

'HIGH PLACES' IN THE AEGEAN:  
THE CASE FOR NON-CRETAN PEAK SANCTUARIES

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In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

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by  
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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

‘HIGH PLACES’ IN THE AEGEAN:

THE CASE FOR NON-CRETAN PEAK SANCTUARIES

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In loving memory of Carl.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

## CHRONOLOGICAL TERMS:

FN: Final Neolithic			
EBA: Early Bronze Age	EM: Early Minoan	EH: Early Helladic	EC: Early Cycladic
MBA: Middle Bronze Age	MM: Middle Minoan	MH: Middle Helladic	MC: Middle Cycladic
LBA: Late Bronze Age	LM: Late Minoan	LH: Late Helladic	LC: Late Cycladic

‘HIGH PLACES’ IN THE AEGEAN: THE CASE FOR NON-CRETAN PEAK  
SANCTUARIES

Kristine Mallinson

Dr. Susan Langdon, Dissertation Supervisor

ABSTRACT

My dissertation, centers on the overseas religious and cultural influences of the so-called Minoan culture of Bronze Age Crete through a critical, comparative analysis of alleged peak sanctuaries in the Aegean islands, and Greek mainland. A detailed study of the material culture and topographical elements of the sites sheds light on cultural exchange of religious ideas and choice of these non-Cretan Bronze Age communities, ultimately focusing on how new means of creating, expressing, and maintaining social distinction were constructed through certain groups’ participation in Minoan-influenced socio-religious practices. This project serves as the first detailed analysis of all possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries and seeks to determine if the non-Cretan peak sanctuaries are a direct result of Minoanization (i.e., tied to the rise of Knossos on Crete), part of a larger Aegean cultural *koine*, and/or has roots in local behavior. This project, then, complicates the debates surrounding Minoanization by focusing on religion, an aspect previously neglected due to lack of evidence.

The primary data offered by this research is the firsthand study of a large assemblage of ‘conical cups’ from the recently discovered peak sanctuary site at Stelida, Naxos. These small, handleless drinking vessels have long been recognized as marker of Minoan influence, both in terms of the cups’ form, and the associated rituals of consumption. Through my multifaceted study, I explore what the technological aspects tell



us about the individuals making the Stelida cups (i.e., borrowing of Minoan practices, standardization, and instances of innovation); how the Stelida cups compare to both Minoan and other Minoanizing Cycladic cups; and how they compare to conical cups found at other Naxian sites of broadly contemporary date. This project illuminates processes that are typically not considered in the larger questions of cultural interaction during that era when Minoan overseas cultural influence is seen to be at its greatest, i.e., the Second Palace, or Neopalatial Period.

## Chapter One Introduction

The study of Later Middle to Early Late Bronze Age cult places have served as a cornerstone of Aegean prehistory for over a century (e.g., Renfrew 1985; Marinatos 1993; D'Agata and Van de Moortel 2009). Yet the focus has tended to center around the island of Crete and the Greek mainland, with one notable exception of Renfrew's 1985 *The Archaeology of Cult: The Sanctuary at Phylakopi*. This study presents the first comprehensive comparative analysis of one type of open-air Minoan cult place, the non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. My goal is to examine the influence of the Minoan culture in the sphere of religion beyond Crete (fig. 1). Minoan peak sanctuaries have been the subject of much research since J.L. Myres first defined the concept in 1903 at the site of Petsophas.<sup>1</sup> Several sanctuaries of this type have been claimed to exist outside of Crete and linked with the process of Minoanization but have not been the subject of a detailed comparative analysis.

This research project emerges from the discovery of a Minoan-type peak sanctuary on Stelida, northwest Naxos during the summer of 2019. Stelida is well known as a Palaeolithic-Mesolithic chert quarry that has revolutionized our understanding of Neanderthal and early *homo sapiens* movement through the Aegean.<sup>2</sup> As a supervisor at Stelida, I initiated the excavation of a Trench 44, a modest 1 × 1.5-meter trench on the uppermost, flattest part of the southern peak in 2019 in order to try to locate *in situ* Palaeolithic material, (fig. 2). While the excavation indeed revealed quantities of Upper Palaeolithic stone tools, this material was intermixed with pottery and other finds of later

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<sup>1</sup> Myres 1902-1903, 356-387.

<sup>2</sup> Carter et al. 2016; 2019.

prehistoric date. While some pottery had been uncovered earlier on the site, within the first few passes the quantity of pottery was doubled. It was clear we had found something significant. With the opening of a second trench, Trench 47, it was clear, given the quantity, context, and character of the finds, we had found a Bronze Age site (fig. 2).<sup>3</sup> The most dominant find within the Bronze Age assemblage is a plain, handleless cup with a flat base and outward flaring sides/body; this distinctive vessel is well-known as the handleless conical cup (henceforth ‘conical cups’), an archetype of the Minoan culture in terms of its form, and the rituals it is associated with.<sup>4</sup> While these cups clearly emulated Minoan forms of the palatial periods, macroscopic examination indicated that the vast majority were locally-made, rather than imports from Crete. Dr. Tristan Carter, the director of the *Stelida Naxos Archaeological Project*, offered me the chance to work on the conical cup assemblage as the evidential basis of my doctoral research project. This material, with its archaeological and historical implications, formed the foundation of my dissertation.

In light of the new evidence from Stelida, a comparison of all alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries has important implications for our understanding of the processes of Minoanization (fig. 1). This project complicates the debates by focusing on religion, an aspect previously neglected due to lack of evidence. In this vein, the current project seeks to understand the processes of Minoanization through the examination of the spread of a particular type of Cretan religious practice outside the island.

My aim is to deploy a detailed study of the material culture and topographical elements of non-Cretan peak sites to shed light on cultural exchange of religious ideas of

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<sup>3</sup> Carter et al. 2021. The finds are discussed in more detail in Chapter Two as well as an explanation for why this is a Minoan peak sanctuary.

<sup>4</sup> Wiener 1984, 20.

Bronze Age communities. Specifically, this research reveals the construction of new means of creating, expressing, and maintaining social distinction through the participation in Minoan-influenced socio-religious practices. Working from a detailed analysis of all possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries, a driving question is whether these sites are a direct result of Knossos-led Minoanization, part of a larger Aegean cultural *koine*, or has roots in local behavior, or some combination of these forces. To this end, the current project employs aspects of identity theory to understand the behaviors of the local communities, as discussed in Chapter Five. A key component of this discussion is the detailed analysis of the Stelida conical cups as the most common type of Minoanizing pottery found at peak sanctuaries.

In the attempt to better understand the dissemination of Cretan cultural influence in the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium cal. BCE and the development of an Aegean-wide religious *koine*, this project addresses the following questions. 1). When and where can evidence of worship on a peak outside of Crete be classified as Minoan in type? What was their role outside of Crete? Were they distinct from Cretan examples and if so, how? 2). Why do these cult sites emerge outside of Crete in the Neopalatial period? 3). Were they tied in with the emergence of a 'Minoan' culture with the rise of Knossos? A more standardized Cretan *koine*? Or is that too simplistic? 4). Since this project deals with both religion and materiality, with the transfer of Minoanized technology and material culture traditions, does it follow that we also have the transfer of religious activity? 5). What do these sanctuaries add to the Minoanization debate? How does it complicate it and how can we bring religion into the debate? In sum, I believe we are able to establish a pattern of determining if one particular

site makes a better candidate than another for the title of a peak sanctuary, a hierarchy of scale.

### Literature Review

Aegean	Cyclades	Absolute (B.C.E.)	Crete (Palatial chronology)	Crete	Absolute (B.C.E.)	Mainland	Absolute (B.C.E.)
Early Bronze Age	Early Cycladic I	3100-3000	Pre-palatial	Early Minoan I	3100-3000	Early Helladic I	3100-3000
	Kampos Phase	2900-2650		EMIB	2900-2650		
	ECII (Keros-Syros Phase)	2650-2500		EMIA	2650-2450/00	EHII	2650-2500
	Kastri Phase	2500-2250		EMIIB	2450/00-2200	Later EHIII	2500-2200
	Kastri Phase and into Phylakopi I Phase	2400-2200		EMIII	2200-2100/2050	EHIII	2200-2100/2050
Middle Bronze Age (MBA)	Middle Cycladic earlier	1875/1850-1750/1700		Middle Minoan IA	2100/2050-1925/00	Middle Helladic (MH)	2100/250-
			Protopalatial	MMIB	1925/00-1875/00		
				MMII	1875/00-1750/00		
	MC Later	1750/1700-1700/1675	Neopalatial	MMIII(A-B)	1750/00-1700/1675		
Late Bronze Age (LBA)	Late Cycladic I	1700/1675-1625/00		Late Minoan IA	1700/1675-1625/00	Late Helladic I	1700/1675-1635/00
				LMIB	1625/00-1470/60		
						LHIIA	1635/00-1480/70
	LCII	1625/1600-1420/1400	Post-palatial	LMII	1470/60-1420/10	LHIIB	1480/70-1420/10
				LMIIIA1	1420/10-1390/70	LHIIIA1	1420/10-1390/70
	LCIII	1420/1400-		LMIIIA2	1390/70-1330/15	LHIIIA2	1390/70-1330/15
				LMIIIB	1330/15-1200/1190	LHIIIB	1330/15-1200/1190
				LMIIIC	1200/1190-1075/50	LHIIIC	1200/1190-1075/50

Table 1: General Chronologies of the Aegean. (Adapted from Manning 2010, 23, table 2.2 and Abell 2014b, 2, table 1).

In the following survey I contextualize the non-Cretan peak sanctuaries, discussed in the following two chapters, by considering the major chrono-cultural framework of the period (Table 1). First, I briefly introduce the ‘Minoan civilization’ by highlighting the prominence of Crete in the Aegean and the role of the palaces within the religious sphere. Then, I review the debates surrounding the nature, dynamics, and significance of Minoan cultural influence overseas, engaging with discussions of the ‘Minoan Thalassocracy’, colonialism, and the more recent concept of ‘Minoanization’. Embedded in this discussion is a socio-economic characterization of the larger Aegean Middle Bronze Age (henceforth MBA) to situate the discussion of non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. This survey progresses geographically, commencing with Crete, then moving via the islands (with a focus on the Cyclades), before alighting on the Greek mainland. Finally, I turn to the phenomenon of peak sanctuaries: their definition, history of research, characteristics, and role in the political/socio-religious landscape of state level Crete.

### The ‘Minoan Civilization’: History of Concept, Terms, and Religion

On the island of Crete, the fifth largest island in the Mediterranean and a ‘stepping’ stone between the eastern and central Mediterranean, the so-called ‘Minoan Civilization’ emerged during the Bronze Age (ca. 3100-1050 BCE).<sup>5</sup> The term Minoan was first used by Karl Hoeck in the book *Kreta* when discussing the history of the island of Crete.<sup>6</sup> Arthur Evans was the first to translate the German term *minoisch* into the English term ‘Minoan’, as he excavated the remains of Knossos in his seminal publication the *Palace of Minos*.<sup>7</sup> As a result, Minoan is the term designated for the people and their material on the island

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<sup>5</sup> Adams 2017, 2.

<sup>6</sup> Karadimas and Momigliano 2004, 245. Hoeck 1823, 1828, 1829.

<sup>7</sup> Evans 1928. Though it is usually thought that Evans was the first to coin the term.

of Crete during the BA. The material remains from the island (e.g., frescos, pottery, metals, stone goods, etc.) are a distinct and unique phenomenon.<sup>8</sup> There are four main time periods associated with the Minoans, each of which are centered around the development of palatial centers: Prepalatial, Protopalatial, Neopalatial, and Postpalatial (Table 1). It was in the Protopalatial period when the first palaces emerge on Crete (as well as the first peak sanctuaries, as discussed below). These palaces are of a common form, functioning as complex, multi-functional buildings with rooms around a large rectangular central court on a north-south axis and a second important courtyard on the western side.<sup>9</sup> The palaces are well planned and organized structures that suggested dominance of a local elite or several elite groups.<sup>10</sup> It is within this period that Minoan culture became more lavish and connected with foreign entities, e.g., Egypt and the Near East.<sup>11</sup> For purposes of this dissertation, we are namely interested in the Neopalatial period.

The Neopalatial period (1750-1460 BCE) is typically thought of as the height of Minoan culture, with lavish art, architecture, and goods when the Minoans were the ‘dominant culture’ in the Aegean and very connected to Egypt, the NE, and other parts of Greece through trade.<sup>12</sup> This is the also the period that we see a huge increase in Minoan and Minoanizing goods/elements outside of Crete, as discussed later on in this chapter. Knossos in central Crete is thought to be the main supra-regional center and appears to set cultural standards of the time. Situated near modern-day Heraklion, Knossos the largest, most lavish, and best studied Minoan palace on Crete.<sup>13</sup> It is from this palace that most of

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<sup>8</sup> Fitton 2002, 9.

<sup>9</sup> Fitton 2002, 68.

<sup>10</sup> Fitton 2002, 67.

<sup>11</sup> Fitton 2002, 63-64.

<sup>12</sup> Adams 2017, 1.

<sup>13</sup> Adams 2017, 9-11.

the information about the ‘Minoan civilization’ emerges, though it is a unique site for its lavishness and greatness. For interests of this research, Knossos has a peak sanctuary associated with it: Juktas, the richest and largest of the Cretan peak sanctuaries. The palaces, during the Neopalatial period are generally characterized by a rectangular central court on a roughly North-South orientation with an important west court, extensive storerooms, workshops, archive rooms, and areas used for ritual or storage of cult.<sup>14</sup> Most use ashlar masonry. These palaces were extravagant in terms of the size and richness of material remains of frescos, luxury goods, and the sheer quantity of material.

It is generally thought that palaces functioned as centers of redistribution, innovation, and controlled Minoan religion.<sup>15</sup> In fact, it was Evans who first put forth the Minoan palace-sanctuary theory which viewed the palaces as controlled by a priest-king, with Knossos specifically in mind.<sup>16</sup> More recently scholars have suggested that public religion may have been dominated by palatial elite, instead of a single priest-king.<sup>17</sup> Minoan religion appears to have played a central role in Minoan society which permeated from the palatial centers. Scholars, like Adams, suggest that Minoan religion was used to join “people together through a shared cultural symbolism and sense of collective identity, while, at the same time, it creates, legitimizes, and challenges social differentiation.”<sup>18</sup> In sum, it is commonly understood that the trends in Minoan culture most likely were set by palatial elites who were well connected with cultures outside of Crete as there is evidence of material from the Near East, Egypt, and elsewhere in the Aegean. As discussed

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<sup>14</sup> Fitton 2002, 114.

<sup>15</sup> Younger and Rehak 2008, 173-174.

<sup>16</sup> Schoep 2018, 5.

<sup>17</sup> Younger and Rehak 2008, 166.

<sup>18</sup> Adams 2017, 12.



throughout this dissertation, it is within the Neopalatial period when we see a centralization and standardization of material, with Knossian community acting as the main cultural innovator.<sup>19</sup> Thus, the question arises as to the role of Knossos in overseas relations, and particularly within the sphere of religion.

Minoan overseas relations: from Thalassocracy and Colonies to ‘Minoanization’

It was Arthur Evans who first proposed an overseas Minoan empire, a claim based on a combination of archaeological evidence and the writings of Herodotus and Thucydides,<sup>20</sup> with the significant quantities of Minoan material culture found outside Crete? allegedly reflecting military domination by Cretan forces. He characterized this empire as a Minoan Thalassocracy which suggested that not only did non-Cretans adapt the culture of the Minoans, but Minoan people moved to the islands.<sup>21</sup> Modern European colonialism greatly influenced Evans, who saw Minoan culture as the ‘cradle of European civilization.’<sup>22</sup> Thus, embedded in the discussion of the ‘Minoan civilization’ are modern European socio-political situations that influenced early archaeologists.

The idea of a Minoan thalassocracy has not been without its critics, even early on. In 1955 Starr argued that the Minoan thalassocracy was a myth invented in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE to justify the Athenian empire.<sup>23</sup> The core of his argument rested on the fact that even if the Minoans used the islands in the Aegean as footholds for access to trade, it did not mean that such sites were controlled by the Minoans.<sup>24</sup> This perspective eventually led to a theory of Minoanization, a more recent term used by scholars as an alternative to the idea

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<sup>19</sup> Adams 2017, 11.

<sup>20</sup> Evans 1928, 626; 1935, 283, 754–755; Herodotus 3:122; Thucydides I.4.

<sup>21</sup> Evans 1928; 1929; 1935; Niemeier 2009, 13; Girella et al. 2016, 2.

<sup>22</sup> Evans 1921, 24; Adams 2017, 21.

<sup>23</sup> Starr 1955, 289-291.

<sup>24</sup> Starr 1955, 285-286.

of the Minoan thalassocracy, as discussed below.<sup>25</sup> This concept provided a way of understanding the large number of Minoan and Minoanizing objects found outside of Crete, specifically on the Aegean islands, that were not militaristically focused.<sup>26</sup>

Following the initial scholarship on Minoan Crete in the early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century as discussed above, there was renewed interest in the debate surrounding the phenomenon of Minoan interaction outside of Crete in the 1980's.<sup>27</sup> The projects on Kea at Ayia Irini, Melos at Phylakopi, and Kythera at Kastri provided the incentive for reexamining the idea of a Minoan thalassocracy.<sup>28</sup> The 1982 conference and later publication, *The Minoan Thalassocracy: Myth and Reality*, pushed the discussion further.<sup>29</sup> A panel at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America and the subsequent 2016 publication *Beyond Thalassocracies: Understanding Processes of Minoanisation and Mycenaeanisation in the Aegean* revisited the debate.<sup>30</sup> Despite the long history of discussion, there still tends to be a Creto-centric view of trade and contact during MM III-LM II. Within the debate about the role of Minoan influence, there has been a general trend away from colonialism as an interpretive framework, to the idea of Minoanization, which does not negate the possibility of population movement but emphasizes that local populations had a more active choice in the interaction with the Minoan culture. This survey first discusses the practice of colonialism that is linked to Evans' idea of the Minoan thalassocracy before discussing Minoanization as a phenomenon.

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<sup>25</sup> Broodbank 2004, 46.

<sup>26</sup> Broodbank 2004, 46.

<sup>27</sup> Rutter and Rutter 1976; Branigan 1981; 1984; Cherry 1981; Davis 1979; 1980; 1984; Schofield 1982a and b; 1984; Wiener 1984.

<sup>28</sup> Girella et al. 2016, 4.

<sup>29</sup> Hägg and Marinatos 1984.

<sup>30</sup> Gorogianni et al. 2016.

Colonialism characterized the first trend, specifically an understanding of Minoan activity within outside of Crete as colonial in nature.<sup>31</sup> This perspective tended to characterize the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and focused on the ideas of colonies and acculturation, implying the passive loss of cultural traits of less complex societies when in contact with more dominate societies.<sup>32</sup> Branigan's 1981 publication set in motion the identification of 'Minoan settlements' in the Aegean as specific types of colonies. He identifies three types: governed, settlement, and community. Governed colonies are previously established settlements on which a foreign government is forcefully imposed. The purpose of this would be to establish a strategic or commercial outpost.<sup>33</sup> Archaeologically speaking, Branigan argues that there will be evidence for a governor residence, some sort of protection (walls, a garrison (both accommodation and equipment), maybe offices and accommodation for an immigrant staff, imported luxuries from the homeland, and evidence for distinctly uneven social and spatial distribution of imports.<sup>34</sup> Settlement colonies are towns that were established by foreign people on previously unoccupied lands. These colonies were established either due to population pressure back home or for new opportunities.<sup>35</sup> The archaeological material includes new occupation with distinctly foreign material, including architectural styles of the homeland but with modifications with local material, a high level of imports including personal belongings at first, then local material might be incorporated based on whether or not a strong connection with the

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<sup>31</sup> Branigan 1981; 1984; Niemeier 1998; 2009; Attoura 2002.

<sup>32</sup> Mackenzie 1904; Furumark 1950; Scholes 1956; Barber 1974; 1984; 1987; Branigan 1981; 1984; Wiener 1984; 1990; Girella and Pavúk 2015, 388.

<sup>33</sup> Branigan 1981, 25-26.

<sup>34</sup> Branigan 1981, 25.

<sup>35</sup> Branigan 1981, 26.

homeland is maintained.<sup>36</sup> Evidence of burial practices, religious cults, and politics of the homeland will remain in place for generations.<sup>37</sup> Finally, community colonies are made up of a population of immigrants from a foreign place who sought a trade or commerce opportunity.<sup>38</sup> The archaeological evidence differs based on the strength of the cultural traditions of the ‘colonists’ according to Branigan, but generally he argues that social customs such as religious and burial habits are typically maintained.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, personal belongings and architecture would probably reflect a mixture of local and homeland traditions.<sup>40</sup>

For all three colony classifications, Branigan assumes that the colonialists will maintain a sense of homeland tradition and impose it in the new settlement. The key is to identify these foreign elements that are more than simple imports that could be generated through trade; thus, it relies of distinct behavioral traits such as burial practices and architecture. He argues that on the basis of evidence most of the Minoan sites outside of Crete would be classified as community settlements<sup>41</sup> except for Kastri on Kythera that can be labeled a settlement colony.<sup>42</sup> Scholars tended to use this identification, though it has fallen out of practice more recently. The focus on colonies placed the emphasis on the Minoans, both in regard to movement of goods and people as well as impetus for interaction with the wider Aegean.

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<sup>36</sup> Branigan 1981, 26.

<sup>37</sup> Branigan 1981, 26.

<sup>38</sup> Branigan 1981, 26-27.

<sup>39</sup> Branigan 1981, 26-27.

<sup>40</sup> Branigan 1981, 27.

<sup>41</sup> Branigan 1981, 31.

<sup>42</sup> Branigan 1981, 32.

Following Branigan's method is Wiener's 'Versailles effect' approach that follows the idea of colonialism but with a particular focus on cultural trends.<sup>43</sup> Wiener argues that the adoption of certain Minoan cultural fashions was not simply for certain cultural gains, but because the locals, specifically the Cycladic locals, thought of the Minoans as culturally superior. He also thought foreign archaeological material was indicative of the movement of people. For example, he believed that the numerous conical cups outside of Crete were a result of Minoan colonists or their descendants, because their mundaneness versus luxury goods could have been a result of the 'Versailles effect.'<sup>44</sup> Niemeier also argues that it was possible that Crete controlled the Aegean islands, especially through weapon and ship technology.<sup>45</sup> Like Branigan's approach, these place the emphasis on the Minoans rather than the locals.

The main issues of the colonial approach are the use of the word colony, the impetus behind Minoan 'expansion' into the Aegean, the amount of data needed to quantify Minoan activity, and the quality of the material. The relationship between behavior, identity, ethnicity, and archaeological remains has been the focus of much scholarly attention.<sup>46</sup> In regard to prehistoric archaeology specifically, Shennan asks the question of whether archaeological 'cultures' can be read as ethnic identity using the archaeological remains.<sup>47</sup> He states that "ethnic identity appears to be an evanescent situational construct, not a solid enduring fact through which we can trace the destinies of peoples."<sup>48</sup> As such, for Shennan,

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<sup>43</sup> Wiener 1984.

<sup>44</sup> Wiener 1984, 20.

<sup>45</sup> Niemeier 2009, 16.

<sup>46</sup> Shennan 1989, 1-32.

<sup>47</sup> Shennan 1989, 6.

<sup>48</sup> Shennan 1989, 13-14.

“ethnicity...does not exist outside the orbit of early states.”<sup>49</sup> For purposes of this project, central to this is the difficulty of discriminating between the presence of ‘actual Minoans’ and the practices of the local populations. These concerns have been the focus of critiques by many scholars since Evans proposed his idea of a homogenous Minoan civilization.<sup>50</sup> This reappraisal is especially timely in light of the recent criticisms of models like Hellenization and Romanization.<sup>51</sup> Additionally, Knapp states that since the idea of the thalassocracy is most likely modeled on Athens in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE, there may be no evidence that supports such an idea.<sup>52</sup> He argues for an approach centered on the mechanisms of trade during the BA within the Mediterranean.<sup>53</sup> Thus, when I discuss the ‘Minoans’ I am not referring to a distinct ethnic group, but a cultural identity that emerges on Crete during the Bronze Age that is a catch-all term but may not refer to an ethnic group.

The criteria of what makes a site ‘Minoanized’ are less clear. Before the 1980’s a large amount of Minoan pottery and artifacts (or Minoanizing) qualified a site as a Minoanized place. In his 1984 discussion of the relationship between Crete and the Cyclades, Davis argued against this quantitative approach and instead maintained that scholars should still look for these shared cultural traits but emphasized the need to understand the functional role the objects played in the Cyclades.<sup>54</sup> He argued that more specialization in craft production and accelerated competition in the marketplaces spurred by interaction with the Minoan culture signifies a growing social and economic complexity

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<sup>49</sup> Shennan 1989, 16-17.

<sup>50</sup> Hamilakis 2002; Broodbank 2004; and papers in Hamilakis and Momigliano 2006; Girella et al. 2016, 2.

<sup>51</sup> Wiener 2011.

<sup>52</sup> Knapp 1993, 333.

<sup>53</sup> Knapp 1993, 338.

<sup>54</sup> Davis 1984, 159.

in the islands.<sup>55</sup> Thus, the large quantity of Minoanized goods in the Cyclades need not to equal Minoan presence but of a desire on behalf of the local populations to take part in the cultural trends.

In a similar vein, Niemeier (1998) shifted from a purely quantitative approach to focusing on specific artifact types – and related practices – as a means of detailing degrees of intensity of socio-economic interaction. He stated that sites with domestic pottery, the ‘kitchen kit,’<sup>56</sup> evidence for Minoan religion and cult,<sup>57</sup> and burial habits<sup>58</sup> could be argued as having been ‘Minoanized.’<sup>59</sup> Yet, there are some problems with these, for example, the cooking elements or ‘kitchen kit’ theory that mundane cooking utensils could serve as markers of ethnic identity was tested at Phylakopi by Davis and Cherry.<sup>60</sup> They concluded that LBA I material at Phylakopi is not clear – the most common type of cooking pot is most likely Minoan in origin, while not necessarily Cretan in origin, but other types of cooking pots not known on Crete were found.<sup>61</sup> Regarding religion, Marinatos argues that there is a mixture of the sacred and profane in Minoan society – there are sanctuaries with evidence of feasting, making of bread, industrial activities, and storage and this is seen on Crete and on Thera.<sup>62</sup> This, then, suggests that due to the similarity in cult, perhaps the Minoans controlled their ‘colonies’ through religion.<sup>63</sup> This idea is explored in detail within

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<sup>55</sup> Davis 1984, 159-160.

<sup>56</sup> Schofield 1983, 298-299; Wiener 1984, 19-20; 1990, 135, 137-140.

<sup>57</sup> Coldstream and Huxley 1984, 108; Davis 1984, 164-165; Hägg 1984; Marinatos 1984; Niemeier 1986; 249; Wiener 1990, 143-146; Sakellarakis 1996.

<sup>58</sup> Coldstream and Huxley 1972, 220-227; Coldstream and Huxley 1984, 108-109; Hägg 1984, 199

<sup>59</sup> Niemeier 1998, 30.

