Part I

An international style

1 The theoretical evolution of an international style

In the formative periods of the archaeological discipline it was a convenience for archaeologists and historians alike to envision the cultures of the ancient eastern Mediterranean as somehow internally homogenous and culturally isolated from each other. In fact, this premise may be extended out to embrace many facets of culture, including visual representation. And it is possible to generalise regarding the unique characteristics of the broader states of the Near East as diverse artistic, religious, social and political entities, as long as awareness is retained that these characteristics were more fluid and variable than static. This early notion of 'separateness' however, did not preclude trade or the implementation of hostile political activities, such as military expansion between states, but predominantly this viewpoint was considerably more convenient for academia than the vision of the past that we are compelled to embrace today.

The intention of this chapter is to track the process of academic thought regarding the exchange of visual culture and idiom in the Bronze Age and to therefore follow the formation of an idea of a trans-cultural iconography, such as the international repertoire that is examined here. There is no attempt made to analytically examine the visual idiom involved in the latter part of this dissertation. That is to be addressed in the chapter on iconography proper and with the discussion of the artefacts. Rather this chapter addresses the visual repertoire as it has been cited and represented in literature in the previous two hundred years and the academic dialectic that resulted from this exposure. Objects represented here may thus not all represent artefacts from secure archaeological provenience and many are therefore not employed in current discussions of this visual repertoire. The intention is rather to build a nuanced understanding of how we have come to the theoretical locus in which we are embedded today.

1.1 Intrusive iconographic motifs and foreign exotica from the dawn of Egyptology

From the early nineteenth century, publications such as the extensive illustrations from Napoleon's Egyptian expedition and subsequent discoveries and excavations within Egypt have all contributed endlessly to scholarly dialogue over foreign exotica in Egyptian archaeological contexts. If one turns to historical publications from this time

it is already apparent that scholars were aware of visual evidence for external diplomatic and commercial relations from pharaonic Egypt. Early European interest in elite and royal funerary complexes on the west bank of Thebes in southern Egypt had resulted in the discovery of New Kingdom royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings, such as that of Seti I, KV 17 and Ramesses I, KV 16, by Giovani Belzoni in 1817.[1] In addition, as early as the 1820s travellers to Egypt could access these Western Theban elite tombs and view paintings which bore representations of foreign emissaries bringing exotic goods to the Egyptian court from the neighbouring cultures of the eastern Mediterranean, or of individuals of 'un-Egyptian' character depicted as bound captives from Egyptian New Kingdom military campaigns.

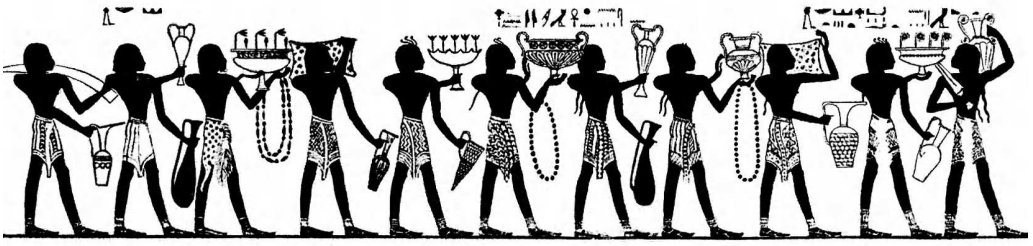

Fig. 1.1 'Thebes, fresco in the tomb of Rekhmire' in Bossert 1921, 258–9.

In the 1800s the most widely visited and published of these Eighteenth Dynasty tombs was that which belonged to the court vizier Rekhmire, TT 100,[2] in Sheikh abd el Qurna,[3] which was arguably first entered by a westerner, Frédéric Cailliaud, in the 1820s. Cailliaud's illustrations of this tomb and the paintings by Robert Hay of this and the tomb of Senenmut, a senior official of Hatshepsut, TT 71,[4] immediately stimulated further interest from scholars. These were both published in the early 1830s and subsequent visitors to these tombs included most of the Egyptological elite of the nineteenth century.[5] If one opens any publication on Egyptian art from this period it is possible to find illustrations taken from these tombs of foreigners bearing lavish and colourful foreign 'tribute' to the Egyptian court.[6] The tomb of Senenmut also contributed the now famous imagery from the ceilings, with various complex patterns of 'exotic' running spirals and rosettes. Senenmut and Rekhmire and their images of foreign peoples, exotica and spiral-form ornament were to set the foundation for what was to come.

[1] Tyldesley 2006, 112.
[2] 18th Dynasty, reigns of Thutmose III to Amenhotep II, 1479–1400 BCE.
[3] Hodel-Hoenes 2000, 140.
[4] 18th Dynasty, reign of Hatshepsut, 1479–1457 BCE.
[5] Hodel-Hoenes 2000, 140.
[6] The interpretation of these scenes as foreign tribute is now considered to be embedded in Egyptian internal politic, for further discussion see Panagiotopoulos 2001, 263–83, and 2008, 167–79; Graff 2008, 260; Hallmann 2006, 316–7; Rehak 1998, 39–53; Wachsmann 1987, 4–12.

Fig. 1.2 'Aegean tribute' from the tomb of Rekhmire. After Perrot and Chipiez 1885, fig. 542.

The foreign emissaries from these two tombs carry objects that bear the various elements of visual idiom that had an early impact on the art historical study of cultural styles and on the quest to identify cultural origin for symbols and motifs exchanged in the Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean. The tomb of Senenmut shows figures bearing Minoan gold cups, conical rhyta, or amphorae, often with decorations of running spirals, rosettes and bucrania. The tomb of Rekhmire on the other hand has a wider range of foreign gifts from Nubia to the Aegean and Syria. These various emissaries carry prestige objects such as griffin headed rhyta (libation vessels) or silver and gold vases decorated with fluting and lotus flowers, rosettes or with ibex and lion protomés.

Fig. 1.3 Silver and gold vessels from TT 65, the tomb of Nebamen and Imiseba. After Prisse d'Avennes II, 96.

But along with these tombs the Eighteenth Dynasty tomb of Nebamen that was usurped by Imiseba in the Twentieth Dynasty, TT 65, again at Sheik abd el Qurna, was also to have an influence on this topic.[7] In a scene of Nubian tribute to Ramses IX there are

[7] Referred to as Imiseba in early publications.

rows of ornate silver and gold vessels before the king that have graced almost every volume of the nineteenth century from Rosellini to Prisse d'Avennes. The vessels are ornate and prestigious with repeated 'problematic' motifs, such as again running spirals and rosettes, but also ibex and cattle gambolling in 'un-Egyptian' poses decorate their sides. These objects were described as Egyptian products in these volumes,[8] but by the early twentieth century scholars like Pierre Montet were citing these same vessels as evidence of foreign tribute to Egypt and intrusive exotic idiom due to these specific motifs.[9]

In the nineteenth century professional ethics in Egyptology were an entirely different concept to the present day and the museums of the western world welcomed the addition of Near Eastern antiquities to their fledgling collections without asking too many awkward questions about methods or sources. European connoisseurs in the form of educated statesmen and diplomats set themselves up as experts and antiquities collectors, and made significant contributions to the development of the Louvre, British, Berlin and Turin museum collections. Two individuals stand out among many for combining politics with business in the first half of the nineteenth century, the English consul-general Henry Salt[10] and French consul-general Bernadino Drovetti[11] who were both ruthless competitors and the collectors who supplied the antiquities that form the foundation collections for the previous museums.[12]

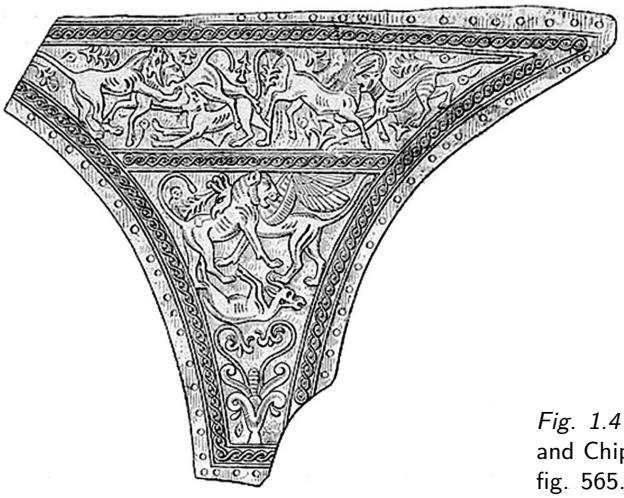

Fig. 1.4 'Bronze pectoral' in Perrot and Chipiez 1885, Vol. III, *Phénicie*, fig. 565.

How this contributes to a discussion of hybrid idiom is that many antiquities that illustrated academic discussion in the nineteenth century were sourced by Egyptian dealers and diggers under the employ of one of these men. The earliest hybrid idiom

[8] Prisse d'Avennes 1878, *Histoire de l'art Égyptien*, Atlas II; Ebers 1879, *Aegypten in Bild und Wort,* 254.
[9] See Montet 1937, 51–69.
[10] Dawson and Uphill 1972, 258.
[11] Dawson and Uphill 1972, 90.
[12] Tydesley 2006, 95.

object to my knowledge is a bronze appliqué now in the Louvre collection that Henry Salt purchased in Egypt. This artefact is no longer deemed admissible to discussion due to issues of provenience and certainly contributes little to our knowledge due to same. It is worth mentioning here because of its constructed history and because it constitutes one of the few metal pieces replete with a fully representative example of this visual idiom. Yet it was sourced approximately eighty to one hundred years before other objects in similar style were discovered in the Valley of the Kings and in Ugarit. On the basis of this correlation, the plaque is in my opinion unlikely to be a nineteenth century forgery. As to its value as 'constructed' art history, the object was purchased by Henry Salt in Egypt, with no local source indicated, but due to the visual idiom the plaque has always been attributed in publications and the museum's records as from a Levantine coastal source, particularly the region of Tyre.[13] It is here in the early nineteenth century that the idea of a Phoenician source for this idiom begins to take nebulous form in the minds of scholars.

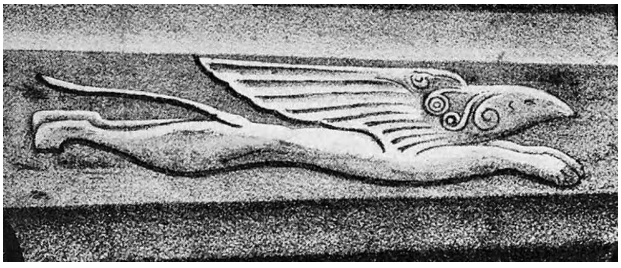

Fig. 1.5 Aegean griffin on a dagger from Tomb III, Mycenae, 16th c. BCE. After Evans 1921, fig. 534.

From this early beginning, the next substantial development on this theme occurred with discoveries relating to royal funerary assemblages at Dra abu en Naga in Western Thebes in the middle 1800s.[14] In 1859 the coffin of an early Theban queen from the transition from the Seventeenth Dynasty to the New Kingdom, Aʿhhotep[15] was discovered under poorly documented circumstances.[16] The assemblage of this queen marks the beginning of scholarly debate over entangled iconography, since the coffin contained a bundle of precious metal royal objects: jewellery, weapons and a silver boat.[17] Of these, two prestige weapons with unusual idiom attracted the most dialectic: a ceremonial axe bearing an image of a winged griffin with Aegean features[18] and a gold and niello dagger with a design of running animals in arguably Aegean poses.[19] Both objects also bear Egyptian religious and royal idiom alongside the titulary of the founder of the Eighteenth Dynasty, Aʿhmose I, but it is the intrusive idiom on these two weapons that has attracted the most academic interest.

[13] The Louvre Atlas database describes the plaque as: 'Objet Syrien trouvé en Égypt', Joan Aruz (2008, 404) cautiously says 'which came to be attributed to the site of Tyre'.
[14] von Bissing 1900; Reeves 2000; Tyldesley 2006, 148.
[15] 1560–1550 BCE.
[16] Ostensibly discovered by Auguste Mariette (Ebers 1880, vol. II, 58) it was first formally documented by Friedrich von Bissing in 1900 in *Ein thebanischer Grabfund aus dem Anfang des Neuen Reichs.*
[17] Lilyquist quoting Howard Carter (1993, 55).
[18] 'Adder mark', 'notched plumes' or 'dog tooth' feathers and spiral curls on wings and shoulder.
[19] 'Flying' or 'running gallop'.

Due to the obscure origins for the material from Dra abu en Naga there has been some discussion over identification for this queen with another of the same name, or indeed whether these two are in fact one individual.[20] The Aʿhhotep associated with Dra abu en Naga is generally considered to have been the wife of Seqenenre Taa II, the final ruler of the Seventeenth Dynasty and the mother of Aʿhmose I, founder of the Eighteenth Dynasty.[21] However, on the fringes the idea has circulated that the presence of Aegean intrusive idiom within this corpus and an ambiguous royal title both argued this queen was a Minoan princess.[22] This collection of artefacts is most noteworthy for the sheer scope of visual and literary space allocated to the weaponry, jewellery and ornament in subsequent nineteenth century publications.[23] And prior to the twentieth century it would be reasonable to state that, on the evidence available to scholarship, queens of the early Eighteenth Dynasty were particularly attractive topics for academic dialogue. Except at this point in time the presence of royal cartouches on the artefacts led scholars to refer to them in terms of the king, not the owner of the assemblage, due to rather Victorian assumptions regarding male and female roles in ancient Egyptian culture.

The value of this assemblage was eclipsed in the early 1880s when a large cache of Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasty royal mummies, including the mummy of a queen Aʿhhotep, was discovered by Emile Brugsch in the vicinity of Deir el Bahari in Western Thebes.[24] This cache of thirty-six mummies had been collected in antiquity as a means of protecting the bodies of New Kingdom royal families from tomb robbers after numerous incursions in the valley complex. It contained the remains of the rulers Aʿhmose I, Amenhotep I, Thutmose I, II and III, Seti I and Ramesses II, as well as New Kingdom royal wives, princes and princesses. In 1886 and almost concurrent with this discovery, Gaston Maspero had overseen the clearance of the predominantly intact tomb of a senior craftsman of the Valley of the Kings, Sennedjem, TT 1, at Sheikh abd el Qurna in Western Thebes.[25] The assemblage from this tomb did not attract the notoriety of the royal tombs, but is worth noting here because it represents a good sampling of early Nineteenth Dynasty prestige funereal artefacts,[26] some of which also bear relevant intrusive iconography.[27] The deceased was not a member of the Egyptian elite, rather he was a senior tradesman from the workman's village of Deir el Medina.[28]

[20] For one queen: Eaton-Krauss 2003, 75–89; Lacovara 2008, 119. For two/three separate queens: Roth 1999, 361–78.
[21] Or Aʿhhotep wife of Kamose, Dodson and Hilton 2004, 124, 126, 128.
[22] See further discussion pages 308 to 311.
[23] Ebers 1880, 45, 58; Perrot and Chipiez 1882, 830–1, figs. 564–5; Steindorff 1900, 21, figs. 12–3; Maspero 1903, 136–40 (glass), 300–1 (Phoenician connection); Breasted 1905, 44–5; Evans 1921, and so on.
[24] Rediscovered would be a better term, since the cache had been discovered earlier and exploited by local Egyptians, Breasted 1905, 146–7; Tyldesley 2006, 152–6.
[25] Hodel-Hoenes 2000, 247.
[26] 'Tomb No. 1 is not only one of the most beautiful and better preserved of Thebes; but it is, besides, a perfect example, complete and typical of a tomb containing a great family,' Bruyere 1959; Porter and Moss 1970, 1–5.
[27] See page 325.
[28] *'Servant in the place of truth',* was employed in the construction of royal tombs and funerary assemblages, currently considered to have been a senior stonemason, Saura i Sanjaume 2006, 12.

The intrusive idiom from this tomb belonged to toiletry articles of his wife, Ijneferty, and consists of scenes of a goat and tree, a steer in 'Aegean pose', volute palmettes and running spiral ornaments. Interestingly this tomb has contributed little to dialogue over hybrid idiom, but it was cited in the early twentieth century in French publications.[29]

Fig. 1.6 Griffin on the axe-head of queen A'hhotep, 16th c. BCE, Western Thebes. Image A. Sinclair.

The next landmark in understanding Egypt's complex external relations in the New Kingdom came towards the end of 1887 when European scholarship became aware of the existence of clay tablets inscribed with Akkadian cuneiform from a context within Egypt. These cuneiform tablets had been appearing sporadically on the Egyptian antiquities market and were predominantly letters from foreign kings and vassals to the Egyptian court. Further investigation of the source for these diplomatic correspondences revealed not only an archive of royal letters from the various political powers of the Late Bronze Age, but also drew scholarly attention to the site of Akhetaten, Tell el Amarna, in middle Egypt, which was the capital city established by the late Eighteenth Dynasty ruler Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten. An individual who attempted to alter the theological landscape of Egypt and in doing so built a new city dedicated to the cult of the sun disc at Amarna.

Subsequent to these finds, William Flinders Petrie led an excavation of this site in 1892 which produced an unprecedented quantity of Mycenaean ceramic fragments,[30] vitreous materials of very fine quality[31] and yet more tablets inscribed with Akkadian cuneiform, the *lingua franca* for Near Eastern political correspondences.[32] These clay tablets which were found in the royal archive augmented the existing corpus of diplomatic letters, with the addition of some documents that took the form of Akkadian lexica or scribal glossaries. While this study examines the significance of the diplomatic records from Amarna, the idiom of the vitreous materials[33] and painted palace frescos are also considered significant. Only one object from this excavation was to attract controversy

[29] Capart 1931, fig. 85; 1947, 756.

[30] Before this time Aegean finds in Egypt had been of single vessels and/or fragments and this excavation yielded over a thousand fragments with some few fragments of Cypriot and 'Phoenician' ceramic. Petrie 1894, 17; Kelder 2010.

[31] Faience and 'Phoenician glass' and some 5000 moulds for the production of same which he ascribed to local production by foreign artisans, Petrie 1894, 16.

[32] Petrie 1894, 34.

[33] Amulets, scarabs, rings, also the many moulds for amulets and ring bezels, inscribed with the names of Akhenaten and royal women or with motifs relevant to this discussion: caprids and voluted flowers and palmettes, Quirke and Tajeddin 2010, 348–9.

over style at the time: a jasper vessel lid from the royal correspondences building that is carved in the round and has an 'un-Egyptian' scene of a lion attacking a steer.[34]

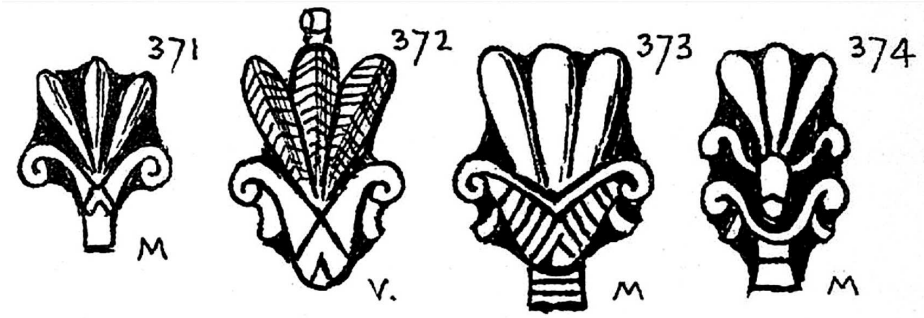

Fig. 1.7 Tell el Amarna: Volute trees on ceramic moulds for rings. After Petrie 1894, pl. XVIII.

Seven years later Petrie's excavations from 1889 to 1890 at Illahun and Gurob near the Fayoum in northern Egypt were to contribute indirectly through the discovery of what he described as 'foreign' tomb assemblages in both town and funerary contexts. These assemblages which are dated to the Eighteenth and Nineteenth dynasties contained glass and faience vessels,[35] Mycenaean stirrup jars and pilgrim flasks which argued, at least superficially, for the presence of foreign artisans in the region.[36] Petrie himself considered these objects to be Phoenician in origin and style, a not entirely invalid leap for his time, considering the glass techniques and motifs present are mirrored by designs from the later Phoenician period in the eastern Mediterranean. This assumption was supported and espoused in academia well into the twentieth century until it became apparent that the Phoenician culture did not date as early as the second millennium.[37]

Further to the south at Western Thebes, Georges Daressy had excavated the undecorated tomb of an Eighteenth Dynasty nobleman, Hatiay, steward of the granary of the temple of Aten at Karnak.[38] Within this unpublished funerary assemblage were two objects that attracted discussion in the late 1800s: a repoussé bronze patera with a scene of cattle in lush marshes and a wooden ointment jar of a servant bearing a vessel decorated with calves frolicking in vegetation. Each of these objects was found placed in the sarcophagus of a woman bearing the name of Siamen. Scholars at the time made some effort to ascribe cultural sources for the ostensibly alien motifs residing on these artefacts, with Wolfgang Helbig ascribing Phoenician, Heinrich Brunn, Cypriot and Friedrich von Bissing arguing resolutely for Mycenaean influence, but placing

[34] Hall 1901, fig. 71. British Museum EA 22866.
[35] These glazed materials are now understood to be Egyptian production.
[36] Petrie 1892; Tsountas and Manatt 1897, 308.
[37] It should be understood that the connection of this iconography to later visual idiom from Syrian and Phoenician cultural styles is acceptable methodology, but to claim a retrospective connection is not, see Markoe 1990, 13–26; 2003, 309–19. For Phoenician Iron Age chronology see Gilboa and Sharon 2003, 7–80.
[38] Discovered in 1896. Daressy 1901, 1–13; von Bissing 1899, 28–56; 1901, 60–2; Maspero 1923, 202, fig. 393; Wiese 2004, 220–3.

some emphasis on the development of a hybrid Phoenician style situated between the Egyptian and Assyrian artistic canons.[39] However, the mobility of poses in fact only argue for cosmopolitan Amarna period Egyptian.

Fig. 1.8 Bronze bowl from the tomb of Hatiay. After Daressy 1901, fig. 10.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century scholars had accrued enough archaeological material to begin to question the presence of these unusual motifs on artefacts from excavations and on the antiquities market in Egypt. At this time a number of decorated wooden toiletry boxes were in circulation and being acquired by representatives of European museums. The prime example of these was the MacGregor box,[40] which as early as 1898 was being cited in scholarship as an example of Mycenaean visual style on an Egyptian artefact. Both Édward Naville and Georges Perrot espoused this object as being of Mycenaean inspiration, with Naville concluding that its likely origin was Phoenician, from either Syria proper or via Syrian craftspeople working in Egypt.[41]

This object was not unique and Flinders Petrie himself excavated similar boxes from funerary contexts at Sedment, Kahun and Gurob near the Fayoum in the same period and early twentieth century.[42] In scholarly discussions of Aegean motifs on Egyptian material, the Kahun box, MacGregor box and another wooden pyxis lid from the Berlin Museum (the 'Sarobina box')[43] were often cited in literature as specific examples for evidence of foreign iconographic intrusions on Egyptian objects. There are, however, at least twenty of these toiletry boxes which bear varying scenes of animal combat carved and incised on their surfaces that reside in museum collections around the globe. There are also others carved with similar ornament and technique with bucolic scenes.[44]

[39] Helbig 1896, 38; Brunn 1893; von Bissing 1899, 50–1.
[40] Originally in the possession of an English collector, the Reverend William MacGregor, this box was auctioned by Sothebys in the 1920s and now resides in the Boston MFA collection.
[41] Naville 1898, 1–11; Perrot and Chipiez 1880, 829.
[42] Petrie 1890, 35; 1924, 25, 31–2, pls. LVIII.47, LXVII, LXXI.3 & 5, LXVII.
[43] Sarobina or Sarbibina box, purchased by Lepsius from dealer in Cairo in 1842 (from a tomb in Sakkara?); 'Mycenaean style', Steindorff 1900, 70; 'pure Mycenaean', Petrie 1897, 76–7; 'Mycenaean via the Levant', Naville 1898, 11; 'Syrian or Phoenician', Sethe cited by Naville in 1898, 3; 'Mycenaean', Hall 1901, fig 55.
[44] See pages 221 to 223.

Fig. 1.9 The MacGregor Box from the collection of the Reverend William MacGregor, now in Boston MFA. After Naville 1898, fig. 3.

The next significant Egyptian funerary assemblages to contribute material to this discussion were three tombs discovered and cleared by Victor Loret in the Valley of the Kings in 1898–9. The tombs of two early rulers of the Eighteenth Dynasty, Thutmose III, KV 34, and Amenhotep II, KV 35, were poorly documented and substantially looted in antiquity, but the latter shall contribute to discussion of royal assemblages and the material from Tutankhamen's tomb with international idiom in Chapter Seven.[45] The third and equally significant event, was Loret's discovery in 1899 of the tomb of Maihirperi, a senior Eighteenth Dynasty court official, again in the Valley of the Kings.[46] This tomb, KV 36, was the first to be found relatively intact and while looted of precious materials contained much of its original funerary assemblage. It owes much of its obscurity to the sensational discoveries immediately preceding and following than to its own historical insignificance.[47] It is equally no benefit to posterity that the material from this tomb had until recently not been formally published.[48]

The owner of the tomb, Maihirperi, although perceptively not of royal lineage, and probably of Nubian descent, had received unprecedented honour by being allocated burial in the Valley of the Kings, the necropolis reserved for New Kingdom royalty. He held the courtly titles of 'fan bearer on the right of the king' and 'child of the royal Kap' (or harem).[49] However, the king referred to for these senior roles is not established and largely dependent on a variety of royal names associated with the assemblage. Hatshepsut is named on the mummy linens from the tomb, but other artefacts may be dated to the reigns of Amenhotep II and Thutmose IV. Thus the date of this tomb is problematic and could be assigned to any ruler between 1450 to 1350 BCE: Thutmose III, Amenhotep II, Thutmose IV, or in fact even Amenhotep III.[50]

[45] Loret 1899a, 98–112; 1899b, 92–7. See further discussion pages 302 to 306.
[46] Porter and Moss 1964, 556–7; Reeves 1984, 141–52; Reeves and Wilkinson 1996, 179–81; Lilyquist 2005, 62–3.
[47] Thutmose IV in 1903, Amenhotep III between 1905 and 1915.
[48] Daressy 1902; Orsenigo (2007, 2016).
[49] Wiese and Brodbeck 2004, 172–3.
[50] A 76 year time range from ca. 1424 to 1348 BCE; Dodson and Hilton (2004, 290), however Christine Lilyquist (2005, 62) assigns the tomb to the late reign of Hatshepsut ca. 1450 BCE.

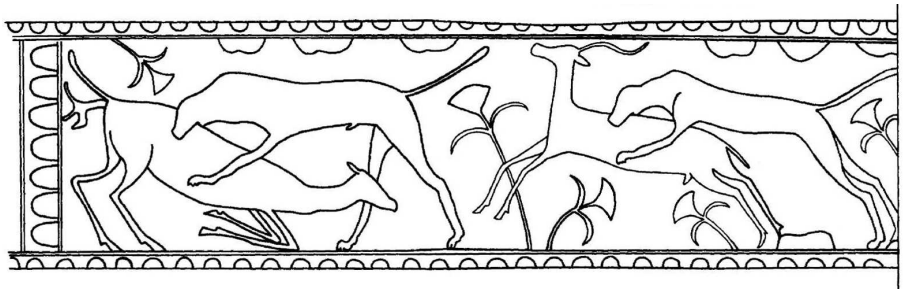

Fig. 1.10 Maihirperi leather dog collar from KV 36, Western Thebes. After Daressy 1902, 34.

Within this collection of funereal material were a small group of worked leather artefacts that excited scholarly attention for the iconography on their surfaces, particularly one leather dog collar.[51] For the object has an unusual decoration of animal combat between hunting dogs and antelopes. This study is also interested in the imagery on some of the accompanying military equipment, as well as that of the collar, as they include volute trees, palmettes and running spirals.[52] Thus, by the end of the nineteenth century scholarship was facing an already nuanced view of intercultural relations in the Late Bronze Age. Excavations of Eighteenth Dynasty tombs and a late Eighteenth Dynasty city site had produced abundant evidences for cultural contacts. In addition, specific rich assemblages, such as those belonging to the state officials, Maihirperi, Hatiay and Sennedjem, and that of queen A'hhotep, each contained objects bearing unusual iconographic idiom.

Flinders Petrie delivered a series of lectures to the Royal Institution in London which went on to be published in 1895. This book on the subject of Egyptian decorative design has informed subsequent academic dialogue on Egyptian ornament and addressed such topics as complex and simple spiral, the lotus, 'lily' and palmette. In doing so Petrie established terminologies for Egyptian visual idiom that are still in use today in academic discourse.[53]

1.2 Beyond Egypt: The problem of 'Phoenician' ivory and bronze

1.2.1 Nimrud

It is worth briefly mentioning the broader context of archaeological research at this point, as it too contributed to this process. In tandem with the first forays into professional archaeology in Egypt, excavations in the Near East were contributing substantially to ideas about the visual output of ancient cultures. In Mesopotamia ivory plaques and inlays displaying foreign and hybrid features had been discovered in

[51] There were in fact two leather dog collars: the pair has a frieze of antithetical horses.
[52] See discussion pages 318 to 320.
[53] Petrie 1895.

various palatial contexts. The earliest and most significant group to have impact on this topic must be the Nimrud ivories**.** The ivories (and some bronze platters) which date to the first millennium were sourced from Austin Henry Layard's excavations at Nimrud in northern Iraq in 1849. While it is currently understood that these ivories which bear strong Egyptianising[54] and hybrid features are not directly related to the Late Bronze Age examples, at that time no subtle stylistic distinction was in place and these ivories have at one time been neatly conflated together under the aegis of either Assyrian or Phoenician.[55] Two years after Layard, William Loftus continued to excavate the same site and found yet more mixed style ivories, this time a cache which had been burnt in the sacking of the buildings, but again bearing similarly themed hybrid iconography.[56]

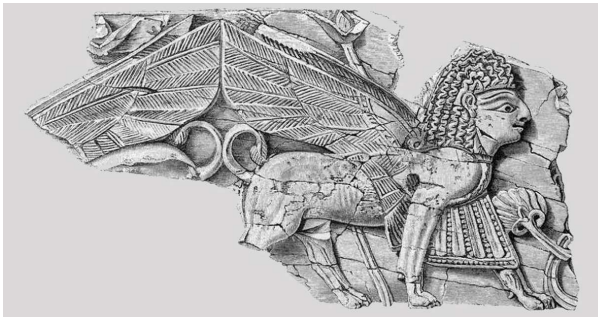

Fig. 1.11 Ivory inlay with 'Egyptianising' features from the excavation of Nimrud, 8th–7th c. BCE. After Layard 1849, pl. 89.

It was fully a century after Layard and Loftus that the British returned to Nimrud and excavated the Neo-Assyrian period palace of the ruler Shalmaneser III. Between 1949 and 1963 excavations under the direction of Max Mallowan contributed to the discussion by adding a multitude of ivories, some of which again bear eastern Mediterranean hybrid idiom consistent with the earlier mixed style artefacts.[57] In the nineteenth century scholarly debate rested firmly on whether these ivories could be attributed to Egyptian or Phoenician workshops and it was not until the twentieth century that Frederik Poulsen introduced a third category; northern Syrian[58] which may be identified most easily by the absence of Egyptian idiom and an arguably clumsier style of execution. These carved furniture panels and elements of harness may now be ascribed to more than any single cultural influence and represent Assyrian, Phoenician, Anatolian, intermediate Syrian and northern Syrian visual styles, but have in fact only served to muddy the waters somewhat regarding the considerably earlier, yet, in certain cases, quite similar international ivories.[59]

These conclusions while flawed are understandable, as many motifs and stylistic details under discussion here are present on these artefacts, and both nature and function

[54] 'Egyptianising' describes the adoption of features of Egyptian state idiom, such as the pharaoh as conquering warrior and/or by using Egyptian script and icons.
[55] Wilson 1938, 335.
[56] Layard 1849; 1853; Reade 2008, 1–22.
[57] Herrmann and Laidlaw 2013, 84.
[58] Poulsen 1912; Winter 1976b, 26; 1976a, 2-3.
[59] Herrmann and Laidlaw *Ivories from Nimrud I–VII.*

of these artefacts are comparable. They are furniture inlays for royal beds, tables and thrones and from small cosmetic vessels.[60] Also, because of the sheer volume of ivory plaques and inlays that Near Eastern archaeology has produced from now famous excavations, ivory remains the centrepiece of scholarship for discussion of the international style and effectively casts the evidence from other media into the shadow with the extensive publications devoted to debating the topic reaching back over a century to the beginning of the twentieth century.

1.2.2 Mycenae and Enkomi

Further west in the Aegean and Cyprus, excavations of palace, temple and elite funerary sites had been equally contributing ivory artefacts and iconography to the scholarly debate. The much lauded excavations of Heinrich Schliemann at the citadel of Mycenae in the 1870s had placed Mycenaean Greece on the world stage and in the process had also produced imported exotica from both Egypt and Mesopotamia.[61] Subsequent excavations led by Christos Tsountas at the same site were to seal the issue when they found Egyptian scarabs and fragmentary faience plaques in elite contexts that bore New Kingdom Egyptian royal cartouches with the names and titles of Amenhotep III and queen Tiye.[62] Excavations of elite chamber tombs at Spata near Athens also produced the odd unusual ivory pyxis and further east at the island of Delos excavation of the temple of Artemis by a French team in 1896 produced a cache of ivories among which were a few plaques with chronologically 'earlier' scenes of animal combat.[63]

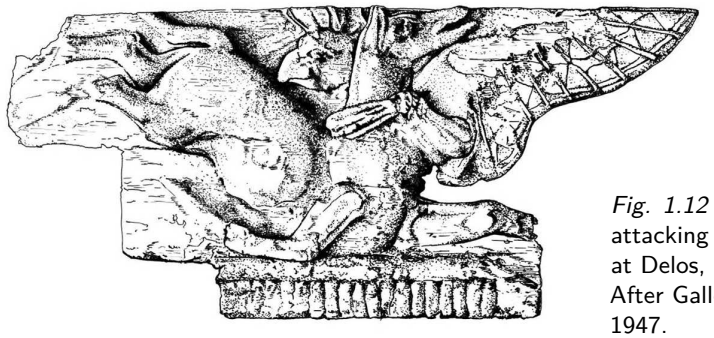

Fig. 1.12 Ivory inlay with a griffin attacking a deer from the Artemision at Delos, 1200–1100 BCE (style). After Gallet de Santerre et Tréheux 1947.

Excavations of elite tombs by Alexander Murray at the site of Enkomi in eastern Cyprus in 1896 had equally contributed many more unusual prestige artefacts to our dialogue.[64] For, not only did these funerary assemblages contain a quantity of imported exotica from the Mycenaean Aegean, Egypt, Syria and the Levant, including gold bezel rings and scarabs with Amarna period idiom and royal names, but they also contained some

[60] Furniture inlays, horse harness plaques and small prestige ceremonial vessels.
[61] Schliemann 1878; Karo 1930, I and II.
[62] More fragments have since been added to the group and it now comprises 13 in total, see Phillips and Cline 2005; Cline 1987; Tsountas and Manatt 1897, 319.
[63] Gallet de Santierre and Tréheux 1947, 148–254.
[64] Murray 1900, 1–54; 1899, 24.

few objects in precious materials and bearing 'mixed' iconography of hunt and animal combat that confound cultural attribution.[65] Most notable and repeatedly published of these is an ivory game box of Egyptian type that bears problematic Syro-Levantine iconography of royal hunt on two sides and pastoral scenes with cattle and caprids on the ends.[66]

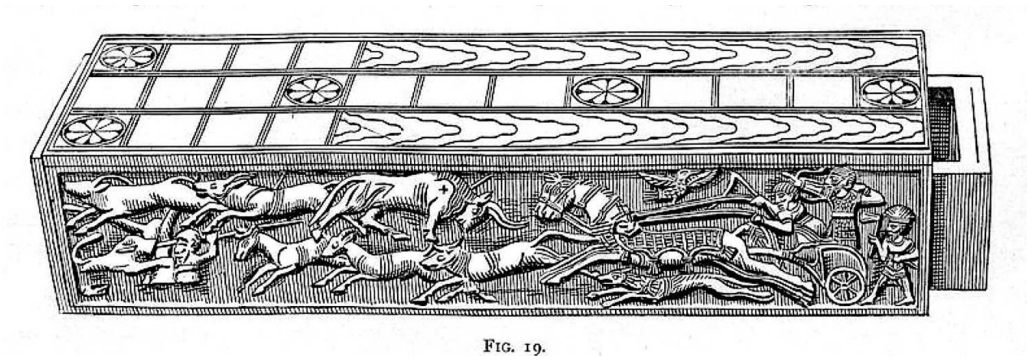

Fig. 19.

Fig. 1.13 Ivory game box from Enkomi in Cyprus, 12th c. BCE. After Murray 1900, pl. I.

Under the influence of extant material from other first millennium excavations, Murray made another mistake that dogged this discipline in the early twentieth century and argued for the chronology of the Mycenaean period to extend beyond the Late Bronze Age through to the seventh century BCE. This was founded primarily on the previously discussed stylistic similarities to Assyrian and Phoenician idiom from the first millennium. He argued the presence of an Egyptian gold and vitreous paste pectoral established his later date, because 'paste inlays did not begin in Egypt until 800 BC'. The awkward presence of a scarab with the Eighteenth Dynasty queen Tiye's name was attributed to the first millennium Greek vogue for copying earlier Egyptian royal scarabs![67] In assessing the content of his Enkomi excavation Murray concluded erroneously that 'our excavations in 1896 show, first a mixture of Egyptian, Phoenician and Assyrian artistic influence, and, secondly a strongly marked Hellenic element'.[68] He also prevailed under the now discredited assumption that the large corpus of prestige Mycenaean ceramic from these Late Bronze Age elite tombs indicated a Mycenaean political occupation of the island.[69]

By the end of the nineteenth century the visual output of first millennium Assyria, Phoenicia and Late Bronze Age Mycenae were dominant in the archaeological record and thus readily provided the template upon which scholarship of this entangled iconography was grounded. Equally, it needs to be emphasised that at this time Aegean archaeology was predominantly defined by mainland Greek, Mycenaean culture, and many artefacts that are now known to be Minoan, or Cycladic were at that time

[65] Claude Schaeffer's excavations at Enkomi in the early 1950s have since augmented this group to include gold diadems and a silver cup: Schaeffer 1951, 177–84; 1953, 51–64.
[66] Murray 1899, 24; 1900, 12–5; Ridgeway 1896; Caubet 2009.
[67] Murray 1899, 26.
[68] Murray 1899, 31.
[69] A nice example of the 'pots equal people' fallacy.

subsumed under the general heading of Mycenaean. Harold Hall was particularly guilty of this error in his early publications,[70] but in fact, at the turn of the century Arthur Evans had yet to discover and 'reinvent' the Minoan culture and further east, Leonard Woolley and Max Mallowan were still to make their notorious inroads into earlier Mesopotamian culture.

1.3 Scholarly debate: The early twentieth century

After the turn of the century, a quick succession of clandestine and legitimate excavations in Egypt contributed much to the iconographic exchange debate in scholarship. Beginning with the illegal looting of an intact tomb, the tomb of Touti, at Gurob in the Fayoum in 1900 which was exposed by the authorities and subsequently written up officially by Emile Chassinat in 1901.[71] This elite female tomb associated with the cemetery of a royal harem was dated by Chassinat to the reigns of Amenhotep III or Akhenaten, due to inscriptions naming Amenhotep III, Akhenaten and Tiye on some objects. It contained an eclectic range of Eighteenth Dynasty elite grave goods[72] and one unusual carved wooden bowl[73] which manifests ostensibly exotic iconographic elements: volute palmettes, winged male sphinxes, guilloche bands and rosettes, while also containing stock Egyptian idiom, such as stylised protomés of the goddess Hathor. This bowl has previously been described as international style due to the idiosyncratic volute tree and the 'un-Egyptian sphinxes',[74] and it is difficult to criticise early scholars for considering the Phoenician question, when in this instance the object does have stylistic parallels with much later wooden cult bowls from Nimrud.[75]

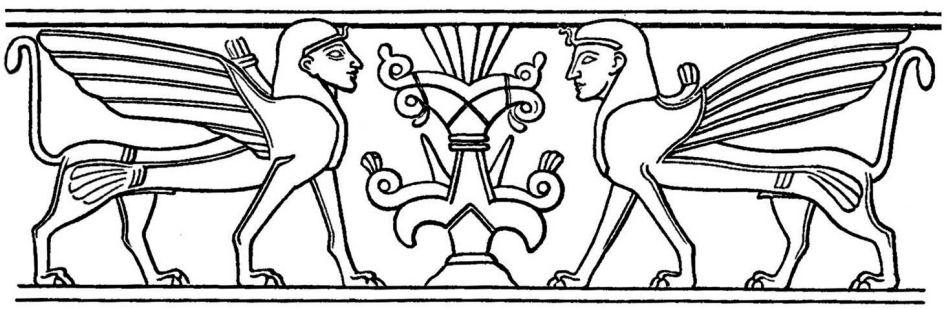

Fig. 1.14 Detail from the Gurob wooden bowl, tomb of Touti, late 18th Dynasty, ca. 1350 BCE. After Kantor 1945, 495.

[70] Hall 1901.
[71] Chassinat 1901, 225–34.
[72] Kohl jars, mirror, hair pins, wooden statuettes, a dagger of Middle Kingdom type, gazelle cosmetic spoon, ushebtis, lotus bowl, pyxis etc, Chassinat 1901, 227–8.
[73] Louvre: E11041.
[74] Kozloff (1992, 358–9) calls this a 'Cypro-Phoenician tree'.
[75] Chassinat (1901, 231–4) incidentally used this and the first millennium Nimrud bowls to argue an Egyptian source for all objects within this repertoire.

Legitimate excavations under the auspices of Theodore Davis in the Valley of the Kings then proceeded to produce a plethora of luxury grave goods from elite and royal tombs that successfully eclipsed the contents of the preceding tombs. In 1903 the tomb of the Eighteenth Dynasty ruler Thutmose IV, KV 43,[76] was excavated by Howard Carter on behalf of Davis and while substantially looted in antiquity it contributes data towards discussion of hybrid idiom for weapons and royal chariotry in the New Kingdom.[77] Almost immediately following this royal tomb, in 1905 James Quibell discovered the virtually intact tomb of the priest and master of the king's horse, Yuya and his wife T̲uya,[78] who were high ranking elites from the late Eighteenth Dynasty and parents of the chief wife of Amenhotep III, Tiye. This tomb, KV 46, contained furniture and chariotry bearing some unusual and intrusive design elements that contribute substantially to our narrative and to academic dialogues about iconographic diffusion, with motifs such as running spirals, rosettes and volute trees. In Davis' publication of the excavation Percy Newberry also discussed possible exotic idiom on figures of the goddess Tauert and of the god Bes from the funerary furniture, and the evidence of influences from Egypt on Cypriot and Aegean iconography, such as the adoption of Tauert by Crete into the Minoan genius.[79]

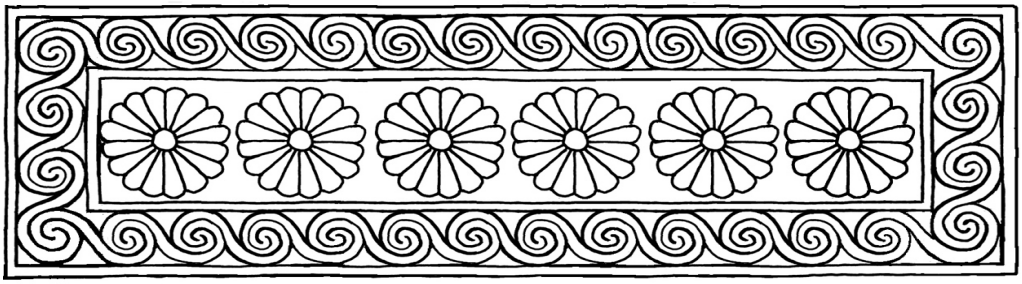

Fig. 1.15 Rosettes and spirals on the chariot from KV 46, the tomb of Yuya and T̲uya, reign of Amenhotep III, 1389–1352 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

In late 1906, from an entirely different direction and context, a hoard of precious metal vessels appeared on the antiquities market in Egypt. This occurrence prompted the Egyptian director of antiquities Gaston Maspero and his assistant Campbell Edgar to investigate in an official capacity which turned out to be the rail construction at Zagazig in the Egyptian Delta. The outcome of Maspero's investigation was two groups of gold and silver artefacts. One, the original looted material which indirectly found its way to museums around the globe, and the other, the official material which was excavated a month later by the Department of Antiquities and now resides in the Cairo Museum.[80] The Tell Basta treasure comprises vessels, jewellery, statuettes, tools and metal scrap found in a cache in the environs of the temple of the goddess Bastet at Bubastis.[81]

[76] 1398–1388 BCE.
[77] Carter and Newberry 1904; Tyldesley 2006, Chapter 10; Porter and Moss 1964, 559–62.
[78] Davis 1907; Quibell 1908; Tyldesley 2006, 204–5; Porter and Moss 1964, 562–4.
[79] On a chair of queen Sitamen, daughter of Tiye, Newberry 1907, 40–1.
[80] The Metropolitan Museum in New York and the Berlin Museum in Germany.
[81] Maspéro 1908, 401–12; Edgar 1907; Maspéro 1907, 93–108; Simpson 1949, 61–5.

Unlike the previously cited material, these objects bore the cartouches of some few rulers of the Nineteenth Dynasty and were therefore most likely accumulated by the temple precinct over time.[82] However, the iconography resting on some of these vessels again exhibited characteristics consistent with those residing on the material already mentioned, such as animal combats, caprids flanking volute trees, winged sphinxes and griffins. Again, these were juxtaposed with canonical scenes from the Egyptian visual repertoire. Interestingly, the original researchers, Maspero and Edgar, both considered this imagery to be Egyptian, but constructed by artisans skilled in exotic motifs.[83]

Similarly, the excavations of Arthur Evans at the Minoan palace of Knossos in Crete had stimulated this scholar to argue his own theories regarding the transference of iconographic motifs between the Aegean and Egypt. Idiom such as the sphinx, griffin, solar symbols, the papyrus (*'waz'* lily) he deemed transferred from Egypt to Crete in the Twelfth Dynasty. In return, such motifs as the winged griffin with spiral crest, animal combats, running and concentric spirals, flying leap and the flying gallop animal pose were transferred from Crete to Egypt in the Twelfth and Eighteenth Dynasties.[84] With regard to the volute tree Evans initially described it as the 'Egyptian' or an 'Amarna floral pillar' in 1901, no doubt under the influence of the sheer volume of rings and seals with the motif that were produced by Petrie's Amarna excavations. His subjective rationalisation was that it was in fact a stylised drawing of an iris,[85] but later, after extensively excavating at Knossos in Crete and with Murray's discoveries in Enkomi, Evans changed his tune and designated the volute tree a Mycenaean iris or Cypriot palmette.[86]

Fig. 1.16 Upper register of Tell Basta 'Atumemtoneb' vessel A, Egypt, 19th Dynasty, 12th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

Armed with the aforementioned archaeological evidence it seems only natural that in the early twentieth century scholars felt confident to attempt to cast judgement on the anomalous material that had been accumulated throughout the eastern Mediterranean. These began with Max Müller's *Egyptological Researches* in 1906 and 1910, where Müller

[82] The reigns of Ramesses II to Tausret.
[83] Edgar 1907, 108; Maspero 1908, 411–2; Poulsen (1912, 5, 9) also supported this assessment in his study on Egypto-Aegean connections.
[84] Evans 1921, 704–5, 709–11, 713–8; 1928, 200–8.
[85] Evans 1901, 148–51.
[86] Evans (1928, 494–5) as a stylised date palm.

examined the foreign idiom (rosettes and 'meanders') from the tomb of Senenmut[87] and the foreign tribute scenes from the tomb of Menkheperreseneb in Western Thebes and leant his support to a broad argument for the gazelle, ibex, volute palmette and scroll ornaments having entered the Egyptian visual vocabulary from Syria, not the Aegean, with tribute in the early Eighteenth Dynasty. This conclusion incidentally rejected Petrie's conclusions about the Egyptian origin of the floral idiom.[88] In 1912 Friedrich Wilhelm von Bissing presented a paper to the Royal Bavarian Academy on the role of Egyptian art in influencing the iconography of neighbouring cultures entitled: 'Der Anteil der ägyptischen Kunst im Kunstleben der Völker'. This presentation which was subsequently published laid some emphasis on the evidence for an artistic connection between the Aegean and Egypt, but refused to accept a Cretan origin for motifs such as the spiral.[89] In the same year Frederik Poulsen published *Der Orient und die frühgriechische Kunst* and attributed the unusual imagery from a Tell Basta vase to both Phoenician and Assyrian influences while simultaneously conceding that their probable workshop origin was within Egypt.[90]

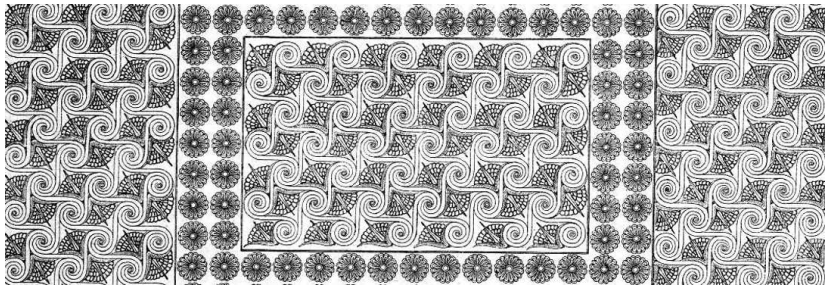

Fig. 1.17 Ceiling from the 'Treasury of Minyas' tholos tomb at Orchomenos in Greece, 1275–1200 BCE. After Schliemann 1881, pl. 1.

In 1914 Harold Hall from the British Museum presented a paper to the Manchester Egyptian and Oriental Society[91] in which he assessed previous archaeological finds from the Aegean and elaborated on the visual evidence for cultural connections between the two regions. In addition, in the same year he published two large articles on 'The Relations of the Aegean with Egyptian Art' and for these employed the ceramic evidence and the paintings of foreign tribute from the Theban tombs of two Eighteenth Dynasty courtiers (naturally Senenmut and Rekhmire). In his volume on Aegean art in the following year Hall discussed the issue of the intrusive iconography on ivory from the Aegean[92] and Cyprus,[93] arguing that the 'non-Minoan' elements indicated an Asiatic/Syro-Mesopotamian origin for certain motifs, such as the winged griffin

[87] Müller 1906, 13–4.
[88] Müller 1910, 4–9.
[89] Interestingly, von Bissing refuted the argument of Arthur Evans that the spiral in Egypt was of Aegean origin.
[90] Poulsen 1912, 5, 9.
[91] Hall 1914, 11.
[92] Delos, Spata, Mycenae and Athens.
[93] From Murray's excavations at Enkomi.

and sphinx, and drew comparisons with the 'hypothetical semi-Minoan' style of the Egyptian Sarobina toiletry box lid from the Berlin Museum and the Enkomi ivory gaming box from the British Museum.[94]

In the aftermath of the First World War the discipline of Egyptology was to gain an immense boost in profile when in 1923 the world reeled in the sensation of the discovery by Howard Carter of the virtually complete funerary assemblage of Tutankhamen, a little known late Eighteenth Dynasty ruler. Tutankhamen's tomb, KV 62, in the Valley of the Kings had by sheer accident of circumstances suffered little plundering, save two incursions by thieves in the period immediately following the Eighteenth Dynasty,[95] and was resealed and lost to historical memory during the Ramesside period.[96] This royal tomb stands as a conservative indication of the sheer wealth of material that may have been considered appropriate for the burial of an Egyptian ruler in the New Kingdom and for the benefit of this study, also contained the largest collection of objects that may confidently be associated with iconographic ambiguity and an hybrid style, including such motifs as running spirals, rosettes, animal combats, voluted trees, winged sphinxes and griffins. It should be pointed out here that of these objects only one gold dagger and a gold chariot plaque were to be used as terms of reference for hybrid idiom in subsequent publications until the middle of the twentieth century, when this was expanded out to the idiom on three sides of a ceremonial chest.

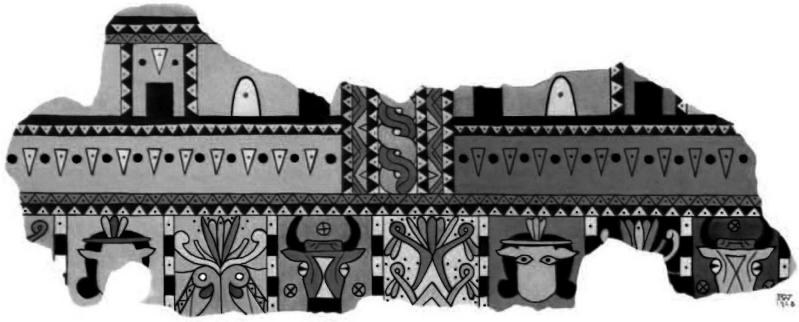

Fig. 1.18 Wall painting with Egyptianising idiom and volute trees. Nuzi governor's palace, Mitanni period, destroyed ca. 1350 BCE. Image after Starr 1937, fig. 128.

At approximately the same time a French excavation led by Pierre Montet at Byblos on the Lebanese coast provided funerary evidence for Byblos' longstanding strong ties to Egypt, with royal tombs of the second and first millennium, many containing an eclectic range of Egyptian and Egyptianising prestige goods. The most significant tombs (I, II and III) date to the reigns of Twelfth Dynasty rulers Amenemhat II and Senwosret II and contained artefacts emulating those objects considered fit for an Egyptian pharaoh, in addition to Egyptian material that is fit for a pharaoh.[97] Another first millennium

[94] Hall 1915, 202–3.
[95] Reeves and Wilkinson 1996, 125–6; Reeves 1984, 55–65; 1995, 95–7; Tyldesley 2006, 231.
[96] Carter and Mace 1963.
[97] Virollead 1922; Hakimian 2008, 49–58; Kopetzky 2015; Schiestl 2007.

royal tomb at Byblos (Tomb V) equally provided some anomalous ivory from a pyxis with an animal combat of the type already under discussion.[98] This excavation also contributed more prestige objects of entangled idiom and medium from the Temple of the Obelisks.[99]

Further east in Mesopotamia proper, excavations at the site of Nuzi in northern Iraq by an American team led by Richard Starr brought to light a late Mitanni period residential governor's palace[100] that was decorated with colourful wall paintings that equally contained ostensibly intrusive idiom. The watercolour painting of this painted frieze was a common addition to discussions of Mesopotamian art in the early twentieth century. The original frieze contained bucrania,[101] rosettes, Egyptianising Hathoric protomés, volute trees and guilloche bands, and until the twenty-first century was generally considered a classic example of international influences. The frieze is dated to Stratum II at Nuzi which represents the final phase of Mitanni rule and the first half of the fourteenth century.[102] It is contemporary with the other contentious hybrid material culture of that period from northern Mesopotamia, 'Nuzi ware', light on dark ceramics which also contain similar idiom of volute flowers, rosettes, spirals and were likened to the considerably earlier Aegean Kamares ware, but are now considered to have a north Syrian indigenous origin.[103]

Fig. 1.19 Gold bowl, Acropolis of Ras Shamra/Ugarit. 'Coupe en or, son décor au repoussé compose de motifs Mycéniens, Égyptiens et Syriens est typique pour l'école d'Ugarit'. Image and text after Schaeffer 1949, pl. VIII.

