

Chapter 14 The Mycenaean Inheritance

In Chapters 4 to 12 we examined in detail the various aspects of Minoan and Mycenaean life as presented to us by the seal artists across the centuries. In the Iconographic Interpretation section which concluded each of these Chapters we concentrated on the Minoan experience down to the end of Minoan High Art but did not review what was happening in the Legacy and Late Periods. In this Chapter we turn to these two Periods and examine what can be learnt from the seal images created at this time, both in Crete as it continued with its seal tradition and on the Mainland. In the Legacy and Late Periods, there is a significant change in that the choices about iconographic content are now made by the Mycenaean ruling elite. In this Chapter, the illustrations of the seal images are, as they were in Chapter 13, mostly in colour and repeat seal images presented in the earlier Chapters as a reminder of their contexts¹. First, we look to establish how much of Minoan iconography was received into the Mycenaean sphere during the Minoan High Art Period. Then we investigate how much of the Minoan iconography was accepted in the Legacy and Late Periods, how much the images were changed to suit Mycenaean tastes and whether the Minoan meanings transferred across to the culture of the new rulers of the Aegean. There is much to assess here as we turn our attention to the Mycenaean Mainland.

The First Phase: Transference, Reception and Display (Plates 14.1 to 14.18)

We look first at the seals excavated at Mainland sites, seals which belong within the Minoan High Art Period. Early discussions on Aegean art have tried to find what is Minoan and what is Mycenaean in this excavated material. Concentrating on the seals, there are many questions to ask but it is not easy to find answers. Are the seals made by a Minoan artist in Crete and thus an import? Are the seals made for a Mycenaean owner by a Minoan artist living on the Mainland? Are they made by a Mycenaean artist trained in the Minoan seal tradition? Currently, with the extant material available, we have no way of knowing the answers to any of these questions. What we can say is that the seals are overwhelmingly Minoan in technical expertise and in iconography. Accordingly, I have taken the stand that, until the destructions on the island of Crete at the end of LM IB, the seals found on the Mainland were created with Minoan technical expertise and in the Minoan iconographic idiom, regardless of who was making them or where they were being made. It is through these prestige items that a comprehensive transfer of Minoan iconography occurred. This first transfer, with its resultant reception and display, is clearly documented in some of the finest seals remaining to us. The selection presented here comes from burial deposits at Mycenae, from the Vaphio Tholos and from the site of Pylos in burials and in the palace.

The Shaft Graves at Mycenae provide some of the earliest evidence in a variety of seals. The amethyst gem in 14.1 shows a male head in profile that closely aligns with the male heads known from contemporary Minoan seals as compared in 3.67 to 3.72. The war scene of 14.2 and the hunt scene of 14.3 are both handled in the duelling Icon using the climactic point syntax. Both compositions explode in violence but, just as the victor makes the fatal lunge, we are reminded of the cost: the death of the vanquished warrior and the grievous wounds to the successful hunter. Interest in chariot scenes is also recorded as in the gold signet of 6.106. The Vaphio Tholos provides further evidence in its collection of fine seals.

¹ The original seals, signets and sealings, illustrated in colour in this Chapter, have all been discussed in the appropriate Chapters above where they were illustrated as the black and white drawings of the seal impressions.

The beautiful signet in 14.4 is pure Minoan idiom. A cultscape portrays a pulling the tree *Icon* with the tree growing from rocky ground and the beehive with bees below. A woman in flounced skirt draws attention with her gesture to the male tree puller on one side and his panoply on the other. Overhead hovering symbols provide a further link to the supernatural world. The boar tusk helmet of 14.5 enjoys sole subject status in focus syntax. It is one of the special objects and testifies to the importance of the warrior. In 14.6 the hunt theme is handled by the *Icon* of dealing with the catch. Two hunters are trussing a great lion, clearly successful in their exploits. Many of the Mycenae Chamber Tombs held seals created in this first transfer period. The antithetical group composition in 14.7 shows two lions rampant about a Minoan curved altar. Working to an exceptionally tight reflectional symmetry, the artist has coalesced the lion heads into one frontal head. In 14.8 two dragons rest rather in the manner of two bulls reclining. In 14.9, on a fine carnelian lentoid, a Mistress of Animals *Icon* portrays the Lion Mistress in flounced skirt wearing a triple horn bow hat topped with a double axe. It is one of two almost identical portrayals. The other, also on a carnelian lentoid, is seen in 1.24. Turning to the site of Pylos, both palace and tholos tombs provide seal evidence. The sealing in 14.11 comes from the Pylos palace and is the impression of a seal featuring the animal attack theme where the predator is a hound in the flying gallop chasing the stag quarry. In 14.10 a magnificent gold amygdaloid from the Rutsi Tholos shows the attempted capture of a bull. The formidable animal has been forced into a reverse twist by the net and it tramples the hunter fallen below – all is pure Minoan artistry. From the same Tholos, the agate cushion with gold mounting in 14.12 celebrates the role of fantastic creatures. A great female griffin, resplendent with neck and wing curls, stands statant, wings elevated, head regardant erect.

The recent excavation of the Griffin Warrior Grave at Pylos has provided new insights into this first period of the transference of Minoan iconography, not the least because the warrior was buried with many fine seals like the six illustrated here as 14.13 to 14.18. The iconography across the four great gold signet rings records the bull sports theme and three cultscapes. In 14.13 the bull is in the flying gallop with a leaper behind, turned towards the bull. In 14.15 an elaborate cultscape is composed of several *Icons*. It shows an incurving bay with the tricurved arch patterned sea surface giving way to a wateredge of rocky ground which provides the foundation for a tree shrine flanked by palms. That the sea is meant to extend around the shrine scene is indicated by the rocky wateredge fringing the top perimeter. On one side of the shrine are two women servers wearing fringed skirts and high hats and giving the forehead gesture. On the other side of the shrine the Great Lady and her two diminutive servers are wearing frilled skirts and neck scarves floating free. Parallels with the Minos Ring immediately spring to mind while all iconographic details are matched in LM seals and sealings. The VIP Lady in 14.16 gives the power gesture with a staff topped by horns like the one in 9.88. She is accompanied by a pair of birds, one on each side, perched on rocky outcrops. Thus, she is the Bird Lady identified by her familiars, as are the Bird Ladies in 12.54 and 12.84. The presence of the birds recalls their ability to carry a goddess through the air and their role as messengers to mortals. The Bird Lady is depicted with the iconographic details of flying hair and pointed feet usually reserved for the Epiphany Lady. There is no mortal below to greet her as there would be in the VIP appearing on high *Icon*. However, the suggestion is there in her descending pose, just as it is with the flying Griffin Lady in 12.73. In the VIP granting audience *Icon* in 14.18 the Great Lady is shown as Seated Lady holding a mirror as in 12.37. She is seated on a high-backed chair with a footstool. A bird perches at her back, thus alluding to the Bird Lady persona. A skyline arches above. Her server approaches, bringing an unidentified item that looks rather like a didgeridoo or an alpine horn.