<sup>60</sup> Davis and Cherry 2007, 303.

<sup>61</sup> Davis and Cherry 2007, 303.

<sup>62</sup> Marinatos 1984, 168.

<sup>63</sup> Marinatos 1984, 176.

the context of the non-Cretan peak sanctuaries that have been identified, however tentatively, throughout the Aegean.

The concept of Minoanization provides a tool to discuss Minoan cultural interaction outside of Crete that does not necessitate the movement of people, while also not negating the possibility. The current state of debate allows for us to talk about the processes of Minoanization when there is evidence of Minoan imports and Minoan influence (whether that is technological, artistic, burial, etc.). However, it should not lead to assumptions of direct colonization or habitation by Minoans throughout the Aegean, beyond small, scattered numbers. While the term Minoanization itself is full of baggage, Broodbank's seminal publication and later Niemeier's have laid the groundwork for the current use of the term. Broodbank describes Minoanization as a

“modern term of sometimes deceptive convenience for a heterogeneous range of ancient material culture, traits, and practices that indicate the adoption in places beyond Crete, through whatever means, of ways of doing things that originated directly or indirectly within that island...[and it is] related in some way to the expansion on Crete of complex palatial polities during the early to mid-second millennium BC.”<sup>64</sup>

Thus, for Broodbank the term covers a broad way of understanding Minoan interaction that leaves room for colonies, diplomacy, trade, inter-marriage, etc. as the various processes that could explain the archaeological record. Niemeier states that the processes of Minoanization most likely did not form through the founding of colonies, but through trade networks, suggesting more choice on behalf of the local populations.<sup>65</sup> In these views, the process appears to be a peaceful interaction with the highest concentration of Minoanizing traits occurring in the Neopalatial period. Broodbank does state that while the process of

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<sup>64</sup> Broodbank 2004, 46.

<sup>65</sup> Niemeier 2009, 12.



Minoanization has been thought to be uniform throughout the Aegean, such an idea does not accurately describe the phenomenon. Instead he suggests that “we need to think about Minoanisation in more multi-variate terms, to investigate specific sets of contextual logics as they emerge, and to integrate our results, if possible, with independently grounded analyses of movement of people and networks of power.”<sup>66</sup> In fact, the term has been applied to various parts of the Aegean.<sup>67</sup> This process of Minoanization as described by Broodbank and Niemeier argues that interaction between Crete and specific islands manifests differently among different communities by which scholars might understand the nuances analytically. Niemeier also suggests that cult and religion would have played a key role in this expansion of power.<sup>68</sup>

In response, my study takes a similar approach arguing for more choice on behalf of the local communities in their relationship with Crete. Such an approach allows for the islanders to be selective in their adaptation of certain Minoan behaviors, especially within the realm of cult and religion. Thus, I seek to juxtapose wholesale rearrangements of Minoan practices as an index of colonialism with a more selective range of Minoan practices as an index of local agents’ adoption and emulation of Cretan traditions. Additionally, this dissertation analyzes a specific set of material cultural to investigate the question of to what extent did Minoan practices get incorporated within local island behavior. Gorogianni states that certain categories of material can provide insight into the influence of the Minoan civilization outside of Crete. Namely she points to the following:

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<sup>66</sup> Broodbank 2004, 58.

<sup>67</sup> See Girella and Pavúk 2015 for discussion of the Northeast Aegean; Niemeier 1998 for Southeastern Aegean and Cyprus, selections in Gorogianni et al. 2016; on Kythera see Colstream and Huxley 1972; Sakellarakis 1996; 2011; Sapouna-Sakellarakis et al. 2012; Tournavitou 2009; 2014; Broodbank and Kiriati 2007; Broodbank 2004; Kiriati 2003.

<sup>68</sup> Niemeier 2009, 20-21.

pottery (imports, emulation of shapes, decoration, use of potter's wheel), cooking technology (tripod cooking pots), textile production (upright loom), administrative technologies (metrology, writing (e.g., Linear A)), wall paintings, architecture, and religious practices.<sup>69</sup> Such processes suggest a more meaningful connection than simple trade, as discussed throughout this dissertation.

More recently, Earle has argued that scholars should not equate the existence of Minoan (or Mycenaean) goods to colonial political structures.<sup>70</sup> This is specifically due to there being no set of agreed upon criteria that equates a site as being Minoanized.<sup>71</sup> Thus, without a set criterion the debate of whether a site is Minoanized or not is unsolvable. The main problem is that the scholarship tends to treat 'the Minoans' as a single unit instead of localized agents. Studies that focus on the micro-level allow for a detailed examination across media to understand these processes of interaction.<sup>72</sup> This, in turn, seeks to clarify the role locals played in the adaptation of Minoan cultural trends.

Related to this is the movement proposed mostly by Davis, Schofield and others who viewed Crete from a Cycladic perspective.<sup>73</sup> They sought to move away from the more passive acculturation model and created a model that allowed the locals more active roles in the adoption of Minoan practices and material.<sup>74</sup> The Western String Theory, which is discussed in detail in Chapter Two, plays a fundamental role in this trend.<sup>75</sup> This direction can be characterized as a post-colonial approach as it assigns more choice to the locals and

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<sup>69</sup> Gorogianni 2016, 145.

<sup>70</sup> Earle 2016, 94.

<sup>71</sup> Earle 2016, 94.

<sup>72</sup> Gorogianni 2020, 56.

<sup>73</sup> Davis 1979; Schofield 1982a; 1982b; Davis 1984; Davis and Lewis 1985; Davis 1986; Davis and Cherry 1990; Davis and Gorogianni, 2008; Whitelaw 2005; Berg 2000; 2002; 2007a; 2007b; Broodbank 2004; Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2005; 2008; Cutler 2012.

<sup>74</sup> Davis 1979; 1980; 1984; Schofield 1984; Papagiannopoulou 1991.

<sup>75</sup> Davis 1979.

shifts the focus away from the ‘dominant’ group. Such an approach allows scholars to study the material within the context of the islands instead of directly comparing it to the material from Crete. The three following approaches continued this post-colonial movement, and this is the current standing of the field.

Another method is the practice of approaching issues of cultural contact through a more holistic characterization of assemblages, which focused on analyses of technologies, production traditions, and their transmissions as evident in the archaeological record and a means of shedding light on various processes that underpin ‘Minoanization’.<sup>76</sup> Pottery production has been at the forefront of this discussion as it is the primary data set archaeologists have, with a specific focus on the potter’s wheel and questions of the standardization of manufacturing to understand the choice that local potters were making as they brought Minoan techniques and shapes into their practices. This sort of micro-level study allows scholars to humanize the processes, specifically how local potters used Minoan technology within their local production.<sup>77</sup> This practice follows the post-colonial approach by focusing on reasons behind the adaptation of Minoan practices in the wider Aegean by the local community artisans. My study on the conical cups from Stelida follows this trend, as seen in Chapter Five.

Mainly focused on pottery, scholars have sought also to incorporate scientific analyses within the study of material culture, specifically the use of petrography.<sup>78</sup> This allows for the sourcing of clays to confirm the long-held belief of the local production of

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<sup>76</sup> Abell 2014a; 2016; Abell and Hilditch 2016; Berg 2007a; 2007b; Gillis 1990a; 1990b. Gorogianni et al. 2016; Hilditch 2014; Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2005; 2008. Niemeier 2009, 20-21; Gorogianni 2020.

<sup>77</sup> Gorogianni 2020, 56.

<sup>78</sup> Marthari 1993a; 1993b; Marthari et al. 1990; Kiriati 2003; Marketou et al. 2006; Broodbank and Kiriati 2007; Hilditch 2008; 2014; Knappett et al. 2011.

pottery even if the technologies used were Minoan. For example, the adaptation of the Minoan potter's wheel to make Minoan shapes using local clays was assumed.<sup>79</sup> This trend has allowed scholars to answer long held questions of Minoan influence over local pottery traditions by testing the local clay sources in these areas to determine if the clay used to create the pottery was indeed locally sourced or imported. If the clay was locally sourced, then it is assumed that local craftspeople were creating the pottery.

Another trend has been focused on network analyses and interaction between Crete and the Aegean.<sup>80</sup> Knapp's 1993 publication called for more focus on the mechanisms of trade, arguing that there were most likely several types of exchange happening, from state-level to private trade.<sup>81</sup> This approach allows for more flexibility in the trade networks and provides more choice on the individual level to push back against the Cretan-centric focus of earlier scholarship.

Marketou suggests a solution, embedded within Minoanization, called Pax Minoica.<sup>82</sup> She suggests that in the mature phase of LM IA when earthquakes and tephra fall affected the local Rhodians, people chose not to develop in isolation but chose to participate in the wider Aegean cultural trends. Namely Marketou states that this was both an expression of elitism and a way to survive following the environmental destructions.<sup>83</sup> Specifically she argues that the local populations possibly adopted more Minoan practices as a means for enticing the Minoans into helping the Rhodians. The assumption is that if Rhodians participated peacefully with the Minoans and adopted aspects of their religion,

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<sup>79</sup> Hilditch 2014.

<sup>80</sup> Davis 1979; Knapp 1993; Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2008.

<sup>81</sup> Knapp 1993, 339-342.

<sup>82</sup> Marketou 2009, 91.

<sup>83</sup> Marketou 2009, 91.

the Minoans were more likely to help them because they would have been more dedicated to their existing relationships.

More recently, Gorogianni has argued for a ‘globalization’ approach that looks for the surge of complex connectivity and a creation of a global culture<sup>84</sup>, which is another contribution to the Minoanization debate. The increased connectivity and development of a global culture “are further correlated with increased standardization and homogeneity coupled with the deterritorialization of cultural traits, but also with inherent vulnerability of all the participants to the exchange network.”<sup>85</sup> She argues that in order to understand processes of interaction, scholars need to have more reflexive and flexible strategies that allow for more clarity in regard to the choice of people and objects.<sup>86</sup> Gorogianni’s methodology is to conduct a detailed analysis of various cultural media (pottery, textile, architecture, and technologies, etc.) that were affected by processes of cultural interaction in both different ways and at different speeds.<sup>87</sup> For example, she studies imported pottery, locally produced pottery, and evidence for textile production from Ayia Irini, specifically the Northern Sector of the settlement.<sup>88</sup> Her goal is to quantify the different categories of material in order to determine if local trends can be established that suggest different affiliations and tastes of the local populations. In her study, Gorogianni shows that a detailed analysis of different classifications of material at Ayia Irini reveals clear Minoan influences, but never a fully ‘pure’ Minoan assemblage, which suggests choice on behalf of the locals in how they chose to incorporate Minoan culture into their daily life. This

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<sup>84</sup> Gorogianni 2020, 54.

<sup>85</sup> Gorogianni 2020, 54.

<sup>86</sup> Gorogianni 2020, 55.

<sup>87</sup> Gorogianni 2020, 56.

<sup>88</sup> Gorogianni 2020, 57.

approach is closely followed in my own examination of the possible peak sanctuaries outside of Crete. In general, the current state of the field has strived for more choice allotted to the local communities.

To argue for the process of Minoanization is to assume that there is such a thing as Minoan culture, but the fact is that there is no uniform ‘Minoan’ culture within Crete. According to Girella, while there is evidence that Knossos created a sort of cultural homogenization starting in the Later MM period, there is still regionalism both in Crete and outside for the engagement of Knossian culture, thus it is very important to understand the historical context when one discusses Minoanization.<sup>89</sup> For Gorogianni, this is where globalization theory is beneficial as such “studies bring to light the realization that we cannot understand the processes and experiences that affect people and their things...if we regard cultures as homogeneous, unchanging, and firmly anchored and delineated in space.”<sup>90</sup> Thus, it is key to discuss the processes of Minoanization within specific historical and cultural contexts.

It is argued by many that Knossos became the main power on Crete in MM III and in the same period the concentration of non-Cretan imports at Knossos greatly increased.<sup>91</sup> As Abell states, “The presence of not only Cycladic, but also Dodecanesian and Milesian imported pottery at MM IIIA Knossos suggests that palatial elites there were actively cultivating new exchange relationships with the wider Aegean in that period.”<sup>92</sup> Within the Cyclades, these new exchange relationships can be explained by the desire of Knossos to access the trade networks through the Western String, but also by the choice of the locals

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<sup>89</sup> Girella et al. 2016, 3.

<sup>90</sup> Gorogianni 2020, 55.

<sup>91</sup> Abell 2016, 74.

<sup>92</sup> Abell 2016, 74; see Knappett et al. 2013 for additional information.

to build a relationship with Knossos.<sup>93</sup> As a result, we need to reframe this idea of a ‘Minoanization’ outside of Crete. And perhaps we are looking more at some sort of ‘Knossianization’ rather than ‘Minoanization’ in Later MC and Early LC, at least within the Cyclades.

The term ‘Knossianization’ has not been used by scholars, instead they continue to use the term Minoanization when discussing the influence of Crete outside the island.<sup>94</sup> Yet, as mentioned above, scholars argue that Knossos seems to be the main influencer of culture on the island during the Neopalatial period and may be the impetus behind activity in the Aegean.<sup>95</sup> The term Knossianization could be used to better represent the cultural influence outside of Crete during MM III – LM I. This is due to multiple reasons: regional variation on Crete suggests there is no uniform Minoan culture, and Knossos appears to be the main impetus behind the activity in the Aegean. Thus, Knossos would have most likely been the trendsetter on Crete.

This idea of ‘Knossianization’ nevertheless presents an interesting critique of the Minoan civilization as a whole and is revisited in Chapter Five. Additionally, while the term Minoanization carries with it a long history of debate and scholarship, Broodbank argues that the term should not be abandoned.<sup>96</sup> I generally agree with this statement because, if the baggage is accepted, it provides a means of understanding Minoan and/or Minoanizing artifacts outside of Crete. However, to properly contextualize both the term and the phenomenon, it is necessary to understand the baggage that comes with the term Minoanization. Henceforth in my use of the term ‘Minoanization’ I adhere to Broodbank’s

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<sup>93</sup> Knappett 2006; Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2005; 2008; Abell 2016, 75.

<sup>94</sup> Broodbank presented the same idea at a job talk in the early 1990’s, personal communication T. Carter.

<sup>95</sup> Girella et al. 2016, 3.

<sup>96</sup> Broodbank 2004, 54.

definition whereby the term implies increased contact with the Minoans due to their increased activity in the Aegean without necessarily invoking military domination and/or the establishment of Minoan colonies though such explanations could be used in certain cases but that we need to be context specific in our understanding of cultural interaction rather than starting with a top-down pan-Aegean narrative.

Four main sites have remained the focus of the Minoanization debate, namely: Ayia Irini, Kea, Phylakopi, Melos, and Akrotiri, Thera from the Cyclades, plus and Kastri, Kythera.<sup>97</sup> It should be noted that all but one of these sites (Phylakopi) have a tentative corresponding peak sanctuary.

### Kythera

Of all overseas contexts, the large island of Kythera arguably shows both the earliest, and most intense cultural connections with Minoan Crete, perhaps unsurprisingly given its proximity, situated between Crete and the mainland (fig. 1). These connections are attested through the results of an excavation at the main harbor town of Kastri<sup>98</sup> and a more recent survey of the southern half of Kythera<sup>99</sup>, the latter attesting to strong cultural connections – if not an actual presence of Cretan migrants/colonists – in the Early Bronze Age, mid-third millennium BCE, a few hundred years before the rise of the Minoan palaces.<sup>100</sup> Overall, in the Bronze Age there seem to be five phases of Minoan influence over the island, according to Broodbank.

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<sup>97</sup> Sakellarakis 1996; 2011; 2013; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012; Tournavitou 2009; 2014; Georgiadis 2012; 2014; 2016.

<sup>98</sup> Coldstream and Huxley 1972.

<sup>99</sup> Broodbank 1999; Bevan 2002.

<sup>100</sup> Broodbank 2004, 49.



Phase 1 dates from 3200-2500 BCE when Minoan influence is sparse, but there is evidence of a local community dating back into the Neolithic Period.<sup>101</sup> The island seems to have been inhabited with dispersed villages from FN to EBA II with material culture similar to the mainland and the Cyclades and west Crete.<sup>102</sup> In Phase 2 (2500-1950 BCE) the local community seems to be borrowing Cretan practices as seen in pottery that is locally made, but exclusively Cretan in both decoration and shapes.<sup>103</sup>

Phase 3, contemporary with Protopalatial Crete (c. 1950-1700 BCE), is characterized as the consolidation of habitation near Kastri and a drop-off in mainland links.<sup>104</sup> The connection with Crete remains strong.<sup>105</sup> Phase Four (1700-1450 BCE) shows direct correlation with Cretan trends. Much more detail is explained in Chapter Three, but in general we see the growth of Kastri and the surrounding area and a slight change in ideological characteristics, with evidence of an elite class in both the funerary and secular worlds (Agios Georgios).<sup>106</sup> Finally, in Phase 5 (1450-1200 BCE) the influence from the mainland seems to emerge.<sup>107</sup>

Kythera, then, presents a case study where cultural developments on the island appear to be closely intertwined with those on neighboring Crete and, as a result, becomes an important cultural center. As detailed in Chapter Three, the island is also home to the one accepted non-Cretan peak sanctuary of Agios Georgios and a possible second one.

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<sup>101</sup> Broodbank 2004, 74.

<sup>102</sup> Broodbank 2004, 75.

<sup>103</sup> Broodbank 2004, 75.

<sup>104</sup> Broodbank 2004, 76.

<sup>105</sup> Broodbank 2004, 77.

<sup>106</sup> Broodbank 2004, 77-81.

<sup>107</sup> Broodbank 2004, 81.

Thus, the nature of investigation on Kythera is very different than the other regions and presents an important comparative case study for Stelida.

### The Cyclades

While the Early MC period was once considered something of a sort of ‘Dark Age’<sup>108</sup> compared to the cultural dynamism of the preceding EC period of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE, due to power dynamics shifting from the Cyclades, to external forces on Crete (Minoans), and the Greek mainland (Mycenaeans). This position was critiqued by Scholes (1956), whose compendium of sites indicated that there was more activity in the Cyclades during this period than previously thought.<sup>109</sup> A subsequent review by Sotirakopoulou (2010) argued that the lack of clear understanding of the Early MC period is not due to the islands being insignificant, but rather a result of the absence of systematic archaeological exploration outside of the Western String Islands.<sup>110</sup> Ultimately she posited that Early MC in the Cyclades was “a period of assimilation of the advances attested in other Aegean regions and preparation for the developments to follow.”<sup>111</sup> She seeks to shed light on the Early MC period in order to understand the cultural changes that occur during the Later MC and Early LC periods. Of pertinence to this thesis, is her specific claim that Troullos (Kea), Mikre Vigla (Naxos), and Mazareko (Andros) might have been Minoan peak sanctuaries. If this is right, she states, scholars would have to reconsider the relationships between the Cyclades and Crete and “pose anew the question over the myth or reality of what was called ‘The Minoan Thalassocracy.’”<sup>112</sup> In light of the new evidence

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<sup>108</sup> Scholes 1956.

<sup>109</sup> Scholes 1956, 11-13.

<sup>110</sup> Sotirakopoulou 2010, 826.

<sup>111</sup> Sotirakopoulou 2010, 837.

<sup>112</sup> Sotirakopoulou 2010, 837.

from Stelida and the consequent reexaminations of other possible peak sanctuaries in the Cyclades, this idea has large implications for our understanding of the Minoan Thalassocracy and is returned to below.

### Rhodes

The evidence for MBA activity on the island of Rhodes is represented primarily by the settlement archaeology of Rhodos, Rianda, and Moschou Vounara.<sup>113</sup> There are however, also two proclaimed religious sites of Philerimos and Prophetes Elias, which are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four.

The settlement data suggests that Rhodes was host to some thriving communities, after a well-developed EBA heritage on the island. The area surrounding Ialysos reveals a rich settlement that displays clear influences from Minoan Crete, as attested variously by material culture, frescos, and architecture,<sup>114</sup> indicating that certain groups in Rhodes were well active participants in the socio-economic networks that connected insular Aegean communities with Protopalatial Crete. As to the character of religious practice on MBA Rhodes things remain somewhat unclear, though there are hints of early ritual activity of Minoan influence at Philerimos, which is discussed in Chapter Four.

### The Mainland

The socio-economic character of the Early Middle Helladic Period (MH)<sup>115</sup> is poorly understood due to the limited archaeological evidence from this period.<sup>116</sup> Most of the evidence comes from graves, while the settlement evidence mostly originates from

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<sup>113</sup> Marketou 2014, 180.

<sup>114</sup> Marketou 2014, 180-184.

<sup>115</sup> The term 'Helladic' is given to the Bronze Age culture of the Greek mainland (Shelmerdine 2008, 3).

<sup>116</sup> Dickinson 2010, 15-27; Cherry 2017, 169. See Cherry 2017 for a recent overview of the MH evidence as well as Philippa-Touchais et al. 2010 for reports on MH sites from across the mainland.

regional surface surveys, architectural studies, and small-scale excavations.<sup>117</sup> However, as Cherry points out most of the evidence from MH is only partially published (e.g., Lerna) and this has likely resulted in an inaccurate understanding of cultural developments of this period.<sup>118</sup> It is generally believed that on the mainland, ‘social complexity’ did not develop until MH III,<sup>119</sup> as evidenced by the wealth of the shaft graves at Mycenae, the contents of which included objects and iconography attesting to clear links with Neopalatial Crete.<sup>120</sup> Voutsaki argues that the evidence from burials reveal funerary behavior that reflected active social change to produce and uphold social distinctions on behalf of the elites.”<sup>121</sup> The catalyst for this activity was Minoan expansion. According to Voutsaki and Tartaron, palatial centers became possible because their political elite were able to eliminate rivals in a regional competition for hegemony.<sup>122</sup>

Thus, our understanding of the earlier MH faces issues that are present in the other regions of the Aegean. The archaeological evidence is scant, and it is largely believed that the mainland suffered a period of depopulation following the end of EH until MH III. However, this may be due more to the lack of archaeological investigation and/or publication rather than a reflection of reality. As a result, the question of what religion looked like on the mainland is difficult to discuss in detail before MH III. It is generally agreed that the first phase of Mycenaean religion was heavily influenced by aspects of Minoan practices (with the imitation and importation of luxury and cult objects), while not

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<sup>117</sup> Tartaron 2008, 103; the Berbati Valley: Wells and Runnels 1996; northwest Phlius and the Nemea Valley: Casselmann et al. 2004; Cherry and Davis 2001; Wright 2004; Wright et al. 1990.

<sup>118</sup> Cherry 2017, 173.

<sup>119</sup> Tartaron 2008, 100.

<sup>120</sup> Tartaron 2008, 101.

<sup>121</sup> Tartaron 2008, 102; See Voutsaki 1995; 1998; 1999; 2001 for a more detailed discussion.

<sup>122</sup> Tartaron 2008, 102.

necessarily representing a wholesale adoption of attendant Minoan belief systems.<sup>123</sup> This phase is MH III and is largely based on the evidence at Epidaurus (see Chapter Three). Thus, the question of whether or not mountaintop cult activity was in existence on the mainland before the 16<sup>th</sup> century is difficult to answer given the lack of archaeological evidence.

The evidence of contact between the different areas of the Aegean during the early part of MBA is perhaps less than other periods, but nevertheless present. For instance, contact between the Cyclades and the mainland is attested at the very start of MBA in the form of imported and exported pottery.<sup>124</sup> The contact between these two regions appears to be mainly with Attica and the northeast Peloponnese as Grey Minyan ware is attested throughout the Cycladic islands as well as Cycladic or Cycladic-influenced pottery found on the mainland.<sup>125</sup> The East Aegean contact with the Cyclades in MBA is not as well attested, but a few sherds or vases have been noted.<sup>126</sup> As discussed later, the contact between Crete and the Cyclades is well attested through MBA, though the connection seems mostly with Knossos.<sup>127</sup> The question of how religious evidence can be used to address the debate lies at the heart of this project. Is it possible to establish a set of criteria to determine Minoan inspiration (or domination) in cultic spaces? Are these Minoan-influenced cults direct replications of Cretan ritual spaces, and practice, or is there evidence of local adaptation? Finally, why did these cult spaces develop outside of Crete during MM III – LM I?

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<sup>123</sup> Tartaron, 2008, 116.

<sup>124</sup> Sotirakopoulou 2010, 833.

<sup>125</sup> Sotirakopoulou 2010, 833. See pages 833-836 for a detailed discussion of the sites and material.

<sup>126</sup> Sotirakopoulou 2010, 836.

<sup>127</sup> Sotirakopoulou 2010, 833.

### Minoan Peak Sanctuaries

Minoan peak sanctuaries are one of the best-known types of Minoan religious cultic spaces. The term ‘Minoan peak sanctuary’ was first employed with reference to Petsophas in eastern Crete, which was excavated in 1903 by J.L. Myres.<sup>128</sup> Since then, scholars have used this term to designate mountain-top cult activity on Crete during the Bronze Age. The most extensive peak sanctuary, in term of numerous and rich finds, sits atop Mount Juktas, in central Crete, excavated by Arthur Evans (fig. 3), and long believed to be associated with the palace of Knossos.<sup>129</sup> As discussed in Chapter Four, since the initial excavation and publications, Juktas has served as the main type-site for the identification of peak sanctuaries (and yet it remains poorly published detail-wise), though it perhaps should be considered a rare example of an extremely rich sanctuary.<sup>130</sup> After the identification of Petsophas and Juktas, there was a surge of peak sanctuaries identified in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>131</sup> thanks largely to the work of Paul Faure<sup>132</sup>, Stelios Alexiou<sup>133</sup>, and Costis Davaras.<sup>134</sup> Their work led to the identification of over fifty peak sanctuaries, though only fifteen of these sites have been excavated, and none have been fully published.<sup>135</sup> As a result, detailed information about these sites is somewhat lacking, complicating the understanding of identifiable traits and trends of Minoan peak sanctuaries.

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<sup>128</sup> Myres 1902-1903, 356-387.

<sup>129</sup> Evans 1921, 154-159.

<sup>130</sup> Evans 1921. See Kyriakidis 2005 for a discussion of the term peak sanctuary, particularly Chapter Two.

<sup>131</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 14.

<sup>132</sup> Faure 1967.

<sup>133</sup> Alexiou 1958; 1963a; 1963b; 1963c; 1966; 1967; 1969.

<sup>134</sup> Davaras 1961-2; 1971a; 1971b; 1971c; 1972a; 1972b; 1973; 1974a; 1974b; 1976; 1978; 1981; 1982.

<sup>135</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 14.