In the mid 1930s Fernand Bisson de la Roque excavated the temple of Monthu at El Tôd near Luxor in Egypt.[104] Within the foundations of this temple four bronze chests were discovered containing a hoard of compacted silver and gold moulded and fluted vessels with a large quantity of raw, partially worked and finished lapis lazuli. All of

[98] Dussaud 1924; Wallenfels 1983; Aruz 2008, 411–12.
[99] Montet 1928.
[100] Palace is a misnomer, as it infers a royal family. Nuzi was a provincial governorate of the state of Arrapḫa which itself was under the jurisdiction of the Mitanni kings, see Starr 1937; 1939.
[101] Bull's heads viewed frontally.
[102] Novac 2007, 390–3.
[103] Stein 1984; Zimansky 1995.
[104] Bisson de la Roque 1937.

arguably foreign origin which may be dated by context to the Middle Kingdom reign of Amenemhat II, but which stylistically vary from the middle third millennium to the early second.[105] Apart from the arguably exotic visual features of these products, the materials themselves attest to Egypt's wide external connections, as both lapis lazuli and silver were valuable minerals that were not naturally occurring within the Egyptian homeland.[106] This assemblage contributes obliquely to discussions here through both the evidence for longstanding international connections, but also via one silver cup that has a voluted pattern embossed on the handles. Academic dialectic over the cultural origin of these precious metal vessels ranges from the Aegean, Syria, the Levant and Anatolia.[107]

Further north-east in the southern Levant, multiple archaeological sites contributed yet more Egyptianising and hybrid ivories to research; Petrie's excavation at Tell Farah produced the fragmentary sides of an Egyptianising box with banquet and marsh scenes, James Starkey and Olga Tufnell at Lachish contributed pyxis lids and gold foil with volute trees and palmettes. At Megiddo a large hoard of ivories of varying cultural origin was found in the 'treasury' of the palace during excavations in 1937,[108] and then there was the eclectic array of material from Claude Schaeffer's excavations at Ras Shamra in Syria in the 1930s.[109]

Schaeffer's excavations of the environs of the temple of Baal on the acropolis at Ras Shamra had resulted in two gold vessels that again appear to have been heirlooms from a temple hoard. In addition, a cache of carved ivory furniture inlay elements bearing mixed cultural imagery was later found in the royal palace and a pyxis lid with a carved mistress of animals figure from a tomb at Minet el Beida.[110] The iconography of this piece alone is a topic that has been occupying scholars for decades.[111] Schaeffer wrote extensively on the cultural influences explicit on these artefacts in the voluminous publications of his excavations in the 1930s and 1940s. He himself favoured local manufacture and in explanation of the exotic style, the presence of Syro-Mycenaean artisans working in ivory and metallurgy at Ugarit.[112] To argue date and style for the gold vessels and ivories he leaned heavily on the idiom from the dagger and a plaque from the tomb of Tutankhamen, with a brief mention of an early gold dagger with lions and goats from Evans' excavations at Knossos that is still cited today for this topic.[113] Naturally the scenes of foreign 'tribute' from Eighteenth Dynasty tombs also rated mention, with emphasis on the tomb of Rekhmire.[114]

[105] Quenet et al 2013, 517–8.
[106] Pierrat-Bonnefois 2008, 65–6; 1999; Pierrat 1994.
[107] Anatolia or Ebla – Maxwell-Hyslop 1995; Aegean – Laffineur 1988, 17–30; Warren and Hankey 1989; Hood 1978, 153–66; Georgia – Seyrig 1954, 218–22; Syro-Phoenicia – Montet 1937, 83, 88, 90, and gift from a Phoenician king to Egypt, but of Cretan workmanship – Dussaud 1949, 45.
[108] Loud (1939, 9) dated them to 1350–1150 BCE; also see Feldman, 2009, 175–94.
[109] Schaeffer, *Ugaritica* I–VII.
[110] Tomb III, Schaeffer 1939; 1949; Gachet-Bizollon 1992; 2001; 2003, 87–99; 2007.
[111] Gates 1992, 77–86; Caubet and Matoian 1995, 99–112; Poursat 1999, 683–8.
[112] Schaeffer 1939, 34.
[113] Schaeffer 1949, plaque with griffin, 32–3, fig. 8; dagger, 1939, 33–4, fig. 27.
[114] Schaeffer 1949, figs. 6, 9.

In the early 1930s John Pendlebury, a seasoned excavator in Egypt and in the Aegean, published two papers: an article on analysis of the evidence for cultural interaction entitled *Egypt and the Aegean in the Late Bronze Age,*[115] and a catalogue of the extant Egyptian artefacts that had been found in Aegean contexts: *Aegyptiaca.* In the former he avoided a discussion of motif transfer and interpreted the material evidence from the Aegean. From this he inferred heightened political and trade relations between Egypt and the Aegean in the Mycenaean period dating from the rule of Amenhotep III and after the collapse of the Minoan 'thalassocracy' in the Aegean.[116] He recommended that there was a necessity for scholarship to pay more attention to issues of artistic transference between the two regions and cited the work of Henry Frankfort at Tell Amarna as representative of this.[117]

Six years later, Henry Frankfort weighed into the melee regarding hybrid idiom with his own discussion on the winged griffin and sphinx in Near Eastern art.[118] In this article he firmly situated the motif of the griffin within the artistic canon of Mesopotamia, with emphasis on the role of Mitanni and the Hyksos rulers in the mid second millennium in the spread to Egypt and the Aegean. The winged sphinx was summarily conflated with the griffin, while he dismissed the griffin entirely from the Egyptian visual repertoire. Ignoring all other evidence, he cited the 'unique' example on the axe of Aʿhhotep as evidence of the foreign origin of this motif in Egypt which only subsequently reoccurs in later dynasties.

A year later the excavator of Byblos in the Levant, Pierre Montet, carried on with Schaeffer's rationale and ascribed a Phoenician-Syrian origin to the five Tell Basta vessels and some jewellery that bear problematic idiom, again comparing them stylistically to Schaeffer's two gold vessels from Ugarit and the Louvre Tyre plaque to argue this point. Additionally, he employed the florid designs of vessels with fluting, lotus, caprids and rosettes from offering and tribute scenes in Eighteenth Dynasty elite tombs and temples to argue a non-Egyptian source for this material.[119] He ascribed a Near Eastern 'Phoenician' or 'Syrian'[120] origin to motifs such as the royal chariot hunt, the female sphinx, volute palmette and winged griffin, again supported by the visual evidence from the two Ugarit gold vessels. This argument was immediately rebutted by Norman de Garis Davies and Jean Capart arguing the lack of corroborating evidence from Syria and a shallow understanding of the extensive Egyptian evidence.[121] Which did not appear to discourage Montet in the least, as he was still forwarding the notion of Syrian and Phoenician origin for these vessels and those from Ugarit in 1949 in *L'art Phénicien du IIe millénaire.*[122]

[115] Pendlebury 1930, 75–92.
[116] A notion that is now refuted, Knapp 1993, 32–47.
[117] Frankfort 1929.
[118] Frankfort 1936–7, 106–22.
[119] Montet 1937, 133, 170–9.
[120] Montet repeatedly conflates these terms in his study.
[121] de Garis Davies 1938, 253–4; Capart 1938, 88–90.
[122] Dussaud 1949, 19.

By the close of the 1930s and the advent of war in Europe, eastern Mediterranean scholarship was faced with a group of diverse precious artefacts all bearing anachronistic iconography on their surfaces. And nobody could agree on cultural source. These objects represented an eclectic mix of finely wrought vessels and weaponry in precious metals, ivory inlays for furniture and cosmetic items like alabaster vessels and toiletry boxes from elite tombs and temple complexes from the Aegean, Egypt, Cyprus and the Levant. But naturally it was the problematic iconography that was attracting the most debate and the issue of chronology did not lean too heavily on the discussion, as objects cited range from both diverse geographical points and all the way from the sixteenth (A'hhotep axe and dagger) to the end of the thirteenth century (Tell Basta vessels).

Fig. 1.20 Nuzi ware ceramic from Alalakh in south-east Anatolia, 1450–1350 BCE. After Woolley 1955, pl. CV.

Few excavations in the Middle East traversed the period between 1939 and 1945, and one that straddled the period immediately before and after affects this discussion by imposing diffusionist and culture historical theory on the existing evidence. The excavation of Alalakh/Tell Atchana in south eastern Turkey, ancient coastal Syria was directed by Leonard Woolley (1937–9, 1947–9). Whose intention in choosing the site may be considered somewhat questionable, as he employed the 'begin with a theory and then seek evidence to support this' system of excavation. Woolley was determined to trace the evidence for long term cultural diffusion westward from the ancient Near East to the Aegean and thus on to classical Greece and Europe.

> 'The excavation of the lofty mound of Tell Atchana in the Amuk plain was encouraged by the Trustees of the British Museum with the express intention of 'tracing early cultural relations between the Aegean and the Asiatic mainland, throwing light, if possible, upon the development of Cretan civilisation and its connexions with the great civilisations of Nearer Asia.'[123]

[123] Barnett 1957, 355.

Woolley weighed in to the discussion of interconnections with evidence for palatial wall and floor paintings exhibiting 'Aegean' visual idiom, such as a fragment of a wing which may be from a griffin or sphinx, traces of bull's head bucrania (a bull horn) and 'Aegean style' marbling patterns. He incidentally dated these palace paintings too early in order to support his argument for an east-west diffusion of 'high culture' to Greece in the Middle Bronze Age.[124] The excavation also established ties with Cyprus via numerous imported ceramics in the early Late Bronze Age levels, as well as providing more early fourteenth century Nuzi ware ceramics and evidence of strong trade or diplomatic connections with Egypt in the Amarna period, with artefacts from the court of Amenhotep III, such as faience fragments and seals.[125] In the long run the site did not however argue for a cultural diffusion westward of civilisation, nor has it provided any objects with hybrid idiom that are currently considered to be international.

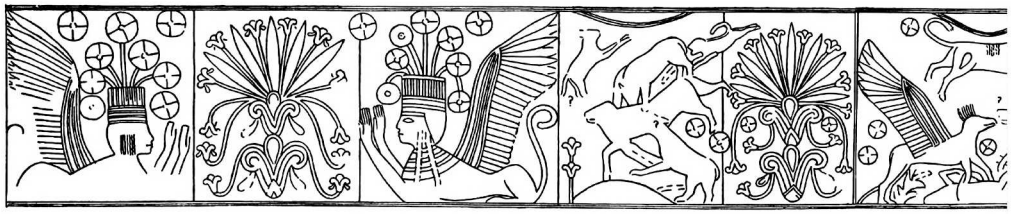

Fig. 1.21 Reconstruction of embroidered band of linen tunic, tomb of Tutankhamen, Egypt, 14th c. BCE. After Crowfoot and Davies 1941, pl. XX.

1.4 The dialogue over the origins of motifs: Post World War II

While it is not within the scope of this study to pay homage to every academic reference to cultural exchange and iconographic transfer in the past, it seems appropriate to name the outstanding influences that preceded current opinion on a freestanding international style in the Late Bronze Age. The chief suspect in the investigation has always been the Phoenicians and with the exclusion of some Egyptologists steadfastly standing behind Egypt for the source of some of this idiom, most Near Eastern scholars fell down on the side of the northern Levant and Syria in the mid twentieth century.

The intervention of World War II in the late 1930s placed archaeological excavation in the eastern Mediterranean on hold and as a result the available academic community shifted emphasis into research and publication. Thus in 1941 Grace Crowfoot and Norman de Garis Davies wrote a detailed analysis of an embroidered linen tunic with animal combats and volute palmettes from Tutankhamen's tomb in the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* and following Montet they described the motifs as 'distinctly

[124] The paintings are currently dated to the Syrian MB II contemporary with the Mari palace, late 18th to 17th c. BCE, Von Rüden 2013, 62; Feldman 2007, 40–1.
[125] Woolley 1955; Yener 2014.

Syrian in character, though they show marked Egyptian influence'.[126] They supported these assumptions with a discussion of Frankfort's Syrian origin for the winged sphinx and griffin, with corroboration of Müller's[127] thesis that the volute palmette tree was equally introduced to Egypt in the form of portable prestige weaponry via Syria and the Assyrian 'tree of life'. The latter neatly demonstrating the effectiveness of first millennium Neo-Assyrian motifs in influencing discussions of visual idiom from the Late Bronze Age.[128]

However, Alan Gardiner writing in this same issue on the gold dagger from Tutankhamen's tomb examined the images of animal combat and volute palmettes on the gold sheath and interestingly stated that there was no reason to suspect an influence from the Aegean in the iconographic idiom, rather he saw clear parallels with the depiction of wild animals from hunt scenes from Eighteenth Dynasty tombs.[129] Thus, at least Gardiner placed his rather impressive reputation on the side of Egyptian manufacture for these objects. In fact, this appears to have been the opinion of many Egyptologists, with some individuals carefully conceding the possibility of artistic influences on these designs from Syria and the Levant and others, from the Aegean.

1.4.1 Helene Kantor

In 1942 Helene Kantor was a relative newcomer to Egyptology who, while researching her doctorate under the supervision of Henry Frankfort, wrote an article attempting to bring the various strands of data together relating to Egypt's early trade and material connections with the ancient Near East.[130] This paper set her firmly on track for a career researching comparative Near Eastern visual culture and three years later she submitted her doctoral dissertation on Egyptian plant ornament to the University of Chicago.[131] In this she laid the foundation for both discussion of hybrid floral idiom and for what was to be her seminal paper on iconographic transfer: *The Aegean and the Orient in the Second Millennium BC*.[132] While Kantor is often cited by scholars of interconnections for the complexities of attributing cultural origin to visual idiom, particularly the Aegean connection, in her doctoral dissertation she argued for Egyptian origin and value for many motifs that currently cause controversy or were at that time attributed to either Syria or the Aegean.

The volute tree, her 'south flower' or 'hybrid south flower', she placed firmly within Egypt, dating it back to Old Kingdom royal iconography and later seals. Effectively refuting the argument by Crowfoot, de Garis Davies and Müller that it may have been transferred from Syro-Mitanni via gifted and looted prestige weapons and chariotry, she countered that there is no archaeological evidence from Mitanni to support this

[126] Crowfoot and de Garis Davies 1941, 127.
[127] Müller 1910, 9.
[128] Crowfoot and de Garis Davies 1941, 128–9.
[129] Gardiner 1941, 1–2, ii.
[130] Kantor 1942, 174–213.
[131] Kantor 1945.
[132] Kantor 1947a; Alizadeh 1992.

thesis.[133] Objects already cited here served to argue her point with the usual high profile objects, such as those from Tell Basta, tombs of Maihirperi and Tutankhamen, as well as a wealth of minor elements from New Kingdom royal and elite tombs and palaces. Perhaps one of the few objects that she conceded was not Egyptian was the Gurob bowl from the tomb of Touti, but she challenged the connection to Syria and posited perhaps an influence from further north in Anatolia while still maintaining that the original stimulus for the motifs was Egyptian.[134]

Fig. 1.22 Stylistic connections between the Aegean and Egypt: lids of cosmetic boxes, left the Sarobina box from Saqqara, Egypt, right from Menidi on mainland Greece. Images Kantor 1947a, pl. XXIV.

In the latter more widely cited paper Kantor examined the visual evidence for interconnections between the Aegean and the Near East (in actuality mainly Egypt), and argued for two periods of heightened cultural interaction and subsequent iconographic exchange and adoption of foreign idiom. According to Kantor, these two periods were the Middle Bronze Age, specifically the Egyptian Twelfth Dynasty with Minoan Crete in the seventeenth century and the Late Bronze Age Egyptian Eighteenth Dynasty/New Kingdom with Mycenaean period mainland Greece. She supported this argument with the evidence of Aegean ceramics from various archaeological contexts in Egypt,[135] the evidence of the aforementioned foreign emissaries in Eighteenth Dynasty Theban tombs and of many individual objects ostensibly bearing Aegean iconographic motifs, all now familiar to this discussion.

Where her paper impacts on this examination is Kantor's discussion of Eighteenth Dynasty 'animal style' artistic conventions and the reputed influence from the Aegean on

[133] Kantor 1945, 477–8.
[134] Kantor 1945, 495–8.
[135] Minoan tri-chrome Kamares ware in the Middle Bronze Age and Mycenaean stirrup jars and rhyta in the Late Bronze Age, Kantor 1947a, 18–21, 33–8.

Egyptian visual composition in the Eighteenth Dynasty from the reigns of Hatshepsut to Tutankhamen. Equally, she addressed the adoption of Minoan decorative ornament in the form of complex spiral patterns through the medium of imported ceramic decoration and perhaps woven textiles, although it must be emphasised that these are predominantly ornamental patterns from the earlier Middle Bronze Age. Finally, it cannot be stressed enough that the objects employed to argue her points are in fact contributors to subsequent discussions of mixed styles, although in the context of her study, they would better be described as intrusive elements. The artefacts employed by her included many previously cited objects, particularly the ivories from the excavations of Enkomi, Megiddo and Ugarit, and naturally the material from Egyptian contexts that she knew from her earlier dissertation on floral motifs.[136]

Kantor's contribution to studies of iconographic exchange did not go unchallenged, however, and in 1951 the Egyptologist Jean Vercoutter wrote a critical review of her work[137] which argued that cultural influences from the north and east of Egypt had not been granted equivalent value in contributing to New Kingdom artistic innovations as those from the Aegean. Appropriately, he laid stress on the influence of the Second Intermediate Period and the advent of the Hyksos kings in substantially modifying the Egyptian world view. In addition to this stimulus, he also included the military campaigns of the early Eighteenth Dynasty as potentially augmenting the flow of north-eastern and Aegean visual styles into Egypt and the importance of the emporia such as Ugarit on the Syrian coast and Enkomi in Cyprus in facilitating the movement of artefacts and motifs. Two years later Vercoutter weighed further into the intercultural relations dialectic over Egypt and the Aegean and argued that the identity of the 'Keftiu' in Eighteenth Dynasty Theban tomb paintings as being emissaries from Minoan Crete.[138] However, he maintained his emphasis on the importance of the Levantine coast, Syria and Cyprus as conduits for the movement of Aegean objects and held that relations between Egypt and the Aegean would have been predominantly indirect via eastern Mediterranean trading intermediaries.

1.4.2 An 'international style', William Kelly Simpson

In the interim the assistant curator of Egyptian Art at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, William Kelly Simpson, had published his own examination of the gold and silver vessels from the Tell Basta treasure, some examples of which were residing in the Metropolitan Museum collection.[139] This 1949 article was a brief introduction to the vessels, their iconography and inscriptions, however, ten years later in 1959 he published a further comprehensive analysis of the vessels which is still useful to scholarship today and in which the usage of the term international style to identify this iconography was first aired.[140]

'It seems likely, however, that the repertory of exotic details used in the

[136] Enkomi ivory game box and mirror handles, Megiddo hoard ivories, Minet el Beida ivory pyxis lid, gold bowl and patera, A'hhotep's dagger, Maiherperi dog collar, MacGregor box. See Chapter Four.
[137] Vercoutter 1951, 211–2.
[138] Vercoutter 1954.
[139] Simpson 1949, 61–5.
[140] Simpson 1959, 31.

> decoration was part of an international style current at the end of the second millennium B.C., and that it is unnecessary to postulate a foreign origin for the vessels themselves on the basis of these details'.

The 1959 article was a concise overview of the scholarly controversy over the stylistic origins for the Egyptian objects bearing mixed iconography. After resoundingly dismantling Pierre Montet's argument for a Syrian origin for the unusual pieces,[141] Simpson himself posited that while the objects from the two collections represented a varied timeframe[142] and therefore were likely temple heirlooms, their place of origin was still the site in Egypt, Tell Basta/Bubastis. Yet he too was prepared to concede that perhaps this was under the influence of foreign artisans and artistic styles. The same year another scholar associated with the Metropolitan Museum, William Hayes, judiciously stayed out of the controversy in his *The Sceptre of Egypt,* and merely discussed the Tell Basta vessels from the Metropolitan collection in terms of their attribution and iconography, only briefly referring to possible Syrian influences in the workmanship.[143]

It is also worth noting that in the mid twentieth century certain scholars were still resolutely ascribing a Phoenician origin to the available artefacts bearing this iconography. The excavator of Amarna, Alalakh and Ur, Leonard Woolley, wrote of the gold bowl and patera from Schaeffer's excavation of the Acropolis at Ugarit:

> ...'which reflect Phoenician style, as it was then and was to continue to be for centuries'.[144]

He subsequently went on to dismiss the craftsmanship of these gold vessels with:

> 'The effect of the two vessels is astonishingly rich, the workmanship is excellent and the design is extremely skilful, but nowhere is there any originality of invention.'

Indeed, according to Woolley all idiom employed to decorate these artefacts was borrowed from other cultures by the Phoenicians and he argued that all meaning for these motifs had been disregarded and therefore lost. In his view they were in fact 'reduced to mere ornament', and went on to add:

> 'It is evident that the craftsman possessed a 'pattern book' of motives derived from all the sources available to him and combined them indiscriminately into a design.'

This viewpoint is somewhat harsh and reflective of an intellectual burden that scholarship has inherited for objects in this style; that they are somehow artistically inferior. He similarly ascribed the profusion of mixed style ivories from the Levant and Syria to these same Phoenician craftsmen, regardless of the stylistic variance between individual artefacts. This was troublesome of him when one considers that at this time the cultural

[141] Simpson 1959, 43–4.
[142] Situated between the reigns of Ramesses II and queen Tausret due to the presence of cartouches from both rulers (and possibly of Seti II), dated between 1279–1187 BCE, Lilyquist 2012, 37.
[143] Hayes 1959, 358–60.
[144] Woolley 1961, 110–1.

attribution of the specific Phoenician ivories had already been comprehensively handled by both Helene Kantor (1956, 1960) and Richard Barnett (1948, 1956). These authors had subdivided the many Iron Age ivories into two distinct groups: a Phoenician and a northern Syrian style.[145] However, Woolley was not unique in his assumptions and Henry Frankfort in his monumental and repeatedly republished volume on Near Eastern art[146] while less critical of the idiom, again compared the decoration of the gold bowl and patera to the dagger sheath of Tutankhamen. Dubbing the decoration 'Mitanni style' and rather erroneously claiming it was an 'excellent example of Phoenician syncretism 500 years before they were known'.

These ideas have a habit of hanging around well beyond their 'use by' and even today it is possible to come across a paper that ascribes a direct and diachronic connection between Phoenician visual idiom and Late Bronze Age international objects.[147]

1.4.3 Richard David Barnett

Another contributor to discussion, Richard Barnett, had been assistant keeper and keeper of the Near Eastern antiquities at the British Museum throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s. He had direct access to the ivories from the British collection and was styled as an expert on first millennium Assyrian and Babylonian art, in particular the Phoenician and Syrian ivories.[148] He published examinations of the visual style of many ivory and precious metal objects over the course of his career and has had significant impact on the development of scholarship on this later topic. This discussion however will not deal with the first millennium material, but rather briefly introduce his remarks on mixed iconographic artefacts where they reflect the direction of scholarship in the middle of the twentieth century.

In 1957 Barnett published an article on fragments of an unprovenienced silver bowl from Tell Qatinah near Homs in western Syria. The iconography was used as the basis for dating the vessel and his conclusions were ultimately situated towards the end of the Late Bronze Age and early Iron Age. However, it is his discussion of the volute tree that demands attention:

> 'This type, however, (is) first found in a fresco at Nuzi ... This formula recurs, after Nuzi, in sacred trees illustrated in a series of jewellers moulds from Tell el Amarna where Syrian influence was notoriously strong. In the XIX Dynasty it is met on a silver dish obviously under the strongest Syrian or Phoenician influence, from Zagazig (Tell Basta).'[149]

[145] Not to mention that further studies have qualified these classifications: Feldman 2002, 6–29; Winter 1981, 101–30.
[146] Frankfort 1970, 260.
[147] Onnis (2014) argues value continuity from the Late Bronze Age, yet employs a restricted repertoire of international examples (Tell Basta Treasure, Ugarit bowl and platter, incidentally claiming the latter is a bowl) and includes some objects that are not 'international', but rather have culturally specific idiom (Hittite bowl from Kinik-Kastamonou).
[148] Barnett 1982; 1956a-b; 1948; 1938; 1935.
[149] Barnett 1957, 244.

Fig. 1.23 Silver bowl with volutes, griffins and sphinxes from Qatinah in Syria, Late Bronze to early Iron Age (style). After Barnett 1957, fig. 1.

As to be expected the usual suspects for this idiom were cited, both the Phoenicians and volute trees from Tell el Amarna, Tell Basta and from the wall painting from the governor's residence at Nuzi. The problem with his statement, however, is that it is grounded in an impression prevalent in early scholarship that the Mitanni period wall paintings from Nuzi are chronologically earlier than the Amarna period, when in fact the building was destroyed with paintings in situ at *approximately the same time.* The destruction of Nuzi by the Hittites is currently dated to ca. 1350–1340 BCE which would make the paintings on the walls approximately contemporary with the Amarna correspondences and with the Amarna volute trees. The same article also contributed to discussions of style for griffins and sphinxes in second and first millennium art and while leaning heavily on first millennium models also arbitrarily used second millennium examples, such as the winged sphinxes from the Amarna period Gurob bowl of Touti. This particular scholar was also guilty of maintaining the misleading use of the term Phoenician for this Late Bronze Age material. As late as 1982 he was still erroneously calling the hybrid idiom from the Ugarit ivory bed panels 'proto-Phoenician' and in doing so inferring a direct relationship between the two millennia and styles.[150]

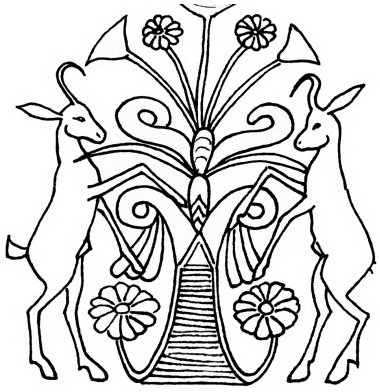

Fig. 1.24 Volute tree and gazelles on a limestone stele from Malqata royal palace, Western Thebes. Reign of Amenhotep III, 1389–1352 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

[150] Barnett 1982, 29; this connection was more than adequately challenged by Markoe (1990, 16).

1.4.4 Wolfgang Helck

Two major volumes were produced in German in the 1960s and later 1970s by Wolfgang Helck which were broader works examining the evidence for cultural interconnections for the entire Bronze Age, first between Egypt and the Near East in *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vorderasien im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr* 1962, and subsequently for the eastern Mediterranean region with *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens und Vorderasiens zur Ägäis bis ins 7. Jahrhundert v. Chr* 1979. Both provided staples for the discussion of cultural interaction in the Bronze Age and contributed very welcome linguistic and textual evidence to the usual list of almost ubiquitous artefacts. The A'hhotep dagger and axe were naturally cited along with a welcome resumé of the value of prestige materials in cultural exchange. His conclusions were fairly cautious regarding the origin of motifs on mixed idiom objects from Egypt and generally favoured internal Egyptian production, but under cosmopolitan influences. With regard to a little known stele from the palace of Amenhotep III at Malqata in Western Thebes he concluded that while the goats and sacred tree motif had its ultimate origins in Syria, the object could not be of Syrian production because of clear stylistic parallels to objects from similar early fourteenth century semi-royal contexts, such as the chariot from the tomb of Yuya and Ṯuya.[151] He similarly cited the popularity of the griffin, female sphinx and animal combats in fourteenth century Egyptian art, adding the evidence from the tomb of Tutankhamen to support an internal value at that time.

1.4.5 William Stevenson Smith

William Stevenson Smith was assistant curator and later curator of the Egyptian collection of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts from 1941 until 1969, and in 1952 he published an article on the MacGregor cosmetic box from this museum's collection. Within this article he examined the themes and motifs found on this box and drew upon the earlier examinations by Kantor, Naville and von Bissing. Smith challenged the earlier contention that the box was of Aegean manufacture. Instead he concluded that this object, while influenced by Aegean artistic convention, was unquestionably of Egyptian workmanship, but under the influence of Mycenaean art. In arguing this point he again discussed the issue of the images of Keftiu from the Theban tombs and drew comparisons with similar toilet boxes from other museum collections. In addition, he introduced the premise that was to form the substance of subsequent discussion of the international style: the relationship of these artefacts to elite gift exchange, 'It is the kind of portable object which must have passed back and forth as gifts in the hands of the king's messengers'.[152]

It was in 1965 that a formal structure was applied to the evidence and to objects bearing mixed style when Smith re-emphasised William Kelly Simpson's general attribution for these artefacts with the term that was to remain in academic usage until the early twenty-first century: the label 'International Style'. Smith introduced this notion

[151] Helck 1962, 542–3.
[152] Smith 1952, 79.

in his volume on the visual evidence for artistic transfer in the ancient Near East: *Interconnections in the Ancient Near East.* In this, he analysed the evidence for contact between Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, Anatolia and the Aegean for the Bronze to Early Iron Ages. But it was his discussion of Late Bronze Age iconographic exchange that was to have a lasting impact on scholarship. For he suggested that objects bearing this style;

> 'had developed from the interchange of motifs resulting from the diplomatic exchanging of gifts between the sovereigns of widely separate states'.

Smith also imposed a temporal framework on the topic and argued that the period covered by this style was the three hundred years following the sixteenth century which culminated in the end of the Late Bronze Age, ca. 1200 BCE.

Thankfully, in this volume there was little mention of the attribution 'Phoenician' and some energy was put into examining the somewhat neglected artistic influence of the Nubian kingdoms to Egypt's south on New Kingdom Egypt, particularly Second Intermediate Period Kushite Kingdom faience and ivory inlays with relevant idiom such as; caprids flanking trees, rosettes and running spirals. His range of objects bearing an international style was contrarily not restricted by style or in fact by portability, and included orthostats from northern Syria and Anatolia (which are much later), wall paintings from Egyptian and Near Eastern palaces, ceramics (Nuzi ware) and the well published objects from Ugarit, Cyprus and Egypt.

1.4.6 Fritz Schachermeyr

In 1967, immediately following on the monograph by William Stevenson Smith,[153] the historian Fritz Schachermeyr weighed in on the discussion of interregional diplomacy between the palatial elites of the second millennium in the eastern Mediterranean with his volume on the Aegean relations with the East *Ägäis und Orient: Die Überseeischen Kulturbeziehungen von Kreta und Mykenai mit Ägypten, der Levante und Kleinasien unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des 2. Jahrtausends v. Chr.* As with his predecessors, Schachermeyr's focus was on the material evidence for intercultural exchange in the second millennium and the subsequent creation of an international *koiné* of shared visual idiom and reciprocal gift exchange between elites throughout the region.

One could argue that it is at this point that the term '*koiné*' was first formally applied to describe both the participants in this elite gift exchange and as a reference to the artefacts themselves. However, credit could also be given to the excavator of Crete, Arthur Evans, since he coined the term to describe Aegean culture in the early twentieth century and as already discussed the term is fairly ubiquitous within scholarship.[154] As a component of his analysis, Schachermeyr addressed the issue of iconographic borrowing and motif transfer which could have occurred as a component of elite gift

[153] In an addendum of the publication Schachermeyr emphasised that he was unable to read Smith's volume before the release of his own publication.
[154] Originally a linguistic term, see Introduction.

exchange. The volume was a broad and thorough analysis which suffered from the handicap that is to dog discussion of this topic, he cited and used images of the ubiquitous material that has formed the core to discussion of intrusive and exotic iconography. Additionally, many artefacts cited are those that until the twenty-first century were museum pieces of questionable provenience and yet would go on to be repeatedly cited in further publications. Of the artefacts with secure proveniences only a specific selection were illustrated and much of the idiom was displayed in isolation from full context.

Fig. 1.25 Animal combats from a wooden chest in the tomb of Tutankhamen, 14th c. BCE. Illustration after Schachermeyr 1967, 176–7.

Subsequent to this volume there appears to have been a lull in scholarly interest in a unique visual style in the 1970s to 1980s, with only a few voices raised in defence of internal Egyptian source for some problematic visual idiom. William Ward, an expert on Egyptian seal iconography for example supported Helene Kantor's earlier claims and made a good argument for an Old Kingdom source and value for the running spiral, and by extension the volute flower in his volume on Middle Bronze Age Egyptian cultural contacts with their neighbours.[155] But this view does not appear to have had any significant impact on the direction of scholarship at that time.

Instead, the advent of the New Archaeology focussed academic attention away from art historical methodologies and cultural mechanisms in the Late Bronze Age occupied pride of place in the publications of many scholars.[156] However, as a side note, the Near Eastern ivories bearing problematic idiom were at this time still consistently attracting scholarly analysis regarding cultural origin and agency.[157]

In 1971 Christine Lilyquist wrote a paper on motif transfer to accompany an exhibition on cultural exchange at the Metropolitan Museum,[158] and in this she briefly discussed the idiom of the griffin, lotus and lion in eastern Mediterranean art, ascribing an Elamite origin to the griffin which later spread to Predynastic Egypt. However, in the 1970s attention was resoundingly focussed on the material rather than the iconographic evidence for trade and exchange in the eastern Mediterranean with scholars producing

[155] Ward 1971, 105–19.
[156] Kemp 1978, 7–57; Schulman, 1979; Weinstein 1981, 1–28; Merrillees 1986, 42–50; Zaccagnini 1987, 57–65.
[157] Winter 1976, 1–22; 1981, 101–30; Liebowitz 1987, 3–24; 1989, 63–4.
[158] Harper et al 1971, 318–26.

appropriate comparisons, such as Cyril Aldred's 'The Foreign Gifts Offered to Pharaoh' and 'Foreign Tribute', Robert Merrillees' 'Aegean Bronze Age Relations with Egypt' and Mario Liverani's invaluable 'Irrational Elements in Amarna Trade' which dealt with irrational trade and the mechanisms for rulers demanding gifts of commodities for which they ostensibly possessed internal supplies, such as gold for Egypt, or copper for Cyprus.[159] Motif exchange and hybrid iconography were to take precedence in one publication from the late seventies, the previously cited volume on relations between the Near East and the Aegean by Wolfgang Helck,[160] where Minoan influences on New Kingdom Egyptian art included the usual repertoire of idiom from Kantor, the griffin, volute flower, the female sphinx and mobile animal poses.

Further excavations in the eastern Mediterranean at this time were to contribute only a lesser volume of new artefacts that confound attribution when assessed in terms of their visual idiom. In the early 1970s and 1980s excavations from two sites in south eastern Cyprus were to produce artefacts that again bear culturally mixed iconography. These small faience vessels, a conical rhyton, an amphora and a stemmed vase, with scenes of animal combats, running spirals and animals flanking palmettes were subsequently dubbed Levanto-Egyptian and Egyptianising by Edgar Peltenburg in the original excavation report.[161] Due to their secondary archaeological contexts[162] they may be dated loosely to the thirteenth and twelfth centuries when Cyprus was an active and significant participant in international diplomacy and trade.[163] These vessels and yet more carved ivories have added to the existing corpus of problematic objects from Late Bronze Age Cyprus.

1.4.7 Then we acquired archaeological evidence for prestige exchange

The discovery of the Cape Gelidonya shipwreck in south-western Anatolia in 1960 by George Bass had contributed substantially to discussions of international relations by finally supplying tangible evidence for the exchange of prestige materials at the end of the Late Bronze Age that had only been formerly known through the diplomatic correspondences of the fourteenth century. In this case, the primary cargo of the ship was copper ingots for bronze smelting, but the vessel also contained smaller cargo/personal effects of mixed artefacts inferring a culturally mixed crew.[164] However, this shipwreck paled in significance in comparison to the discovery by Bass of the Uluburun wreck in 1982 from near Kaş in south-western Anatolia.[165] The Uluburun shipwreck is dated to after the end of the Egyptian Eighteenth Dynasty at the end

[159] Aldred 1971, 105–6; Merrilees 1972, 281–94; Liverani 1979, 21–33.
[160] Helck 1979.
[161] Peltenburg 1974, 105–44.
[162] In secondary contexts and looted from elite tombs.
[163] Peltenburg 1991; Steel 2014, 576–8.
[164] Bass 1961; Bass and Throckmorton 1961.
[165] Bass et al 1986, 269–96.

of the fourteenth century[166] on the basis of ceramic typologies and from the presence of a gold scarab bearing the cartouche of the Amarna queen Nefertiti in a hoard of precious metal scrap.[167] While there was no material identified as belonging within the international style from the cargo of this wreck,[168] there was ample evidence for the nature of elite international maritime trade at that time. The vessel contained a wealth of copper and tin ingots, in quantities that could in fact represent those listed in diplomatic letters. In addition, it contained prestige goods such as terebinth resin, orpiment, gold and faience vessels, ostrich shells, ebony, ivory and raw glass. In fact, this cargo represents a comprehensive cross section of the luxury and quotidian materials from a variety of sources that were in circulation between the great states in the Late Bronze Age.[169]

1.4.8 Severe and Ornate Styles: Janice Crowley

The next published study of eastern Mediterranean iconographic transference and a notional international style came in 1989 with the Aegean scholar Janice Crowley's *The Aegean and the East.* This book for *Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology* was the publication of her doctoral thesis with the University of Tasmania.[170] Crowley continued where William Stephenson Smith and Fritz Schachermeyr had left off and addressed the issue of identifying and tracking specific visual idiom from Egypt and the Near East, both to and from the Aegean for the entire Bronze Age. The volume is arranged in two halves, the first is a systematic classification of individual iconographic motifs and themes, such as the sacred tree, griffin, and sphinx or of various motifs of ornamentation: rosette, running spiral, guilloche, etc. The second half addressed the mechanisms and evidence for artistic transference in the eastern Mediterranean, with some discussion of the motivation for adoption or rejection of foreign idiom.

Naturally this study examined the issue of Stevenson Smith's artefacts in the international style and those objects bearing intrusive features of an international visual repertoire in the Late Bronze Age, the latter being her preferred phrasing. The influence of Frankfort, Kantor and Stevenson Smith are all quite visible in her choices of idiom and objects, with perhaps too much emphasis placed on unprovenienced pieces and not enough on chronology. As a result there is sometimes even a thousand years between some of her examples of a given motif. As a component of her discussion, Crowley created two categories for objects exhibiting this international style: the first is a *Severe Style* which she attributed to a stronger creative influence from Mycenaean visual culture and the second an *Ornate* or *Florid Style* which owed more to the influence of northern Syria.[171]

[166] As *terminus post quem*, (late 14th century to early 13th), the object was part of a cache of scrap metal and may have passed down through different hands, Bass et al 1989, 17–29; 2008, 358.
[167] Pulak 2008, 297, 300.
[168] Again this is predicated on classification, as some scholars include faience female head cups in an international style, Matoïan 2005, 49–50.
[169] Bass et al 1989, 1–29; Pulak 2008, 289–310; 2001, 13–60; 1997, 49–52.
[170] Crowley 1977.
[171] It ought to be borne in mind that these terms are borrowed from early Classical and post-Renaissance neo-classical art, see Schachermeyr 1966.

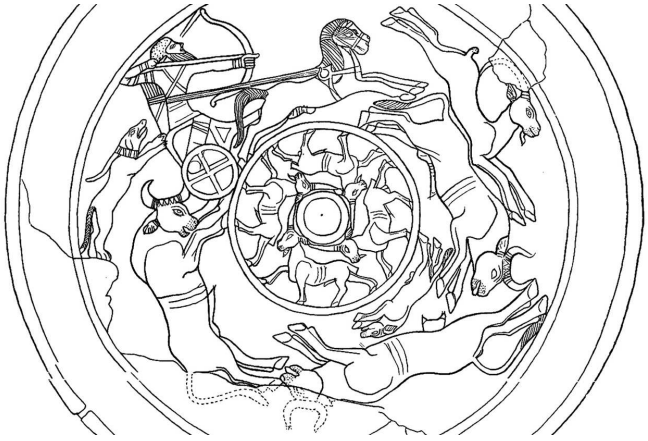

Fig. 1.26 Crowley's *Severe Style*: 'formal features', chariot hunt, no fill or border ornament. Gold patera from Ugarit. Image after Schaeffer 1949, pl. VII.

Within the *Severe Style* she placed the Ugarit gold patera with chariot hunt, an Enkomi silver bowl, a Dendra bowl and a Cypriot seal with emblematic scenes. Within the *Ornate Style* she chose twelve objects inclusive of the dagger sheaths, a bowcase and alabaster vase from Tutankhamen's tomb, the Tyre bronze plaque, the faience rhyton from Cyprus and four vases from Tell Basta.[172] As an example of national styles with obvious evidence of intrusive idiom she chose to cite five objects from the tomb of Tutankhamen that have canonical Egyptian idiom in conjunction with intrusive running spirals and volute trees.[173] In choosing these differentiations, Crowley's work paid homage to earlier discussions of mixed idiom ivories by Kantor and Barnett, each of whom had argued for many features of objects decorated in this style as being attributable to Syrian workshops and craftsmen.[174] In terms of her illustrations, the volume appears to depend on the usual objects for this idiom and the visual choices of both Stevenson Smith and Kantor, although there was much more emphasis placed on Aegean seal idiom than had previously occurred.

In the final decade of the twentieth century emphasis appears to have been situated in the Aegean and on evidence for Aegean interconnections with the Near East and Egypt, with volumes published by Connie Lambrou-Phillipson '*Hellenorientalia*',[175] Jacke Phillips '*Impact and Implications*'[176] and Eric Cline *Sailing the Wine Dark Sea.*[177] However, the topic of the international style did not rest entirely there and in 1996 Betsy Bryan employed the objects bearing 'multi-cultural' and 'Egyptianizing' styles to argue political presences in the Late Bronze Age Levant.[178] This methodology was enthusiastically refuted two years later by Christine Lilyquist, who instead saw cultural

[172] Crowley 1977, 197–99.
[173] The two state chariots, a ceremonial throne, a stool and a child's chair from KV 62, these will be discussed further in Chapter Six, also see Crowley 1977, 184.
[174] Kantor 1956; Barnett 1939; 1948.
[175] Lambrou-Phillipson, 1990. *Hellenorientalia.*
[176] Phillips, 1991. *The Impact and Implications of the Egyptian and Egyptianizing Objects Found in Bronze Age Crete ca. 3000-1100 BC.*
[177] Cline, 1994. *Sailing the Wine Dark Sea: International Trade and the Late Bronze Age Aegean.*
[178] Bryan, 1996a. 'Art, Empire, and the End of the Late Bronze Age'.

artefacts and intrusive cultural styles as evidence of multivalent interactions apart from simplistic culture historical models of colonialism or empire.[179]

Conferences dealing with eastern Mediterranean interconnections with Egypt produced suitable subsequent publications, with the proceedings of a colloquium entitled *Egypt, the Aegean and the Levant*,[180] published in 1995 under the same title and edited by Vivian Davies and Louise Schofeld. This volume was weighted heavily in Egyptian-Aegean relations as evidenced from the Egyptian Eighteenth Dynasty sites of Tell ed Dab'a and Tell el Amarna, with the Levant only nominally represented, however, at this time Dab'a and the Aegean style iconography was the topic on the minds of all. Interest in iconographic exchange and trans-cultural idiom in Aegean scholarship was to achieve a singular peak in 1997 with the fiftieth anniversary Aegaeum conference held in Cincinnati in the United States.

1.4.9 Aegaeum 18

In 1998 the Aegaeum series of conferences published the proceedings from their dedicatory conference to Helene Kantor in 1997 under the title of *Aegean and Orient in the Second Millennium.* Within this volume a variety of eastern Mediterranean scholars honoured the legacy of Kantor while readdressing topics relating directly to visual style and iconographic idiom. The issue of the international style was addressed again by Janice Crowley in her quite summary article 'Iconography and Interconnections' which essentially reiterated what had already been dealt with in her earlier volumes.[181] Paul Rehak and John Younger added more to the debate over the ivories with their article 'International Styles in Ivory Carving in the Bronze Age', elaborating on the significance of exotic raw materials like ivory in international gift exchange.[182] Annie Caubet contributed her own judgement on the topic and proposed that the hybridity residing in these objects did not just reside in the iconography, but rather in the complex technologies and exotic raw materials employed in their manufacture.[183] Finally, Andrew and Susan Sherratt addressed the political and cultural impact of this period of heightened regional interconnectivity.[184]

These articles and many others in this volume set the stage for research in this topic to take a new direction. As towards the end of the twentieth century scholarship was still predominantly examining these objects in relative isolation from each other, either in terms of material, particularly the ivories, or by specific region, culture or indeed by discipline, and from an art historical and typological standpoint. This was all set to change with the publications of Marian Feldman. In 1998 she submitted her doctoral dissertation: *Luxury Goods from Ras Shamra-Ugarit and their Role in the International*

[179] Lilyquist, 1998. 'The Use of Ivories as Interpreters of Political History'.
[180] Davies and Schofield 1995. *Egypt, the Aegean and the Levant: Interconnections in the Second Millennium BC.*
[181] Crowley 1998, 171–80.
[182] Rehak and Younger 1998. 'International Styles in Ivory Carving in the Bronze Age'.
[183] Caubet 1998, 'The International Style: A Point of View from the Levant and Syria'.
[184] Sherratt and Sherratt 1998. 'Small worlds: interaction and identity in the ancient Mediterranean'.

Relations of the Eastern Mediterranean and Near East during the Late Bronze Age to Harvard University, thus paving the way for a career devoted to examining prestige artefacts from the Late Bronze Age.

1.4.10 Marian Feldman and *Diplomacy by Design*

In 2002 Feldman published an article which examined mixed idiom ivories from the Levantine region entitled 'Luxurious Forms: Redefining a Mediterranean 'International Style'.[185] In this study Feldman employed art historical models to establish a clear delineation between two dissimilar visual styles manifested on ivories from various sites in the Levant. The discussion took into account the many ivory plaques from Megiddo, Lachish, Byblos and Ugarit. These two visual styles she described as a local 'Indigenous Levantine Tradition',[186] which exhibits stylistic characteristics from the Egyptian visual repertoire, and an 'International Style' group, which displays a homogenous hybrid idiom.[187] However, she did not rest on her laurels with this article and four years later weighed into the debate properly and published her seminal volume on the issue of an international style: *Diplomacy by Design.*[188]

Within this publication Feldman proposed that the focus needed to move away from the 'self-defeating' avenues of artistic and cultural origin and towards the political and social climate which fostered the creation of these hybrid luxury objects. Thus, with her monograph she followed Annie Caubet's example and examined the political mechanisms for the manufacture of a hybrid style and the issue of agent and patient: that is the identity of the patron commissioning such artefacts and the recipient of such luxury gifts.[189] Her argument focussed on the identity of the consumers of these precious objects, the elites and royal palaces participating in the international brotherhood of the Late Bronze Age and the resultant creation of a common elite vocabulary of hybrid imagery. She proposed an alternate designation for objects within this classification employing Schachermeyr's term for this elite club of kings, *koiné* and dubbed them an: 'international artistic *koiné*'.[190] This alternative name has some justification, as the former epithet is opaque and may apply to a variety of historical contexts, such as medieval and early twentieth century architectural styles, however, adding *koiné* to the title does not improve clarity.

Feldman also reiterated that the nature of these artefacts, not just the iconography, was evidence for the heightened internationalism of the period. Like Caubet, she argued that the exotic forms, sophisticated technologies and the raw materials employed in these objects all manifested evidence for the transference and adoption of culture, technology and ideas between the leading polities in the Late Bronze Age. Interestingly, while she rejected art historical approaches to examining this iconography, she also

[185] Feldman 2002, 6–29.
[186] Feldman 2002, 10–7.
[187] Feldman 2002, 17–23.
[188] Feldman 2006a.
[189] Feldman 2006a, 4–5, 194.
[190] Feldman 2006a, 10.

employed these same generalities in her own definition of the idiom.[191] Equally, she refined the definition of the international style further than Crowley and rejected those objects that did not conform to her revised definition, like the Minet el Beida pyxis lid and the Enkomi gaming board. A primary factor of this new definition was the removal of elements of idiom that contained cultural narrative or ideology, such as a strong central subject, human protagonists or canonical and cult scenes. Her argument was that those objects which display these themes do not conform to the criteria consistent with the visual idiom of this international *koiné*. These objects, she posited, were evidence for the assimilation of foreign visual idiom into a local style, rather than a fully fused idiom.[192]

Fig. 1.27 In or out? Warrior combating a griffin and animal combat on two faces of an ivory mirror handle from Tomb 17, Enkomi, Cyprus, 1450–1100 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

Most salient to her argument regarding the international *koiné* objects is her rejection of local semantic significance for this idiom. While she is staunch in her assertion that this idiom speaks of notions of elite privilege and kingship, she rejects all cultural, narrative or cult identifiers for the themes displayed within these objects.[193] They are instead luxurious symbols of 'generic' power: elite badges of membership in a supra-regional club of rulers stripped of any idiosyncratic cult or cultural affiliations. With Feldman's contribution to this discussion it became *de rigueur* in scholarship to speak of internationalism and an international artistic *koiné*, but any discussion of visual semantics or notions of 'style' had become problematic. This monograph marked a methodological shift in academic dialogue on the ancient eastern Mediterranean world, from art historical structuralist approaches to artefacts as '*objets d'art*' to material culture/anthropological discourses.

Nonetheless, this volume has attracted criticism, as while it is elegantly argued, there are methodological inconsistencies that even now require addressing.[194] These include the emphasis placed on textual evidence from the Amarna diplomatic letters, over the

[191] Feldman 2006a, Chapter 3: 'Iconography and Meaning'.
[192] Feldman 2006a, 27.
[193] Feldman 2006a, 11–3.
[194] See the reviews by Ömür Harmanşah (2008) and Fischer and Wicke (2011).

rather uneven archaeological evidence, as currently there are no firm correlations for hybrid royal gifts within the material record.[195] Another would be the arbitrary choice of artefacts and the selective approach to presenting them, particularly the dependence on the celebrity objects, such as the Tutankhamen daggers, Tell Basta treasure, Megiddo ivories and Ugarit bowls. Finally, due to sheer volume her examination breezed over important details, such as the cultural and archaeological context for these objects. Rather than looking at primary data, like excavation reports for her discussion, she leant on secondary sources and the conclusions of previous scholars already cited in this chapter.

Notwithstanding these issues, after the publication of *Diplomacy by Design* scholarship embraced the premise dealt by Feldman and handled these awkward issues by focussing upon the broader material evidences for diplomacy in the Late Bronze Age, admittedly while still simultaneously leaning heavily on text. This notion of an international *koiné* of elite rulers was expanded out to embrace evidences of hybrid visual practice and gifting beyond the exchange of small portable prestige artefacts. These interesting new approaches included a wider repertoire of such 'commodities' as the exchange of craftspeople,[196] prestige consumables, like olive oil and unguents and perhaps even social customs among the exclusive elite, such as body language and gesture.[197] International repertoires in architecture were another arena attracting significant academic interest, with the excavations of several important palatial sites in Egypt and the Near East, and it comes as no surprise that this is an avenue that Marian Feldman has also subsequently pursued.[198]

1.5 Evidence from Eastern Mediterranean palatial archaeology

Perhaps the most compelling evidence that has contributed to discussions of transcultural reciprocity comes from excavations of palatial sites throughout the eastern Mediterranean. These remnants of prestigious wall paintings again augment the evidence for extensive interregional interaction via the presence of entangled motifs and the employment of exotic techniques in their execution. The discovery of palatial wall paintings displaying both non-indigenous visual styles and exhibiting foreign techniques has contributed much to the discussion of the exchange of visual culture, but also has kindled debate as to the nature and origin of the artisans who produced these paintings. Since an artefact is not physically embedded in a culture and may be transferred between regions, but architectural features must by necessity be bound to location, inferring either the exchange of skilled craftspeople or of indigenous artisans trained in exotic techniques. Currently we have evidence for foreign motifs adorning the palaces of a variety of eastern Mediterranean Bronze Age polities. From Minoan imagery and

[195] Lilyquist 2012; 2013; Sinclair 2012.
[196] Hitchcock 2005, 691–9.
[197] Kelder 2009, 339–52.
[198] Feldman 2007, 39–65; also Hitchcock 2008a, 17–8; 2009, 165–71.

fresco techniques in Egypt at a fifteenth century palace at Tell ed 'Dab'a (Avaris),[199] to Aegean idiom and fresco techniques from the fourteenth century palaces of Amenhotep III at Malqata and Amenhotep IV at Tell el Amarna.[200]

Similarly, from the Near East there is evidence for Aegean style pavements and idiom on wall paintings from the Levant at Tell Kabri and Syria at Tell Atchana (Alalakh),[201] Tell Hariri (Mari), Tell Mishrife (Qatna) and Tell Mardikh (Ebla).[202] Finally, there are fragmentary wall paintings containing Egyptianising idiom from palatial complexes that range over a very wide timeframe from Tell Sakka (Syria), Tell Burak (Levant) and Nuzi, (Iraq).[203] However, it must be emphasised here that the intrusive idiom manifested from the palaces of Tells Kabri, Sakka and at Mari all date significantly earlier to the Middle Bronze Age[204] Tell Burak is even earlier than these and situated in the twentieth century BCE.

Because of this these paintings are better considered in the light of evidence for the enduring nature of eastern Mediterranean interregional relations, than as necessarily relevant to a discussion of Late Bronze Age elite gift exchange and an international repertoire. In fact, they muddy the waters regarding motif exchange. However, they have also had considerable impact on past discourse regarding the travels of specific motifs and do contribute to the narrative here. Alalakh and Mari for example provide idiom in academic discourse for the origins of the griffin, sphinx and running spiral. The only Near Eastern palace paintings that currently have international features and date to the Late Bronze Age are from Qatna and Nuzi and these may be placed tentatively within the span of sixty years before each site was sacked by the Hittites ca. 1350–1340 BCE. As a result these two may be considered approximately contemporary with the Amarna correspondences.