There are also two fine two agate seals with intricate designs. The image on the agate lentoid in 14.14 is composed in the animals at the curved altar *Icon*. It depicts two geniuses about the curved altar which supports double horns with a sprouting plant while overhead a sunburst shines. One genius holds the ewer as is usual and the other an unidentified item shaped like a cone. The whole image is very close to the composition on the Vaphio lentoid 10.136. One of the finest carved seals ever to come to light is the agate amygdaloid in 14.17. It displays the war duelling *Icon* at the climactic point. The warrior victor, clad only in the belt and codpiece and with hair flying back, delivers the fatal blow, plunging his sword

into the neck of his adversary. The warrior vanquished, supposedly protected by his crested helmet and eight shield, tries in vain to use his spear. Below, clad only in a plaid kilt, a warrior fallen lies contorted in his death throes, his sword discarded, useless, on the ground. The carving of the detail is superb and is matched by the amazing composition. War and hunt duelling Icons regularly use diagonal play to emphasise the violence of the confrontation. An almost identical composition is seen in the gold cushion 14.2 but the amygdaloid artist here has excelled in its use. The diagonals of body lunge, leg stretch, spear and scabbard alignment are all shown to advantage but there is one extra telling detail. The victor is at full stretch, his upper arm grasping the helmet crest of the warrior vanquished to wrench his head back and expose the neck. Then the fatal sword thrust is delivered down, the only vertical in the whole composition. Brilliant!

The Second Phase: Rejection, Continuity, Variation (Plates 14.19 to 14.54)

The full Minoan repertoire was already available on the Mainland by the beginning of LH II but as the Mycenaean ascendancy grew in strength the iconography changed. Turning back to Chapters 4 to 12, we now look at what Minoan iconography continues to be employed by seal artists and what no longer appears in the repertoire as we move into the Legacy and Late Periods.

Rejection

The absence of some of the foremost Minoan *Icons* and elements is notable, as recorded in the examples for the Legacy Period in Chapters 4 to 12. Many earth and sky elements discussed in Chapter 4 disappear. Particularly noticeable is the absence of the boulder and water symbols. The profusion of flowers, plants and trees that was documented in Chapter 5 is no longer observable. The interest in animal life seen in Chapter 6 continues but the cat is gone, as are the scorpions, butterfly and dragonfly. In the realm of the sea, virtually all the sea creatures seen in Chapter 7 disappear. We are missing the many varied fish, the lifelike crabs, the bait balls and the jellyfish and there is only one triton as in 7.83. The constructed environment discussed in Chapter 8 loses almost all the detail of small items like vessels, nets, collars and leashes. There are no fleecy skirts and few frilled or fringed ones while women rarely wear pants anymore. All eight hovering symbols that are positioned above human figures in the complex scenes of Minoan high Art have disappeared. These are the eye, ear, grainshape, piriformshape, pillarshape, curlshape, triple bud rod and double axe with scarf, although a residual use of the grainshape is seen in the two outlier examples 9.61 and 14.56. Of the twelve special objects of symbolic importance, three – the panoply, scarf knot and vase – are gone while the triton has a belated appearance in a cultscape in 7.83. Of the exotic animals and fantastic creatures surveyed in Chapter 10, almost immediately we lose the monkey while the dragon is only known in one clear example, 10.126². Chapter 11 gathered the hybrid humans, frontal faces and various combination fantasies on view but virtually all of these are gone, including the formerly much depicted birdwomen.

Turning to the Great Gods, Chapter 12 presented the Minoan Pantheon in Table 1 listing the forty deity personas down to the end of Minoan High Art, and the Mycenaean Pantheon in Table 2 listing the twenty-eight deity personas known in the Legacy Period. Of the twenty-nine Minoan Lady and Lord personas listed in Table 1, only thirteen remain in Table 2, and only eight if we remove the instances of only one credible sighting. The Mistress and Master personas are eleven in number in Table 1 and fifteen in Table 2, although both totals are somewhat reduced when the personas based on only one example are removed. Table 2 reveals both omissions from the Table 1 list and the creation of new candidates. The whole category of the Mistress with Animal *Icon* has virtually disappeared. The Bird Mistress is gone but a Bull Mistress is shown. Four new Masters have appeared. Last, but not least, of the roles of women and men described in Chapter 9 and reviewed in the discussion on the ceremonies they conducted to

² The head of a dragon is shown on a fragment of the sealing from Knossos in 10.125 but the stylistic date of LM IIIA1 is queried.

commune with the gods, many are simply not there anymore. Mortals greet the Great Gods in the VIP appearing on high *Icon* in one example 12.176 and in the VIP granting audience *Icon* in one example with mortal servers in 12.88. The ceremony of kneeling the boulder is gone while that of pulling the tree has only one example, 5.129/9.61. The ceremony of presenting the cloak, discussed in Chapter 8, is not recorded. The ceremonies honouring special events in human lives, such as marriage and farewells, are not continued. There is a winnowing, too, of the gestures given by mortals and deities. Five of the eight Minoan gestures used by mortals – the heart, shoulder, reaching, holding hands and arms high gestures – are lost. Five of the seven gestures used exclusively by the gods – the hips, brandishing, pointing, beckoning and power gestures – are also lost.

Continuity

Some mainstream Minoan iconography continues into the Legacy Period. Of all the images and symbols of the earth and sky discussed in Chapter 4, only a few rocky ground motifs and some celestial signs are still used as in 4.34 to 4.39 and 4.100 to 4.108. The rocky ground subtending the shrines in 14.26 has now become a series of loops. The sunburst in 14.37 shines over symbolic creatures. Reviewing the flora in Chapter 5 reveals that only a branch now suffices while the triple bud as in 14.36, the papyrus as in 14.31/5.54 and the palm as in 14.19, 14.22, 14.27 and 14.39 are favoured. Much of the fauna seen in Chapter 6 is still shown. Of the forest animals, the agrimi is still shown as a Master attendant in 14.28 but comes to look more like the domestic goat as the animal sacrificed in 14.39. The stag and boar seem to get a new lease of life as in 6.40 to 6.48. The bird is shown in natural depictions but also in symbolic as well as messenger roles as in 6.175 to 6.180. Domestic animals now populate the seals, with cattle the most often depicted. They stand or rest as sole subjects, are the prey in animal attack scenes, suckle their young in fecundity scenes and feature in symbolic presentations as in 6.115 to 6.126. In 14.19 the bull is sole subject, in 14.22 a cow suckles its calf and in 14.30 bulls are attendants to a Mistress. Rams remain popular as in 6.127 to 6.129, also featuring in symbolic roles as in the animals at the tree of life antithetical group in 6.129 and with their horns on the tusk helmet in 14.5. The hound, which has been there since the beginning, remains a favourite as in 6.109 to 6.114 where it is seen in hunt scenes and in attendant and familiar roles. It courses beside its hunter owner in 14.24 to brave the rearing lion and holds the great boar at bay in 14.31 so that its master can deliver the fatal spear thrust. Of all the sea creatures covered in Chapter 7, only the dolphin, the octopus and the argonaut enjoy any sustained representation, as in 7.34 to 7.36, 7.55 to 7.57, 7.82 to 7.84, 14.29 and 14.40 to 14.42 where they are shown both as natural creatures and in symbolic roles. In 14.29 dolphins leap as attendants to the Dolphin Mistress. The constructed environment, so graphically shown in the pieces from Minoan High Art in Chapter 8, is now represented by some ships, shrines and the three altar types – table, curved and sacrifice – as in 8.85 to 8.93, 14.25 and 14.39. Clothing for women still shows the flounced skirt and some fringed ones while the male continues to be shown with belt and codpiece as in 8.130 to 8.134. Equipment for war and the hunt remains in the repertoire as in 8.154 to 8.159. The constructed symbols, grand pillar and double horns, are regularly seen as in 8.91, 8.92, 8.130, 14.25, 14.26 and 14.32. Of the twelve special objects of symbolic importance in Minoan High Art, eight continue, most in more muted form. They are the double axe, eight shield, helmet, cloak knot, horn bow, orb rod, triple bud rod and ewer. Three of the exotic animals and fantastic creatures of Chapter 10 become firm favourites and are given considerable coverage. They are the lion as in 10.43 to 10.57, the griffin as in 10.85 to 10.96 and the genius as in 10.145 to 10.156. The lion is shown in hunt and animal attack scenes as in 14.20, 14.22, 14.24 and 14.31, in suckling and caring for young scenes in 14.21 and 14.22 and in symbolic representations in 14.37 and 14.38. The griffin is seen in animal attack scenes and in symbolic roles as in 14.27, 14.34 and 14.37. The genius is evidenced in his symbolic role in 14.30 and 14.33. From the hybrid and combination forms gathered in Chapter 11, the animal men are the great survivors as in 11.34 to 11.54. The bullman has considerable coverage, somersaulting as in 14.41 and running as in 14.42.

