a walled city where the combat takes place. Lamb finds this fragment to have a patch of green “suggestive of a tree and scallops of the type usually found in landscape.” Another fragment is that of a greaved man, who appears to have lost his weapon and is in the process of falling backwards (fig. 124). He wears a tunic of some sort rather than a plated kilt. Another pair of fragments may be from an actual battle, but it is not clear. The greaved legs of two running men are preserved (fig. 124). Below them is the head and part of a spear of another soldier facing the opposite direction. It is not clear whether the fact that these figures face different directions suggests two opposing sides. If this were to be the case, it would be important to note that both sides are armored, at least to some extent, unlike most of the adversaries of the Mycenaean in the Pylos frescoes. In all of the published Megaron frescoes from Mycenae, there are no clear depictions of the “other” that they would be battling.

Cult Center

The Cult Center at Mycenae provides us with some of the best examples of wall painting from the site. They are of particular interest due, in part, to their relatively clear religious iconography, an aspect of wall painting that is typically much more obvious on Crete and at Akrotiri than on the mainland. The Cult Center lies on the southern slope of the acropolis, south east of the area of Grave Circle A and the South house. The area that is referred to as the cult center is variously defined, sometimes as only the area excavated by Taylour including the Room of the Frescoes and the Room of the Idols. As Immerwahr points out, we should see one larger

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428 Immerwahr 1990, 125. She references the Siege Rhyton in addition to this fragment and the first one of the section.

429 Lamb 1921-1923, 252.
cult area, including the area excavated by Mylonas, particularly the southeast house, or House of the High Priest, and the area of Tsountas’ shrine.430

Tsountas’ excavations in the late 19th century produced a small plaque with what appeared to be a goddess behind a figure-eight shield with figures on either side, which can be seen as worshipers (fig. 125). This led to the argument that the building was used as a cult to a Mycenaean warrior goddess. Additionally, as previously mentioned, the Ramp House deposit, included fragments of what appears to be a procession fresco, suggesting that there may have been cult activity near the grave circle even before the evidence from the cult circle proper. Morgan suggests that its proximity to the grave circle continues to represent veneration of ancestors.431

The Room of the Frescos (LH IIIB) includes some of the best preserved Mycenaean paintings, which were found in situ (fig. 126-127). In the corner of the room, there is a small bench or altar, decorated at the top by a beam end frieze and ‘horns of consecration.’ Above the bench are the lower portions of two life-size females facing each other. They stand in an architectural setting of spiral fluted columns and a dado of ashlar masonry. The one on the right wears the standard Minoan flounced skirt and appears to be holding out a staff or scepter. The figure on the left wears a straight blue dress. She holds a sword somewhat close to her body. Immerwahr notes that the scene clearly takes place in a shrine, but that it is unclear whether both figures are goddesses or one is a priestess.432 In between the figures, two small males appear, one black and one red. They are sometimes seen as representing the dead (black) and living or

430 Immerwahr 1990, 119.
431 Morgan 2005b.
432 Immerwahr 1990, 121.
breathing (red) warriors, since this color designation is seen in Egyptian painting. Thus, the figure on the left has often been identified as a goddess who is protector of warriors and the female on the right may be either goddess or a priestess. Marinatos argues that although the one on the left may have slightly larger proportions, the one on the right has an attribute as opposed to an offering. Furthermore, she argues that the position above the altar suggests that the two are both recipients of offerings. She further identifies the two small figures as spirits or souls. To the left of the bench, there is a third figure, whose upper portion is preserved. She wears a sleeved bodice under an animal skin that has been fastened diagonally. She also wears a flat-topped headdress with a plume. There are also traces of the front paws and the tail of what is likely a lion or griffin, both of which, but especially the latter, are usually associated with divinities. In either hand, she holds a shaft of wheat, so is sometimes seen as a nature or life-giving goddess, although Marinatos argues that she is only a priestess, bringing offerings of wheat to the altar she faces and towards which she walks. She counters the argument that only goddesses would be associated with lions or griffins by referencing a seal from Vapheio (CMS 1, 223) which is said to have a sacerdotal figure accompanied by a griffin. The wheat bearing figure is also in an architectural setting represented by the capital to her left. This building is closely related to the one housing the Room of the Idols, such that they once shared an open area before changes in access patterns. Morgan suggests that they were part of the same cult rather

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433 Morgan 2005b.