Much of the aforementioned data on painting and prestige gifts culminated in 2008 with an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum in New York and the subsequent publication of the volume *Beyond Babylon*.[205] Papers in this substantial volume addressed a variety of topics, such as diplomatic gifting, foreigners in Theban tombs, exotic frescos, the Aʿhhotep artefacts, the Tôd treasure, the Uluburun artefacts, prestige materials and of course the international style, which was tackled by Joan Aruz.[206] This paper drew attention to the glyptic evidence for motif transfer which Feldman had overlooked in her volume and leaned heavily on value neutral terminology. Thus, Aruz favoured the term 'inter-cultural' over the more problematic 'international', however, she followed Feldman's use of the equally value laden term 'hybridisation' and again generally cited the most notorious pieces, which brings us to the final phase in the process.

[199] Bietak 2005a; 2005b; 2013; Morgan 2010a; 2010b; Marinatos 2010, 325–55.
[200] Weatherhead 2007, 347; Nicolakaki-Kentrou 2003, 352–60.
[201] Niemeier 1991, 189–200.
[202] Parrot 1937, 325–54; Gates 1984, 70–87; Margueron 2014, 236–7; Gates 1984; Pfälzner 2013; 2008, 219–32.
[203] Taraqji 2008, 128–9; 1999, 27–43; Evans 2008, 128–9; 194–5; Sader 2009; von Rüden 2013.
[204] Tell Kabri (ca. 1700–1600), Tell Sakka and Zimri-lim at Mari (both ca. 1800–1700 BCE).
[205] Aruz et al 2008.
[206] Aruz 2008, 387–405.

1.6 Trans-cultural theory in the twenty-first century: Hybridity and entanglement

In the past twenty years human agency, material culture and materiality have held sway in archaeological dialectic and these have impacted directly on analysis of artefacts bearing mixed form, material and iconographic idiom, prestige or otherwise. While Marian Feldman set the benchmark in 2006 by directing attention towards social mechanisms that may have inspired this international style, this has not prevented further 'tinkering' with models for iconographic exchange. A contribution to this subtle adjustment has come from discussion of object and motif transfer in the eastern Mediterranean for the final two centuries of the Late Bronze Age, particularly as the result of ceramic evidence and the heated dialectic over the significance of specific forms of Mycenaean pottery from loci around the Mediterranean littoral. This issue has been most prevalent in the spheres of archaeology for the emporia of the Levant and Cyprus.[207] For these regions debate has focussed on the complexity of teasing out human cultural identities within the presence of artefacts, cultural practices and technologies in an intercultural climate of trade, migration, warfare and diplomacy. At which time artisans, diplomats, messengers, migrants and refugees from political instability may all have combined to blur boundaries of cultural attribution in the archaeological record.

Following Marian Feldman's use of hybridisation in 2006, the term went on to acquire significance in many publications on this topic. Cypriot archaeologist Bernard Knapp addressed the controversy over the presence of Mycenaean material culture in Cyprus and refuted the longstanding assumption that the island had undergone Mycenaean colonisation at the end of the Bronze Age. Instead he argued for a process of cultural hybridisation that resulted in the creation of an entirely new and uniquely Cypriot social entity.[208] How this impacts on our discussion is that his argument included objects that had previously been considered to be within the sphere of the international style.[209] Thus, in some way Knapp redirected focus for this topic away from prestige gifting and instead argued for internal production under the influence of elite emulation for the Cypriot artefacts exhibiting hybrid idiom.

However, discussion does not end there and following the popularity of trans-cultural and hybridity as terminologies, academia has again imposed a nuanced twist to the dialogue with the adoption of the term 'entanglement' in preference to the value laden and problematic term 'hybridity'. Hybrid/hybridisation was itself a development upon earlier academic culturally loaded 'buzzwords' that were previously applied to mixed style artefacts, like Egyptianising, Aegeanising, Levanto-Egyptian, Cypro-Phoenician or Syro-Mycenaean. But it is argued to be embedded in negative values in western

[207] Voskos and Knapp 2008, 659–84; Hitchcock and Maeir 2013, 28.1; 51–74; Hitchcock 2011, 267–80; Stockhammer 2011, 282–96; Hesse 2008, 18.
[208] Knapp 2009, 219–39; 2015, 17–30.
[209] For example the faience rhyton from Kition-Bamboula and the ivory game box from Enkomi, Knapp 2009, 227.

culture and therefore equally problematic.[210] In 2012 Phillip Stockhammer edited and contributed to a volume on this tricky topic and dismissed Feldman's use of hybridisation to describe trans-cultural artefacts.[211] This criticism is not without merit, as one of the immediate traps of this methodology is the assumption embedded within 'hybridity' of essentialism or the pre-existence of original cultural purity. For the entire eastern Mediterranean in the second millennium it is no longer possible to impose such broad classifications on human cultural identity.[212]

But, while entanglement provides a convenient solution for dealing with problematic artefacts and material cultures, the dialectic does not end here and scholarship is still facing the potential of nuanced analysis and methodologies for the material expression of eastern Mediterranean cultural interaction.[213] A salient feature of this discussion is in fact the 'semantic' or 'cognitive slippage' within academic terminologies for idiom transfer. Terms like international style, international artistic *koiné*, *koiné* style, international repertoire, inter-cultural style, trans-cultural or even pan-cultural, with or without quotation marks or capitalisation, all jostle for precedence in the publications of the past twenty years. What this appears to evidence, at least superficially, is a singular lack of consensus on this topic, combined with a degree of caution and a desire to employ 'up to date' scholarly expression, usually borrowing heavily from interdisciplinary research.[214]

While Marian Feldman set the precedent for the definition of international artistic *koiné* in 2006, the greatest flaw within this discussion is that subsequent publications on this topic have a tendency to pay lip service to these criteria and then deftly apply their own terms and cite their own preferred artefacts and attributes. A solid example would be the most recent congress and publication on eastern Mediterranean cultural exchange in 2013 entitled *Cultures in Contact* and overseen again by the Metropolitan Museum. The topic of the international style was broached within this volume and again interpretations vary from lip service to Feldman, to words of caution regarding the archaeological evidence for prestige gifts and the dependence on text from Christine Lilyquist.[215]

> 'In the end I am less for grand theories than for detailed studies of objects and their context, which can then be compared to text.'[216]

In fact no single author appears to be in complete consensus with another on the definition of objects within this classification. And in truth, exactly where does one delineate precisely between the presence of intrusive forms and idiom and complete compositional hybridity/entanglement? Perhaps it is ultimately more convenient for

[210] This is predicated on the biological study of hybrid organisms and racial bigotry, where a creole or hybrid entity is considered inferior to the 'pure' form, However, any discussion predicated in assumptions of pure or non-pure race or cultural influences is problematic, Matic 2017.
[211] Stockhammer 2012, 43–58; 2013, 11–28.
[212] Maier et al 2013, 2–3.
[213] Panagiotopoulos 2011, 51–60; 2013; Silliman 2015.
[214] It should be noted that I favour clarity over the use of academic buzzwords.
[215] Aruz et al 2013; Lilyquist 2013, 272–3.
[216] Lilyquist 2013, 272.

many to consider Feldman's criteria as a baseline. However, the topic is resoundingly not closed and is open to further scrutiny and redefinition which is exemplified by the recent publications of Erika Fischer and the current excavator of Qatna, Peter Pfälzner.

Erika Fisher challenged the notion of a concrete 'international style' in 2007 with her article 'Der so genannte „Internationale Stil" der Späten Bronzezeit. Kritische Anmerkungen zu einem kunsthistorischen Phantom' arguing for both a wider repertoire of objects and, true to her earlier review of Feldman, argued that indigenous and culturally specific idiom is in fact present in most examples of this style.[217] Since that time Peter Pfälzner has published extensively on his own hybrid idiom prestige objects from the Royal Hypogeum at Qatna. The most relevant of which is an article from 2015 'The Art of Qatna and the Question of the 'International Style", again tackling hybrid idiom. He too challenged the current criteria and argued convincingly, I might add, that the objects with hybrid features from the Qatna royal tombs do not appear to fit the model of international kingly gifting, but rather they exhibit clearly local Syrian features.[218]

1.7 Discussion: The evolution of an 'international style?'

The lengthy process of discovery, analysis and dialectic for artefacts bearing intrusive iconography and entangled visual style is considerable and has its earliest beginnings in the middle of the nineteenth century with a number of objects from less than exemplary excavation contexts in Egypt and elsewhere. By the close of the nineteenth century, sites in Egypt, Cyprus, the Aegean and western Syria had all yielded up to archaeologists considerably more prestige artefacts bearing ostensibly intrusive and entangled visual elements in various precious media. At this time scholarship tended to address the issue by wavering between ascribing local or Phoenician cultural origin for these pieces. With the advent of the twentieth century a spate of widely publicised excavations in Egypt, Crete, Syria and the Levant had considerably augmented this evidence for cultural interaction, again with the Phoenicians claiming much credit within scholarship.

After these sound yet limited beginnings, the discoveries of Tutankhamen's tomb in the Valley of the Kings and at the acropolis in Ugarit resoundingly topped the list of cited and prestigious examples of a trans-cultural mixed visual style. At which point Woolley, Schaeffer and most of archaeological elite were addressing the issues of intrusive idiom in art historical and culture historical terms, and attempting to trace ethnicities, population movements and the spread of aesthetic 'high culture' to early Europe via classical Greece.[219] Subsequently, Helene Kantor published her monograph on the material manifestations of interaction in the second millennium and firmly established the groundline for the topic that was not greatly challenged or in fact modified until quite recently.

[217] Fischer 2007b, 804–86.
[218] Pfälzner 2015, paper presented at the conference 'Qatna and the Networks of Globalism' held in 2009 in Germany.
[219] Renfrew 2007, 36–7.

By the middle of the twentieth century scholarship was faced with a chronological easing away from the Phoenicians as the object for the dubious cultural origin dialogue and the issue of elite diplomacy, royal letters and prestige gift exchange moved gradually into the fore. Under these terms the notion of an 'international' repertoire of objects and iconographic idiom was fairly broad and eclectic. Due predominantly to an assumption of a non-cohesive stylistic relationship connecting prestige gifts between kings. As a result, this notion was less dependent on discussions of idiomatic style and more on shared visual motifs circulating between the elites of the various cultures. Towards the close of the twentieth century material culture studies pushed the barrier away from art historical models of style and towards materiality, social mechanisms and multilayered biographies for artefacts and material remains.

In addition, emphasis has appropriately been redirected towards the political and economic mechanisms for the creation of such hybrid or trans-cultural entities. With the advent of the twenty-first century we are faced with a considerably more nuanced vision of cultural exchange and motif transfer in the Late Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean. However, the case is by no means closed, as there are noticeable lacunae in the current evidence, particularly with the Egyptian evidence which has been cited ubiquitously over the previous two centuries, but never addressed the context of its social and religious locus nor for its archaeological context.

In a manner of speaking, at this point in time scholarship is both further forward with the greater wealth of artefacts from sound archaeological contexts and yet simultaneously constrained by reasoning that is embedded in early scholarship. Yet from contemporary scholarship we are also constrained by theoretical boundaries within which notions, such as 'style' have become problematic to argue and inexplicably entangled idiom, which conveniently may never be 'un-tangled', has become the almost rational solution to this dilemma. It is worth noting that any discussion of international style objects in current academic and museum publications invariably refers back to the presence of 'foreign' motifs and the mixed characteristics of this style regardless of the basic fault underlying that reasoning. This is entirely unavoidable, if somewhat of a hangover from early scholarship, since first and foremost, this is how this material may be readily identified. That these characteristics have been moved aside to place emphasis on agency, identity and context is also entirely justified. As iconography is but a single component of the whole, but we may not completely reject the idiomatic feature that has always been the signifier for this repertoire and this shall be the topic of the next chapter.

2 International visual idiom

2.1 Visual concepts and terminology

> 'The Aristotelian "urge to classify" so central (as to be subliminal) in Western thought often obscures the synthetic nature fundamental to all classification. Almost unavoidable is the resultant tendency to assume that classifications are universally valid "objects" to be discovered rather than artificial (if not arbitrary) tools contrived for descriptive purposes'.[1]

The international style is a complex and often contradictory conceptual entity within contemporary scholarly literature. As a visual style it may be described as iconography that exhibits a cohesive fusion of visual components that may be sourced from a multiplicity of cultures participating in diplomatic exchange in the eastern Mediterranean second millennium. It arguably manifests a limited repertoire of themes, content and actors, and currently this style may not be attributed to a single cultural source. The definition of these characteristic attributes is fairly fluid in scholarship, as has been discussed in the previous chapter, but currently rests somewhat insecurely on academic and exhibition publications from the last twenty years.[2] Under this rather opaque heading I propose to attempt to tease out the separate strands that serve to confuse the novice when first approaching artefacts covered by this discussion.

In order to develop a coherent narrative, this chapter begins with a discussion of visual semantic, placing emphasis on the range of visual signalling that this topic encompasses. Then the features of this iconography are addressed and the characteristic idiom for this ostensibly unique visual style, including both current consensus and my nuanced definition of same. However, before launching headlong into a discussion of an international iconography of the Late Bronze Age Mediterranean it would be suitable to provide brief definitions of some problematic terms that by stint of necessity may be used in this dissertation. Each term may attract dialectic both in its favour and in its derision.

Since words have the power to create ideas and in the knowledge that my perception is itself tempered by my own subjective experience as a writer and as a professional artist it is considered essential to at least mark out the parameters of this discussion.

[1] Ritner 2008, 238.
[2] Particularly Feldman 2006a.

2.1.1 'Art for art's sake', but not in antiquity

An appropriate point to begin might be with the inherently problematic terms whose use ultimately derives from nineteenth century connoisseurship and from antiquities collecting. These are such semantically loaded terms as 'art' and 'artist', which may be used ubiquitously in literature of the ancient eastern Mediterranean, but which have contemporary resonance within English. These words have little or no equivalent value in antiquity, specifically for the visual output from various cultures of the second millennium.[3] It ought to be emphasised that in the past two hundred years western culture has chosen to place a given, but arbitrary, value on the various creative disciplines, such as the precedence of the 'fine' arts over the 'decorative' arts. This dispassionate 'aesthetic' approach is predicated on the *objet d'art* as being superior to those that have a quotidian social value and function, placing this object in an aesthetic category somehow above ideological, cultural and religious contexts. This approach places more emphasis on the artist as agent, rather than the social context or on the other often primary agent, the sponsor, who in this instance, the Bronze Age Near East, was the royal patron and the vehicle, state rhetoric.[4]

As a result, in English the terms art and artist have a hierarchical precedence over the less prestigious terms for handwork and technological adeptness, like craft and craftsmanship, and equally for the objects that are the outcome of these disciplines. In fact, there could be argued to be a discrete hierarchy from top to bottom between these designations: artist over technician and artisan, with craft worker languishing dismally in last place and often conflated with 'hobby' production. No such distinctions existed in antiquity, and if so they would have been stratified around technical superiority and in seniority. All prestige creative output in the Bronze Age was via trained technicians at the discretion of the state, manufactured for elite patrons and was produced by skilled, but predominantly anonymous artisans.[5] This does not assume absence of value for this skill or for an individual, quite the contrary, as in antiquity the ability to produce images of power had acknowledged magical value, with the artisan as the direct instrument of divine will.[6] But emphasis may be assumed to reside in the agent, the god, the ruler and the elite, not in the individual.

In pharaonic Egypt the complete absence of a term or terms that covered the range of modern values for artist is illustrative of this. Instead the term employed to describe an artisan, ḫmw, had a wider semantic range that covered handworker, technician, expert or craftsman, but which may also be translated in scholarship as artist.[7] The work that these skilled professionals produced for elite patrons was relatively anonymous and reflective of the ideology of cult and of elite power. This distinction has been disputed in scholarship, but for the benefit of this discussion is retained, because the issue here is the value of the term 'artist' in English, not whether the style of individual painters

[3] Trigger 2003, 543; 2001, 82–3; Baines and Yoffee 1998, 235.
[4] Moxey 1991, 986.
[5] Midant-Reynes 2003, 342–5; Robins 1986, 7; Baines 2015, 5–10; Davis 1983.
[6] Helms 1993, 17–18, 69–87; Gell 1992, 43–4, 49; Walker and Dick 1999, 114; Robins 2005, 6; Lorton 1999, 173.
[7] Ritner 2008, 31–2, 56–7; Te Velde 1970, 185.

or workshops may still be detected in elite visual representation.[8] As such I propose to avoid these problematic words in deference for terms which have a more local relevance.

2.1.2 Style

The noun 'style'[9] is another art historical term which has recently suffered considerable loss of prestige in relation to academic critique of this topic. In archaeological theory style has suffered setbacks due to emphasis placed on the English value of the term when applied to material culture.[10] After Marian Feldman's rejection of the use of art historical approaches to the international style, the topic has become increasingly difficult to cite in research without seeming to employ faulty or out of date methodology. However, for the purposes of discussion here style may not be dismissed out of hand when addressing what is fundamentally a visual medium. Style, when applied to visual representation, is employed as a diagnostic medium that critiques the visual characteristics of an artefact. It has been described as 'the constant form … and sometimes the constant elements, qualities, and expression … in the art of an individual or group' which may be expressed by 'communicating and fixing certain values of religious, social, and moral life through the emotional suggestiveness of forms'.[11]

In scholarly publications this term may be applied to a range of topics including cultural features, object typologies, the dictates of medium, form, surface, tools employed and so on. While the art historical approach of using representational style to trace the hand of individual craftspeople or workshops may not be relevant to this research, the discussion of many other facets of visual and material style are still eminently appropriate. A broad understanding of a visual style is essential to an understanding of an artefact, because in the absence of this capacity a scholar may not recognise lacunae one is unfamiliar with. As a contemporary example the understanding of a visual style enables one to recognise the presence of minute photo-shopped details on a photograph of an ancient artefact from an internet site.

Lacunae are always present in research and in this day and age technology facilitates this problem. The only solution to this dilemma is extensive awareness of style conventions and critical comparison. When employed in this text the term style is intended to convey such characteristic thematic and conceptual notions which may be represented within the materiality and design of an artefact. It may also refer to iconographic conventions that are employed by artisans within a unified cultural tradition and naturally to the structural use of compositional elements within a design, to those mechanical characteristics of art criticism, such as line, form, texture, colour and composition. It shall not be employed to denote the output of an individual artisan or atelier, because the quest for production sources or workshops is not considered relevant to this discussion.

[8] Laboury 2012; 2013.
[9] Cambridge Dictionary: "style' a way of doing something, especially one which is typical of a person, group of people, place or period'.
[10] Davis 1990; O'Brien and Leonard 2000.
[11] Shapiro 1994, 51.

2.1.3 Cultural style/canonical form

Which brings us to the notion of a 'unified cultural style' or 'canonical style', which may be broadly employed to refer to long standing visual traditions within a culture, such as pharaonic Egypt, Babylonian Mesopotamia, Anatolian Hatti or Minoan Crete, but in this discussion does not assume the non-existence of stylistic variation or innovation within a homogenous visual tradition, as no cultural representation may be considered entirely resistant to variation or thought to be entirely static.[12] Equally, what is often cited as 'canonical style' within a given culture would better be described as an 'elite visual grammar' which, as a direct consequence of the proportion of society it represented, was limited to specific and arguably narrow ideological intentions and audience.[13]

Finally, contemporary art historical and archaeological scholarship are burdened by the decisions of earlier western scholars for the narrow application of these designations. As traditionally canonical styles have been assessed in terms of artefacts and monuments from the fine arts, that is, monumental relief, paintings, sculpture and architecture, rather than those from the decorative arts which in fact represent the majority of artefacts discussed here. This is particularly applicable to Egyptian visual representation, where discourse has been governed by the conventions of monumental art and where two dimensional representation has been dominated by a specific genre, elite tomb decoration which had a narrow social function.[14] Academic discourse on Aegean and Mesopotamian visual representation has had nominally wider scope, embracing glyptic and ceramic design, but with the Minoan and Mycenaean cultures contributing an enormous corpus of palatial wall paintings to discussions of their visual representation.[15]

Because of this disparity, I take exception to comparison of one cultural iconography with another that does not consider the constraints of form, space and medium. For example, the artefacts examined in this dissertation are predominantly from the latter less prestigious discipline 'the minor' or 'decorative arts' and here there will be more emphasis on a syntactic approach with reference to stylistic features. The designation 'canonical style' does however assume conscious adherence by state employed artisans to specific elite or royal sanctioned models. This is particularly relevant to this study of prestige artefacts from Egyptian funerary and royal contexts from the New Kingdom.

Finally, within the discipline of Egyptology the term 'decorum' has substantially replaced 'canon' or 'convention' and is employed to refer to restricted access elite Egyptian visual conventions. The term was introduced by John Baines in the late 1980s and is applied to visual culture within Egyptology discourse, however, the author finds this term to carry negative baggage within English, but more importantly, this dissertation was intended to be transparent to a cross-disciplinary audience, therefore it is not employed here.[16]

[12] Davis 1989, 1–3.
[13] Trigger 2003, 544–5.
[14] Schäfer 2002, 14–36; Baines 2015; Davis 1989; Robins and Fowler 1994, 1–6.
[15] For example: Collon 1995; Winter 2003; 1995; Chapin 2004; Panagiotopoulos 2012c; Blackolmer 2012; 2009; Hood 1985.
[16] Baines 1990; 2007.

2.1.4 Visual idiom

The noun 'idiom',[17] like *koiné,* has semantic origins in the differentiation between individual and shared features, whether applied to animate or inanimate things. In the original usage it was applied to human social structure: that is, private rather than public values and social practice and it often bore negative connotations, hence resulting in derived forms like the English term 'idiot', that originally denoted a person who does not conform socially. Idiom has subsequently developed as a linguistic and art historical term to describe the characteristic arrangement of traits that identify a specific cultural or individual style, in fact, it conflates too readily with the former term 'style' and has served somewhat conveniently to replace this in academic discourse as a solution to the problematic status of the former.

Visual idiom may refer to the semantic value of groupings or chains of individual elements that serve to create a unique value separate to that of the individual components, as 'meaning resides in a system of *relationships between signs* and not in the signs themselves. A sign considered in isolation would be meaningless. Furthermore the meaning of a sign or chain of signs is not predetermined, but is a matter of cultural and historical convention'.[18] This is particularly pertinent to a discussion of an artificial Late Bronze Age royal idiom that in theory represented a new semantic model for highly entangled chains of signs and symbols, ostensibly excluding or conflating any internal cultural signals.

Equally, for the benefit of this discussion, the term idiom may be employed to reference conventional modes of expression that are identifiably unique to a given culture, like the visual output of pharaonic Egypt. This usage may therefore cause it to be conflated with both style and syntax.[19] Particularly, as the linguistic term syntax describes the arrangement or in fact rules for the sequence of words and phrases in a given language. In its literal form, the international style iconography, by virtue of its 'idiomatic' or distinctive traits, could be described as an international idiom. However, I have no claims to introducing a new epithet for this already multi-titled topic.

2.2 Visual semantic and iconography

2.2.1 Symbolic entities and semiotics

Having established a few potential pitfalls for the unwary and a basic vocabulary it is appropriate to move on to briefly address semantic theory proper. The theoretical models that inform analysis of human symbolic systems have their roots in early twentieth century theoretical linguistics and began with the nineteenth and twentieth century

[17] From the Ancient Greek noun ἰδιος, 'ones own, pertaining to oneself, private, personal,' ἰδιοςις 'distinction between', Liddell and Scott 2010 [1889].
[18] Tilley 1989, 186; Renfrew 2007, 108–9.
[19] Cambridge Dictionary: "idiom' a group of words in a fixed order that have a particular meaning that is different from the meanings of each word understood on its own'.

publications of Charles Pierce and Ferdinand de Saussure.[20] Saussure's approach to language introduced the terms 'semiotics' and 'semiology'[21] and was founded on the assumption that meaning is present in the relationships between human systems of communication. In doing so he reduced the keystones of a language to their simplest form as combinations of symbols which can signal specific yet arbitrarily chosen ideas, objects and abstract concepts in isolation from the source subject. He created binary models of 'langue' to identify a given language system, which may be juxtaposed with 'parole', the usage and function of language within a given system.

Beyond this, he proposed another binary model for describing a group of symbols that might constitute a communicative symbol, word or sign. These were based on a 'signifier' which encompasses the medium for describing a thing, that is, the arbitrary arrangement of vocalisations or letters that evoke an object, such as the word 'house', which bears no relation to the object, yet signifies a dwelling in the English language. The parallel term 'signified' was again a medium for describing an object which this time is represented by a sign or symbol that visually illustrates same, such as a drawing of a house. There is as much value in the potential for multivocality in the selection of signifiers and symbols that humans employ in textual and visual expression as there is also to an awareness of what it is not. This is particularly relevant here in an examination of hybrid idiom that occurs in conjunction with pictorial text such as the Egyptian objects from KV 62 and Tell Basta.

In contrast, Charles Pierce's system contained a trifold framework which constituted three semantic entities: the icon, symbol and index. An icon is a sign or motif that relies on similarity to the object it is intended to represent, it may be 'read' as directly signalling the object it references. For example, a globe with outward radiating lines may represent the sun or a crescent, the moon. Icons present the least degree of difficulty to the unconditioned viewer because they predominantly reflect recognisable universal phenomena.[22] The language of symbols, by contrast, is dependent on visual metaphor and firmly grounded in localised human cultural conventions, habits and language. Thus the word for 'sun' in English is only transparent to a speaker of the English language. Finally, an index is the most subjective notion to decipher. For, regardless of time and space, an index is grounded in learned social information and has no connection to the signalling of the original icon. As a result, the only way an index may be read is if the symbolic vocabulary of a culture is understood.

These briefly sketched rationales formed the basis for the subsequent discipline of Structuralism for which the grounding figure was Claude Lévi-Strauss who set out to refine linguistic models for application in the broader humanities, specifically to human symbolic systems and the discipline of anthropology.[23] This entailed examining all facets of human symbolic behaviour, such as social practice, oral and literary narratives,

[20] Pierce 1958; de Saussure 1959.
[21] From σημειον (σημα) a 'sign', 'mark', 'token' or 'signal', Liddell and Scott 2010[1889].
[22] However, this assumption is still dependent on the actor having the same symbolic vocabulary as the viewer, Pierce 1958, 391.
[23] Hitchcock 2008b, 29–34; Moxey 1991, 988–90; Tilley 1989, 185–7.

or environment. However, this approach was constrained by the pursuit of inflexible one on one outcomes and was subsequently challenged by exponents of Post-structuralism who argued for multivocality and polyvalency of signs within symbolic systems and language.[24] Such polysemous symbols may equally be the outcome of adaption to changing contexts from societal pressures, transference and through the passage of time. So that in an archaeological context, in order to interpret an object or a symbol, one must take into account multiple signals, like function, site, deposition, environment and cultural context.

All of these methodologies inform this discussion of hybrid idiom, from the likely multi-values of objects transferred between cultures, the value range from agent, artisan and patient, object biographies, textual content and thus the enormous potential for multivalency in imagery that is itself 'multicultural'.

2.2.2 Pictogram and script

In the practical application of these theories linguistic evidence indicates a tendency for signs to evolve through usage from iconic forms representing specific objects towards symbolic forms representing references to objects and ideas. In many cultures the origins of both pictographic and alphabetic scripts lie in symbols previously made out of simple iconic forms that were used as signals of the objects they represented. This is readily illustrated by the development of cuneiform writing in the ancient Near East, where symbols for commodities such as wheat or sheep began as concise pictograms which gradually schematised over time to become abstract cuneiform symbols and from there the symbols evolved to adopt an expanded range of abstract and complex metaphorical roles.[25] Similarly, when we turn to pharaonic Egypt, we face a similar process of schematisation for the evolution of language and of an icon, but here a less dramatic alteration has occurred than for most languages.

In fact, over three thousand years there was little substantial change for hieroglyphic script until the introduction of administrative written forms, scribal Hieratic and the later Demotic script, neither of which were designed to replace the monumental form. Egyptian hieroglyphs in their purest pictorial form were reserved for elite and state monuments and were to never entirely lose their connection to the original icon.[26] Equally, Egyptian visual representation is similarly emblematic, highly iconic and at no time lost its indivisible connection to the script, nor did the script to the accompanying image, each serves as complement to the other in visual representation.[27] This being said, there is no reason to assume that text and image always served to convey the same messages when they were used in conjunction with each other, as text was aimed at a restricted audience, whereas image was potentially legible to a broad eclectic audience.[28]

[24] Bahrani 2001, 150; Tilley 1989, 186.
[25] Bottéro 1992, 71–7; Schmandt-Besserat 2007, 3–12.
[26] Baines 2007, 7–10, 281–2; Assman 2011, 152.
[27] Fischer 1986, 24–46.
[28] Bryan 1996b.

Further, I place singular value on the third bridging mode of representation introduced by John Baines in 1989, the emblematic mode, which straddles formal visual design and text. This visual mode has a different code of conduct, was more emblematic, fusing symbol, icon and index. It was employed by elites to convey quite clear shorthand messages of power and divine sanction, and is specific to utilitarian (yet royal) contexts from Egypt, such as commemorative seals, tools of warfare, ritual objects, royal sceptres, thrones and cosmetic items.[29] It is this visual conflation present in all Egyptian iconographic programs that I propose to address within this dissertation, particularly as the material that is studied here is somewhere within the area of formal visual design and highly emblematic.

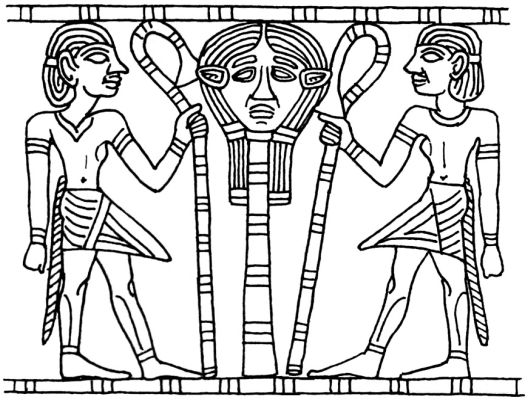

Fig. 2.1 Syro-Egyptian visual hybridity on a gold plaque from Qatna Royal Hypogeum, ca 1450–1350 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

2.2.3 The problem of visual hybridity

In order to adequately address the issue of iconography and the sensitive topic of mixed idiom international style artefacts, it will be necessary to clearly define my position. For we are in fact situated in a unique position with most manifestations of pharaonic Egyptian visual expression, where the relationship between script and sign never made the diachronic shift from indexical and iconic forms to the symbolic, an evolution that most linguistic theorists have come to expect from human language. Thus with Egypt we are faced with an artificially constructed state for both the hieroglyphic script and for its indivisible complement, visual representation. This notion of semantic immobility (hieratische Stillstellung) has been adequately handled in publications by both Jacob Burckhardt[30] and Jan Assman,[31] where this static or semi-static capacity for hieroglyphic signs may be ascribed to the symbolic value and differentiation residing within the symbols themselves.

How the foregoing may be applied to discussions of this hybrid visual style will become apparent when it is pointed out that the majority of the artefacts bearing this idiom from Egyptian contexts that are the topic of this study are not in fact isolated pieces.

[29] Baines 2007, 285.
[30] Burckhardt 1984, 195: 2011, 79.
[31] Assman 2011, 152–4.

Rather, they are either components of groups of objects, the vast majority of which are fully Egyptian in character, or the imagery itself resides on objects which bear Egyptian canonical features, and, in some instances, with accompanying hieroglyphic inscriptions or emblematic, even cryptographic signs. This does not broadcast an impression of 'foreignness' for these artefacts, instead it infers internal manufacture by artisans skilled in a wider visual and material repertoire. Interestingly, Marian Feldman in her monograph conceded this briefly when addressing the related material from KV 62 and Tell Basta:

> 'If one equates language, ethnicity, and artistic expression with immutable and inherent cultural identity, then one would lean toward Egypt (and by inference an 'Egyptian' artist) as the origin of the production of these, and thus potentially all, koiné works.'[32]

Current scholarship has manifestly distanced itself from the issue of analysing the international style iconography as a self defeating exercise. This conclusion is made on the understanding that when dealing with a hybrid visual style, the search for physical geographic or cultural origins is futile, due to the inability to disentangle the many visual threads contained therein. Thus, all previous research is dismissed in a sentence. At present, it is no longer *de rigueur* to discuss the features of this corpus in terms of the visual idiom or style lest one appear to be grasping at straws. Instead, emphasis is placed on agency, mechanisms and patronage for the creation of this material. And these are all entirely valid avenues of discussion to pursue.

However, to entirely reject analysis of visual style is somewhat 'throwing out the baby with the bathwater', since it is the iconography and these unique features that are the primary signifier employed to identify this material. If we did not have this oddly situated hybrid idiom we would be looking at iconography that we recognise and which suffices for canonical Near Eastern or eastern Mediterranean iconography.[33] One may employ an alternate diagnostic method and seek evidence for the adoption of intrusive foreign elements. However, it may be argued that the majority of objects bearing this style are too effectively fused to support any argument for intrusive motifs within a fixed cultural style. So, instead, we are faced with literature which rejects issues of production source or cultural origin, yet simultaneously employs parallel methodologies regarding the mixed elements contained in this iconography. Before this discussion threatens to overreach itself, it appears fitting to return to the practical features of the topic under examination; what exactly are the characteristics of this international style as it is defined and understood in contemporary scholarship?[34]

[32] Feldman 2006a, 98.
[33] Bearing fully in mind the semantic slippage inherent to such facile generalisations.
[34] Annie Caubet (1998) discusses the notion only in terms of idiom and material.

2.3 Visual semantic for an international style

> 'Animal attack scenes, fantastical vegetation, and hybridized forms derived from multiple artistic traditions typify this style'.[35]

The most readily identifiable feature of the international style is its most ambiguous, this is the cohesively amalgamated visual hybridity where no cultural feature may be disentangled from another. This stands in notional juxtaposition to visual representation which may exhibit intrusive idiom within the canonical. Conceptually this idea of visual hybridity also sits diametrically opposite to ideas of what 'canonical' idiom entails for ancient cultures, which is itself a house built upon weak culture historical foundations. The iconography associated with an international style has been variously described as a fusion of visual elements from the artistic canons of a variety of Near Eastern and Mediterranean cultural traditions. Some authors go as far as to describe this style as containing a fusion of the three major artistic traditions, these being the Egyptian, Aegean and Mesopotamian. But it should be borne fully in mind that this is our construction of value based on the excavation history of the ancient Near East. Other authors credit Egyptian, Aegean, Levantine and Syrian traditions. Cypriot archaeologists on the other hand speak of Egyptianising, Levantine and Mycenaean features. Be that as it may, 'the devil is in the detail' and the detail is in most cases ambiguous and not resolvable employing these models.

Artefacts bearing this iconography do combine these motifs so effectively that scholars have been involved in a continuous dialectic for decades attempting to accurately identify both cultural and technological origin, predominantly through the employment of stylistic comparison, but equally through contextual and scientific avenues. The current group of hybrid artefacts has defied attempts thus far. With advances in archaeological technology, scientific methods have provided aids to research, but methodologies like chemical analysis can only establish source of materials and in the international context of the second millennium these are diverse and do not necessarily indicate point of manufacture or distribution. As has already been stated, applying art historical analysis of the imagery is equally a self defeating exercise, as this iconography is argued to be cohesively incorporated. Which leads the discussion to the inevitable question, how does one recognise or adequately define this iconography? Many different approaches have been applied to this visual idiom with a rapidly narrowing list of criteria which culminated in Feldman's 2006 publication. This volume now tends to form the core reference point for many scholars, but yet again with the imposition of nuances that reflect an individual's own view.

2.3.1 Can we talk about canonical styles?

Before outlining the characteristics that define this topic, the general characteristics that are employed to identify this idiom must be briefly outlined. Terms like Aegean and Mesopotamian are too sweeping and need to be clarified. For example, no one culture

[35] Feldman 2009, 182.

is subsumed under 'Aegean', Aegean is a geographic designation. In fact contemporary Aegean scholarship recognises three visual styles for the second millennium: Minoan, Mycenaean and Cycladic. Each bears nuanced features and chronological situation. Minoan visual representation is earlier than Mycenaean, predominantly situated between the Middle and early Late Bronze Age and generally relies on naturalistic models. Late Bronze Age Mycenaean art by contrast leans towards more formal compositions and images of royal hunt. Cycladic is situated between the two, yet freestanding, and in this discussion is exemplified by the artefacts and paintings from the transition between Minoan high culture and the Mycenaean period around the time of the Theran volcanic event.[36]

In similar vein 'Mesopotamian' is a massive construct that is a much more opaque geographic notion, as it represents varied cultures and language groups and for the benefit of this discussion is here embedded in the visual output of the Amorite rulers of the Middle Bronze Age, the Hurrian, Assyrian and Kassite cultures of the international period Late Bronze Age. In terms of cultural style there is often a convenient but simplistic distinction made between northern (Syria) and southern Mesopotamia. As discussed in Chapter One the discussion of Hurrian/Mitannian visual style is predominantly embedded in the presence of hybrid idiom and purported absence of a cohesive set of internal visual principles as for other cultural styles. Mitanni is therefore problematic to define and replaced the Phoenicians in scholarship for objects with entangled features. But it must be emphasised that in the absence of acknowledged elite visual grammar from Mitanni and in the knowledge that geographical definitions are weak parameters in the international Late Bronze Age that 'Mitannian' is an opaque definition.

Fig. 2.2 Illustration of the problems associated with this topic; cultural origin has been disputed, attributed to 14th c. BCE (style). It was purchased in the 19th century and has no provenience, yet has influenced discussions of cultural style. Image A. Sinclair.

On the other hand Egyptian visual representation may superficially be subsumed under one very broad heading, but it too was not static, and in the Eighteenth Dynasty became more mobile and expressionistic culminating in the visual design of the fourteenth

[36] The date is disputed, but is currently ca. 1630–1600 (high chronology) and 1530–1500 BCE (low), Manning and Kromer 2012, 449. Also Höflmayer 2009; Manning 2007, 101–38; 2014, 80.

century Amarna period which is pivotal to this topic. Anatolia, Cyprus and the Levant by contrast have in the past, like Mitanni, generally been assessed in terms of the scale of artistic influence from the aforementioned cultures in combination with indigenous values and features, with freestanding indigenous hybridity in the visual output of the Late Bronze Age now finally becoming a feature of discussion.[37]

Visual representation as already stated was, regardless of culture, predominantly an expression of power for ruling elites in often longstanding complex and hierarchical cultures. Thus elite 'art' was about power. As a sweeping statement it could be argued that no culture under examination here is an exception to this rule, as while the Minoans have in the past been drawn as an ideal of a-political harmony their visual rhetoric is nowadays considered to also reflect the rhetoric of cult and power of those at the top of the social hierarchy.[38] The purpose of iconography therefore in all regions of the eastern Mediterranean Bronze Age was grounded in elite control and in reinforcing right of rule by virtue of two basic and entangled constructs: the guarantee of divine sanction and the ability to control social disorder. This public expression of divine right and power over the notional 'forces of chaos' manifested itself in different ways in visual representation, but the intention was essentially the same everywhere for royal iconography.[39]

In Mesopotamia, Mycenae, Egypt, Syria, the Levant and Hatti this process rested in producing monumental imagery of the ruler depicted conquering the enemies of the state and hunting or 'master of' dangerous animals.[40] Equally, they had themselves represented making offerings in the temples of the gods in their capacity as supreme high priest and divine mediator. This type of state art generally requires the use of a strong central subject (the ruler) with other human or natural elements ranked in clear hierarchical succession below the focus figure. Order and piety also dictate the use of structured and sombre compositions with registers and a groundline that anchors figures. These two basic details occur throughout the period under discussion and earlier in monumental art and they inform this discussion by their argued absence from international idiom. However, it could be claimed that structured composition was not essential to represent the powers of disorder and therefore fallen enemies and wild beasts of the desert were not always required to form an orderly file in imagery, and it is not uncommon in monumental visual representation for these figures to be represented as disorderly groups.

It is also important to emphasise that these programs are characteristic of monumental art and that glyptic and objects in the decorative arts do not always conform to these models.

[37] Hesse 2008, 18; Knapp 2009, 219–39; 2015, 17–30.
[38] This peace loving ideal is the outcome of Arthur Evans' construction of Minoan identity in the early twentieth century, see Papadopoulos 2005, 'Inventing the Minoans'; Panagiotopoulos 2007, 'Arthur Evans' langer Schatten'.
[39] Renfrew 2007, 185–8; Trigger 2001, 98–104.
[40] Winter 2008, 75; Frandsen 2008, 47; Allsen 2006, 8–10.

Fig. 2.3 A typical model for Aegean mobility on a gold cup from Vaphio near Sparta, Greece, 1550–1450 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

2.3.2 The features of the international style

The foremost feature of compositions exhibiting this style is the argued absence or virtual absence of this strong central subject, or in fact any intention of conveying a formal visual narrative containing subjects displaying hierarchic precedence. This is arguably in direct contradiction to the iconographies of power for third and second millennium Near Eastern states where social and occult hierarchies were overarching elements for elite visual vocabularies. The absence of a strong central subject instead has affinities with some aspects of Aegean iconographic convention, where flora and fauna may interact in a seemingly haphazard riot of colour and line.[41] While most commentators discuss the open composition as the defining feature of this iconography, this is slightly misleading as it is worth emphasising here that this is in fact one element of these compositions. There are three forms of composition which may be juxtaposed seamlessly with each other on an artefact and which may be dependent on the scale, function and spatial constraints of an object.

Fig. 2.4 Detail of animal combat from the 'Tyre' bronze plaque. Image A. Sinclair.

[41] 'Seemingly' must be emphasised, as it has been argued that Minoan naturalistic compositions contain signals of an ordered ideal world, elite rhetoric and ritual practice, see Chapin 2004. Human representation in both Mycenaean and Minoan tradition does exhibit hierarchic precedence and processional features for human activities.

These are:

1. An open composition that is not dependent on an anchoring groundline, if there is one present. Within this space, mobile figures are arranged that twist and float with little regard to gravity. Low growing vegetation is employed to fill the negative space, so that an impression is made of a semi-natural landscape. This vegetation may hang or float in the upper field in a manner consistent with both Aegean iconography and with the composition of second millennium Near Eastern seals. There is no attempt to impose perspective on the image, as figures and vegetal fill are spaced evenly to employ the whole canvas, equally, scale for figures may be unnatural and variable. This may infer an emblematic rather than narrative intention to the imagery. The overall impression of this composition is to draw the eye around or back to the centre of the entire field, rather than the horizontal or lateral movement towards a strong subject. This vignette may then be framed by an unspecified amount of ornamental borders which also exhibit restricted visual idiom.

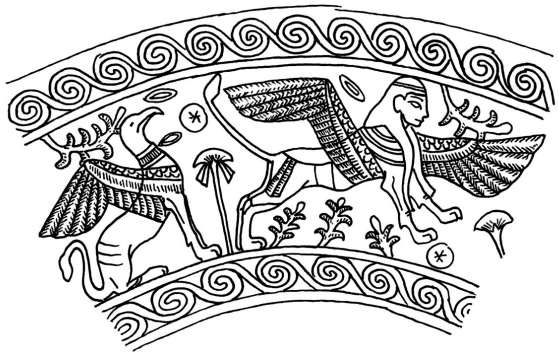

Fig. 2.5 Partial and fully grounded figures on the gold bowl from Ugarit,14th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

2. A symmetrical emblematic composition for which all components, plant and animal are static or passive and grounded to a baseline. This scheme is commonly found adjacent to the former open composition or the open composition and emblematic may be partially constrained by this same groundline. This too may be framed by ornamental borders.

3. A compact composition which, through judicious arrangement of the central figures, fills the entire frame and therefore exhibits no substantial negative space. The pose and framing of figures in these arrangements reflects the organic nature of the first type of composition, but is naturally constrained by the approach of resolving the entire field adequately. These last may not be framed by ornamental borders. However, as those objects fulfilling this description mostly apply to small freestanding inlay plaques, such as ivory furniture inlays or pyxides, it ought to be assumed that ornamental features may still have been present on the finished object.

Fig. 2.6 Compact composition with little or no fill. Ivory lid from a pyxis. Hala Sultan Teke, Cyprus, 1315—1112 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

2.3.3 Themes: Animal combat versus pastoral scenes

The themes employed for compositions that are inclusive in this style are relatively restricted and superficially eschew specific cultural or religious emblems, although they may equally function as multivalent designs. Within this loose corpus there are few examples of the themes of power most associated with the cultures of the ancient Near East, such as royal ritual activities, presentation scenes, lion hunts, military activities or cult ideology with figures of anthropomorphic gods.[42] In fact the human/divine protagonist is arguably absent and depending on the scholar this iconography is unique for the absence of human and anthropomorphic divine agents.[43]

The absence of a human protagonist naturally excludes narratives of human hierarchy and subsequently there should be no apparent signals of hierarchical precedence present. Equally, there ought to be no apparent political or cult framework conveyed by this idiom. However, this statement excludes the value of the floral and faunal contents as cultural or religious symbols, which cannot be excluded from visual rhetoric in the second millennium, where plants and animals could be employed to indicate a deity. Themes are instead derived from the non-human natural world of desert and steppe, primarily an animal combat or attack and emblematic scenes of figures heraldically flanking a central schematic 'sacred' tree. The animal combat scenes are active rather than passive, although depending on the scholar this idiom may be extended out to include bucolic or agrarian themes, such as cows or antelope suckling their young or calves frolicking in vegetation.[44] However, if one were to include every usage of this theme of wild nature from ancient iconography this would be a ludicrously broad visual genre, so there must be additional visual elements that contribute to the identification proper.

[42] General: Allsen 2006, 14–6; Hatti: Bonatz, 2007, 120–3; Canby 1989; Levant: Keel 1997, 244–306; Mesopotamia: Porada 2006, 2702–12; Egypt: Leprohon 2015.
[43] Feldman (2006a) rejects artefacts that contain human figures, except those on the rhyton and vase from Kition-Bamboula, the Ras Shamra gold bowl and ivory bed panels, and the Tell Basta vessels.
[44] 'Pastoral style', Steel 2014, 89.

Fig. 2.7 Animal combats and pastoral scenes on wooden cosmetic boxes from Egypt, 18th Dynasty. Images A. Sinclair.

2.3.4 'Animal style'

A significant contribution to debate over the exotic features of this idiom has in the past been the issue of posture for the animals within this iconography. These have been variously described as 'un-Egyptian' poses of vigorous mobility such as running, bounding or leaping, often using twisted and tilted body axis, each contributing to a rationale for less formalistic Aegean or Syrian characteristics within this iconography.[45] These poses may be commonly termed the running gallop, flying gallop, running leap and flying leap, and are identified by a fully or partially extended posture for the animal. The gallop has all feet raised and outstretched before and behind the animal, sometimes almost horizontally. The flying leap involves the hindquarters of an animal being raised above the body axis in a kick back that causes the figure to appear to land on its front legs. Twisted poses involve a similar shift in body axis from an ostensibly horizontal stance, which occasionally is augmented by the turning back of the head to view its pursuer.[46] In the past these poses have been viewed as Aegean conventions.

Fig. 2.8 Desert hunt from the tomb of Amenemhat, TT 82, Western Thebes. Reign of Thutmose III, 1479–1425 BCE. After Prisse 1878.

[45] This is predominantly grounded on Helene Kantor's paper from 1947.

[46] See Kantor (1947a, 62–71) for the core definitions where she employs the dagger of A'hhotep, the hunt scenes from 19th Dynasty Theban tombs, the dog collar from Maihirperi and dagger of Tutankhamen.

However, a counter argument for Aegean influence on this style of rendering animal figures rests in conventions for Near Eastern seal compositions from the Old Syrian period (2000–1700 BCE) in northern Mesopotamia, although these too have contributed to circular arguments by being part of an earlier construction of Aegean idiom transference.[47] Figures of wild desert denizens are also rendered in outstretched gallop in this medium, where these are fleeing or pursuing each other among similar icons to those others included here.[48] In Egypt this mobility is argued to have been introduced during the early Eighteenth Dynasty, although usually the mobility of the later Eighteenth Dynasty is more subdued with a more relaxed cantering posture, like the figures illustrated above from wooden cosmetic boxes.[49] Nonetheless, to complicate the issue, mobile poses and twisted posture are attested earlier from Egypt, particularly from the decorative arts from vessels, game boxes and cosmetic palettes, but also for wild prey in tomb painting and relief, and in fact the twisted pose appears to be a visual convention of flight from a hunter for desert animals in hunt scenes dating back to the Old Kingdom and Early Dynastic period.[50]

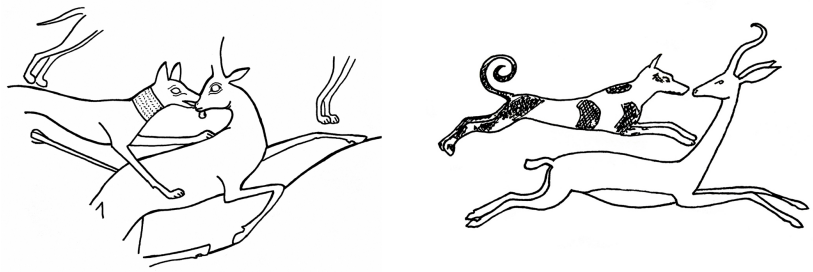

Fig. 2.9 Animal combat from the tomb of Khety, Deir el Bahari, Western Thebes (left).Ceramic bowl from Qubbat el Hawa near Aswan (right). 11th Dynasty, 2060–1963 BCE. Images A. Sinclair.

2.4 The international style: Themes and idiom in context

This section is broken up into four basic thematic categories: the mobile animal combat or pastoral romp, the static emblematic scene, subsidiary ornamental motifs and the sacred tree motif. In certain respects it must be emphasised here that the disposal of these individual components of this idiom into categories such as these or into binary oppositions is in some way an arbitrary disposition of mine. However, many style components employed here are basic to human perception and serve to arrange the discussion in a coherent manner, for example, active and passive, predator and prey, theme and ornament, masculine and feminine and so on. This premise is also predicated on these highly regulated semantic patterns being intrinsic to Egyptian visual rhetoric.

[47] Aruz 2008, 391–2; Bietak (2010, 196) 1700–1600 BCE; Teissier (1996) 1820–1600 BCE.
[48] Haematite cylinder seal, Ashmolean 1914.161, Aruz 2008, fig. 124.
[49] Again Kantor (1947a, 71) is the source for this rationale.
[50] Strandberg 2009, 29.

2.4.1 The animal combat: The actors

2.4.1.1 Predators

The choice to artificially designate predators from prey here is a conscious decision based on the visual signalling of this idiom. This signalling entails wilderness scenes predominantly containing animal attacks between a limited selection of clearly designated assailants and victims. There are, in fact, only three natural predators present in this iconography: the lion, leopard and hunting dog, and one hybrid entity, the griffin. It should also be noted that beyond Egyptian contexts and excluding human figures, the number of predators is reduced to two: the lion and griffin, or three, if the human hunter is included.

The physiognomy of all four predators in the Egyptian material is consistent, so that while it cannot be claimed outright, it would be reasonable to propose that wild predators could have been viewed as related entities at least in terms of iconographic convention. Details like sinews on legs, notches on knees, 'chunky' paws are ubiquitous to all animals. Individual species is only indicated by details such as body mass: lions, for example, are heavier, and bear clear signals, such as a mane. Leopards, dogs and griffins are differentiated by spotting, leonine head and ears, raptor head and wings for griffins, or floppy ears and pointy snout on dogs. Dogs and griffins wear collars. The non-Egyptian evidence displays similar bodily characteristics where the griffin and lion have the same basic physiognomy and body markings. For the later Late Bronze to Iron Age ivories from the Aegean, Cyprus and the Levant these characteristics are very consistent, with details like pronounced musculature, rib markings and 'flame' markings on haunches.[51] However, some of these later line conventions are not restricted to predators.

Gender is another topic that is underrepresented in discussion of this visual content, but will not be overlooked here. For predators from Egypt figures are unambiguously male with respect to lions, but not for the three other aggressors, dog, griffin and leopard. This gender ambiguity is reasonable for the leopard, as the real animal has no highly visible gender signals or visibly distinguishable genitalia, but for dogs this feature may not be argued, and I would hazard to suggest that they may be intended gendered female in the absence of male genitalia. This statement is supported by the effort that has been put into portraying gender in this style, at least from Egypt, as prey: cattle, antelope and caprids are consciously represented as male, often in defiance of anatomical correctness, and where they are not, this cannot be ruled out due to the fragmentary nature of the evidence.

2.4.1.2 The lion

The lion was a ubiquitous symbol of power that has resonance in the symbolic vocabulary of most cultures, modern and ancient. It could in fact be described as the predator

[51] Helene Kantor's 'Levanto-Aegean Outline Style', Rehak and Younger 1998, 251.

of elite power and religious clout par excellence in the psyche of humankind.[52] In the ancient eastern Mediterranean the lion and the hunting of lions by individuals of power was so firmly embedded in visual culture that this creature exists even in the iconography of states where there is to this day still controversy regarding its actual biological presence.[53] But the alpha male lion is not just a potential object of elite pursuit and display of royal prowess, both in practice and in visual rhetoric. As an icon, it is ideal as a metaphor for physical strength and therefore also the quintessential embodiment of divine and royal masculine power.

Fig. 2.10 Ivory plaque with animal combat between a bull and lion from the Artemision at Delos in the Aegean, 1200–1100 BCE (style). Image after Kantor 1956, fig. 2.

In Egypt the lion had specific associations with kingship and the king dating to as early as the Predynastic and by extension with the cult of the sun god. However, as a divine symbol it was also associated with protective goddesses: Hathor, Sekhmet, Bast, Pachet, Qudshu and the gods Shu and Nefertum.[54] Further north in the Levant and Cyprus, it was visually associated with a naked goddess and mistress of animals.[55] In Syria, Mesopotamia and Anatolia it was similarly associated with a mistress of animals, warrior goddesses, Ištar, Išara and Šauška and to a lesser degree with hunting and warrior gods in general.[56] In the Aegean the lion was equally associated with masculine prowess and power,[57] but it was also represented emblematically with a female goddess or priestess, a mistress of animals and with a master of animals figure along with bulls, hunting dogs and griffins.[58] Thus it comes as no surprise that the lion is a dominant figure in scenes of animal combat from objects in an international style. These powerful figures are never freestanding or passive and instead are always depicted in flight pulling down bulls or antelope, or leaping on them from above. They may dominate compositions where they are present, even when wrapped in mortal combat with another predator. Naturally, gender is indicated as masculine by the heavy body

[52] Thomas 2004, 183–7; Morgan 1988, 44–6; Strawn 2005, 135.
[53] For example there is controversy over the rare lion bones from the Mycenaean period in Greece, which either argue for extreme rarity or that the few were exotic imports to the region from North Africa, Thomas 2004, 189–93.
[54] Teeter 2002, 337–9.
[55] Webb 1988, 276; Cornelius 2004, 78.
[56] Taracha 2009, 60–1, 122; Gunther 2002, 83–7; Breniquet 2002, 160–1.
[57] Morgan 1988, 44–9.
[58] Blackolmer 2009, 38–9.

mass and the conscious employment of a luxuriant mane that is only present on mature male lions.