Of the Great Gods discussed in Chapter 12 there are eight personas who have presence in the Legacy Period as seen in 12.87 to 12.98 and 12.174 to 12.188. Listed in Table 2 of Chapter 12, they are the Great Lady, Seated Lady and Griffin Lady, and the Staff Lord, Mighty Lord, Griffin Lord, Lion Lord and Agrimi Lord. The Griffin Lord is seen in his chariot in 13.27. Mistress and Master images are quite strong, showing some alignment with the Lady and Lord personas, as in 12.114 to 12.119 and 12.195 to 12.212 where there is a decided increase in the number of Masters. A Dolphin Mistress is seen in 14.29, an Agrimi Master in 14.28 and a Lion Master in 14.38. Several of the roles of women and men seen in Chapters 9 and 12 are continued. Men are engaged in the pursuits of war and the hunt as in 9.133 to 9.144 while women attend to religious duties as in 9.55, 9.56 and 9.76 to 9.78. Generic ceremonies of worship are on show, with processing as in 14.32 and 9.57, sacrificing as in 9.58 and 9.59, serving at the altar as in 14.25 and serving the shrine as in 14.26. The ceremony of leaping the bull is strongly in evidence as in 14.43 to 14.54, including an unusual depiction with two leapers somersaulting in 14.23. As for the gestures, three of the eight Minoan gestures used by mortals – the greeting, forehead and hands high – continue to be used as in 9.76 to 9.78, 14.26 and 14.32. Gesturing by the Great Gods is limited to the exclusive male chest gesture and the sharing with mortals of greeting and hands high gestures. All these remaining gestures appear to be used as in the Minoan idiom.

Variation

However, it is not simply what iconographic elements are out and what are in that marks the change into the Legacy Period. It is also how those iconographic motifs that continue to be depicted are used and what relationships they bear to each other. We now see that the Minoan idiom does not always hold in the continuing subject matter as the Mycenaean ascendancy strengthens. Examples from the treatment of flora and fauna, the constructed environment, fantastic creatures, deities, the bull sports and human activities reveal the variations.

The detailed delight in the bounty of nature disappears from the artistic record. There are fewer flowers and less variety in the trees and plants, which, in comparison with the earlier Minoan examples, are stiff, even stylised. They are increasingly used only as symbols as with the triple bud rods separating a ram and a bull in 6.122 and the elaborate triple bud rod forming the tree of life in 14.36. The late development of the palm deserves special consideration. This is where a particularly stylised form of the palm becomes the norm as seen in 14.19, 14.22, 14.27 and 14.39. Some show shoots emerging each side of the trunk base in continuation of the Minoan palms in 5.95 and 5.97 while the trunk is thinner and taller and regularly horizontally ribbed. The canopy consists of a central spike or spikes or triple bud with branches/inflorescence curving down each side. What we appear to have here is a coalescing of two motifs which have long been in the iconographic repertoire: the palm tree and the triple bud. This hybrid, which we may term the Mycenaean palm³, is thus able to combine the artistic strength of both original motifs and, judging by its usage, is also able to encapsulate much of the original meaning of fertility and links to the supernatural world.

With the animals it is the loss of movement that is most observable. The characteristic Aegean animal poses of flying gallop, flying leap and reverse twist are gradually reduced to the flying gallop as in 14.23, 14.44 and 14.49, while even that becomes stiffer as in 14.47. Scenes of predation and fecundity are featured as in 14.20 to 14.22 but the Minoan sensitivity to animal joy and pain gradually disappears. The combination of the suckling cow and the attacking lion in 14.22 would not have appeared in a Minoan composition.

The constructed symbols of staff, double horns and grand pillar remain but with different stress on their importance and prevalence of use. The staff with its power gesture no longer is the great statement of authority, appearing rarely as in the hands of a Master in 12.196. The double horns symbol continues to identify altar and shrine as in 14.25, 14.26 and 14.32 and it subtends a Mighty Lord in 10.154.

³ Similar linearisation is observed in the pottery motifs where there might have been cross-fertilisation. See Furumark 1941 (1972), Motive 14 Palm I and Motive 15 Palm II, 276-282.

However, the double horns are not regularly used as the base for sprouting greenery in association with ewer and vase. The grand pillar is much more in evidence. Animals stand beside it as in 10.49 or are tethered to it as in 6.123 and it is shown in connection with shrines as in 8.89 and 9.76. Significantly, the grand pillar becomes the central symbol in antithetical group compositions where it is attended by lions and griffins and even geniuses as in 10.146 and birds as in 6.180. This *Icon* of animals at the grand pillar has taken the powerful eastern motif of animals at the tree of life, substituted the pillar for the tree and thus created a potent Aegean statement. In similar substitutions, the curved altar replaces the tree of life as the focus in the antithetical group and the *Icon* of animals at the curved altar becomes another potent Aegean symbol. It is seen with hound attendants in 6.111 and lion attendants in 10.51. There are some examples that continue with the original animals at the tree of life *Icon*. Couchant rams attend a papyrus triple bud tree in 6.129 while sejant sphinxes attend a tree shaped like a triple bud rod in 14.36.

There are eight special objects of symbolic importance in Minoan High Art that continue in the Legacy images. Six objects – the double axe, eight shield, helmet, cloak knot, horn bow and ewer – show restricted usage in that they do not appear to be subjects in their own right as previously but appear to continue courtesy of their association with a major subject matter element. The double axe and horn bow are shown in the special headdress worn by the Mistress as in 14.30. The helmet is worn by warrior or Master as in 14.38. The eight shield and cloak knot come with the animal quarry or the hunter, with the Master as in 14.38 or the bullman as in 14.41. The ewer is held by the genius as in 10.145, 10.153 and 10.154, thus continuing his original role. Some Mycenaean understanding of the content of these six motifs must inform these usages but it is clear that the potency of their Minoan meaning has waned. The other two special objects, the triple bud rod and the orb rod, grow stronger. The triple bud rod now becomes a favourite way to render the tree of life as in 14.36. It is also seen as a separate motif as in 14.42. The orb rod which did not have great exposure in Minoan images is now seen as a separate symbol. It is linked with the genius as in 10.145 and is the central symbol in the antithetical group with attendant lions as in 10.50 and with stags as in 8.45. These depictions show the orb as a sphere. With some examples like 8.46 and 6.121, the orb has “wings” and even a flattened top so that the orb rod looks more like a grand pillar and is used at that scale in the antithetical group.