One can also point to more recent surveys by Rutkowski and Nowicki<sup>136</sup>, plus excavations anew at Juktas by Alexiou<sup>137</sup> and Karetsou<sup>138</sup>, while new field work has been conducted by Peatfield and Morris<sup>139</sup> at Atsipades, Chryssoulaki<sup>140</sup> at Traostalos, and Sakellarakis<sup>141</sup> at Agios Georgios on Kythera.<sup>142</sup> In addition, the republication of Vrysinas<sup>143</sup> by Tzachile and of Pyrgos and Philioremos by Kyriakidis<sup>144</sup> have further enabled scholars to detail general trends and traits in the archaeology of peak sanctuaries. There is no consensus regarding the number of accepted peak sanctuaries, with Faure claiming as many as fifty-two examples,<sup>145</sup> a figure reduced to thirty-seven by Rutkowski, while Peatfield has most recently talked of twenty-five, and Kyriakidis lists twenty-two.<sup>146</sup> This lack of consensus is due to the lack of well-defined criteria to identify a peak sanctuary, and/or the use of different criteria, but various scholars have worked on establishing a methodology that seeks to find general trends across the agreed upon sanctuaries, both in the Protopalatial and Neopalatial Periods.<sup>147</sup> Three fundamental scholars (Peatfield, Kyriakidis, and Briault) have attempted such and certain aspects of their methodologies are borrowed in this project.

Alan Peatfield is one of the main scholars of Minoan peak sanctuaries since the late 20<sup>th</sup>, along with the excavation and interim publications of Atsipadhes, Peatfield has

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<sup>136</sup> Rutkowski and Nowicki 1984; 1986; 1988; 1990.

<sup>137</sup> Alexiou 1958; 1963a; 1963b; 1963c; 1966; 1967; 1969

<sup>138</sup> Karetsou 1974; 1975; 1976; 1977; 1978; 1979; 1980; 1981a; 1981b; 1984; 1985; 1988; 1989; 2001; Karetsou and Mathioudaki 2012.

<sup>139</sup> Peatfield 1983; 1987; 1990; 1992; 1994.

<sup>140</sup> Chryssoulaki 1999; 2001.

<sup>141</sup> Sakellarakis 1996; 2011; 2013; Tournavitou 2009; 2014; Sapouna-Sakellaraki 2012.

<sup>142</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 14.

<sup>143</sup> Tzachile 2001; 2003; 2016.

<sup>144</sup> Kyriakidis 2002; 2005, 14.

<sup>145</sup> Faure 1967.

<sup>146</sup> Kyriakidis 2005.

<sup>147</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 13-14.

focused on establishing the criteria for identifying peak sanctuaries. These include: a figurine assemblage of animals, humans, and votive limbs in significant numbers as well as certain topographical elements.<sup>148</sup> The topographical elements include: placement close to or on the summit of a mountain, local or regional prominence of the mountain and/or sanctuary site, clear lines of visibility between the peak sanctuary and the settlement areas, accessibility of mountain and peak sanctuary site, proximity to settlements, proximity to areas of human activity and exploitations, and intervisibility with other peak sanctuaries.<sup>149</sup> Peatfield believes that the topographical elements are vital for the placement of peak sanctuaries. This is because worshippers at the sanctuaries would want to see their home and this “interactive view was intrinsic to the Minoan concept of what a peak sanctuary was for.”<sup>150</sup> He found that twenty-five upland sites on Crete met his criteria for a peak sanctuary.<sup>151</sup>

With his long-term collaborator Christine Morris, Peatfield has also sought to investigate the purpose and meaning of these sanctuaries. They argue that peak sanctuaries initially “seem to embody a rural nature cult arising out of the concerns of the peasantry.”<sup>152</sup> Similarly, Steel argues that they appear to be associated with the emergence of a pastoral economy.<sup>153</sup> These places were for both individual pilgrimage with the deposition of votives and communal gatherings for sacrifice, libation, and feasting.<sup>154</sup> Some scholars have also suggested that the deposition of anatomical votives denotes a healing aspect to

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<sup>148</sup> Peatfield 2007, 297.

<sup>149</sup> Peatfield 2007, 297.

<sup>150</sup> Peatfield 2007, 299.

<sup>151</sup> Morris and Peatfield 2004, 45.

<sup>152</sup> Morris and Peatfield 2004, 45.

<sup>153</sup> Steel 2012, 23.

<sup>154</sup> Steel 2012, 23.



the peak sanctuary cults.<sup>155</sup> In terms of the worship at these sites, Peatfield claims that it was an “intensely sensory experience and [drew] out of the ritual process its essentially performative nature.”<sup>156</sup> Although further work in identifying these ‘experiences’ would allow scholars to better understand the intimate nature of these moments of worship and has not been considered during the excavation of these sites, this is outside the scope of this project. Peatfield’s work served as the first real reexamination and classification of Minoan peak sanctuaries, but with a focus fixed solely on Crete.

In his 2005 book *Ritual in the Bronze Age Aegean: The Minoan Peak Sanctuaries*, Kyriakidis sought to further Peatfield’s work but with a particular focus on the rituals at the sanctuaries. He attempted to determine how scholars could identify peak sanctuaries through establishing certain criteria and traits by examining twenty-two well-studied sites across Crete and one outside of the island (Agios Georgios, Kythera).<sup>157</sup> He establishes what he calls generating criteria (criteria that are necessary for the existence of the category) and non-generating criteria (i.e. traits that are not always shared by all members of a category).<sup>158</sup> Generative traits include: location on a peak, evidence of a non-domestic site, existence of open-air activities, and lack of a settlement on the same peak.<sup>159</sup> Non-generative traits include: presence of certain artifacts (figurines, pebbles, and other items), correspondence and proximity to settlements, visual link between the site and settlement and audio-visual link, and activities dated to the Minoan period.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Steel 2012, 23, Morris and Peatfield 2004, 53, and Watrous 1995, 398.

<sup>156</sup> Peatfield 2007, 300.

<sup>157</sup> The sites are Agios Georgios, Ampelos, Atsipades, Etiani Kephala, Juktas, Kalamaki, Karphi, Korakomouri, Liliano, Megali Keria, Maza, Modi, Petsophas, Philioremos, Prinias, Pyrgos, Sphakia, Thylakas, Traostalos, Vrysinas, Zakros Vigla, and Xykephalo.

<sup>158</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 15.

<sup>159</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 17-21. See these pages for clarification on his reasoning.

<sup>160</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 15-21. See these pages for clarification on his reasoning.

The categories of artifacts are split into two groups. The first group is called ‘activity-related types,’ artifacts that can identify a specific activity such as: feasting, drinking, storage serving and carrying, cooking and food preparation, direct fire, heating, blood collection, pouring liquids, lighting, fumigating, offering tables, pebbles, knives, swords, weapons, and personal items.<sup>161</sup> The second category focuses on types of items that are typically determined as ritualistic and what he names ‘feature types.’ These items are: animal figurines, human figurines, horns of consecration, double axes, building remains, and Linear A.<sup>162</sup> He then identifies categories of artifacts that can help determine if a site is a peak sanctuary. However, he notes that open-air sites have inherent issues: they tend to lack permanent equipment and material is swept away, resulting in mostly secondary deposits. Moreover, the publication of these sites varies widely so that if a type of item is missing, that does not guarantee the absence of the item if the site has not been well excavated or reported.<sup>163</sup>

Through both groupings he establishes ways in which scholars can determine if sites are both peak sanctuaries as well as help determine the rituals at the sites. He argues that while it is difficult to establish peak sanctuaries due to both the lack of publication and the inherent difficulty of identifying rituals, there are general trends that can be established across the twenty-two Minoan peak sanctuaries. For Kyriakidis, all the peak sanctuaries have evidence of performance and participation, repetition and invariance, traditionalism, standardization of activities, a degree of rule-governance, and symbolism.<sup>164</sup> These similarities across the island at the peak sanctuaries is suggestive of some sort of

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<sup>161</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 24-25; Table 1.1 and 1.2.

<sup>162</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 26; Table 1.3.

<sup>163</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 14 and 23.

<sup>164</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 77-92.

mechanism of cohesion in these outdoor spaces.<sup>165</sup> Additionally, all of the peak sanctuaries “participated in the forging of a common identity for their participants that transcended the political and geographical borders within and beyond the island.”<sup>166</sup> The forging of a common identity of participants is an idea that is further explored in later chapters, with a particular interest in whether such an identity can be determined for the potential peak sanctuaries outside of Crete. The advantage of Kyriakidis’ methodology is that the focus on both the characteristics of the sites and the actions identified by the material remains allows scholars to discuss what might have taken place at these sites.

Briault’s 2007 article, “Making Mountains Out of Molehills in the Bronze Age Aegean: Visibility, Ritual Kits, and the Idea of a Peak Sanctuary”, sought to determine whether certain characteristics and/or artifacts found at the identified peak sanctuaries were more important than others. This work follows Peatfield’s scholarship which argued that the topographical elements of the sites were more important than the artifacts found. Briault argues for the opposite approach, suggesting that the equipment used at the peak sanctuaries was more significant for their transmission and performance of the rituals than the physical characteristics of the landscape.<sup>167</sup> She does not argue that topographical elements are unimportant, but that the objects can be used as a means of framing the activities that took place there and that the topographical characteristics are less likely to account for the success and popularity of the peak sanctuary cult.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 118.

<sup>166</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 118-119.

<sup>167</sup> Briault 2007, 123.

<sup>168</sup> Briault 2007, 123.

A polythetic classification is taken by Briault to test how successful the idea of the ‘peak sanctuary’ was in its transmission within Crete and throughout the Aegean.<sup>169</sup> She creates a ‘peak sanctuary kit’ to generate the taxonomies of the ritual contexts and then ranks each site according to how much of the kit the site has.<sup>170</sup> The categories in her ‘kit’ include human figurines, animal figurines, votive limbs, clay/stone tables, double axes, horns of consecration, weapons, miniature vessels, animal rhyta, stone ladles, shells, pebbles, bones, and ash/fire.<sup>171</sup> Briault’s methodology, offers a firmer basis for empirically testing the identification of peak sanctuaries rather than environmental determinism. Such an approach is employed and tested throughout this project.

In addition to Peatfield’s topographical characteristics, studies of inter-visibility between settlements and peak sanctuaries and between different peak sanctuaries have sought to clarify the situation.<sup>172</sup> Recent work has also incorporated GIS to examine the topographical elements of peak sanctuaries,<sup>173</sup> with Soetens investigating intervisibility and viewsheds at peak sanctuaries as possible indices of political control. Such studies largely focused on Cretan case studies, until recent work on viewshed analyses at Stelida<sup>174</sup> which showcases the advantage of including such studies at non-Cretan sites to provide yet another means of identifying if a site fits the topographical classifications that have been established for Cretan sanctuaries. To that end, a viewshed analysis on each of the possible peak sanctuary sites is presented in Chapter Four.

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<sup>169</sup> Briault 2007, 124.

<sup>170</sup> Briault 2007, 124.

<sup>171</sup> Briault 2007, 126 Table 1, 129 Table 2, and 132 Table 3.

<sup>172</sup> Peatfield 1983, 1987, 1990, 2009; Cherry 1986; Nowicki 1994, 2007, 2018; Soetens et al. 2001, 2002; 2008; Soetens 2006; 2009.

<sup>173</sup> Soetens 2006, 2009; Soetens et al. 2003.

<sup>174</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 83.

The main problem in studying Minoan peak sanctuaries, their definition, and theories concerning their function and significance, is the nigh-total lack of systematic publication of these sites and their material culture.<sup>175</sup> As discussed in Chapter Three, it is only with the full publication of Agios Georgios on Kythera that the field has the first, fully published peak sanctuary (one that happens not to be on Crete). It has become, perhaps, clearer that as more peak sanctuaries are studied in detail, that these sites are less homogenous than once believed. Instead, as discussed throughout this dissertation, the field should not think about 'peak sanctuary homogeneity' but instead talk of local variations of a common set of practices and beliefs.

Despite the definitional problems detailed above, it is commonly agreed that the first peak sanctuaries on Crete date to the end of the EM and flourish until MM II/MM III (ca. 2200-1700 BCE).<sup>176</sup> If we accept Peatfield's corpus, we can talk of approximately twenty-five peak sanctuaries in use during the Protopalatial period,<sup>177</sup> while only eight sanctuaries were active in the Neopalatial period.<sup>178</sup> The eight Cretan examples that I include in this study are: Juktas, Petosphas, Traostalos, Vrysinas, Kophinas, Prinias, Pyrgos, and Gonies/Philioremos.<sup>179</sup> Just one of these – Juktas - continued to be active ritual centers at the end of LM I, and into the Postpalatial period.<sup>180</sup> It should be noted that the peak sanctuaries that were active in the Neopalatial period were mostly situated close to palatial centers, the significance of which is discussed in Chapter Four.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 5.

<sup>176</sup> Peatfield 1994, 91.

<sup>177</sup> Peatfield 1990, 127.

<sup>178</sup> Peatfield 1990, 127.

<sup>179</sup> Soetens, et al, 2002, 165. Others have been presented, though I will focus my discussion on only these eight sites as they are the best documented and agreed upon generally by scholars.

<sup>180</sup> Peatfield 1990, 131.

<sup>181</sup> Peatfield 1990, 127.

Within Minoan religion, peak sanctuaries are classified as a type of ‘nature’ sanctuary along with cave sanctuaries.<sup>182</sup> They function differently than palatial or town shrines in that, according to Marinatos, nature sanctuaries are where popular and official religion met in common concerns and located in ‘natural’ spaces as opposed to the built environment of the palace or villa.<sup>183</sup> Since the first peak sanctuaries date to shortly before the rise of the palaces, it could be possible that they were independent of official religion at the time.<sup>184</sup> Adams suggests that since all peak sanctuaries might have had a fertility aspect associated with them since they are typically found within fertile environments with animal figurines.<sup>185</sup> Like cave sanctuaries, peak sanctuaries are believed to be one of the few cults in Minoan Crete that involved the participation of all social classes, as Sakellarakis argues with reference to the mundane character of the offerings.<sup>186</sup> The main element that differentiates peak sanctuaries from other types of cult is their location: on or near a peak.<sup>187</sup>

A recent posthumous publication by Sakellarakis attempts to discuss the role of the peak sanctuary within the Minoan religious system with a particular focus on the archaeological remains.<sup>188</sup> His detailed study, with a specific focus on Agios Georgios (Kythera), aids this project as references are made throughout my discussion of non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. As discussed through the chapters of this thesis, Sakellarakis’ work paired with Kyriakidis’ show that certain activities have been recurrently associated with

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<sup>182</sup> Marinatos 1993, 115-126.

<sup>183</sup> Marinatos 1993, 126.

<sup>184</sup> Marinatos 1993, 116. Or it could be that ‘official’ religion may not have existed at this point.

<sup>185</sup> Adams 2017, 144.

<sup>186</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 3.

<sup>187</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 8.

<sup>188</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 3-134.

peak sanctuaries, especially Neopalatial sites: votive deposition (both ritual items (as discussed in Chapter Four) and everyday items (conical cups, tripod cooking pots, loom-weights, etc.)<sup>189</sup>, processions<sup>190</sup>, burning (involved in this is a discussion of animal sacrifice and ritual meals)<sup>191</sup>, ritual breaking of objects<sup>192</sup>, drinking or feasting related activities<sup>193</sup>, and activities such as prayer, dancing, and pilgrimage and the actors involved.<sup>194</sup> In sum, a wide-range of activities could have taken place at peak sanctuaries and it was most likely the case that not all peak sanctuaries would have functioned in the exact same manner (given the material record at some sites). Architecture at peak sanctuaries also seems to be a distinctly Neopalatial phenomenon.

Alongside our understanding of peak sanctuaries through reference to their excavated record, we can also point to their iconographic depiction in Minoan Crete, which provide additional information about cult activity, though Sakellarakis notes that these depictions are rarely considered in the larger study of Minoan religion.<sup>195</sup> These depictions all come from palatial centers in Crete, plus the heavily Minoanized site of Akrotiri on Thera (as discussed in Chapter Two).<sup>196</sup> The first example is of a fragment of a stone relief rhyton from Gypsades near Knossos (fig. 4). In this piece one can see an asymmetrical tripartite building with ‘flag poles’ crowned by horns of consecration rising from rocks.<sup>197</sup> A male figure is depicted kneeling while arranging something near a vessel, perhaps a

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<sup>189</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 50-77; Kyriakidis 2005, 141-165.

<sup>190</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 78-84.

<sup>191</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 85-106; Kyriakidis 2005, 135-141.

<sup>192</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 107-113. He points out that it is nearly impossible to verify this activity and the evidence from Agios Georgios suggests that breaking of vessels (only .5% of pottery is intact) most likely did not happen in a primary deposition given the lack of joins identified in post-excavation study.

<sup>193</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 128-135.

<sup>194</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 114-122; Kyriakidis 2005, 79.

<sup>195</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 33.

<sup>196</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 33.

<sup>197</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 33.

wicker basket.<sup>198</sup> The second depiction is a fragment of a stone rhyton from Knossos that Sakellarakis states probably shows a peak sanctuary because of the multi-leveled structure with flag poles and horns of consecration (fig. 5). Here we see two male figures walking holding out their hands carrying an object, what has been interpreted as ladles, in front of the building. The significance of ladles is discussed in Chapter Four. The most discussed depiction of a peak sanctuary is that of a stone relief rhyton from Zakros, which shows a rocky mountainous landscape, a building that is decorated, horns of consecration, a wide staircase that leads to the shrine, flag poles, wild goats and birds, and several altars including a large trapezoidal altar, a portable in-curved altar, and a stepped altar with a tree (figs. 6-8).<sup>199</sup> Lastly, a sealing from a metal signet ring from the Central Sanctuary at Knossos shows a richly dressed female figure standing on top of rocky mountain flanked by lions who hold a vertical staff with her outstretched left hand (fig. 9).<sup>200</sup> To the left is a two-storied building with horns of consecration and to the right is a male figure wearing a belt and a Minoan loin cloth who holds one head on his forehead.<sup>201</sup> A wall painting from Thera might also show a peak sanctuary, but is discussed in more detail in Chapter Two (fig. 20). In sum, these scenes show what the architecture at some of these sites might have looked like<sup>202</sup> as well as various ritual activities including votive dedications and processions.

In regard to the divinity, or divinities associated with the cult<sup>203</sup>, Rutkowski proposed that the god(s) worshipped at the site was most likely associated with the skies,

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<sup>198</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 33. See Shaw 1978, 440-411 for more information.

<sup>199</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 34-35.

<sup>200</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 35.

<sup>201</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 35.

<sup>202</sup> See Sakellarakis 2020, 40-45 for a detailed discussion.

<sup>203</sup> See Sakellarakis 2020, 124-134 for a detailed historical overview on the subject.



due to the elevation of the sites.<sup>204</sup> Specifically, he saw a connection between the votives and a desire to appease the gods in terms of fertility of crops and the welfare of humans.<sup>205</sup> Ceremonies that took place at these sites were most likely held at specific times of the year, perhaps once or twice a year.<sup>206</sup> Alternatively, as Sakellarakis argues, different groups of people might have had different festival days at the peak sanctuaries, though a spring or summer festival most likely were more common.<sup>207</sup> Rutkowski argues that this cult might be connected to a ‘king’ figure, especially during the Neopalatial period given their location in proximity to palatial centers.<sup>208</sup> On the other hand, Marinatos argues that due to the lack of specific cult images there might be regional variation in the gods worshiped at the sites across Crete.<sup>209</sup> Marinatos sees peak sanctuaries as cults that represent popular religion, even if they become more palatially oriented in the Neopalatial period.<sup>210</sup> Peatfield argues that perhaps gods did not play a central role in the cult.<sup>211</sup> Instead, he argues that the figurines suggest a focus on visionary epiphany, healing, divination, and altered states of consciousness.<sup>212</sup> Thus, while it is generally assumed that there were a series of similar activities performed at these sites (as discussed below), there appears to be variation as to what the cult represented and what finds were deposited. This issue of cultic variability is considered in Chapter Four, but it remains here to simply emphasize how recent scholarship has served to complicate our understanding of these sites.

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<sup>204</sup> Rutkowski 1986, 87.

<sup>205</sup> Rutkowski 1986, 87.

<sup>206</sup> Rutkowski 1986, 91.

<sup>207</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 50, see pages 47-50 for a detailed discussion of all the options as well as a historical look at Greek festivals.

<sup>208</sup> Rutkowski 1986, 94-95.

<sup>209</sup> Marinatos 1993, 119.

<sup>210</sup> Marinatos 1993, 115.

<sup>211</sup> Peatfield 2001, 54.

<sup>212</sup> Peatfield 2001, 55.

Overall, Minoan peak sanctuaries are considered highly symbolic places of worship through the deposition of votives and their placement within the landscape. However, there has been a lack of scholarly attention and interest in identifying possible Minoan peak sanctuaries found outside of Crete until the excavation of Agios Georgios by Yannis Sakellarakis.<sup>213</sup> Agios Georgios on Kythera is a prime example of one of the best-preserved Minoan peak sanctuaries, having become a type-site, much like Juktas, as seen in the following chapters. Importantly, the peak sanctuary is the only type of extra-urban Minoan cult space that is found throughout Crete and was also imitated across the Aegean islands and on the mainland.<sup>214</sup> In general, Neopalatial peak sanctuaries on Crete are open-air cult sites that are located on or near a peak, typically associated with palatial centers, easily accessible, with a variety of archaeological remains (typically votive goods (figurines, double axes, horns of consecration, weapons, pebbles, libation tables, etc.), consumption pottery (e.g., cups (including conical cups), storage jars, cooking pots), pebbles, and architecture), as discussed in more detail in Chapter Four. In reality, the more peak sanctuaries are studied, the clearer, as discussed in Chapter Four, the considerable degree of differences and variations between sites becomes.<sup>215</sup> As such perhaps peak sanctuaries should be discussed more in terms of a hierarchy of peaks rather than attempting to quantify characteristics that earn a site the title of a ‘Minoan peak sanctuary’.

### **Terminology**

The terminology surrounding peak sanctuary studies has been the subject of much debate since Myres first used the term over a century ago to describe mountain-top worship

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<sup>213</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 92-99.

<sup>214</sup> Briault 2007, 123.

<sup>215</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 7.

during the Minoan period, with few scholars attempting to clarify its meaning.<sup>216</sup> Rutkowski states the “term ‘peak sanctuary’ – sometimes used interchangeably with ‘temenos’ – has a specific meaning. It denotes cult places situated on mountain tops, and sometimes surrounded by walls. There was always an altar, and occasionally a sacred building, in the peak sanctuaries.”<sup>217</sup> To Kyriakidis the word “peak” is problematic because the location of a site does not necessarily have to be on a prominent peak.<sup>218</sup> His working definition in 2005 was an open-air, extra-settlement, ritual peak site.<sup>219</sup> For him, thus, the definition of a peak sanctuary relies more on the characteristics that make up the site, similar to Rutkowski. I generally agree with this, as a site could be on a peak but not necessarily a ‘peak sanctuary.’ Furthermore, there may well be other forms of upland Bronze Age cult places that have yet to be recognized (both on and outside of Crete) that would not be best described as a peak sanctuary.

Another area of terminological dispute is the reference to Minoan Crete, since some scholars argue that peak sanctuaries cannot exist outside this orbit. In this case, the term ‘open-air cult site’ might avoid the baggage of the term. An open-air cult site could simply mean a site where ritual activity took place in an open area. By cult I am specifically referencing a system of religious devotion aimed at a specific god or group of gods. While I tend to agree that “open-air cult site” is less narrow, I believe that a clear definition of peak sanctuary can and should be used. Thus, for clarity’s sake, the term ‘peak sanctuary’, for purposes of this project, means a site that is dated to the Protopalatial and Neopalatial periods, located on or near a peak, has finds that suggest ritual activity such as drinking

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<sup>216</sup> Myres 1902-1903.

<sup>217</sup> Rutkowski 1986, xix.

<sup>218</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 17.

<sup>219</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 51.

vessels, evidence of burning, cult objects (ladles, offering tables, figurines, double axes, or horns of consecration), and is clearly not a settlement or burial ground. The peak sanctuary cult (what the goal of the worship is, actions taken, and gods venerated) would be different than a domestic cult. Since every detail of Minoan religion (i.e., gods, purposes, etc.) are not known, it is me assuming that the cult that takes place at the peaks will be inherently different than other cults, but what those specific differences might be are more generally assumed than known concretely. More clarity on what it takes to earn the label ‘peak sanctuary’ is revisited throughout this project, but for now this broad, context specific definition serves as the primary meaning behind the phrase.

The term “ritual” is similarly laden with debate. For purposes of this project, I follow Kyriakidis’ definition that ritual behavior can be discerned in the archaeological record “as an etic category that refers to set activities with a special (non-normal) intention-in-action, which are specific to a group of people.”<sup>220</sup> Additionally I tend to agree with him that at Minoan peak sanctuaries it is difficult to distinguish one ritual from another. What archaeologists reveal is ritual patterning rather than individual rituals.<sup>221</sup> This is due to the nature of the site, the frequent use of the site, and the deposition of artifacts.

As stated earlier, the term Minoanization has been fraught with debate. However, I follow Broodbank’s concept that Minoanization is a way to understand interaction with the Minoan civilization that does not presuppose colonialism but leaves room for interpretation (e.g., trade, diplomacy, inter-marriage, colonies, etc.) as a means of analyzing the archaeological remains. As a result, the terms Minoanizing and Minoanized are used as an adjective and verb, respectfully, to understand this interaction. Thus, when I use

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<sup>220</sup> Kyriakidis 2007, 10.

<sup>221</sup> Kyriakidis 2007, 15.

Minoanizing I mean goods that are created locally (using local resources) in a Minoan fashion instead of true Minoan imports.

### **Methodology**

This project takes a multi-pronged approach, combining both religious and materiality studies to discuss the implications of cultural exchange during the later Aegean Bronze Age. As stated above, this project seeks to synthetically present, analyze, and discuss all possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries for the first time. Thus, I first survey the possible peak sanctuaries by discussing the settlements on the islands (or nearby the site) that date to the same time as the peak sanctuary to provide contextualization of the alleged peak sanctuaries and then provide a detail analysis of the finds. As seen in the following two chapters, several of the sites are poorly studied, making it difficult to draw firm conclusions. For the dissertation, the catalog of sites (Appendix A) is organized geographically. Each site is described in full, with a specific focus on topographical elements and material remains. A site-specific bibliography is also provided for clarity's sake.

I then analyze and compare the sanctuaries' characteristics to determine whether we can confidently determine the existence of peak sanctuaries outside of Crete. Here I borrow methods from Peatfield, Kyriakidis, and Briault. From Peatfield, I employ his topographical criteria for peak sanctuaries. Kyriakidis' categories and groupings are used to test if ritual behavior can be identified based on the publications of a site. I also follow his practice of not dismissing a category based on the quality of the publication. Since the publication of the sites varies greatly, instead of assuming absence when a particular type

of object is not present, I leave the category blank.<sup>222</sup> Briault's polythetic classification is greatly beneficial in prioritizing material culture in identifying the function of a site. Thus, I detail what components of her peak sanctuary 'kit' are present at each of the possible non-Cretan sites. This allows for comparison with accepted Cretan peak sanctuaries and facilitates a larger discussion about cultural exchange and interaction between Cretan and overseas populations during the Neopalatial Period. I believe we can establish a pattern of determining if one particular site makes a better candidate than another for a title of a peak sanctuary, a hierarchy of scale. Kyriakidis provides a helpful guide when he states that the absence of a type of item, depending on the publications and how the site was investigated, does not necessarily imply the absence of the object from the site originally.<sup>223</sup> Furthermore, he also notes that due to the nature of these sites (highly exposed on mountains) the items excavated at the peak sanctuaries probably represent only a fraction of what was originally there.<sup>224</sup> This, of course, is impossible to verify but nevertheless is something to keep in mind as we think about the types and number of artifacts as well as the condition of the artifacts that have been found at each of these sites. Such indications suggest that more extensive site studies may yet reveal predictable patterns. This aids the establishment of a scale as I believe our understanding of these sites cannot be concrete and there are positive aspects in this flexibility.