The features of lions that recur particularly with ivories in this idiom have been adequately addressed by previous scholars[59] and rest primarily with the presence of specific stylistic features. These discussions have generally focussed on the idiom from Aegean, Cypriot and Levantine ivories with some brief reference to the convention for lions from Egypt. Foremost is a hair whorl or rosette on the shoulder of the animal. This characteristic is most likely an Egyptian convention, as figures with hair whorls from Egypt are attested quite early and always associated with royal or divine figures. In the Eighteenth Dynasty the lion with hair whorl is used as a metaphor for the ruler in the tomb of Tutankhamen, but is also drawn on a royal pet lion, and for divine leonine figures such as the *rwty/aker* lions that guard the horizon.[60] Beyond Egypt there are other visual characteristics associated with late 'international' lions, such as musculature on thigh ('flame'), sinews on the leg, mane patterning (flame) and ear shape (clover-leaf). It must be emphasised that these characteristics do not occur on the Egyptian examples, neither from Tell Basta, nor from the much earlier Eighteenth Dynasty objects. Instead the features from Egyptian hybrid objects favour canonical Egyptian representation for lions and in certain details, for predators in general: V or tongue shaped mane pattern, shell shaped ear, framing beard on jowl, and in early examples[61] the hair whorl that also reappears on the later ivories. This local content tends to infer a local source for the idiom.

2.4.1.3 Hunting dogs

> 'If we were to accept these objects as having a 'magical' status, then the dog could be said to be a magical guide or reinforcement of the hunter's action'.[62]

The role of second predator figure in this imagery belongs to the dog, but not the wild species that may inhabit the liminal wastelands of cities of the ancient eastern Mediterranean, rather the figure employed in this idiom appears to be, regardless of stylistic variation, the domestic hunting dog which was an essential accessory for elite hunters. This assumption is evidenced by the ubiquitous presence of a leather collar on these animals as they pursue their prey in the wilderness. Like the lion, these figures are represented fully mobile, never passive or static and always pursuing or running down specific prey, such as antelopes or bullocks with the most common attack pose from Egypt showing the hound biting down on the prey's testicles. Similarly to the lion, the hunting dog was a symbol of elite power throughout the Near East in the Bronze Age as the accomplice to the ancient human predator in royal hunt symbolic.[63] In this

[59] Kantor 1947b; 1956; Rehak and Younger 1998.
[60] Whether it was a real hair whorl or a rosette is not considered crucial to this topic, Kantor 1947b, 1948, 1950; Vollgraff-Roes 1953.
[61] No hair whorls are visible from the Tell Basta vessels.
[62] Davis 1992, 67.
[63] Allsen 2006, 54–7; Bonatz 2008, 1; Rice 2006, 14–5; Strandberg 2009, 48; Houlihan 2002.

imagery the association is noticeably positioned with the importance of the human male hunter and the act of hunting as an expression of elite prestige. The hunting dog constituted the ultimate early human ally that could be employed to bring down those adversaries of the wild who potentially represented disorder.

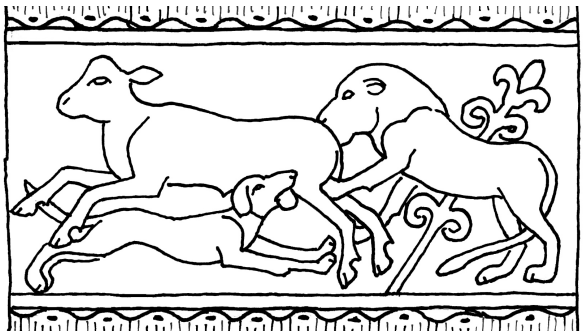

Fig. 2.11 Hunting dog, lion and steer on a wooden cosmetic box from Sedment, tomb of Menmena (Menna), Egypt, early 19th Dynasty, 13th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair

Symbolic associations with canines are evident, but not always prominent from the regions under discussion here, where such connections may be made with surety. For Egypt the domestic dog was an object of elite prestige and an essential element of ritualistic hunt iconography in elite tombs dating from the Early Dynastic period.[64] In day to day life the hunting dog was also a highly prized import from Nubia and an elite domestic pet. In cult it had affinities with the gods who protected the deceased, the liminal spaces between life and death and thus securing the passage to regeneration, such as Anubis and Wepwawet, but also Osiris and Horus. Dogs in textual contexts could be employed as a linguistic metaphor for loyalty or devotion.[65]

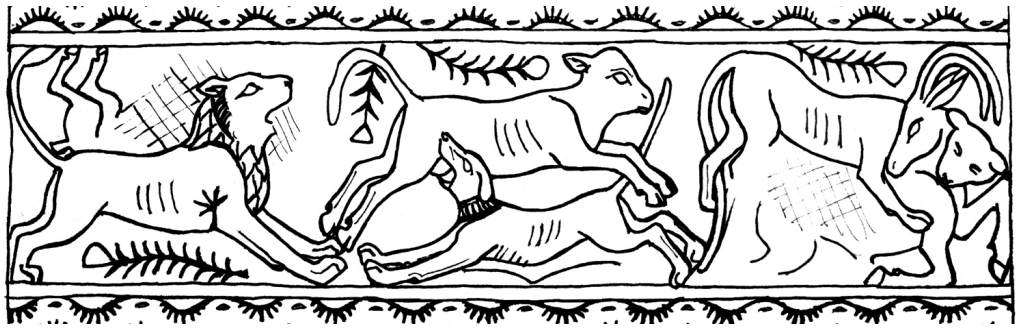

Fig. 2.12 Animal combat from the 'MacGregor' cosmetic box, 18th Dynasty (style). Image A. Sinclair.

Within the Syro-Mesopotamian cultural sphere the dog was an icon or cult animal associated with healing, particularly of the goddess Gula and the apotropaic demon of disease Pazuzu.[66] In visual rhetoric the hunting dog was however a relative late comer to Mesopotamia where, unlike Egypt, it was conspicuously depicted as male

[64] Ikram 2013, 300.
[65] Wassell 1991, 49–52.
[66] Böck 2013, 38–44; Ornan 2004; Bonatz 2008, 1–6; Breniquet 2002, 154.

in Neo-Assyrian royal hunt iconography of the first millennium, well after the objects discussed here.[67] By contrast, the hunting dog was not a feature of Middle Bronze Age Minoan iconography, however, it became a motif of significance in hunt scenes within Late Bronze Age Mycenaean elite rhetoric. Mycenaean art favoured images of elite hunt containing hunting dogs pursuing boars and deer.[68] For the international repertoire hunting dogs are arguably present in animal combats on artefacts from Cyprus,[69] the Levant,[70] but primarily from Egypt, where they are also prominent in combat scenes on internal Egyptian prestige goods, such as cosmetic boxes and ointment spoons, and on hunting regalia, such as bow cases and chariots.

2.4.1.4 Composite creatures: The griffin

Griffins constitute a dominant figure within this iconography, occurring often on entangled ivories and metal artefacts from throughout the eastern Mediterranean. In these contexts they are represented in various active poses grappling with lions or pouncing on bulls and ibex. They may also occur in isolated passive and emblematic poses on ivory, precious metal and on cylinder seals.

The griffin is a composite entity that according to western tradition is composed of a lion's body with the head of an eagle. The form of the classical griffin (Γρύψ) from which we acquire the term, owes much to the Near Eastern orientalising period and the circulation of eastern ivories and Anatolian bronzes in the early first millennium.[71] As a consequence this griffin, that came to personify the goddess of fate, Nemesis, had horse or hare ears, with a pronounced knob on the forehead and was crestless. This distinction needs to be made clear, as the term and contemporary perception of the mythical animal have had some influence on our reading of the earlier creatures purely by virtue of the choice of epithet and the past assumption of linear development for the icon.[72]

Like many motifs under discussion, the griffin has a longstanding publication history that has firmly embedded some resilient assumptions about its cultural origins. Henri Frankfort laid the foundation for discussion of this motif with an article 'Notes on the Cretan Griffin',[73] where he argued for a northern Syrian origin for the eagle-lion griffin which then transferred to the Aegean and finally ended its travels in Egypt. Many subsequent scholars tend to support this original thesis notwithstanding that he overlooked a substantial proportion of the visual and textual evidence from Egypt.[74] His argument instead rested with the chronologically unreliable evidence of Syrian and

[67] Breniquet 2002, 154.
[68] Krzyszowska 2014, 343–6; Cultraro 2004, 119.
[69] Bearing in mind that the Enkomi gameboard with dogs is now rejected due to the chariot hunt.
[70] Both gold vessels from Ras Shamra-Ugarit (Feldman rejects one of these from this style).
[71] 7th c. BCE, Armenian (Urartu) or northern Syrian bronze cauldrons decorated with griffin protomés have been found across the eastern half of the Mediterranean basin, Coldstream 2003, 344–7.
[72] Dessenne 1957; Eggebrecht 1977.
[73] Frankfort 1937.
[74] Crowley 1977, 48–55; 1989, 46–53.

Hurrian cylinder seals, the Mari paintings and the Amorite examples of winged leonine genii with the heads of eagles. Janice Crowley for example later relied on this paper for her discussion of the origin of the griffin in her examination of Near Eastern idiom and combining this with very early dates claimed Mitanni was the cultural source of the 'true' griffin occurring between 1750–1500 BCE, and effectively pushing the state of Mitanni back more than two hundred years.

Fig. 2.13 Ivory furniture plaque of a Mycenaean style griffin from the palace hoard at Megiddo. 1300–1200 BCE. After Kantor 1956, fig. 3.

As a result it is common for scholars to cite Mesopotamia as the earliest cultural source for the lion-bird hybrid, but it is important to be aware that the criteria for identifying these animals are very broad. The earliest attestation of an eagle headed winged creature is from late fourth to early third millennium Proto-Elamite Susa in Iran which has stylistic similarities to early Syrian and Egyptian winged Mischwesen.[75] Subsequently, this animal continues in southern Mesopotamia at Uruk, levels VI to IV, with possible associations to the lion headed god Imdugud/Anzu that was associated with thunderstorms.[76] In the Akkadian period (2350–2150 BCE) a 'griffin' appears in glyptic that has a fan shaped tail, wings and talons with a lion's head and torso which spews liquid from its mouth. This hybrid creature is attested until the end of the Old Babylonian period, ca. 1600 BCE, and is associated visually with the storm god Iškur/Adad, often pulling his war chariot. It was also associated with a frontal naked goddess, who may have been another weather god. An upright form with similar features also occurs in contest scenes where it is represented emblematically wrestling a hero or god, and in this case may represent the combat between Anzu and Ninurta.[77] This figure persists into the Neo-Assyrian period, where it was a chaos monster associated with Anzu.[78] This animal is the griffin scholars refer to as the original source, however, it bears little resemblance to the later griffins and may be described as a lion-dragon in Mesopotamian literature on glyptic.[79]

[75] Teissier 1987, 31.
[76] Uehlinger 1995, 6–7.
[77] It may also be called *ušumgallu*, 'great dragon', Uehlinger 1995, figs. 18–9; Black and Green 2004, 107–8.
[78] Schwemer 2008b, 33–4; Teissier 1987, 31–2; Börker 1971, 633.
[79] Green 2002, 27–32; Uehlinger 1995, 15–6; Crowley 1977, 55.

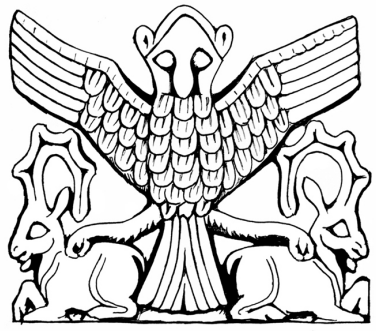

Fig. 2.14 Third millennium Mesopotamian raptor-lion hybrids. Akkadian seal with weather gods from Nimrud. Anzu demon on a stone plaque from Mari, Syria. Images A. Sinclair.

In Syria and the Levant the characteristics of griffins are consistent with those from Mesopotamia (weather dragon and Anzu demon) until the second millennium when Amorite glyptic introduced exotic motifs, and a new lightweight griffin with eagle head, wings and lion body appeared along with a sphinx. This griffin is visible in glyptic of the Old Syrian and later Mitanni periods, but it is not uncommon for the Mari palace paintings to be cited as the Syro-Mesopotamian example of a classic griffin.[80] These figures are placed emblematically with sphinxes wearing divine crowns and flanking an investiture scene with the goddess Ištar, providing an association with kingship for Mischwesen from Amorite period Syria. In the Late Bronze Age, as with the surrounding regions, the culturally entangled griffin with Egyptian (double crown) and Aegean (volute curls) features appeared in glyptic from Syria, Cyprus and the Levant. Anatolia in turn may have acquired the motif from northern Syria at the beginning of the second millennium, as is apparent from seals from Kanesh/Kultepe and sealings from Açem Höyük, but this was not a popular motif there until the Late Bronze Age, later recurring in the monumental iconography of temples of the Early Iron Age when this griffin was ubiquitous to the entire Near East.[81]

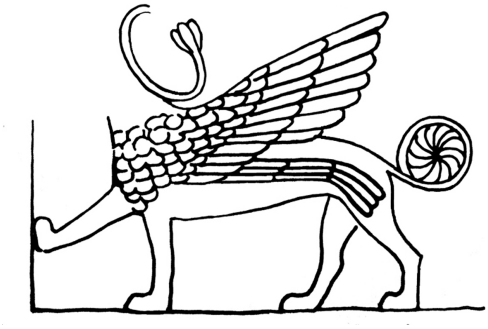

Fig. 2.15 Griffin? flanking the royal investiture scene from the palace of Zimri-lim at Mari, ca. 1760 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

[80] However, the figures are unclear and it is the reconstructions that are used for this identification, Teissier 1996, 88–90; Gates 1984, 85; Margueron 2014, 152–4; Parrot 1958, pls. VIII, IX, XII–III.
[81] Börker 1971, 633–9.

The griffin appeared in the Aegean 'from the East' some time between the Middle Minoan II/late Middle Helladic and the end of the MM III/LH I, ca. 1800–1600 BCE,[82] but it does not achieve prominence in Aegean elite rhetoric until the Mycenaean Late Bronze Age when it is visible in many prestige media. It is common practice for the griffins from the throne room at Knossos to provide the visual backup for this discussion and to conflate easily with the palatial period frescos, however it is important to be aware that the Knossos fresco is dated to the Late Bronze Age (LM II) after the Mycenaeans had obtained ascendancy at Knossos and restored the palace.[83] Earlier examples of griffin idiom from the Aegean rest on prestige objects from the Mycenaean Shaft Graves and seals. This raptor headed lion acquired a distinctive Aegean character once established in internal rhetoric, with such features as the adder mark for feathering on wings and spiral volutes on wings, shoulder and crest. Although the crest and wings are not always attested. However, the lion/eagle or lion/vulture griffin did have considerable significance in the Mycenaean visual repertoire and was associated like lions and sphinxes in emblematic scenes with powerful divine figures, masters and mistresses of animals.[84] It could also be depicted as a predator attacking wild animals in animal combats.

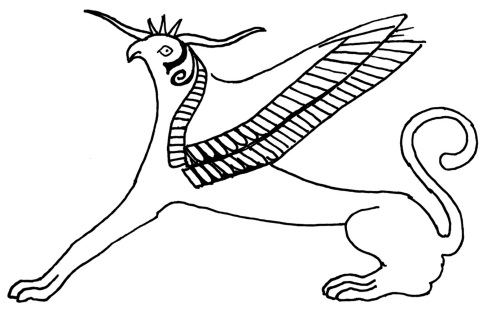

Fig. 2.16 Middle Bronze Age entangled idiom from Anatolia, Egyptianising griffin on an ivory furniture plaque from Açem Höyük, ca. 1800 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

Currently a good discussion of the griffin is supplied by Lyvia Morgan in an article which analyses the palatial wall paintings from the fifteenth century palace of Tell ed Dab'a in Egypt. However, there is evidence of limited approach, as the author reiterates the claim of previous scholars with 'the Aegean griffin appears suddenly in Egypt on the A'hhotep axe' (ca. 1550 BCE). This is incidentally squeezing the adoption and transfer of the motif to Egypt into a reasonably brief timeframe.[85] This statement also misdirects the reader from the fact that the animal represented on the otherwise Egyptian axe bears Aegean stylistic features in conjunction with a greater percentage of *Egyptian* stylistic features.[86] To be accurate, the adder pattern on the wings and the volutes on the head and shoulder do appear to reference Aegean griffins and sphinxes. However, the reclining posture of the sleek leonine figure is recognisably

[82] MM II, according to Feldman 2006a, 80, Aruz 2008, 138–9; 'a late import' in the 16th century, Morgan 1988, 49; MM III to LH I/Shaft Grave period, Crowley 1977/1989, Table 3.
[83] Driessen 2003, 59; Hood 2005, 50, 65.
[84] Blackolmer 2009, 38–9; Morgan 2010a, 304; Deplace 1967, 50–2.
[85] Morgan 2010a.
[86] 'Minor idiom intrusions' within the A'hhotep treasure, Simpson and Smith 1999, 123.

Egyptian, as are the details of physiognomy and the accompanying hieroglyphic text which states that it is beloved of the war god Monthu. The Aegean features are an interesting intrusion, but to be pedantic, it is perhaps an adoption of exotic idiom, not the sudden appearance of an Aegean griffin in Egypt. It is also worth noting that these details appear to be rare, perhaps dropping out of Egyptian iconography rapidly and by the mid Eighteenth Dynasty the Egyptian idiom for these figures is established as it will remain until the Ptolemaic period.[87]

2.4.1.5 The Egyptian hieracosphinx

The Egyptian royal griffin has a literary and visual value that may be documented to the early Middle Kingdom, if not much earlier. Contrary to general approaches, there was not one hybrid 'griffin' in Egyptian visual idiom and therefore the application of a single term to identify this creature is problematic. Few of these figures have clearly defined eagle heads and a vulture may be more relevant attribution in this case, having singularly more value in the Egyptian symbolic vocabulary. In most cases the hawk dominates for this hybrid entity and therefore, for the benefit of clarity, the term hieracosphinx (ηιεραχ 'hawk' and ϛφιγξ 'sphinx') that some scholars employ in preference to 'griffin' is usually more accurate. In Egyptian iconography the hieracosphinx is attested in a variety of forms from as early as the Predynastic period, where winged leonine raptors are depicted in desert hunt scenes with fantastical animals, lions, dogs and antelope on familiar ceremonial objects.[88] However, while most hybrid idiom scholars pay lip service to the longevity of the native Egyptian hieracosphinx, less attention is allocated to the internal value of the creature in Late Bronze Age international discussions beyond stylistic minutiae. Assumptions are made regarding the eagle-lion dichotomy which do not transpose easily onto the examples from Egypt.

The body of hieracosphinxes from Middle Kingdom magical knives is often spotted and panther-like, referencing the patterning of leopards and not lions, therefore perhaps conflating with the value of leopards.[89] Equally, the setting of these creatures in Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasty elite tombs places them among hunting animals. They are represented with hunting dogs alongside the tomb owner and in hunt scenes. Some with the lean physiognomy of the hunting dog or the spotting of leopards and at least one with distended breasts in the manner of a lactating bitch. There is also a lean hieracosphinx from Middle Kingdom bronze ceremonial axes that features raised wings like the later A'hhotep griffin.[90]

[87] Eggebrecht 1977; Te Velde 1967, 17–21; Leibovitch 1968.
[88] For example, on the underside of the Oxford or Two Dogs schist palette from Hierakonpolis and an ivory knife handle from Gebel el Tarif (el-Amra), late predynastic (probably Nagada IIc/d), Davis 1992, 62–7, 77–90, figs. 20, 26–7.
[89] Approximately 15 ivory wands from the BM, Louvre, Boston MFA, MMA, Petrie and Cairo clearly show spotted and winged Mischwesen, see Steindorff 1946; Altenmüller 1983; 1986.
[90] 1st Intermediate Period to 2nd Intermediate Period, Kühnert-Eggebrecht 1969, cat. 27.

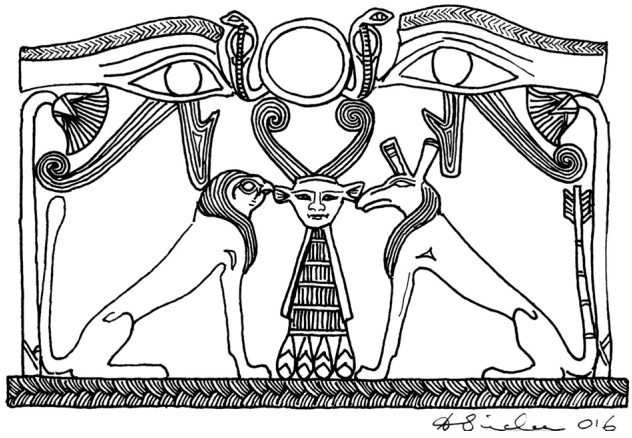

Fig. 2.17 Horus and Seth as leonine-hound Mischwesen flanking a voluted icon of the goddess Bat/Hathor. Cloisonné pectoral, reigns of Senwosret II–III, 12th Dynasty. Image A. Sinclair.

The body on the Eighteenth Dynasty examples often continues to be lean and interestingly, also greatly resembles a hunting dog rather than that of adult male lions. There is no hair whorl like those associated with lion idiom, although this motif may occur on lions and griffins on international pieces. Like the hunting hound, New Kingdom griffins are often rendered wearing dog-collars and on certain figures there may be a rosette neck pendant that resembles the pendant on contemporary winged sphinxes.[91] What also seems to evade notice is that the Aegean features that were present on the A'hhotep axe are not present later. There is no volute curl on the wing or shoulder, the adder pattern never reappeared to indicate feathering and the crest on the head was reduced to a flyaway series of strokes that could signal the crest of a lapwing, or a vulture, both recognisable Egyptian symbols of kingship.

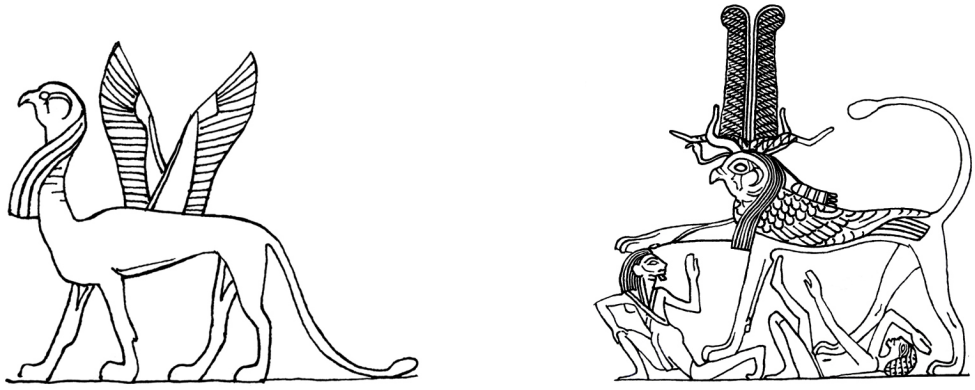

Fig. 2.18 12th Dynasty hieracosphinx from ivory wands (left) and the Monthu hieracosphinx (right), pectoral of Mereret, Dahshur, reign of Senwosret III, 1850–1700 BCE. Images A. Sinclair.

Having dispensed with the physical characteristics it is appropriate to move on to the semantic value of the griffin/hieracosphinx. While Egyptian iconography may have

[91] Tutankhamen linen tunic, Tell Basta vessel A and KV 11, tomb of Ramesses III.

adopted exotic idiom into its repertoire at various points in its history, there is no reason to dismiss the internal value of the daemon. Hieracosphinxes were associated with kingship and with some few gods: with Seth, the god of chaos and protagonist of the god Horus, with the god of war, Monthu and the child gods, Horus the Younger, Shed or Nefertum.[92] The Monthu hieracosphinx is particularly prominent in the military propaganda of the rulers of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties, whereas the association with the youthful Horus is situated from the New Kingdom to the Roman period. In most contexts the creature functions as an ally of the sun god and destroyer of the enemies of order. Even as symbol of Seth its function was about construction of order, with Te Velde going so far as to suggest the hawk and raptor griffins represented the two gods, Horus and Seth respectively.[93] Textual evidence for the nature of the hieracosphinx infers that these creatures went by various names with differing characteristics and therefore had different natures and affiliations: *sefer, seref, taštaš, aḫḫ, saget, šedw or seṯer*.[94]

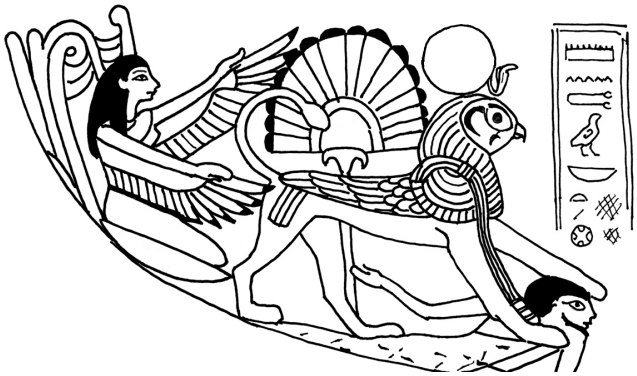

Fig. 2.19 Monthu hieracosphinx, funerary boat, tomb of Amenhotep II and tomb of Qenamen (painting of royal barge), Western Thebes, late 15th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

Sefer (śrf or śfrr) may be from a Semitic root with an original value of 'on the mountain' or 'in the desert'. It was usually depicted hunting wild animals in the desert steppe. A hieracosphinx from a Middle Kingdom tomb at Beni Hasan is conventiently labelled as śfr.[95] Similarly, hawk headed hybrids from El Bersha are labelled *seṯer*.[96] The taštaš (tštš) has wings either displayed or held flat on the body.[97] This figure wears a headdress and may be depicted as war-like and trampling enemies. It becomes the royal hieracosphinx between the Fifth and Twelfth Dynasties through to the Roman period. Aḫaḫ (ʿḫḫ) was a winged panther that was employed to describe the prowess of ruler Ramesses III from the royal inscriptions broadcasting his victories in the Levant at the temple of Medinat Habu. Aḫaḫ was used to describe his ferocity in battle, along with bull and leopard metaphors.[98] Saget (ś3g.t) is rare and only attested from elite

[92] Pinch 1994, 41.
[93] Te Velde 1967, 21.
[94] Te Velde 1967, 17–21; Leibowitz 1968, 127.
[95] Beni Hasan tomb 15, of Baqt III, Griffith and Newberry 1893, pl. IV; Porter and Moss 1968, 151–4.
[96] Tomb 5, Griffith and Newberry 1895, pl. XVI.
[97] Bersha tomb 5, of Ahanacht, Griffith and Newberry 1895, pl. XVI; Porter and Moss 1968, 181–2.
[98] Edgerton and Wilson 1936, 32–3.

tombs at Beni Hasan and Bersha, a fantastical animal that has a hawk's head, nursing bitch's body and serpent tail which ends in a lotus flower.[99]

Fig. 2.20 Reconstruction of Akhkh hieroglyphs carved in the Medinat Habu battle texts of Ramesses III, late 19th Dynasty, Medinet Habu, Vol. 8, pls. 27/28. Image A. Sinclair.

While there is still some discussion over attribution and function of these creatures due to conflation of their names and attributes, and there is no reason to exclude temporal distance contributing to this conflation, some certainty may be gleaned from the visual and written evidence. The primary symbolic entity from this group of hybrid predators was the royal hieracosphinx: the hawk headed leonine symbol of the god Monthu and like the sphinx, a metaphor for the pharaoh's aggressive military power in royal rhetoric. While this figure might be referred to as *taštaš, aḥaḥ* or earlier as *seṯer*, his function was explicit in the royal insignia on his head and the destroyed enemies of Egypt under his forepaws in royal idiom. In visual representation this royal animal was associated with kings of the New Kingdom, particularly in their funerary assemblages, but also on state monuments.

Fig. 2.21 Limestone vessel with the god Shed from the Boston MFA: 05.90 (Hellenistic period). Image A. Sinclair.

[99] Beni Hasan tomb 17, of Khety, Griffith and Newberry 1893, pl. XVI; Bersha tomb 4, Neheri, Griffith and Newberry 1895, pl. XI; Porter and Moss 1968, 154–9, 181.

The entity we are also interested in, however, is the raptor headed predator which I am at a loss to describe as a hieracosphinx or griffin, since neither term appears to be accurate. This creature has raised wings and on Egyptian international pieces has a collar like hunting dogs and leopards, inferring a direct relationship of ownership to a human or divine agent. It has lean canine features and a long, often coiled, tail like a leopard or dog. This composite animal is seen hunting in tandem with dogs in the international examples from KV 62 and Tell Basta, but the same animal is also visible in Egyptian rhetoric where it is associated as a protective demon on cult vessels and funerary accessories in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties. It is this animal that has been associated with the god Seth by Te Velde and Borchardt. The latter also suggested that it was associated with the female sphinx, just as the hieracosphinx belonged with the male royal sphinx.[100]

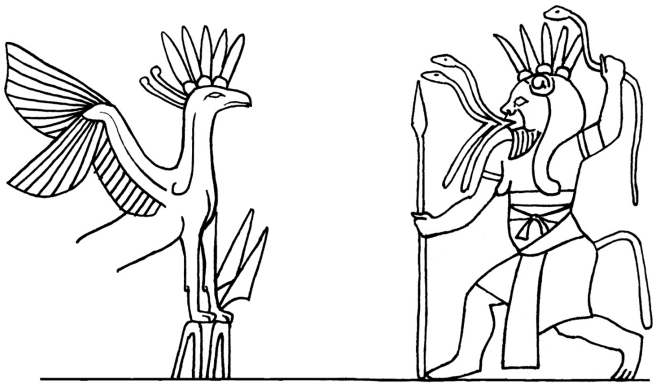

Fig. 2.22 Griffin with magical knives. Reverse has Bes figures. Limestone funerary headrest from the tomb of Qenherkhepeshef, Deir el Medina, Western Thebes, 19th Dynasty. Image A. Sinclair.

In the first millennium in Egypt this hybrid animal is visible as a companion to Horus the Child or Shed, often pulling the god's war chariot and like ruler and gods actively trampling the forces of chaos underfoot, such as serpents, lions and antelopes.[101] It was also an accomplice to myths and rituals associated with the raging eyes of the sun god: Sekhmet, Wadjet, Pachet, Mafdet or Hathor.[102] In the myth of the wandering eye, where the goddess Sekhmet transforms from raging vengeful lioness to a gentle gazelle through the machinations of the other gods, *sefer* griffins honour the goddess by bowing down in her presence. From these various attributes, this Mischwesen may be assumed to have had a protective and regenerative function within Egyptian rhetoric, yet again associated with royal and solar significance. There is little or no differentiation between this figure on the ostensibly hybrid objects and where it occurs in Egyptian canonical rhetoric.

[100] Borchardt 1933, 35–8.

[101] Metternich stele MMA: 15.85 (30th Dynasty, Late Period); limestone Horus-stele, Prague: N3 P1636 (Thebes, 3rd Intermediate Period); Boston MFA 05.90 (Hellenistic Period).

[102] See the myth 'The return of the Distant Goddess' from the temple of Monthu and Rat-Tawy (Hathor) at Medamud near Thebes: *wnḫ nꜣ ṯ śfrr.w m ꜥ.wjꜣf*, 'Griffins (*śfrr.w*) cover themselves for you with their (his) wings', Darnell 1995, 84–6.

Fig. 2.23 Griffins with Egyptianising symbols on a gold plaque from the Royal Hypogeum at Qatna, ca 1450-1350 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

By contrast, the international griffins from beyond Egypt have the heavy build and physical features of the lion and *do not wear a collar*, with the single exception of the seated griffin on the Ugarit gold bowl. There appear to be at least two distinct types of international griffin beyond Egypt, the later 'Mycenaean' style crested griffin with flame musculature, pronounced sinews and volutes on wings, against a more lightweight Syrian griffin that is specifically visible in the hybrid material from Qatna, Byblos and Ugarit. This figure reflects Egyptian conquering sphinx postures and visual characteristics. The most notable feature of this Mischwesen would be schematic feather representation along the back and rump that may be interpretations of the folded wings of an Egyptian royal sphinx. Perhaps the addition of raised wings in combination with the former device is a Syrian attribute, as it is apparent from the sphinxes and 'griffin's from Mari (ca. 1760 BCE) and paralleled on the later Touti box (ca. 1350 BCE). This, however, like the Egyptian idiom, tends to argue an internal value in Syria for these creatures.

Fig. 2.24 Griffin trampling a caprid on the ivory table inlays from the palace of Ugarit (left). Griffin on the Ugarit gold bowl (right). Images A. Sinclair.

2.4.1.6 Leopard/panther

The panther or leopard occurs with seeming regularity within the Egyptian repertoire for the international style and yet has rated little interest, except perhaps in its natural capacity as a predator and a denizen of wild places. The predatory nature of the animal is self evident as it is another big cat, but it does not appear to have played a strong role in eastern Mediterranean symbolic vocabularies, so academic discussions have a tendency to embrace large chronological spans to cover this absence.[103] In the Aegean the leopard is a rare motif from Bronze Age iconography. Thus, in order to widen the field many scholars employ a range of feline types under this classification, including cervals and wild cats, to argue a general value for an animal that was likely an exotic ideal rather than a reality. Nonetheless, the leopard rates as a wild predator in hunting idiom in elite iconography, particularly weapons, from the late Middle Minoan IIIB to the Mycenaean period (1700–1100 BCE). The earliest example is on a ceremonial axe from Crete and approximately contemporary with the arrival of the griffin and sphinx in the Aegean.[104] Lyvia Morgan provides a good overview of this motif in her analysis of leopards in hunt scenes from Tell ed Dabʿa.[105]

Big cats, like the lion and leopard were indigenous to the ancient Near East, however there is limited pictorial or archaeological evidence for a significant symbolic value for the leopard from Syro-Mesopotamia in the late Chalcolithic and early Bronze Age. Identification in iconography is often ambiguous and may in fact be female or young lions.[106] The fourth millennium Uruk period site of Tell Uqair has a monumental wall painting flanking the altar of a temple which has two spotted big cats as guardian figures.[107] In the third millennium there are representations from Early Dynastic cylinder seals, where they are an element, like the lion and lion-dragon, in contest scenes.[108] There are also textual attestations attributing the wild nature of the leopard to the goddess Inana-Ištar in her capacity as goddess of the wilderness and mountains, 'Inana of the panther'.[109] In terms of the decorative arts, two sites contribute leopard idiom on royal objects. The earlier is the royal tombs at Ur where leopards constitute the protagonist with a master of animals in contest scenes.[110] The latter is from Ebla in Syria which contributes leopards again in contest poses from inlays and plaques from the Akkadian period palace G.[111] In the period under examination here, the second millennium, the symbolic potential of the leopard is less evident, apart from certain priestly and apotropaic roles (leopard men) and demons,[112] yet it may again

[103] The value of the leopard in the early Neolithic cannot be argued to have direct bearing on the icon in the 2nd millennium except as an example of human value construction: predator = powerful icon, Nys and Brettschneider 2008, 12–3.
[104] Morgan 2010b, 282; Mallia palace, Evans 1928, 274–5, fig. 164.
[105] Morgan 2010b, 283–8.
[106] Heimpel 1983, 599; Ünal 1983, 604.
[107] Williams-Forte 1983, 603; Lloyd et al 1943, 141, pls. X–XI.
[108] Williams-Forte 1983, 602.
[109] Heimpel 1983, 601; Williams-Forte 1983, 603–4.
[110] See the 'queen's lyre' of Ur from the British Museum: 121198.a.
[111] Matthiae 1995, 74–5; 2003, 173, cat. 112.
[112] The hybrid Lamashtu demon has a spotted flank and one of the 'seven demons' was a leopard, Heimpel 1983, 601; Leick 2003, 110.

be summed up as a potentially royal icon by virtue of it being a large predator and a powerful adversary.[113]

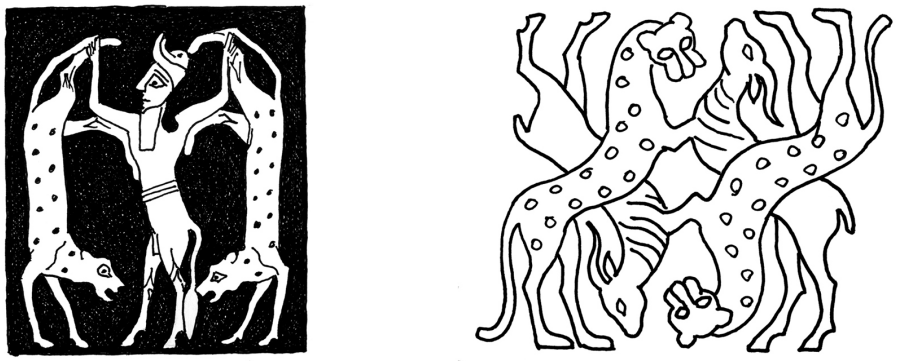

Fig. 2.25 Detail from the queen's lyre of Ur, tomb of Pu-abi, Early Dynastic III, Iraq. Contest scene on a seal from Tell Chuera, northern Syria. Images A. Sinclair (right), after Williams-Forte 1983.

In second millennium Hittite Anatolia the leopard was another animal of prey like boar, deer and antelopes, and therefore the cat was there the object of royal hunt and ideology of male elite prowess.[114] Most attestations for a symbolic value for leopards in ancient Anatolia are in fact very early from the Neolithic[115] or disputed, like the animal of the Hittite goddess Hebat, which may be a lioness or a panther.[116]

However, the statement that the leopard is similarly rare in visual idiom from Egypt is more problematic.[117] Leopards, in the practical sense, were an African and Near Eastern wild animal of high value as an object of royal hunt, of interregional trade and as prestige gifts to rulers.[118] In Egypt the leopard held apotropaic values within solar cult and by extension for elite funerary ritual. The pelt of the leopard was worn by *sem* priests and by the king (as high priest) as the signifier of senior status.[119] Both real and fabricated priestly leopard pelts were present in the tomb of Tutankhamen along with apotropaic panther figures. Each was decorated with five point stars as a direct analogy with the leopard as a personification of celestial divinity. Many items of furniture and sculpture from the assemblage are decorated with leopard skin or metaphorically represent leopards.[120]

[113] Scurlock 2002, 363; Gilbert 2002, 28.
[114] Collins 2002, 250, 328–9.
[115] Çatal Höyük ca. 8000 BCE, Gunther 2002, 82; Williams-Forte 1983, 602.
[116] Leick 2003, 81.
[117] Which Morgan claims (2010b, 288–90).
[118] Houlihan 2002, 121, 129; Phillips 1997, 423–57.
[119] Rummel 2007; Gregory 2013.
[120] Leopard skin cloaks: Carter numbers: 021t, 044q, 046ff. Also a folding chair, throne and funerary bed.

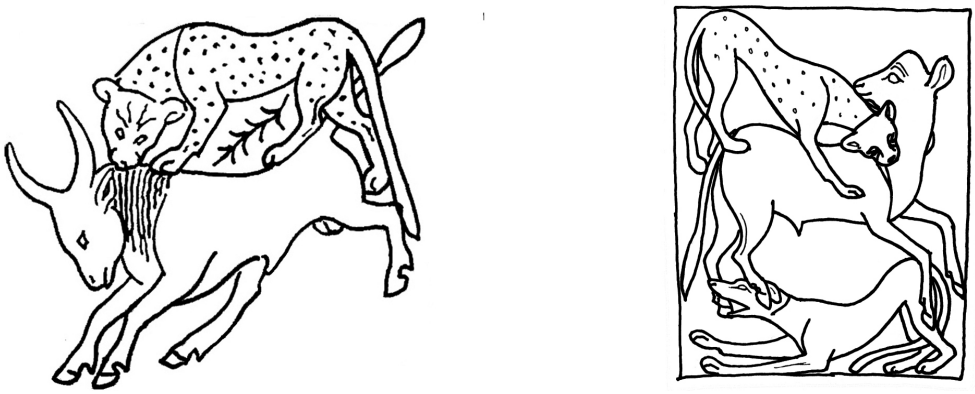

Fig. 2.26 Leopards attacking bovines from wooden cosmetic boxes from Abusir and Munich, late 18th Dynasty; Cairo JE 29140 and Munich ÄS 473. Images A. Sinclair.

In the divine pantheon the leopard was associated with both male and female deities. For example a first millennium text associates it with the god Seth in an anecdote explaining how the leopard received its spots, that is a word play on the terms for 'branding' and 'leopard'. Seth disguises himself as a leopard in order to approach the body of Osiris and is caught by Anubis and branded all over his body with a heated iron.[121] In general terms the wild cat fulfilled a protective function for the ruler and the solar god, and in that capacity was specifically associated with the goddesses Mafdet or Pachet (a lioness).[122] These goddesses represented the feminine protective power of the solar god, being absorbed into the roles of his mother, wife and daughters, like Hathor, Wadjet, Sekhmet and Weret-Hekau, and they functioned as protectors of rulers, the earthly manifestation of the sun god. As a result of this, leopards were associated with the ritual regalia of princesses and queens from the Middle Kingdom onwards.[123] The panther Mafdet was addressed under many epithets as 'fighter of serpents', the 'lioness who rends' and 'the great fettering goddess'.[124]

This role of subduer of the forces of chaos had the natural outcome that as early as the Old Kingdom the deceased came to be identified with this goddess and his bodily parts such as hands and feet were invoked as her instruments in the battle with disorder.[125] There is some ambiguity attached to the identity of the animal associated with this goddess and she may in fact have multivalent feline personas, panther, lynx, ichneumon or genet.[126] The goddess could be addressed as 'the Cat' or 'executioner' and in this capacity she was preserver of the sun god and fighter of his enemies, particularly all

[121] Pinch 2002, 105.
[122] There has also been a connection made to Seshat via her leopard skin skirt and conflation with Mafdet as a vengeful protective goddess, Schneider 1997, 266–7.
[123] As elements of royal jewellery: golden claws as pendants and frontal facing protomés as beads and clasps, Grajetzki 2014, 43, 90, 126–7; Patch 2015, 118–9, cat. 57A–E; Lilyquist 2003, 159.
[124] 'This hand of Teti that has come against you is the hand of the great fettering-goddess in the midst of the Enclosure of Life'. Pyramid Text: PT 259, (484); Allen and der Manuelian 2005, 90; Bohms 2013, 157.
[125] PT 259–60: Allen and der Manuelian 2005, 89–90, 95–6.
[126] Quack 2007a, 15; Bohms 2013, 56.

manifestations of the serpent Apep. In addition, she served as protectress and mistress of the ḫw.t ʿnḫ, the Mansion of Life, which was an important royal institution, most likely the domestic chambers of the ruler.[127]

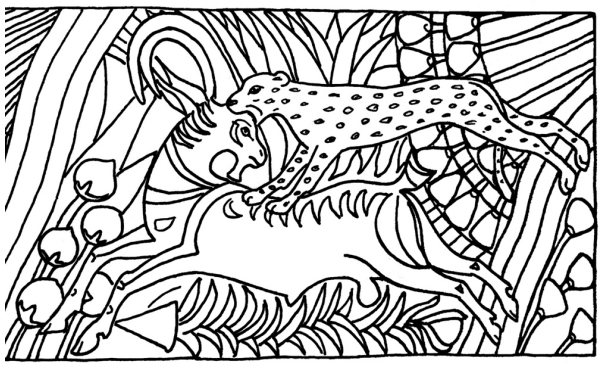

Fig. 2.27 International idiom from Egypt, a leopard attacking an ibex, inlaid chest, KV 62, tomb of Tutankhamen, 1334–1324 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

Along with an internal value for the predator it appears that leopards on objects in the international style only occur on the artefacts from New Kingdom Egyptian contexts. The KV 62 assemblage has leopards on the animal combats from the inlaid chest, dagger sheath, an openwork buckle and a chariot harness appliqué. Leopards also occur as predators on the Tell Basta vessels and as freestanding motifs with ibex and dogs on cosmetic boxes and ointment spoons from elite funerary contexts. In these they occur as active predator leaping on caprids and antelope often with another predator. It is interesting to note that the connection to the iconography of the goddess Mafdet may be signalled by the frontal presentation of the animal's head which is a characteristic of her iconography and may be found on queen's diadems from the second millennium.[128] In fact, this is a common convention for rendering these figures in the decorative arts which has in the past been rationalised as an Aegean or Mesopotamian feature. However, this format is reminiscent of apotropaic panther and canine heads from Middle Kingdom ivory wands and naturally of similar panther figures invoking Mafdet, Sekhmet or Pachet from KV 62.[129]

2.4.1.7 The human predator

A strong hierarchic scaled human actor is currently argued not to be a requirement of this visual idiom and quite often this rationale is used to exclude ambiguous objects from this corpus, usually in the context of the royal chariot hunt.[130] However, the remaining objects within this style are not all devoid of human figures, perhaps due to arbitrary selection criteria or an inability to exclude pieces that have formed the basis of this discussion. Therefore the human actor shall be included here.

[127] See PT 440c, 442c, 677d, 685c, also Bohms 2013, 158–9; Gordon 2004, 155–9.
[128] Two exceptions which are in profile are from animal combats on the chest from KV 62 and Tell Basta vessel A.
[129] Approximately 13 ivory magical knives residing in museums around the world have panther heads: 5 in the BM, 2 in MMA, Leipzig, Pennsylvania, Petrie, Walters, Brooklyn and Boston.
[130] As with the Enkomi game board.

The figure is unsurprisingly always male and depicted in activities that again relate to elite prowess and power, either hunting or combating wild animals. On the Ugarit gold bowl two warriors battle a lion with spear and dagger, on the bed panels from the palace they wield spears as a part of animal combats. On a Tell Basta bowl[131] this theme is repeated with one figure bearing a shield, the other a hunting stick or khepesh sword. Ivories from the Megiddo treasure have a warrior grappling with lions and another exception to the 'no cult' argument, as a fragmentary plaque with animal combat from a pyxis has both traces of processional figures and cult imagery.[132] In this case, there are 'Egyptianising' figures of the god Bes. In addition, the faience rhyton from Cyprus has two warrior figures in kilts and armed with daggers who pursue and rope steers. On the faience vase two figures dressed in long robes and holding spears run in pursuit of a lion and antelopes.

Fig. 2.28 International style gold bowl, detail with warriors fighting a lion, Ras Shamra, Ugarit Acropolis, temple of Baal, 14th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

The most common posture for these figures is the Egyptian smiting pharaoh pose, with head shown in profile, braced and extended legs, one arm straight out in front of the figure and the other bent upwards behind as though about to strike or throw a weapon.[133] This convention served as a core visual metaphor in Egyptian canon for the ruler and while it was primarily the preserve of kings and gods, it was later adopted by elites in second millennium funerary iconography.[134] The motif was adopted into Cypriot, Levantine and Syrian elite visual idiom between 1700 and 1450 BCE in the Middle to Late Bronze Ages. There it was specifically associated with the iconography of warrior deities such as Baal, Rešeph, Tešub, Amuru and Hadad. However, the motif is attested in Anatolian glyptic prior to this adoption, so that it may also have entered the repertoire from the north-west and then been augmented with the adoption of Egyptian motifs in the Amorite period.[135]

[131] MMA: 07.228.20, Lilyquist 2012, cat. 9.
[132] Dated to ca. 1100 BCE, Loud 1948, pl. 204.
[133] Luiselli 2011; Sliwa 1974, 98–104; Davis 1989, 80; Robins 1997, 17.
[134] Davis 1989, 64; Baines 2007, 209.
[135] Yon 2007, 354; Sanders 2007, 260; Teissier 1996, 13; Gachet-Bizollon 2007, 44–5.

This smiting posture is consistent to international idiom regardless of cultural source and of details like costume or weaponry. The opponent of this royal or divine warrior may be a lion, human adversary, bull or griffin, whereas ibex and deer are significantly less common. These figures are always mobile and aggressive, and no emblematic or static poses are used, nor are they depicted hierarchically, rather where context is apparent they are a seamless component of the entire scene of wild hunt and combat. This icon recurs in Egypt on a vessel from the Tell Basta treasure with adjacent scenes of domestic agrarian activities containing human actors. It should be noted that contrarily none of the current acknowledged pieces from KV 62 have human actors, but their physical context modifies this assumption somewhat and will be discussed further in Chapter Six.

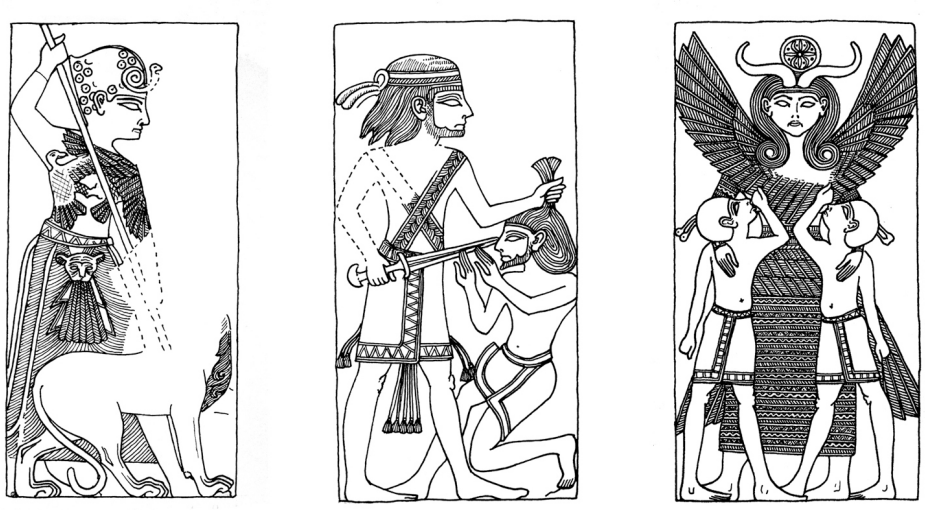

Fig. 2.29 Smiting pose on ivory bed inlays from the Royal Palace of Ras Shamra, Ugarit, 14th–13th century. These are argued to belong within the international style, the royal human figure and internal features could argue against this. Images A. Sinclair.

2.4.1.8 Prey/wild nature

The objects of predator aggression in international imagery are again a relatively small repertoire of animals that inhabit the wild places beyond human civilisation. These animals were the objectives of elite and royal hunt, such as cattle (bulls, steers and aurochs), antelopes (gazelles, eland and oryx) and caprids (moufflon, goat or ibex). There are also a selection of animals that appear less frequently in this idiom, such as deer, ostriches and hares, with the latter two only being attested on objects from Egypt, both from KV 62 and the Tell Basta treasure. Wild cattle, specifically bulls, but also immature males, steers or calves, feature heavily in this iconography from all regions. Aurochs or bulls are particularly prominent in animal combats on carved ivory inlays and pyxides from the Levant and Cyprus and are often depicted in large scale enveloping the entire field.

Like the male lion, the bull functioned ubiquitously in iconography as a metonym for elite male power, as primary symbol of masculine potency and equally as a cult signifier in visual idiom for specific divinities. The bull was a symbol of gods in Egypt, the Levant, Syria and Hatti in the Late Bronze Age. The former being associated strongly with kingship and gods of the underworld,[136] whereas in the Near East the bull represented various local translations of the warrior and weather gods: Tešub, Adad, Hadad, Amuru and Baal.[137] This sacred association did not preclude this animal having a function in hunt ritual nor as a high status cult animal for offerings to the divinity that it symbolised.[138] In the Aegean and Cyprus specific associations with a god are unclear, because of the current absence of a clearly defined Aegean pantheon, but bull symbolism was also prominent in visual idiom, and in Minoan Crete the bull appears to have been a symbol associated with the site of Knossos.[139]

Antelopes and caprids equally held longstanding internal value for all cultures under discussion, but rather than direct associations with kingship, they were associated with the symbolism of state and funerary cult and therefore indirectly with kingship, yet still with a value of power over nature. Male antelopes, deer and caprids were again symbols of the fringes of civilisation and of disorder, and therefore the object of royal hunt and suitable for prestige offerings in festivals and funerary contexts. In Egypt they had a further value as symbols of the goddess Hathor and as metaphors for love and human passion, being depicted in love poems as pursued by the hunting dog, as a man might pursue a woman, interestingly inverting the genders of this visual idiom, where the prey is always male.[140] In this vein the gazelle and the ibex, often bound with rope to control their power, were employed to decorate domestic furnishings and cosmetic tools, such as spoons and toiletry boxes. But it should be emphasised that they do not appear to lose their connection to chaos.[141]

In fact, all denizens of the desert and steppe may be viewed as fulfilling this function as denizens of the 'other', including the wild bull and lion, but these were a dangerous and exclusive activity reserved for royal patrons. Hunting lions and aurochs was the ultimate symbol of elite power, which is reflected in the prevalence of royal chariot hunt images from Egypt and the Near East in the Late Bronze and in the Iron Ages. It should also be noted here that there are pointed absences from this imagery that were components of the royal/elite hunt symbolic in the eastern Mediterranean: there are no boars, hyenas, elephants, hippopotamus, crocodiles or serpents employed in this imagery, in fact the repertoire is fairly narrow. Currently this selectiveness is attributed to ease of 'translatibility' through diverse cultures. What is not attended to is the prevalence of local animals in the iconography from North Africa. Ostriches, hares,

[136] Davis 1989, 65; Germond and Livet 2001, 150; Wassell 1991, 32–3.
[137] Bryce 2002, 144; Collins 2005, 24, 40; Taracha 2009, 60.
[138] Cluzan 2008, 243.
[139] Rehak 1995, 449; Hallager and Hallager 1995, 547–55.
[140] 'Oh that you were to approach your sister speedily, like a gazelle fleeing in the desert, her legs rush forward, but her body weakens, and fear courses through her limbs. A hunter pursues her, hunting dog by his side ... The Golden commends her to you, friend!' Papyrus Chester Beatty I, verso G 40.
[141] Wassell 1991, 22.

eland and oryx are to be found in the idiom from the Egyptian international objects, whereas deer and boar are generally present on northern or Aegean artefacts.

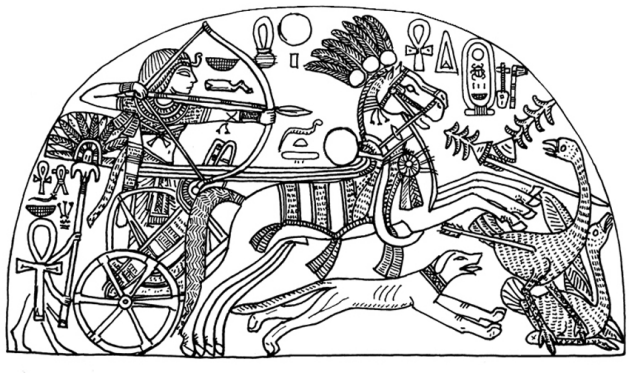

Fig. 2.30 Tutankhamen hunting ostriches, gilded fan from KV 6, tomb of Tutankhamen, 1334–1324 BCE. Note the use of the international fill-herb. Image A. Sinclair.