Of the Fabulous Five exotic/fantastic creatures, three – the lion, the griffin and the genius – continue their Minoan roles into Mycenaean iconography. The variation here is that they enjoy even more expansive coverage and their symbolic roles begin to dominate. The proliferation of lion images is no doubt partly due to the fact that it is not an exotic animal for the Mainland Mycenaean. In studies across many years, Nancy Thomas has documented the existence of *Panthera leo* in Greece and elsewhere⁴. Thus, direct experience with lions no doubt sharpened portrayals of predator lions as in 14.20 and lion hunts as in 14.24. The lion’s magnificent power is fully appreciated by the Mycenaean who present it as a statement of their own ferocious aggression⁵. Lions are also shown as familiars/attendants to Lords and Masters and as guardians to grand pillars seen in 10.49 to 10.57 in continuation of the earlier Minoan usages. However, their role has been expanded so as to create an increased symbolic presence. The griffin, too, continues its Minoan predator and symbolic roles but, as with the lion, increasingly concentrates on its symbolic duties. Griffins are sole subjects, posed grandly as in 14.34, 14.37 and 10.88. They are the identifying familiar/attendant for Lords and Masters, as with the Griffin Lord in 14.27 and Ladies and Mistresses as in 10.92 to 10.95 and as protector of the grand pillar as in 10.90. The third of the Fabulous Five to become embedded in Mycenaean iconography, the genius, continues to be portrayed, as before, in symbolic roles, with rather more variation seen in these roles in the Legacy Period. The genius does hold the vase in 10.145 as in his original role but his server roles are extended⁶. Quadruple geniuses are

4 Thomas, POLEMOS, 297-312; XAPIS, 161-206; METAPHYSIS, 129-137; ZOIA, 53-81.

5 See also Bloedow, EIKON 295-305; POLEMOS, 285-295; MELETEMATA, 53-61.

6 Tina Boloti sees the server role in the genius carrying the cloak knot (sacral knot) in the wall painting fragment from Pylos, Boloti 2016, 505-510. Carrying the prestige male garment would accord well with the male-oriented persona of the genius at this time.

servers to what appears to be a Great Seated Lady in 14.56 while double geniuses salute the Bull Mistress in 14.30 in an antithetical group composition which is new to the iconographic repertoire. Such an association with female deities runs counter to the male orientation of the Minoan idiom. It marks an extreme variation and calls for an explanation. The genius becomes the attendant to the Master of Animals as in 10.153. It can take the form of a geniusman and also be the Master of Animals with hound attendants as in 10.152. Then the genius expands its roles so as to be really the only spirit helper. He is the hunter in the regularly used *Icon* of carrying the catch as in 10.148 to 10.150. This is the role which is also seen with the successful human hunter and the lion/griffin predator holding the dead agrimi, bull or stag. There appear to be two aspects to this hunter role. On the one hand the genius is identified as the actual hunter, either successful himself or helping to promote a human hunter's success. On the other hand the genius, in carrying the catch, may well be ensuring safe passage for the slain animal to the world beyond. The sunbursts placed beside the group in 10.148 would indeed suggest such carriage to the spirit world. The image in 14.33 is also composed in the carrying the catch *Icon*. It shows the genius bearing a dead man over his shoulder, the body slumped and hanging down. Does the dual role of the genius have a parallel application here? Does the protection offered to the live human hunter continue in death as safe conduct to the afterworld? If so, this would cast the genius in the role of psychopompos and further consolidate his deity identity. As so often with Aegean iconography, we are left to wish that we had some accompanying text to help explain.

The sphinx, noted in 10.97 to 10.99, hardly had a presence in Minoan iconography but now comes to the fore as in 14.35, 14.36 and 10.102 to 10.105. Shown symbolically in the heraldic poses couchant or sejant, it regularly wears the plumed hat formerly worn by the Mighty Lord. The elevation of the sphinx to a substantial iconographic motif in Mycenaean art marks a substantial change from the Minoan idiom and suggests that the meaning of the sphinx had greater resonance for the Mycenaean. The acceptance of the sphinx in the Legacy Period may well reflect increasing communications with the east and Egypt. The sphinx is, after all, the most powerful statement of the might of Pharaoh and as such, is male. The Mycenaean sphinx, if the link with the Mighty Lord through the plumed hat holds, is also male and is always shown in symbolic roles. Associating its iconography with that of the Pharaonic sphinx fits well with concepts of royal power held by the aspirational Mycenaean rulers.

As for the Great Gods, the reduction in numbers sees the female personas shrinking more than the male. Leaving aside the personas with only one sighting, there are three credible Ladies, three Mistresses, five Lords and six Masters. The strengthening of the Master sightings, as well as the expanded role of the genius in them, is notable. This severe reduction of deity personas means that the identity groupings noted in the Minoan examples have now dissipated. These variations amount to a rejection of much of the iconography of Minoan deity personas, if not of the deities themselves, raising the question whether the ones that remain have the same meaning as in Minoan times.

The continuing coverage of the bull sports theme provides perhaps the most interesting of the variations occurring in the Legacy Period, as seen across the examples 9.92 to 9.96 and 14.43 to 14.54. These changes are in great contrast to the scenes of Minoan High Art, best displayed in the LM I sealings 9.157 to 9.168. Of the six *Icons* used to display the ceremony of leaping the bull – leaper preparing, somersaulting, landing, falling, fallen and bulldogging – the full range is known at the beginning of the Legacy Period. However, it is not long before the artists concentrate on one *Icon*, leaper somersaulting, as in 14.49 to 14.53. In all these, the somersault is completely misunderstood with the leaper either arched the wrong way or lying the length of the bull's back. Moreover, in each example the leaper holds the bull's horn, a method which is only ever the case in the Minoan idiom when the bulldogging *Icon* is used. The pose of the bull is also misunderstood and in 14.54 we do not even have a bull but an agrimi/goat! The original flying gallop, still being attempted in 14.49, slows down to a static pose, resting as in 14.52 or standing as in 14.53. This may partly be ascribed to the general loss of movement in the depiction of animal bodies that is evident in the Legacy Period, as discussed above. However, it is certainly also due to a misunderstanding of the momentum of the charging bull. Then there is the overall effect of the presentation where bull and man are given about the same amount of space in the

composition. This is in complete contrast to the often-partial body of the leaper and the overwhelming presence of the bull seen in the LM I examples. The setting of the Legacy bull sports also records changes by including surrounding vegetation as in 14.47 and 14.52 to 14.54, which is not seen in the focus compositions of LM I. These many significant differences, observable in every aspect of the Legacy Period bull sports, suggest a provincial art not fully familiar with either the original performance or Minoan artistic tradition. It is important not to equate these Legacy Period images with those of Minoan High Art when considering either the art or the evidence for the bull sports. These significant differences also raise the question of when the bull sports ceased to be conducted and whether the Mycenaean examples are simply a reminder of a past spectacle whose essential details have been forgotten. It is clear that great importance was attached to the bull sports theme for it to have continued to be so strongly (even if imperfectly) portrayed. This suggests that knowledge of the meaning of the bull sports continued into the Mycenaean consciousness even if the bull sports were no longer conducted as a ceremony of worship to the Bull God in his avatar form⁷.

The Mycenae Ring and the Tiryns Ring (Plates 14.55 to 14.56)

These two famous gold signets have enjoyed extensive coverage since their early discovery through their repeated illustration and because of voluminous discussion about their artistic detail and possible meaning⁸. They have regularly been presented as characteristic examples of Minoan and/or Mycenaean art. After our iconographic investigations it is now possible to see them anew as Mycenaean adaptations of the iconography of the Minoan tradition. Their stylistic dating takes us from the First Phase of transference, reception and display into the Second Phase of rejection, continuity and variation. Their rich use of iconographic detail is like a summary of the transition.