A study of the conical cups from the newly discovered Stelida peak sanctuary serves as a powerful means of investigating issues surrounding Minoanization, ritual practice, and as a means of clarifying the participants of cult activity at the site. Handleless

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<sup>222</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 23.

<sup>223</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 14 and 23.

<sup>224</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 53.

conical cups (henceforth ‘conical cups’) are small, plain, handleless vessels that emerged as a distinctive form of material culture on Crete during the Middle Minoan II period (1900-1700 BCE, Protopalatial period) with regional variations, but are not standardized and mass-produced on Crete until the Late Minoan IA period (1700-1450 BCE, Neopalatial period).<sup>225</sup> The standard iconic shape appears in LM IA and is tied with the rise of Knossos as a supra-regional power.<sup>226</sup> It is during the latter period that conical cups become the vessel associated with feasting and other ceremonies,<sup>227</sup> being employed as all-purpose vessels, used to hold food and drink.<sup>228</sup> They appear to be so ubiquitous that they were often recycled, e.g., into lamps. These are simple, mass-produced, drinking vessels known in the thousands from other peak sanctuaries as well in settlements, burials, and caves.<sup>229</sup> In fact, they are the most common find at Minoan peak sanctuaries, both on Crete and at the alleged overseas examples as well as Minoanized settlement sites.

As the most common shape found in Minoan contexts they are widely studied and documented. These cups, while a Cretan shape, are found throughout the Aegean typically at sites considered to be either Minoan colonies or Minoanized sites.<sup>230</sup> Knappett and Hilditch go as far to say that “It seems that conical cups, and the practices they enact, are an integral part of Minoan civilisation on and off Crete.”<sup>231</sup> This idea that conical cups can equal Minoanization serves as the foundational question of this research. My analysis seeks to answer the question of how can one set of objects that are widely accepted as Minoan

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<sup>225</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 92-95.

<sup>226</sup> Hilditch 2014, 30; Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 98.

<sup>227</sup> Hilditch 2014, 30.

<sup>228</sup> Wiener 1984, 20.

<sup>229</sup> Wiener 1984, 20; Gillis 1990a; 1990b; 1990c; Davis and Cherry 2007; Barber 2008; Goroginnai et al. 2016.

<sup>230</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 92.

<sup>231</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 92.

objects within a non-Cretan peak sanctuary provide insight into the function of a site and the identity of the worshippers?

### **Organization of the study**

Chapters Two and Three present the bulk of the evidence for non-Cretan sanctuaries, organized by geographical location (fig. 1). The possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries include Kythera (Leska and Agios Georgios), Rhodes (Philerimos), Mainland (Maleatas on Mount Kynortion at Epidauros), Naxos (Mikre Vigla and Stelida), Kea (Troullos), Andros (Mazareko tou Fellou), and Thera (Mavro Rachidi). Each site is discussed in detail by geographical context, chronology, finds, and historical context. It is shown that all the non-Cretan peak sanctuaries date primarily, if not exclusively to the Neopalatial period (the significance of which is discussed in the following chapter).

Chapter Four presents the comparative analysis of the non-Cretan peak sanctuaries, both as a group and with Neopalatial Cretan peak sanctuaries. This chapter explores the role of peak sanctuary worship outside of Crete. To what extent is it distinct from Cretan practice? Can one discern local elements of ritual and/or material culture at these overseas sites? While the subject of intermural, Minoanised cult activity in overseas associated settlements is beyond the remit of this thesis as a stand-alone subject, we do however, consider the question of whether what is happening on the peaks is distinct from cult activity in neighboring settlements. Chapter Four also includes a viewshed analysis from each of the alleged overseas peak sanctuaries to discuss the intervisibility of both these islands, Crete, and the settlements associated with each peak sanctuary. This further aids my analysis of whether this activity is distinct from Crete or not.



Chapter Five seeks to clarify the role of peak sanctuary worship during the Neopalatial period outside of Crete. Specifically, this chapter explores the question of why these sanctuaries emerge at this time. Is this phenomenon tied with the rise of Knossos as a political, and cultural entity (i.e., through a process of Knossianization, rather than Minoanization)? Tied to these questions is the debate surrounding Minoanization more generally, and the choice-making of locals in these socio-economic-religious processes. Key themes such as identity and mobility theories aid this discussion. Ultimately, I challenge the traditional narrative of Minoan dominance as it does not allow for local choice to be part of the narrative and does a disservice to the complexity of the archaeological record.

Chapter Six concludes the project with a macro-scale analysis. After surveying the possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries in the Aegean, it is argued that these cult places deserve a larger place in the Minoanization debate than previously granted. This chapter summarizes the preceding chapters to situate the role of peak cult activity during the Neopalatial period and lays out potential future avenues of research.

## Chapter Two

### Non-Cretan Peak Sanctuaries in the Cyclades

This chapter seeks to introduce the alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries in the Cyclades. Structurally I commence with a review of the data from the Cyclades, while Chapter Three then provides detailed appraisals of the evidence from alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries outside the Cyclades.

The Cyclades have seen an intense amount of archaeological investigation, with a particular focus on the Bronze Age remains. This is partly due to the importance of the Early Cycladic culture with its rich graves and well-known marble figurines.<sup>232</sup> The subsequent Early Middle Cycladic Period has generally been understood as a ‘Dark Age’ when the islanders’ cultural influence waned, while that of Minoan Crete was in ascendancy.<sup>233</sup> More recently several scholars have sought to remedy such a view, as briefly discussed in Chapter One, in order to understand the developments in the Cyclades during the Later MC and Early LC periods.<sup>234</sup> Yet, this more recent scholarship has still tended to focus on the three islands of Kea, Melos, and Thera and their respective major sites of Ayia Irini, Phylakopi, and Akrotiri. These are all settlement sites, each with some evidence for Minoan influence and cult activity. Based on certain common characteristics such as harbors, Minoan imports and Minoanized material (e.g., pottery, wall painting, architecture, etc.), they were linked by Jack Davis as the main trading route between the Minoans and mainland Greece.<sup>235</sup> This chapter first contextualizes Cycladic archaeology of the later Bronze Age within the Western String debate and then survey the alleged peak

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<sup>232</sup> Renfrew 1972.

<sup>233</sup> Scholes 1956, 9.

<sup>234</sup> See Davis 1992 for a detailed discussion of this.

<sup>235</sup> Davis 1979.

sanctuaries. Preliminary conclusions are drawn about the character and significance of the alleged Cycladic peak sanctuaries, with a more detailed analysis taking place in Chapters Four and Five.

At the time of writing, there are five potential peak sanctuaries in the Cyclades, two on Naxos, the largest island of the archipelago, plus single examples on Andros, Kea, and Thera (fig. 10) (Appendix A). None of these sites has been fully excavated, which makes the identification of firm cultic activity relatively difficult with some (if not most) of these sites. Before discussing these alleged peak sanctuaries, it is important to first discuss the broader context of the Cyclades during the Neopalatial Period and the relationship the islanders had with Crete.

### **The ‘Western String’**

The socio-economic and/or religious impact of Minoan Crete on Late MC and Early LC Cycladic islands has been argued to be unevenly distributed. In 1979 Jack Davis employed the term ‘Western String’ to describe the primary sphere of Minoan influence in the Cyclades, through reference to a north-south route from Crete to the Greek mainland (Attica), via Thera-Melos-Kea established by the Cretan to guarantee access to supplies of copper, silver, and lead that their elites desired but did not have access to locally. Regular Minoan trade with the Cyclades started in MM I and had its apogee between MM III and LM IB.<sup>236</sup> The route appeared to be articulated via three nodal communities in the western Cyclades, namely Akrotiri on Thera, Phylakopi on Melos, and Ayia Irini on Kea, harbor towns that represent these islands’ major Bronze Age centers (fig. 11).<sup>237</sup> These sites all displayed significant evidence for Minoan socio-economic influences. While material

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<sup>236</sup> Cherry and Davis 1982, 335.

<sup>237</sup> Davis 1979, 144; Cherry and Davis 1982, 333.

either imitating Minoan objects or imported from Crete were found, obvious signs of Cretan technological influences and ideas in wall paintings, local pottery, architecture, metrology, and script were also unearthed at these sites,<sup>238</sup> all of which has suggested to many a more meaningful connection besides simple trade (though the question of cult places is somewhat lacking). Thus, the core of the Western String argument posits that the three aforementioned harbor sites were the main nodes along a longer trade route connecting Crete and the mainland. This theory became the main approach used to discuss Late MC- Early LC Cyclades and is still used in current scholarship today.

While most of Cretan trade is believed to have operated along this route (as evidenced by the concentrations of Minoan influence at these sites), it was not exclusively so. Davis et al.<sup>239</sup> argue that Minoanization did not diminish as one traveled further to the north on the basis of the large quantities of Minoan imports and like objects found at Ayia Irini.<sup>240</sup> They envisioned some sort of export system occurring in the Cyclades, where perhaps Phylakopi acted as a secondary distribution center for the other Cycladic islands.<sup>241</sup> Such a system could explain both the exchange of Minoan goods, and also Cycladic goods among the non-Western String islands, as for example with the Cretan imports found on Kato Kouphonisi<sup>242</sup>, and the recovery of Thera pottery on Panagia Antilaloussa.<sup>243</sup>

The question as to what these varied forms of Minoan contact and influence meant on the ground in Thera, Melos, and Kea, has received considerable attention, with more recent scholarship cautioning that a single answer/socio-economic phenomenon should be

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<sup>238</sup> Cherry and Davis 1982, 335.

<sup>239</sup> Davis et al. 1983, 361.

<sup>240</sup> Davis 1979, 149.

<sup>241</sup> Davis 1979, 149.

<sup>242</sup> Hadjanastasiou 1989, 215.

<sup>243</sup> École Française D' Athènes 2013b, 74.

assumed.<sup>244</sup> Broodbank has argued that one of the main problems with the Minoanization debate is the common practice of conflating all periods of Minoanization, making it seem that it was a static situation, when in reality it was fluid and everchanging across time and space.<sup>245</sup> Even within the Western String islands, the contact with Crete and the mainland differed. For example, Barber suggests that it was Phylakopi, and its obsidian resources, that first brought the Minoans to the Cyclades and then Thera.<sup>246</sup> In regard to pottery production, as is discussed in more detail in Chapter Five, the wheel – which is commonly believed to have first been adopted on Crete (and by extent indexical of Minoan influence) – is viewed a little later at Phylakopi and Akrotiri than at Ayia Irini.<sup>247</sup> Furthermore, the wheel was used for the production of local and Cretan shapes at Akrotiri and Ayia Irini, but at Phylakopi the wheel was only used for Cretan shapes.<sup>248</sup> The example of the pottery wheel, then, shows how the main marker of Minoanization (i.e. pottery) differed on the three islands not just in terms of chronology, but also technology. Not every site nor every island has the same relationship with Crete. I suggest that the same argument can be levelled at the archaeology of the alleged Cycladic (and other non-Cretan) peak sanctuaries. Increased attention to the nuances of interaction between the islands against the backdrop of Cretan dominance can complicate the traditional view of Minoanization studies today and allows scholars to better understand how these interactions and adaptation of ‘culture’ occurred.

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<sup>244</sup> Schofield 1984, 179–183; Doumas 1984, 340–348; Davis and Cherry 1990, 185–200.

<sup>245</sup> Broodbank 2004; Abell 2016, 73.

<sup>246</sup> Barber 1984, 182.

<sup>247</sup> Gorogianni et al. 2016, 213.

<sup>248</sup> Gorogianni et al. 2016, 213; Knappett 2016.

In discussing Minoanization and the Western String in the MBA II – LBA I periods, the focus has typically been Creto-centric. For example, Abell argues that there is a problem with the practice of only looking to Crete as the source of Minoanizing imports as they could have been accessed by Cycladic communities via intermediary populations.<sup>249</sup> Abell states that such a Minoan-centric perspective has concealed how variably Cycladic communities engaged with the phenomenon of Minoanization.<sup>250</sup> These studies allow for more choice to be assigned to Cycladic populations, which in turn better elucidate the workings of trade networks and cultural interaction in the MBA-LBA periods. This research takes a similar approach when discussing the alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries; with a particular focus on identifying the possible ‘indigenous’ elements within the archaeological record.

#### Islands beyond the Western String

It has been argued, mostly by Cherry and Davis, that those islands beyond the Western String, were much more isolated from both the mainland and Crete.<sup>251</sup> In fact, Cherry and Davis state that even if sites other than the Western String had extensive excavation and survey, they still will not have as much mainland or Cretan evidence as the Western String.<sup>252</sup> According to this model, such islands as Naxos and Andros, lying to the east of this seafaring route, comprised something of a socio-economic ‘backwater’ at this time.

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<sup>249</sup> Abell 2016, 73.

<sup>250</sup> Abell 2016, 73-74. Davis and Cherry 1990; Schofield 1990; Whitelaw 2005; Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2005; 2008; Berg 2007b; Karnava 2008; Cutler 2012; Abell and Hilditch 2016; Gorgianni et al. 2016.

<sup>251</sup> Cherry and Davis 1982, 333.

<sup>252</sup> Cherry and Davis 1982, 335-336.

This view of the Cycladic-Minoan relations, and of Naxos's perceived marginality in particular, has not been without its critics.<sup>253</sup> In fact, the evidence from MBA II – LBA I Naxos has been typically used as the main critique of the Western String, not least by Schofield in 1982, whose argument appeared shortly after the 'Western String' model was first proposed. Here she emphasized the recovery of Minoan and Melian imports from Naxos and Delos (albeit in tiny quantities compared to Thera-Melos-Kea),<sup>254</sup> Which suggested that the nature of interaction between Cycladic populations, and those based on Crete and the mainland was more complex than previously suggested. The main problem is not that perhaps the evidence does not exist, but simply the archaeological investigations on the islands have not been fully developed since excavation and surveys had been biased towards the Western String islands. In fact, she argues that while it would be expected that Delos, Naxos or Paros might have extensive material, the BA remains on Delos are scanty, but "Naxos might still produce a few surprises."<sup>255</sup> The excavation that suggests that Naxos did indeed play a larger role in regional socio-economic networks has finally commenced with Stelida.

Subsequently, Wiener in 1990 argued that the Western String theory was not adequate for understanding the role of trade in the Cyclades. He instead opted for a model that included Naxos and involved travel through the central Cyclades, specifically a northern trade route that existed with the mainland and Crete that stopped at Thera, Naxos, Kea, and Attica.<sup>256</sup> Dietz's 1997 publication on the mainland and Cycladic connection

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<sup>253</sup> See Belza 2018, Chapter Three for a detailed examination of critiques of the Western String Model.

<sup>254</sup> Schofield 1982b, 10, 13.

<sup>255</sup> Schofield 1982b, 11. Belza 2018 argues that Naxos is the most likely candidate out of the Eastern and Central Cycladic islands for having contact with Crete. However, this thesis lacks new archaeological evidence to support such a claim. Nevertheless, it provides the most up-to-date reexamination of the Western String model.

<sup>256</sup> Wiener 1990, 128-161.

during the Shaft Grave Period provided another interpretation of trade routes in the Later BA. Dietz argued that the trade routes between the mainland and Crete from MBA III-LBA IA were controlled by Cycladic traders instead of the Minoans and furthermore, the trade between the Cyclades and the mainland was independent from Minoan trade.<sup>257</sup> In 2000, Mountjoy and Ponting argued for new routes, specifically one Northern route via Thera, Ios, Naxos, Paros, Syros, and Kea.<sup>258</sup> Continuing this argument, Mountjoy, in 2004, stated that there was no Minoan control in the Cyclades in LBA IB based on the lack of Minoan innovations and the fall off in LM IB pottery imports.<sup>259</sup> Thus, the close relations between the Cyclades and Crete seems to have been finished in the LBA IA period.<sup>260</sup>

Berg's 2006 publication critiqued the Western String arguing that excavation bias has led to a misunderstanding of MC-LC activity in the Cyclades. Specifically, she argued that Naxos may have been a part of the trade networks and that there was a specific Cycladic route in which traders freely traveled.<sup>261</sup> Belza's 2018 master's thesis provides the most recent analysis of the Western String model. She states that none of the critiques have proven the model to be inadequate, but perhaps the name is the main problem.<sup>262</sup> What is clear is that Davis' original idea that Minoan material culture did not gradually decrease as one moved further North away from Crete holds true. Thus, while we do not have to dismiss the model, it does need to be adjusted and updated with reference to the new archaeological data since 1979. There is no doubt that the communities of Davis' Western String had a special relationship with Crete, but special does not mean

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<sup>257</sup> Dietz 1997, 9-35.

<sup>258</sup> Mountjoy and Ponting 2000, 178.

<sup>259</sup> Mountjoy 2004, 399.

<sup>260</sup> Mountjoy 2004, 402.

<sup>261</sup> Berg 2006, 4-6.

<sup>262</sup> Belza 2018, 97.



exclusive.<sup>263</sup> In fact, as Schofield argues, it would be “nonsensical” to suggest that it was the only route.<sup>264</sup> What is clear is that exchange networks were multifaceted and complex during the Later MBA – Early LBA periods. The possible peak sanctuaries in the Cyclades add to this discussion as another lens through which one can evaluate the impact of Cretan influence in the islands, this time with reference to the cultic sphere.

### **Naxos**

There are two possible peak sanctuaries on Naxos: Mikre Vigla and Stelida (fig. 12) (Appendix A). Before discussing them, it is important to understand the context of the island during the Later MBA-LBA I period. This period is poorly understood on Naxos due to the relatively limited number of excavations and surveys dedicated to this period, compared to the EBA, and LBA II-III period of Mycenaean influence. However, with a recent reappraisal of legacy data from Grotta<sup>265</sup>, and the new work at Stelida, it can be seen that Naxos was an active island that was in contact with a wide range of cultures (other Cycladic islands, Crete, and the mainland). Grotta is the main settlement at the time, though MC-LC I finds are rarely in primary context due to the long-lived (disturbed) nature of the site.

Grotta is the Bronze Age harbor town, situated in the NW part of the island under the modern city of Chora (fig. 12). Prior to the excavations at Stelida, it was the only site on Naxos that has been systematically excavated and published that dates to the Later MBA period.<sup>266</sup> Despite a long history of research and rescue excavations at the site, most of the

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<sup>263</sup> Schofield 1982b, 11.

<sup>264</sup> Schofield 1982b, 11.

<sup>265</sup> Vlachopoulos 2016.

<sup>266</sup> Cosmopoulos 1998, 128. See Welter 1930, 134–135; Scholes 1956, 12; Barber 1978, 66–75; Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979, 325–326; Fotou 1983, 20–22, 46, 49–51; Hadjianastasiou 1989, 205–215; Papagiannopoulou 1991, 290–291; Hadjianastasiou 1993, 257–262; Cosmopoulos 1998, 128, 144; Vlachopoulos 2016, 120, 123–124, figs. 7.1–9.

archaeological remains have not been published. The site was inhabited since the Late Neolithic period through the Geometric period.<sup>267</sup> By the Final Neolithic period, an important settlement existed on Kokkinovrachos at Grotta.<sup>268</sup> Kokkinovrachos became one of the most important centers on Naxos during the EBA period, especially seen in the wealth of the cemetery at Aplomata.<sup>269</sup> According to Vlachopoulos MC finds from the 1949-1985 excavations are fragmentary at best and most of the site of that period is now underwater.<sup>270</sup>

It was not until the Demetrokalli Plot was excavated in the 1980s that there was a better understanding of MC-LC I periods at Grotta.<sup>271</sup> The rescue excavation found a paved road flanked by two walls built of granite boulders and an extensive area paved with a pebble floor to the south.<sup>272</sup> Almost all of the pottery was made of local Naxian clays, but their shapes and decorative motifs derive on the whole from Minoan prototypes.<sup>273</sup> Minoan style pottery at the site included conical cups, hole-mouthed jars, tripod cooking pots, and bridge-spouted bowls, all locally made.<sup>274</sup> There was also a range of Cycladic style pottery being produced at the site, including types (e.g., Black and Red type vessels) that imitated products better-known from Kea, Melos and earlier from Akrotiri.<sup>275</sup> There were also a few genuine imports, including two fragments of a cup or flower pot probably painted by the Cretan Reed Painter dated to LM IA, and there are Minoan elements in a stone lamp that

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<sup>267</sup> Cosmopoulos 1998, 128.

<sup>268</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1988a; 1989; Philaniotou 1988-1989.

<sup>269</sup> Marangou 1990; Vlachopoulos 2016, 117-118.

<sup>270</sup> Vlachopoulos 2016, 120; Lambrinoudakis and Philaniotou-Hadjianastasiou 2001; Cosmopoulos 2004; Vlachopoulos 2003; 2008; 2012, 345-346.

<sup>271</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1993.

<sup>272</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1993, 259.

<sup>273</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1993, 259.

<sup>274</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1993, 259.

<sup>275</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1993, 259.

may have been imported or locally imitated.<sup>276</sup> There was also an important LM IB vessel with relief shells that may have come from Knossos, with comparanda rare, only found at Poros-Katsambas, Mochlos, Zakros and Marseille.<sup>277</sup>

This assemblage suggested to Hadjianastasiou that Naxos was likely the center of pottery production in the Cyclades with products of high quality similar to those found on Crete.<sup>278</sup> She states that “the Minoan elements were adapted in a manner which may be generally called Cycladic, although in some cases it may be termed specifically Naxian.”<sup>279</sup> If correct, this assigns an important role to Naxos in regard to the pottery tradition of the Cyclades, something that has been largely ignored by scholars. The new evidence from Stelida provides needed information about the role of Naxian potters in the larger Cycladic tradition. The massive walls of the Demetrokalli plot could provide evidence for large scale trade happening on Naxos. The combination of the walls and the survey evidence from Mikre Vigla, discussed below, also point to the central place of Naxos in Later MBA-LBA Aegean trade.<sup>280</sup> Even with the fragmentary evidence of MC-LC I Grotta, it can be seen that Naxos was both locally and regionally important before the arrival of the Mycenaeans in LBA III.

There is also a handful of lesser known and poorly studied sites with MC-LC I material, including Aila, which is located in southeastern Naxos near the eastern coast (fig.

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<sup>276</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1993, 259.

<sup>277</sup> Vlachopoulos 2016, 123, fig 7.7.

<sup>278</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1989, 213-214.

<sup>279</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1993, 259. It is not very clear what Hadjianastasiou means here by ‘Naxian.’ She points to a bridge-spouted bowl in the Naxos Museum (7727). Her description is as follows “The clay is brown semi coarse and micaceous and the surface smooth but undecorated. There is one round horizontal handle opposite the spout. The rim is flat and slightly protruding. The profile of this vessel resembles that of bridge-spouted jars from Kea and Phylakopi but the horizontal handle brings it close to painted bowls, also from Phylakopi, dated to the LCI-II period. The same type of spout as that on our vessel occurs in Kos.” (Hadjianastasiou 1989, 209).

<sup>280</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1989, 214.

12),<sup>281</sup> Where three cist tombs were excavated in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by Stephanos. One of the tombs is dated to the Geometric period. The second tomb contained bronze metal tools, but no ceramics and is dated to the end of MC or very beginning of LC I.<sup>282</sup> The third tomb, Tomb 24, had an assemblage that included eleven pots; six one-handled conical cups (five dark-coated and one with tortoise-shell ripple pattern decoration), one one-handled semi globular cup with tortoise shell ripple pattern, and one plain, handleless conical cup.<sup>283</sup> According to Marthari, these vases are imports from Minoan Crete and/or local imitations of Minoan prototypes, since the fabric has not been studied.<sup>284</sup> The pottery is dated to MM III/LM IA.<sup>285</sup>

Another important but poorly investigated site is that of Rizokastellia, which sits on a rocky natural acropolis about 1.25 km SW of Tripodhes (Vivlos) on the western side of Naxos (fig. 12) and is located near a southwestern emery outcrop.<sup>286</sup> The site was excavated by Stephanos in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>287</sup> As with the other sites, the finds have not been published in detail but the original publication details MC-LC III sherds, including a LH IIIB/C deep bowl fragment, obsidian, and a fortification wall.<sup>288</sup> In terms of

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<sup>281</sup> Barber 1978, 64–65, 313; Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979, 331; Barber 1981, 18, site no. 24; Fotou 1983, 36–37, 47–48, site nos. 6, 22; Papagiannopoulou 1991, 290; Hadjianastasiou 1993, 257, n. 3; Sotirakopoulou 2004, 75, site no. 431; Marthari 2009, 41–44; Sotirakopoulou 2010; Belza 2018, 172–173; Berg 2019, 175.

<sup>282</sup> Stephanos 1903, 57; 1905, 224; Papathanasopoulos 1963, 129–30, pl. 62, grave no. 23; Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979, 331; Marthari 2009, 43; Belza 2018, 173.

<sup>283</sup> Stephanos 1903, 57; 1905, 224; Papathanasopoulos 1963, 129–30, pl. 62, grave no. 23; Papagiannopoulou 1991, 304; Marthari, 2009, 43–44.

<sup>284</sup> Marthari 2009, 43–44.

<sup>285</sup> Papagiannopoulou 1991, 304.

<sup>286</sup> Stephanos 1911, 272–273; Fimmen 1921, 14; Scholes 1956, 12; Renfrew 1972, 516, 518, 524 no. 11; Leekley and Noyes 1975, 48; Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979, 328; Barber 1981, 18 site 29; Fotou 1983, 46–47; Treuil 1983, 64; Jones 1986, 265–66, 500–501; Papagiannopoulou 1991, 291; Schallin 1993, 21; Hadjianastasiou 1993, 257, n. 3; Sotirakopoulou 2004, 74, site no. 42; Vlachopoulos 2012, 348; 2016, 119; Belza 2018, 177; and Berg 2019, 173.

<sup>287</sup> Scholes 1956, 12; Barber 1981, 18.

<sup>288</sup> Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979, 328; Barber 1987, 156; Schallin 1993, 20; Belza 2018, 177.

architecture, Scholes reports abundant traces of habitation on the lower slopes and remains of a stepped street or stairway near the summit.<sup>289</sup> Berg calls Rizokastellia one of the three main settlements on Naxos during the MBA period, along with Grotta and Mikre Vigla.<sup>290</sup> While the site is not well studied, it is clear that it was an important settlement situated above a wide coastal plain and stood in an important position on the island between Grotta and Mikre Vigla.

MC-LC I material has also been reported at Ayios Myronas<sup>291</sup>, Chosti<sup>292</sup>, Kalantos<sup>293</sup>, Kleidi Site<sup>294</sup>, Petasi<sup>295</sup>, and the Zas Cave (fig. 12).<sup>296</sup> Thus, while the evidence for MC-LC I material on the island is fragmentary, the island community on Naxos was clearly an active and vibrant island during this period, and a participant in larger Aegean networks. No evidence of cultic activity has been noted at any of these sites except for Mikre Vigla and Stelida, which have been identified as possible peak sanctuaries.