2.4.1.9 Predators and prey, universal signalling of order versus chaos.

> 'In the semiotic cultural theory developed by Boris Uspenskii and Juri Lotman, culture is opposed to what is its opposite – non-culture – each being a means of defining the other and therefore having a structural relationship to it. Therefore, culture does not simply oppose what is outside of its notions of what is barbaric or civilised, instead culture itself can exist only through this relationship with its exterior. In sum, culture needs chaos in order to define itself'.[142]

The visual idiom of predators in pursuit of wild prey in the wilderness, while ostensibly representing vague notions of royal power and elite prerogative for this style, extends out beyond this premise to encompass core state ideology from many of the cultures of the eastern Mediterranean. For primitive cultures the hunt of the potential threats to mankind and social order came to represent social stability for the visual rhetoric of rulers. This is particularly the case when domesticated carnivores such as hunting dogs, griffins and leopards are juxtaposed in opposition to wild herbivores. In all cultures represented here this was core visual rhetoric and in second millennium Egypt, Mycenaean Greece, Anatolia, Cyprus, the Levant, Syria and southern Mesopotamia hunt iconography was a primary iconographic program for expressing elite prowess, power and prerogative.[143]

In Egypt the representation of the hunt of steppe animals (the traditional forces of disorder) was a core canonical visual metaphor, with that of fishing and fowling, for the pursuit and imposition of social and cosmic order over the forces that threatened social stability and for regeneration in the afterlife.[144] As such it was emblematic of the ruler in his function as maintainer of world order. The removal of a human protagonist from

[142] Bahrani 2001, 149.
[143] Trigger 2003, 628–9.
[144] Hendrickx 2010, 130–1; Strandberg 2009, 97–100; Angenot 2011, 261–2; Feucht 1992; 1998.

this theme does not essentially weaken the semantic value, but instead imposes the visual dynamic onto the role of the predator, and thus often the icon of preference is the lion, as symbol of divine and earthly power which is shown subduing an animal of the wilderness, usually an equally powerful subject like a wild bull or larger desert game. The presence of a collar on griffins and dogs similarly signals that their master is present.

2.4.2 Emblematic scenes: Caprids or sphinxes flanking a sacred tree

By contrast to open wilderness and conflict, scenes of emblematic austerity are also to be expected from this idiom. This is preferably in juxtaposition with the mobile scenes since, when they are found in isolation one is faced with the easy conflation with internal idiom from any culture contributing to this discussion. The repertoire for this theme is narrow and predominantly consists of reclining or standing sphinxes or caprids which heraldically flank the volute tree. Beyond these, it is possible to find examples of other figures flanking a tree such as bullocks and lions on objects from Ugarit, griffins from Qatna, or ostriches and a rooster from a bowl from Tell Basta. Feldman in her monograph associated sphinxes in this iconography with the role of predator in an animal combat, like the griffin and lion. This claim is not borne out by the extant evidence, as only one object may have sphinxes in combative poses.[145] Rather, the sphinx in international examples is always presented emblematically, passively standing or reclining in ritualistic poses, most often antithetically flanking the sacred tree in complement to the similar figures of caprids and trees. This sphinx is nearly always depicted with unfurled wings and a floral headdress.

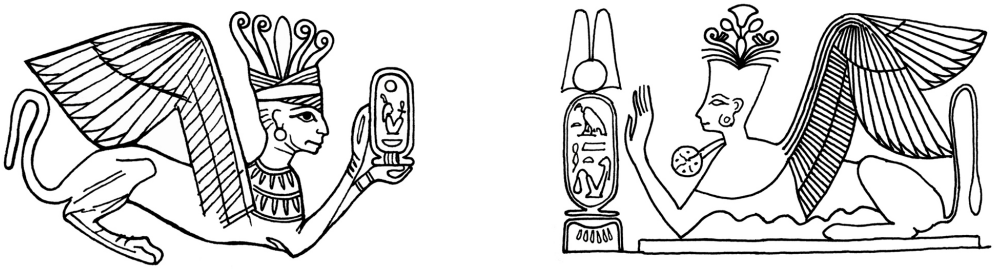

Fig. 2.31 Late 18th Dynasty queens as a winged royal sphinx with voluted headdress: Tiye (left) and Mutnodjmet (right), 14th c. BCE, Egypt, MMA 26.7.1342; Turin 1379. Images A. Sinclair.

2.4.2.1 Sphinxes

The mythical creature the sphinx, like the griffin, is another hybrid entity that bears multivalent form and identity in antiquity and which is heavily influenced by retrospective art historical analysis. The epithet itself, Σφίγξ, 'throttler' is derived from the classical Greek monster of the Oedipus cycle who kills all individuals who travel

[145] Ugarit pedestal table from the royal palace, but these figures are still emblematic.

her path. Thus the famous precedent is a human headed monster with leonine body and was quite singularly and rapaciously associated with the female gender.[146] On the other hand, the earlier Egyptian sphinx had a similarly human head and leonine body, but was, in many instances, male and associated in visual rhetoric with the ruler, the role of kingship and with the manifestations of the sun god proper.[147] No scholar tends to challenge the Old Kingdom Egyptian origin of this motif, although human headed lion demons are attested like other hybrids from early southern Mesopotamia.[148] The earliest attested couchant royal sphinxes from Egypt are dated to the Fourth Dynasty and are male (Giza sphinx) and female (statue of queen Hetepheres II).[149] However, the Egyptianising sphinx like the lean raptor griffin appears to have entered the Syrian visual repertoire in the early second millennium, later spreading west to Cyprus and the Aegean, so that in the Late Bronze Age it is ubiquitous to the prestige arts.[150]

The telling issues for past dialectic over the sphinx are not based on variations of hybrid content, as human head and leonine body are relatively fixed, although some scholars class all leonine Mischwesen as 'sphinxes'.[151] Instead, emphasis has been placed on other stylistic details, particularly gender, regalia and the presence or absence of wings in iconography.[152] In early scholarship these factors were the impetus for an argument for motif transfer of the winged sphinx to Egypt in the Second Intermediate Period to early Late Bronze Age, with again the majority favouring a Syrian source for this idiom.[153] The argument may be traced via early twentieth century rhetoric over the winged sphinxes of queen Tiye from the Metropolitan Museum and Mutnodjmet, the royal wife of Horemhab from Turin (above).[154] Beyond these figures, the earliest attested female sphinx with raised wings from Egypt dates to the fifteenth century reign of Hatshepsut and, like the later examples, the figure adores the cartouche of this queen.[155] There are also three ivory plaques with hybrid sphinxes from the international repertoire from the Megiddo hoard that have actively contributed to discussion of hybrid features for sphinxes.

[146] Demisch 1977; Stadelmann 2001, 307; Zivie-Coche 1984, 1140.
[147] Amen-Re, Re-Horakhty, Re-Atum, Horemakhty, Heka, Zivie-Coche 1984, 1144–5.
[148] Otto 2000, 255.
[149] From the funerary complex of Djedefre at Abu Roash, Cairo: JE 35157.
[150] Teissier 1996, 193; Stadelmann 2001 307.
[151] For example Stadelmann 2001, 310; Warmenbol 2006, 176.
[152] Liebovitz 1987, 7–9.
[153] Von Bissing 1898; Frankfort 1936, 116; Demisch 1977; Helck 1962, 357.
[154] Liebowitz 1987, 6–8; Leibovitch 1947, 8–9.
[155] Wooden box from the Abbott Collection, New York, Prisse 1878, pl. II.25; Leibovitch 1947, fig. 8.

Fig. 2.32 Ivory furniture inlay from the Megiddo governor's palace hoard, 13th century, southern Levant. Image A. Sinclair.

Details like the floral headdress on these figures have contributed to an Aegean rationale, due to an argued resemblance to the floral or 'flame' crowns of Mycenaean sphinxes. Wolfgang Helck in 1962 argued that the female sphinx, griffin (and running spiral) all transferred to Egypt from Crete during the Hyksos period.[156] Fifteen years later Janice Crowley argued that these Mischwesen transferred to the Aegean from 'Asia' in approximately the same period, but she did not challenge the basic premise, an Aegean source.[157] Henry Frankfort in his griffin study favoured Syrian origin for the female sphinx, but based on Egyptian models.[158] Beatrice Teissier in 1996 also considered it a Syrian product, while leaning on Helck and Demisch for her conclusions.[159] Like many icons under discussion here the debate for origins and the evidence for motif transfer is complex and for this discussion rests in the evidence from early second millennium international period when Egyptian Twelfth Dynasty rulers were known to gift their Syrian allies with sphinxes.[160]

Fig. 2.33 Male sphinxes flank a sacred tree, relief on the wooden bowl from the tomb of Touti, Giza, reign of Amenhotep III, 1389–1352 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

[156] Helck 1962, 357.
[157] Crowley 1977; 1989, 43–6, leaning on Frankfort 1936.
[158] Frankfort 1936-7, 116.
[159] Teissier 1996, 194; Demisch 1977.
[160] For example the sphinx of princess Ita, daughter of Amenemhat II from Qatna and of Amenemhat II from Ugarit, Mesnil de Buisson 1928, 10; Schaeffer 1939, 21.

What is self evident is that the sphinx was a symbol of kingship in the pharaonic period and by association, the solar deity, which also appears in the iconography of eastern Anatolia and northern Syria in the Middle Bronze Age.[161] Later it appears in the Aegean and Cyprus, where it subsequently entered the repertoire of the first millennium and may have travelled down to contemporary visual representation as a predator with a lion's body and woman's head, although wings in this case are optional. This is assuming of course that a linear development occurred. The Egyptian sphinx, however, was for most of the pharaonic period usually male and royal, a visual development from the ruler as a conquering lion.[162] It is argued to have had a symbolic value as an embodiment of magical power, with a sign value of ḥkꜣ, (*heka*) 'magic/enchantment' which could be conflated or substituted with pḥtj (*phty*) 'power/strength/might' in later periods.[163] The characteristics of the original model are fairly consistent, a leonine body with a human head that wears the royal *nemes* headdress. This figure came with a limited repertoire of poses: predominantly couchant and rampant, the latter often emblematically trampling enemies in state rhetoric.

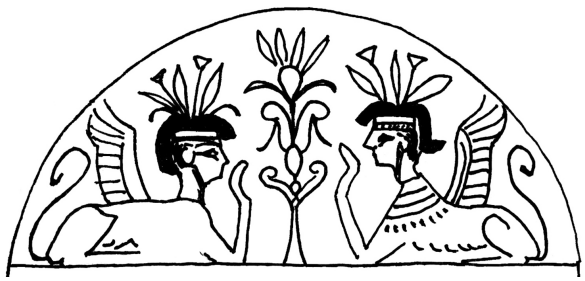

Fig. 2.34 Female sphinxes flanking volute tree with Hathoric motifs on a faience offering bowl from Gurob, Manchester: 721, late 18th to 19th Dynasty. Image A. Sinclair.

Winged sphinxes are attested in royal rhetoric from the Old Kingdom and were used for the rampant figure.[164] However, they were more common in the Middle Kingdom, with the deceptive factor being that most often the wings are folded against the body and easily overlooked.[165] Female sphinxes are less common from Egypt and attested for queens and princesses from the Old Kingdom to the New Kingdom.[166] However, the female royal sphinx is most apparent from the visual output of the late Eighteenth Dynasty. This sphinx is usually winged and, in many instances clearly female, often with distended breasts which has naturally contributed to dialectic over stylistic origin, with the now prevailing view that the female sphinx was Syrian in origin.

[161] Otto 2000, 257.
[162] Demisch 1977, 64.
[163] Ritner 2008, 25.
[164] Temple of Sahure relief with rampant royal sphinx (or griffin) trampling foreign enemies which is so stylistically close, it could have served as model for the 18th Dynasty examples, Borchardt 1913.II, pl. 8.
[165] Teissier 1996, 193; Otto (2000, 257), cites Dessenne 1957, 33, claiming the winged sphinx was rare before the 18th Dynasty.
[166] With the earliest sphinx attested being of queen Hetepheres II from the mortuary complex of Djedefre at Abu Roash.

Fig. 2.35 Winged male sphinx flanking sacred tree on the Ugarit gold bowl, Acropolis temple of Baal, 14th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

Sphinxes from objects displaying international style are always rendered in emblematic, poses. Only one object from this group might associate the sphinx as a participant in an animal combat and this is a tenuous association. These are on a register from the ivory inlays for a royal table from the palace at Ugarit. However, the poses are still highly emblematic in contrast to the usual mobility of an animal combat. Unlike the griffin, leopard and hunting dog, these sphinxes do not convey a message of allegiance to a powerful master, rather they project royal prerogative, power and protection with their regalia and framing stances. The sphinxes from Syrian contexts are gendered male and exhibit the same schematic wing device on their hindquarters as griffins, which supports an argument for a local connection using Egyptian models, particularly from Ugarit.

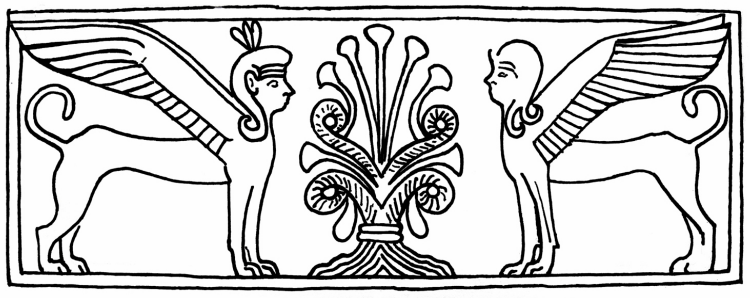

Fig. 2.36 Gold sheet diadem from Tomb 2 at Enkomi in Cyprus, 14th to 11th century. Image A. Sinclair.

In Egypt hybrid winged sphinxes are female and wear no collar, rather they wear signals of Egyptian divine female power and associations with the female protective role, specifically with queenship, the goddess Hathor and the goddesses who defend and renew kingship.[167] As such, they wear lily or lotus diadems which conflate readily with Aegean and Syrian sphinxes, yet also with New Kingdom Egyptian idiom for royal

[167] Preys 2006, 141, 144–5.

women.[168] Like some griffins, a few wear rosette-sunburst pendants.[169] They also wear Egyptian beaded collars and mimic stock rampant and couchant male royal sphinx poses. Beyond the two international examples from KV 62 and the Tell Basta treasure, objects with these royal sphinxes often name Egyptian chief queens or rulers.[170] From this it is relatively easy to assume that these figures relate in some way to female royal power regardless of the idiomatic origin of the motif.

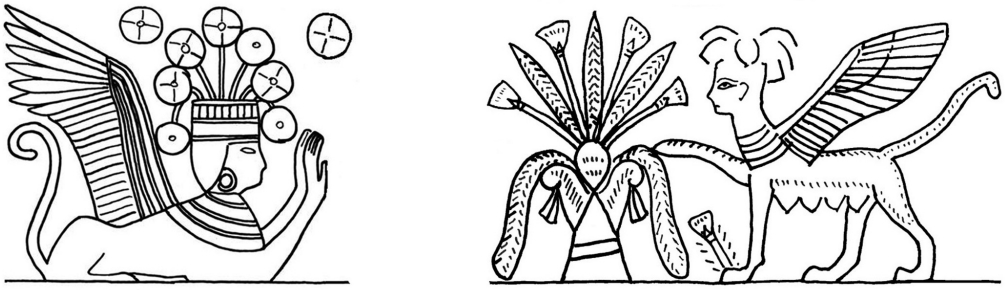

Fig. 2.37 International sphinxes from Egypt; Tunic of Tutankhamen, ca. 1330 BCE (left), Tell Basta treasure, Amy patera, ca. 1250–1200 BCE (right). Images A. Sinclair.

2.4.2.2 Caprids

The caprid flanking a sacred tree is a ubiquitous visual theme that is present in early Near Eastern and African visual representation and it is worth stressing here that it has an environmental context, as it is possible to still view caprids in wild and domestic contexts from Europe, Africa and the Near East doing precisely this action of foraging by standing on the hind legs and reaching up to graze. Caprids are ubiquitous to the entire region of Africa and western Asia and represent domestic and wild members of the goat family (capridae). They also extend into southern and central Europe. Distinction between species is all too often blurred in scholarship and, in certain instances, in the original iconography. As such, the figures may be assumed to be ideals, rather than biological realities, which can nonetheless often be the object of scholarly dialectic.[171]

The depiction of caprids in a heraldic scheme with a central sacred tree has been argued in the past to be firmly situated in the symbolic vocabulary of early Mesopotamia. By extension, this image is interpreted as relating to notions of universal abundance and fertility which have been extended out to include this international shared rhetoric of royal power.[172] The use of the term 'tree of life' for this tree has similar dubious and value laden connotations which are considered embedded in out of date Biblical

[168] Lilyquist 2003, 159; Troy 1986, 64–5.
[169] Silver or gold vessel from an offering scene before Seti I at Karnak temple; ostracon from tomb of Ramesses VI, Cairo, Daressy 1901, pl. XVIII; chief queen Mutnodjmet, coronation statue of Horemhab, Turin: 1379.
[170] Particularly Tiye, chief queen of Amenhotep III.
[171] See for example the discussion over identification of species in late 18th Dynasty art, Osborn 1978; Reed and Osborn 1978.
[172] Feldman 2006a, 81–2, 85–6.

scholarship and rejected here, preferring the broader term sacred tree. That being said, the actually value of this scheme is still subject to debate and is no longer necessarily assumed to be embedded in vague notions of fecundity or fertility. Othmar Keel, for example, has suggested a value of a blessing for unspecified figures, like sphinxes, birds or caprids flanking sacred trees, with the whole scheme having a value of 'undifferentiated numinous power' in the Levant.[173]

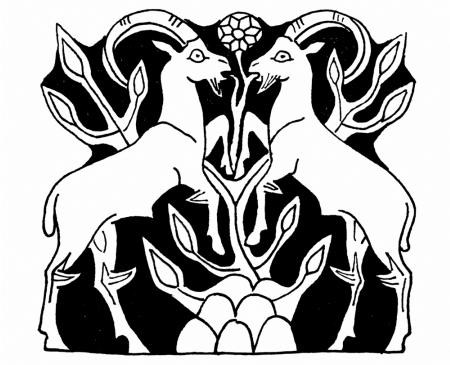

Fig. 2.38 Shell inlay plaque from Ur, southern Mesopotamia that is the common visual model for comparing the Late Bronze Age motif to Mesopotamian parallels, Early Dynastic III, 2600–2350 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

Contrary to the prevailing view that dates back to the nineteenth century which associates this theme with Mesopotamia, in pharaonic Egypt the use of goats or antelopes feeding on a central tree was a longstanding feature of elite funerary idiom where it was usually placed within scenes of herding and domestic agriculture, often adjacent to scenes of the king or an elite male hunting desert or marsh animals. In Old and Middle Kingdom elite tombs, goats or ibex are in the majority and were often used to frame a stylised, but clearly foliate tree.[174] This specific funerary usage infers the scene of domestic activity had value in the visual rhetoric of rebirth, regeneration and schemes of universal harmony in Egypt, just as hunting and fishing did. This connection may be extended out to individual features of the animals, where as an icon the ibex horn functioned as a metaphor for the new year and for cosmic renewal by virtue of its resemblance to the hieroglyph for 'year', rnp.t, which is a notched palm frond and a ubiquitous component of royal ideology, both as securing a pharaohs rule, his jubilees and for guaranteeing universal order.[175]

Fig. 2.39 Ibex flanking a sacred tree on an ivory furniture inlay from Arslantepe, Anatolia, ca 1000 BCE. Northern Syrian style. Image A. Sinclair.

[173] Keel and Uehlinger 1998, 219.
[174] Old Kingdom: tombs of Pepiankh (Cusae), Itty-Shedu (Deshasha), Khnemhotephapi and Khunes (Zawiyat el Meytin), mastaba of Niankhnum and Khnumhotep (Saqqara). Middle Kingdom: Djefaihapi (Asyut), Baqt I and Aneni (Beni Hasan) and Djari (TT 36, Western Thebes).
[175] Keimer 1947, 11, 14; Desroches-Noblecourt 1956, 208.

In Bronze Age Aegean, Near Eastern and Egyptian iconography caprids appear to bear considerable symbolic value, albeit not necessarily the same value, nor the same subspecies of caprid. In early Mesopotamian iconography the moufflon or ibex with curved horns and stocky body may frame a stylised foliate tree, with hooves planted on the symbols for mountain, particularly from cylinder seals and ivory or bone plaques. Divine associations for this motif range from the goddess Inana (rosette and tree), the god Dumuzi and the demon of thunderstorms Anzu.[176] Like Egypt, the motif continues on a millennium later, with various pedestal shaped schematic volute trees, particularly in glyptic from northern Syrian Amorite sites, such as Qatna and later east at Mitanni period Nuzi and northwest at Ugarit. In the Levant the caprid, with the lion or griffins is visually associated with a naked goddess: Ashera or Qudshu.[177] Cypriot elaborate seals also employ this motif with similar visual associations to the Syro-Levant.[178] Here one could expect the internal value may have changed along with the cultural change, however given the frequent association with royal burials, royal prerogative is arguably still present for many.

With the previously cited icons, this motif of caprids or gazelle flanking a tree carries symbolic weight throughout the eastern Mediterranean, having a long history of internal value for most regions under discussion. What cannot be claimed, however, is a definitive place of origin or one ubiquitous value, when the motif appears to be so universal to human experience. In the international style the caprids flanking sacred tree motif is present from Egypt on the ceremonial chariot from the tomb of Yuya and Ṯuya, two appliqués from KV 62 and on silver vessels from Tell Basta.[179] From the Levant, Megiddo contributes a few stylistically varied ivory plaques and combs with this motif. Syria is represented by a gold plaque from the royal hypogeum at Qatna, and from Ugarit, the gold bowl and possibly on the ivory table inlays.[180] Cyprus has caprids flanking sacred trees on the two faience vases, while also originally contributing the now rejected ivory game board. There are no examples of caprids flanking this specific tree from the Aegean.

2.4.3 Voluted sacred tree

> 'The palmette is derived from an old tradition in Egyptian plant ornament. It is related to the equally simple early palmettes employed in the figure eight spirals painted on the ceiling of the tomb made at Assiut for Hepzefa, the Governor of the Fourteenth Nome of Upper Egypt.'[181]

[176] Barrett 2007, 49–50.
[177] Borowski 2002, 407; Cornelius 2004,
[178] Keel and Uehlinger 1998, 51, 153, 233; Stuckey 2003, 134–5, 145–8.
[179] Amy patera and vessel fragments B and C. See page 203.
[180] The images available of these damaged fragments are unclear and some appear to have comb like protuberances not unlike griffins. The reconstructions similarly ought to be viewed with caution.
[181] 'Ḏjefaihapi', governor of Assiut, early 12th Dynasty under Senwosret I, Smith 1965, 40. Many scholars use this tomb to argue the point of arrival of complex spiral motifs in Egypt from the Aegean, Shaw 1970.

The term volute palmette or simple volute describes a schematic composite floral motif which in its simplest form may contain a bifurcated double flower with a central inverted petal-form stamen. This core element may be crowned with a fan of ovoid pointed leaf fronds ('palmettes') or with flowers, which in Egypt may be either daisy rosettes or papyrus. Outwardly curved droplets or simple flowers may be suspended from the underside of the volute petals and in complex cases this design may be stacked indefinitely with alternating upright and reversed volute flowers. Most scholars differentiate between the simple flower 'lily' and the complex or layered forms of the motif which may be variously described as a volute tree, volute palmette, palmette, south-flower, lily of the south, Syrian palmette, Phoenician palmette or Cypriot palmette in literature.[182] The use of volute palmette as a designation again has its origins in the nineteenth century and in classical scholarship, deriving from the term for the spiral capital of Greek Ionic columns.

In the dogged pursuit of origins for this motif there have been two dominant camps within scholarship, one is an 'Asiatic', northern Syrian cultural origin, particularly from the court of Mitanni to Egypt.[183] The other ascribes an Egyptian origin to the motif which subsequently spread to the Levant, eventually entering Assyrian and ultimately early Greek design as the voluted capital.[184] It is interesting to note that of the three earlier studies of the sacred tree for the ancient Near East, each scholar ascribed the volute tree to Egyptian derivation. The earliest study by Hélène Danthine, placed the volute palmette in the Amarna period under some influence from western Asia, from whence it subsequently returned to the north-east via Ugarit (no doubt influenced by the trees from the gold bowl excavated by Schaeffer). However, in most contemporary scholarship northern Syria and Mitanni remain the preferred cultural inspiration for the complex volute tree motif.[185] Whatever the rationalisation employed, it is undeniable that this floral motif becomes ubiquitous to the Near East in the Late Bronze Age and continues to have semantic significance in visual design through to the Classical period.[186]

Current scholarship is therefore fairly, but not wholly, unanimous in its assessment of the volute tree from the second half of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Nuances such as date and ultimate source are opaque, but often the consensus in Egyptology is its conceptual origin is still 'Western Asia', variously the Levant, northern Syria or even more vague

[182] The latter are usually applied to the post Late Bronze Age examples of this motif, and may be conflated with Phoenician idiom.

[183] 'Mycenaean iris' or 'Cypriot palmette', Evans 1901, 147, 149; 'Greek Palmette', Murray 1899, 30; 'Palmette Chypriote' Schaeffer 1949, 24; 'Syrian Palmette', Montet 1937; Crowfoot and de Garis Davies 1941; 'un-Egyptian' Aldred 1951, 9.

[184] Worth noting that von Bissing 1902, 84 and 1910, 198 used 'Syrian Palmette', but did not rule out the possibility of Egyptian origin. Scholars within the pro-Egypt camp were: Goodyear 'lotus palmette' 1891, 109; Riegl 1893, 60; Borchardt 1897, 18–24, called it a 'lily' which may be traced to the Old Kingdom: Danthine, 'begins at Amarna', 1937, 182; Kantor, 'south flower' 1945, 251–306; Smith 1965, 40: Kepinski 1982; Ward 1971, 108; Crowley 1977, 75; 1989, 73; Spalinger, 'tree of life' 1982, 117.

[185] Feldman 2002/2006a; Aruz 2008, 240 (cites Kantor 1945).

[186] Art historian E.H. Gombrich (1984, 181) argued for an Egyptian origin in the first millennium for the Greek palmette!

'Mesopotamia'. Thus, it is considered 'a new motif to Egypt',[187] which 'betrays the influence of Western Asia'[188] or unambiguously comes from Mitanni.[189] While many choose to place its point of greatest impact within the visual output of the Amarna period. In New Kingdom Egyptian iconography the volute flower may be found on a vast range of objects in an equally vast range of media beyond the artefacts under discussion here. In the international iconography from Egypt, this floral motif may be used as fill in a larger composition, it may occur in more complex scenes as an isolated visual element, or in a sacred tree design.

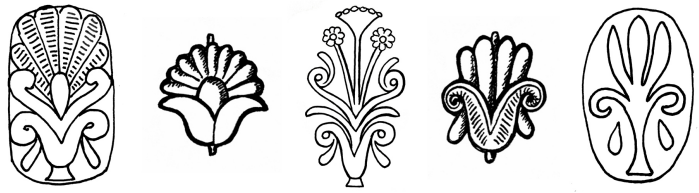

Fig. 2.40 Volute palmettes and trees from Amarna and Malqata, from faience pendants and clay moulds, 1370–1330 BCE. Images A. Sinclair.

For objects in the international style the complex volute tree with palmette crown is present as an emblematic motif from Cyprus: gold, jewellery, diadems and seals from Enkomi tombs, but no ivories, and the Levant: Megiddo ivories, Lachish gold and ivory, Ugarit ivory and gold vessels, Qatna gold plaques. It may occur as a freestanding motif or flanked by griffins or sphinxes. However, it does not occur on any Aegean ivory. In fact, the only example of this emblem from the Aegean that may be closely associated with this style is a cloisonné gold pendant from Myceneaean Thebes in Boeotia which to my knowledge has not been associated with the international style and may well be an Egyptian import.[190] Regardless of this there is enough visual conflation with what Arthur Evans called the '*waz*' lily of Minoan Crete for this flower that it cannot be argued to be entirely absent from the Aegean visual vocabulary, however the iconographic source for the *waz* lily is generally assumed to be the papyrus.[191]

For international idiom from Egypt the volute palmette occurs in emblematic scenes flanked by sphinxes, roosters, ostrich, ibex, gazelles or rarely, griffins. Unlike elsewhere, in many Eighteenth Dynasty Egyptian examples it can also occur as vegetal fill in animal combat scenes[192] and as an ornament of costume and decorative border.[193] In fact the task of defining the boundaries of this motif in Egyptian iconography is problematic due to the basic and elaborate volute plants being thoroughly embedded in Eighteenth Dynasty royal idiom.

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[187] Lilyquist 2005, 62.
[188] Roehrig 2005, 47.
[189] Bryan 1995, 286.
[190] Athens: SNM: A.1909.527.19.
[191] Evans 1928, 476–7, fig 285. There is also a sound argument that it is a sea daffodil, *pancratium maritimum*, see Baumann 2006.
[192] KV 62: calcite jar, gold harness plaques, openwork plaque, 2 dagger sheaths.
[193] KV 62: chariot 122, 2 daggers.

2.4.4 Ornament: Decorative patterns and vegetal fill

The repertoires for secondary vegetal fill that may be used for the compositions in this style, if they are present, usually constitute a restricted selection of three plant icons. These are the rosette, which may be a recognisable daisy type flower or a more schematic circle with halo of dots (dot rosette). Another is a single stemmed lily, 'potamogeton' or 'cornflower', that is a frond-like low growing herb with thin lateral leaves spaced evenly up the stem. This may have a bud or a triangular flower head. The final plant used for background fill is a simplified version of the volute tree. Beyond these, floral motifs, a lesser repertoire of plants may also be evident although these are still relatively restricted idiom, like papyrus, pomegranates, poppies or mandrakes. However, it must be emphasised the latter are features of the Egyptian related material and do not appear to occur on international objects beyond Egypt. In addition, if decorative framing is present it will constitute one or more ornamental bands which also exhibit similarly restricted yet diverse visual idiom.

2.4.4.1 Running spiral, guilloche and rosette

There is a relatively wide repertoire of arguably intercultural decorative motifs employed for ornamental borders: the running spiral, guilloche, rosettes, lilies, lotus, papyrus and mandrake. For the international style, most dialectic over stylistic origins focuses on three specific motifs: the 'Aegean' running spiral, the 'Mesopotamian' guilloche and the rosette. The debate is not entirely fixed, nor has it ever been and there is again some argument for the pursuit of such ubiquitous motifs in the visual record as a self defeating exercise. However, this self defeating exercise continues to plague academic discourse and may not be summarily dismissed. Of the artefacts under examination here, those from KV 62 are bordered with running spirals, petal ornament, guilloche, chequerboard, rosettes, lily volutes and feathering. Vases and paterae from the Tell Basta treasure have rows of spirals, petal ornament, lotus, grapes, rosettes and mandrakes. Beyond the Egyptian group the international ivories rarely have ornamental borders, perhaps due to damage or to their function as inlays, however, precious metal artefacts exhibit both guilloche and running spirals.

2.4.4.2 Guilloche, chain or knotted rope ornament

Guilloche is a continuous ornamental pattern of wavy braiding, not dissimilar in form or methods of execution to the running spiral. Opinion in early scholarship regarding the origins of this motif rested firmly in the available archaeological evidence from Mesopotamia in the nineteenth century and the well illustrated publications of first millennium Assyrian palace ornamentation by Henry Layard. Thus, the examples from Assyrian and Persian monumental architecture and the aforementioned ivories from Nineveh and Nimrud had an impact on early discussions of this ornament which actually has iconographic origins in much earlier cultures. In the early twentieth century examples of guilloche from sites such as the Mitanni period wall paintings from the palace of Nuzi, contributed to discussion of local and exotic motifs in Mesopotamia.

Second millennium seals from northern Mesopotamia bearing guilloche are found over a wide geographical spread in Syria, Anatolia and the Levant. Middle and Late Bronze Age seals from Syria bearing guilloche also occur as objects of elite exchange in Aegean contexts.[194]

There are to my knowledge only two examples of guilloche decoration from the currently acknowledged international style artefacts of known Egyptian provenience, these are on a gold dagger from KV 62 (small band on the dagger and a schematic 'wave' border framing the sheath), however, this is entirely predicated on the classification of inclusion in this style, as there are other objects from this tomb including chariots for which this motif is a secondary border motif.[195] There is also the notorious bronze unprovenienced 'Tyre' plaque from the Louvre which was sold to this institution by Henry Salt in the nineteenth century.[196] Instead, the most common ornamental border manifested on Egyptian artefacts, apart from internal decorative bands, is the running spiral or coil motif. Guilloche may occur as a decorative element in other media such as faience tiles, where it is a feature of Nine-Bow captive costumes.[197]

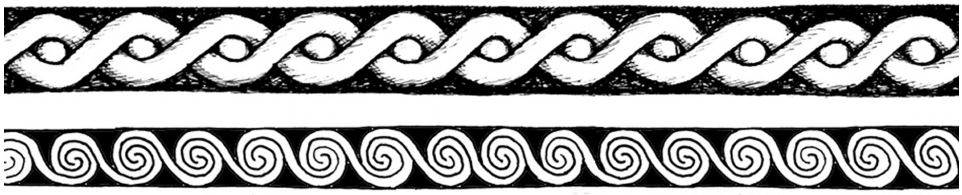

Fig. 2.41 Guilloche above and running spiral below.

2.4.4.3 Running spiral

The spiral, coil, or scroll motif is another ubiquitous symbol which may be argued to be firmly embedded in the visual repertoire of many cultures in the eastern Mediterranean region in the Late Bronze Age. Thus, it has attracted no end of debate over the origins, method of transfer and adoption in academic literature from as early as the nineteenth century. The presence of framing running spirals on objects bearing intrusive or hybrid idiom has had considerable impact on the discussion of this style over the past century, beginning with some respectably out of date values about the uniformity and diffusion of human social development from scholars in the late nineteenth century.[198] In eastern Mediterranean archaeology discussion kicked off in the early twentieth century with the general assumption of a 'sudden' appearance of spiral-form designs on Egyptian Middle Kingdom seals and scarabs, somewhat under the influence of Arthur Evans' well publicised Minoan finds from Knossos in Crete and Percy Newberry's examination

[194] Aruz 2008, 396.
[195] Also a small silver (harness?) plaque, Carter 620 (50) and a red gold openwork plaque, Carter 044a.
[196] In my opinion the early date for the acquisition of this object favours it being authentic.
[197] Syrian captive from temple of Ramesses II, Medinet Habu, Boston MFA: 03.1569.
[198] Goodyear (1891) argued the spiral motif derived from the Egyptian lotus, which is not so extraordinary if one considers he argued for the lotus as stimulus for practically every ornamental vegetal and abstract motif in human history!

of Egyptian scarabs.[199] Newberry considered that the running spiral motif that is common on Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasty administrative seals was not attested in Egypt before the reign of Senwosret I and his opinion seems to have had a lasting impact, even in the face of dissent from later seal experts like William Ward.[200]

Aegean specialists looked at the evidence from excavations in Crete and Mycenae and established the longstanding argument that Egypt adopted the spiral motif from economic contact with the Aegean via the medium of patterned textiles[201] and prestige ceramic in the Twelfth Dynasty.[202] In opposition to this stance were individuals like John Pendlebury and Friedrich von Bissing, who argued vehemently for an independent derivation of the spiral motif in Egypt, citing its presence on First Intermediate Period administrative seals, a usage which then expanded in the visual repertoire of the Middle Kingdom.[203] By the mid twentieth century voices from various art historians were raised in caution at the possibility of identifying cultural source for spirals, such as Sidney Smith, who said: 'there is also no way of tracing the original centre of diffusion'[204] and equally Ernst Herzfeld, who sensibly stated: 'There is no way to interpret such absolute prehistoric symbolism. Even the survival of symbols into such recent historic periods where literary sources might mention the one or the other would be of no help, for symbols change their meaning when migrating from land to land or passing from one period to another.'[205]

That being said, the spiral was a ubiquitous motif for the Bronze Age and it must be emphasised that in media such as metal, the spiral is a natural arrangement for the manipulation of thin strips of rolled wire. This is borne out by the frequency of spiralform ornaments in precious metal from elite contexts throughout western Asia in the third millennium.[206] To this may similarly be added the wire amulets with openwork spiral ornament from elite Middle Kingdom tombs in Egypt.[207] However, the strongest argument has always come from the Aegean and this is in some degree to the credit of Helene Kantor, who has had such a lasting impact on discussions of motif transfer. In her publications she qualified the Aegean origin rationale and proposed a nuanced explanation for the 'travels' of this ornament. Thus, she argued that Egyptian exposure to complex spiral patterns via trade in the Middle Kingdom influenced the

[199] Evans 1901, 199–200; Newberry 1908, 79–82, derived from Celtic iconography!
[200] Ward 1971, 105–19, argued the spiral was internal and attested from the Old Kingdom in Egypt.
[201] Riefstahl 1944, 44, 'un-Egyptian'.
[202] Kamares ceramics, Hall 1909, 221; 1914, 205, 115; Fimmen 1921, 198–200 (scarabs).
[203] Pendlebury 1939, 145. 'To talk of Crete borrowing from Egypt or vice versa is impossible'; von Bissing 1912, 8.
[204] Smith 1945, 8, fn. 40.
[205] Herzfeld 1941, 62.
[206] Late Uruk period spirals on metal pins and seals from Arslantepe, Tell Brak, Amuq and Jebel Aruda. Early Dynastic pins and pendants from the royal tombs at Ur. The presence of this motif on cult scenes infers a likely value for the symbol in Mesopotamian cult, Frangipane and Palmieri 1983, 403–4.
[207] Amulets from Abydos, tomb V 21, Ayrton et al. 1904, 8–9, pl. XII 1–2, MMA: 04.18.9: Gold ring from the 'gallery of the princesses' at Dahshur, de Morgan 1895, 68, fig. 145, cat. 34. Also *uraei* amulets from various Middle Kingdom sites, see Boston MFA: 21.973, from elite female tomb, N 453b, at Naga ed Deir.

appearance of more elaborate forms in Egypt. While the basic running spiral, in her opinion, was a longstanding indigenous motif. Later other Egyptologists such as Cyril Aldred[208] and Aegean wall painting specialist Maria Shaw[209] placed their clout behind this thesis. In the latter twentieth century most opinions were consolidated on the side of motif exchange via trade stimulating the 'sudden' appearance of the spiral in Egypt in the early second millennium.[210]

This view, that the spiral ornament is 'un-Egyptian' with qualifications, is where many scholars seem to stand, particularly with this motif's fairly visible presence on New Kingdom artefacts, elite tomb walls and ceilings and from the walls of palace complexes throughout the eastern Mediterranean. But it must be borne in mind that the running spiral motif as an 'international' palace decoration may in many cases be dated earlier to the Middle Bronze Age,[211] and thus is more an argument for its longevity as a symbol of elite ideology throughout the eastern Mediterranean than for its point of stimulus in the Late Bronze Age. However, if one includes other examples of spirals in this assessment on indigenous artefacts, such as seals and particularly second millennium palace paintings in mixed cultural styles, then spiral borders are an almost ubiquitous feature of royal wall paintings, coming from Malqata, Tell el Amarna, Tell ed Dab'a, in Egypt and Qatna, Mari and Alalakh in Syria.

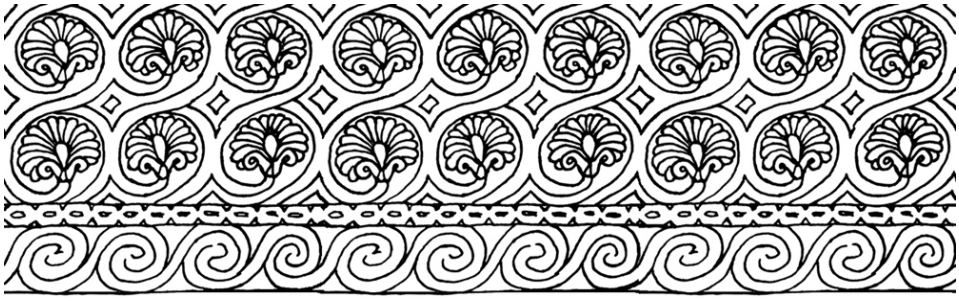

Fig. 2.42 Palmettes and spirals on the ceiling of TT 93, the tomb of Qenamen, reign of Amenhotep II, late 15th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

2.4.4.4 Comparison with running spirals from internal contexts

Just as the spiral ornament may be argued to be ubiquitous to the eastern Mediterranean region, there is reasonable material evidence for the spiral as an indigenous motif within the decorative arts of north-eastern Africa in the second millennium on vessels, small figurines, amulets and jewellery in Egypt and Nubia. In the New Kingdom the presence of a spiral ornament does not automatically support an argument of exclusively exotic

[208] Aldred 1951.

[209] Shaw (1970, 25, 28) the spiral which was alien to Egypt was probably borrowed from the Minoans via ceramic and textiles.

[210] Helck 1979 (1995), 16, 'seemingly abrupt' appearance of the spiral: Crowley 1989, 109, spirals occur in Egypt and Asia in isolated examples in the 3rd millennium: Keel 1995, 434: Quirke and Fitton 1997.

[211] Running spirals from the Amorite palace of Zimri-lim at Mari (18th century BCE).

origin. Although this does not prevent this assumption from occurring frequently in scholarship, rather the range of artefacts containing this motif argues for an expansion of value range within Egyptian material culture. Simple and complex spiral borders and patterns occur on a range of objects in equally broad media: weaponry, daggers and quivers, chariots, harness fittings, and particularly on vessels in faience, stone and precious metal.

Egyptian scholarship attributes an internal value of regeneration and 'life giving powers' to the scroll or spiral motif where it occurs on seals, sealings and scarabs.[212] This assumption is supported by the material contexts of this motif in Egyptian visual design where it is predominantly arranged in complex patterns in combination with lotus blossoms and rosettes in funerary contexts, such as tomb ceilings and on offering bowls, often in media that also signal regeneration, such as faience.[213] Beyond this basic attribution there has been an association made by Drioton[214] to the scroll motif as a cryptographic icon signalling the Theban chief god Amen. However, this reading is no longer accepted by many scholars. The regenerative value of the symbol is supported by the presence of the spiral border as a framing devise with the zigzag band on faience vessels: rhyta, kohl pots, blue offering bowls and votive objects from the Middle Kingdom onwards, becoming more apparent in the idiom of cosmetic and cult vessels in the early Eighteenth Dynasty.

Salient to this discussion must be the caution that while running spirals occur on an eclectic range of objects from the tomb of Tutankhamen and on fragments of one vessel and a knob from Tell Basta, the spiral is not a dominant feature of other artefacts that fall within the international category. In fact, it appears to be a device associated specifically with medium, as it occurs on metalwork, as filigree and repoussé, in glazed faience and carved wood, but rarely on carved ivory. Further, while concentric spiral ornament is a feature of Aegean visual design, no international style ivory from any region beyond Egypt is decorated with running spiral borders, although there are ivory plaques with spiral borders from Ugarit, but these frame either canonical Egyptian royal titulary and symbolism or are too fragmentary to judge.[215] Rather, running spirals are attested on gold sheet from Egypt, Cyprus, Qatna and Ugarit.

2.4.4.5 Vegetal motifs: Framing and fill

Floral decorative elements that are employed to both frame a design and to fill negative space within the fields may no longer be viewed as semantically blank ornamental schemes. For regardless of culture these icons also contribute to the idiom of an object in the second millennium. Irene Winter made a good case for this in 2003,[216] where she

[212] Hornung and Staehelin 1976, 166; Ward 1971, 111.
[213] Strauß-Seeber 1974, 72–3; Pinch 1993, 308–9.
[214] Drioton 1957.
[215] Gachet-Bizollon 2007, cat. 321–6, from a well in Court V of the Royal Palace at Ugarit. The cartouche is unclear, but appears to be the prenomen of Neferneferuaten, see image page 153. Also Gabolde 2012, 295-7.
[216] Winter 2003.

addressed floral ornament in Neo-Assyrian visual rhetoric as evidenced by monumental architectural tiling, painting and relief. In this she argued that the schemes themselves constructed an ideal universal garden lush with specifically chosen icons of abundance and fertility. This comparison is doubly suitable to this discussion, since it contributes a broad adjustment to how we view ancient ornament from any cultural source, which is augmented by the understanding that Neo-Assyrian state ornament, like Phoenician, and its predecessor Middle Assyrian iconography were influenced by Late Bronze Age Egyptian and international visual idiom and similarly employed the same content to create decorative schemes, such as rosettes, pomegranates, lotus blooms and volute palmettes. Similarly in New Kingdom Egyptian royal rhetoric the use of floral idiom was predicated on the symbolic value of the plants used, and when combined together a lush marsh environment was constructed.

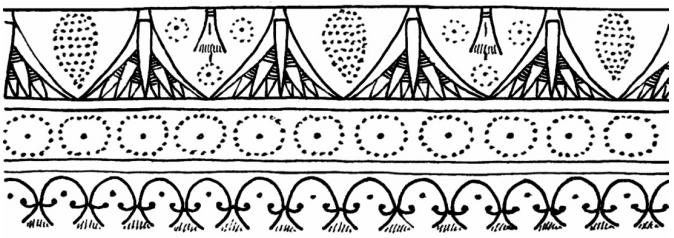

Fig. 2.43 Ornamental bands of *nymphaea caerulea*, grapes, rosettes and south flower from a Tell Basta vase, 19th Dynasty.
Image A. Sinclair.

2.4.4.6 The lotus and papyrus

The lotus and papyrus hardly need an introduction in terms of their reasonably specific cultural context and their internal semantic values. They are water plants of the Egyptian natural sphere that served to illustrate unified statehood in Egyptian royal rhetoric, thus they occur in all visual rhetoric of kingship from monumental architecture, to weapons, chariots and thrones. As icons, the lotus is often argued to signify the region of Upper Egypt south of Heliopolis, while the papyrus signified the lush northern marshes of the Lower Egyptian Delta region.[217] In the rhetoric we are examining here they are arguably most visible as an alternating ornamental band that signals this duality.

As a caution it should be emphasised that there is often a conflation of the volute south flower with the lotus in scholarship, as rarely is the former icon within New Kingdom royal rhetoric a true *nymphaea*. Rather the south flower as both hieroglyph and icon is the simple red and blue volute flower. And while it has been argued this is a schematic lotus there is evidence that argues the two are freestanding motifs. The simplest example of this is in Egyptian funerary and coronation scenes from royal pavilions, where papyrus, volute and lotus are represented together, or where two types of lotus, a volute and a papyrus are represented.[218] Similarly within the KV 62 assemblage there are floral dichotomies containing lotus and volute flower and excluding papyrus

[217] Loeben and Kappel 2009, 115–7: Robins 1997, 18: Kemp 2006, 679–81: Desroches-Noblecourt 1995, 55.
[218] TT 1, Tomb of Sennedjem, also see Desroches-Noblecourt 1995, 60–1; 1956, 180–5.

entirely.[219] This arrangement is also apparent from international objects from Syria and Ugarit where volute and lotus appear to be the preferred ornamental dichotomy.[220]

Few international style objects employ papyrus as fill or as decoration, with the only exceptions being papyrus clumps as vegetation on friezes on the silver vessels from Tell Basta and the body of the polychrome vase from Kition-Bamboula in Cyprus.[221] It is also possible that papyrus are intended within the rosettes on two gold roundels from the royal tomb at Qatna.[222]

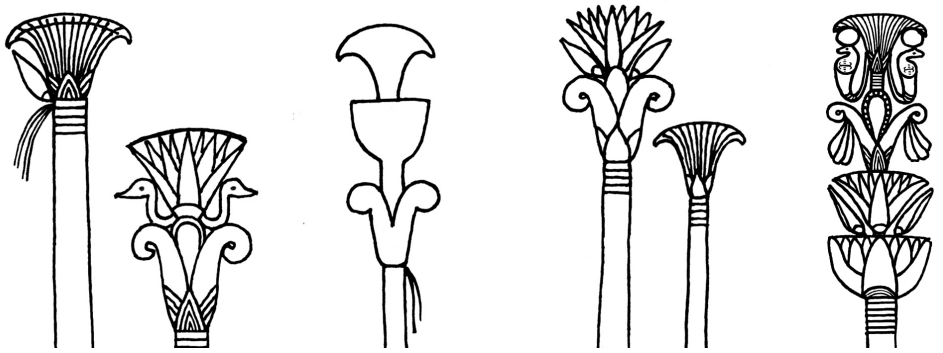

Fig. 2.44 Capitals from painted shrines in elite tombs (left to right): TT 226, Heqareshu, framing Amenhotep III and Mutemwiya; Tell Amarna, Meryre, framing Akhenaten and Nefertiti; TT 192, Kheruef, framing Amenhotep III and Tiye; TT 1, Sennedjem, framing Osiris, 1400–1330 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

Beyond the use as state and cult icons, the lotus and papyrus have related but nuanced symbolic values that both signal nature's abundance, generation and the promise of regeneration after death. Both plants are aquatic and associated with fertile marshes. The white and blue lotuses are varieties of water lily that grow in Egypt in ponds and still water. In Egyptian symbolic vocabulary they may both be ascribed as solar/lunar symbols from the visual metaphor of their radiant gold centres to their diurnal growth habits. The speckled blue lotus, *nymphaea caerulea* opens at dawn with the rising sun and closes with its setting, and thus represents the solar god Re in his daylight passage of the heavens. The white *nymphaea lotus* opens at dusk and therefore mimics the passage of the sun as it passes through the underworld at night, but it may also have had lunar significance.[223]

As a component of Egyptian embodied ritual and festival celebration, the blue lotus is also thought to have had mild narcotic properties, but scientific confirmation of this thesis is still disputed. Nonetheless, the fragrant capacity of the flower is self

[219] For example the famous pectoral with the barque of the moon god over a winged scarab, Cairo: JE 61884, Carter number: 267d.
[220] Qatna Royal Hypogeum gold plaque, Main Chamber, Cluster 2(b).
[221] Larnaca Museum: KEF 63(a).
[222] Qatna Royal Hypogeum, Main Chamber, Cluster 1, with griffins; South Chamber, cap of a ritual horn.
[223] Pinch 2002; Meskell 2002, 152; Hepper 2009, 11, 16; Pommerening et al 2010, 15.

evident.[224] Blue and white lotuses are most common idiom for the decoration of faience, wooden and ceramic offering and cosmetic vessels and for jewellery and may be associated with solar deities, principally Re, or Amen-Re, Hathor, but also the Horus child, Nefertum and the world creator Atum/Nun.[225] The papyrus flower, in parallel, contained inherent values of verdant growth, abundance, fertility and possibly also manifested sexual connotations, thus also being associated with the goddess Hathor.[226] By placing these two flowers in an iconographic scheme, both the unified cosmos and rhetoric promoting generation and natural abundance could be conveyed to the viewer.

Fig. 2.45 Fill plant from the Tyre bronze plaque (left), LBA, the Kition-Bamboula faience rhyton (centre), 13th c. BCE, Cyprus, Ugarit gold bowl (right), 14th c. BCE. Images A. Sinclair.

2.4.4.7 The low growing fill 'herb'

In the international style an upright leafy plant frond is often used as vegetal fill for scenes of animal combat and with a low growing volute flower is commonly employed to fill negative space in the composition. The plant may be flowerless, or there may be a bud or a red or blue triangular flower on the crown. This plant occurs within many international iconography scenes from Egyptian contexts,[227] and beyond Egypt only occurs on two faience vessels from Kition-Bamboula in Cyprus, the Tyre bronze plaque and the gold bowl from Ugarit.[228]

With regard to botanical attribution for this single stemmed low growing herb, opinions are diverse and contradictory. Early scholarship favoured the identification of this plant with the aquatic pondweed, *potamogeton lucens*.[229] The *potamogeton* is a plant of wetlands which remains fully submerged in water and was a prominent motif associated with marshland fecundity on funerary iconography from the Old and Middle Kingdoms in Egypt. There it occurs on reliefs, small models and vessels as a basic symbolic component of watery environs with *nymphaea* flowers and *tilapia* fish. Due to surface coverage and scale, it was not necessarily required to be fixed to a groundline. This plant may be represented with a red flower on the apex.

[224] Meskell 2002, 176; Pommerening et al 2010, 30.
[225] Strauß-Seeber 1974, 72, 74–5.
[226] Desroches-Noblecourt 1995, 55; Strauß-Seeber 1974, 77.
[227] Except the Tell Basta Treasure.
[228] It also occurs on the Tyre bronze plaque from the Louvre.
[229] Keimer 1927; Germer 1985, 188.

The cornflower, *centaurea cynthus*, is another less likey option for this idiom from Egypt, which is a low growing blue flowered wild herb.[230] It rises to considerable prominence as a component of visual design in the Eighteenth Dynasty adorning pectorals, amulet and seal designs, precious metal, faience and glass. Equally it occurs ubiquitously on palace paintings and as fill on small objects. More importantly, it is supported by the archaeological record, being a common component of floral funerary bouquets and collars in the New Kingdom.[231] Usage and context of the cornflower dictate that its value was again centred in generative powers, but it must also be recalled that the plant has had medicinal values within certain cultures. However in Egyptian usage, where cornflower is indicated it is clearly blue and is not triangular.

The poppys, *papaver somniferum* or *papaver rhoeas,* are further contenders for fill plants for similar reasons to the cornflower, as *somniferum* has narcotic properties and the latter was prominent in funerary rhetoric and on objects bearing this idiom. In this case the flower is red and conflates readily with Egyptian Amarna period representations of desert landscapes in hunt scenes from tombs and palaces. Although it must be noted here that there is a tendency to conflate these two poppies together in some literature, however only *rhoeas* has a red flower.

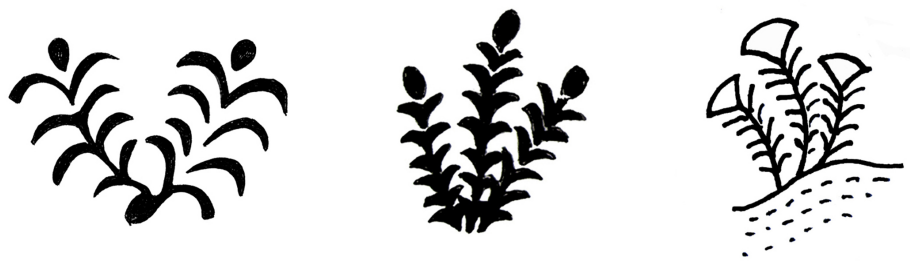

Fig. 2.46 Fill herbs from a faience vase from Malqata (left), 14th c. BCE; unguent vase of Siamen (centre), 14th c. BCE, tomb of Hatiay; wall painting with griffin, tomb of Ramesses III, (right), KV 11, 12th c. BCE. Images A. Sinclair.