434 Rehak 1984; Immerwahr 1990, 121.

435 Marinatos 1988a, 247.

436 Marinatos 1988a, 248.

437 Immerwahr 1990, 121; Marinatos 1988a, 246.

438 It is suggested in CMS that the figure is male and that his clothing makes him a priest.
than two separate cult entities, and represent the duality of life and death.\textsuperscript{439} Immerwahr suggests that the figures represent two aspects of a single female divinity: war and fertility.\textsuperscript{440}

The Southwest Building, excavated by Mylonas, produced less complete wall paintings, but they are important nonetheless and considered to be higher (or more Minoan) in quality than the frescoes in the Room of the Frescoes.\textsuperscript{441} This building produced no clear evidence of sacrifice, but the fresco fragments suggest a cultic relation. There appear to be the ends of what may be two separate processions. In one case, the “Mykenaia,” there is a female holding a necklace (fig. 128). She is seated frontally with her head turned left in profile, against a solid blue background. She wears a saffron closed jacket with red and white. By association with skirt fragments of a seated female, she is thought to be the seated recipient, likely goddess, of the necklace at the end of a procession of figures moving toward their right.\textsuperscript{442} More recently however, Jones argued that she is instead a standing female striding to the left.\textsuperscript{443} Thus, she is perhaps a mortal with an offering. She is considered to be one of the finest examples of painting on the mainland, especially on account of the depictions of individual strands of hair.\textsuperscript{444} Even so, Immerwahr notes that her left thumb is depicted incorrectly.\textsuperscript{445}

There is also a fragment of a female grasping a small female figurine against a white background (fig. 129). The figurine is more anthropomorphic than the figurines from the Room

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{439} Morgan 2005b.
\item \textsuperscript{440} Immerwahr 1990, 121.
\item \textsuperscript{441} Immerwahr 1990, 121.
\item \textsuperscript{442} Immerwahr 1990, 119.
\item \textsuperscript{443} Jones 2009.
\item \textsuperscript{444} Immerwahr 1990, 119.
\item \textsuperscript{445} Immerwahr 1990, 119.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
of the Idols, so it is suggested to be a representation of an actual human, perhaps a child.\footnote{Immerwahr 1990, 119.}

There is another fragment of a stool with a foot, which, if associated, would suggest that this figure was sitting, and is therefore receiving the figurine.\footnote{Immerwahr 1990, 119.} Thus, she could be seen as a goddess related to children or family. Alternatively, the figure could be being presented to the seated figure. It has been suggested that this and “Mykenaia” were part of two different procession friezes on opposite walls.\footnote{Immerwahr 1990, 119.} The idea of a seated goddess receiving offerings is a recurring theme in Minoan art (cf. Saffron Gatherers from Xeste 3, Akrotiri, where a blue monkey gives some to a seated female identified as a goddess).

Other important fragments from the area include a frieze of several large figure eight shields (fig. 130) and a female wearing a boars’ tusk helmet and holding a griffin in her arms (fig. 131). Griffins are not normally seen in the presence of humans, so she is likely divine.\footnote{Immerwahr 1990, 121; Rehak 1984.} The helmet has led some to suggest that she is a warrior goddess, perhaps a precursor to Athena.\footnote{Immerwahr 1990, 121.} Immerwahr suggests that it may instead represent an ivory offering from a procession scene.\footnote{Immerwahr 1990, 121.} There are also remains of chariots, which may have lined the wall of the corridor that has been dubbed a processional way.\footnote{Mylonas 1981.} If this is the case, chariots are not confined to scenes of going off to hunt or battle. Tsountas had also found fragments of three Minoan genii with donkey heads carrying a pole over their shoulders (fig. 132).\footnote{Mylonas 1981.} In the topmost layer of the fill of the fill of the