### Mikre Vigla

Mikre Vigla is located on the western shore of Naxos, about eight kilometers south of Chora on the fertile plains of Polichni and Tragaia (figs. 10, 12-14) (Appendix A). The site is located on a low hill on a promontory with access to a natural bay and was systematically surveyed by Barber and Hadjianastasiou in 1985.<sup>297</sup> The goal of the survey

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<sup>289</sup> Scholes 1956, 12.

<sup>290</sup> Berg 2007b, 13. This statement by Berg follows that of Hope Simpson and Dickinson who states it may have been one of the most important sites on Naxos during this time (Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979, 328).

<sup>291</sup> Legaki and Mavroeidopoulos 2017; Nikolakopoulou 2019, 27.

<sup>292</sup> Stephanos 1909, 116; Fimmen 1921, 14; Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979, 333–334; Barber 1987; Schallin 1993, 19; Belza 2018, 173.

<sup>293</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1993, 260; Bennet 2015; Bennet, 2016, 15; Belza 2018, 175.

<sup>294</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1988b, 497; Nikolakopoulou 2019, 27.

<sup>295</sup> Renfrew 1972, 519, site no. 32; Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979, 332; Hadjianastasiou 1993, 257, n. 3; Belza 2018, 176.

<sup>296</sup> Zachos 1987, 694; for additional information see Zachos 1987, 696–698, fig. 7; Zachos 1999, 153; Hadjianastasiou 1993, 261.

<sup>297</sup> Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989; Berg 2007b, 125.

was to provide more information about the Later MC to Early LC periods. Bronze Age material at the site is dated from EC to LC I-II with Geometric and later material also present.<sup>298</sup> The numerous finds included pottery (both local and imported) dating from the prehistoric to post-prehistoric periods<sup>299</sup>, figurines (about 140 terracotta fragments) whose date was considered to possibly span EC II to Early LC, spindlewhorls, loomweights, painted plaster, one piece of bronze, and stone finds (obsidian, marble fragments, emery fragments, chert).<sup>300</sup> Along with the artifacts, several structures were identified and while these could not be dated securely, Barber and Hadjanastasiou state that it is reasonable to suggest a prehistoric date due to the associated artifacts (fig. 13).<sup>301</sup> These structures are significant since MC-Early LC architecture is relatively rare on Naxos.

The terracotta figurines are of significance as they are typically what scholars point to when they discuss the possibility of a peak sanctuary at Mikre Vigla, as seen below (fig. 15). The figurines are all made of coarse, local clay and a few have slight traces of slip.<sup>302</sup> The figurines were cataloged into fourteen types (figures with baldric or cap, figures with penis-sheath or belt, kourotrophos type, plain figures with heads, ‘seated’ figures, figures with rear extensions, torsos, torsos of schematic figures, torsos of figures with separate legs, bases or cylindrical lower bodies, heads, bovids, limbs (various), and limbs (plain and rounded)).<sup>303</sup> At the time of their discovery, terracotta figurines of prehistoric date were relatively rare in the Cyclades,<sup>304</sup> leading Barber and Hadjanastasiou to seek parallels from

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<sup>298</sup> Barber and Hadjanastasiou 1989, 140.

<sup>299</sup> See Vaughn 1989 for information on the fabrics.

<sup>300</sup> Barber and Hadjanastasiou 1989.

<sup>301</sup> Barber and Hadjanastasiou 1989, 67. See 67-71 for detailed information about each structure.

<sup>302</sup> Barber 2017, 455.

<sup>303</sup> Barber 2017, 455-463.

<sup>304</sup> Aside from the Final Neolithic figurines of Kephala on Kea (Coleman 1977), and the large statues of LC I date from the temple at Ayia Irini (Gorogianni 2011).

the corpus of EC marble figurines, and by extent an EBA date for the Mikre Vigla examples.<sup>305</sup> That said, they did acknowledge that parallels could be drawn between the Mikre Vigla terracotta figurines and those from Minoan peak sanctuaries, albeit only at a general level.<sup>306</sup> It was Sakellarakis, writing a few years later after his discovery of the Agios Georgios peak sanctuary on Kythera, who reevaluated this date of the Mikre Vigla terracotta figurines, arguing against the EC figurine comparisons and instead emphasizing the striking parallels to Minoan examples, such as their long necks, clothing, and backward tilting of heads.<sup>307</sup> Sakellarakis further argued that the local manufacturing of the Mikre Vigla terracotta figurines is another direct comparison to the Minoan figurines, as discussed in Chapter Four.<sup>308</sup> Ultimately, I am in broad agreement with Sakellarakis's interpretation given (a) that they recall Minoan examples, (b) that the associated pottery is overwhelmingly Later Bronze Age in date (not EC), and (c) the results of the work at Stelida. A restudy of the Mikre Vigla figurines, especially in light of the findings from Stelida, would greatly aid our understanding of these items.

As is typical on Naxos, most of the pottery from Mikre Vigla was made using local clay sources and dates mainly to Late MC to Early LC I.<sup>309</sup> Wheelmade pots seem rare, but the few that do exist were made in finer reddish clay and imitated small open Minoan shapes such as semiglobular cups.<sup>310</sup> Barber and Hadjanastasiou identified thirty-three genuine Minoan imports that date mostly to MM II-III (though extending to LM IB with one decorated sherd in Marine style); including nine fine Kamares ware sherds and coarse

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<sup>305</sup> Barber 2017, 463-464.

<sup>306</sup> Barber 2017, 464.

<sup>307</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 160-161.

<sup>308</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 161.

<sup>309</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1993, 260; Berg 2007b, 125.

<sup>310</sup> Berg 2007b, 126.

fabrics and most are serving vessels and included cups and bridge-spouted jars.<sup>311</sup> Eighty-eight Minoan imitations were found including amphorae, bridge-spouted and hole-mouthed jars, bell cups, conical cups, semiglobular cups, straight-sided cups, lamps, tripod cooking pots, and fenestrated stands.<sup>312</sup> Melian products are the most prominent import from the islands, most being handmade, with both Cycladic White and the local Melian fabric were represented.<sup>313</sup> Some Grey Minyan ware was also found, a highly distinctive fine-ware that one typically associates with the Greek mainland.<sup>314</sup> The survey data shows a clear connection with Crete based on Minoan imports, Minoanizing pottery, and the figurines as well as a strong connection with Melos.<sup>315</sup>

Barber and Hadjanastasiou argue that the connection with Crete was driven by the latter's need of marble and emery (both native to Naxos), while trade with Melos was driven by Naxian desire for obsidian. Naxos, in this light, participated in the wider cultural phenomenon in the Aegean and, thus was active in the larger Aegean networks. This challenges the validity of the Western String model, as discussed above.<sup>316</sup> Mikre Vigla was clearly an important center for trade and contact during Later MBA-LBA I.

The function of the site is largely debated, but Barber and Hadjanastasiou state that it is clear the site was at least partly a settlement due to the large amount of coarse and fine pottery for everyday use, most of which dates to the Neopalatial period. Furthermore, the house remains provide evidence for domestic activities with the spindle whorls and

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<sup>311</sup> Barber and Hadjanastasiou 1989, 107-111; Berg 2007b, 127.

<sup>312</sup> Berg 2007b, 127.

<sup>313</sup> Berg 2007b, 127.

<sup>314</sup> Berg 2007b, 127.

<sup>315</sup> Barber and Hadjanastasiou 1989, 140.

<sup>316</sup> Berg 2007b, 125.



loomweights.<sup>317</sup> The site also had an associated natural harbor,<sup>318</sup> the large amount of Melian pottery hinting at its role as a possible trading center. Hilditch, following the earlier claim of Barber and Hadjanastasiou, argues that Mikre Vigla played a significant role “as a node within Cycladic interaction networks” that functioned as a port for exporting Naxian raw materials and products.<sup>319</sup>

Alongside the domestic aspects of the site, one can also discern a religious function given the large number of figurines found at the site. Sakellarakis cites as evidence for a possible Minoan peak sanctuary at Mikre Vigla its proximity to Grotta, the similarity between the figurines and votive limbs found on Crete, the Minoanizing pottery, and the absence of animal figurines.<sup>320</sup> Furthermore, a large number of the terracotta figurines and a piece of bronze were found in association with Structure 1 (5.4 × 3.9 m) (fig. 13).<sup>321</sup> This building has been interpreted as a possible shrine by Barber and Hadjanastasiou due to the large number of figurines found in this part of the site.<sup>322</sup> It should be noted that not all scholars agree with the peak sanctuary identification. For example, Vlachopoulos states “there is a great difference indeed between the identification of open-air cult on a hilltop and the misguided inclusion of Mikri Vigla among the ‘peak sanctuaries’ outside Minoan Crete, which has been proposed since then.”<sup>323</sup> However, he does not provide clear arguments against the identification. I do not believe Vlachopoulos’ critique is as

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<sup>317</sup> Barber and Hadjanastasiou 1989, 139.

<sup>318</sup> Hilditch 2008, 292; Vlachopoulos 2016, 119.

<sup>319</sup> Hilditch 2008, 292.

<sup>320</sup> Barber and Hadjanastasiou 1989, 140-141; Sakellarakis 1996, 94-96. See Vlachopoulos 2016 for a critique of the peak sanctuary identification.

<sup>321</sup> Barber and Hadjanastasiou 1989, 67-68, figs. 2-3.

<sup>322</sup> Barber and Hadjanastasiou 1989, 131.

<sup>323</sup> Vlachopoulos 2016, 119.

problematic as he suggests. This is because Mikre Vigla has a distinct Minoanizing element (e.g., the pottery and figurines).

As is detailed throughout this survey of alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries, there is a variation of material from these sites – rather than a ‘canonical kit’, suggesting each group choosing a selection of ‘Minoan’ practices and their associated material culture, rather than a wholesale ritual ‘package’. Berg suggests that Mikre Vigla not only had a special relationship with Crete, but also with the Greek mainland, whereby we are dealing more with a general trend of the Mikre Vigla inhabitants accessing non-local prestige goods, rather than there existing a specific relationship with one culture.<sup>324</sup> Nevertheless, it appears that Mikre Vigla was an important site through the MC and LC periods on Naxos and had a large role within larger Aegean networks of exchange. The possible religious character of the site is significant, especially in light of the new finds at Stelida, and is discussed in further detail in the proceeding chapters. In sum, the peak sanctuary identification relies on the figurines, topographical elements, and the large quantity of Minoanizing pottery typical at peak sanctuaries including consumption ware (bell cups, conical cups, semiglobular cups, straight-sided cups, and tripod cooking pots) and storage vessels (amphorae, bridge-spouted and hole-mouthed jars).<sup>325</sup>

### Stelida

A new possible Minoan peak sanctuary was uncovered on Stelida in 2019 (Appendix A). Stelida, a double peak promontory, is about three kilometers from Grotta,

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<sup>324</sup> Berg 2007b, 128. Belza 2018 argues that the Minoan finds at Mikre Vigla could have reached Naxos indirectly from Crete. Thus argument, while possibly true, neglects Naxian importance during this time and assumes that Naxos would not have been connected to the larger Aegean network. I would argue that based on all the finds from Naxos, even excluding Stelida, such an argument does not accurately represent what occurred.

<sup>325</sup> Berg 2007b, 127.

rising 151 meters above sea level on the northwestern coast of Naxos (figs. 2, 10, 12).<sup>326</sup> the site was discovered in a 1980 survey conducted by René Treuil under the auspices of the École Française d'Athènes. Treuil stated that on Stelida he found a few coarse ware sherds that could date to EBA, a small rectangular building on the north side dated tentatively to EBA, and lithic debitage.<sup>327</sup> Interest in the lithic debitage brought Tristan Carter to Naxos in order to investigate the chert quarry site of Naxos in the context of claimed Palaeolithic activity in the Aegean islands, a challenge to the long-held belief that insular occupation only dated from the Neolithic.<sup>328</sup> A surveys of the site was undertaken from 2013-14<sup>329</sup>, with excavations commencing in 2015, the aim being to understand the history of the site from the Middle Pleistocene - Early Holocene.<sup>330</sup>

The survey recovered stone tools typical of Lower/Middle Palaeolithic to Mesolithic date, plus fifty-four sherds of pottery.<sup>331</sup> The dates of the survey ceramics intermittently span the EC to historic periods.<sup>332</sup> At this point however, most of the diagnostic BA pottery came from the nearby promontory, suggestive of a 'classic' EC coastal site. This impression of BA activity at Stelida changed radically in 2019 when the team shifted its excavation focus from the flanks of Stelida, to the uppermost, flat of the hill to try and find *in situ* material (the deposits on the hillside are all in secondary context).<sup>333</sup> The first trench, Trench 44, was opened in a flat area a couple meters southeast of the highest, southern peak (fig. 2). From the outset of the clearing, it was evident that Bronze

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<sup>326</sup> Carter et al. 2016, 267.

<sup>327</sup> Treuil 1983, 64. See Sfériadès 1983 for more information.

<sup>328</sup> Cherry 1981.

<sup>329</sup> Carter et al. 2014; 2016.

<sup>330</sup> Carter et al. 2019.

<sup>331</sup> Carter et al. 2021 84. Due to the scope of this project, the lithics will not be discussed. See Carter 2004 and 2017; Carter et al. 2017; 2019.

<sup>332</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 84.

<sup>333</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 65.

Age activity took place on the hill., with significant quantities of BA pottery recovered. During the 2019 season one more trench was opened, but in 2021 seven trenches were opened (or expanded) to understand in greater detail what was occurring at the peak.

The central feature of the site appears to be a small (ca. 7 × 6 m) rectangular structure built atop the southern peak.<sup>334</sup> The eastern wall was partially uncovered during the 2021 season and was excavated to a depth of over two meters in height on one façade.<sup>335</sup> To the west of this building, on a slightly lower terrace, more rudimentary walls appear to delineate a precinct like area to the west. To the north are several (non-local) schist pavers that appear to define a formal approach up a rubble ramp to the building, while to the south (non-local) granite blocks may have served a similar purpose and/or form part of a rough bench. Most significantly, a large, dressed architectural block of granite found on the surface close to the structure's southern wall is inscribed with a mason's mark.<sup>336</sup> The architecture uncovered at Stelida recalls that at a few Minoan peak sanctuaries – specifically of Neopalatial date - such as Juktas, Petsophas, Philioremos, and Traostalos.<sup>337</sup>

The bulk of material from these trenches is ceramic, and typologically the material is overwhelmingly Minoan in character. In keeping with what has been documented previously at MC-LC I Akrotiri, Phylakopi and Ayia Irini, macroscopic visual inspection of the fabrics suggest that most vessels were made on Naxos, indicating that this is 'Minoanizing' rather than Cretan imports.<sup>338</sup> Pottery of Cycladic cultural type comprises a much smaller proportion of the ceramic assemblage.<sup>339</sup> The Minoanizing part of the

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<sup>334</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 66.

<sup>335</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 92.

<sup>336</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 66-67, 92.

<sup>337</sup> Kyriakidis 2005.

<sup>338</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 68.

<sup>339</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 68.

assemblage is dominated by handleless cups, followed by smaller quantities of tripod cooking-pots, jugs, jars and amphoras, plus a small number of ritual vessels such as cup-rhyta, miniature vases, and lamps. Typologically the bulk of this pottery can be assigned to the MM IIIB period, with lesser quantities of LM IA date (following the Knossian scheme).<sup>340</sup> Most of the pottery is fragmentary with evidence of burning occurring on several of the sherds. The dominance of vessels related to the consumption of drink, and food is directly comparable to ceramic assemblages reported from Cretan peak sanctuaries, and the material relating to feasting and dedicatory actions.

Other finds included fine lime-plaster (some large chunks, some with visible surface, and a few painted examples), large quantities of mica-schist (likely roof tiles from the peak-top building), thousands of beach pebbles, pumice, charcoal, shells (murex, limpit, and others), at least two libation tables (one of stone and one of ceramic), and bronze (many narrow strips of bronze, a pin-like implement, two figurine bases, three bronze or lead figurines, a bronze votive foot, a piece of a sheet bronze figurine, and several other bronze pieces), plus<sup>341</sup> emery, granite, and large quantities of stone tools (residual Palaeolithic material). Phytolith samples attest to the dominance of grasses, including cereals, plus evidence for bushy herbs, material which likely represents fuel for the fires that were burnt in the peak area, some of which may have been chosen for their aromatic properties.<sup>342</sup> Animal bones were also uncovered, representing sheep/goat and part of a cattle jaw.<sup>343</sup> One of the most significant finds was a complete stone ladle from Trench 47.

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<sup>340</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 68.

<sup>341</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 75-80, 92.

<sup>342</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 80-81.

<sup>343</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 81.

The ladle was found whole, measuring slightly over eight centimeters (fig. 16). It is made of a banded schist, potentially from Kinidaros, twelve kilometers to the east of Stelida.<sup>344</sup> As discussed in Chapter Four, ladles are hand-held pouring vessels, often heart-shaped (cordiform), and have long been associated with ritual contexts of “high places” both literally (peak sanctuaries), and figuratively (elite/exclusive spaces).<sup>345</sup> The former includes Juktas, Agios Georgios on Kythera, and Troullos on Kea. The latter comprise religious spaces at Knossos, Archanes, Troullos (Archanes), Phaistos, Palaikastro, Ayia Irini on Kea, a chamber tomb at Mycenae in the Argolid, and the ‘sacred’ Vathy Cave on Kalymnos. Clearly, a Minoan object type (if not origin), ladles are a component of Neopalatial ritual equipment, dating MM III – LM IB.<sup>346</sup>

The bronze figurines are worth mentioning in more detail as such items are uncommon at Cretan peak sanctuaries (only eighteen in total).<sup>347</sup> The Stelida bronze figurines vary in style. As mentioned above, there are two bronze figurine bases that have a circular base with a short stem that emerges vertically from the base; based on comparanda from Agios Georgios,<sup>348</sup> these should be male human figures.<sup>349</sup> Three complete figurines were found in the 2021 season.<sup>350</sup> One of the complete figurines is flat with one arm bent over the chest and the other arm straight down by its side. This figurine is clearly female in form (wide bottom for dress and hair) with one arm down and the other crossed at its chest. There is also a small square of metal jutting at the bottom that perhaps

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<sup>344</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 75, Figure 9.

<sup>345</sup> Evans 1921.

<sup>346</sup> Warren 1969.

<sup>347</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 85. Six at Juktas, five each at Traostalos and Kophinas, and two at Vrysinas. 83 bronze figurines were found at Agios Georgios, which I will discuss in depth in the next chapter.

<sup>348</sup> Sapouna-Sakellaraki 2012:18-19, 25-26, 41-42, 44, 72-73, Pin. 8 (E8), 13 (E14), 22 (E36), 25 (4), 37 (E79) *inter alia*.

<sup>349</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 76.

<sup>350</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 92.

connected to a base. There are again similar figurines found at Agios Georgios.<sup>351</sup> The second figurine is another female figure, which has both arms going up to its head, breasts, a dress, hair in the back, and feet/legs above what looks like a pedestal or base. It seems to be most like E77 at Agios Georgios.<sup>352</sup> The third complete figurine is most likely made of lead and is flat and highly weathered, making it difficult to determine the possible gender.

The votive foot found in 2021<sup>353</sup> is also significant as it is one of the best examples of a votive limb found at Stelida. Bronze votive limbs are fairly rare at Minoan peak sanctuaries; typically, these are made of ceramic. However, the Stelida bronze foot has parallels with Agios Georgios, Kythera (E63-E65).<sup>354</sup> A bronze sheet figurine of most likely a leg with a perforated hole was also uncovered. This bronze sheet also has parallels at Agios Georgios, Kythera.<sup>355</sup>

While many of these conclusions are based on preliminary studies of the material, it can be argued that Stelida was clearly heavily influenced by Minoan cultural, and religious practices. The cultic function of the site is clear (any domestic or funerary function is clearly ruled out), but regarding the degree of Minoan influence, a detailed study of the conical cups can provide more information as discussed in Chapter Five.

## **Andros**

There is one possible peak sanctuary on Andros: Mazareko tou Fellou (figs. 10 and 18) (Appendix A). Before analyzing the site of Mazareko, it is necessary to discuss the settlement activity on Andros during the MC-LC I period. As with Naxos, excavations and

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<sup>351</sup> Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 60-62 (E70), 67-68 (E75), and 68-69 (E76).

<sup>352</sup> Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 70-71 Figure 71, Catalog E77.

<sup>353</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 92.

<sup>354</sup> Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 53-54.

<sup>355</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 81-99. Plate 17.

surveys on Andros have not focused on this period, however, when one looks and reviews the evidence synthetically, it can be seen that communities on the island were networked with populations on other Cycladic islands, Crete, and the Greek mainland. Koutsoukou in the 1980s conducted a survey of the North and West part of the island and identified several sites with ancient remains, six of which produced MC-LC II material.<sup>356</sup>

Plaka is located on the western side of the island near the southern coast (fig. 18),<sup>357</sup> situated on a low promontory with direct access to the sea. The British School in Athens collected sherds from the site which were studied by Koutsoukou in the 1980s and dated from the Final Neolithic to the MC period.<sup>358</sup> Rescue excavations conducted by the Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities in 2002 and 2005 revealed two occupational phases; EC III and MC I-II.<sup>359</sup>

The site of Chartes, located inland on the NW side of the island, was surveyed by Koutsoukou in 1989 (fig. 18).<sup>360</sup> Bronze Age material included pottery (some possibly dated to MC – two sherds), a horizontal lug handle and a piece of obsidian. The site was identified as a settlement by Koutsoukou. Kastri on the promontory on the NW side of the island was studied by Koutsoukou in 1989 where Final Neolithic pottery and obsidian were identified, with a single MC-LC obsidian tool (fig. 18).<sup>361</sup> Maroniti is located near Kastri on a hill that faces the Gaurio valley (fig. 18).<sup>362</sup> Koutsoukou also identified this site with LC surface ceramics and architecture; Later Archaic to Classical material was also

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<sup>356</sup> Koutsoukou 1992.

<sup>357</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 461–463, pl. 1; École Française D’Athènes 2002, 2005; Nikolakopoulou and Karnava 2005, 98; Televantou 2006, 214–215; Belza 2018, 148-149.

<sup>358</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 461–463, pl. 1.

<sup>359</sup> École Française D’Athènes 2002; 2005; Nikolakopoulou and Karnava 2005, 98; Televantou 2006, 214–215.

<sup>360</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 208, 434, 583, fig. 103, site no. 71; Belza 2018, 145.

<sup>361</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 80–82 figs. 51–53, pl. 107, site no. 28; Belza 2018, 146.

<sup>362</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 89–91, 369–373, figs. 60–61, pls. 22–24, site no. 33; Belza 2018, 146-147.



identified.<sup>363</sup> The architecture consists of a long portion of a wall (six meters were exposed and survived to the height of 1.90 meters and made out of large limestone blocks of irregular masonry), possibly part of a prehistoric massive fortification wall, which is similar in construction to the walls at Ayia Irini and Phylakopi.<sup>364</sup> Koutsoukou connects the site's material with Mazareko tou Fellou (the possible peak sanctuary), but it is tentatively proposed, and only further investigation will clarify the situation. The last site, Pori, is located inland on the north end of the island, near a flat arable plateau (fig. 18).<sup>365</sup> Pori was identified by Koutsoukou who found a large amount of prehistoric pottery, mostly from the LC period with notable finds including pithoi sherds with relief band decoration (three sherds).<sup>366</sup> Koutsoukou suggests the site was a settlement.

While the sites have only been tentatively studied (besides Plaka) island community on Andros does appear active and in contact with other Cycladic islands during this period. The one possible peak sanctuary identified by Koutsoukou is the site Mazareko tou Fellou.

#### Mazareko tou Fellou

Mazareko<sup>367</sup> is a rocky hill situated on the NW slopes of Charakas that overlooks both a valley and the bay of Phellos near the sites of Maroniti and Kastri (figs. 10 and 18) (Appendix A).<sup>368</sup> The site has not been excavated but has only been briefly examined by Koutsoukou. Ruins of a retaining wall are visible on site, made of grey blue marble and smaller stones, which Koutsoukou dates most likely to the Classical period though it could

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<sup>363</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 89.

<sup>364</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 89-91, pl. 23-24.

<sup>365</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 222-224, 438-439, fig. 106, pl. 100, site no. 78; Belza 2018, 149.

<sup>366</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 438-439, K1: 14, 21, 18.

<sup>367</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 93-99, 373-380, fig. 62, pls. 109-110, site nos. 35-36; Sotirakopoulou 2010, 837; Belza 2018, 147-8.

<sup>368</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 94.

date to MC-LC.<sup>369</sup> Pottery found at the site dates to the MC-LC II (ca. 35 sherds) and Classical periods.<sup>370</sup> Both fine and coarse ware have been reported; shapes represented included bridge-spouted jars, goblet, tripod cooking vessels, pithoi, kylixes, and stirrup jars.<sup>371</sup> Of particular note is a mouth of the bridge-spouted jar with black curvilinear decoration in a white slip; this is a Minoan shape made in local fabric.<sup>372</sup> Some pithoi sherds had a rope disc pattern which Koutsoukou points out is comparable to pithoi found at Ayia Irini, Phylakopi, and Delos.<sup>373</sup>

Other finds include a small, pierced disc of local green schist that could have been part of a necklace, similar to examples known from the Neolithic.<sup>374</sup> Striking is the absence of any obsidian, which makes Koutsoukou argue that this was not a habitation site, in addition to its small size, high proportion of fine wares, and the retaining wall.<sup>375</sup> Koutsoukou states that it might have been a peak sanctuary, pointing to Mikre Vigla as a possible comparison. No other scholar has commented on this possible classification, but the topographical setting and finds clearly point to consumption activities. If it is in fact a peak sanctuary, Maroniti would most likely be the main settlement associated with the open-air cult site of Mazareko. While the site has not been extensively studied, there is some evidence for influences from and/or connections with Minoan Crete, communities of the Western String, and Mycenaean Greece. Koutsoukou states that while the Minoanizing

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<sup>369</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 94-95.

<sup>370</sup> See Koutsoukou 1992, 373-380 for the catalog.

<sup>371</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 373-380. Interestingly, no conical cups were noted.

<sup>372</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 96.

<sup>373</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 96.

<sup>374</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 97.

<sup>375</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 97-98.

sherds are not numerous, Andros was in some way in contact with Minoan culture during the Later MC-LC I periods.<sup>376</sup>

## **Thera**

There is one possible peak sanctuary on Thera: Mavro Rachidi (figs. 10 and 19) (Appendix A). The island of Thera, unlike Naxos and Paros, is significantly better understood during the MC-LC I period, due the well-preserved site of Akrotiri, whose exploration provides a range of evidence for connections with other Cycladic islands, Crete, and the Greek mainland.