Another possible attribution for this plant is a hybrid bouquet that occurs in elite Egyptian iconography from this period where 'leaves' or 'buds' can be layered symmetrically up a papyrus stem with triangular (blue) flower held in the hands of elites and rulers in funerary scenes of offering. This is reinforced in the knowledge that in many cases the flower of this lily may be blue and stylistically most like the specific typology of the papyrus. However, as with many other elements of this idiom, specific botanical attribution may not be the agent at work here, as this iconography reflects ideals, not reality.

If the flower head on this plant is ignored, a case could be made for a conflation with the date palm frond that is a symbol of kingship in Egypt and of goddesses of fecundity in the Levant. As a symbol of kingship the palm leaf is grounded in the hieroglyphic

[230] Loeben and Kappel 2009, 140–1; Hepper 2009, 14.
[231] Hepper 2009, 14.

system: rnpw/rnpj 'to be rejuvenated', which visually guarantees a ruler renewal of his kingship in the real world and for all eternity.[232] Equally, the influence from Levantine idiom cannot be excluded, due to the influence of the Second Intermediate Period Hyksos rulers in the Egyptian delta. In Levantine seal imagery the date palm frond is most often employed as a fill motif with caprids or with the naked goddess figure. Thus it is similarly considered to project notions of abundance and regeneration, however, a connection to kingship is also proposed.[233] In form and diversity 'fill-herb' serves me as the most convenient epithet for this plant idiom, a title which is multivalent and translates visually across most of the cultures under discussion here. However, no botanical attribution is intended and no floral term used here does not carry subjective signalling. There is no reason to assume that craftspeople themselves did not conflate botanical values across timeframes and borders. It could be many plants, yet it also may be a hybrid.

2.4.4.8 Mandrake/Persea

The mandrake and/or persea occurs as an ornamental motif on objects from the Tell Basta treasure, as fill and ornamental bands on the inlaid chest from KV 62, perhaps also as fill on the Tell Basta vessels. As is evidenced by my ambiguous attribution of term, this fruit is not always easy to identify in iconography. As while each plant is dissimilar, the one having long wide palmette leaves radiating from a centre, the other a standard bushy form with small oval leaves, the fruits of both are globular and yellow, and when viewed in isolation, identification is problematic. The mandrake, *mandragora officinarum*, is a characteristic of Eighteenth Dynasty literature and visual culture and, like the lotus and poppy, the plant is argued to have narcotic and medicinal properties which were translated within Egyptian social and visual culture to values of sensuousness and transcendence.[234] Thus the plant is represented on ritual scenes of regeneration and banquet. The mandrake is a visible feature on the inlaid chest with international themes from KV 62.

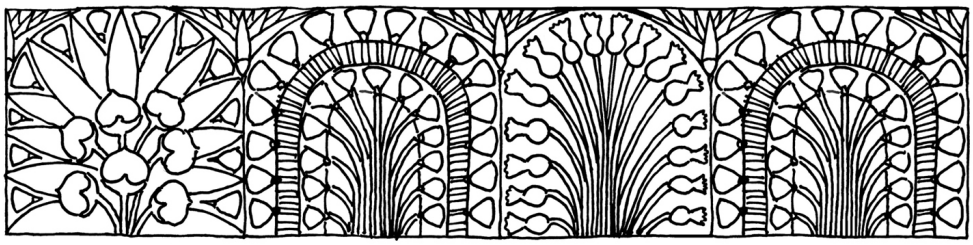

Fig. 2.47 Mandrakes, poppies, *nymphaea caerulea* and cornflowers on the inlaid chest from KV 62, tomb of Tutankhamen, 1334–1324 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

[232] Originally argued by Keimer (1947); Desroches-Noblecourt 1956, 208; Hornung and Staehelin 1976, 126; Grover 2008, 2.
[233] Ziffer 2002, 13.
[234] Sherratt 2007, 31–2; Hepper 2009, 15; Krauss 2015; 2009, 135–6; Loeben and Kappel 2009, 135–6.

The persea, *mimisops laurifolia,* by contrast is a leafy tree that produces sweet oval yellow fruit and had similar values of regeneration in Egyptian culture, the fruit being attested from funerary contexts in the pharaonic period.[235] The mandrake/persea fruit is present on one complex volute tree from the international style: the gold dagger sheath of Tutankhamen, but is also characteristic as an ornament for faience vessels at this time. There are to my knowledge no mandrakes on objects displaying the international style beyond Egypt.

Fruits of the vine, poppy pods and pomegranates were also popular motifs for objects in the decorative arts in the New Kingdom, but are lesser ornamental elements of this iconography and are predominantly extant on the Egyptian material, such as the Tell Basta vessels and the chest from KV 62. Beyond Egypt the pomegranate had a strong place in the iconography of the Levant, Cyprus, Syria and for the international style is present on material from Ugarit. As with the conflation of mandrake fruit with persea there is similar ambiguity with identification of poppy seed pods and pomegranates in visual idiom in the Late Bronze Age.

2.4.4.9 Rosettes

The term rosette is employed in visual studies to indicate a circular emblem that substantially resembles the open radiating petals of a flower, hence 'rosette', literally the (French) diminutive of rose that has come to be employed to identify any circular flower shaped ornament in art historical theory and archaeology. In iconography it is to be identified as a radial scheme, essentially with a circular centre and some resemblance to a marguerite daisy when viewed from above. Thus some scholars may refer to this motif as a marguerite or daisy rosette. But it may equally be highly schematic and geometric, making the term as ambiguous as many of the others referred to here, if not more so. And it is perhaps worth emphasising that the pursuit of botanically based identification that has governed many early studies is a fruitless task and that a radiating circle is an obvious solution to the decoration of the centre of vessel surfaces and for resolving the decoration of large surfaces.

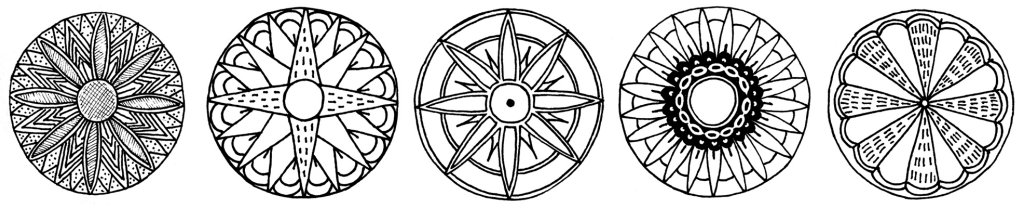

Fig. 2.48 Nymphaea caerulea rosettes on funerary vessels from the 18th Dynasty (left to right): Abydos, reign of Thutmose III; Gurob, tomb of Touti; Thebes, TT 8, tomb of Kha and Merit; KV 46, Yuya and Tuya; Sedment, tomb 1723. Image A. Sinclair.

The rosette is enormously diverse and therefore potentially multivalent, varying from material context and from the vagaries of both medium and style. In the past it has

[235] Hepper 2009, 15.

been assigned a prominent place in the history of decorative ornament, with early scholars ascribing the Egyptian flower's influence on the development of rosette motifs of neighbouring and succeeding cultures in the eastern Mediterranean.[236] In the late nineteenth century scholarship was of the opinion that the various rosettes in Egyptian iconography were derived from a lotus blossom that is viewed directly from above.[237] In opposition to this stance were those who, under the influence of the daisy ornament from first millennium Neo-Assyrian sites such as Babylon, Nimrud and Nineveh, argued for a Mesopotamian origin.[238] Later the discoveries of Woolley at Ur augmented this thesis, with Streng arguing a rather broad syncretic connection of the symbol to the goddesses Isis and Inana/Ishtar.[239] Montet on the other hand was staunch in the claim that the second millennium rosette was a chrysanthemum and specific to the region and arts of Syro-Phoenicia.[240]

Further east the Mesopotamian rosette of the third and second millennia is ubiquitous to elite funerary contexts and has been argued to reference specific deities depending on the number of petals. As such, this rosette perhaps functioned as a stellar or solar symbol.[241] However, accurate identifications of divine symbols are still problematic, with the sun god, Utu/Shamash, and the goddess Inana/Ishtar, both being contenders for the eight point star from second millennium glyptic and jewellery.[242] Like many motifs discussed here, the daisy and dot rosette may already have been fully culturally entangled in the Middle Bronze Age when Egyptian and Mesopotamian motifs were a feature of Old Syrian seals.[243] In fact, a rosette is a ubiquitous eastern Mediterranean ornamental motif that was employed in the decorative arts of southern Mesopotamia and Syria throughout the Bronze Age.[244] It occurred within Aegean visual idiom from the Early Minoan period on Crete, became prominent on Kamares ware ceramic in the Middle Bronze Age,[245] later entering the Mycenaean repertoire where it is thought to function as a protective symbol on amulets and jewellery.[246]

With regard to the various forms of the Egyptian rosette, the 'daisy' rosette arguably only comes ubiquitously into vogue in the international age of the early New Kingdom.[247] In terms of iconographic origins Helene Kantor in her dissertation on Egyptian plant motifs[248] argued she perceived no pattern or identifiable typological groups for the rosettes of the Old to Middle Kingdoms and as a result focussed on the wealth of data

[236] Goodyear 1891, 99–104, 149.
[237] Flower on the diadem of Nofret, 4th Dynasty statue from Cairo, Goodyear 1891, 103; Riegl 1893, 53.
[238] Von Sybel 1883.
[239] Streng 1918.
[240] Worth bearing in mind that his botanical attributions are dubious; he also identified poppy as hollyhock and cornflower as blueberry, Montet 1937, 47, 83—7, 147, 171.
[241] Barrett 2007, 25; Teissier 1996, 101–2.
[242] Maxwell-Hyslop 1971, 141; Black and Green 2004, 92, 150; Pulak 2008, 350.
[243] Syrian glyptic, Tsouparopoulou 2014, 42.
[244] Black and Green 2004, 156.
[245] Crowley 1989, 82; 1977, 84.
[246] And incidentally ascribed to a Mesopotamian source and a symbol of Ishtar, citing Barrett 2007, 25.
[247] Von Sybel 1883; Kantor 1945, 127; Crowley 1977, 83, 1989, 81.
[248] Kantor 1945, Chapter IV, 127–68.

from the New Kingdom in her study of rosettes, perhaps contributing much to the assumption that the motif is late in Egypt. A recent article by Arlette David depends on the earlier models and in this case argues only two varieties of rosette from Egypt: 'wheel' (banded or geometric) rosettes that are built from circles and *nymphaea* rosettes that are floral, incidentally excluding the entire repertoire of composite rosettes from discussion.[249]

I can only note that colour is overlooked in the discussion of plant idiom, where in fact the simple petalled rosette from New Kingdom Egyptian decorative arts comes in predominantly two colours; blue, or less often white, with an orange-yellow centre. This excludes all yellow, red or orange flowers (daisies, chrysantheums) from discussion and infers that the likely flowers are the culturally predictable ones – the white and blue *nymphaeas*. A telling example of this would be the chest (Carter 021) from the tomb of Tutankhamen with royal hunt and battle scenes, that has been the cited as an example for the intrusive rosette since the 1930s. All rosette ornamental bands on the chest have dark blue flowers.

In fact, there are two major flaws to the study of plant motifs overall; one is the use of art historical terminology that signals specific types of plant, or stems from classical scholarship, and the other is the tendency earlier scholars have had to arbitrarily bestow subjective botanical classifications.

2.4.4.10 The Egyptian composite rosette

If one views the composite rosette from Old Kingdom funerary imagery there does not appear to be a single flower intended. Instead there are schemes of radiating flowers viewed in profile, creating a bouquet which may contain papyrus, *nymphaea*, volutes and in one case the *dw3* star combined with Maat feathers.[250] These motifs were perhaps derived from a real small bouquet and are attested from the Fourth Dynasty from the diadems of queens and princesses, weaponry and inlaid royal furniture. From the Eleventh Dynasty the repertoire expands and the composite bouquet appears on tomb ceiling designs, seals, menats, faience vessels, wooden oars from funerary boats and so on. The foremost connection of this icon in Egypt is with elite prerogative (often female), funerary practice and with Hathoric cult, again inferring a basic value of generation and regeneration for flowers. This is further reinforced by the value of floral symbols in written culture where papyrus and lotus function as signifiers for unity, creation and verdant fecundity. Thus composite rosettes may feature in Egypt as signals for social unity, dichotomy, fecundity and generation.

Suffice to say the rosette was another multivalent and ubiquitous entangled motif in the Late Bronze Age which actually occurs within international idiom only sparingly. While it was a feature of Aegean visual design, there are no rosette borders on the Aegean international pieces. Similar may be said of Cyprus and the Levant, where rosettes, if present, usually form the central motif of a radiating lotus design on ivory

[249] David 2014, 1.
[250] Kantor 1945, Chapter V, 169–98. See my image page 162.

and faience bowls and vases. This mimics the Egyptian use of *nymphaea* for vessel decoration, perhaps repeating the value of regeneration as well. If further Cypriot prestige objects are included, however, the motif is very visible from elite funerary culture, occurring on the rejected silver cup and ivory game board from Enkomi and as a primary motif with volute tree and spirals on gold funerary diadems.

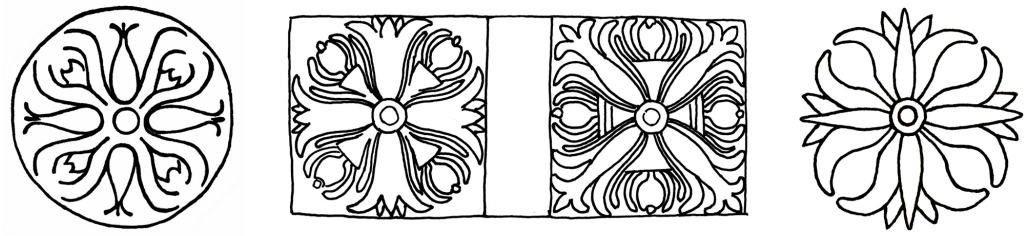

Fig. 2.49 Composite rosettes: gold queen's diadem, Giza, 4th–5th Dynasty. Throne inlays and diadem of queens from the Sun Temple of Sahure, Giza, 5th Dynasty. Images A. Sinclair.

Syria, by contrast, does contribute 'international' rosettes, with the gold plaques from Qatna employing these as a border design on a pendant and as a bouquet motif, which in this example appears to be a design of radiating papyrus flowers.[251] In Egypt the dot rosette or sunburst is a common element of fill on the Ramesside period objects associated with the international style (Tell Basta treasure). While in the Eighteenth Dynasty both geometric and dot rosette are highly visible in the decorative arts, particularly in wood, faience and glass, and as fill elements for palace wall paintings dating from at least the reign of Amenhotep III. This latter intrusion may be ascribed in scholarship to the Aegean under the influence of the Minoan style paintings from one hundred years earlier and the mobility of poses for some animals.[252] However, rosettes are not present on the currently acknowledged Egyptian international style objects, but will be introduced in Chapter Six with other hybrid idiom objects from KV 62.

2.5 Discussion

The salient feature that may identify this international iconography is arguably the seamlessly integrated idiom that combines various culturally multivalent components to make a syncretised composition. In this way an international style artefact ought to provide a combination of mobile animal combats and emblematic scenes, preferably including hybrid creatures like the winged sphinx and griffin. In compliment to these, there ought to be specific stylised volute sacred trees and ornamental bands or vegetal idiom. This elaborate layering of diverse elements conveys a notion of natural environment and wild environs ostensibly devoid of signalling of culture and cult, but supposedly conveying general symbols of fertility and abundance and of royal power.

[251] Qatna Royal Hypogeum, Main Chamber, Cluster 1, with griffins; Cluster 2(b) with lotus and volutes.
[252] Nicolakaki-Kentrou 2003.

In the past it has been argued in the face of our limited understanding of abstract cult icons that specific eastern Mediterranean cultural and religious emblems, like divine symbols, are absent from this iconography in order to facilitate acceptance in a range of eastern Mediterranean palatial centres.

I have reservations about this generalisation, since, as has already been stated, idiom within this repertoire does in fact bear resonance in most states under discussion, albeit multivalent and stylistically fluid, but yet inherently meaningful. It would perhaps be more suitable to talk of value being multivocal in this corpus, than of it being devoid of local or cult significance. However, in terms of iconographic idiom, none of the aforementioned characteristics of this style is static and due to the nature of entangled iconography, style interpolations and intrusions occur, often in conjunction with integrated imagery. Discussion of style is an inadequate tool simply because the very nature of these artefacts is fluid. This is consistent with the notion of varying sources of production and cultural agents, thus involving many palatial workshops and artisans. Local visual idiom may intrude in juxtaposition with the hybrid which inevitably leads to the question; how does one establish clear boundaries between intrusive and an international idiom? The nature of cultural entanglement dictates that this issue is problematic and potentially irresolvable.

However, as the foregoing discussion of visual semantic shows, the pursuit of specific origins for these iconographic motifs is contradictory and in the main self defeating, imposing a 'chicken or egg' process on a topic that is more of an intellectual exercise of enormous geographical and chronological breadth than a solution to the adoption or exchange of visual culture in periods of intense cultural entanglement, such as the Late Bronze Age. Without even taking into account the enormous impact of the earlier international period of the Middle Bronze Age. Many of the motifs under discussion here are either ubiquitous to eastern Mediterranean rhetoric of kingship, such as hunting and animal combats, or they are staples of the decorative arts, like the rosette and running spiral. Others elements, like the griffin and sphinx, were equally likely to have transferred to and fro throughout the eastern Mediterranean in the early second millennium, perhaps from much earlier.

The profoundest lacuna in current discussion of international idiom is the absence of a global view of the Egyptian evidence for this ostensibly international style. While the ivory idiom from the eastern Mediterranean is exhaustively discussed in scholarship, the Egyptian evidence is virtually dependent on analyses of the Tell Basta treasure and the commentaries of Levantine and Aegean scholars. More specifically, the chronologically secure evidence from what many argue to be the beginning of this international style from KV 62 and KV 46 is allowed to rest on interdisciplinary views that often date back to brilliant but unfortunately very early scholars like Henry Frankfort and Helene Kantor. In order to effectively break this drought, the various aspects of this topic will be dealt with in the following chapters, beginning with the international context; the currently acknowledged international objects and then turning back to Egypt.

3 Objects of international prestige

> *'Now for the greeting gift of my brother I have sent: one large gold cup, its handle inlaid with genuine lapis lazuli, one heavy maninnu necklace with twenty genuine lapis lazuli stones and nineteen gold ones, its centre piece of genuine lapis lazuli set in gold, one heavy maninnu necklace, with 42 genuine ḫulalu*[1] *stones, 40 gold pubic triangles of Shaushga, of which the centre piece is on genuine ḫulalu stones set in gold, ten teams of horses; ten wooden chariots, with their accoutrements and 30 women (and) men, as the greeting gift for my brother.'*[2]
> EA 19, 80–5. Tušratta of Mitanni to Amenhotep III of Egypt

It would be unjust to a comprehensive approach to the international repertoire from Egypt if the broader context was not introduced relatively early within the text. As established in Chapters One and Two, the definition for an artefact belonging within the classification of international style is frustratingly variable, it may be assessed in terms of visual idiom, technology, material and form, and subsequently I am not confident the topic may be adequately addressed here within a chapter. Comprehensive and sometimes contradictory examinations are already provided by Erika Fischer, Janice Crowley and Marian Feldman.[3] Here the assessment is predicated on providing an overview of the extant material before introducing the focus artefacts from this study. In the following two chapters I have placed emphasis upon the primary sources for this material, by looking at the original publications and excavation reports. Less emphasis is placed on secondary sources, due to a desire not to travel over old ground. As already discussed, these often involved circular arguments and a process of down-the-line conclusions grounded in culture historical scholarship of the early twentieth century. In that vein I shall also seek to avoid the celebrity objects, where possible and introduce illustrations of less familiar pieces.

The defining criteria that have informed classifications for artefacts with the international style in the past fifty years, if one excludes hybrid visual idiom, are currently both their portability and their prestige value. What Stephenson Smith termed 'their small readily portable size and their comparative high value in diplomatic gift exchange'. The first aspect 'portability' is arguably illustrated by the descriptions in diplomatic texts and the nature of many objects in this group, ivory furniture inlays, cosmetic tools and small vessels that tend to conform with those cited in the vast quantities of

[1] A stone with white and black bands, Schuster-Brandis 2003, 262; Horowitz 1998, 10, a variety of agate; Landsberger 1967, 152, 'a valuable/precious stone'; Black et al 2000, 119, 'banded agate'.
[2] Rainey et al 2015, 147; Moran 1992, 45.
[3] Fischer 2007b; Crowley 1977; 1987; Feldman 2002, 2006a.

royal gifts in the Amarna correspondences.[4] Within this relatively eclectic corpus there are many artefacts that manifest Late Bronze Age elite prerogative, particularly those associated with the performance of same, such as symbols of military prowess and royal hunt, including weapons and chariot decorations. Equally there are elite domestic furnishings and furniture fittings, such as inlays, mirrors, unguent jars, pyxides, chests and libation vessels that are all consistent with the written evidence of international gifting.

One of the largest inventories in the Amarna correspondences probably provides a satisfactory overview of what the Egyptian court of the Eighteenth Dynasty considered suitable royal gifts to a peer. The letter EA 14 from Napḫuriya (Akhenaten or perhaps Tutankhamen) to the Babylonian king Burna-Buriyaš in the mid fourteenth century is an inventory of bride gifts for a Kassite princess who was being sent to Egypt. It lists almost endless quantities of Egyptian prestige goods that are reminiscent of the contents of assemblages of New Kingdom royal tombs: many articles of gold jewellery and accessories set with unusual gems, stone amphorae and figurines, containers of sweet and aromatic oils, wooden, silver and gold figurines, silver and gold vessels with ornate embellishments, cosmetic containers, stained ivory combs and set pieces, bronze mirrors and razors, gilded chariots, model boats, gilded beds, thrones, footrests, chests, headrests and fine grade textiles.[5]

The second criterion of value to a Late Bronze Age king according to Stevenson Smith, prestige, indicates an object with high social value and suitability for conspicuous display which could potentially manifest itself in public ceremonial performance of royal power. However, prestige is a more opaque notion, predicated in relative and internal values, for which the obvious example is the ability to access rare minerals such as silver, lapis lazuli and gold, or exotic plants and animals, such as the pomegranate, olive or horse, but this mechanism may not be the sole agency at work here.[6] High value may be embedded in many spheres beyond economic value, such as control over advanced technologies or distance value. In the Egyptian context this particularly applies to advances in glass and metalworking and to innovations in military technology.[7] In addition, distance value and cultural exoticness played an important role in value creation, which may be reflected in a variety of ways.[8] High value may reside in a mundane object by virtue of distance value alone or even perhaps the ability to command supply regardless of the object acquired.[9]

Finally, and in some ways foremost to the political machinations of the second millennium Near East and eastern Mediterranean, the most efficient means of acquiring

[4] Although it is worth noting here that not all gifts are in fact 'small' in the correspondences, such as the people, horses, chariots, beds and chairs in Amarna letters EA 5, 9, 14, 22, 25.
[5] Rainey et al 2015, 112–27; Moran 1992, 27–37.
[6] Warburton 2014, 132; Cline 2005; Sherratt and Sherratt 1991, 355, 358–62.
[7] Spalinger 2005, 1, 6; Morkot 2003, XLIII.
[8] Knapp, 1998; Cline 1999; Lévi-Strauß 1971, 52–68.
[9] For example, letters EA 235, 314, 327 and 331, where Egypt required glass from various rulers of Levantine city-states, a commodity for which Egypt had an established internal and well developed source, Liverani 1979, 'Irrational Elements in Amarna Trade'.

and displaying royal prestige would have been through the medium of living gifts: skilled technicians, servants, cult personnel and the ultimate prize, familial connections obtained via arranged marriages between palaces.[10] The latter strategy was an efficient method for cementing a political alliance and another vehicle for the transference of exotic idiom, technologies and cultural artefacts. In fact, of the previous strategies it may be argued to be the most enduring.

3.1 International materials and technology

> *'1 plaque with winged disks and Deluge monster(s), of ebony, overlaid with gold. 30 shekels of gold have been used on it. 1 dagger, the blade, of iron;*[11] *its hilt, of gold, with designs; its haft, of ...; an inlay of genuine lapis lazuli; its pommel, of ḫiliba*[12] *stone. 5 shekels of gold have been used on it.'*[13]
> EA 22. III.5–10. Gifts from Tušratta of Mitanni to Amenhotep III as dowry for princess Tadu-Ḫeba

International iconography is not the sole measuring gauge for objects classified within this style and currently further aspects of international relations in the Late Bronze Age must be taken into consideration, such as exchange of raw and processed prestige materials and technologies. The evidence from royal correspondences between the greater and lesser kings of the Late Bronze attests to the importance of foreign exotica, but also of raw materials and trained artisans in the maintenance of royal prestige. Before discussing the international corpus, these latter two aspects of international relations will be outlined as both raw materials and advances in technology are topics that are employed in scholarship to illustrate the internationalism of the period and the hybridity of objects, to greater or lesser effect. Technology particularly contributes to discussion here, as innovations in furnace techniques and military hardware are commonly argued to have contributed to both the rise in economic power and diplomatic parleying at the beginning of the Late Bronze Age and the latter is sometimes credited with stimulating the end. While many scholars cite multiple reasons for the social collapse around 1186 BCE[14] at least one ascribes this to changes in military hardware and tactics.[15]

The typological range and diversity of media employed for objects in the eastern Mediterranean Late Bronze Age and the international style is considerable and may be argued to entail an eclectic mix of cultural sources both within and without the regions under discussion here. The raw materials that contribute to the final product

[10] Liverani 2008, 163–4; Meier 2000, 165–73; Zaccagnini 1987, 57–65; 1985, 593–605; Schulman 1979, 177–93.
[11] Here *parzillu*, *CAD* 6, 1956, 3; Moorey 1994, 288.
[12] Sumerian HI.LI.BA, Akkadian *hilibû,* 'the underworld'; 'name of stone', nature unclear, see *ORACC*; *epsd*; Black et al 2000; Labat 1976, 396.
[13] Rainey et al 2015, similar translation to Moran (1992).
[14] Cline 2014; Knapp and Manning 2016.
[15] Drews 1993.

similarly manifest the internationalism of the period with elephant ivory from Nubia and Syria, hippopotamus ivory from the Levant, Egypt and Nubia,[16] gold, electrum, turquoise and cobalt from Egypt, copper from Sardinia and Cyprus,[17] carnelian from Iran, Baltic amber from northern Europe via the Aegean, Afghani lapis lazuli, tin and silver via Assyria and Babylon, iron and silver from Anatolia and also potentially from the Aegean, ebony and incense from Nubia, wool from Syria and Mesopotamia, linen from Egypt and liquid assets like wine, oils, herbs, perfumes and coloured dyes from the Aegean, Levant and Nubia.[18]

Fig. 3.1 Tutankhamen returning from hunting ostriches on the ceremonial fan from KV 62, 1334–1324 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

Precious metals like gold, silver and electrum have always been materials of considerable social prestige, however, their specific values in early cultures may not correlate with contemporary values. In antiquity value resided in scarcity as well as visual attractiveness, thus gold and silver were highly valued and were commonly employed as transferable assets for pre-currency states.[19] At the time under discussion silver was highly prized and at certain times, probably due to availability, outstripped gold in value.[20] Because these two minerals were prestigious and easily reworked the majority of artefacts in these metals have not endured in the archaeological record and when they do survive are often sourced from elite or cult contexts directly associated with royal or divine prerogative.[21]

[16] Caubet and Gachet-Bizollon 2013, 419; Krsyszkowska 2003; Krsyszkowska and Morkot 2000, 322–7.
[17] Knapp and Cherry 1994, 157; Sherratt 2003, 42–5; Cline 2005.
[18] Sherratt and Sherratt 1991; Stos 2009; Liverani 2008, 162–3; Monroe 2009, 73–82.
[19] Bachhuber 2006, 350; Helwing 2014, 418.
[20] In Bronze Age Mesopotamia silver was usually the favoured index for commercial transactions, Moorey 1994, 237; Ogden 1982, 22–3.
[21] Moorey 1994, 221.

Refined products represent another aspect of prestige exchange: glass ingots, copper and tin ingots, alloyed metals such as bronze,[22] military equipment, woven textiles, oils, perfumes, wine and of course prestige furnishings. Of these, textiles, dyes, oils and perfumes are difficult to track in the material record and in this discussion only the first contributes any potential correlations, with the one linen tunic with international motifs from KV 62 in Western Thebes in Egypt. Minerals, on the other hand, are equally problematic, due to states of preservation, oxidation, the common use of alloying and/or reworking and recycling, but here they contribute substantially to the discussion of Egyptian prestige artefacts and at that time they held considerable economic and prestige value.

But it is not just the raw materials that may be objects of prestige and therefore international in scope, for the cultural source of a raw or even partially worked commodity does not indicate point of final processing or any of the possible stages in between. In addition, the technologies associated with working with prestigious materials may also be fully culturally entangled in the late second millennium. In the transition between the end of the Middle Bronze Age, ca. 1700 BCE, and the beginning of the Late Bronze Age, ca. 1550 BCE, specific advances in technology appear in the material record of the Near East. While their source of cultural origin may be problematic, four major innovations contribute specifically to this discussion: advances in smelting techniques, the manipulation of wood to create sophisticated military hardware and polychrome textile and vitreous technology. These four innovations usually form the core of discussion of diplomatic gifting in scholarship and due to scarce archaeological evidence depend almost exclusively on the lists of royal gifts in the diplomatic texts. Thus, for example, Tušratta plays a leading role, with many rare materials and technologies often being attributed to the Hurrians and Mitanni, such as horses, chariots, iron, red gold, coloured textiles, granulation and glass.

This technological entanglement is apparent throughout the regions under discussion from 1400 BCE onwards and is well illustrated by objects discussed in this and further chapters. Particularly for the composition of prestige artefacts of interregional royal exchange: military hardware, jewellery and furnishings that are listed in the royal correspondences. These refined objects may display fully entangled visual idiom, media and technology. One caution would be the easy conflation of chronology in scholarship fuelled by the vagaries of accurately discriminating between the likely adoption of a foreign technology and fully assimilated acculturation within state industry.[23] Another is that the quest for the cultural source of technologies while admirable is, like the search for visual style sources, a self defeating exercise once the material evidence becomes scanty. This is not the purpose of this discussion. Rather it is to firmly embed the overall cultural and chronological context for prestige technologies and artefacts in the Eighteenth Dynasty. In fact, that is the intention of this chapter; to establish the

[22] It is worth noting that gold and silver were generally exchanged as finished products and often reworked in the workshops of the recipient, it was predominantly glass, copper and tin that were exchanged in ingot form.

[23] Shortland (2004) 'Hopeful Monsters' for a discussion of the process of technological invention-adoption.

material context for objects bearing hybrid idiom that are currently considered to be fully entangled and international.

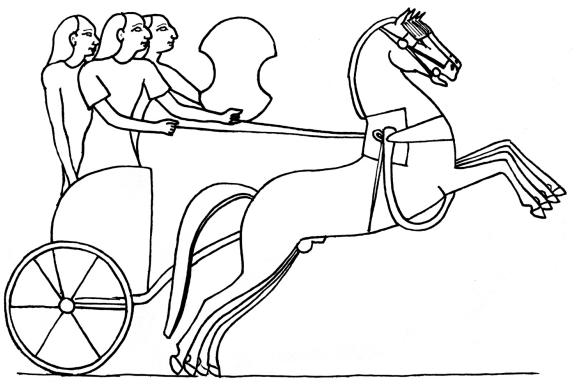

Fig. 3.2 The Egyptian visual convention for Hittite charioteers at the battle of Qadesh, reign of Ramesses II, ca. 1274 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

3.2 Military hardware

Egypt acquired a plethora of military innovations between the Middle Kingdom and the end of the Hyksos period. From whom and whether via hostile activities, diplomacy, trade or even independent invention is still disputed due to the scarcity of records before 1550 BCE, but the material record supplies correlations to support this assumption. The foremost of these innovations must be the light-weight war chariot and the war horse, followed by new prestige weaponry, such as the *khepesh* sword and the composite or compound bow. These objects inform this discussion due to at least two object types, chariot and composite bow exhibiting international style idiom, entangled technologies and entangled media on prestige accessories from KV 62. All four innovations were adopted into the rhetoric of royal power in Egypt before the early Eighteenth Dynasty.[24]

Fig. 3.3 Chariot hunt with 'international' hybrid imagery from the Enkomi ivory game board, 12th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

These innovations in battle technology are also often employed to support an argument for exotic imports in discussions of the international style, with many scholars citing

[24] Shaw 2012, 93–4, 104–5; Darnell and Manassa 2007, 70, 76–7.

the period spanning the reigns of Thutmose I and Thutmose III (1504–1425 BCE), who made military incursions into the Levant and Syria, as the primary stimulus for technological and artistic exchange.[25] At that time Egyptian rulers boldly entered the international arena in the Levant and western Syria and returned triumphantly home with (according to their internal propaganda) abundant exotica, weapons and prisoners of war. Although what is important to emphasise here is that by the early Eighteenth Dynasty the war chariot, war horse, *khepesh* sword and compound bow were already attested in textual and visual culture in Egypt.

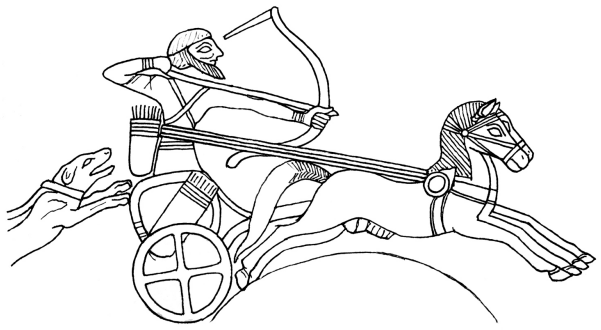

Fig. 3.4 Chariot hunt with 'international' hybrid imagery on the gold patera from the temple of Baal at Ugarit, 14th c. BCE.
Image A. Sinclair.

Of these, the war chariot and the composite bow were likely to have been innovations of woodworking originating in southern Mesopotamia and developed there from around 2500 BCE.[26] The ordinary bow constructed of a single piece of flexible wood may be dated earlier throughout the Near East, however the invention of the even more flexible composite bow constructed of laminated woods and bone created a weapon with greater reach and accuracy.[27] Similarly, the early war chariot was a cumbersome cart with four solid wooden wheels that was usually depicted pulled by onagers.[28] The true battle chariot of the second millennium was lighter and with only two spoked wheels was much more mobile and manoeuvrable. When combined with horses a chariot was an entirely different tool of warfare. It was this innovation that changed the face of royal rhetoric throughout the eastern Mediterranean in the Late Bronze Age.

Between 1800 and 1550 BCE Egypt acquired these new military technologies which were embraced and adapted into the power repertoire of Egyptian kingship.[29] The origins of these technologies to Egypt share a similar scholarship history as many others here and rest predominantly on textual evidence, with a lesser contribution from iconography, as there are no war chariots extant from anywhere in the second

[25] Lilyquist 2005, 60–6; Bietak 2005b, 79–81; Morris 2014, 361–2.
[26] Schrakamp 2015a, 215–6.
[27] McLeod 1962, 18.
[28] Littauer and Crouwel 1979, 23–8; Schrakamp 2015b, 225; 2015a, 215.
[29] Shaw 2012, 93–4, 104–5; 1991, 41; Darnell and Manassa 2007, 70, 76–7, Chariot 17th to 16th century, Littauer and Crouwel 1979, 76; Crouwel 2013, 74; Compound bow: 12th to end 17th, Hoffmeier 1975, 10.

millennium except from Egypt, where it is assumed to be introduced technology.[30] The origin of the light war chariot is problematic, but as a rule firmly rests in Western Asia. In the 1960s Wolfgang Helck argued that it arrived during the Hyksos period from the Hurrians, as there was 'no difference to the Hurrian form of the chariot'. This is an ambitious claim considering it was made in the absence of evidence from Syria and instead based on the premise that the Hurrians, an Indo-European people, were the innovators of horse warfare.[31]

It should be noted that his evidence was based on glyptic images of two wheeled and spoked chariots of the Old Syrian and (Anatolian) Kanesh colony types, not from Mitanni glyptic which is somewhat an outcome of the early scholarly conflation of Mitanni (1550–1350 BCE) with the Old Syrian Amorite period (2000–1600 BCE). In the 1970s Littauer and Crouwel argued for the light chariot being a local Near Eastern development, not the result of an insurgence of a new cultural group.[32] Moorey in the 1980s also countered the Hurrian rationale and made a case for horse and chariot technology having their origins in the Near East in the third millennium and thus were not sudden cultural introductions to the region in the second. He argued the Amorites and Anatolia were the major agents for the promotion of horse and chariot technology in the early second millennium, introducing the textual evidence for equine hardware from Mari, Chagar Bazar and Alalakh.[33] An Anatolian argument for this technology is also supported by the textual evidence and glyptic from Kanesh and is now touted as a possible cultural source by Schrakamp.[34]

Regardless of the exact timeframe for the likely introduction of the light two-wheeled war chariot to Egypt, it and presumably the horse are attested as in use as the ruler's siege instrument under both A'hmose and Kamose at the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty in the battles to expel the Hyksos.[35] This context also provides arguably the first example of the Egyptian term wr(r).t with the chariot determinative which was used to indicate the vehicle alternatively with a Semitic loanword mrkb.t in text.[36] After this, during the Eighteenth Dynasty the only likely innovations to this military hardware were the adoption of the short backed horse and later the introduction of the six or eight spoked wheel that could support more weight, such as a driver and a bowman, some time during the fifteenth century.[37] These changes could easily have been the outcome of eastern Mediterranean military activity and diplomacy.

From this and from many examples of royal visual propaganda from Eighteenth Dynasty rulers it is safe to assume that military technology related to woodworking had been

[30] Although Säve-Söderbergh (1951, 60) argued for independent invention in Egypt.
[31] Helck 1962, 546; also Goetze (1963, 124).
[32] Littauer and Crouwel 1979, 70.
[33] Moorey 1986, 198.
[34] Schrakamp 2015b, 226.
[35] šwtwt⸗f ḫr wr(r).t⸗f, in *Biography of A'hmose, son of Ibana*, Shaw 1991, 39–40, although the text is slightly later, from the early 18th Dynasty, Darnell and Manassa 2007, 70, 77; Kamose war inscription at Karnak, A'hmose battle stele, Abydos, Gnirs 2001, 403; Spalinger 2005, 1–4; Morkot 2003, 63.
[36] Schneider 2004, 24; Shaw 1991, 39.
[37] Spalinger 2005, 8–10, 17–8; Hoffmeier 1976; Meeks 2005.

fully mastered in Egypt in the early New Kingdom and the iconography associated with them.[38] However, like the Near East, material evidence for the war chariot from Egypt is not so kind. There are for the entire pharaonic period only eleven chariots or chariot fragments extant and they all conveniently hail from the Eighteenth Dynasty.[39] Harness and axle fittings are similarly rare, attested from KV 62, four other Eighteenth Dynasty royal tombs and military barracks/residences at Tell el Amarna and Pi-Rameses.[40] Finally blinkers, bosses and chariot appliqués are attested from five Eighteenth Dynasty royal tombs and from Tell el Amarna.[41] Of the eleven chariot bodies (or fragments) nine are from royal tombs. Seven of these are dated to the Amarna period, with three of them bearing international idiom and potential evidence of diplomatic gifting. Currently only one chariot (from the tomb of Yuya and T̲uya) is accepted as within the international style, although originally all three were.

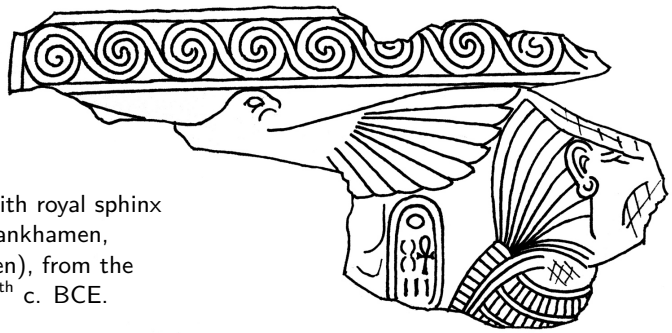

Fig. 3.5 Ivory furniture inlay with royal sphinx naming the predecessor of Tutankhamen, Ankhkheperure (Neferneferuaten), from the Royal Palace of Ugarit, mid 14th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

3.3 Prestige materials

3.3.1 Ivory and bone

> *'Let them fashion and color trees of ivory. Plants of the countryside that match let them fashion of ivory and may they colour (them) and bring them to me.'*
> EA 11, verso 10–2. Burna-Buriyaš of Babylon to Naphuriya of Egypt

The first raw material to come under scrutiny here shall rate only nominal mention as the topic of hybrid idiom from ivory has been exhaustively dealt with in the past.[42] Ivory and bone are considered to have had dissimilar values in antiquity with elephant ivory sitting at the top of the scale and only accessible to royalty in the Bronze Age.

[38] Hoffmeier 2001, 412; Shaw 1991, 41.
[39] 10 royal and 1 non-royal chariot from the tombs of Tutankhamen (KV 62), Yuya and T̲uya (KV 46), Thutmose IV (KV 43), an unknown tomb and fragments from the tombs of Amenhotep II (KV 35) and III (WV 22), Littauer and Crouwel 1979, 75; Herold 2007.
[40] Unknown royal tomb, the 'chariot tomb', KV 58, that is roughly contemporary with KV 62, tombs of Amenhotep II, III and Thutmose IV.
[41] Amenhotep II, Thutmose IV, Amenhotep III, Tutankhamen and the 'chariot tomb'.
[42] See for example Caubet and Gachet-Bizollon 2013; Busch 2008: Feldman 2002; Krzyszkowska and Morkot 2000; Rehak and Younger 1998.

Hippopotamus ivory was mid range prestigious and available to upper level elites, while bone was and is to be considered a quotidian medium that in theory was accessible to all.[43] In terms of surface lustre, scale and density elephant ivory is considered the most attractive of the three materials, although it should be emphasised that even bone that is in a pristine state and highly polished has a very attractive surface lustre. Ivory as a result is the most common medium on which this hybrid iconography may occur and is represented by small toiletry items like combs, spoons, mirror handles, pyxides, unguent horns and furniture inlays. These may be incised or carved in low to high relief, they may also be coloured.[44] While many objects covered by this discussion are elephant ivory and therefore rest at the top of the value scale, not all are.[45] In terms of source, both wild hippopotamus and elephants are attested from North Africa and the Syro-Levant in the Bronze Age.[46] However, the ivory from prestige objects in the Aegean and Cyprus will have been imported from the East or from Egypt. Interestingly, while most artefacts with international features from the eastern Mediterranean are ivory, and predominantly elephant ivory, Egypt contributes substantially less evidence.

3.3.2 Metallurgy

Metallurgy has been a significant contributor to past discussion of international prestige objects and iconography in the second millennium and in the main has revolved around dialectic over the origins of specific techniques such as granulation, filigree and cloisonné, and the identification of manipulated surface hue with patinas like niello and red gold, which are then employed to argue cultural influences, ethnicities or entanglement. In addition, it should be stressed that the manipulation of raw metals was not overly complicated in the entire Bronze Age and initially entailed the cold working, cutting, annealing and modifying of sheet copper, gold, electrum or silver. Proper casting techniques are the product of more sophisticated technologies in the later second millennium.[47]

Bronze is an alloy of tin and copper which may be considered an elite technology in the second millennium due to the understanding that for the Bronze Age the earliest examples of bronze are in fact mainly arsenical and not tin bronze.[48] Bronze smelting technology and the refinement of tin instead of arsenic not only created a safer working environment, but it also heralded the advent of the Late Bronze Age international quest for tin sources and the rapid rise in social prestige for the primary source of copper in the eastern Mediterranean, Cyprus.[49] Not to mention that Egypt was also sitting on large reserves of copper ore.[50]

[43] Feldman 2006a, 119; Moorey 1994, 116.
[44] EA 13. IV.
[45] In fact most ivory from Ugarit is hippopotamus (excluding the international pieces), Caubet 2013, 48. In the Levant bone was ubiquitous until the LBA II-III (1400–1200 BCE) when it was superseded in elite contexts by ivory, Liebowitz 1987, 4; Caubet and Gachet-Bizollon 2013, 419–20.
[46] Caubet and Poplin 2010, 3–4; Krzyszkowska 2003, 219; Krzyszkowska and Morkot 2000, 322, 326; Caubet 2013a, 48.
[47] Prévalet 2014, 424–5; Moorey 1994, 226.
[48] Rehder 2000, 113–4.
[49] Papasavvas and Kasianidou 2015, 230–4.
[50] Ogden 2000, 150.

Iron and tin are not precious metals in modern terms, but in the second millennium their status was significantly higher, as iron that is attested before the end of the Bronze Age is sparse and associated with precious materials or with elite cult and funerary use in the entire eastern Mediterranean and further east. Tin on the other hand, was even rarer and with copper was essential for the production of bronze weapons.

In the past bronze has not been included in discussion of the international style presumably because it is perceived as lower in economic value to gold and silver. However, this is faulty reasoning, as bronze was in fact complex furnace technology using rare and very rare minerals with high economic value.[51] In addition, there are bronze objects bearing hybrid idiom and they are not mundane. Control of resources, sophisticated technologies and exotic source placed these metals almost on a comparable scale of value to Bronze Age elites as gold, silver and lapis lazuli.[52] However, the origin for tin before the first millennium is problematic and this issue is not aided by the lack of modern evidence for ancient mining sites. Iron may have multiple sources in the natural environment, as meteoric and as a geological ore, but it may also be acquired though the smelting of copper as it occurs naturally in copper ores.[53] Meteoric iron is not locally specific and may be found in indiscriminate geographical regions, which is reflected in the selection of ancient terms naming it celestial metal.[54] The provenance of mined ore is more specific and Anatolia and Cyprus have both been cited as the likely big movers in iron and in tin in the Late Bronze Age.[55]

Generally when an international style object with iron is cited in scholarship either Hatti or Mitanni are touted as the likely source, due to the written evidence from diplomatic correspondences. And, in the face of two studies in the past fifty years[56] that correlate the iron samples from second millennium Egypt with local meteoric iron, many scholars will still cite Hatti or Mittani when arguing a source for the iron on an Egyptian international artefact, particularly the dagger from KV 62.[57] This assumption is also based on the translation of the term for iron in the Amarna text, as the term used for the daggers is variable, with the dagger cited above having a blade of *ḫabalkinnu*. The exact nature of this metal is disputed, with most Near Eastern scholars considering it an unspecified iron alloy. Iron is usually indicated by *parzillu*.[58]

Granulation and filigree are another popular exotic source citation for the decoration of international style objects. These were metallurgical methods developed in the Early Bronze Age Near East for adhering metal granules and threads to a metal core using either an adhesive or an early form of soldering.[59] The earliest attestation of

[51] Muhly et al 1985, 69.
[52] Sherratt 1993, 63–4.
[53] Moorey 1994, 278–81; Rehder 2000, 114, 117.
[54] Mesopotamia, Hatti and Egypt, Muhly et al 1985, 75; Harris 1961, 60; Moorey 1994, 279.
[55] Moorey 1994, 287; Muhly et al 1985, 70–1; Stech-Wheeler et al 1981, 264–5; Sherratt 1993.
[56] Bjorkman 1973; Comelli et al 2016.
[57] For example Helck (1962, 410) argued gifted from the 'northern states', perhaps originally from Hatti, Stech-Wheeler et al (1981, 264) cite Mitanni as distributor/processor, Feldman (2006a, 16, 116) 'from a foreign ruler, possibly Hatti'.
[58] Muhly et al 1985, 85; Moorey 1994, 279; Rainey et al 2015, 1307.
[59] Ogden 1982, 64; Lilyquist 1993; Prevalet 2010, 32.

granulation is disputed, but currently situated in the mid third millennium and is a form of proto-granulation on earrings and daggers from a royal tomb of Early Dynastic Ur in southern Mesopotamia.[60] These are, however, one of few isolated examples from the third millennium from Mesopotamia and only occur in royal tombs. The technique is uncommon in the eastern Mediterranean and Near East until the early second millennium, after which it appears almost ubiquitously in richer assemblages of the early Middle Bronze Age from Egypt to Anatolia.[61]

Royal burials from Syria at this time represent a leap in sophistication from where the technology may have spread to the Levant. The earliest examples from Egypt are situated in a similar timeframe, in the Twelfth Dynasty, when Egypt's ties to the wealthy cities of Ebla and Byblos are most strongly represented by their respective royal assemblages.[62] This technology in Egypt is manifested by gold jewellery and a tubular amulet from royal female burials dating to the reign of Amenemhat II (1932–1896 BCE).[63] However, granulation is a technology exclusively associated with royal burials after the Twelfth Dynasty and only becomes widespread in Egypt from the early New Kingdom.[64]

Filigree is similarly a metallurgy technique where thin threads of cold worked metal were shaped independently and then applied to decorate a metal surface, again using an adhesive or a form of soldering. While some scholars have also attributed a Mesopotamian origin for this technique,[65] it is again largely a simple process which could arise out of independent experimentation with metallurgy. In the Aegean the arguably earliest example of filigree occurs in a tholos tomb at Kalathiana in Crete, but is hampered by the difficulties associated with a long term elite funerary context that also contained imported exotica from Egypt and the East.[66] In Egypt elaborate forms of gold and silver filigree are attested from the late Seventeenth Dynasty to the early New Kingdom, but simpler forms often combined with granulation occur earlier in the Middle Kingdom.[67] It should therefore be emphasised here that according to this chronology to cite either filigree or granulation as foreign technology in the fourteenth to thirteenth century in Egypt is somewhat misleading.

The third and final technology for manipulating precious metal is cloisonné. It is achieved by modelling sheet gold or silver to form matrices that can frame small inlays

[60] Lilyquist 1993, 32–3; Maxwell-Hyslop 1971, 36–7; Politis 2001, 162.
[61] Objects exhibiting early forms of granulation are attested from the Aegean at Komasa (Xanthudides 1924, 29), Anatolia at Troy (Schliemann exc.) and southern Mesopotamia at Ur (Woolley exc.). The Anatolian and Aegean samples contribute little to chronology because of problematic contexts: a tholos tomb ca. 3500–3000 BCE and lacunae in excavation data.
[62] Kopetzky 2015; Flammini 2010; Nigro 2009; Schiestl 2007; Morandi-Bonacossi 2014.
[63] A copper and gold amulet tube from Tomb 211 at Lahun, Englebach 1923, 16, pl. XIV.5; Quirke 2015, 56. Also from the funerary complex of Amenemhat II at Dahshur. Gold ring from the second treasure, beads from the mastaba of Princess Khnumet and a silver bracelet from the Tôd Treasure, Prévalet 2014, 38; de Morgan 1903, VII, XII; 1895, 61.
[64] Troalen et al 2009; Ogden 2000, 165; Lilyquist 1993, 51.
[65] Higgins (1980, 19) spread from Mesopotamia to the Levant, Aegean and Egypt.
[66] Xanthudides 1924, 82, pl. XLIIIB; Marinatos 1959, 70, fig. 13.
[67] Andrews 1990, 98.

of coloured stone or paste. It was another elite technology that was used primarily to decorate small objects, particularly jewellery, but also larger objects of royal office like sceptres and maces. The technique is attested earliest from Egypt and then sporadically from elite funerary contexts from mid third millennium Mesopotamia.[68] Similarly there are random examples of cloisonné from elite funerary contexts at Byblos in the Levant, Ebla in Syria and Kalehöyük in Anatolia in the early second millennium.[69] Nonetheless it remained a specific feature associated with Egyptian technology and prestige objects until the first millennium. In the internationalism of the Late Bronze Age it is naturally attested more widely.[70] How these technologies impact on this discussion is that they are highly visible on the international daggers, staves, compound bows and chariots from KV 62, the tomb of Tutankhamen.

3.3.3 Manipulating metal colour

> *'1 maninnu necklace, cut from 35 genuine lapis lazuli stones, 35 ḫiliba-stones, in the centre a genuine ḫulalu-stone, mounted on gold with a reddish tinge.'*[71]
> EA 22.II. 6–8. Tušratta of Mitanni to Amenhotep III.

The conscious manipulation of metals to create multicoloured designs seems undervalued in previous scholarship of international idiom. At best many scholars again lean on the evidence of the diplomatic correspondences to argue cultural origins for minerals, advanced techniques and specifically coloured metal, while often disregarding the core terms in use in the texts. The most noticeable of these is the employment of Amarna letter EA 22 (cited above) for a Hurrian provenance for red gold in the fourteenth century. Gold, as is the case for most minerals, rarely occurs in an unadulterated form in its natural state and may contain impurities that affect the colour. This characteristic may be exploited or actively sought out by artisans and as a result may cause conflation in archaeological publications between terms like white gold, electrum and red gold. Electrum is a natural gold with a high silver content (20–50%) whereas white gold is where silver has been intentionally manipulated with gold. The debate over the ratio that defines these is ongoing, because gold may occur naturally with silver from a ratio of anywhere between 1 and 50%.[72]

At the other end of the visual scale red gold is achieved where copper is present in gold ore and intrusions in low ratios may similarly be the result of natural conditions. In scholarship rose or red gold is generally used to describe gold that has a ratio of copper that is higher than 2.5%.[73] This type of copper alloyed red gold reaches a peak in use in Egypt during the Amarna period, particularly for bezel rings bearing royal names and interestingly an equal measure of these rings are attested from elite

[68] Royal tombs of Ur, Moorey 1994, 229.
[69] Paterakis et al 2016, 106–7.
[70] Prévalet 2014, 430; Moorey 1994, 229.
[71] Rainey et al 2015.
[72] Ogden 2000, 162–3.
[73] Ogden 1993, 40.

tombs in Cyprus.[74] However, red gold is also applied to describe an alloy of silver and gold that was manipulated to create a red shade and which is attested from studies of gold coatings from sarcophagi from Twelfth Dynasty elite tombs at Meir and early to mid Eighteenth Dynasty jewellery from Deir el Bahari and the tomb of the Foreign Princesses (Hatshepsut to Thutmose III).[75]

Fig. 3.6 Red patinated gold sheet openwork plaque with the Egyptian god Ḥeḥ and naming Tutankhamen from KV 62, 1334–1324 BCE. Note the guilloche bands. Image A. Sinclair.