The **Mycenae Ring** uses seven *Icons* to craft its complex cultscape in stage syntax: celestial sign, hovering symbol, VIP granting audience, VIP with servers, tree growing from rocky ground, pulling the tree and animal head. The main subject is the VIP granting audience *Icon* with the Great Lady of large size, as Seated Lady, welcoming the servers who bring gifts to her. She is seated on rocky ground with a tree growing from rocky ground at her back. Both she and her women servers are bare-breasted, wear flounced skirts and have elaborate hair styles. Overhead the celestial sign comprises a curved skyline subtending a sunburst and moon crescent. The double axe and panoply as hovering symbols sit immediately below this while the left bezel curve holds a row of six lion heads. Much of the iconographic detail conforms with that of the Minoan personas of Great Lady, Seated Lady and Flower Lady but there are significant differences. In the main VIP granting audience *Icon* here, the servers bring flowers and poppies which have not, so far, been featured as gifts. The VIP with server *Icon* is altered from the usual composition of having the two small women servers, one each side of the Great Lady as in 12.39 to 12.41. One server is now included in the main VIP granting audience *Icon* while the other server is the officiant in the pulling the tree *Icon*. Yet, the server as tree puller does not wear long pants as one would expect from the Minoan examples 5.121, 5.123 and 5.126. Nor does she assume the normal stepping up pose of tree pullers but stands flatfoot on the ground. The animal head here is the known lion head frontal but its use in the prestigious side curve of the bezel, repeated six times, constitutes a breakthrough image. The handling of the hovering symbol *Icon* is unprecedented in having the special objects, the double axe and the panoply, perform as hovering symbols. There is also the question of more nuanced differences like the shape of the small female tree puller and the abrupt change of direction in the handling of the rocky ground each side of the Lady's feet. Finally, it must be noted that the use of seven *Icons* contributes to an almost *horror vacui* composition. Four, perhaps five, *Icons* are the maximum for

7 Refer to the interpretation of the bull sports ceremony in Chapter 9 above and the identifying of the Bull Lord as the god of the earthquake in Chapter 12 above.

8 Both rings are from treasure hoards reburied in Mycenaean times. The Mycenae Ring was found at the Ramp House south of Grave Circle A at Mycenae. The Tiryns Ring was found in the lower town of Tiryns.

elegant display of the subject matter, something we have observed in the best Minoan works, conscious as the artists were of the restricted size of the seal face. Attempting to include so many *Icons*, each with considerable detail, leads to a cluttered canvas that is not characteristic of Minoan composition.

The cultscape on the Mycenae Ring is heavily reliant on Minoan iconography, so much so that it could, at first glance, be seen as Minoan. However, there are significant changes to the Minoan iconographic detail and to the norms of Minoan design concepts. These changes can only be the result of Mycenaean choices to vary the original Minoan idiom, whether by deliberate intention or because of incomplete understanding. Accordingly, the Mycenae Ring should be seen as a Mycenaean creation, already diverging from the Minoan idiom as art moves into the Legacy Period.

The **Tiryne Ring** also uses seven *Icons* to compose its complex cultscape in stage syntax: VIP granting audience, gesturing, processing, carrying the special object, special object, celestial sign and hovering symbol. Again, the VIP granting audience *Icon* is the main subject. The Great Lady, as Seated Lady, is clothed in a long gown, has ringlets at the back and wears a flat hat. She sits on a high-backed chair where a bird perches at her back and she has a footstool for her feet. A table altar is set up behind her showing a half rosette and she has an orb rod as special object set up before her. Her servers are four geniuses all carefully depicted in profile with wasp waists and elaborate cape backs. They are processing to her, each carrying the ewer as special object, while an upright palm branch is placed at the back of each figure. The groundline is a constructed dado of triglyphs and half rosettes. The celestial sign *Icon* is a wavy skyline subtending the sunburst and moon crescent. The hovering symbol *Icon* consists of four grainshapes shown against a dotted sky above the skyline. The Lady welcomes her servers by raising the chalice to give the toasting gesture. In every *Icon* and in almost every iconographic detail there are changes to the expected Minoan usage. When the celestial sign incorporates a skyline it denotes an outdoor event not, as here, a possible indoor event indicated by the elaborate dado as groundline. The grainshape hovering symbol seems unexceptional although it is repeated and shown against an unusual dotted, perhaps starry, sky. The high-backed chair has a long history, as does the association of the bird with female divinities, but they are now seen together as also in 14.18. A richly embellished gown replaces the flounced skirt or long pants. The flat hat looks like the prestigious plumed hat but the plume is missing. The placement of an altar behind the chair and the orb rod before the seated figure is new. The properly shaped geniuses carry their ewers as special objects, as in their original fertility role, and the palm branches behind echo the vegetation in earlier examples, particularly the ones in 10.129 and 10.136. Yet, that is where traditional genius usage ends. Previously, only one genius is featured in a seal image, or perhaps two if it is an antithetical group composition. To have four geniuses shown together is a startling first, as is their service to what appears to be a female deity. Then, quite exceptional is the gesture used to welcome her servers. The toasting gesture with chalice is a one only example and new to the iconographic record.

The Tiryne Ring is an exceptional iconographical statement. The significant variations and new features surely cannot be accidental but must represent changed attitudes to previous iconographic norms. The most significant of these is the move to have geniuses serve a female deity when the Minoan idiom always has them operating in the male sphere. What is the identity of this Great Seated Lady who represents such an abrupt change to long-established iconography? Has some male authority figure taken over the iconography of the Minoan Great Seated Lady and called in no less than four geniuses to help? It is tempting to see the seated figure, not as a Great Seated Lady, but as a male mortal ruler who has subsumed her trappings and thus keeps the male sphere intact. That the figure has ringlets and wears a long gown is not a guarantee of being female in the Aegean. The seated shape is full but not overly so and there is no hint of a breast. The toast with the chalice is a one only gesture, thus consolidating the presentation of the special power that the figure wields. Still, it seems too great a leap in meaning change to see in the figure a male mortal, albeit an authority figure of supreme power, a reigning king, indeed the Mycenaean Wanax⁹ himself. An alternative reading may still allow the figure to be female and divine,

9 In the Linear B texts the ruler is the wa-na-ka, thus spelled in transliteration of the syllabic script.

and thus legitimately subsuming the Great Seated Lady iconography, but represent a new deity. Some clues may be found in the later wall paintings of the Cult Centre at Mycenae¹⁰. The composition in the upper section shows two figures of the same height and size facing each other¹¹. Both have ringlets and both are female if the white skin convention still holds. The figure on the right wears clothing in the Minoan style of a flounced skirt and bodice with breast showing. She holds out a staff resting on the ground in the power gesture. Thus, she is to be seen as a Lady deity evoking the power and status of the Minoan past. The figure on the left, who must also be a deity because of her equal height and size, wears a long rich gown and a hat without a plume similar to the seated figure in the Tiryns Ring. She holds a huge sword, point down, resting on the ground, surely a symbol of power and authority. The sword/dagger was brandished by deities in Minoan seal images but its positioning in this painting constitutes a new Mycenaean iconographic element. Between the staff and sword symbols, two small male figures, one black and one red, hover with hands outstretched towards the sword. They appear to be bringing the power from the goddess of the Minoan past and giving it with their outstretched hands to the gowned deity, or more particularly to her sword. Whatever the true meaning of these small figures, there is no doubt that they are iconographic heirs to the Epiphany Ladies and Lords of the Minoan tradition who were able to appear before mortals, gesturing to them as they appeared from on high. Is this painting an Investiture Scene? It certainly looks like a statement of divine mandate for the gowned female deity to rule and, if so, would be confirmation of the status of the Tiryns figure. Both the Mycenae and the Tiryns figures would thus place the Mycenaean state firmly within that group of warrior-oriented societies that choose a female deity to lead them and to personify victory as a spirit in female form. With a new dress, a new hat and a new gesture, the commanding figure in the Tiryns Ring may well be a new deity entering the male sphere as the personification of the new Mycenaean state and thus be deserving of a new name, the Mycenae Lady.