\footnote{See above for N. Marinatos’ counter-argument pertaining to the Room of the Frescoes.}
Southwest Building, there were fragments of another life-size female figure, which is standing and holds a single yellow figure. She is interpreted as a part of a later, more conventionalized, procession scene. 454

An important observation that Mylonas makes is that the cult center is very much distinct from the megaron complex on the acropolis. 455 Thus, he argues against the idea of a wanax/ruler in the megaron who was also the primary person in charge of cult practices. 456 Although some ritual activity may have taken place outside of the Cult Center, the latter is where the majority of our evidence comes from. The frescoes of the palace proper do not have the same overtly ritual themes. The scenes of battle in the megaron may relate, however, if one sees the Cult Center goddess above the bench as a protector of the warrior elite.

453 Immerwahr 1990, 121.
454 Immerwahr 1990, 119.
455 Mylonas 1981.
456 Mylonas 1981.
VI. COMPARISON

The Mycenaean Fresco painting tradition is certainly indebted to its Minoan antecedents, but Immerwahr’s view may be too Creto-centric. Although the technology seems to be Minoan in origin, why must nearly all motifs be seen as strictly Minoan? Immerwahr argues that there must be a lost Minoan/Knossian precedent for the idea of miniature frescoes in the West House at Akrotiri and motifs present during Shaft Grave Mycenae, but also states that themes of warfare and hunting are characteristically Mycenaean. I do not believe that Mycenaean wall painting should be seen simply as the degradation of technique and the simplification, abstraction, or misunderstanding of motifs. Mycenaean wall painting transformed the art into one that worked within the Mycenaean value system. Yet, Minoan and Mycenaean paintings should not be seen as portraying a strict dichotomy between a peaceful Minoan thalassocracy and a group of warmongering Mycenaean states. To further explore the similarities and differences between the painting programs, I will focus on several important aspects, including the major topics of the scenes, depictions of humans and (possible) divinities, the presence of animals, and other elements, although there is overlap between these categories. I will then situate the frescoes within the broader concepts of the function of palaces and ideas concerning Minoanization and Mycenaeanization.

457 Immerwahr 1990, 64.
**Fresco Topics**

There are a variety of different topics represented in Minoan and Mycenaean wall painting. In the Neopalatial period, nature scenes with a high degree of naturalism were some of the most common, both in the Palace at Knossos itself, and in the nearby elite houses or villas, especially the “House of the Frescoes.” Scenes focusing on purely natural themes are also present at Akrotiri, as with the case of the “Spring Fresco.” Immerwahr argues that the nature scenes of Minoan fresco painting are more than just decoration and unlikely to be the result of individual taste or expression.\(^{458}\) She finds the idea of “art for art’s sake” to be anachronistic. Thus, the emphasis on nature is seen as connected with a Minoan Goddess of Nature and her worship.\(^{459}\) On the other hand, Shaw suggests that some of these scenes may in fact represent gardens.\(^{460}\) Nevertheless, she sees access to nature painting as restricted, especially since they often decorated the upper floors.\(^{461}\) Chapin further argues that not all landscapes need be religious, for there are medical and/or economic values in some plants.\(^{462}\) The Caravanserai paintings are sometimes seen as having a less religious implication or even as the beginning of the decline in the depiction of nature in LM IB after the eruption of Thera (but see above for Shaw’s argument against this).\(^{463}\)

After the Neopalatial period, such wholeheartedly natural scenes become much less common, but we should not regard the element of nature as totally absent in later fresco-painting.

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\(^{458}\) Immerwahr 1990, 46.

\(^{459}\) Immerwahr 1990, 46.

\(^{460}\) Shaw 1993.

\(^{461}\) Chapin 2004b, 59.

\(^{462}\) Chapin 2004b, 59.

\(^{463}\) Immerwahr 1990, 79; Shaw 2005.
Many paintings still include elements of nature – plants, rocks, etc. – but nature is often only alluded to rather than put on display. For example, the Room of the Frescoes at Mycenae has the female figure holding sheaths of grain. Furthermore, large scale animals that are not in an elaborately decorated setting are known from both Knossos (e.g. the Dolphin Fresco and to a lesser extent the Crocus Panel from the House of the Frescoes) and Akrotiri (e.g. Antelope Panels from B1). Thus, the frieze of hunting dogs from Pylos is not out of place.