These two methods for creating a red gold matrix may also be conflated with a cherry red gold that was achieved by using surface patination, which entailed heating a coating of iron and arsenic over a gold base. This coated red gold is also characteristic of Egyptian gold work in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Dynasties. These objects appear an even deeper red or purple to the naked eye than the copper or silver alloys and are well represented in assemblages from the Amarna period, particularly KV 62, from gold sequins, beads, rosettes, buckles, staves and plaques inclusive of the international style objects.[76] Like many previously cited technologies, there is currently no consensus on the cultural origin for the latter technique, as it is unattested archaeologically beyond Egypt, except for a Late Minoan IIIA rosette bead from Mochlos in Crete.[77]

By contrast, in scholarship the status of red gold in the Late Bronze Age contrarily often rests on those phrases from an Amarna letter cited above.[78] Red(-ish) gold is listed for jewellery and horse trappings eight times in Tušratta's list of gifts to the Egyptian king.[79] This is certainly evidence for a prestige value in Syria, but not evidence for whether these are synthetic techniques or whether they involved manipulation of the raw material or coatings in Mitanni.[80] The other scholarly citation for the cultural source of red gold is from an unaccredited statement by Ogden that the technique is

[74] Ogden 2000, 164.
[75] Frantz and Schorsch 1990.
[76] Troalen et al 2014, 222; Ogden 2000, 164; Schorsch 2001.
[77] Giumlia-Mair and Soles 2013.
[78] EA 22: I.20/25 II:8/15 and EA 25: I.27 II.7/9/42 Tušratta lists bridle trappings, necklaces and toggle pins with blood red gold (KÙ.GI ša da-ma).
[79] Ša da-ma šu-lu-û/ šu-û-lu-û 'like blood red'. For *dama/dāmu* 'blood', 'dark', 'darken', or 'blood red' see Labat and Malbran-Labat 1976, nos. 69/81; Borger 2004, nos. 113/137; Black et al 2000, 52.
[80] This is without imposing further issues of the value of the colour terms employed in these texts.

mentioned in a Mesopotamian metallurgy text.[81] In truth, the textual evidence does exist for a value for red gold from the Amorite royal year names, although they employ different colour terms,[82] and from *miš pî* ritual texts from the Neo-Assyrian period which describe gold for constructing divine statues.[83] Neither source indicates exact hue or that this red gold was achieved by the presence of natural copper, silver in the matrix or via a patination technique.[84] Regardless of the fruitless quest for cultural origin for the technology, this manipulation of colour, both the conscious production of red and white coloured gold, is an acknowledged characteristic of Egyptian metallurgy, yet it was clearly also of value in Syria and Mesopotamia, and because of the number of red and white gold decorated artefacts from KV 62, contributes to this discussion.[85]

The problematic material niello by contrast actually contributes little, but will be cited here because it is a further elite technology of the second millennium that not only has contributed to discussion of cultural exchange in the past, but that also remains a controversial topic. This is again because this purple-black patina may well have been achieved in various regions using different techniques, assuming it was not a form of degraded copper.[86] Niello is attested on culturally entangled elite weapons from the Levant and Egypt in the Middle Bronze Age,[87] and daggers from elite tombs of the middle of the second millennium in the Aegean.[88] Two artefacts bearing international idiom are considered by some scholars to employ niello on their surfaces: the dagger of Aʿhhotep and a gold and silver wishbone cup from an elite tomb at Enkomi in Cyprus that is decorated with rosettes and bucrania.[89] However, studies of the chemical properties of the black mineral on Egyptian, Levantine, Cypriot and Aegean objects have established that it is not true niello, rather this metal surface was a black bronze patina designed to create a purple-black colour contrast for polychrome decoration of precious metal.[90] Black bronze and black copper are attested technologies in Egyptian texts from the Twelfth Dynasty, yet again suggesting entangled contexts for these technologies from the Middle Bronze Age.[91]

In summary, the techniques of prestige metalwork cited here are to be considered relatively impossible to disentangle from each other in the early Late Bronze Age. The majority like granulation and filigree may be considered to have begun either independently or in southern Mesopotamia in the third millennium and from there

[81] Ogden 1982, 19.
[82] Year names from Amorite rulers at Isin and Babylon. For example 'Year (Hammu-rabi) made the great thrones in reddish gold for Szamasz, Adad and Szerida' (KÙ.SIG$_{17}$ ḪUŠ.A, *ḫušša* is bright red). See Feigin and Landsberger 1955; *RIA* 2, 128–9, 179–85. CDLI 'Year names' - https://cdli.ucla.edu/tools/yearnames/HTML/T12K6.htm
[83] 9th and 7th centuries from Babylon, Walker and Dick 1999, 58–62, 65–6.
[84] Giumlia-Mair and Soles 2013, 119.
[85] Troalen et al 2014, 222; Schorsch 2001; Frantz and Schorsch 1990.
[86] Thomas 2011.
[87] See for example the khepesh sword with Egyptian idiom and spirals from Shechem, in the Levant, Munich: ÄS 2907.
[88] Giumlia-Mair and Soles 2013; Thomas 2011.
[89] See page 192.
[90] Giumlia-Mair and Quirke 1997; Thomas 2011.
[91] Giumlia-Mair and Quirke 1997, 96.

became reasonably widespread elite technology for the Middle Bronze Age Near East and eastern Mediterranean. Cloisonné and patinated red gold are manipulations of precious minerals that have their earliest attestations from Egypt, but which equally might have spread throughout the region via gift exchange in the Middle Kingdom into the period under discussion, although they are predominantly attested from Egyptian sources. Niello or black bronze is still a controversial a topic and not represented in the focus assemblage of this examination, but was a prestige technique of the early second millennium that most likely again had affinities with various cultures in the Late Bronze Age.

3.3.4 The fabric of prestige: Woven decorated textiles

> *'[1] linen cloth, for the front of the body, decorated with borders, [...] ... of a robe, tabarru-red, not ami-red, [go]ld all set with stones. [x] (pieces of) fine linen cloth, for the front of the body, decorated with borders, colored ami-red.'*
> EA 14.III. 26–29. Dowry linens from Amenhotep IV to Burna-Buriyaš of Babylon

Evidence for the exchange of prestige textiles in the second millennium is again somewhat problematic and depends substantially on the iconographic and textual evidence, again because textiles and their associated technologies do not survive well in the archaeological record. As a result of this there are few material traces for the characteristics of textiles from the Late Bronze Age in the eastern Mediterranean with the exception of Egypt whose climate has facilitated the survival of a limited amount of prestige and mundane textiles from funerary contexts spanning millennia.[92] It is very much an accident of circumstances that Egypt provides the only ornately woven textile ceremonial garment that is cited for the international style. Naturally it is from KV 62 and has provided abundant fuel for a discussion of foreign idiom over the last ninety years.

Elaborately woven, coloured and decorated textiles represent a sizable proportion of the gifts exchanged between kings in the diplomatic correspondences and the quote above represents but a fraction of the textiles listed in one letter listing dowry for the bride price of a Babylonian princess. In this letter the Egyptian king sends his royal peer linens of the finest quality amounting to over a thousand articles. The scribe chose to place emphasis on the quality of many as 'royal linens',[93] and the colour red is the only hue pointedly referenced, along with lavish details such as fringing, beading with gold or with precious stones, reflecting a degree of flexibility in the textile coffers of the pharaoh. By contrast, the bride gifts from Tušratta of Mitanni to Amenhotep III

[92] Smith 2015, 16.
[93] Rainey et al and Moran translate this as 'byssos' which may be misleading, as the literal translation is 'king's linen' (GIŠ.NÁ ša LUGAL). Byssos or 'sea silk' was a highly valued and incredibly rare thread which resembles spun gold that is sourced from a type of mollusc.

include descriptions of textiles where emphasis is placed upon multicoloured fabrics[94] and on the coloured dye *takiltu,* a deep lapis lazuli blue to purple wool which like the stone lapis lazuli held the highest prestige throughout the Near East.[95] Further north-west, diplomatic correspondences from Hatti list fine clothing and textiles as suitable greeting gifts that were sent by a royal peer for a coronation.[96]

Regardless of the dearth of actual archaeological evidence, textiles have been a strong contributor to rationales regarding iconographic exchange in the second millennium, with the Aegean contributing a sizeable portion and held responsible for the appearance of complex floral, voluted and spiral-form patterns in both Middle[97] and early New Kingdom Egypt.[98] Syro-Mesopotamia is usually also cited as the cultural source of coloured, embroidered and fringed textiles with decorations of specific idiom under discussion here, such as the rosette, griffin, volute palmette and caprids flanking same.[99] It should be noted that the sources used to argue these rationales in the last one hundred years are the diplomatic letters and the pictorial evidence from Middle Kingdom and the early New Kingdom elite Egyptian tombs. This is done in defiance of the current understanding that the latter iconography is not intended to be photographic realism and is from highly subjective Egyptian funerary contexts with a specific audience and intention.[100]

Egypt by contrast for the pharaonic period has been assumed to be largely represented by undecorated simple weave textiles, due to the preponderance of visual and archaeological evidence for plain linen. This conveniently ignores the issue of visual evidence for complex designs on high status royal and divine costumes and for cult and festival decorated textiles, unless one assumes these prestige items were always imported. However, with the large retinues of servants that were exchanged internationally in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasty it can only be assumed that textile technology like military and vitreous was enhanced and developed in the early New Kingdom. This is generally ascribed to the military expansions of Thutmose III in Syria around 1460 BCE and the introduction of a new loom type and tapestry techniques to Egypt.[101] The idea that Egypt only produced plain linens also overlooks the New Kingdom archaeological evidence for coloured textiles[102] and from descriptions of textiles from

[94] The term GÙN.A (*burrumu/barāmu*), here translated as 'multicoloured', may also be translated as 'patterned', 'variegated' or 'ornamented', EA 25.IV.45–50. See Sinclair 2013, 9–12; Labat and Malbran-Labat 1976, 113; Borger 2004, 183; Black et al 2000, 38.
[95] EA 22.II.36–42, EA 25.IV.3.
[96] Bryce 2003, 149.
[97] Shaw 1970.
[98] Kantor 1947a, 29; following Kantor, Barber 2007, 205–38; 1998, 16–7; 1991, 330–59.
[99] Montet 1937, 39–42; Helck 1962, 439, although he argued made in Egypt by Syrians; Davies 1941, 127–8.
[100] Wachsmann 1987, 6–9; Panagiotopoulos 2006, 388; Redford 2003, 253.
[101] Riefstahl (1944, 31–2) is the source for this claim in contemporary literature, which considering the date should be viewed with caution, as it may be predicated on assumptions regarding technological innovation in Egypt and Syro-Mitanni. Riefstahl is followed by Barber (1991, 157–62; 2007, 174) and Vogelsang-Eastwood (1993, 7).
[102] For example blue, pink and red dyed woven borders on elite funerary linens from Gurob and Deir el Medina and painted designs on votive cloths from Deir el Medina and Deir el Bahari, Picton, et al 2014, 5–9; Hallmann 2015; Naville 1913, pl. XXX.

EA 14: lines 10 to 31, which list linens in coloured dyes, with fringing, beading and gilded ornament. Again, like with metallurgy, discussions of late Eighteenth Dynasty prestige textiles are liable to be manipulated with citations of exotic origins by avoiding attention to chronology and technological assimilation. This topic will be returned to when the linen ceremonial tunic from KV 62 is discussed in Chapter Six.[103]

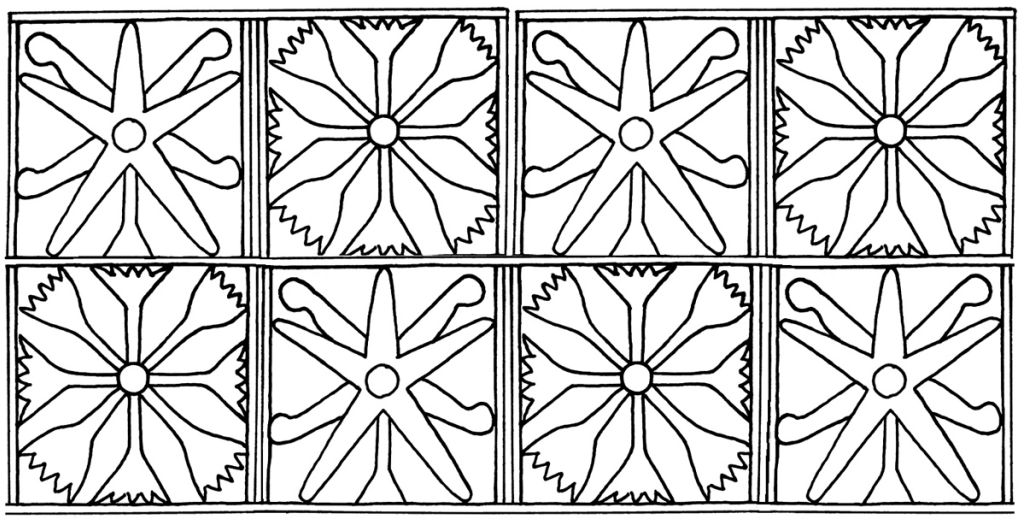

Fig. 3.7 Polychrome design of rosettes on the sail of a royal barge from the Temple of Sahure, Abusir, 5th Dynasty. Image A. Sinclair.

3.3.5 Things that shine from within, precious stone and vitreous technologies

Semi-precious stone, stone vessels, glazed stone, frit, faience and glass are all engulfed under the one heading here on the premise that in antiquity they were generally classified as lithics.[104] This is a convenience for me, rather than a fixed classification, as they overlap in terms of visual appeal, prestige and function in the period with which we are dealing. The most profound differentiation between each would probably be 'relative value', as glass for example was a royal prerogative, faience and frit were royal and/or elite. All three were furnace technologies. However, all media discussed here were valued as diplomatic gifts and are cited in the lengthy lists of audience gifts and dowries, particularly precious stones like lapis lazuli and carnelian.[105] In the diplomatic correspondences of the Amarna age vessels and toiletry objects in lithic materials are listed in astonishing quantities among the royal gifts.

[103] See page 260.

[104] In Akkadian all are identified by the determinative na_4/zá which is loosely classified as 'stone'.

[105] I am aware that amber is not a mineral, however it could be classified as one in cuneiform texts from the second millennium (AL-GA-MI-SIB-BA), '*Elmešu*-stone' see *CAD* E108. Amber is incidentally not attested in the Amarna Letters.

In letter EA 14 (lines 34–73) Napḫuria/Akhenaten provides an enormous inventory of bride gifts from Egypt to the Kassite king Burna-Buriyaš. The list is inclusive of copious quantities of vessels, linens, jewellery with one hundred and sixty-three empty stone vessels and an unspecified large amount of luxury containers filled with aromatics, oils and unguents (ca. 1000) in an equally broad repertoire of shapes and decoration. However, to assume these stone vessels were all made from Egyptian materials or by Egyptian workshops over simplifies a complex topic and an international climate, as the terms employed in the correspondences are not all uniquely Egyptian[106] and lists of deliveries of genuine and artificial stone from Syrian (mnw stone) and Anatolian rulers are attested from earlier Egyptian kings, such as Thutmose III, a comfortable one hundred years earlier.[107]

It does appear that of the many stone products exchanged between Near Eastern and Mediterranean courts it was the vessels which endured in the archaeological record, as Egyptian and Egyptianising alabaster and granite vessels are attested from sanctuaries and elite tomb contexts from across the Near East, Cyprus and the Aegean.[108] The same could not be said of the metal vessels or the precious stone figures, pendants and beads that are similarly listed as gifts. These latter must have been reworked on receipt in a foreign court. This also works in reverse and a simple case in point would be the copious use of genuine and synthetic lapis and carnelian in Egypt for royal inlays and jewellery, yet the complete absence of the enormous repertoire of multicoloured stones which were sent to Egypt from Mesopotamia, Hatti and Syria. It can only be assumed these were not of significant value in Egypt, as they were not reworked and have since disappeared fairly effectively from the material record.[109] The prestige semi-precious stones that it appears everybody in power valued highest in the second millennium were the dark blue lapis lazuli and the deep red carnelian, both of which were high demand luxury products that had their origin in the mountains east of Assyria. For this reason the rulers of Egypt, Anatolia, the Aegean, Levant and Cyprus were constrained to pursue diplomatic exchange in the pursuit of these materials. In fact it could well have been the elite demand for these stones that stimulated the rapid development of the vitreous industry in the middle of the second millennium.

3.3.6 Frit, polychrome faience and true glass

Polychrome faience, vitreous faience and glass may be considered important technological innovations of the international period, as they relied on advances in furnace technology and in the use of a much wider range of raw materials from diverse cultural

[106] Although the use of an introduced term does not indicate that the object is not of local manufacture, nor does it indicate when a term entered the Egyptian bureaucratic lexicon.
[107] See the relief of gifts from this king to the Amen temple at Karnak.
[108] Roßberger 2014, 207–8; Lilyquist 1996; Sparks 2003; Bevan 2007, 101–8, 143–53, 157–60.
[109] *Pappardilu*: chalcedony with white stripes or spots: *muššaru:* red and white banded sardonyx: *marḫallu* a striped carnelian: *hulālu*: white and black banded agate: *hulālu-īni* and *aban īni:* eye agate: *arzallu*: black, white and yellow-green obsidian, all well attested from prestige Mesopotamian and Syrian jewellery and cult implements, Schuster-Brandis 2003, 262–8; Scurlock 2014, 284–8.

origins for their production.[110] Before approximately 1600 BCE the vitreous colour palette for the entire Near East was bichrome or at most trichrome and predominantly turquoise blue with a decoration of brown-purple-black.[111] In the Late Bronze Age access to and employment of exotic raw materials allowed a wider colour palette, with featured colours being cobalt blue, haematite red, antimonite yellow and quartz white, but subtleties such as pinks, purples and metallic opacities were also achieved by some ateliers.[112] The range and type of object also expanded with the technology and it was possible to produce more complex forms such as multiple segment figures and stemmed vessels.[113] Among the artefacts examined here there is a substantial contribution from polychrome vitreous materials from Egypt, with the outstanding examples being cosmetic vessels and tiles from royal palaces, and fine inlays for weaponry, staves, chariotry and furnishings from KV 62 in Western Thebes.

Glass appears to be a hallmark innovation of the second half of the second millennium, being an object of exchange that may be documented in the material and textual records.[114] Prior to the sixteenth century evidence for organised glass production in the entire Near East is problematic and, assuming that existing identifications are correct, these beads and fragments were probably the outcome of accidental misfiring of frits or faience or the outcome of experimentation, rather than an indication of intentional production.[115] Many scholars ascribe the invention of advanced vitreous technologies to northern Syria, since the earliest attested glass fragments are from the site of Alalakh in coastal southern Anatolia/north western Syria. However, these examples should be approached with caution, as they were excavated by Woolley in the 1930s and his chronology for this site is still subject to dispute.[116] It is also important to emphasise that there is no evidence of glass workshops from the Near East at this time and that evidence for workshops and an industrial approach to vitreous production are later and come from Egypt.[117]

The earliest evidence for glass from Egypt appears sporadically in the material record of the late Seventeenth and early Eighteenth Dynasty kings, in royal and elite graves.[118] Internal Egyptian manufacture of glass is currently attributed to the mid fifteenth century co-reign of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III.[119] As, from the correlations with

[110] Vandiver 1983, 108–9; Kaczmarzyk and Vandiver 2008, 59–60.
[111] Kaczmarzyk and Vandiver 2008, 57–8; Bouquillon et al 2005, 20.
[112] These are a characteristic of workshops in the southern Levant, Mcgovern et al 1993, 8–9.
[113] Patch 1998, 32; Kaczmarzyk and Vandiver 2008, 59.
[114] Amarna letters EA 14, 37, 148, 235, 314, 323, 327 and 331. Glass, turquoise and lapis lazuli in rows of offerings presented by Thutmose III to the temple of Amen at Karnak, Bevan 2007, fig. 7.2; Sherratt and Sherratt 1991, fig. 2.
[115] Moorey 1985, 194–9; 1994, 190–2; Peltenburg 1987, 16–8; Lilyquist 1993, 52; Shortland 2004, 8–9; 2012, 44; Nicholson 2007, 1; Shortland and Tite 2008, 209.
[116] Mitanni for example is not attested at Alalakh before 1550 BCE which is approximately the same level as the earliest glass vessel fragments from the site, (level VI ca. 1550–1525 BCE), but occupation by the Hittites cannot be excluded at that time, Woolley 1955, 301; Yener and Akar 2014, 264–6; Moorey 1994, 193.
[117] Moorey 1994, 194; Rehren 2014, 219.
[118] Shortland 2012, 50; Nicholson 2012, 17.
[119] Vessels first attested in Egypt ca. 1500, adopted from Syria, Tite and Shortland 2008, 209; Shortland 2012, 53–4.

Theban military expansion into the northern Levant at this time many scholars again place the introduction of glass technologies within this timeframe.[120] To support this thesis, scientific tests of the glass vessels from the Western Theban tomb of the three foreign wives of Thutmose III have found that the red paste used on one vessel may have affinities with Syrian glasses from level II at Nuzi (ca. 1350 BCE).[121] In stark contrast to this finding, recent and ongoing tests of contemporary Near Eastern vitreous materials from various Syrian sites have established that there are no raw material correlations for the extant Egyptian glasses and vitreous faience with those from northern Mesopotamian ateliers. Instead, the industries are considered to be freestanding and that diplomatic gifts of glass between rulers are likely to have contributed nominally to local production.[122]

This means that in the period under discussion, mid to late Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt, vitreous industries were likely to have been freestanding and predominantly internal industries under supervision of the palaces, perhaps employing exchanged technologies and artisans. It also implies that rulers of this period may have been exchanging prestige artefacts inlaid or constructed with these materials, but we currently have no material evidence for these finished exotic imports. Instead we have evidence that raw materials were the object of exchange from the Uluburun shipwreck and from glass beads from elite graves in Denmark. Both sources exhibit affinities with Egyptian Eighteenth Dynasty workshops and illustrate the distances involved in elite exchange.[123] However, from the wealth of evidence from diplomatic correspondences we can assume many raw materials, skills and skilled individuals were being exchanged between the great and lesser states.[124] And this is not limited to glass manufacture, but ought to extend out to all skilled fields in circulation in the Late Bronze Age: military, textile and furnace technologies.

[120] Roehrig 2005, 67. Nicholson (2007, 1–2) does not exclude the possibility of an already sophisticated glass industry under Hatshepsut.

[121] Lilyquist and Brill 1993, 9–12. While the glass cups provide the mainstay of discussion of early glass in Egypt, it ought to be noted that while more than likely authentic, they were purchased in Luxor by Howard Carter in 1919, Lilyquist 2003, 149.

[122] Rehren 2014, 221; Eremin and Walton 2010; Andrew Shortland and Katharine Eremin have recently challenged the Mesopotamian invention rationale at the ASOR meeting in November 2016, arguing that the later Nuzi glass industry is emulation of Egyptian glass.

[123] Egyptian blue glass ingots from the Uluburun shipwreck that were probably in transit to the Mycenaean court and perhaps further to Europe, Bass 1986, 281–2; Pulak 2001. Blue glass beads from elite tombs in Denmark, Varberg et al 2015.

[124] Raw glass is present as an economic commodity in interactions between Egypt and minor Levantine rulers.

3.4 Human Mobility: Princesses, princes, diplomats, artisans and entourages

Fig. 3.8 Egyptianising ceremonial scene on an ivory box from the governor's residence at Tell Farah, 13th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

> *'Now this tablet I have sent to you in order to say to you: Now I have dispatched to you Ḫanya, <commander of> the stable of the regular army, with everything for the acquisition of beautiful female cupbearers, viz. silver, gold, linen garments, carnelian stones, all (kinds of) precious stones, an ebony chair; likewise, all of excellent quality.*
>
> *So send very beautiful cupbearers in whom there is no malice among them, so that the king will say to you, "this is excellent," …'*
> EA 369. 2–14. Amenhotep III to Milkilu of Gezer

The exchange of human resources is a factor that contributes endlessly to dialogue regarding entangled technologies and material culture. It is an issue that determinedly clouds the ethnic identification of individuals, particularly in 2nd millennium Egypt where quite often foreign nationals were absorbed seamlessly into local society through adopting Egyptian names and cultural habits.[125] However, ethnicity is in itself a complex and loaded topic that, like ideas of race, may readily lean too heavily on colonial and nationalistic agendas in scholarship.[126] Ethnicity is in fact not a fixed concept that depends on DNA, and ideas of cultural allegiance are largely fluid and dependent on individual human choices.

That being said, in the period under discussion here human movements must have also played a large part in interregional exchange and transference of material culture. The diplomatic correspondences of the Late Bronze Age name large entourages accompanying betrothed princesses going between courts to cement familial ties, but these women and their staff disappear entirely on entering the Egyptian and Near Eastern courts. Similarly the generous numbers of servants that were gifted to Egypt are virtually invisible within the archaeological record, but this invisibility in some way may not

[125] Schneider 2010, 144–6; 2006, 210–2; Baines and Riggs 2012; Emberling 1997.
[126] Matić 2020; 2017; 2015

translate to lesser status, a foreign princess, musician or cupbearer may not have been in a position to challenge the role of the hereditary royal family, but they were nonetheless housed and in the end buried with style, albeit Egyptian style.

The Amarna correspondences have had a sizable impact on this discussion, both for their providing evidence of the betrothal of daughters of Near Eastern rulers to the Egyptian king within a timeframe from approximately 1420 to 1350 BCE, but also for the one document from the king of the Kassites, Kadashman-Enlil, that cites Amenhotep III who unequivocally states that the Egyptian court never bestowed princesses in marriage on foreign rulers, whatever their status in the international hierarchy.[127]

Marriages of foreign princesses to the Egyptian king that are currently known from textual and archaeological sources include the three 'foreign princesses' of Thutmose III and an unidentified Mitannian princess to Thutmose IV. On succeeding his father Amenhotep III raised the bar by marrying at least two princesses from Mitanni (Tadu-Ḫeba and Gilu-Ḫeba) and one from Kassite Babylon, as well as others from the smaller Levantine city states.[128] Akhenaten appears to have continued his father's policy, but identification of these women is tenuous, with perhaps only the argument that his lesser queen Kiya being Tadu-ḫeba still holding any water in scholarship, an argument that is decidedly lacking in empirical evidence.[129] Tutankhamen on the other hand may be assumed to have continued in his predecessor's style (but without Mitanni), however there are no records of foreign princesses sent to his court over the ten years of his rule.

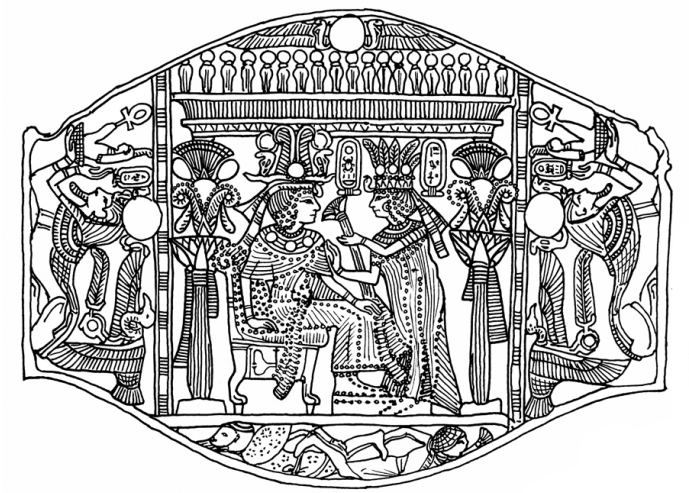

Fig. 3.9 Egyptian royal ritual scene on a red gold buckle from KV 62, 1334–1324 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

At the other end of the scale there is currently no evidence to refute the claims by Amenhotep III that Egypt never married a princess to a foreign king, save one object that has in the past attracted controversy over cultural origin. This human aspect of visual hybridity and prestige exchange is represented by a vase excavated by Claude

[127] EA. 4. 4–9.
[128] Meier 2000, 165–73; Wilkinson and Doyle 2017, 90–2.
[129] Dodson 2009, 16; 2014, 51, 78–81.

Schaeffer in the central archives of the Royal Palace at Ugarit in 1951 which for the second half of the twentieth century was dubbed the 'marriage vase' on the basis of an assumption that the woman in the scene was an Egyptian princess betrothed to Niqmaddu II.[130] However, there is nothing in the visual content or text of the fragment to argue that the scene depicts a marriage except flawed art historical and culture historical assumptions regarding style equating directly with ethnicity.

Fig. 3.10 The so-called 'Marriage vase of Niqmaddu'. Fragmentary calcite vase with ritual scene from the Royal Palace at Ugarit, 14th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

The object appears to reflect the close cultural and iconographic ties that the court of Ugarit maintained with Egypt in the fourteenth century, and therefore most likely represents the chief queen Piṣidqi and the king of Ugarit in a ritual scene. This is reinforced by the knowledge that the image mimics Egyptian royal rhetoric that broadcast a monarch's right to the throne that is associated with the jubilee and coronation. Equally the closest visual parallel to this vase from Egypt or anywhere else is on a red and white gold granulation openwork buckle from the tomb of Tutankhamen[131] where the queen offers the seated king a floral bouquet within a kiosk surmounted by *uraei* and supported by floral pillars with papyrus, poppy buds, south flower and *nymphaea lotus*.[132]

An additional human medium for cultural transfer was via the political strategies of the rulers of the smaller kingdoms partaking in diplomacy in the Late Bronze Age. It was not unheard of for Levantine rulers to facilitate relations with the Egyptian court by sending their heirs to Egypt to be educated, where they could acquire not only superior social skills, but also political connections to cement social ties and perhaps even acquire foreign spouses.[133] On returning to their own courts to take up positions of authority these individuals will have brought with them Egyptian social habits, tastes and most likely their own small entourages. It is important to emphasise that these complex familial relationships were the foremost medium for the possible entanglement

[130] Schaeffer 1956, 164–8; Desroches-Noblecourt 1956, 179–220; Yon 2006, 158–9, cat. 49.
[131] Carter number 585s, see image page 167.
[132] For discussion of the value of the iconography see Feldman 2002, Singer 2011, 37—9; Fischer 2012 and Gabolde 2004, 154-5; 2012, 320-2. The latter refutes the claim the female figure is an Egyptian princess.
[133] Liverani 1983, 41–56; 1990, 274–82; Knapp 1998, 197; Bryan 1996a, 38–41; Kitchen 1969, 77–95.

of people, things and of foreign idiom. The disproportionate ratio between lists of kingly gifts that often cite some servants, a necklace, some lapis and perhaps a chariot, compare starkly against voluminous lists of sumptuous bridal gifts, so that it is not difficult to understand why few rulers were disposed to argue at the marital disparity with Egypt.[134] But it is also important to recall that these thousands of Egyptian objects sent to Anatolia, Assyria and Babylon are not visible from any royal palatial or funerary context. Rather until a royal tomb proves otherwise, it must be assumed that most gifts were reworked in palace workshops.

Foreign craftspeople were another effective medium for the transference of material culture. In theory this sharing of international technologies and visual themes infers the existence of individuals who were highly skilled and stylistically versatile. These people might be another human dimension in international parleying and while still a contested topic there is limited evidence for the 'borrowing' of artisans within the diplomatic correspondences. For example, there is a letter from the ruler of Hatti to the Kassite king that requests a skilled sculptor be sent to make 'images'.[135] Another text from Middle Assyrian Aššur describes a group of craftspeople that travel between royal courts catering for elite demand. However, because skilled technicians were always affiliated with elite culture and royal palatial economies their identities are rarely recorded. They were instruments within a much larger political framework. Within the Egyptian palatial machine skilled tradesmen were equally easily absorbed into the dynamic of Egyptian industry, as is illustrated by the New Kingdom records for multicultural artisans living and working within the village that served the royal tombs at Deir el Medina in Western Thebes.[136] Similarly, skilled apothecaries, priests and exorcists could be gifted or simply 'borrowed' between kings, sometimes in the retinues of gods when cult figures bestowed divine favour on a court.[137]

Finally, this technological and artistic interconnectivity would not have been exclusive to the individuals who were objects of royal parleying and gifting. Other groups of people would have facilitated the movement of human assets, finished objects, raw materials and visual idiom. These were the people who participated in these processes, such as couriers transporting documents, the ambassadors between the courts who communicated with kings, negotiated deals, bestowed *šulmanu* and placated wounded feelings.[138] These individuals held privileged status as cultural ambassadors and as economic agents. Not to mention the large military escorts that would have been necessary to accompany these precious cargos through what will have been potentially unstable regions. The process of carrying out these activities would have occupied considerable distances and long timeframes, as well as long voluntary (and involuntary) residencies in foreign courts.[139]

[134] Wilkinson and Doyle 2017, 90–2.
[135] Hattusili III to Kadašman-Enlil, Beckman 1995, 143; 2013, 207.
[136] Moorey 1994, 14.
[137] Beckman 2013, 207.
[138] Jönsson 2000, 202–3; Westbrook 2000, 33–4; Oller 1995, 1465–73.
[139] Bryce 2003, 57–65; Berridge 2000, 213–9.

> *'To the king, the sun god, my lord, the message of Niqmaddu, your servant.*
>
> *At the feet of the king, my lord, have I fallen. May it be well with the king, the sun god, my lord, his household, with his consort, with his wives, with [his sons, his horses,] the regular troops, with [his chariots, … of the king,] the sun god, my lord.*
>
> *… may he give me two youths, palace personnel of the land of Cush.*
>
> *And give to me a palace retainer, a physician. There is no physician here …'*
> EA 49. 1–26. Niqmaddu II of Ugarit to Amenhotep III[140]

3.5 Discussion

The foregoing was intended to clarify opaque definitions of cultural entanglement and exotic technologies which are often aired in discussions of hybrid artefacts, particularly in association with this idiom from Egypt. It is not uncommon to read that a precious metal inlaid dagger has international features by virtue of technologies that, to be precise, were probably introduced from abroad, such as granulation, glass or filigree, when in fact these were culturally fully embedded in Egyptian elite industry and royal prestige in the Late Bronze Age. This same applies to statements regarding innovations in military technology like the compound bow and the two wheeled war chariot, both of which were introduced into Egypt probably from the Near East sometime between the late Middle Kingdom and the Second Intermediate Period, but both of which also appear to have been fully integrated into Egyptian royal rhetoric in the late Seventeenth or early Eighteenth Dynasty. Therefore these technologies do not contribute to a discussion of exotic features two hundred years later when the elites of the entire eastern Mediterranean were thoroughly embedded in royal diplomacy and prestige gifting of objects constructed using these same techniques, except perhaps as evidence of thorough technological entanglement. They do not however add weight to a discussion of entangled iconographies, to arguments regarding ethnicity or in fact to the nature of international style objects.

[140] Rainey et al 2015.

4 International Style beyond Egypt

4.1 The international artefacts

The first chapter of this dissertation constituted an introduction to the discovery and dialectic over artefacts commonly cited for this international style, and this notional list is in continuous flux according to which scholar is consulted and which criteria are employed which may extend beyond style, portability and economic/prestige value. They are also often predicated on issues of provenience, with some scholars excluding the earlier dubious acquisitions of museums. However, my statement that the corpus is fluid and subjective is no excuse for shirking an introduction to the material context and to the objects that have informed past scholarship, which will be outlined here.[1]

It is also important to emphasise that while the Aegean, Cypriot and Levantine artefacts in mixed styles are considered essential to a discussion of international idiom, this chapter does not aim to replace what are numerous and highly competent analyses of the non-Egyptian artefacts, particularly the ivories which have been subject of prolific publication and will in the main only be referenced in this volume.[2] However, this study does aim to add to the overall picture with a consolidation of material bearing hybrid idiom from early scholarship already addressed in Chapter One and from more recent publications and excavations. The material will be addressed here according to region and beginning with the Aegean.

4.2 The Mycenaean Aegean[3]

In the early Late Bronze Age there was a transition occurring in the power of the Aegean. At the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty in Egypt Minoan cultural influence appears to be fairly visible in the international scene and is readily represented by the Aegean figures bearing identifiably Minoan artefacts in tomb scenes of nobles at Thebes and in the excavated evidence of Minoan style frescos from the reigns of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III from a palace at Tell ed Dab'a in the Delta.[4] However, this presence gradually gives way to the Mycenaean mainland during the Eighteenth

[1] For a list of artefacts, chronologies and archaeological contexts see Table I.
[2] Kantor 1947a; Vercoutter 1951; Smith 1965; Schachermeyr 1967; Crowley 1977; 1989; 1998; Rehak and Younger 1998; Caubet 1998; Feldman 2002; 2006a; 2009; Busch 2008; Fischer 2007b.
[3] See Table I.1.
[4] Bietak 2005a; 2008; Shaw 1997; Younger 2009; Barrett 2009, 220; Rehak 1996; 1998; Wachsmann 1987.

Dynasty as the Mycenaean culture expanded economically and politically, both in the region and in the sphere of international diplomacy. By the reign of Amenhotep III the evidence for Egyptian and Aegean political relations and prestige exchange has a specifically Mycenaean character, with evidence of gifting from this king to the Mycenaean centres.[5] It is predominantly the Mycenaean Aegean that has impact on discussions of an international style.

The Aegean represents a small proportion of objects bearing ostensibly entangled idiom, many of which are small ivory furniture inlay plaques and pyxides. Many of these hail from Mycenaean elite funerary contexts, being from tholos tombs in Boeotia and the rest are fragments from a cult precinct on the island of Delos in the Aegean. These latter are problematic due to their occurring within a temple hoard in a much later Iron Age context from a temple of Artemis. On the basis of style these are dated to the twelfth century, but they are components of a larger group of mixed media[6] and mixed chronology heirlooms, presumably accumulated by the temple over a long period of time.[7]

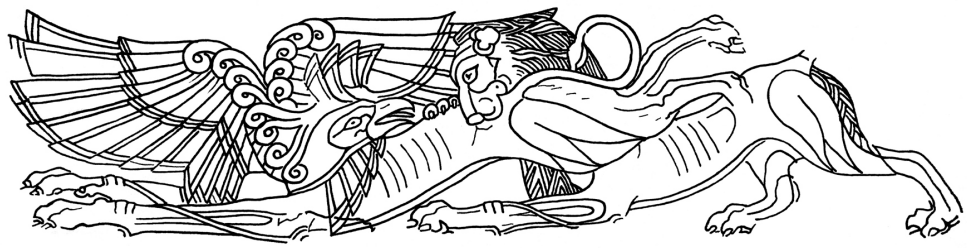

Fig. 4.1 Lion attacking griffin, ivory plaque from the Artemision, Delos in the Aegean, 12th c. BCE (style). Image A. Sinclair.

The former ivory objects from the mainland, however, are not dated with precision either, which may be ascribed to the Mycenaean practice of using tholos tombs over successive generations of interments. These ivories variously represent scenes of animal combat on inlays and small cosmetic vessels: two plaques from Spata with an animal combat, a pyxis lid from Thebes and a pyxis with lid from the Athenian Agora[8] which are all ascribed a date range of the Late Helladic III, from the thirteenth to twelfth centuries. There are also ivory objects with emblematic scenes of female sphinxes from the same LH III contexts at Thebes and Spata that were often cited in older publications on this topic,[9] but which are rejected here due to clear internal idiom.

[5] Cline 1994, 31–55; 1990; Phillips and Cline 2005.
[6] 2533 fragments of ivory, also bone, bronze, gold and stone/beads, jewellery, small plaques, statuettes, inlays and a frit scarab in gold mount with a winged sphinx on the base.
[7] Gallet de Santerre et Tréheux 1947; Poursat 1973; Tournavitou 1995.
[8] This object is not in my opinion an international piece, but it has international content: an animal combat with griffins, Shear 1940.
[9] Vermeule 1964; Crowley 1989.

Fig. 4.2 Ivory pyxis from the Athenian Agora, 1275–1200 BCE. After Shear 1940, fig. 29.

However, this is with the caution that many of these inlays and pyxides could easily be Mycenaean work, for while the stylistic characteristics of these pieces involve the correct visual content: griffins, sphinxes, animal combats and employ devices like figure mobility such as flying gallop and distorted poses, it must be emphasised that these are Aegean visual conventions, as is the modelling of figures. It should also be noted that if ornamental bands are present they are also Aegean. However, some figures show clear stylistic parallels to international ivories from Cyprus and the Levant and therefore contribute to the topic, and it cannot be denied that content is correct, but it must be emphasised that their exotic nature may rest predominantly on the imported prestige material, ivory.

Fig. 4.3 Ivory pyxis lid from Athens, 1275–1200 BCE (left). Ivory inlay from a tholos tomb at Spata, 1400–1275 BCE (right). Images A. Sinclair and after Kantor 1947, pl. 24.

In addition to the ivories, mention must be made of a group of faience vessel fragments from the House of Shields at Mycenae. This elite building is considered most likely to have been a storage and redistribution point for luxury exotica and contained a large quota of stone vessels and carved ivory inlays, although these are in fact predominantly Aegean in content: *was* lilies, tri-glyphs, dolphins and figure of eight shields (hence the name), with some fragmentary lions in extended gallop that could be local or

international.[10] Only one very fragmentary relief plaque of these has an animal combat between a lion and deer.[11] The faience objects from this building by contrast represent fully mixed material culture and are still disputed as to cultural origin for a variety of valid reasons. Faience was not a preferred Mycenaean industry, but rather a Cretan and Egyptian specialty which was largely superseded in the Aegean by glass in the Late Bronze Age and stylistically these vessels favour both Egyptian and Cypriot faience vessel idiom.

Nonetheless, of these objects one very fragmentary vessel which may be from a rhyton[12] has a scene of a lion grappling with a griffin or lapwing.[13] Further objects from this context may be cited as international style in publications, but are rejected here due to largely Aegean characteristics, such as warrior heads with boar's tusk helmets. The date attributed to this group is similarly the thirteenth century.[14] Another likely emporia building from this period at Mycenae, the House of Sphinxes, produced a large quantity of exceptional furniture inlays with winged sphinxes and three very fragmentary ivory strips with lions and an animal combat.[15] These latter too contribute little more to the topic, due to their similar content to the previous group and to their very poor condition. The same may be said of three fragmentary ivory pyxis lids and two combs, all with traces of galloping animals and animal combats from various elite tombs at Mycenae. These ivories are also from contexts with imprecise chronologies and they are generally attributed to the Late Helladic III, 1400–1200 BCE.

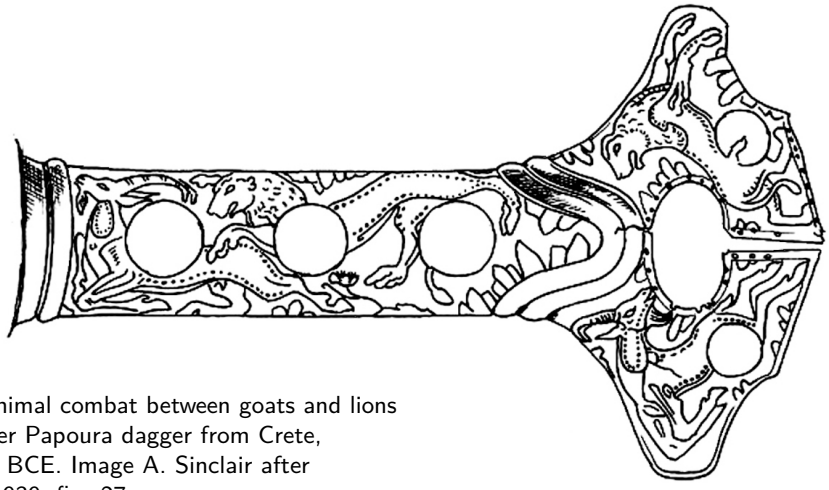

Fig. 4.4 Animal combat between goats and lions on the Zafer Papoura dagger from Crete, 1450–1275 BCE. Image A. Sinclair after Schaeffer 1939, fig. 27.

[10] Wace 1954, pl. 33–4; Poursat 1973, 419–21, figs. 3–4; 1977b, cat. 51–3, pl VI.
[11] Wace 1954, 235–7.
[12] That it may be a conical rhyton only contributes to the circularity of arguments, as while they were an Aegean cult vessel, faience conical rhyta were produced in Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt and later in the Levant. They are currently not attested from the Aegean, Peltenburg 1974, 128; Koehl 2006, 343.
[13] Wace 1954, 237, pl. 36; 1956, 110–2, pl. 21b.
[14] Koehl 2006, 323; Foster 1979, 126–35.
[15] Wace 1954, 240–1; Poursat 1977b, cat. 141–3.

There is one other prestige artefact from the Aegean that has rated mention in many publications on hybrid idiom since it was excavated in Crete in the early twentieth century by Arthur Evans: the Zafer Papoura dagger from an elite warrior's tomb near Knossos.[16] This dagger has an embossed gold sheet hilt with intricate decoration of goats and lions repeatedly along the grasp and framing the blade, there are also repeated bands of running spirals, and in contrast to many objects cited here, it has an early if unexact date from the fifteenth to thirteenth century BCE.[17] However, it is difficult to take this object seriously as a hybrid piece, regardless that it is often cited as one. As again it is an Aegean dagger type rendered in Aegean style with visual idiom that while international was certainly not exotic to Crete. Lions and caprids in mobile poses with running spiral ornament are entirely consistent for local idiom and to compound this there are no intrusive motifs.

Fig. 4.5 Ivory ritual horn from Tomb 55 at Mycenae, 14th–13th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

To bring this back to international idiom, the dominant theme on many of these small artefacts is the animal combat, often between a griffin and lion, or lion and game animal. The composition is mobile and, with the exception of the pyxis from Athens, entirely dominated by the subjects, effectively leaving no space for elements of fill. It should be noted that volute trees alone or with emblematic flanking figures are not represented on these objects, neither ivories nor faience. Freestanding volute flowers only occur as gold plaques in the Aegean and reflect Aegean influences, stylistically referencing the Aegean *was* lily or papyrus and therefore may be assumed to be outcomes of earlier intercultural exchange, rather than international hybrid forms.[18] Only one ivory ritual horn with exotic motifs may be added to this group which again hails from a tomb with a very loose Late Helladic III date. This is from chamber tomb 55 at Mycenae,

[16] 'The chieftain's grave', Evans 1906, 51, 57–8, fig. 58, 112; 1935.II, 865–7, fig. 851–2; Schaeffer 1939, fig. 27; Marinatos 1959, 112–3; Feldman 2006a, 44; Aruz 2013, fig. 19.5.

[17] Middle Minoan I according to Evans in 1906; MM II, Marinatos 1959, 112–3; after MM IIA 1 to LM IIIA, Alberti 2004.

[18] Assuming that Evans' claim is correct, that the *was* lily was adopted in the Middle Minoan period from the Egyptian papyrus, Evans 1928, 476–8; Crowley 1977, 77–80.

and in contrast to the other objects cited here, the tusk has no Aegean iconographic features, but rather displays hybrid Levantine or Egyptianising idiom, with a youthful Egyptianising male (Nefertum?) standing between kneeling ibex that in turn flank an emblematically placed volute tree. Above the tree are traces of the wings, tail and claws of a raptor holding Egyptian *shen* symbols.[19] While this example contributes a likely exotic import of high prestige, it is arguably not an international style object, however, it, like many others here, contains both relevant idiom and content, and has contributed to this topic in past scholarship.[20]

4.3 The Levant[21]

The Levantine coast from Sinai northwards to coastal Syria and Anatolia represents various smaller cities and city states whose allegiances to the higher powers of the region may be considered often fairly fluid throughout the Late Bronze Age. In the period studied here, the 'Empire period', the two major political pressures on the region were the kingdom of Mitanni to the north and Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt to the south which resolved itself into a relationship of diplomacy, interdynastic marriages and gift exchange after the military forays of Thutmose III in Syria. After the Empire period (ca. 1350–1340 BCE) this power dynamic was composed of Egypt and Hatti. The smaller northern city states such as Ugarit and Qatna held a convenient, yet probably uneasy independence which was largely dependent upon maintaining healthy diplomatic relations with all powerful polities.[22] The more central cities of the Levant such as Sidon, Tyre, Byblos, Tell Miqne and Megiddo were substantially under the jurisdiction of Egypt at this time, although whether they were ruled directly or considered relatively independent tributary states is still subject to debate.[23] Finally, the southern Levantine cities may be considered to have been properly economically affiliated with Egypt, cities such as Lachish, Tell el Ajjul and Tell Farah.[24]

The Levantine coastal littoral contributes the two previously cited and ubiquitously published groups of international style ivory inlays and gold vessels from the larger cities of Ugarit and Megiddo that were excavated in the early twentieth century and discussed in Chapter One. Additional smaller groups and isolated pieces of mixed idiom ivory and gold come from Tell Farah/Beth Pelet, Tell ed Duweir/Lachish, Tell Miqne and Gubla/Byblos. The former must rate mention as they are numerous and the most familiar to scholarship, the latter however contribute less to discussion, predominantly due to their dubious chronologies.

[19] 'Phoenician' in Dussaud 1949, 105, fig. 57; 'Aegyptiaca' in Cline 1994, cat. 20; see Poursat 1977b, cat. 301, pls. XXX, XXXI; Burns 2011, 259–60, fig. 4.
[20] See for example Dussaud 1949, 104–5, fig. 67; 'corne d'ivoire Phénicienne'; Poursat 1977b, 94–5, 'Syrian import'; Crowley 1977, 224, cat. 522, 'direct import'.
[21] See Table I.2.
[22] Pfälzner 2012, 771; Novac 2007; Liverani 2014, 331–7.
[23] Liverani 2007, 10–2; Massafra 2014.
[24] Na'aman 2000, 131–3; Weinstein 1981.

4.3.1 Ugarit

The coastal emporium of Ugarit straddled the uneasy divide between the contemporary categories 'Syrian' and 'Levantine', as at different times in its political history it was within different spheres of influence. In the Middle Bronze Age it may be considered to have been culturally Amorite Syrian, but in the Late Bronze Age it fluctuated culturally and economically between Syria, Egypt and Hatti.[25] The material excavated by Claude Schaeffer in the early twentieth century from Ugarit constitutes many of the most widely discussed and published examples of hybrid idiom. An ivory pyxis lid with a *potnia theron* or mistress of animals figure placed between rearing caprids from Tomb III in the harbour city of Minet el Beida is the earliest[26] and easily most notorious object, but it was not alone and a fragmentary pyxis with remnants of an animal combat and royal offering scene was also from this context.[27] Tomb III has been dated to the thirteenth century and apart from the 'Aegeanising' ivories contained an eclectic mix of multicultural prestige goods from Egypt, Cyprus and the Aegean.[28]

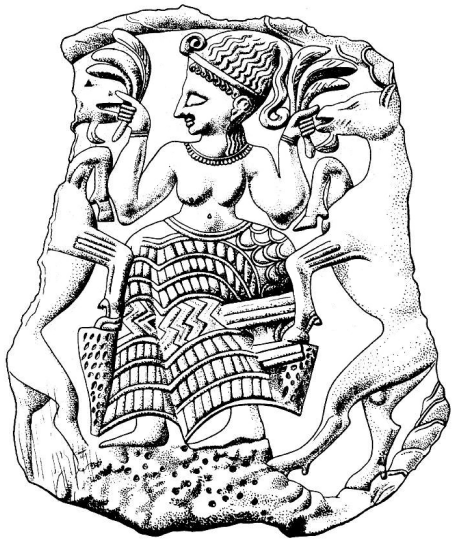

Fig. 4.6 Mistress of animals, ivory pyxis lid from Tomb III, Minet el Beida, Ugarit, 1300–1250 BCE. After Kantor 1947, pl. XXII.

Tomb VI shall be introduced here, although it has not been cited elsewhere for this idiom.[29] This tomb was a similarly rich burial with abundant Egyptian, Egyptianising, Mycenaean and Cypriot material, as well as a fragmentary faience conical rhyton with international idiom: successive ornamental bands, including running spirals and a frieze of animal combat with hunting dog, bullock, lion and perhaps a griffin. This tomb

[25] Yon 2006, 18–9.
[26] Discovered in a richly equipped corbelled tomb in 1928, which contained Cypriot and Mycenaean pottery, faience and Egyptian alabaster vases, Schaeffer and Dussaud 1929, 291; Gachet-Bizollon 2007, 87–91.
[27] Louvre: AO 11601 and AO 11602b, Schaeffer and Dussaud 1929, 292–3, pl. LVI; Gachet-Bizollon 2007, cat. 72, 80, 251–3, pls. 13, 71.
[28] Wijngaarden 2002, 67–70, table III.
[29] With the exception of the author's 2012 Master thesis.

is dated between the fourteenth to thirteenth centuries, which tallies with Schaeffer's dates, as he considered it contemporary to the Amarna period in Egypt, admittedly leaning too heavily on the 'Syrian' idiom from Tutankhamen's tomb. However, the paucity of records from Schaeffer for the context of the rhyton places it only tentatively within this assemblage.[30] The rhyton conforms to all requirements for a fully entangled international object, but stylistically rests closest to Egypt due to the combinations of content and ornament that mimic the idiom from faience vessels and wooden cosmetic boxes.[31]

Fig. 4.7 Reconstruction of the frieze on a fragmentary faience rhyton from Minet el Beida, Ugarit, Tomb VI, 14th–13th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

Subsequent to the discovery of the elite tombs, the previously cited gold repoussé bowl and patera[32] with scenes of animal combat and royal hunt were recovered in 1933 from a building within the precinct of the temple of Baal on the acropolis.[33] This was immediately south of the temple proper and in relative proximity to three limestone cult stelae, inclusive of the famous *Baal au foudre* stela.[34] Because of association with a temple complex and object type the gold vessels may well have functioned as feasting or cult ware originally dedicated to the temple and later disposed of in the hoard.[35] The dates attributed to these vessels vary widely, with Schaeffer granting them the Late Ugarit II, contemporary with Akhenaten in Egypt, due to the 'almost complete' destruction of the building by an earthquake and a reference to same in an Amarna tablet.[36] More recent scholarship tends to take into account the absence of stratigraphic context for the hoard and, depending on whom you consult, a date range of two hundred years from 1500 to 1300 BCE is proposed.[37] However, the fourteenth century, when Ugarit was under some degree of Egyptian jurisdiction remains a conservative estimate, as the current excavators of the site place the destruction of the city by a major earthquake towards 1300 BCE.[38]

[30] Louvre: AO 30644, Schaeffer 1933, 102–6; Caubet and Pierrat-Bonnefois 2005, fig. 143.
[31] See the discussion of idiom on Egyptian boxes page 221 and Catalogue IV.3.
[32] Aleppo: 4572 and Louvre: AO 17208.
[33] Schaeffer 1949, 3–5, 23, pls. I–VIII; Caubet 2013a, 41–3; Yon 2006, 164–5.
[34] Louvre: AO15775.
[35] Caubet 2009, 55.
[36] Late Ugarit II, 1450–1365 BCE and EA 151 from Abumilki of Tyre to an unnamed Egyptian king which describes a fire destroying half the Ugarit royal palace, Schaeffer 1949, VII–III, 3–5.
[37] The Louvre is cautious giving 1500–1300 BCE, Aruz prefers the 14th century (2008, 239 & 2013, 294), Cluzan (2008, 243) 15th to 14th centuries, Feldman (2006a, 51) was careful to avoid a date.
[38] Yon (2006, 18–20) ascribes Hittite influence from the fall of Mitanni, 1350–1340 BCE.