Composition in Mycenaean Wall Paintings

During the Late Period the seal iconographic repertoire diminishes further and the pre-eminent position of the seals in shaping the art has finished. Nevertheless, the earlier seal influences continue to shape composition and content. While the seal iconography has always been shared across various media, in the later Mycenaean world, the ivories and jewellery provide many of the small-scale examples while fresco/wall painting takes art to the grand scale. In the Mycenaean citadels extensive pictorial programs covered the walls, all of which owe their inspiration to the fresco/wall painting genre which began to burgeon in Minoan High Art¹². As we have seen, those Minoan fresco examples were themselves shaped in composition and content by the seal images. Thus, the Mycenaean wall paintings source their inspiration through the Minoan frescoes and also through the acceptance of Minoan iconography directly through the seals. The wall paintings from the Pylos Palace, so many of which were found *in situ*, are particularly revealing as to just how deep and how long-standing is the influence of the seal iconography. There are grand pictorial programs continued across several rooms which include the expected subjects like processions, hunts and battles, chariot scenes and looping rocks in the glen motif, animals that were once

10 The Cult Centre paintings have been extensively discussed. See Rehak, EIKON, 39-62; Immerwahr, AP 115-121; Morgan, AWP, 159-171.

11 Illustrated as a line drawing reconstruction, AWP, 167, Fig. 10.5.

12 At the citadel of Tiryns, wall paintings show women processing, hunt scenes with boars and hounds in the flying gallop and flying leap, chariot scenes and floral and spiraliform designs. The symbiotic relationship of flora and geometric designs which began in the Early Seal Period has a new lease of life in Mycenaean borders and all-over patterns. AP, 129-132, 143-144.

At the site of Mycenae, wall paintings, although often fragmentary, show processions, religious content and battle scenes. AP, 117, 118-121, 123-125.

signature animals in the Minoan repertoire like the hound, bird and dolphin, and sea creatures¹³. The discussion below concentrates on the paintings of the important rooms of the Vestibule and the Throne Room of the central megaron.

The Vestibule wall painting¹⁴ takes up the long-favoured *Icon* of processing and presents it in a double-tiered arrangement of gift bearers and a great bull. It is likely that the tiered arrangement actually portrays a procession moving two by two, as intimated in the earlier seal images. Bearers lead the procession in the company of an extremely tall figure who does not carry any gifts. They are followed by the bull which occupies the full height of the two tiers. Additional gift bearers follow in two tiers as before. The female bearers wear the flounced skirt and the male bearers a long robe or the kilt. The tall figure also wears a long robe, similar to, but more elaborate than, that worn by the male bearers. Reading that the size differential continues the Minoan idiom of being an indicator of importance and of divine status helps establish the identity of the bull and the tall figure. Here is a bull, so large in relation to the human figures that it must signify a god. This is none other than the Bull Lord in his avatar persona of the animal bull. The other figure who is so much larger than the gift bearers must also be of extreme importance. Since he is smaller than the bull and does not evidence any deity criteria he is a mortal and, taking such an important role in the procession, must be the leader of his people. All the iconographic details lead to the conclusion that this figure is the king, the Pylian Wanax, leading his people out from his megaron through the vestibule in ceremonial procession to honour the Bull Lord.

The Throne Room wall painting¹⁵ is particularly significant because of its position in the most important room of the megaron where the Pylian Wanax has his throne. The first panel shows the griffin and lion posed couchant on rocky ground in an up-dated version of the pair from the Fabulous Five. Their placement in this significant position no doubt suggests that these powerful creatures are at home in the palace of the Pylian Wanax. Does the griffin's wingless state mean that it will never again have to fly away from its Pylos home? Does its wingless state link this griffin to the one in the LM II Knossos Throne Room fresco, also wingless? The omission calls for explanation since the iconography of the winged griffin is so firmly established. The next panel is framed by rocky ground below and rocky ground above in the glen motif, indicating an outdoor setting. The main subject here is a huge bull which, like the great bull in the Vestibule painting, can be none other than the Bull Lord in his avatar persona of the animal bull. In the same panel there are human figures much smaller in size. The smallest are four banqueters in long robes sitting paired at two tables. On the right the rocky ground rises up to provide a striated boulder as a seat for a larger lyre player. A huge bird flies away from him out over the banqueters. So we have here the rocky ground/boulder, not as a seat for the Minoan Great Lady or for a boulder kneeler to hold, but as the seat for a bard to sing to a human audience. Who is the bard? Since he is seated on one of the most prestigious symbols of power it is hard to see him as mortal. Also, he is larger than the banqueters. He can only be a god of music who can play the lyre. Again, we see a transference of what was once female divine imagery into the sphere of a male god. The great bird still acts as the messenger bird but now it takes the divine bard's music and words out to humans.

Before leaving the Throne Room at Pylos, a note on the painted plaster floor is in order. Set out in a grid with alternating panels reflecting stone and textile patterns, the floor layout also uses a diagonal which, as Emily Egan has revealed, immediately directs the gaze of a person entering the room to the throne on the right hand wall¹⁶. One square in front of the throne shows a great octopus and this feature accords well with other marine themes used in palace wall paintings like the argonaut and the dolphin

13 AP, 117-118, 128, 132-133.

14 Illustrated as a line drawing, AWP Fig. 1.11.

15 Illustrated as a line drawing, AWP, Fig. 1.12. The Lyre Player is shown in a colour reconstruction which reveals the striations of his boulder seat, AP, Pl. XVIII.

16 Egan, 2016, 131-147.

friezes¹⁷. The pairing of wall painting pictorial programs featuring the bull and those featuring marine themes is notable at Pylos and finds other parallels, as discussed below.

Mycenaean Meanings

In the above survey into the detail of the shift from Minoan iconography into Mycenaean iconography in the Legacy Period, the seal designs reveal some general trends. There is an overall reduction in both the subject matter and the syntax of its portrayal. There is a move from naturalistic portrayals towards the static and the symbolic. There is an increasing concentration on the male. Then, by the Late Period, the seals have ceded their position as the primary art influencer to other media, especially to wall painting. As the Pylos examples indicate, the structure of the composition of the palace wall paintings is Minoan, begun long ago in the seal images and continued in the frescoes of Crete and Thera. However, the changes to Minoan idiom observable in these late Mainland creations show that the iconographic detail of the Minoan idiom has morphed into Mycenaean usage. No doubt there has also been a change to accommodate a Mycenaean mind-set although we may not be able fully to interpret the Mycenaean meaning. The instances noted above where the power of a Mycenaean Wanax may be depicted are a case in point. Whether it is the embodiment of that power in a new goddess figure or the portrayal of grand leadership in a religious procession, the variation in iconographic detail points to the type of ruler who would have been delighted to be listed as one of the four great kings of the world in the Hittite records.