Akrotiri is one of the most famous habitation sites from the Aegean Bronze Age and was the main settlement on Thera dated to the BA (fig. 19).<sup>377</sup> As stated above, this is one of the ‘Western String’ sites identified by Davis in 1979. The site dates back to the Late Neolithic period and flourished until the volcano eruption in LC I / LM IA. The LC town is characteristic by dense settlement pattern with an organized street network, domestic spaces, workshops, frescos, and cult activity. Contact with Crete seems to have begun in the Early MC period and increased gradually over time.<sup>378</sup> Imported Minoan pottery became frequent and local imitations of Minoan pottery became common in later phases (straight-sided cup, hemispherical cup, saucer, bridge-spouted jar, and the conical cup).<sup>379</sup> The potter’s wheel was also used for the manufacture of Minoanizing forms.<sup>380</sup> The implications of the transfer of manufacturing techniques is discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

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<sup>376</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 96.

<sup>377</sup> Doumas 1983; 2010; Hardy et al. 1990. Nikolakopoulou et al. 2008; Nikolakopoulou 2013; 2019; Palyvou 2005; Berg 2019.

<sup>378</sup> Berg 2019, 219.

<sup>379</sup> Berg 2019, 220.

<sup>380</sup> Berg 2019, 220.

The richness of the site in the form of finds, architecture, and frescos reveal that Akrotiri was connected to Crete, the mainland, other Cycladic islands, and the eastern Mediterranean which suggests that it played a crucial role in Aegean trade during the Neopalatial period.<sup>381</sup> It was the connection to Crete that is most visible in the substantial number of artifacts, frescos, and manufacturing techniques on a variety of crafts.<sup>382</sup> Several cult places have been identified by Nanno Marinatos at Akrotiri, but they are all intermural cults that appear to be connected with industrial activities such as the production of bread<sup>383</sup> or the cooking of food.<sup>384</sup> As discussed in Chapter Four, the cult spaces incorporated the use of Minoanizing material suggesting further connections with the island of Crete.<sup>385</sup> Study of the remains is ongoing and has shown the importance and connections of the settlement throughout the Bronze Age.<sup>386</sup>

Several other MC-LC II sites on Thera have been identified, however no site is as well studied or published as Akrotiri. Balos is 1 km NW of the modern village of Akrotiri and was excavated in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (fig. 19).<sup>387</sup> Two buildings were located (with possibly more in the vicinity) with plaster on the interior walls and large pithoi inside. Animal skeletons (goat and sheep) were also found inside some of the rooms. Overall, the remains at Balos dated to the LC I period.

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<sup>381</sup> Berg 2019, 255-256.

<sup>382</sup> Berg 2019, 255.

<sup>383</sup> Marinatos 1984, 169-171 (N. Mill and The Mill of the Square and the Adjacent Storeroom).

<sup>384</sup> Marinatos 1984, 173-174 (Shrine of the Antelopes and the Boxing Children). She has also interpreted some cult places in terms of rites of passages. See 1993, 201-220 for more information.

<sup>385</sup> Marinatos 1990, 370.

<sup>386</sup> Berg 2002; 2004; Gillis 1990a; 1990b; 1990c; Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2005; 2008; Knappett et al. 2011; Marinatos 1974; Marthari 1993b; Marthari et al. 1990; Michailidou 2001; Morgan 1988; Nikolakopoulou 2009; 2013; 2019; Schofield 1982a; 1990.

<sup>387</sup> Sperling 1973, 13-14, 53-56; Barber 1981, site no. 4; Doumas 1983, 45; Belza 2018, 190.

Chalarovounia is located on the SE side of the island and identified by Marthari who noted a rubble-masonry wall and pottery (dated to LC I with wares including Cycladic cups, local Theran vases, imported Minoan and Cycladic ceramics) (fig. 19).<sup>388</sup> In central Thera on the western coast is the site of the Karageorgis Quarries where EC-MC graves were excavated in 1978 (fig. 19).<sup>389</sup>

Phtellos on the western coast in the central part of the island was excavated by Doumas (two LC I rooms) and Marthari (a MC building with three rooms) (fig. 19).<sup>390</sup> From the MC building, evidence of wall paintings was uncovered along with Cycladic White vessels. Roas on the western coast of the caldera was excavated from 2003-2012 under the direction of Marthari, where a ‘villa’ with seven rooms and a courtyard was uncovered (fig. 19).<sup>391</sup> Fragments of painted plaster were found in some of the rooms as well as a large number of imported Minoan vessels and local Cycladic pottery. Non ceramic finds included stone tools and bronze. Most of the material dates to the LC I period with some MC material.

Other sites identified either through survey and/or excavation, but not well studied include: Archangelos,<sup>392</sup> Agios Nikolaos,<sup>393</sup> Cape Koloumvos,<sup>394</sup> Exomiti,<sup>395</sup> Kamara,<sup>396</sup>

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<sup>388</sup> Marthari 2004, 54, 57, 61–62, figs. 2–6; Belza 2018, 191.

<sup>389</sup> Marthari 1982, 96; 1987, 368–369; 2001, 109–111; Doumas 1983, 28, pl. 34; Papagiannopoulou 1991, 30–32, 292; Sotirakopoulou 2004, 73, site no. 12; Belza 2018, 192.

<sup>390</sup> Doumas 1973, 161–166; Barber 1981, 20, site no. 44; Marthari 1982, 88–100; 1987, 368–369; 1993b, 14–16; 2001, 105–120; Papagiannopoulou 1991, 292; Sotirakopoulou 2004, 73, site no. 11; Belza 2018, 194.

<sup>391</sup> Marthari 2004, 57–59, 62–65, figs. 7–11, 2012, 105–106; Belza 2018, 194–195.

<sup>392</sup> Sperling 1973, 13; Doumas 1983, 27; Belza 2018, 189.

<sup>393</sup> Marinatos 1968, 57; Belza 2018, 190.

<sup>394</sup> Scholes 1956, 13; Barber 1981, site no. 42; Belza 2018, 190.

<sup>395</sup> Scholes 1956, 13; Barber 1981, 20, site no. 43; Belza 2018, 191.

<sup>396</sup> Sperling 1973, 22–23; Barber 1981, 20, site no. 45; Doumas 1983, 45; Belza 2018, 191.

Katsades,<sup>397</sup> Mavromatis Quarries,<sup>398</sup> Meso Vouno,<sup>399</sup> Oia Quarry,<sup>400</sup> and Profitis Ilias<sup>401</sup> (fig. 19). The evidence at each of these sites equates to a few sherds, but nevertheless suggests that a large portion of the island was inhabited during this period. There was home to an important and interconnected community during this period with material distributed across the island, with a particular relationship with Crete.

### Mavro Rachidi

Marvo Rachidi, also known as Kokkino Vouno, rises above Akrotiri to the west (fig. 19) (Appendix A).<sup>402</sup> Marinatos reports several walls, pottery, painted plaster, pieces of a stone vessel, and metals.<sup>403</sup> No further details or images as to what those remains are or looked like have been published. Doulas interpreted the site as a representation of a possible watch tower over the ancient harbor of Akrotiri, recalling Caskey's interpretation of Troullos on Kea as discussed below.<sup>404</sup> According to personal communication in 1994 between Doulas and Sakellarakis, Doulas did not rule out the possibility of a peak sanctuary.<sup>405</sup> No proper excavation has taken place at Mavro Rachidi besides the reports of Marinatos. Nevertheless, it would be surprising, perhaps, that the site of Akrotiri would not have a peak sanctuary within its vicinity given its intense contact with Crete through the Bronze Age. In fact, in her in depth study of miniature frescos Morgan identifies the North Wall (Upper Zone fresco titled "The Meeting on the Hill and the Pastoral Community") in

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<sup>397</sup> Marinatos 1968, 4, 59; Barber 1981, 20, site no. 49; Belza 2018, 192.

<sup>398</sup> Doulas 1983, 45; Televantou 1987, 509–512; Papagiannopoulou 1991, 292; Sotirakopoulou 2004, 73, site no. 13; Belza 2018, 193.

<sup>399</sup> Doulas 1983, 10, 129; Belza 2018, 193.

<sup>400</sup> Doulas 1983, 10, 129; Belza 2018, 193.

<sup>401</sup> Sperling 1973, 34; Belza 2018, 194.

<sup>402</sup> Marinatos 1968, 35-36; Barber 1981, 20, site no. 50; Doulas 1983, 55-56; Morgan 1988, 156; Sakellarakis 1996, 96.

<sup>403</sup> Marinatos 1968, 35-36.

<sup>404</sup> Doulas 1983, 55-56.

<sup>405</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 97; footnote 186.

the West House at Akrotiri as a possible peak sanctuary ritual, which she assumes depicts a local scene that occurred in the nearby hilltops (fig. 20).<sup>406</sup> She interprets the scene as the end of a ritual activity at which pastoral men partook in activity with their livestock on the hill.<sup>407</sup> In the scene there is an isolated building on the hill with a view of a settlement in the vicinity.<sup>408</sup> Sakellarakis states that there is no doubt that this scene depicts a peak sanctuary.<sup>409</sup> He emphasizes the nine male figurines, three who are wearing the Minoan kilt, one who has his hand to his forehead (a well-known Minoan gesture), a figure with, most likely, outstretched arms, and two figures on the plateau at the top performing a type of ritual who wear long ‘priestly’ robes.<sup>410</sup> If this scene does depict a local peak sanctuary worship, then Mavro Rachidi is the best candidate that has been identified.

Certainly, if Marvo Rachidi is a peak sanctuary, Akrotiri would have served as the main settlement, despite several other settlements visible from the open-air cult site. The architecture and painted plaster recall other possible peak sanctuaries.

## **Kea**

There is one possible peak sanctuary on Kea: Troullos (figs. 10, 21-22) (Appendix A). Before discussing the finds at Troullos, it is important to understand the context of the island during the MC-LC II periods. This timeframe is fairly well understood on Kea due to the ongoing excavations at the important site of Ayia Irini and two surveys. The first survey was undertaken from 1983-1984 by John Cherry, Jack Davis, and Eleni Mantzourani that examined the relationship between Ayia Irini and the hinterlands.<sup>411</sup> The

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<sup>406</sup> Morgan 1988, 156-158.

<sup>407</sup> Morgan 1988, 157.

<sup>408</sup> Morgan 1988, 157.

<sup>409</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 37.

<sup>410</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 37-38.

<sup>411</sup> Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991.

second, by Joanne Murphy from 2012-2014, sought to study the methodological reliability of survey techniques and to note landscape changes since the previous survey).<sup>412</sup> As mentioned above, Kea is one of the ‘Western String’ islands as identified by Davis in 1979, with Ayia Irini the main Bronze Age settlement.

Ayia Irini is located on the NW coast of a low promontory and was excavated by John Caskey from 1960-1975 with continued publications (fig. 21).<sup>413</sup> The site was first occupied in the Final Neolithic-EC period and lasted through the Bronze Age. The settlement was rebuilt in the MC period when the site suffered from an earthquake. A fortification wall and temple were also built at this time. Contact with Crete is evidenced at the site by MM IIA, but it flourished in LC I-II when contact with the mainland is also clear. Evidence for domestic, industrial, and religious activities has been found at the site and subsequent study of the material is still ongoing.<sup>414</sup> During the Periods V and VI intense contact with the island of Crete is recognized (ca. 1800-1600 BCE).<sup>415</sup>

Ayia Irini is one of the smallest ‘Minoanized’ sites in the Aegean, yet it was clearly an important and connected site with its location near the Lavrion mines of nearby Attica.<sup>416</sup> In regard to Cretan connections, Minoanizing forms began to be created in a limited way during Period IV, but intensified during Periods V and VI.<sup>417</sup> Other Minoan

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<sup>412</sup> Morgan 2012; École Française D’Athènes 2013a; Murphy, Abell, Wallrodt, Hogue, and Baxley, *forthcoming*; Murphy, Nazou, Abell, Wallrodt, and Hogue, *forthcoming*.

<sup>413</sup> Scholes 1956, 11; Caskey 1962, 263–283, 1964, 314–335, 1971, 359–391, 1972, 357–40; Catling 1972, 23–24, 1973, 28–29, 1974, 21–22; Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979, 304–305; Davis et al. 1983; Schofield 1984; Davis 1986; Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991, 99, site no. 35, fig. 9.1–6; Gorogianni 2016.

<sup>414</sup> Abell 2014a; 2016; 2021; Abell and Hilditch 2016; Davis 1980; 1984; 1986; Davis and Cherry 1990; Davis and Gorogianni 2008; Davis and Lewis 1985; Davis et al. 1983; Gorogianni 2016; Gorogianni et al. 2016; Gorogianni 2020; Morgan 2020.

<sup>415</sup> Gorogianni 2016, 138.

<sup>416</sup> Gorogianni 2016, 138-139.

<sup>417</sup> Gorogianni 2016, 140.



elements can be seen in cooking technology, textile production, administrative technologies (including Linear A and weights and measures), wall paintings, architecture, and religious practices.<sup>418</sup> Thus, local Keans adopted certain Cretan techniques, while still importing Cretan, mainland, and other Cycladic goods through the Bronze Age. Concerning cult practices, a temple was uncovered during the excavations that was built during Period IV.<sup>419</sup> Originally the temple was a square two-room building but was enlarged to an oblong building though the original two rooms were preserved and appeared to be special in the later periods.<sup>420</sup> The most significant finds associated with the temple are thirty-two terracotta statues that range from seventy to 120 centimeters.<sup>421</sup> All of the statues are female figures with flounced skirts and uncovered breasts in the typical Minoan fashion, but the size is atypical for Minoan figurines which are typically smaller than twenty centimeters.<sup>422</sup> Other finds include benches (interpreted as votive platforms) in Rooms 3 and 6, evidence of burning, Grey Minyan cups, and duck vases.<sup>423</sup> Interestingly, no Minoan ritual equipment (e.g., Minoan (or Minoanizing) consumption ware, libation tables, double axes) were found.<sup>424</sup> Due to this lack, Caskey states the temple is a distinct expression of Cycladic worship and ritual.<sup>425</sup>

Outside of Ayia Irini and Troullos, fourteen sites with MC-LC II material were identified by survey in the 1980s, but none of these sites appear to have been settlements

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<sup>418</sup> Gorogianni 2016, 145, Table 8.4; Gorogianni 2011, 642.

<sup>419</sup> Gorogianni 2011, 638.

<sup>420</sup> Gorogianni 2011, 638.

<sup>421</sup> Gorogianni 2011, 640.

<sup>422</sup> Gorogianni 2011, 640.

<sup>423</sup> Berg 2019, 177.

<sup>424</sup> Berg 2019, 178.

<sup>425</sup> Caskey 1986, 38; 1998, 128.

(fig. 21).<sup>426</sup> Instead, Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani argue that these sites represented regular activities in the hinterlands by the inhabitants of Ayia Irini. The typical pottery included pithos sherds with relief decoration and tripod cooking vessels, and obsidian was noted at some sites.<sup>427</sup> Another site was identified by the Poiessa survey, namely Karthaia where MM IB/II material was identified through local Kean wares, some Aeginetan wares, and a few southern Cycladic wares found under the later Roman theater.<sup>428</sup>

### Troullos

Troullos is a rounded hilltop about 500 meters north of Ayia Irini (figs. 10, 21-22), where Caskey undertook a small excavation during the 1966-1970 campaigns (Appendix A).<sup>429</sup> On site there is a rectangular enclosure with two drum structures: one inside, and one outside; the northeastern part of the enclosure was paved with irregular slabs of local marble (fig. 22).<sup>430</sup> Finds include pottery, 95% of which was local coarse wares that included 149 conical cups, twelve tripod vessels, a spout of a plain sauceboat of EH type, Matt-painted wares, jugs, jars, pithoi. Non ceramic finds include a stone ladle, stone libation tables, a head of an EC figurine, bronze thin strips, a bronze u-shaped object, five pieces of obsidian,<sup>431</sup> and a bronze figurine with a pin stuck into it.<sup>432</sup> The Kea survey

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<sup>426</sup> Agios Ioannis Prodromos (Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991, 95, site no. 29, figs. 9.4, 9.5; Belza 2018, 156), Ayia Varvara (Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991, 108–109, site nos. 49–50, figs. 5.1b, 9.4; Belza 2018, 157), Kephala (Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991, 117–119, site nos. 58–59, figs. 5.1b, 9.4; Belza 2018, 158-159); Mavrou (Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991, 106–107, sites nos. 46–47, fig. 9.4; Belza 2018, 159), Off-site 24 (Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991, 81, fig. 9.4; Belza 2018, 159), Off-Site 48 (Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991, 108, fig. 9.4; Belza 2018, 160), Otzias (Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991, 117, site no. 57, figs. 5.1b, 9.4; Belza 2018, 160), Perlevos (Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991, 120, site no. 61, figs. 5.1b, 9.4; Belza 2018, 160-161), Stavroti (Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991, 81, site no. 13, figs. 5.1a:13-4; 9.4, 9.5; Belza 2018, 161), Vourkari (Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991, 103, site no. 43, fig. 9.4; Belza 2018, 162).

<sup>427</sup> Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991.

<sup>428</sup> Mendoni 2004, 188–221; Belza 2018, 158.

<sup>429</sup> Caskey 1971.

<sup>430</sup> Caskey 1971, 392.

<sup>431</sup> Caskey 1971, 394-395.

<sup>432</sup> Catling 1972-1973, 24 fig. 47; Davis 1984, 164.

subsequently collected from Troullos: two tripod vessel legs (dating to MC-LC II), a body sherd from a pithos with a finger-impressed relief band, and fourteen untouched obsidian artifacts, possibly Bronze Age.<sup>433</sup> Most of the material at Troullos dates to LC I (though possibly MC III).<sup>434</sup>

Regarding the function of Troullos, Caskey argued that Troullos was a watchtower, though the stone vessels suggested some on-site religious activities.<sup>435</sup> The idea that it might have been a Minoan peak sanctuary was raised by a few scholars, though Davis, in 1984, states that “many features of the site, including its extreme proximity to Ayia Irini, do not fit our picture of a conventional peak sanctuary.”<sup>436</sup> It was Sakellarakis who most adamantly argued that the site is a peak sanctuary based on the conical cups, stone ladle, tripod vessels, offering tables, and bronze votives.<sup>437</sup> The possibility of slightly earlier habitation of the site in the form of a few sherds and the head of an early Cycladic figurine suggests that this site might have been important earlier than the Neopalatial period.

The idea that Troullos would need more evidence to fit the ‘conventional picture of a peak sanctuary’ I believe is incorrect, as local Keans could surely adapt certain culture aspects of Minoan cultures as they did with Minoan pottery, production techniques, and intermural cult. Something non-domestic was happening at Troullos, and the architecture, stone ladle, conical cups, and libation tables are suggestive of a cultic function. It seems unusually close to Ayia Irini (compared to the average distance of peak sanctuaries and settlements on Crete), but this alone should not exclude the possibility that Troullos was

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<sup>433</sup> Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991, 100.

<sup>434</sup> Davis 1984, 164.

<sup>435</sup> Caskey 1971, 392-395.

<sup>436</sup> Davis 1984, 164, note 23.

<sup>437</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 92-93. See note 115 for a full citation of the debate.

the site of cultic activity. This is discussed in more detail in Chapters Four and Five, but Kea was home to an important and vibrant island community, which the locals adapted certain Cretan behaviors and products.

### Comparison

When looking at the possible Cycladic peak sanctuaries it can be seen that the finds vary across the islands, but there are common threads (Tables 2 and 3). The caveat that these sites have not been uniformly studied and some sites are very incomplete at best, is important to keep in mind. Regarding topographical elements, these sites are all on a peak of a hill, within walking distance of a settlement, and are visible from that settlement, as discussed in Chapter Four (Table 2). Thus, all these sites, at least topographically, meet the peak sanctuary standards as laid out by Peatfield.<sup>438</sup>

Site Name	Architecture	Minoanizing Pottery	Accessibility	Metals	Proximity to areas of human activity
Stelida	X	X	X	X	X
Mikre Vigla	X	X	X	X	X
Mazareko tou Fellou	?	X	X		X
Marvo Rachidi	X	?	X	X	X
Troullos	X	X	X	X	X

Table 2: Categories for comparisons of the possible Cycladic peak sanctuary.

Site Name	Human Figurine	Animal Figurine	Votive Limb	Clay/stone table	Doubleaxe	Horns of Consecration	Weapon	Miniature Vessel	Animal rhyton	Stone Ladle	Shells	Pebble	Bone	Ash/Fire
Stelida	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Mikre Vigla	X	X	X					X						
Mazareko tou Fellou														
Marvo Rachidi														
Troullos	X			X						X				

Table 3: Possible Cycladic peak sanctuaries: Peak Sanctuary Kit. Adapted from Briault, 2007, Table 2.

<sup>438</sup> Peatfield 2007, 297.

Regarding material remains, a large majority of finds are locally made and are mostly in Minoanizing forms. When details are known about the finds, consumption wares dominate the pottery at each of these sites (mostly conical cups), suggesting some sort of feasting or consumption of food and liquid occurred at the hilltops. Stone ladles, found at Stelida and Troullos, are connected with cultic activity on Crete. And, finally, architecture was found at all of the sites, with the acknowledgement that the architecture at Mazareko may not have been prehistoric. For Peatfield the most important votive remains are a figurine assemblage – specifically both animal and human figurines as well as votive limbs in significant numbers.<sup>439</sup> Only Stelida, Mikre Vigla, and Troullos have figurines. This raises the question of what characterizes an assemblage. As discussed more fully below, all of these sites include some of the necessary elements to classify them as a peak sanctuary from a Cretan perspective. Whether the same assemblage profile should be expected of sites outside of Crete is a larger question as discussed in Chapter Four.

If one were to follow the peak sanctuary kit as determined by Briault, a different picture emerges (Table 3).<sup>440</sup> Stelida matches the greatest number of categories by far, with Mikre Vigla coming second. Neither Mazareko nor Marvo Rachidi fulfill any of the categories, though in these cases absence is not meaningful because these sites have not been properly published with full details. Thus, future study of the material from these two sites could reveal more information. However, quantification by category is a problematic approach to identifying a ‘Minoan peak sanctuary’, as confirmed Cretan peak sanctuaries only fulfill a handful of these categories as well as discussed in Chapter Four.

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<sup>439</sup> Peatfield 2007, 297.

<sup>440</sup> Briault 2007, Table 2.

The best case for a Cretan peak sanctuary in the Cyclades is Stelida, where the largest amount of material has been found. This could be due to it being the only site that has received the benefit of a long-term excavation. Surely Mikre Vigla was an important site, but Stelida seems to have been the focus of a specific sort of activity for a restricted time, while Mikre Vigla was a longer lasting locale of activity. There may well have been a cult manifested through Cretan peak sanctuaries during the Neopalatial period, but the evidence is complicated. Surely the figurines point to some sort of cult activity, but Mikre Vigla was also next to an important port, thus adding a potential economic center to create an unusual situation, with some sort of cultic activity taking place within one spot of the site. Even the single island Naxos had a variety of cult behavior, and this is an important point in understanding island behavior. Troullos also appears to have been the location of cultic activity with finds (ladle, conical cups, one figurine, libation tables, and architecture) similar to those of peak sanctuaries on Crete.

Despite many commonalities, there are variances in the material found at each of these sites. This could be due to the differing levels of archaeological investigation at each site, but some degree of local adaptation of a 'Minoan' cult could also be at play. This idea is further discussed and analyzed in Chapter Four and Five.

Of particular interest is that due to the nature of investigation, but perhaps also reflective of reality, is that we do not see a standardized form of activity happening across these sites. Is this reflective of local island identity picking (i.e., code switching) and choosing what materiality and behavior to adapt? Or is simply one island (say Kea) in more contact with Cretans and thus more familiar with the cult behavior than the other islands? I would generally argue that it is the former as it allows for more choice to be allotted to

the islanders and it could explain some of the variations of material found at each of the sites, which is the general understanding of the ‘Western String’ islands as well. As mentioned in Chapter One there is much variation in material from the Cretan peak sanctuaries. This is one of the many reasons why peak sanctuaries are not truly understood. This idea of variation of cult and local adaptation of Cretan cult behavior varies from place to place is discussed in Chapters Four and Five in detail. It is important to keep in mind that perhaps we cannot think of a ‘cult package’ to identify non-Cretan peak sanctuaries because there are many variations among even the Neopalatial Cretan peak sanctuaries, suggesting that strict cult packages might not have been present at Minoan peak sanctuaries. In sum, this chapter surveyed the Western String model, showing how the Cyclades in the MC-LC II period have been discussed, while highlighting that the question of cult activity has been largely lacking. This survey of possible peak cult sites in the Cyclades revealed some of the ways local populations could modify Cretan cult behavior. This clear degree of variability might be reflective of local interpretation of a well-known Minoan cult practice all the while still recognizable to Cretans.

### **Chapter Three**

#### **Non-Cretan Peak Sanctuaries outside the Cyclades**

As was seen in the previous chapter, there are several possible peak sanctuaries outside of Crete (Appendix A). This chapter introduces the alleged, non-Cretan peak sanctuaries outside of the Cyclades. While most of these are in the Cyclades, there are also two in the Ionian islands, one in the Dodecanese, and one on the mainland (fig. 23) (Appendix A). Kythera, is the southernmost of the Ionian islands, situated between the southern Peloponnese and western Crete; here excavations have produced evidence for two sites pertinent to this thesis: Agios Georgios (the one accepted peak sanctuary outside of Crete) and Leska. Another peak sanctuary has been tentatively noted on Rhodes (Philerimos) and the last is on the Greek mainland (Maleatas). The site on the mainland has been the subject of much discussion and leads into a more general consideration of ‘colonial’ contact in the following chapters. Only the site of Agios Georgios has been the focus of a full-scale excavation and subsequent publication (Leska publications are forthcoming), while either limited excavation and/or partial publication serve as the only sort of archaeological investigation of the other sites. As a result. In what follows, a survey of the habitation of the various islands (or near the cult site, in the case of Maleatas) establishes the context for an in-depth examination of the possible cult centers identified. It is seen that while the understanding of the sites varies, there are similarities in all of them.

#### **Kythera**

There are two possible peak sanctuaries on Kythera: Agios Georgios and Leska (figs. 23-24) (Appendix A). Before discussing both, it is important to understand the context of the island during the Neopalatial period. Due to its early identification as a



possible Minoan colony, Bronze Age Kythera has been the subject of much research. The island has been privy to both excavations (namely at Kastri, Leska, and Agios Georgios) as well as intensive surveys. The main settlement site on the island is Kastri on the NE side of Kythera and four kilometers from Agios Georgios (figs. 24-25). Initially identified in the 1930's as a site with Minoan contact, evidence from excavations and field surveys led scholars to determine that Kastri was also a Minoan colony.<sup>441</sup> The site dates back to the Early Bronze Age, though Minoan contact on Kythera dates to the EB II period through the end of the Neopalatial period.<sup>442</sup> The site has been described as Minoanized due to the large quantities of Minoan and Minoanizing pottery dating from EM II to LM IB, numerous small Minoan objects, and the presence of Minoan style tombs.<sup>443</sup> While the findings are abundant, it should be noted that the entire settlement has not been properly excavated and there is therefore little architectural evidence.<sup>444</sup> Nonetheless, in his 1981 publication Branigan identified Kastri as a settlement colony.<sup>445</sup>

Broodbank, the director of the Kythera Survey Project, points out that most Minoanizing settlements date to the Neopalatial period, but that Kastri is different because Minoanizing characteristics are present much earlier, in the mid-third millennium BCE (Prepalatial).<sup>446</sup> Broodbank states that “Kythera does provide an example of an island society that displays a wide range of Minoanising traits, and interacted with Crete in a striking number of different ways, over roughly a millennium.”<sup>447</sup> The question that arises

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<sup>441</sup> Coldstream and Huxley 1972; Sakellarakis 1996, 81.