Bull leaping and bull grappling are themes that were quite common at Knossos, but do not appear at Akrotiri. These acts are typically seen to have some sort of religious or ritual significance. One explanation for the significance of bull leaping is for the “shedding of blood in connection with the fertility festival.”\footnote{Kontorli-Papadopoulou 1996, 147, citing M. Cameron.} German points to the importance of movement, danger and strength/vigor in the bull leaping paintings.\footnote{German 2005, 33-49.} More generally, the bull can be seen as a symbol of power.\footnote{Hallager and Hallager 1995.} This could also represent a rite of passage of some variety. A fragment that may be associated with the Grandstand Fresco depicts a woman standing behind what may be a temporary barrier that might have been erected for the viewing of bull games (fig. 10).\footnote{Immerwahr 1990, 66; PM II, 2, 603.} There is certainly a performance aspect to the games. Although there is an early fragment of a miniature painting with a bull and possibly the locks of an acrobat, as well as the large stucco reliefs from the East Hall and the North Entrance, the best examples of bull leaping do not come from the Neopalatial period. The Taureador panels are dated to LM II/IIIA, the period of possible Mycenaean presence at Mycenaean Knossos. This motif is also present on the mainland, although only rarely and from early deposits rather than among the wall paintings that remained

\footnote{Kontorli-Papadopoulou 1996, 147, citing M. Cameron.}
\footnote{German 2005, 33-49.}
\footnote{Hallager and Hallager 1995.}
\footnote{Immerwahr 1990, 66; PM II, 2, 603.}
on the walls at Pylos and Mycenae at the time of destruction. It seems as though the motif may have been initially adopted on the mainland, perhaps as a symbol of power, but that it later went out of use. If the Knossian depictions of bull games are seen as ritual, this may suggest that the symbolism was adopted, but the meaning was changed.

Marinatos sees parallels between the Boxing Boys from Thera and the bull leaping frescoes. Boxing, like bull leaping, may have a ritual component. She notes the similarity in clothing (belt with a knot and loincloth) between adorants and people engaged in sports. The jewelry is also seen as a suggestion that boxing was more than just a game for children. The antelope from the same room are also described as engaged in “ritual competition” intended as a “display of strength.” Thus, animals, humans, and competition are all closely related.

Processions are another common and important theme in Aegean wall painting, although they are most common in the Monopalatial period at Knossos and on the mainland. There are, however, also likely procession scenes from Akrotiri. Interestingly, the paintings from the mainland have fewer males than those from Knossos and Akrotiri. The procession scenes are all seen as fundamentally religious. Those with some in situ preservation tend to be along routes where people may have walked. At Knossos, the Corridor of the Procession leads from the West Entrance down and around to the Central Court. There are also Processional scenes as one approaches the megaron at Pylos. If one sees the Throne Room at Knossos as at all similar to the main halls of the megarons on the mainland, might the Knossian procession have continued to the Throne Room? Alternatively the procession at Knossos followed an actual processional way.

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468 Marinatos 1984, 109-112.

469 Masseti (2003, 278) following Porter (1996). He notes that scholars such as Marinatos and Doumas had previously identified their behavior as “in amorous converse.” The identification of the behavior as antagonistic provides for a more unified program of decoration in the room.
to the scene of feasting or other ritual activity. The megarons on the mainland are sometimes seen as too small for this. They also open onto courtyards, which would have been a more likely location for large groups to gather.

Immerwahr sees what she terms “narrative painting” as reflecting “the true Mycenaean iconography without the strongly Minoanized features of the processional and religious paintings.” She argues that “clearly two themes predominate, the battle and the hunt, but they cannot always be distinguished, and they often seem to have a generic rather than specific meaning.” She also describes “certain general characteristics” of the class, which include the fact that the scene is usually against a neutral background and that there is limited use of “prop” architecture or landscape. This can also be seen in some of the later Knossian frescoes. The ubiquity of these ‘violently’ themed wall paintings, along with the warrior graves of the mainland, gives rise to the idea of a violent Mycenaean culture. Yet, even these themes have roots in earlier art.