Fig. 4.8 Voluted trees and figures from the Ugarit gold bowl, 14th c. BCE. Images A. Sinclair.

Continued excavations on the acropolis in the 1950s by Schaeffer have since contributed more fragmentary ivory inlays bearing hybrid motifs: sphinxes flanking volute trees, animal combats and local cult/royal idiom, which once reconstructed, would have adorned various furnishings including a pedestal table and an ivory inlaid bed. These were discovered scattered on the ground in the north-eastern area of Egyptian Court III, adjacent to Room 44 in the royal palace. This part of the palace acquired this name due to the intrusion of Egyptian architectural features and coincides with the period that Egypt's political presence at Ugarit was at its peak, between 1400 and 1350 BCE.[39] In the same context there were more unidentifiable fragments presumably from furniture, an ivory head of a deity, a scarab commemorating the marriage of Amenhotep III to Tiye and an ivory cult horn 'oliphant' which also displays international features.[40] Unlike many objects discussed here, these objects were likely to have been in their original functional context, as furnishings for a royal apartment, or perhaps cult paraphernalia.

Fig. 4.9 Detail from reconstruction of the ivory bed panels from Court III of the palace at Ugarit, 13th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair after Gachet-Bizollon 2007, fig. 6.

These ivories have been extensively analysed by Jacqueline Gachet-Bizollon who concluded that the visual idiom, while demonstrably influenced by Egypt, contained clearly local Ugaritic-Syrian features and style.[41] This is made more than adequately apparent from the use of royal and divine visual rhetoric from both panels of the bed, which

[39] Yon 2006, 20, 42–3.
[40] Schaeffer 1954, 51–61, fig 4, 9, pls. VII–10; 1962, 17–27.
[41] Gachet-Bizollon 2001; 2007, 161.

is only international in terms of the strongly Egyptianising features and the small registers with animal combats along the upper field. Human actors, such as twin male princes being suckled by a winged goddess and heros combatting lions ought to exclude this bed from discussion. Equally, the horned and winged 'goat-lion' appears to be an icon from internal cult rhetoric. These motifs, like the goddess, are not attested from international style objects beyond Ugarit.

The ivory inlaid pedestal table on the other hand contains successive registers of Syrian griffins emblematically flanking volute trees and similarly rampant sphinxes trampling caprids, again with sacred trees. The winged sphinxes appear to be male, as for the gold bowl from the Acropolis. As a final note, while the scarab of Amenhotep III somewhat misdirected the date for this group in the original research,[42] these ivories are now firmly situated in the mid twelfth century at the very end of the Egyptian political influence at Ugarit.[43]

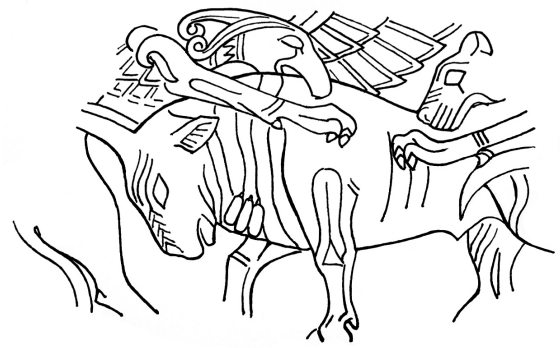

Fig. 4.10 Griffin and lion attacking a bull. Ivory plaque from the tomb of Ahiram, Byblos, 12th–11th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

4.3.2 Byblos

Coastal Byblos in the central Levant has similarly contributed controversy and absolutely no firm chronology. The most notorious object from this city is an ivory relief plaque with a scene of animal combat, again most likely from a toiletry box that was discovered in Tomb V of king Ahiram of Gubla/Jbeil, ancient Byblos. This tomb from the royal necropolis was excavated by Claude Montet in 1923 and has a disputed date due to the wide chronological range represented by the assemblage that include an early Phoenician inscription on the stone sarcophagus. This *terminus ante quem* has incited no end of dialectic over the date for the rest of the tomb. René Dussaud assigned it the thirteenth century,[44] citing the Mycenaean ceramic and two calcite vessels inscribed with the name of Ramesses II. Ronald Wallenfels and Edith Porada have since argued for the early first millennium due to the presence of specific Cypriot ceramic vessels and the problematic Phoenician inscription.[45] Currently a compromise appears to have

[42] Krieger in Schaeffer 1956, 221–26; also Kantor 1956, 168.
[43] 'No later than 1250 BCE' Gachet-Bizollon 2007, 281; 2001, 75–7.
[44] Dussaud 1924, 135–57.
[45] 850–700 BCE, Wallenfels 1983; 9th century, Porada 1973; 10th century, Cook 1994.

been reached with a tenth century date for the tomb. This leaves the ivory box as either an heirloom from the Late Bronze Age that was part of an earlier royal interment or ascribes it to the early Iron Age.[46]

Fig. 4.11 Reworked ivory disk with rampant griffins, Byblos, Late Bronze to early Iron Age. Image A. Sinclair.

Another object from this excavation with an insecure context and therefore completely open date from anywhere between the Late Bronze Age to early Iron is an ivory pyxis lid that has a circular scheme of rampant winged griffins arranged around a rosette incised on the surface. This was from a secondary context among fill that has a more than thousand year range and the plaque also has evidence of re-carving at some point in its functional history.[47] As a result it contributes little to this discussion except more ostensibly international visual idiom.

Fig. 4.12 Mould for metal appliqués from Byblos. After Dunand 1939, pl. CVII.

The final poorly dated object from Byblos is included because it illustrates the circularity of past arguments and the issues inherent to this discussion. It is a mould for making sheet metal plaques that has an international volute tree, but otherwise Syro-Levantine content of two robed men and visually harks back to Old Syrian and Mitanni seal idiom.

[46] 13th century, Aruz 2008, 411; Markoe 1990, 19–21.
[47] Aruz 2008, 140–1, cat. 80; Dunand 1939, cat. 1549, pl. CXXIII.

In 1958 Helene Kantor used this mould to argue the chronology for ivories with volute trees from Tell Fakhariya in Syria.[48] She assigned this object a thirteenth century date purely on the basis of style. In this instance, the style she referred to is derived from the Megiddo ivories (ca. 1350–1150 BCE) and an ivory statuette from near Helmiyah in Egypt that has no provenience and while originally dated to the Late Bronze Age is now considered to be Iron Age.[49]

4.3.3 Megiddo

Heading further south the Megiddo ivories were part of a large hoard of gold, vessels, stone beads and naturally the ivories themselves which bear a broad representation of cultural styles, including Levantine, Hittite, Mycenaean, Egyptian and Assyrian, not to mention the few entangled pieces of international repute. These prestige objects were discovered in a 'treasury' room beneath a floor of the Late Bronze Age palace by a team led by Gordon Loud in 1948.[50] Although the designation 'palace' should not misdirect from the likelihood that the ruler at this time was at best a lesser king who was under the hegemony of Egypt. From the apparently deliberate placement of the hoard under the skeleton of an unidentified bovid this group was argued by Feldman to be a ritual deposit,[51] however one or more funerary contexts[52] or even a workshop may not be ruled out due to the eclectic nature of the objects and to the inscribed Egyptian pieces naming the *kas* of royal stewards and of a chantress of Ptah ('m3ʿ ḫrw' 'justified').[53]

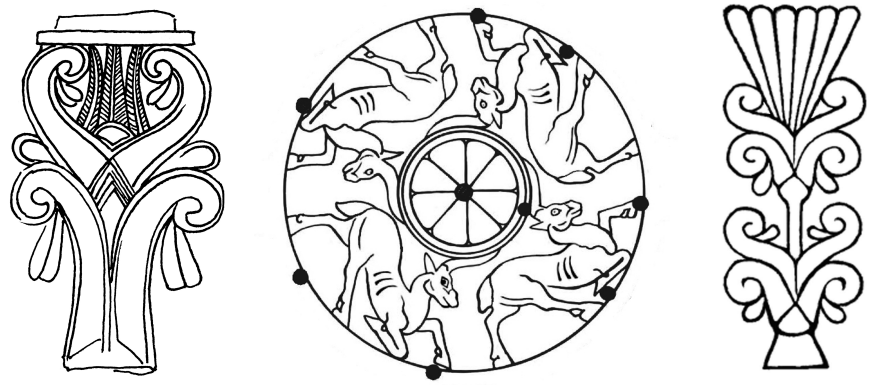

Fig. 4.13 Ivory volute tree plaques and caprids on a pyxis lid from the Megiddo hoard, 13th c. BCE. Centre after Loud 1939, pl. 13.54b. Left and right A. Sinclair.

[48] Kantor 1958, 58, pl. 66; Dunand 1939, 33–4, pl. CVII.
[49] The Helmiyah ivory is discussed further page 221.
[50] Loud 1948, 25, 173.
[51] Loud (1939, 7) did not identify the animal, Feldman (2007a, 177) identifies the skeleton as bovid.
[52] Argued by Fischer in 2007, 119–25.
[53] Wilson 1939, 11.

Within this rich ivory corpus were plaques bearing animal combats, cosmetic tools with pastoral scenes and furniture inlay pieces with various stylistic types of volute trees. Decorative borders when present are predominantly guilloche and zigzags for the hybrid pieces. The assemblage has similarly incited controversy regarding chronology, for while associated with Level VII A[54] which would ascribe a twelfth century date,[55] the similar issues of mixed styles and the presence of an Egyptian ivory scribal palette with the cartouche of Ramesses III (ca. 1150 BCE) only supplies a loose *terminus anti quem* for the group.[56] Loud placed the date for the hoard between 1350 and 1150 BCE, but this choice is dependent on a Hittite plaque having been acquired at the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty and rests too heavily on issues of visual style. It must also be borne in mind that he argued all ivories except the ones with hieroglyphic inscriptions were Levantine work.[57]

4.3.4 Lachish

In the southern Levant Tell ed Duweir/Lachish has similarly produced problematic ivories from a cult context: the site of the Fosse Temple which was excavated by James Starkey and Olga Tufnell in the 1930s. The Fosse Temple is a Levantine cult building that itself is culturally entangled, as it exhibits Egyptian architectural features.[58] It was situated beyond the walls of the city's acropolis over an old fosse and is dated from the thirteenth century during the period of Egyptian hegemony in the southern Levant. It was subsequently destroyed after the end of the Bronze Age, ca. 1150 BCE, giving it a maximum date range of 1300 to 1150 BCE.[59] The ivories were found together within Locus D.181 of the main shrine room, temple structure III, near the altar and cella, and were associated with a rich hoard of prestige artefacts inclusive of ivory lotus bowls, pomegranate sceptres, duck pyxides, faience blue bowls and juglets, pectoral beads, polychrome glass vases, steatite seals and scarabs. The latter inclusive of a glazed steatite commemorative lion hunt scarab of Amenhotep III.[60] The group exhibits a strong Egyptian and Egyptianising cultural presence containing a large sampling of Ramesside prestige material which is also supported by evidence from the rest of the acropolis.[61] Hybrid iconography associated with this discussion is particularly prominent from all levels of the temple with caprids and volute trees being common themes on all value hierarchies of objects from sheet gold through faience to seals and ceramic.[62] This tends to infer a direct connection for this visual content to cult associated with this sanctuary.

[54] Feldman 2009, 177; Loud 1939, 10.
[55] Late Bronze III, Toffolo et al 2014, 226, 236, 241.
[56] Loud 1939, 9.
[57] Loud 1939, 10–1.
[58] Killebrew 2005, 64.
[59] Tufnell et al (1940, 59) using style comparisons to Megiddo and Amarna ascribed fairly open dates for the ivories, ca. 1400–1200 BCE, but the revised date from the current excavator places Fosse Temple III contemporary with stratum VII: 1300–1200 BCE, Ussishkin 1985, 217–8; 2004, 57, 60–1.
[60] Israel Museum: IAA 1934-7687.
[61] Tufnell et al 1940, 35–7, 59–66; Ussishkin 2004, 61.
[62] Tufnell et al 1940, pls. XIV, XXVI, XXVII.

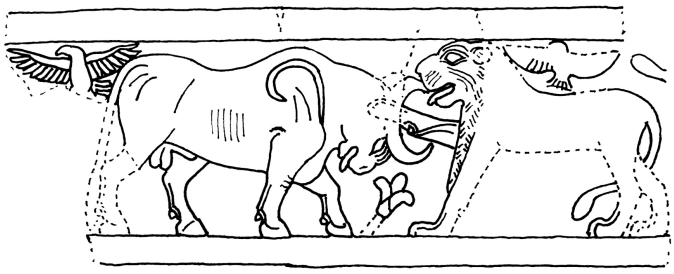

Fig. 4.14 Ivory pyxis with lions and bulls from the Fosse Temple, Lachish, 13th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

The few ostensibly international finds from the shrine constitute a burnt ivory pyxis which has two friezes of animal combat between lions and bulls. As fill it also has small volute flowers specifically signalling the Egyptian south flower and flying birds which are employed in the negative space.[63] The two ivory lids are most likely to be from swivel lidded duck pyxides that were very popular in Egypt and the Levant in the Late Bronze Age.[64] The visual rendering of the lids is dissimilar, but both oval plaques are decorated with a single complex volute tree, one with a triple papyrus crown, the other with a palmette.[65] This usage of a volute tree on a duck vessel is not unique and is attested from Eighteenth Dynasty Egypt in wood on a duck pyxis from Saqqara that will be discussed in the following chapter.[66] It is worth noting that the same temple has produced a considerably wider repertoire of possibly related prestige objects, such as Egyptianising seals, gold foil plaques and a faience collar with volute flowers and rosettes that are generally not included in current discussions of this topic, because they conflate too readily with Egyptian idiom, but then the question must be, why are the ivory lids included when they too are examples of isolate idiom?[67]

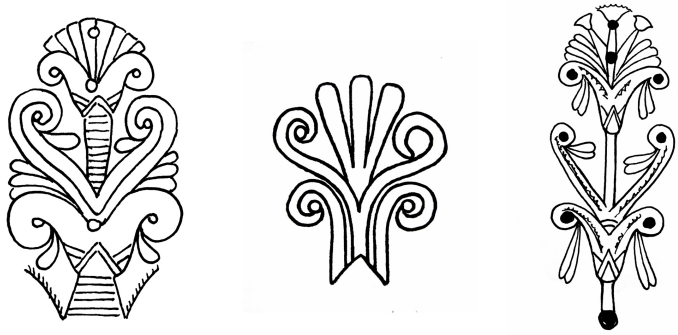

Fig. 4.15 Ivory duck pyxis lids and gold foil plaque from the Fosse Temple, Lachish, 13th c. BCE.
Images A. Sinclair.

[63] Israel Museum: IAA 1934-7715; Tufnell et al 1940, pl. XVIII.
[64] See Adler 1996, 27–118.
[65] Israel Museum: IAA 1934-7711; Tufnell et al 1940, pl. XIX.16/17.
[66] For duck pyxides see Adler 1996, 29–114.
[67] In fact two faience pectorals with volute flowers, grapes, cornflowers and rosettes from Room E, and gold sheet plaques with volute flowers from 'the temple area', Tufnell et al 1940, pls. XIV, XXVI; the latter in the British Museum: BM 123126.

4.3.5 Tells Farah and Miqne

Two more southern Levantine sites contribute nominal outsiders to this discussion, one is problematic because it is pushing the date too far forward in time and the other because it is unquestionably Levantine with strong Egyptianising features. The first is a random find of an ivory pyxis lid with an animal combat from Tell Miqne/Ekron slightly north of Lachish and is the arguably late contribution here (Iron Age I, 1125–1050 BCE). It is included because it has been cited as international by the excavator, Trude Dothan, and it does comply with the requirements for inclusion in this style, being incised ivory and having a circular and mobile scene of animal combat between a griffin, lion and two bulls around a rosette centre.[68] This lid was found in secondary fill in the Lower City between two building structures, numbers 350–1, that represent different strata, V–VI, giving it a possible date range of 1225–1050 BCE.[69] Both buildings were monumental structures of either palatial or administrative function. The lid was found in the general context of the later building 351 with Philistine and late Mycenaean pottery, but other levels of the same locus exhibited ivories and prestige objects consistent with those from Lachish and from Farah. The excavator considered the ivory to probably be from a Cypriot workshop and drew comparisons with the ivory lids from Kition and Kouklia-Palaeopaphos, with the expected references to those with griffins and lions from Megiddo and Delos in the Aegean.[70]

Fig. 4.16 Tell Miqne ivory lid with animal combat; griffin, lion and bulls, 11th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

Tell Farah/Beth Pelet, south of Gaza, contributes a 'rank outsider' that has been cited in early scholarship on cultural entanglement, but represents a heavily Egyptianising presence, rather than seamless fusion of hybrid idiom. It was excavated by Petrie in the early twentieth century and found in Room YC of the 'Residency' of the Egyptian

[68] Dothan 2006, 34–40.
[69] Dothan and Gitin 1993, 1055–6; Dothan 2006, 33–4, fig. 2.
[70] Dothan 2006, 39.

governor of Farah.[71] This residential complex is built in the layout of Egyptian elite architecture and shows no signs of local Levantine features. The incised ivory box constitutes a long fragmentary frieze that has scenes of papyrus swamp with men fishing and fowling, along with wild cattle which are juxtaposed with a more formal Levantine-Egyptian banquet scene. This has an elite male figure being ritually served wine by an female figure, behind her are a musician and a naked dancer. The two zones are spaced by a stylised palm tree that hints at the form for some trees from Megiddo and also to later Phoenician and Syrian ivories. Unlike many trees shown here, this tree is clearly intended to be read as a date palm.

Thus the incised decoration contains aspects of culturally ambiguous idiom, which while generally not rating attribution to the international style, both reflects the internationalism of the Late Bronze Age and has in the past contributed to the discussion of entangled idiom. With the usual rhetoric focussing on the use of a sacred tree and the possible Aegean features of the cattle in the marsh scene most scholars fell down on the side of 'Egyptianising' rather than Egyptian,[72] which is perfectly reasonable for the prestige material from an elite residence of an Egyptian appointed governor. The rationale of Aegean style intrusions for the bullocks in the papyrus,[73] however, leans heavily on conventions for the decoration of these figures, such as pronounced shoulder lines and horns shown in profile and conveniently ignores that in the New Kingdom these features are equally attested from objects in the decorative arts and in tomb paintings from Egypt.

Fig. 4.17 Detail of nilotic scene from the Tell Farah ivory box, 13th c. BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

[71] Petrie and Tufnell 1930, 19; Killebrew 2005, 60.
[72] Petrie (1930, 19) 'purely Egyptian in idea, but workmanship is Syrian'. 'Egyptianising', Kantor 1945, 719; Markoe 1990, 18.
[73] Bryan (1996a, 66–7) employs the characteristics of bulls from the Enkomi game board and the Byblos plaque to argue Aegean features.

The date assigned to this object is quite variable, with Petrie ascribing it to the thirteenth century,[74] Liebowitz to the reign of Ay and the end of the fourteenth century,[75] due no doubt to the influence of scholarship such as Schaeffer's and to the data available at that time. The date has subsequently firmed in the thirteenth, but with Bryan employing the idiom from bulls on Cypriot international ivories for an even later date in the twelfth.[76] Equally Markoe used this box to argue two phases in Late Bronze Age Levantine art: the first (1300–1250 BCE) was modelled on Egyptian idiom and the second (1250–1100 BCE) a freestanding hybrid Levantine style. Naturally he placed this box in the former and I am inclined to agree, in this case due to the features of the Egyptian costumes.[77]

In fact this chronology is a characteristic of this material from the Levantine littoral, apart from the hybrid objects being media and form specific and of course stylistically similar in many cases, when they can be dated with confidence they may all be situated in the later Bronze Age from the mid thirteenth century to the eleventh century, assuming that the objects from Iron Age contexts do not push into the first millennium. This possibility cannot be entirely excluded due to the longevity of this idiom into the Phoenician period, as exemplified by the ivories with Egyptianising and Syrian idiom from Nineveh and Nimrud.

4.4 Syria[78]

4.4.1 Fakhariya

Tell Fakhariya in northern central Syria has been cited by some scholars as a contributor of idiom to this style, but it too pushes the boundaries for defining or even pinning down the criteria for a freestanding international style. There are many fragmentary ivory inlays from a portion of the Assyrian period palace, but again their date is very weak due to their use as fill in the floor of the Iron Age building.[79] The iconography on these inlay plaques constitutes exotic motifs such as Egyptianising Hathor protomés and volute palmette flowers, but they also display features that are a strongly Syro-Mesopotamian in style and content, such as anthropomorphic griffin apkallu genii, winged sun discs, kneeling ovids and robed figures antithetically framing plants. These are all highly reminiscent of Levantine and Syrian internal idiom and later hybrid idiom of the first millennium and not in my view an argument for the Bronze Age unless they are quite late, although Helene Kantor placed them contemporary with the Megiddo ivories on the basis of style.[80]

[74] Petrie and Tufnell 1930, 19, pl. LV.
[75] Liebowitz 1980, 168.
[76] Bryan 1996a, 67; Liebowitz 1980, 165–7.
[77] Markoe 1990, 17–9.
[78] See Table I.3.
[79] Kantor 1958, 57–68, pls. 60–3.
[80] Kantor 1958, 63–4.

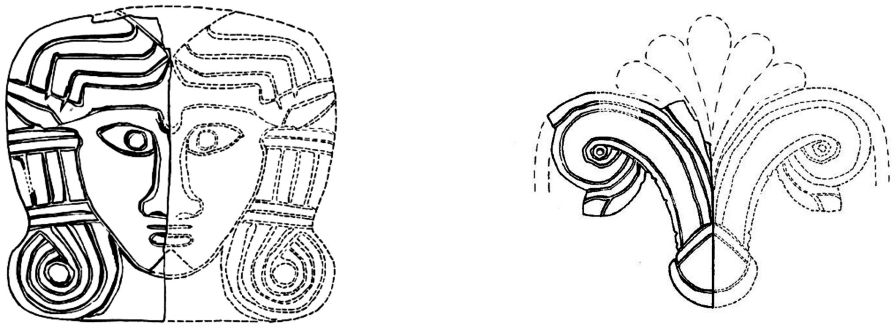

Fig. 4.18 Ivory furniture inlays from Tell Fakhariya, 13th–12th c. BCE (style). After Kantor 1958, figs. 60, 62.

4.4.2 Qatna

The kingdom of Qatna provides the most reliable context and earliest material for discussion of international connections thus far, with a range of prestige media and entangled Egyptian and Syrian idiom from the context of a Bronze Age royal hypogeum situated below the royal palace. The four chamber tomb complex was most likely in use for about four hundred years preceding the destruction of the palace by the Hittites in 1340 BCE, placing the *terminus ante quem* of the tomb approximately contemporary with the late Amarna period and before the reign of Tutankhamen in Egypt.[81] Again we are faced with the time vagaries for elite interments over successive generations for dating this assemblage. However, the objects with hybrid idiom are associated with the latest burials before the tomb was sealed by the destruction and fire in the mid fourteenth century.

Within this royal tomb there were approximately fourteen prestige artefacts in embossed sheet gold and silver from different interments that contribute to discussion here.[82] These probably represent fragments from quiver panels or textile appliqués that were interred with coffins or wooden frames, as they were associated with residual wood and blue dyed textiles. Their likely function gives them possible parallels with the gold appliqués from the tomb of Tutankhamen, although contra Bertsch et al (2018) I find no close stylistic parallels between the two groups, and both technique and medium appear to have been approached differently. While I cite fourteen objects, it is worth noting that only six or seven of these plaques might be classified as international style, the others are Egyptianising Syrian or Syrian. Again this is entirely dependant on classifications for inclusion.

[81] MB IIA–LBIIA, 1850/1800 to 1340 BCE, Morandi-Bonacossi 2013, 16; Pfälzner 2012, 206, 215; Ahrens 2012; 2015; Roßberger 2012, 518.

[82] As with many other contexts with hybrid idiom this depends on the criteria employed, as single motif objects (like gold rosettes or volutes) could hardly be described as 'hybrid', but could potentially be included within broader approaches as part of an international repertoire.

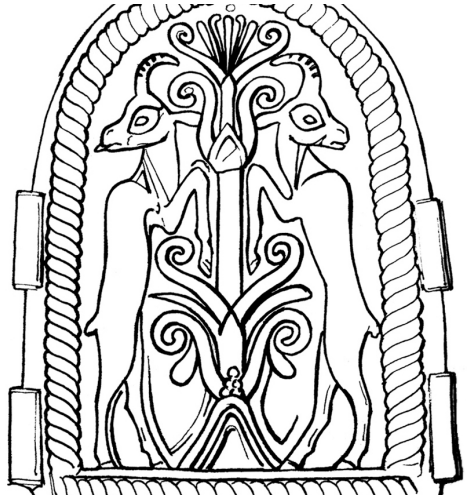

Fig. 4.19 Caprids flanking a volute tree on a gold plaque from the Royal Hypogeum at Qatna, Syria, 1450–1340 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

These plaques were also associated with beads, seals, sealings, scarabs and many vessels of exotic source.[83] The hypogeum contained around sixty Egyptian and Egyptianising stone vessels dating to the Middle through to the Late Bronze Ages,[84] as well as Syrian Nuzi ware ceramic that is associated with the Mitanni empire at its height. This extensive luxury material effectively links this kingdom with both major powers from the first half of the Late Bronze Age. However, the objects with international features like volute trees, rampant ibex and winged griffins exhibit quite clear local idiom and while some do manifest criteria for inclusion in this style there is an equally strong argument for internal value and production emulating international tastes.[85]

Fig. 4.20 Gold foil appliqué and cap from an ivory horn from the Royal Hypogeum at Qatna. Late 15th to mid 14th c. BCE. Images A. Sinclair.

[83] Roßberger 2012, 519.
[84] Ahrens 2006, 15.
[85] Pfälzner 2012a, 795; 2015, 214.

4.4.3 Ebla

The other Near Eastern sites to contribute in a lesser way to this discussion must be the Middle Bronze Age Amorite cities of Ebla/Tell Mardikh in northern Syria and Tell Sakka further south near modern Damascus. Both sites are in fact not precisely relevant to a discussion of the Late Bronze Age, rather they illustrate the complex relationship that Egypt maintained with neighbouring elites in the Middle Bronze Age. Yet each also contributes evidence of entangled prestige artefacts and intrusive Egyptian visual idiom being employed by local elites in Syria as a vehicle for expression of royal power. The Amorite royal palace at Ebla was destroyed by the Hittites as they expanded politically in Syria, ca. 1600 BCE and within a storeroom[86] of this building the excavators found many degraded fragments of ivory inlays that bear strongly Egyptian features including divine figures of a falcon headed god, Horus or Re, a goddess with horned crown, perhaps Hathor or Isis, and a crocodile headed Sobek figure, along with hierarchic scale royal figures wearing the *atef* crown, also with geometric (guilloche and *djed* pillar) and floral elements (lilies and papyrus). The poor condition of the ivory was assumed to derive from inlaid furniture that at the time of the city's sacking was already out of use and in storage, perhaps from a royal throne or bed.[87]

The Royal Hypogeum under palace Q at Ebla also contained three tombs, of which two were substantially looted in antiquity.[88] The unlooted tomb, dubbed 'the Tomb of the Princess', contained a relatively complete female burial, with many Egyptian imported alabaster vessels. The other tomb, the Tomb of the Lord of the Goats, while looted, is dated to the MB II, ca. 1750 BCE, and contributed a variety of fragmentary high value Egyptian royal gifts: a cloisonné mace, a gold filigree handle from another mace or stave and gold jewellery.[89] This material all attests to strong connections with the late Middle Kingdom Egyptian court, regardless of whether they are royal gifts, or reception in Ebla of Egyptian royal material. However, it is a cloisonné red gold scarab ring and a floral pendant that attract interest here, as both were considered Egyptian imports by the excavator and these do manifest the volute lily and lotus of upper Egypt in inlaid frit or glass paste.[90]

A date of the early eighteenth century for these flowers makes this perhaps one of the earliest examples of this characteristic floral idiom in precious metal or vitreous paste, yet the technique, medium and visual idiom in this case all point towards Egypt for the source. However, scholarship has not been unanimous on this judgement, and Christine

[86] P 1, room L4070.
[87] Matthiae 1989, 43–5; Scandone-Matthiae 2003.
[88] Matthiae 2008, 32–41; 1980; 1984; Nigro 2009, 159–75.
[89] One mace with a poor repair bears the name of an early 13th Dynasty pharaoh, Hotepibre. But the identification is not secure, as there is at least one phonetic compliment missing and the addition of the 's' folded cloth could identify another ruler, Sehotepibre, Nigro 2009, 166; Scandone-Matthiae 2003, 489; Matthiae 2008, 38–9. The issue of whether this Hotepibre was a foreigner, 'son of the Asiatic', has been effectively refuted on linguistic terms by Kim Ryholt (1998).
[90] This is a very early date for glass in the Near East, if it is glass, and even earlier for Egyptian glass whose origin is still disputed.

Lilyquist in her study of granulation and glass argued that the scarab is 'another local product on the basis of the design', because this flower, 'which anticipates the Mitanni sacred tree', is not documented in Egypt before the Eighteenth Dynasty.[91]

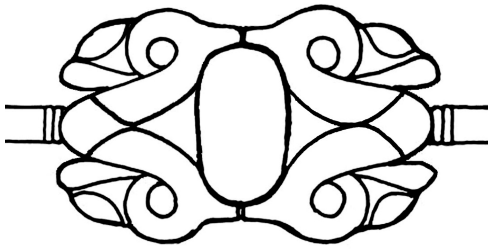

Fig. 4.21 Red gold cloisonné scarab ring from the Lord of the Goats Tomb, Ebla, ca. 1750 BCE. The frit scarab is too degraded to show decoration. Image A. Sinclair.

4.4.4 Sakka

Tell Sakka near Damascus similarly contributes evidence of strong Egyptian connections to southern Syria with elite wall paintings in public rooms from a palatial complex that demonstrate a strong Egyptian influence, at least in terms of idiom of royal rhetoric, such as sphinxes and royal figures in divine *atef* crowns. A fragmentary sacred tree scene with voluted plant and a flanking caprid again muddies the waters about cultural attribution and, like Ebla, effectively pushes these international motifs backwards in time to the internationalism of the Middle Bronze Age. The palace at Tell Sakka may be dated to the early eighteenth century, approximately contemporary with the running spirals, sphinxes and griffins from the wall paintings of Zimri-lim at Mari in Mesopotamia and the prestige Egyptiaca from Royal Hypogea at Ebla, Qatna and Tomb II at Byblos.[92]

Fig. 4.22 Caprid, lotus and voluted plant on a wall painting from the Middle Bronze Age palace, Tell Sakka, ca. 1700 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

[91] Lilyquist 1993, 46.
[92] Taraqji 1999; 2008, 128–9.

4.5 Cyprus/Alašiya[93]

The island of Cyprus was ideally situated in the eastern Mediterranean to facilitate and actively partake in the movement of trade and exotica in the Late Bronze Age. Unlike many of the cultures represented here, it does not appear to have played an active role in Early and Middle Bronze Age cultural interconnections, but from the sixteenth century onwards Cyprus waded into international trade and diplomacy fairly confidently, presumably as social complexity and wealth developed out of a burgeoning metals industry.[94] This statement is qualified by the term 'presumably' because unlike other great states discussed here there is currently no evidence for the ruler that the international correspondences describe. While the connection of Cyprus to the great kings of Alašiya in the Amarna correspondences has been established by scientific examinations of clay for Amarna tablets from inland Cyprus,[95] this is thus far uncorroborated within Cyprus.

Fig. 4.23 Red gold bezel rings from tombs 19 and 67 at Enkomi, Cyprus, 1650–1200 BCE. Images, left after Murray 1900, right A. Sinclair.

The second issue is the nature of social hierarchy in Cyprus. Archaeology has provided evidence for social stratification, sophisticated technology, exotic imports and cult emplacements from emporia cities like Enkomi on the coast, however, no palatial complex has thus far been excavated.[96] Because of this some scholars favour an argument for independent polities over the notion of a unified kingdom, even in the face of the existence of a 'great king'.[97] Nonetheless, the rapid evolution of complex social hierarchies, elite emulation and accumulation of prestige exotica in Cypriot coastal cities is an undisputed fact.[98] The raw materials discussed here: ivory, silver and gold, and technologies like faience and glass may all be considered adopted instruments of

[93] See Table I.4.
[94] Kassianidou 2005, 127; Papasavvas and Kassianidou 2015, 230; Knapp 2015, 23; 2008, 129–32.
[95] Goren et al 2003.
[96] This does not preclude the existence of such architecture, Enkomi was abandoned at the end of the Late Bronze Age and may yet contribute data however, the other major emporium on the Cypriot south coast, Kition, has been continuously occupied since the Bronze Age.
[97] Keswani 1993, 1996; Knapp 2008, 144–53; Peltenburg 2012.
[98] Peltenburg 2012, 1–3; Knapp 2006, 51; 2008, 75–80; Keswani 2004, 152–7; Steel 2013.

power that will have come with the regional recognition of Cyprus as a major player in the supply of raw copper and in the field of complex bronze working. Cyprus represents a broad range of exotic and entangled prestige artefacts which mostly come from elite funerary contexts. They are found in assemblages that bear witness to the internationalism of the period with Egyptian faience, glass, alabaster and gold jewellery, Mycenaean feasting ware, Syrian ivory and faience, Mesopotamian cylinder seals, Anatolian vessels and local ceramic. In fact Cyprus may be argued to be the one culture of the Late Bronze Age that may actually manifest evidence for gifting between royal peers, as some of the richer Enkomi assemblages that Murray and Schaeffer excavated contained Egyptian material that could well have come from the Egyptian court. Tomb 93 contained a rich faience/glass and gold pectoral worthy of an Egyptian royal tomb and a gold bezel ring with *uraei*, while Tomb 19 had two gold cowrie girdles, golden fly pendants and an inscribed gold bezel ring that may read Mw.t nbw t3.wj 'golden Mut of the two lands' which references the Theban goddess Mut, wife of Amen-Re, but may also make a visual pun on mw.t nb t3.wj 'the mother of the lord of two lands'.[99] Egyptian royal names are equally attested on prestige objects dating from the early Eighteenth Dynasty to the Nineteenth at Enkomi, Kition, Kouklia-Palaeopaphos and Hala Sultan Tekke.[100]

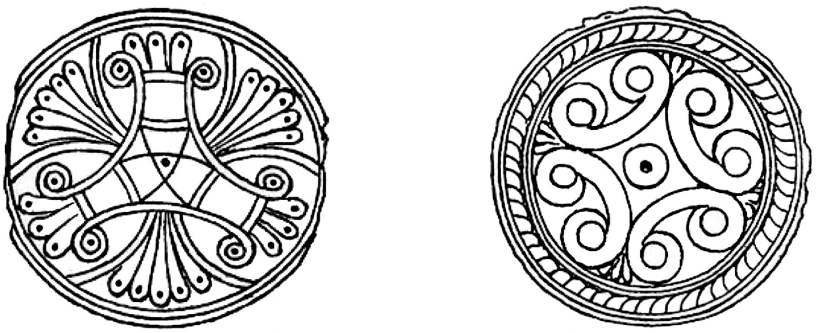

Fig. 4.24 Volute idiom on ivory pyxis lids from Tomb 19 at Enkomi, 1650–1200 BCE. Images after Murray 1900, figs. 22–3.

For international idiom ivory is again well represented by various cosmetic objects, such as mirror handles, pyxides and pyxis lids, most with emblematic scenes or animal combats and others with rosettes of volute plants that hint at the Phoenician sacred tree that was still to come. These ivories all come from elite tombs at Enkomi, Kition-Bamboula, Kouklia-Palaeopaphos (Evreti) and Hala Sultan Tekke, and most date anywhere between the fifteenth to eleventh centuries due to the vagaries of both early excavation documentation and the use of elite tombs for consecutive burials over long periods.[101] The animal decoration of these ivories consists of lions, griffins and bullocks in dynamic and distorted poses, often as combats and Mycenaean style warriors

[99] The British Museum digital collection, finger ring 1 1897,0401.95 cites the goddess Maat 'Maat the golden one' which may well be an error in reading the vulture sign.
[100] Steel 2013, 206–8.
[101] Knapp 2008, 269–72; 2013, 457–9.

grappling with lions or griffins. They are generally described as fusing Levantine and Aegean artistic influences and the animal features such as pronounced veins on legs and flame markings clearly reference ivories from these sources.

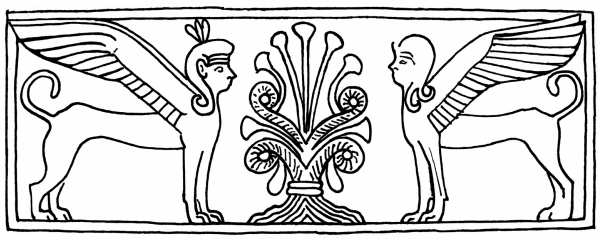

Fig. 4.25 Sphinxes flanking volute tree, gold foil diadem from Tomb 2, Enkomi, 1450–1200 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

Beyond ivory, the group expands out to various objects in precious metals: vessels, plaques and jewellery which pose problems of classification again by virtue of the opaque criteria used to define this idiom. One gold sheet 'mouth plaque' or diadem[102] with emblematic winged sphinxes and a complex volute tree from Tomb 2 at Enkomi has often been included in discussion of international idiom due to the visual content.[103] In fact, if the presence of isolated complex volute trees, rosettes or spirals were taken into account for this corpus, as they have been for ivories from the Levant, then countless embossed sheet gold diadems, pendants and earrings from Cypriot elite funerary contexts must also be included in this style. But this would then expand the repertoire out dramatically, as these motifs are common for these prestige objects, when they bear decoration.

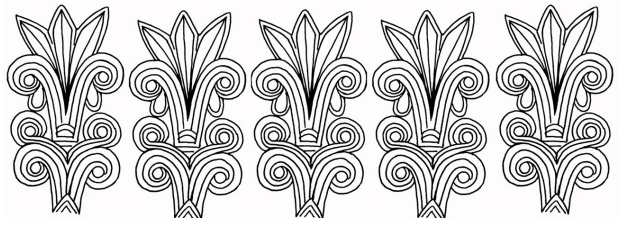

Fig. 4.26 Volute trees on a gold diadem from Tomb 84 at Enkomi, Murray excavation 1900, pl. XII. Image A. Sinclair.

Emblematic scenes, animal hunt, running spirals and volute trees also occur on three small polychrome faience vessels from secondary funerary contexts from the Late Bronze Age elite cemetery of Kition-Bamboula at Larnaka in south-eastern Cyprus. These three objects have the honour of being considered members of the international style in literature, yet they equally contribute features that ought to disqualify them. The first vessel is an Aegean style polychrome conical rhyton decorated with spiral decorative bands and two friezes of mobile human and animal figures.[104] The central scene contains royal or divine male figures pursuing galloping steers with rope and daggers. These figures blur cultural boundaries by combining smiting pharaoh pose,

[102] The function of these gold funerary strips is disputed, as diadems they have direct parallels with Mycenaean funerary assemblages and by extension with plain apotropaic sheet gold strips from Egyptian and Levantine burials. The decoration however appears distinctly Cypriot, but also conflates easily with international, having overlapping content, for Aegean diadems see Panagiotopoulos 2012b.
[103] Schaeffer excavation, 1949, see Schaeffer 1951, 180, 'pectoral'.
[104] Karagiorghis 1974, I, 17, 33, 40–1 and II, pls. A–C; Peltenburg 1974, 116–35; Foster 1979, 52–3.

including the Egyptian white crown, knives on feet associated with the Egyptian god Bes and costume and streamers usually associated with Levantine gods Baal and Resheph-Nergal. The upper register of the rhyton has a pastoral scene of steers and an antelope frolicking in foliage, with both scenes strongly referencing Egyptian cosmetic boxes and faience tiles.[105]

The definitions of the culturally specific hybrid features on this vessel are somewhat predicated on the perception of which features represent a given culture, with a brief example here from Bernard Knapp who describes this rhyton as fusion of Aegean form, Levantine idiom and Egyptian technology, while concluding that the object is a hybridised Cypriot elite product.[106] While contrarily, I find this vessel to contain predominantly Egyptian idiom with intrusions of Syro-Levantine or Cypriot idiom (particularly the male figure). The Aegean features are essentially the vessel form, the running spiral and mobile poses. However, both technology and form could be Egyptian, as the conical rhyton, while originally a Minoan cult vessel type was produced in the Aegean in stone and metal. Conical rhyta in faience are currently not attested from the Aegean, but this vessel type (with spirals) and the stirrup jar were adopted and produced in Egypt and the Levant in the early Late Bronze Age.[107] Again we are faced with the issue of adopted technology continuing to be attributed to a cultural source well after transference and assimilation have taken place.

Fig. 4.27 Conical rhyton from area above tombs 4 and 5 at Kition-Chrysopolitissa, 1300–1200 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

The other two faience vessels are a fragmentary amphora and a stemmed vase from the French excavations at Kition-Bamboula.[108] The stemmed vase has drawn fluting on the base and a primary frieze of antelopes framing volute trees above which is a frieze of papyrus flowers. The shoulder has a hunt scene where two huntsmen pursue antelopes and a lion, with the stock fill-herb motif used as fill. The amphora is polychrome with a yellow and blue *nymphaea caerulea* on the base, running spiral bands, caprids and birds flanking volute trees and Egyptian petal ornament on shoulder and neck. These three faience vessels exemplify the notion of Late Bronze Age fully entangled object,

[105] See the gazelles from Ramesside palace tiles at Tell el Yehudiya, page 229.
[106] Knapp 2008, 269.
[107] The earliest attestations are 16th century, late Hyksos period and early 18th Dynasty, Peltenburg 1974, 128; Koehl 2006, 342–3; 2008, 429; Vermeule 1982, 152–3.
[108] Yon and Caubet 1985, 41–52, 63–9, 70–2, fig. 33; Peltenburg 1985, 190–1.

consisting of hybrid iconography, exotic forms: amphora, jar, rhyton, technology and material; polychrome faience.[109] In this case the use of complex moulds and polychrome leans heavily on Egyptian sources. However, the intrusion of Egyptian techniques, motifs and of 'human' actors undermines the rhetoric for an international style and in earlier scholarship it is possible to find them all described as Egyptianising.[110]

For the benefit of discussion, I also include here three disputed hybrid objects. The first is the silver and 'niello' wishbone bowl with a horizontal frieze of bucrania, lotus and rosettes from Tomb 2 at Enkomi. This is cited primarily because it both has had a place in past dialectic and it does exhibit relevant entangled visual idiom, form and media, again raising the issue of repertoire and constructed boundaries of entanglement. While originally included in discussion it has been rejected in recent scholarship from inclusion in the international style presumably due to internal features such as Cypriot form (wishbone bowl) and visual idiom (bucrania).[111] However, in terms of hybridity, the conflict associated with this bowl was always centred on the degree of Aegean influence in its construction and affinities with Mycenaean bowls and daggers employing that disputed substance, niello.

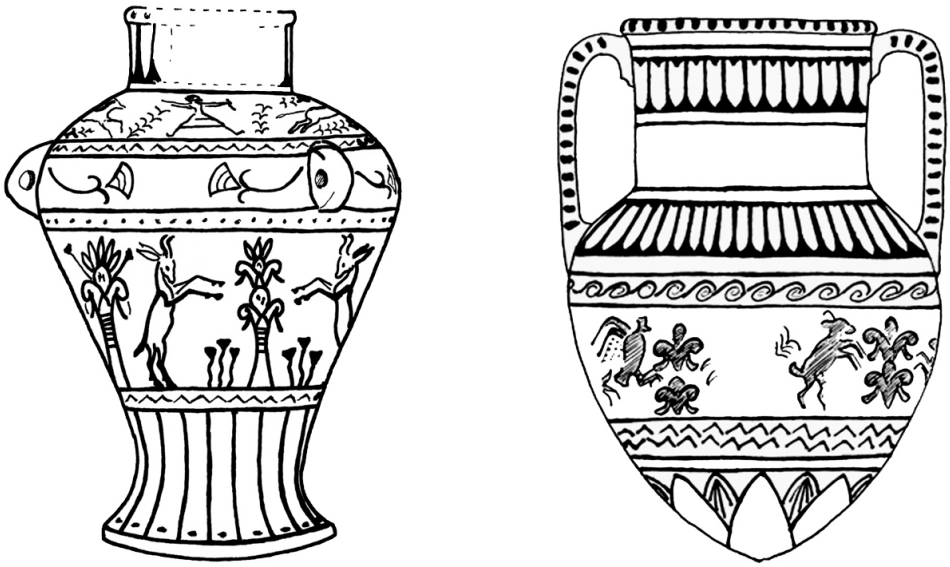

Fig. 4.28 Bichrome jar and polychrome amphora from Kition-Bamboula, Cyprus, 1425–1200 BCE. Images A. Sinclair.

There is also a miniature ivory conical rhyton from a cult pit of the sanctuary at Athienou-Bamboulari in central Cyprus that has been cited as international in Cypriot

[109] Sinclair 2012, MA dissertation, The University of Melbourne.
[110] Peltenburg 1972, 132.
[111] Schaeffer 1959.

scholarship.[112] If entangled idiom and form describes an international vessel, then this object qualifies for inclusion, with scholars disputing its cultural influences and source. The form is an 'Aegean' conical rhyton and it has four successive registers of idiom, inclusive of human heads in profile, birds, fish and caprids. However, in terms of an international style it has few correspondences with the idiom discussed here.

The third object, the Egyptianising ivory game board with chariot hunt and emblematic scenes from Murray's excavations at Enkomi must also be briefly noted here, even in the face of its rejection due to the presence of active human protagonists and chariot hunt.[113] While chariot hunts do occupy the long sides of the box, either end has idiom that if it were not attached to a finished object would be considered international, one side has two caprids antithetically flanking a foliate tree, the opposite end has a pastoral scene with bullocks. The top on the other hand is decorated with rosettes. Like many objects here, the small ivory rhyton and game box are loosely dated to the last century of the Late Bronze Age.[114]

The final contributions from Cyprus are bronze cult stands and tripods from the last century of the Late Bronze Age into the early Iron. These distinctive objects involved a sophisticated command of metal technology, access to tin and bronze and contribute to the discussion by bearing various features of international idiom as their primary and secondary decoration.[115] They have, however, gone out of fashion in discussions of the international style, because as expected, many are from insecure contexts or have loose chronologies. They may not be excluded though, as those with secure contexts include two from a foundry hoard and many from elite tombs again at Enkomi.[116] Bronze openwork tripod and four sided stands were in high demand internationally at the end of the Late Bronze Age and are attested in both standard and miniature forms from sites in the Aegean, the Levantine coast and Cyprus. They were decorated with a range of themes and idiom inclusive of presentation scenes, processional figures, sometimes with musicians and ingot bearers, chariots, emblematic winged sphinxes and lions, schematic volute trees and animal combats.[117] Where they are inconvenient to a discussion of hybrid idiom must be their fairly secure provenance as highly prized prestige products of the sophisticated Cypriot metal industry.[118]

Additionally, these objects like many others here seamlessly fuse 'intrusive' idiom with what is undoubtedly internal Cypriot visual idiom with quite late chronological setting

[112] Dothan and Ben Tor 1983, 123–5, fig. 56; Knapp 2008, 269; 2013, 457; van Wijngaarden 2002, 166–7, fig. 11.3.
[113] This does not prevent this gameboard from still being cited in discussions of international idiom, Aruz 2013, fig. 19.7; Caubet 2009.
[114] Knapp 2008, 269–71; 2013, 457.
[115] Papasavvas and Kasianidou 2015, 233–4; Aruz 2013, 296; Schorsch and Hendrix 2003, 76–7.
[116] British Museum numbers: (hoard) 1897, 0401.1571: 1897, 0401.1460: (Tomb 58) 1897, 0401.1516 (Tomb 97): 1897, 0401.1296: 1897, 0401.1517.
[117] Papasavvas 2004, 33; Knapp 2008, 272–4.
[118] Zuckerman (2012) has put a case for Ugarit as the production source, ca 1200 BCE, on the basis of a commercial letter from the House of Urtenu that orders the materials for 40 bronze stands. However, this evidence is contemporary with the stands from Cyprus and rather emphasises the mobility of technologies at the time.

(late LCIIC–III). Provenance and date instead argue in support of the thesis for the creation of a distinctly Cypriot elite visual style in the second half of the Late Bronze Age that employed an international repertoire. Again the evidence tends to undermine an argument that the international objects exhibiting hybrid imagery from Cypriot elite contexts are exotic gifts.[119]

Fig. 4.29 The end panels of the ivory game board from Tomb 58, Enkomi, 1315–1050 BCE. Image A. Sinclair.

4.6 The other Great Kings

The final section of this chapter makes an awkward impact on a discussion of international idiom, as according to most contemporary commentators there are no acknowledged fully hybrid international pieces from the rulers of Hatti, Mitanni, Kassite Babylon and Assyria. It is interesting to note that few scholars question this state of affairs presumably on the assumption that the fault lies with the archaeological record, which is possible considering the paucity of royal funerary evidence from Hatti and Mesopotamia for the Late Bronze Age. However, this does not explain the absence of international hybrid artefacts from palatial or temple contexts. It is worth noting that fifty to sixty years ago Anatolia, Mitanni and Assyria were included in discussion of this topic, with scholars like Smith including Middle Assyrian prestige objects as evidence of his broader international style, such as an ivory pyxis and a comb from the elite tomb, Tomb 45 (1400–1200 BCE), and palatial paintings and ivory tiles or inlays from the palace of Tukulti-Ninurta I in Aššur (1240–1200 BCE).[120]

These ivory examples combine offering and ritual scenes with elements from the international repertoire, such as goats grazing on sacred trees and dot rosettes. However, the sacred trees of the ivories have clear naturalistic features (foliate, date palm and pomegranates), never losing their Assyrian character and the trees of the palace wall

[119] Voskos and Knapp 2008; Knapp 2008, 280.
[120] Ivories: Wicke 2012; Tomb 45: Feldman 2006b; Wartke 1992; 1995, 81–3, 110–1; Stein 1993, 300, 304.

tiles lean towards the later stylised Neo-Assyrian tree of the first millennium. Equally the figures accompanying these trees are pure Mesopotamian in value with antithetically placed mountain gods and winged bull genii.[121] None of these examples argue more than the adoption of international idiom into local rhetoric of power in the last century of the Late Bronze Age.

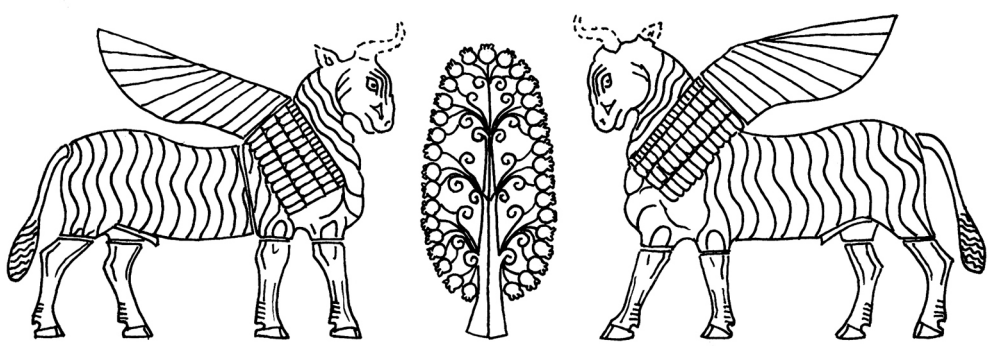

Fig. 4.30 Ivory wall tiles from the palace of Tukulti-Ninurta I, 1240–1200 BCE, Aššur. Image A. Sinclair.

Mitanni equally was represented in earlier discussion by the Nuzi palace paintings and by the plant idiom from Nuzi ware ceramic, both loosely dated to the last century of Mitanni (1450–1350 BCE), but are now each considered to be Syrian elite visual rhetoric that is incidentally not directly associated with royal contexts.[122] Confusingly some scholars may also include the exotic idiom from floors and walls of Syrian and Mesopotamian Middle Kingdom palaces under this topic, however, they are excluded here due to the understanding that they are products of the earlier international age and unless otherwise indicated do not directly inform the royal rhetoric of the Late Bronze Age.

The palmettes, sphinxes, griffins and hunt scenes on early Iron Age orthostats from palaces and cult centres throughout Syro-Anatolia were also once included in this discussion, but have quietly faded to obscurity with the passage of time and more stringent criteria. What this leaves is a few very sparse objects from Anatolian or Syrian sites that in the main clearly reflect local elite rhetoric employing international idiom, and the awareness that in terms of text and archaeology there is a major lacuna. In fact, it must be emphasised here that the primary source for objects with hybrid idiom is the eastern Mediterranean littoral, particularly Cyprus, Ugarit, Megiddo and other Levantine city states. There are in theory only two Great Kings represented by the vast majority of evidence and one was most likely in Cyprus, with the rest of the evidence coming from cities, kingdoms and lesser kings under the relative jurisdiction of Egypt for most of the period, or who were closely allied and active trading partners.

[121] Martin 1995, 98–9.
[122] The palace at Nuzi was a provincial governor's residence.

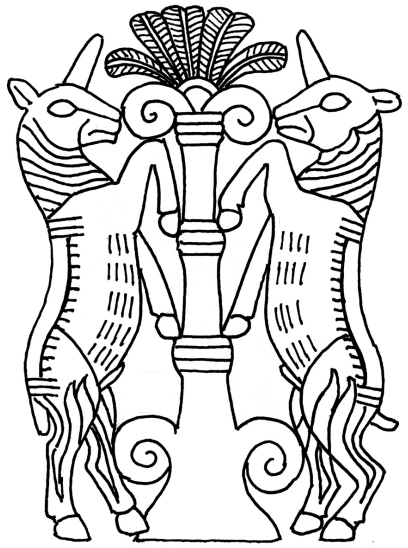

Fig. 4.31 Goats and volute tree on a basalt orthostat from the palace at Tell Halaf, early Iron Age, Neo-Hittite period. Image A.Sinclair.

As case in point, the objects from Ugarit appear to reside in the fourteenth century approximately between the Amarna kings and the switch of allegiance to Hatti in the thirteenth, at which point this hybrid imagery seems to drop out. This does not build a picture of Great Kings gifting each other lavish objects replete with generic idiom of vague notions of kingship and power. Unless only Egypt and Cyprus were retaining prestige gifts and choosing to be buried with them, while their royal peers speedily had theirs reworked. Rather the evidence leans towards objects displaying this idiom being associated with a more contracted geographical range of allies and trading partners and perhaps a connection to Egypt, which brings us to the final player in the diplomatic game.