<sup>442</sup> Broodbank and Kiriati 2007, 241-242.

<sup>443</sup> Branigan 1981, 32. The Minoan style tombs are chamber tombs with Minoan style pottery and stone vases.

<sup>444</sup> Branigan 1981, 32.

<sup>445</sup> Branigan 1981, 32.

<sup>446</sup> Broodbank 2004, 49.

<sup>447</sup> Broodbank 2004, 73.

is how did the local activity and characteristics differ to the Minoan ones. Unfortunately, this question is hard to answer due to the lack of complete excavation and the poor understanding of ‘native Kytherians’ before the arrival of the Minoans.

There is some evidence for local pottery before the Minoan influence took place. The island seems to have been inhabited with dispersed villages from FN to EBA II and the material culture has similarity to other areas on the mainland, the Cyclades and west Crete.<sup>448</sup> The earliest excavated deposit at Kastri is on Kastraki Hill and dates to EBA I-II in style.<sup>449</sup> However, the findings have not been fully studied. Survey evidence has revealed extensive occupation and trade with Laconia from FN-EBA II.<sup>450</sup> In EBA III, the pottery is Cretan in terms of technique, decoration, and shape, but locally made.<sup>451</sup> The small amount of evidence does not inform us much about the local characteristics and culture. However, according to the surveyors the evidence suggests that Cretans and non-Cretans lived alongside each other for centuries, but eventually Minoan culture dominated the island.<sup>452</sup>

Other sites that date to the period of interest have been noted from the Kythera Island Project (1998-2001) which surveyed the central-southern area of the island (around 35.7% of the island) including the area around Kastri.<sup>453</sup> More than eighty Neopalatial sites were noted from the survey.<sup>454</sup> However only five (other than Kastri and Agios Georgios) of the eighty plus sites (fig. 25) have been described in any significant detail, though larger

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<sup>448</sup> Broodbank 2004, 75.

<sup>449</sup> Berg 2019, 199.

<sup>450</sup> Cavanagh and Mee 2011, 42.

<sup>451</sup> Broodbank 2004, 75.

<sup>452</sup> Berg 2019, 199. It should be noted that this is a highly debated topic and is discussed in the following chapters.

<sup>453</sup> Bevan 2002, 220.

<sup>454</sup> Bevan 2002, 218.

trends are described at the end of this section. These five sites were identified in the 1998 survey season and were published by Broodbank in 1999. Information from the 1999-2001 seasons have been published by Bevan in a 2002 article.

The first site with Neopalatial material identified by Broodbank, Site 1, is near the olive oil press at the Mitata-Palaiopolis road division. EBA and Classical/Hellenistic material was also found (fig. 25). The Neopalatial settlement was located below a cliff where sherds of cooking pots, pithoi, jars, and a few fine vessels were found as well as an associated rock-cut tomb with a circular domed chamber.<sup>455</sup> Site 2 (Pelades) is a settlement located near Frilingianika where fragments of cooking pots, jugs, pithoi, jars, dark-on-light cups, a conical cup, at least one closed vessel, ground-stone querns, and a clay weight was found (fig. 25). The site is dated to LBA I.<sup>456</sup> A settlement located 150 meters south of Site 1, Site 12, was identified by fragments of cooking pots (fig. 25).<sup>457</sup> The fourth site, Site 13, is a possible Neopalatial settlement 1000 meters NE of Frilingianika where diagnostic coarse pottery was found in stone-piles (fig. 25).<sup>458</sup> Finally, Site 22 (Viaradika) is located west of the northern cluster of houses in Viaradika where a number of tombs were found, but these were reused for storage or animal pens (fig. 25). The rock-cutting is similar to tombs found at Kastri.<sup>459</sup> Other scatterings of Neopalatial material have been noted, but nothing of significance that designates a site from the 1998 survey season, according to Broodbank.<sup>460</sup>

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<sup>455</sup> Broodbank 1999, 200.

<sup>456</sup> Broodbank 1999, 200-201.

<sup>457</sup> Broodbank 1999, 207.

<sup>458</sup> Broodbank 1999, 207.

<sup>459</sup> Broodbank 1999, 208.

<sup>460</sup> Broodbank 1999, 209.

Bevan notes that the Neopalatial landscape of Kythera was somewhat dispersed, where Kastri was the main area of activity, but it may be inappropriate to speak of a discrete site at Kastri. Instead, a ‘Kastri zone’ which designates a broad region of habitations, tombs, and perhaps agriculture more accurately describes the landscape of Neopalatial Kythera.<sup>461</sup> Outside of Kastri there are only a few larger sites, which could resemble some sort of settlement, but Bevan is hesitant to discuss sites in terms of hierarchy and argues that instead they should be thought of as a product of different social or economic priorities.<sup>462</sup> As a result, Bevan suggests that most of the Neopalatial sites likely represent one or two-family farms.<sup>463</sup> Kythera, thus provides key evidence for an island community that had close interaction with the Minoan culture. However, like the mainland, any discernible mountain-top ritual activity on Kythera before Agios Georgios is, at this time, unknown. The peak sanctuaries of Agios Georgios and Leska provide further contexts for understanding the character of this relationship.

### Agios Georgios

The site of Agios Georgios on Kythera was identified as a peak sanctuary in 1991 by Sakellarakis (figs. 23-27) (Appendix A).<sup>464</sup> Excavations followed this preliminary identification from 1992-1994 and revealed many assemblages that supported the idea that this is a peak sanctuary.<sup>465</sup> Resumed excavations took place in 2011-2015 by Emilia Banou which included a surface survey and excavation.<sup>466</sup> This was the first Minoan peak

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<sup>461</sup> Bevan 2002, 221.

<sup>462</sup> Bevan 2002, 221-222.

<sup>463</sup> Bevan 2002, 222.

<sup>464</sup> Sakellarakis 1996; 2011; 2013; Tournavitou 2009; 2014; Sapouna-Sakellaraki 2012; Banou 2017a; 2017b; 2018; 2020.

<sup>465</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 83.

<sup>466</sup> Banou 2017a; 2017b; 2018; 2020.

sanctuary securely identified outside of Crete.<sup>467</sup> Agios Georgios can be thought of as the extraurban sanctuary of Kastri, as it is four kilometers away and the two are intervisible with each other.<sup>468</sup> The peak of Agios Georgios is 350 meters high (fig. 27).<sup>469</sup> The first activity at the site dates to MM IB, and was continued to be used until LM IB.<sup>470</sup> From the earlier excavations, the site itself appears to be spread among eight terraces and has twenty-seven primary deposits with most of the activity in terrace seven (fig. 26).<sup>471</sup> Unfortunately, due to the existence of a church on the peak, the whole area could not be excavated.

No architecture survives at Agios Georgios, but there are traces of painted plaster from one undisturbed LM I layer at the site<sup>472</sup> and mortar which suggests that later building activity could have destroyed the remains of Bronze Age architecture.<sup>473</sup> It should be noted that the painted plaster found at the site might be indicative of offering tables made of stucco as portable finds are numerous.<sup>474</sup> However there are retaining walls on the south slope of the mountain that date to the Minoan Period.<sup>475</sup> These walls could indicate some sort of spatial organization, as well as the large amount of natural features such as rocks in strange formation and natural crevices.<sup>476</sup> All of these elements are attested at other Cretan peak sanctuaries as well as in the iconography of peak sanctuaries (like the fragment of a

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<sup>467</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 83.

<sup>468</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 81.

<sup>469</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 83.

<sup>470</sup> Banou 2017b, 3.

<sup>471</sup> Tournavitou 2009, 214.

<sup>472</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 139.

<sup>473</sup> Steel 2012, 25.

<sup>474</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 140.

<sup>475</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 14.

<sup>476</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 14.

stone relief vase) (fig. 4).<sup>477</sup> Thirty-two fragments of architectural models were identified, which are typically interpreted as protection for the household.<sup>478</sup>

Some of the most significant finds were 113 bronze figurines (e.g. anthropomorphic, votive limbs, and animal), though terracotta figurines were also noted (fig. 28).<sup>479</sup> Other finds include metal votive weapons (109 blades and small knives)<sup>480</sup>, jewelry, beads (semi-precious stones), ox-hide ingot fragment, stone vases, and melting debris.<sup>481</sup> Seven stone ladles (fig. 29),<sup>482</sup> libation tables (both stone and clay)<sup>483</sup>, miniature clay pairs of horns of consecration (twenty-three)<sup>484</sup>, double axes, and pottery (conical cups, incense burners, pithoi, fineware, rhyton, amphora, and jugs) were also uncovered.<sup>485</sup> Material from everyday life was also recovered such as spindle-whorls, clay loom-weights, stone tools, and tripod cooking pots.<sup>486</sup> Pebbles<sup>487</sup>, the significance of which is discussed in Chapter Four, and shells were also found (mostly in the form of marine mollusks and some edible land snails)<sup>488</sup>, both of which are typical finds at Minoan peak sanctuaries. Animal bones, though not overwhelming in number, are mostly sheep and goats that have preserved butcher's and burning marks.<sup>489</sup> Both the figurines and pottery is discussed in more detail in the following section. Most notably, the excavations also revealed that there were deposits uncovered here that are not seen in peak sanctuaries on Crete. For instance,

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<sup>477</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 14.

<sup>478</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 76-77.

<sup>479</sup> Banou 2017b, 4.

<sup>480</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 74.

<sup>481</sup> Berg 2019, 180-181.

<sup>482</sup> Six were found in the earlier excavations, one was found during the more recent excavations.

<sup>483</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 141-143, figure 54.

<sup>484</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 62, there are decorative (plastic and painting) horns on several ceramic vessels from the site.

<sup>485</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 85-87.

<sup>486</sup> Banou 2017b, 4.

<sup>487</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 122-123.

<sup>488</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 69.

<sup>489</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 68-68; Tournavitou 2011, 733-752; Trantalidou 2013, 465-560.

the excavators found lumps of unworked rock crystal, *lapis lacedaimonius*, Spartan basalt, and *rosso antico* as well as fragments of bronze ingots and slag, which could reflect a workshop associated with the site.<sup>490</sup> The dedication of raw material like these is rare in the Aegean.<sup>491</sup> The bronze figurines are also significant as Sakellarakis states because the number of clay ones are so few versus the bronze figurines, which is the opposite of what is seen on Crete.<sup>492</sup> This is significant as these finds suggest that whatever is happening at Agios Georgios is slightly different than activity on Cretan peak sanctuaries. This is explored in more detail below.

Much scholarly attention has focused on the 113 bronze figurines uncovered at Agios Georgios since this is more than any other Minoan peak sanctuary (fig. 28). The number includes male and female adorants, votive limbs, bronze cut-outs, and very rare items including a bronze bovine leg, a bronze human tooth, and a bronze scorpion figurine.<sup>493</sup> There are more male than female figurines and many of the figurines have Minoan parallels, with regard to the gestures.<sup>494</sup> The most common gesture is the right hand raised to the forehead, which is more common for male figurines than women.<sup>495</sup> It is also a very common Minoan motif known as the Minoan salute.<sup>496</sup> Other gestures are both hands on the breast or hands crossed, identified as female and male, respectively.<sup>497</sup> The third most common gesture is hands on head, which is seen on both male and female figurines.<sup>498</sup>

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<sup>490</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 75, 150.

<sup>491</sup> Briault 2007, 130; Boardman, 1961, 67.

<sup>492</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 88.

<sup>493</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 85; Banou 2017b, 4. See Sapouna-Sakellaraki 2012 for the detailed publication on all of the figurines.

<sup>494</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 85.

<sup>495</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 85.

<sup>496</sup> Morris 2001, 247.

<sup>497</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 85.

<sup>498</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 85.

Minoan peak sanctuaries rarely have a large number of bronze figurines (Juktas only has six, for example<sup>499</sup>) and thus such a large quantity warrants further discussion. Sakellarakis argues that the bronze figurines could be connected to the close vicinity of copper sources in Laconia.<sup>500</sup> In fact, access to metal in Laconia is thought to be one of the reasons why Minoans settled on Kythera and the survey evidence suggests connections with Laconia, which I tend to agree with and is discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.<sup>501</sup> The more recent excavations at Agios Georgios have uncovered more bronze and copper finds, which further highlight the importance of bronze votives at Kythera as discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.<sup>502</sup> As stated above, terracotta figurines (human [whole figures and limbs] and animals) were found during both excavations, though much fewer in comparison to the bronze.<sup>503</sup> A discussion of the meaning of the male and female adorants found at Minoan peak sanctuaries more generally and their gestures are discussed in Chapter Four.

The votive limbs, especially what Sakellarakis interprets as ‘ailing body parts’, supports the theory that peak sanctuaries could have had a healing cult component.<sup>504</sup> At Agios Georgios phallus figurines (bronze and clay), bronze sheets, hands, gowns, feet, and a tooth were uncovered.<sup>505</sup> The phallus votives are rarer (only found at Atsipades) and might be associated with fertility.<sup>506</sup> The animal figurines are few comparatively to Cretan peak sanctuaries (ninety-three found in the earlier excavation of the site, an unpublished number from the more recent excavation should be added). These figurines include bovids,

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<sup>499</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 144.

<sup>500</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 90.

<sup>501</sup> Broodbank and Kiriati 2007, 266. As far as I know, there is little evidence for local bronze production on Kythera during this time period.

<sup>502</sup> Banou 2018, 51.

<sup>503</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 70-74, figures 33, 34, and 36; Banou 2020, 200.

<sup>504</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 70-71.

<sup>505</sup> Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012; Sakellarakis 2020, 71; Banou 2017b, 4-5, fig 4.

<sup>506</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 71.



a caprid, a pig, an equid, a possible dog, five possible deer horns, several scorpions (a bronze and several clay), a beetle, and ten birds.<sup>507</sup> Animal figurines are typically interpreted in two ways. The first represents offerings for protection of the animals, by shepherds, or, in the case of birds, as connected to certain divine figures.<sup>508</sup> The second interpretation is that they represent a cheap substitute for actual sacrifices, but Sakellarakis points out that most of the animal bones found at Agios Georgios are goat and sheep versus the more common bovid figurines.<sup>509</sup> As such, he argues that protection (for the animals, or for the dedicator with specific reference to certain deities through the type of animal dedication) makes more sense.

The other assemblage that has been studied in detail is the pottery.<sup>510</sup> As mentioned earlier, across the eight terraces at Agios Georgios, twenty-seven deposits were excavated during the 1990s, with the majority of them in terrace seven.<sup>511</sup> The pottery is highly fragmented, with only 0.5% of the assemblage comprising whole vessels (albeit some 994 complete pots);<sup>512</sup> most of the assemblage (99.7%) dates to the Neopalatial period.<sup>513</sup> One type associated with ritual activity on Minoan Crete are miniature vessels, which represent 0.77% of the Agios Georgios,<sup>514</sup> And include twenty-three different vessel types, the most popular forms being miniature juglets and conical cups, with rhyta and cup-rhyta being less common but still prevalent.<sup>515</sup> Concerning the normal sized vessels, conical cups are the most prevalent shape (90.75% of overall assemblage), followed by tripod cooking pots

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<sup>507</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 72.

<sup>508</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 72-73.

<sup>509</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 72.

<sup>510</sup> Tournavitou 2014.

<sup>511</sup> Tournavitou 2009, 214.

<sup>512</sup> Tournavitou 2009, 215.

<sup>513</sup> Tournavitou 2009, 215.

<sup>514</sup> Tournavitou 2009, 215.

<sup>515</sup> Tournavitou 2009, 216.

(7.16%).<sup>516</sup> This matches the overall picture at other peak sanctuaries. Tournavitou argues that there is little evidence for pyres or burning activity, suggesting that the tossing of pottery onto the pyre was not an important ritual action at Agios Georgios.<sup>517</sup> The focus instead seems to be on consumption of drinking and eating. She states:

It appears that the most popular and persistent activities in the overall corpus are not pouring and symbolic drinking and/or offering ceremonies, as was the case in the miniature corpus, but ritual drinking and/or symbolic dedication of offerings (cups), the consumption or offering of food (tripod cooking pots) perhaps in conjunction with accessory vessels (kalathoi, dishes/trays, lids) and finally pouring and/or symbolic dedication of liquid substances (juglets), in that order.<sup>518</sup>

Thus, the ritual at the sanctuary focused on consumption and symbolic dedication. It is also of interest that five of the seven terraces face the Minoan settlement at Kastri.<sup>519</sup> This further suggests that a visual link between the sanctuary and settlement was of significance. More pottery, mostly in the form of conical cups, tripod cooking pots, and pithoi, was uncovered in the 2011-2015 seasons.<sup>520</sup> Overall, the pottery assemblage is overwhelmingly Minoan in style, but locally made using local clay sources. This matches the pottery from Kastri which sees the local production of pottery, based on the style and techniques of the Minoans.<sup>521</sup> But Tournavitou and Banou highlight the international spirit of the pottery from Agios Georgios.<sup>522</sup> Specifically that there is also a dominate amount of Laconia-like pottery found at the site as well as Minoanizing.<sup>523</sup> This is different than at Kastri, where

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<sup>516</sup> Tournavitou 2009, 219.

<sup>517</sup> Tournavitou 2009, 221.

<sup>518</sup> Tournavitou 2009, 227.

<sup>519</sup> Tournavitou 2009, 214.

<sup>520</sup> Banou 2018, 48-51.

<sup>521</sup> Kiriati 2003, 129.

<sup>522</sup> Tournavitou 2014, 24-25; Banou 2017b, 8, footnote 13.

<sup>523</sup> Tournavitou 2014, 24-25.

we see almost exclusively Minoan and Minoanizing material, suggesting that Agios Georgios perhaps served a slightly different population than that of Kastri.

Seven stone ladles were also found at Agios Georgios, which is a significant number of a peculiar object. As discussed in more detail in Chapter Four, this is the largest assemblage of such an item outside of Crete. These rare, peculiar items are believed to be highly charged Minoan items, associated with elite and/or cult spaces. One of the ladles is inscribed with Linear A with the word ‘da-ma-te’ alluding to Demeter (fig. 29).<sup>524</sup> Linear A is rather rare but suggests a tie to the Minoans. In fact, Sakellarakis argues that the cult activity was probably dependent on Knossos.<sup>525</sup> Thus, this one object has a lot of ideological weight that has been used to promote the idea that places where stone ladles are found were under the influence of Knossos. The only other sites where more than two stone ladles have been found are Knossos and Juktas, the main peak sanctuary associated with Knossos.<sup>526</sup> As a result, the sheer number of stone ladles at Agios Georgios is significant and supports the function of the site, as discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

As stated above, the site of Agios Georgios on Kythera is the one broadly accepted Minoan peak sanctuary outside of Crete and accounts for the best published Minoan peak sanctuary in the entire Aegean, including Crete. The vast amount of material (both in number and the wide variety of objects) suggests that Agios Georgios held an important role within the religious landscape of Kythera. The Minoan connections are made clear

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<sup>524</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 140.

<sup>525</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 92. While he does not say that this conclusion was made because of the stone ladle, it is nevertheless suggestive of that connection.

<sup>526</sup> Bevan 2007, 132.

with Minoanizing pottery, Minoan ritual equipment (offering tables, ladles, double axes, and horns of consecration), and votive material, like the figurines.

### Leska

The other claimed peak sanctuary on Kythera is Leska, located on the western side of the island (figs. 23-24, and 30) (Appendix A).<sup>527</sup> Leska is the name of the middle summit of Mount Mermigkari on Kythera.<sup>528</sup> The site was suggested originally as a peak sanctuary by Adonis Kyrou on the basis of numerous sherds.<sup>529</sup> Preliminary reports on excavations at the site by Georgiadis have been published in three short articles, with the full monograph currently in press.

The main concentration of prehistoric material was an area roughly 500 square meters, where eight trenches were excavated.<sup>530</sup> However, the Minoan material is concentrated on the flattest part of the summit, covering about 270 square meters where the limestone bedrock is exposed.<sup>531</sup> The material culture can be divided into three periods of chronology: EM (a few sherds), MM IB-MM II (limited number of diagnostic finds), and the Neopalatial period (representing the majority of finds).<sup>532</sup> This suggests that the site had a possible earlier activity than the Neopalatial Period, though limited in form.

The Neopalatial pottery includes conical cups, tripod cooking vessels, straight-sided cups, and a few other vases.<sup>533</sup> Other ceramic finds include clay balls and a small number of clay horns of consecration.<sup>534</sup> Non-ceramic finds include two stone basins, a

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<sup>527</sup> Georgiadis 2012; 2014; 2016.

<sup>528</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 8.

<sup>529</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 8. No citation of Kyrou was provided.

<sup>530</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 8-9.

<sup>531</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 9.

<sup>532</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 9.

<sup>533</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 9-11.

<sup>534</sup> Georgiadis 2014, 47.

conical cup made out of local porous stone, fragmented marble libation tables, thirty pebbles, unworked local chert, a stone pounder, and an obsidian blade.<sup>535</sup> Metal finds include a globular bronze pinhead, a short rectangular bronze sheet, a broken and partly melted piece of bronze, and a bronze pendant in the shape of a helmet.<sup>536</sup> No metal figurines, animal bones, evidence of architecture, nor evidence of burning were uncovered.<sup>537</sup> Only one part of an animal figurine was found.<sup>538</sup>

The excavator, Georgiadis states that the ceramic assemblage closely resembles that from Agios Georgios in terms of typology, with open vessels comprising around 65% of the pottery assemblage.<sup>539</sup> Conical cups are the most popular shape, with straight sided cups and hemispherical cups also plentiful (drinking cups representing about 60% of the assemblage).<sup>540</sup> After conical cups, tripod cooking vessels are the second most common shape.<sup>541</sup> Jugs, display vessels (bowls and kalathoi), and miniatures (mostly juglets, but a few possible conical cups) are also represented.<sup>542</sup> In general, the material is suggestive of consumption activities.

Leska is viewed as being associated with a catchment area in the western part of the island, rather than a particular settlement.<sup>543</sup> According to Georgiadis, Leska could have sustained a smaller population than Agios Georgios and was more associated with a pastoral community consisting of small farmsteads and hamlets, with possible larger

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<sup>535</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 9-11.

<sup>536</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 11.

<sup>537</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 11.

<sup>538</sup> Georgiadis 2014, 49.

<sup>539</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 10.

<sup>540</sup> Georgiadis 2014, 47.

<sup>541</sup> Georgiadis 2014, 47.

<sup>542</sup> Georgiadis 2014, 47.

<sup>543</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 18.

villages in the Mylopotamos and Potamos areas.<sup>544</sup> Georgiadis points out the cloud coverage and water availability in the region, suggesting that there could be a special relationship between the rain, clouds, and local beliefs that supported the topographic characteristics of the peak of Leska.<sup>545</sup>

Both Agios Georgios and Leska are aligned on an east-west axis, so that, as Georgiadis notes, on certain days the two peaks would be linked by the solar movements. There are connections between Leska and Agios Georgios in terms of finds and topographical elements, but Leska does appear distinct from Agios Georgios in terms of having a more restricted range of material culture, and perhaps a poorer set of finds in terms of quality, and investment (Table 5). Thus, while the two sanctuaries were active at the same time, they could have served different population and/or had slightly different purposes for the local inhabitants of the island. Agios Georgios perhaps functioned as the main cult site for the inhabitants around Kastri, while Leska served the population on the western side of the island.

## **Rhodes**

There is one possible peak sanctuary on Rhodes: Philerimos (figs. 23, 31-32) (Appendix A). MBA-LBA sites on Rhodes are not well understood besides the site of Trianda and the surrounding areas. Mee's 1982 publication identified Bronze Age sites (EBA-LBA) on Rhodes but revealed that most of what was known about Rhodes at the time was Mycenaean.<sup>546</sup> More recently, Marketou has identified more Ba sites on Rhodes as most of her work has sought to clarify the remains of Trianda in the modern town of

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<sup>544</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 18.

<sup>545</sup> Georgiadis 2016, 298.

<sup>546</sup> Mee 1982.

Ialysos.<sup>547</sup> Marketou states that there are six sites on Rhodes that have known MBA-LBA IA material (including Philerimos). Thus, I am following her analysis.

The main settlement of Trianda (Ialysos) was the coastal and major prehistoric settlement of the Dodecanese which flourished from LBA I to Early LBA III (fig. 31).<sup>548</sup> However, inhabitation at Trianda most likely dates back to sometime during the MBA period.<sup>549</sup> The site lies under three to four meters of alluvial deposits and was originally near the coastline.<sup>550</sup> Trianda was first excavated by the Italian Archaeological Mission in 1935-1936 and was published by Monaco in 1941.<sup>551</sup> The goal of these excavations was to find the settlement associated with the rich Mycenaean graves on the hills of Makria Vounara and Moschou.<sup>552</sup> Monaco excavated an area of 1,300 square meters and uncovered three layers of the prehistoric settlement by finding two houses on both sides of a north-south road and part of another house in the NE area.<sup>553</sup> Furumark established the chronology of the site based on the Italian excavation, concluding the site spanned LBA I to LBA III.<sup>554</sup> Since 1978 up to 1998, twenty-three rescue excavations were undertaken by the Greek Archaeological Service, which provide the most information about the site.<sup>555</sup> These excavations have revealed small sections of the settlement across various locations, revealing about 5,280 square meters of the LBA IA town.<sup>556</sup>

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<sup>547</sup> Marketou 2009.

<sup>548</sup> Benzi 1984, 100; Marketou 2012, 779.

<sup>549</sup> Benzi 1984, 100.

<sup>550</sup> Marketou 2012, 779.

<sup>551</sup> Marketou 1998a, 40.

<sup>552</sup> Marketou 2012, 779.

<sup>553</sup> Marketou 2012, 779; Monaco 1941, 49, pl. I, plan I.

<sup>554</sup> Marketou, 2012, 779; Furumark 1950, 179.

<sup>555</sup> Marketou 1998a, 40. See also Papazoglou-Manioudaki 1982; Mee 1982, 4-7; Marketou 1987; 1988a; 1988b; 1990; Papachristodoulou 1989, 472-509; 1990, 467-506; 1991, 445-494; 1992, 615-662; 1993, 506-560; 1994, 759-804; Zerboudake 1984, 124-139.

<sup>556</sup> Marketou 2012, 779.