Evans identified the “Theme of the Beleaguered City” in two miniature frescoes from a small room to the north of the central court at Knossos (see above, fig. 12-14). There may be warriors hurling javelins and a youthful officer with his left arm resting on a spear or staff. If these do, in fact, represent military exploits, then one cannot say that Minoans were wholly peaceful peoples. Even if these do not, it is not unreasonable that military was a part of their

470 Immerwahr 1990, 122.
471 Immerwahr 1990, 122.
472 Immerwahr 1990, 122.
473 PM III, 81-84; fig. 45-46.
society, even if it was not the most glorified aspect.\textsuperscript{474} The Minoans, instead, may have simply preferred to show dominance by allusion, through the use of scenes of games. Outside of the realm of fresco painting, the theme of the hunt, in particular, appears on Minoan glyptic. Marinatos argues that, in these cases, the hunt is an extension of the theme of sacrifice, as that is ultimately what may follow.\textsuperscript{475} It is not unreasonable that this extension could be taken as far as the hunt in Mycenaean wall painting.

As for the charge that Mycenaean painting has a generic rather than a specific meaning, it is not clear how this is especially different from Minoan wall painting or why this must be negative. There is no reason to believe that a bull leaping scene, for example, refers to one specific event with specific participants and viewers. Procession scenes need not represent a specific instance when a procession occurred, but they may serve as a continued act of the procession or as a guide for when the procession occurs. The fact that the religious symbolism in a hunt or battle scene is not overt does not mean the fresco is any less important to the society or culture in which it plays its role. These are unlikely to be scenes of mere decoration. Instead, they represent triumph, and success may be attributed to the role of the god(s).

**Humans and Divinities**

With the exception of the Minoan nature paintings, humans play a major role in many of the Aegean paintings. There are very few images that can be identified as even possible divinities. All of these are female. Furthermore, there are no figures that can be confidently

\textsuperscript{474} Gates (1999, 277) poses two possible reasons for what he sees as “no scenes of warfare in Minoan art”: either Minoans had no warfare, or they participated in warlike endeavors, but did not consider this appropriate subject matter. He finds the latter choice preferable because a society free of warfare for several centuries is difficult to imagine.” Although, I argue that there may have been representations of battle, they are not common. Thus his argument still holds value.

\textsuperscript{475} Marinatos 1988b.
identified as rulers. Instead, humans are mostly religious officials and adorants or everyday people. Nearly all of the female figures, both from Crete and mainland Greece, are depicted as wearing what is often referred to as ‘Minoan Court Dress.’ Most of these figures are in scenes which have been identified as having religious iconography. Two of the rare exceptions to the standard female attire occur in the Cult Center at Mycenae and in the West House at Akrotiri. Although they both are dressed unusually, they are not dressed alike. Also, this does not seem to relate to their positions in association with the divine. The first is typically identified as a goddess, but the other as a priestess. In other cases, such as with the goddess receiving saffron from the blue monkey in Xeste 3, the figure deemed a goddess wears typical Minoan costume, albeit slightly fancier than that of the mortals elsewhere in the fresco program. The presence of the griffin is used to confirm her identity as a goddess, as with the helmeted female figure from Mycenae who holds a griffin. The similarity between depictions of mortals and divinities, if they have been correctly identified in the well-preserved case of the Xeste 3 examples, means that in fragmentary frescoes the identities of those depicted is open to debate. Furthermore, if Marinatos is correct concerning the wheat-bearing figure from the Cult Center at Mycenae and the Vapheio seal, then divine creatures may not be enough to identify goddesses. If that is the case, perhaps some of the other identifications of divinities require further examination.