Yet, there is one subject where the seals may be able to take the interpretation further and that is in matching text and image to identify the Bull Lord/bull avatar. Seals of the Legacy Period continue to show bull sports images even though the renditions are mostly incorrect when compared with LM I seal images. If the true subject of the bull sports is the bull avatar then we may have the reason for the continuance: it is to keep alive the memory of the earlier worship of the god which still resonates with the Mycenaean. Then there are the images where the bull or the bullman is joined by dolphins. In 14.40, 14.41 and 7.34¹⁸ a dolphin is shown with a bull while in 14.42 and 11.44 a bullman is shown with a dolphin. The dolphin is the signature animal of the deep ocean and the familiar of the Dolphin Lord. The juxtaposition of both bull and dolphin unites the two deities, Bull Lord and Dolphin Lord. Somewhat belatedly, we are given a clue that the Bull Lord and the Dolphin Lord are the same deity, the god of the earthquakes. The bull is the avatar of the earthquake god manifesting his destructive power on land. The dolphin is the signature animal of the earthquake god who can also wield his power in the destructive force of the tsunami from the sea. The Aegean peoples of the Bronze Age, and before, had already suffered numerous devastating events, none more so than the cataclysmic eruption of the volcano on the island of Thera in the Minoan High Art Period, which would have united the two god personas in their lived experience¹⁹.

In the texts written in Linear B, an early form of Greek, several deities, recognisable as the gods and goddesses of ancient Greece, are named. Poseidon is one of them. In the Pylos texts his name appears transliterated as po-se-da-o and he is a prominent deity who receives taxation dues²⁰. As we have just outlined above, the pictorial programs of the Pylos Palace feature the bull and sea creature themes. In

17 See Egan and Brecoulaki on the argonaut and marine iconography at the Palace of Nestor, MWPIIC, 292-313.

18 Also in CMS VII 111 and CMS IX D24.

19 Recent seismic activity is recorded on the University of Athens website, <http://www.geophysics.geol.uoa.gr>. For a partial list of earthquakes and tsunamis in Greece in historic times, 2022 CE to 464 BCE, see the entry in Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_earthquakes_in_Greece. Where available, records of deaths and comments on the magnitude of the destructions are provided. These seismic statistics are frightening.

20 I thank Tom Palaima for his enlightening counselling on the difficulties of navigating the Linear B script. The Poseidon name is clear, as is his importance in the Pylos texts. There is also a Linear B epithet, transliterated as e-ne-si-da-o-ne, which has been linked to the later description, "earthshaker". However, this transliteration has both phonetic and grammatical problems. So, its link with Poseidon is not accepted by all scholars.

Greek myth and religion Poseidon is the god of the sea and of earthquakes. In Greek literature there are references that can be seen as the recognition of the link between the land earthquake and the sea tsunami. Homer, at the very beginning of the *Odyssey*, introduces Poseidon as the implacable enemy of Odysseus²¹. Thereafter, described by his epithet, “Earthshaker”, Poseidon uses all his power over the sea and waves to prevent Odysseus from coming home. When Telemachus, the son of Odysseus, visits Pylos where the King is Nestor, son of Neleus, who himself is a son of Poseidon, Homer provides a magnificent account of the Pylians sacrificing bulls to Poseidon on the seashore²². This is a ceremony in a specific location which may be interpreted as propitiation against the tsunami. The tragedian, Euripides, has Theseus, son of Poseidon, in avenging rage, call upon his father to destroy his son Hippolytos by sending a seamonster to attack him as he drives his chariot by the seashore. The monster is named as “the bull from the sea” and a long passage is devoted to describing it and its destructive power²³. Is this not the bull/dolphin of the seal images, the tsunami, rising in a great wave as it thunders down on the shore destroying all in its path? Yet, even earlier than these Greek legends are the Minoan myths of the Labyrinth and the ravaging Minotaur kept within it. In the Minoan High Art seal images, the Dolphin Lord carries a hammer axe and the Bull Lord is identified with his animal avatar. Both were clearly important gods. Still, there was no iconographic detail that actually identified the Bull Lord as the earthquake god and no iconographic detail that linked him with the Dolphin Lord. Perhaps we can now do that in retrospect, seeing Poseidon as a great and ancient Minoan god shaking the earth and controlling the ocean, as we await the excavation of more images and the confirmation of his Minoan name.

So, it is clear that there have been substantial shifts in the iconography away from Minoan art as we move into the Legacy Period and beyond that into the Late Period. Some of the most significant of these changes involve core Minoan subject matter involving the presentation of fantastic creatures and gods and the roles of humans. The artists continuing the seal production in Crete in the Legacy Period were not able to use many of their most characteristic iconographic *Icons* and elements while the artists of the Mainland reduced iconographic content and varied the Minoan idiom. Of the many indications of a Mycenaean take-over of Crete after the LM IB destructions, the removal of vital Minoan subjects from the iconographic record may well be the most telling. They are all gone: the kneeling the boulder and pulling the tree ceremonies, the monkey and the dragon, the many personas of the goddesses and gods and their interaction with women and men. There is no emphasis on earth, sky and sea forms, suggesting that the Mycenaean did not view the natural world as a sacred surround. The fascinating detail of flora, fauna and sea creatures has disappeared, with only a few remaining examples used in symbolic ways to reflect an earlier Minoan abundance. In symbolic terms the natural form of the boulder with its connotations of seismic awareness is replaced by the grand pillar which becomes the statement of structural integrity and, by extension, the safety of the Mycenaean citadel. The Lion Gate at Mycenae is the spectacular adoption of a seal image to make the grand political statement of supernatural lion power ensuring the security of the Mycenaean state. Winnowing the exotic, fantastic and hybrid creatures down to only three of the Fabulous Five – the lion, the griffin and the genius – increases their presence hugely. The sphinx joins them. The lion and griffin live a lusty life to the end, becoming emblems for the violence and aggression of their human counterparts. The genius transforms itself into a benevolent spirit guardian for humans and a favoured server to the gods. The sphinx grows in power and symbolism. For the life of mortals, the gender divide of a traditional society dictates that Mycenaean roles are somewhat similar to Minoan roles. The pious serving roles of women continue in processions and before shrines. The warrior/hunter roles for men remain. However, the equal sharing of protagonist roles in ceremony and social interaction is gone. Moreover, the powerful female presence of the Minoan Lady

21 *Odyssey*, Book I, Lines 19-26.

22 *Odyssey*, Book III, Lines 4-8.

23 *Hippolytos*, Lines 1198-1234.

The Mycenaean Inheritance

deities is no longer felt. Images of a dominant male ruler, the Wanax, appear²⁴. This overview presents the Mycenaean point of view, allowing considerable indebtedness to the Minoans but also revealing the creativity of a people with a different mind-set.

²⁴ Jack Davis and Sharon Stocker give a detailed assessment of the formation of the Pylian State, Davis 2022.

Plates 14.1 to 14.56

The First Phase: Transference, Reception and Display

Mycenae, Grave Circles



14.1 – human head
(I 5/LB I)



14.2 – war duelling
(I 11/LH I)



14.3 – hunt duelling
(I 9 /LH I)

Vaphio, Tholos



14.4 – pulling the tree
(I 219/LM I)



14.5 – tusk helmet
(I 260/LB I-LB II)



14.6 – dealing with the catch
(I 224/LB I-LB II)

Mycenae, Chamber Tombs



14.7 – lions, curved altar
(I 46/LB I-LB II)



14.8 – dragons
(VS 1B 76/LB I-LB II)



14.9 – Lion Mistress
(I 144/LB I-LB II)

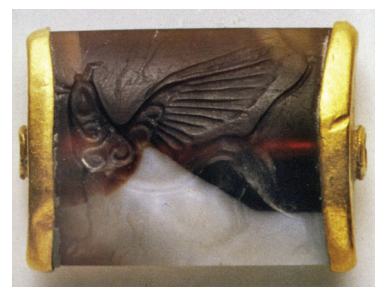
Pylos, Tholos and Palace



14.10 – hunter fallen, bull
(I 274/LB I-LB II)