There is a great deal more variety in the depiction of males’ clothing than in that of females. They can be shown anywhere from nude to wearing long white robes. Although there are some instances (e.g. procession scenes) where robes seem to be indicative of a religious affiliation, this is not necessarily the case, as many of the men in the Flotilla fresco from Akrotiri are robed. Robed men in seemingly religious contexts appear at Knossos, Akrotiri, and Pylos. Of
the sites examined, only Mycenae is lacking clear evidence for religious males. There are no males that appear to be divine at any of the sites.

Clothing may be used to differentiate sides in the Mycenaean battle scenes, at least some of the time. The “Mycenaean” kilts may be pleated, perhaps armored, while opponents may wear sheepskin clothing. This, however, is not always the case, so armor such as boar’s tusk helmets are seen as more clearly indicative of Mycenaean males. Tunics seem to be more commonly worn for hunting. Weapons may be carried either for battle or for hunting. Greaves, and possibly shields, may also be found in compositions of either theme.

**Animals and Nature**

Nature paintings have already been discussed, but a couple more points ought to be discussed regarding the presence of animals within the paintings. Animals, and especially domestic ones, seem to be much more common in Mycenaean painting than in Minoan painting. Although some of these animals, like horses and dogs, are often related to a hunting or battle theme of a painting (e.g. some of the fragments associated with the room above Hall 46), animals often appear in their own right as well. From Pylos, especially, there are a number of fragments dedicated to animals. There are boars from Room 20. There are horses in the Inner Propylon (1 F 2) and Room 20 (7 C 20). Deer also appear in the Inner Propylon, Room 17 and Room 20. Although rocks are the most common nature element shown with the animals, 36 C 17 (fig. 92) shows the rump of a deer next to a papyrus plant, which may be indicative of a more complex scene. Additionally, the Deer at an Altar (3 C 20, fig. 93) shows an animal in an architectural scene. Although no associated humans are preserved here, this too could have been a complex scene.
Lions and griffins may not be the most common animals depicted in Minoan fresco painting, but they are fairly common on Minoan glyptic. They are also common Near Eastern motifs, so they had a fairly long ancestry by the time they made it into Aegean wall painting. They may be guardian animals or symbols of strength and power. It is thus unsurprising that they are found both in the Throne Room at Knossos and at Pylos. The identification of this use of the animals as either Minoan or Mycenaean depends in part on how one views the Mycenaean presence at Knossos and influence on the Throne Room there, which is certainly the earlier scene. Although Immerwahr does not see this room as particularly Mycenaean in style, she admits that the alterations to the Throne Room are often seen as part of the evidence that the Mycenaeans were in control at Knossos by the time of the paintings. Thus, the decoration should be seen as a more Mycenaean choice, even if the work was executed by Minoan artists.

Use within the Palaces

Immerwahr is correct in finding “art for art’s sake” to be anachronous, but her opinion should not be confined to Minoan wall painting. Frescoes were certainly functional aspects of the palaces and an important part of how space was used. I do not believe that even religious paintings simply signified cultic space or displayed how a ritual was enacted, but that the frescoes actually played a part and interacted with the participants. Furthermore, frescoes probably played a larger role in society and aided in how societal, especially hierarchical or elite

476 Marinatos (1988b) includes a number of examples, especially in her discussion of the relationship of the hunt to religion.

477 Immerwahr 1990, 97.

478 Immerwahr 1990, 78.

479 Immerwahr 1990, 46.
heterarchical, interactions were negotiated. This is not to say, however, that the frescoes were used exactly the same way in all the sites examined here. Furthermore, different paintings would have engaged with different audiences depending on their location. The fact that a substantial portion of wall painting occurred in upper rooms suggests that there were levels of access to and restriction from the visual language of the elite.

The lack of clear ruler iconography in Aegean painting is often highlighted, especially when the imagery is compared to that of contemporary Near Eastern cultures. Even without true ruler iconography, the display of rulers’ power was certainly an important aspect of wall painting. Younger catalogs instances of a number of motifs on various media in Aegean art that are sometimes seen as iconographic elements related to rulership: figures with a staff (skeptron), figures wearing garments with diagonal banding, portraits, seated figures, Mistresses/Masters of Animals, and heraldic animal pairs.480 Thus, many religious scenes, especially those of a seated figure receiving an offering, may overlap into the realm of portraying power. If Minoan elites derived some of their power through the control of religion, other religious scenes could, by extension, be seen as ways of displaying power. Although bull leaping does not soundly fall into Younger’s categories, I would also consider this theme to be one that relates to power. Even if the act would not be a clear display of power over a strong animal (as with Mistresses/Masters of Animals), bull leaping certainly would have involved a great deal of strength and agility. It may be a more indirect display of power over a bull to be able to accomplish such feats.

Although enthroned rulers are common motifs in Near Eastern cultures, this does not seem to be the case in the Aegean. Rehak proposes that one possible reason for the lack of imagery for an enthroned male is that the role of the wanax only became defined after Aegean

480 Younger 1995. His catalog includes a number of the frescoes discussed in this paper.
iconography had become virtually set.\textsuperscript{481} Yet, he does not believe that Mycenaean could not or would not create the image of an enthroned male. Instead, he thinks that the concept of an enthroned figure in Mycenaean society ought to be one of a woman rather than a man.\textsuperscript{482}

Finally, displays of battle or the hunt can be seen as displays of power. Most of the Pylian battle scenes are interpreted as showing victorious Mycenaeans. The scenes could serve a number of purposes: to commemorate a victory, promote courage in battle, or remind subjects of Pylian dominance. At the very least, hunting scenes display man’s dominance over the animal kingdom. Interestingly, though, the fresco hunting scenes seem to generally involve deer, rather than stronger animals, like the lions that are hunted on the Shaft Grave daggers.

Although Immerwahr finds a religious element in nearly every aspect of Minoan painting, she argues that Mycenaean painting is much more decorative.\textsuperscript{483} As I mentioned above, scenes of battle and hunting may still be alluding to a religious element, even if they are not as direct as many Minoan paintings in their references. Several scenes are somewhat more directly religious, however. The Cult Center and the Room of the Frescoes at Mycenae provide the most apparent non-processional large scale religious iconography on the mainland, even if there is debate concerning the exact identification of the figures and meaning of the composition. The identification of procession scenes from the Megaron and Vestibule at Pylos is sound, and the identification of several possible portions of processions at Mycenae is quite reasonable. Additionally, the scene of hunters with tripods from Pylos (21 H 48, fig. 103) could be seen as

\textsuperscript{481} Rehak 1995, 116.

\textsuperscript{482} Rehak 1995, 117.

\textsuperscript{483} Immerwahr 1990.
relating to a post-hunt celebration or sacrifice. Finally, the Deer at the Altar (3 C 20, fig. 93) likely has some religious connotations.

Nature scenes on Crete and Thera are seen as indicative of a Minoan nature goddess, but the lack of such scenes on the mainland need not suggest that Mycenaeans did not adopt this aspect of the goddess or value nature. Fertility and the fruits of the earth are often seen as aspects of the all encompassing Minoan goddess, and are common across early societies. Although fertility and the bounty of the Earth may be seen in the Room of the Frescoes at Mycenae, they are certainly not the only things around which ritual and religion might have been centered. Furthermore, even if nature frescoes are common in Minoan art, this does not mean that that was the only aspect of the goddess that was venerated.

Religion and power were often closely related, especially in antiquity. The difference in power structure between Minoan and Mycenaean culture can be seen in the wall painting. Davis argues that Minoan art could not have served a king, for “its message is not a proclamation of the supreme status or of the divine sanction of a ruler, but rather of the status and divine sanction of the cult.”484 Thus, religion was more important than any human ruler, but those elite who had control in a religious venue (priests and priestesses) likely exerted power in other aspects of society. Although rulers on the mainland likely had some control over religion, there may have been some separation as well, as evidenced by the Cult Center at Mycenae as separate from the main megaron complex.