14.11 – chasing, hound, stag
(I 363/LB I-LB II)



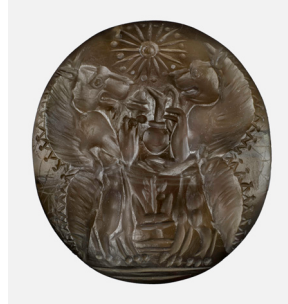
14.12 – griffin
(I 271/LB I-LB II)

The First Phase: Transference, Reception and Display

Pylos, Griffin Warrior Grave



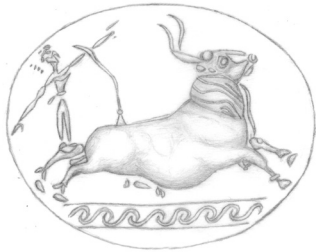
gold signet



agate lentoid



gold signet



14.13 – leaper landing



14.14 – genius, altar, sunburst



14.15 – serving at the shrine



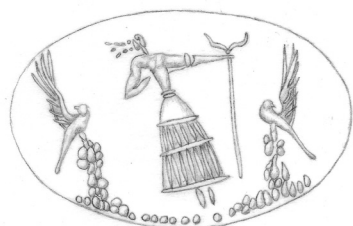
gold signet



agate amygdaloid



gold signet



14.16 – Bird Lady appearing



14.17 – war duelling (drawing of the seal)



14.18 – VIP granting audience

The Second Phase: Rejection, Continuity, Variation



14.19 – bull, palm tree
(I 57/LB II-LB IIIA1)



14.20 – animal crunching
(I 185/LB II-LB IIIA1)



14.21 – caring for young
(I 62/LB II)



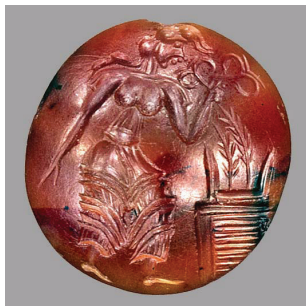
14.22 – animal attack, animal suckling
(VS 1B 136/LB II-LB IIIA1?)



14.23 – bull sports
(VS 1B 135/LH IIIA1?)



14.24 – hunt duelling
(I 165/LB III A)



14.25 – serving at the altar
(I 279/LB II)



14.26 – serving at the shrine
(VS 1B 115/LB II-LB IIIA1)



14.27 – griffin chariot
(VS 1B 137/LB II-LB IIIA1)



14.28 – Agrimi Master
(I 163/LB IIIA1-LB IIIA2)



14.29 – Dolphin Mistress
(VS 1B 116/LB II-LB IIIA1)



14.30 – Bull Mistress, genius servers
(I 379/LB II-LB IIIA)

The Second Phase: Rejection, Continuity, Variation



14.31 – hunter, hound, boar
(I 294/LB II)



14.32 – processing, gesturing
(I 108/LH II-LH IIIA1)



14.33 – genius carrying the catch
(VS 1B 153/LB II-LB IIIA1)



14.34 – griffins, mirror reverse
(I 102/LB II-LB IIIA1)



14.35 – sphinx couchant displayed
(I 129/LB II-LB IIIA1)



14.36 – sphinxes, antithetical group
(I 87/LB II-LB IIIA1)



14.37 – sunburst, griffin, lion, argonaut,
dolphin? (I 329/LB II-LB IIIA1?)



14.38 – Lion Master
(VI 313/LB II-LB IIIA1)



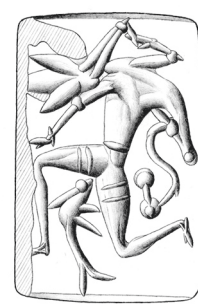
14.39 – sacrifice, palm tree
(XI 52/LH II-LH IIIA1)



14.40 – bull, dolphin
(XI 226/LH II-LH IIIA1)



14.41 – bull, dolphin, bird
(VI 403/LB IIIA1-LB IIIA2)

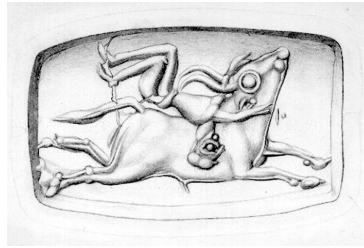


14.42 bullman, dolphin
(VS 3 223/LB II-LB IIIA1)

The Second Phase: Rejection, Continuity, Variation



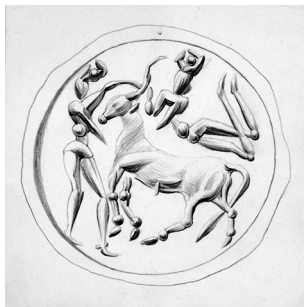
14.43 – leaper somersaulting
(I 200/LB II-LB IIIA1)



14.44 – leaper falling
(V 674/LB IIIA1-LB IIIA2)



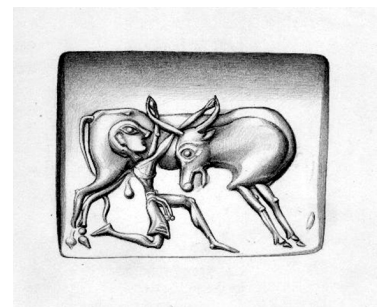
14.45 – leaper bulldogging
(I 95/LB II-LB IIIA1)



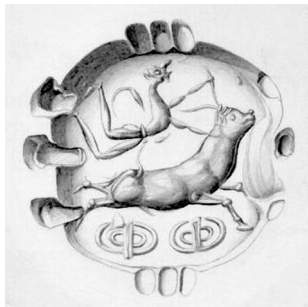
14.46 – leapers preparing, somersaulting
(VII 109/LB IIIA1-LB IIIA2)



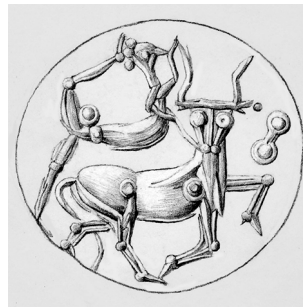
14.47 – leaper landing
(I 82/LB IIIA1-LB IIIA2)



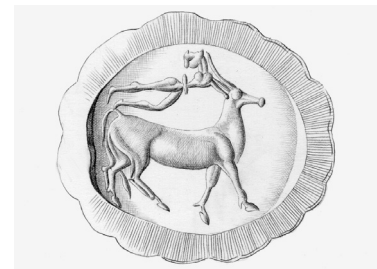
14.48 – leaper bulldogging
(II.3 105b/LB II-LB IIIA1?)



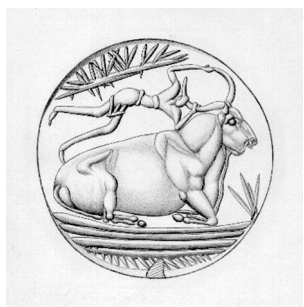
14.49 – leaper somersaulting
(V 517/LH II-LH IIIA1)



14.50 – leaper somersaulting
(VI 337/LB IIIA1-LB IIIA2)



14.51 – leaper somersaulting
(I 79/LB IIIA1)



14.52 – leaper somersaulting
(II.3 271/LB II-LB IIIA1)



14.53 – leaper somersaulting, two bulls
(V 597/LB IIIA1-LB IIIA2)



14.54 – leaper somersaulting, agrimi
(V 638/LB I-LB II?)

The Mycenae Ring and the Tiryns Ring



14.55 – VIP granting audience
(Mycenae Ring, I 17/LB I-LB II)

14.56 – VIP granting audience
(Tiryns Ring, I 179/LB II)