484 Davis 1999, 19.
Minoanization and Mycenaeanization

The end of the Middle and the Late Bronze Age in the Aegean were periods that involved a great deal of mixing between various culture groups. MM III/LM I is often seen as a period of (peaceful) Minoan domination throughout the Aegean. The Near Eastern and Egyptian influences on Minoan Art are regularly discussed, but are beyond the scope of this paper.485 Akrotiri, on Thera, certainly seems to have been an important location of the mixing of Aegean cultures. The frescoes from the site have a wide array of motifs, some of which are characterized as more Minoan (e.g. the Spring Fresco), and others of which are characterized as more Mycenaean (e.g. the Flotilla Fresco).

Although this paper did not delve into mainland culture prior to the appearance of frescoes, through the frescoes we can see a fair amount of Minoanization of the mainland. The technology itself is Minoan, as are many of the motifs found in mainland wall painting. The interactions between the cultures had been going on for a considerable length of time before the advent of wall painting on the mainland. During this period, Minoanizing elements have been noted in other media. Thus, frescoes may almost be seen as the culmination of a long process, perhaps at a time when the mainland was able to import painters or was able to have their own artists train under Cretan painters.

The cultural exchange was not only in one direction, however. The “Campstool” Fresco at Knossos includes the representation of Mycenaean kylikes. Although the theme of the hunt was common in Minoan glyptic, it did not appear in large scale decoration. Scenes such as the Palanquin-Chariot Panels (fig. 40-42) could relate to hunting or show Mycenaean rituals. The figure-eight shield fresco could also relate to battle or warfare, and so does not necessarily fit

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into the peaceful portrayal of earlier Minoan culture. Finally, as mentioned above, the Throne Room Frescoes at Knossos may be Mycenaean additions and represent the adoption of mainland cultural elements. At Knossos, however, the presence of Mycenaean elements would have had a different meaning based on who remained in the palace and the degree of autonomy retained by local elites. If there were only Mycenaean administrators, these motifs could be largely related to personal cultural preference. If Minoans retained any autonomy, then the adoption of mainland motifs could suggest significant cultural exchange.
FIGURES

Figure 1 - Map of the Eastern Mediterranean (Jones and Photos-Jones 2005, fig. 13.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crete</th>
<th>Dates BC</th>
<th>Cyclades</th>
<th>Dates BC</th>
<th>Mainland</th>
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<td>Early Helladic I</td>
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<td>2500–2250</td>
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<td>2200–2300/2050</td>
<td>Kastri Phase and into Phylakopi I Phase</td>
<td>2400–2200</td>
<td>EHIII</td>
<td>2250–2100/2050</td>
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<td>2200–</td>
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Figure 2 - Comparison of (High) Aegean Dating Systems (Manning 2012, Table 2.2).
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Figure 3 - High Versus Low Aegean Chronology (Shelmerdine 2008, fig. I.2).
Figure 4 - Main locations of frescoes in the Palace at Knossos (Immerwahr 1990, fig. 25). Locations: 1. Flowering Olive Fresco (Basement west of Stepped Portico); 2. "Palanquin" fresco (Kn No. 25, Room of the Clay Matrix); 3. "Jewel" fresco (Kn No. 9, Magazine of the Vase Tablets); 4. Miniature frescoes (Kn No. 18, Thirteenth Magazine); 5. "Campstool" fresco (Kn No. 26, West Facade); 6. Bull-grappling fresco (Kn No. 31, Northwest Treasury); 7. Textile Fragments?, Boys Playing Game? (Kn Nos. 14, 19, Northwest fresco heap); 8. Saffron-Gatherer (Kn No. 1, Room of the Saffron-Gatherer); 9. Miniature frescoes (Kn Nos. 15, 16, 17, 38, Room of the Spiral Cornice); 10. "Ladies in Blue" (Kn No. 11); 11. Taureador panels (Kn No. 23, Court of the Stone Spout); 12. Part of “Palanquin”-Charriot fresco (Kn No. 25, Lapidary's Workshop); 13. Ivory deposit; 14. "Dancing Girl" and Dolphin fresco (?) (Kn Nos. 24, 6, Light area east of Queen's Megaron); 15. Nature frescoes (Kn No. 5, Southeast House); 16. Chamber northeast of excavated area.
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