The MBA settlement in the area of Ialysos (the sites known as Trianda and Moschou Vounara) is characterized by a nucleated layout around insulae delimited by pebbled paved streets, alleys, and open spaces (fig. 33).<sup>557</sup> Excavations revealed a street associated with workshops and wealthy storehouses, which seemed to have been organized based on types of pottery.<sup>558</sup> For example one had imported Kamares wares, another had jars, jugs and other pottery types probably coming from cupboards, another had closed vessels such as jars and pithoid jars with everted rims, and another room had tritons jugs, knobbed jars, other closed vessels, and carinated cups.<sup>559</sup> The walls were about 40 to 45 cm thick and built on low foundations of rough stones with upper levels leveled off with mud mixed with pebbles and upper structures made of mud brick and irregular lumps of clay mixed with small stones, pebbles, and organic material.<sup>560</sup> Timbers ran horizontally and transversely through the upper structure and shaped the openings of the rooms. The walls, mostly made of mud brick, were reinforced with layers of fine and burnished plaster, typically painted dark red as well as a few benches with reddish plaster built with mud brick were also found.<sup>561</sup> These building techniques are similar to earlier EBA houses found at Asomatos and EM III houses from Vasiliki on Crete and the Palace and Quartier Mu at Malia.<sup>562</sup>

The southernmost part of the MBA period settlement is different than the nucleated MBA settlement with the uncovering of a spacious room with red polished floors, walls, and benches.<sup>563</sup> This area has plaster, a platform-like feature set on the floor, a wide

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<sup>557</sup> Marketou 2014, 180.

<sup>558</sup> Marketou 2014, 180, fig. 10.3 number 5.

<sup>559</sup> Marketou 2014, 180.

<sup>560</sup> Marketou 2014, 180-181.

<sup>561</sup> Marketou 2014, 180-182.

<sup>562</sup> Marketou 2014, 182.

<sup>563</sup> Marketou 2014, 182.



structure made of cobbles aligned in two parallel rows on the west side of the room, and a monolithic door with a plastered threshold on the SW wall.<sup>564</sup> Marketou points out that its luxuries suggest an important building complex whose function has not yet been determined.<sup>565</sup>

The MBA period pottery includes MM III carinated cups, a straight-sided cup, a peg-top rhyton, and a vase with a double neck.<sup>566</sup> This period of inhabitation ceased when a large destruction event took place, most likely an earthquake as there is evidence of fire and collapse.<sup>567</sup> The site was abandoned as evidenced by the large amount of pottery, tools, and other objects left at the site as well as dense deposits within the storage rooms.<sup>568</sup>

The LBA IA period settlement at Trianda is expansive and was rebuilt over the MBA period remains with the new town characterized by monumental ashlar masonry.<sup>569</sup> The LBA IA buildings incorporated some of the earlier walls and rearranged some of the spaces. In general, most of the interior spaces were plastered, but the frescos unfortunately do not survive.<sup>570</sup> The site has only been excavated piecemeal due to the nature of modern inhabitation. As a result, only a partial insight of the town is known and is designated by rescue excavations which took place in various plots. One of these plots, the Paraskevas plot, revealed ashlar masonry, similar to that found in the Papaemanouil-Chalkiopoulos plot, with a paved street following the east-west orientation of the architecture.<sup>571</sup> Each

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<sup>564</sup> Marketou 2014, 182.

<sup>565</sup> Marketou 2014, 182.

<sup>566</sup> Marketou 1988a, 28, fig. 3.

<sup>567</sup> Marketou 1988a, 28.

<sup>568</sup> Marketou 2014, 183.

<sup>569</sup> Marketou 2009, 84.

<sup>570</sup> Marketou 2009, 83.

<sup>571</sup> Marketou et al. 2006, 7.

building had at least one polythyron with a dithyron.<sup>572</sup> Within the Liamis plot, a large house with an internal row of wooden columns on stone bases was uncovered.<sup>573</sup>

The rescue excavations of Trianda suggest an important settlement on Rhodes with an island community that was thriving and participated in the Aegean maritime trade and was influenced by other cultures. This influence is indicative in the architectural style of several of the buildings as some recall structures at Akrotiri and show connection with settlements at Serayia on Kos, Miletus, Iasos in Caria, Kalymnos, Telos, and Karpathos as well as by the material remains that were collected.<sup>574</sup> The town flourishing within the LBA IA period reaching its greatest size at larger than 17.52 hectares.<sup>575</sup>

The other four sites on Rhodes noted by Marketou are as follows. Site 1 is near the modern chapel of Prophetes Elias on the low NE peak of Mt. Philerimos where Minoanizing material dating from MM I-LM IA was noted from a small excavation (fig. 31).<sup>576</sup> The MM I-MM II period pottery included, all locally made, high-neck jugs, black and red carinated cups (the same types found at Philerimos), conical cups, and other types of vessels.<sup>577</sup> There was also a clay pipe found running East to West along what appears to be a trace of a wall.<sup>578</sup> LM IA Early pottery accounts for the majority of finds. These included sherds of semiglobular cups and a neck of a spouted jugs with knobs.<sup>579</sup> Marketou argues that this site reinforces the belief that the earliest settlers of Ialysos came to Mt. Philerimos first before settling at Trianda.<sup>580</sup>

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<sup>572</sup> Marketou et al. 2006, 7.

<sup>573</sup> Marketou et al. 2006, 7-8.

<sup>574</sup> Marketou 1998a, 40; Marketou 2009, 89. See Marketou et al. 2006 for more information on the pottery.

<sup>575</sup> Marketou et al. 2006, 8.

<sup>576</sup> Marketou 2009, 77.

<sup>577</sup> Marketou 1988a, 27, figs. 2-3; Marketou 1998a, 42, fig.2a.; Marketou 2009, 74, fig. 2.

<sup>578</sup> Marketou 1988a, 27-28.

<sup>579</sup> Marketou 1988a, 28.

<sup>580</sup> Marketou 1988a, 28.

The second site, Site 2, is ten km from Trianda on the north side of the island beneath the Hellenistic city of Rhodes, this site is the only site where MBA material is known near the sea (fig. 31). Finds include loom weights and a carinated cup and a fragmentary high-necked jug, which are possibly indicative of textile production.<sup>581</sup>

The next site, Site 3, is 600-620 meters E/SE of Trianda where evidence for textile production found with many loom weights and MBA pottery were uncovered (fig. 31).<sup>582</sup>

More material that was uncovered at the next site, Site 4. It is a large site with at least six different buildings found (figs. 31 and 33). This site is 812 meters west of Site 3 and about 200 meters south of the southernmost extent of Trianda across four plots; the Danovasilis-Tsaggaris plot, Tsakiris-Metaotos plot, Voutsis plot, and Mavrothalassitis plot.<sup>583</sup> Some of the finds include plastered rooms, vases, walls, and pebble-paved streets. The Mavrothalassitis plot is the area of painted red plaster found within the MBA building which also has a bench. Marketou argues for a possible open-air area just south of this group of rooms with pottery fragments.<sup>584</sup> The Voutsis plot has about four or five houses that are uniform but different than the Mavrothalassitis plot. The southernmost house is divided into at least six spaces where there is a pebbled paved street.<sup>585</sup>

In sum, Rhodes was home to an important and highly connected island community during this time. Contact between the islanders and Cretans appears to date back to at least the MM period as well as neighboring islands. However, that is not to say that Rhodes was subject to Minoan ‘colonialism.’ Marketou argues that the emergence of the important

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<sup>581</sup> Marketou 2009, 77-78.

<sup>582</sup> Marketou 2009, 78.

<sup>583</sup> Marketou 2009, 78-82.

<sup>584</sup> Marketou 2009, 79.

<sup>585</sup> Marketou 2009, 80.

LBA site of Trianda was more likely the result of MBA complex processes in the form of the emergence of local elites seeking to control certain lands and access to agriculture and stock raising and access to trade networks and not tied to the Minoan Thalassocracy.<sup>586</sup> Local communities on Rhodes were participating in complex exchange networks in the MBA (as seen with the Kamares pottery, a few pieces of MC pottery, and Anatolian pottery).<sup>587</sup> The Minoan influence is seen in the large number of conical cups, fireboxes, lamps (clay and stone), and architecture found during the excavations.<sup>588</sup> While it is clear that there are Cretan-like aspects of the LBA IA settlement (like the frescos) the ‘international role’ of the island seems to have been established in MBA.<sup>589</sup> These ideas of international role and Cretan influence are discussed in relation to the possible peak sanctuary at Philerimos in more detail. It is important to establish that Rhodes was a highly connected and rich island before the period of Minoan expansion into the Aegean.

Before discussing Philerimos, it should be noted that there is some evidence of domestic cult at Trianda. Bronze statues of worshippers<sup>590</sup> and clay rhyta (usually in the form of a bull) have been found in several houses as well as a few clay animal figurines.<sup>591</sup> In addition, skulls of sacrificed animals have been found near a cemetery north of Trianda.<sup>592</sup> A pair of horns of consecration and a fresco fragment depicting a double-axe with a sacral knot were uncovered near the polythyron in the NW LBA IA town.<sup>593</sup> Numerous lime plaster tripod offering tables decorated either in monochrome or with

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<sup>586</sup> Marketou 2014, 187.

<sup>587</sup> Marketou 2014, 187-188.

<sup>588</sup> Marketou 2012, 781.

<sup>589</sup> Marketou 2014, 188.

<sup>590</sup> See Marketou 1998b for detailed information on the bronze figurines found in at Trianda.

<sup>591</sup> Marketou 2012, 782; Marketou 1998b, 56.

<sup>592</sup> Marketou 2012, 782; Marketou 1998a, 60-69.

<sup>593</sup> Marketou 1998b, 56.

pictorial decoration, such as two male acrobats performing a reverse vertical exercise on either side of a papyrus, have also surfaced.<sup>594</sup> These finds hint at some aspects of a domestic cult that was under Minoan influence, according to Marketou.<sup>595</sup> The bronze figurines in particular recall Minoan examples. This evidences Minoan influence not only in material remains, but also religious beliefs.

### Philerimos

The site of Philerimos is located on a 267 meters high mountain above the site of Trianda (figs. 23, 31-32) (Appendix A).<sup>596</sup> Material at Philerimos spans the Middle Minoan to Byzantine period and was the site of an important Archaic sanctuary to Athena.<sup>597</sup> The result is a very disturbed site, especially the prehistoric stratigraphic layers.<sup>598</sup> It is one of the two areas on Rhodes that continues from the MBA into the LBA period.<sup>599</sup> The site was first investigated by an Italian team in 1925, but besides a brief publication by Monaco<sup>600</sup>, no detailed publication of the finds appeared until Benzi's 1984 publication.

Benzi's 1984 publication sought to clarify for the first time the function of Philerimos by presenting a selection of finds from the early excavations with a specific focus on the possible Minoan connection of the site. The pottery included carinated cups, bridge-spouted jars, high-spouted jug, and cylindrical jars.<sup>601</sup> The most diagnostic Minoan shape is the carinated cup (four in total) dated in this context as MM IB-MM III.<sup>602</sup>

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<sup>594</sup> Marketou 2012, 782; fig 58.2. Marketou specifically states that it alludes to the Minoan images of bull leapers.

<sup>595</sup> Marketou 2012, 782.

<sup>596</sup> Benzi 1984; Sakellarakis 1996; Marketou 2009.

<sup>597</sup> Benzi 1984, 94.

<sup>598</sup> Benzi 1984 94.

<sup>599</sup> Marketou 2014, 183.

<sup>600</sup> Monaco 1941, 48.

<sup>601</sup> Benzi 1984, 96-100, figs 6-7, 9.

<sup>602</sup> Benzi 1984, 96, fig. 12.

However, unlike Cretan examples, the cups found at Philerimos have an upper attachment of the handle inside the rim instead of the outside, which is indicative of local manufacturing.<sup>603</sup> The bridge-spouted jars are quite different from one another and not in the Minoan canonical form.<sup>604</sup> The cylindrical jars found are of the typical Cretan types, but are closest to a small cylindrical vase from Ayia Irini dated to the beginning of MM III.<sup>605</sup> The high-spouted jug is of uncertain origin (recalling shapes found on Crete and Anatolia from the EBA to the LBA period).<sup>606</sup> Benzi states that it is most likely adapted by local potters, as a similar jug was found in the dump in the Saggio I at Trianda.<sup>607</sup>

Other finds include a brazier, a loomweight, several stone vases (serpentine lid, two stone bowls, alabastron, and a Minoan cup, fragment of a large basin, two marble pommels) and a bronze mirror.<sup>608</sup> The brazier and loomweight are in the typical Minoan style and cannot be closely dated.<sup>609</sup> The stone lid, bowls and alabastron recall Minoan stone vessels and suggest that the locals either imported the finished Minoan products or were able to produce stone vases in the Minoan style.<sup>610</sup> The two marble pommels (associated with the side-hold for a locking pin that appears as early as the Shaft-Grave Period) and the bronze mirror are more Mycenaean in character, according to Benzi.<sup>611</sup> While the overall assemblage is poor, it is thoroughly Minoan in character.<sup>612</sup> All the pottery was locally

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<sup>603</sup> Benzi 1984, 96.

<sup>604</sup> Benzi 1984, 97, figs 10-11.

<sup>605</sup> Benzi 1984, 97.

<sup>606</sup> Benzi 1984, 98.

<sup>607</sup> Benzi 1984, 98.

<sup>608</sup> Benzi 1984, 96-100, figs 8.

<sup>609</sup> Benzi 1984, 97-98.

<sup>610</sup> Benzi 1984, 99.

<sup>611</sup> Benzi 1984, 100. Benzi goes as far as to suggest that the bronze mirror may be a much later dedication, perhaps a sort of heirloom.

<sup>612</sup> Benzi 1984, 100.

made, while the stone vases were either imported or locally made.<sup>613</sup> This suggests that the Rhodians were not only importing Minoan objects, but also were aware of Minoan production techniques and chose to produce Minoanizing objects. Benzi argues that the date of the whole assemblage is probably MM IB-MM II, especially with the stone vases found.<sup>614</sup> While no architecture can be firmly dated to the Minoan period, Benzi does not rule out the possibility of Minoan architecture that was destroyed by later building activity.<sup>615</sup>

Since Benzi's publication, Marketou has revisited the material from Philerimos and provides an updated analysis of some previously unpublished material. She dates the scuttle, plain spindle whorl, and the discoid loom weight that Benzi published to the LBA I period instead of MBA since similar braziers and loom weights were found in LBA IA levels at Trianda.<sup>616</sup> The previously unpublished material include a marble discoid weight (similar to one found at Trianda) and two cast bronze adorants (one male and one female) of typical Minoan type (known from Trianda).<sup>617</sup> The male figurine is similar to one in the Giamalakis collection in Athens.<sup>618</sup> The female figurine has a rounded face lacking facial characteristics, detailed breasts, and a skirt in a triangular and flat form decorated with horizontal incisions.<sup>619</sup> The female figurine recalls a schematic type found at Trianda (M1071) with regard to the hairstyle,<sup>620</sup> and is similar to one from Agios Georgios with regard to the skirt decoration.<sup>621</sup> These finds add more information to the assemblage and

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<sup>613</sup> Benzi 1984, 100.

<sup>614</sup> Benzi 1984, 98.

<sup>615</sup> Benzi 1984, 100.

<sup>616</sup> Marketou 2009, 74.

<sup>617</sup> Marketou 2009, 74-75.

<sup>618</sup> Marketou 2009, 75; Lembesi 2002, 53, εικ. 19.

<sup>619</sup> Marketou 2009, 75.

<sup>620</sup> Marketou 2009, 75; Marketou 1998b, 60-61, fig. 8, 10.

<sup>621</sup> Marketou 2009, 75; Sakellarakis 1996, pl. 13d, the fourth idol in the 4th row.

are more indicative of a ritual function of the site. It should be noted that there are later Mycenaean finds in the deposit of the sanctuary of the historical period, which are a bit more numerous than the Minoan period finds.<sup>622</sup> This redating of the site suggests that the cultic activity at Philerimos dates from LBA IA and continued to LBA IIIA2-IIIIB and reappeared after a possible break in the Protogeometric/Early Geometric period.<sup>623</sup>

In regard to the function of the site, Benzi originally argued that it was probably a settlement, and specifically that it was a ‘settlement colony’ as defined by Branigan.<sup>624</sup> Benzi argued that its high location was most likely for defensive purposes and that it was near water sources.<sup>625</sup> Functioning in tandem with Trianda, eventually the latter took over. Philerimos was first identified as a possible peak sanctuary by Sakellarakis in his seminal 1996 publication. Sakellarakis specifically pointed to the presence of an incense-burner, loom-weight, stone offering table, and the many stone vases as indicative of cultic activity.<sup>626</sup> Marketou has since argued for a cultic function based on the lack of domestic and funerary evidence and the later history of the site, which included Mycenaean ritual activity and a sanctuary of Athena.<sup>627</sup> In regard to the ritual activity on Philerimos, Marketou suggests a sort of ‘Pax Minoica’ in which she envisions a development of an elite *koine* that was led by the Minoans but was not forced upon the local populations within a colonial framework.<sup>628</sup> The evidence of Philerimos suggests a cult that drew inspiration from Minoan practices. The local Rhodians appeared to borrow certain Cretan cultic items and used them within their local contexts as seen by the Minoanizing pottery and figurines.

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<sup>622</sup> Marketou 2009, 75-76.

<sup>623</sup> Marketou 2009, 76.

<sup>624</sup> Benzi 1984, 100; Branigan 1981. See Chapter One for information about Branigan’s colony types.

<sup>625</sup> Benzi 1984, 100.

<sup>626</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 93-94.

<sup>627</sup> Marketou 2009, 76.

<sup>628</sup> Marketou 2009, 91.



However, it is less clear to what degree the locals kept their individual practices. Similar to the settlement evidence at Trianda, the islanders most likely were connected to a larger Aegean network and partook in certain activities. Such ideas are further explored in Chapter Five.

### **Mainland**

One possible Minoan peak sanctuary has been identified on the mainland: Maleatas on Mount Kynortion at Epidauros (figs. 23 and 34) (Appendix A).<sup>629</sup> This is a highly debated identification, as is discussed in more detail below.<sup>630</sup> In regard to settlement evidence, only one site near the site is mentioned as the Mycenaeans are outside the scope of this research. A domestic site has been identified upslope from the cult site of Kynortion Hill (fig. 35). This site was founded early as the EH II period, but the associated pottery also includes material of MH-LH IIIB date.<sup>631</sup> There were several houses noted in the vicinity which “developed under strong Minoan influence” according to Lambrinoudakis but further explanation of what the Minoan elements are is lacking.<sup>632</sup> The close location of a settlement is generally atypical for a Minoan peak sanctuary, as discussed in more detail below.

### Maleatas

The site of Maleatas is part of the larger sanctuary of Asklepios at Epidauros (figs. 34 and 36) (Appendix A). There are two sanctuaries: one dedicated to Apollo Maleatas (the father of Asklepios) on Mount Kynortion and the main sanctuary dedicated to Asklepios

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<sup>629</sup> Papadimitriou 1948, 90-111; 1949a, 91-99; 1949b, 361-383; 1950, 194-202; 1951, 204-212; Lambrinoudakis 1974, 93-101; 1975, 162-175; 1976, 202-209; 1977, 187-194; 1981a, 59-65; 1981b, 151-181; 1983, 151-159; 1987, 52-65; 1988b, 21-29; Hägg 1984, 119-122; Sakellarakis 1996, 97 footnote 187; Briault 2007, 130-131.

<sup>630</sup> See Sakellarakis 1996, 97 footnote 187 for a detailed discussion on the status of this cult site.

<sup>631</sup> Lambrinoudakis 1981a, 63; Rutkowski 1986, 202.

<sup>632</sup> Lambrinoudakis 1988a, 299.

on the plain that developed in the Late Archaic and Classical Periods.<sup>633</sup> Maleatas was first investigated by Papadimitriou from 1948-1956 where he found a rich assortment of offerings attesting to the cult at an open-air altar in the Mycenaean, Late Geometric, Archaic and Classical Periods.<sup>634</sup> He explored the steep hillside under the Classical temple to understand the earlier periods of occupation.<sup>635</sup> A more extensive excavation was undertaken by Lambrinouidakis starting in 1974 under the auspices of the Greek Archaeological Society. This series of excavation sought to systematically investigate the entire area where the ashes and earth of the altar were found (fig. 36).<sup>636</sup> The Bronze Age remains date to the Early Mycenaean period, i.e., LBA I.<sup>637</sup>

The Bronze Age site includes two terraces and numerous finds that are indicative of cultic behavior. The first terrace consists of a large platform that projects from the slope and hosts the ash altar (fig. 36).<sup>638</sup> The deep layer of black, fatty ashes was full of full burnt animal relics and material remains. The animal remains (bovine skulls, horns, and other bones) consists mostly of bulls and goats.<sup>639</sup> The second terrace is larger and supported by a low retaining wall that was built using roughly large-worked stones and measured about 31 by 9 meters.<sup>640</sup> A series of small 'sacred rooms' were built in the corner of the terraces. Lambrinouidakis states that the layout of the cult site is most similar to Juktas and Symi on Crete, where several cult rooms were built with enclosures at the periphery.<sup>641</sup> The large

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<sup>633</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1988a, 298.

<sup>634</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 59. Papadimitriou 1948, 90-111; 1949a, 91-99; 1949b, 361-383; 1950, 194-202; 1951, 204-212.

<sup>635</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 59.

<sup>636</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 59.

<sup>637</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 59; Lambrinouidakis 2002, 214.

<sup>638</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1988a, 298.

<sup>639</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 59.

<sup>640</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1988a, 298-299.

<sup>641</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1988a, 299.

flat area west of the altar is unusual and is not similar to any Minoan or Mycenaean sanctuaries but was most likely used for processions or cult feasts due to the associated artifacts.<sup>642</sup>

Several types of finds were found. The pottery is mostly coarse ware and some fine wares include early types of Vapheio and stemmed cups as well as conical cups.<sup>643</sup> Most of the pottery was fragmentary as if thrown onto the altars.<sup>644</sup> Other finds comprised several ceramic figurines including phi and psi types as well as an abstract wheel-made form that is either the head of a man or an extremely thin horse.<sup>645</sup> Ceramic animal figurines (large bovine, and smaller bovines and horses) were also found.<sup>646</sup> Stone finds included fragments of a steatite rhyton, undecorated stone vases, seals, and a LH II lentoid seal.<sup>647</sup> The steatite rhyton fragments found in the ashes represent a rare form on the mainland.<sup>648</sup> It was decorated with a scene of an army attacking a town, similar to a silver rhyton found at Mycenae.<sup>649</sup> The LH II lentoid seal depicts a woman holding an animal.<sup>650</sup> Metal finds were numerous including bronze double axes, several weapons (real bronze swords or votive imitations, daggers, spearheads and etc.), and a large, hammered bronze animal-like rhyta.<sup>651</sup> Typologically, the bronze double axes are very Minoan: some are nice examples of careful construction with a handle or meant for hanging (fig. 37) and others are of a

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<sup>642</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1988a, 299.

<sup>643</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 59, fig. 6.

<sup>644</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 59.

<sup>645</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 59, figs. 7-8.

<sup>646</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 59.

<sup>647</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 62.

<sup>648</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 62.

<sup>649</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 62.

<sup>650</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 62.

<sup>651</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 62, figs. 9, 10, 12, and 13.

slightly more rough quality and smaller (fig. 38).<sup>652</sup> The weapons are more Mycenaean in type (fig. 39).<sup>653</sup>

The site clearly functioned as a cult place due to the nature of the finds (consumption ware, votive dedications, and evidence of burning), with its initial form established as early as LH I.<sup>654</sup> Lambrinouidakis states that the cult performed here “shows close affinities to Minoan cults in the mountains, so that one could speak of a mainland version of Cretan peak sanctuaries.”<sup>655</sup> Specifically, the double axes, stone vases, and seals are typical Minoan artifacts.<sup>656</sup> In a more recent publication, Lambrinouidakis states that Maleatas should be classified as a peak cult in the broader sense, drawing inspiration from the Minoan culture, but does not outrightly call it a Minoan peak sanctuary.<sup>657</sup> Thus, it is safe to say that Maleatas was an open-air cult place (as Cretan peak sanctuaries are) and that the participants at Maleatas included Minoan type artifacts, but to argue that it is a Minoan peak sanctuary, I argue, would misrepresent the reality, as is discussed in Chapter Four.

Lambrinouidakis suggests that Maleatas could have functioned as a sort of open-air cult site for the wider regional area.<sup>658</sup> As mentioned above, the proximity of the cult site to the settlement is unusual for Minoan peak sanctuaries and adds to the complications of interpreting the character of Maleatas. Lambrinouidakis states that it could have emerged directly from the EH period settlement and functioned in what Bintliff calls a sacral

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<sup>652</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 62. Figure 10 is an example of a large Minoan type of double axe while figure 12 is a collection of the ‘humbler’ examples.

<sup>653</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 62, fig 13.

<sup>654</sup> Rutkowski, 1986, 203.

<sup>655</sup> Lambrinouidakis 2002, 214.

<sup>656</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 62.

<sup>657</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1988a, 299.

<sup>658</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 62.

economy pattern.<sup>659</sup> He points to the fact that Bintliff had identified a few other hilltop cult spaces in the Agrolid (Menelaion and Oros, for example).<sup>660</sup> Due to their high location, Lambrinouidakis states that these cult sites could unite different populations in annual events, which would result in a sense of cultural unity among the local populations.<sup>661</sup> As such, Maleatas could represent a sacred organization that integrated different groups of people together.<sup>662</sup>

The question of the Minoan status of the site is highly debated. There are Minoan elements found at the site, namely seals, stone vases, and double axes. Sakellarakis does not believe that Minoan peak sanctuaries can be recognized on the mainland and specifically states that the topographical elements are lacking at Maleatas as the site is on a slope, not a peak.<sup>663</sup> Hägg has also argued that the site is a Mycenaean shrine, rather than a non-Cretan Minoan peak sanctuary, given the absence of Minoan type clay and bronze figurines of worshippers, animal figurines, models of human limbs, and offering tables.<sup>664</sup>

I would agree that Maleatas is not a Minoan peak sanctuary in the common sense, but it cannot be denied that there is Minoan influence at the site; moreover, *contra* Hägg, animal figurines have in fact been found at Maleatas.<sup>665</sup> The double-axes are a very typical Minoan object, though Hägg argues that their presence can be explained by a connection to the already existing mainland cult practice of animal sacrifice.<sup>666</sup> He also points to the fact that two terracotta double-axes dated to the MH period have been found at Lerna that

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<sup>659</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 62.

<sup>660</sup> Bintliff 1977, 153-160.

<sup>661</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1980, 44.

<sup>662</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1980, 44.

<sup>663</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 97 footnote 187.

<sup>664</sup> Hägg 1984, 120-121.

<sup>665</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 59.

<sup>666</sup> Hägg 1984, 121.

are not of Minoan type.<sup>667</sup> For Hägg, while the early worshippers at Maleatas were adapting certain Minoan beliefs and religious iconography, it is not a case of Minoan domination but simply Minoanization.<sup>668</sup> This statement by Hägg I believe is a more accurate depiction of what was occurring at Maleatas, i.e., it is a mainland open-air cult site with some Minoan influence. Arguably, the inclusion of Minoanizing objects would simply have added to the prestige of the cult and served more as exotic votives than indicators of Minoan influence on the cult behavior, the implications of which is discussed in the following chapter. Nevertheless, it is important to include Maleatas in a survey of alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries to make it clear that even if an open-air cult site has some Minoan material, it does not necessitate that the site is a non-Cretan peak sanctuary.

### **Comparison**

This survey of possible peak sanctuaries details that while there is significant variability in the archaeology of amongst these sites, there are common threads (Tables 4 and 5). It is important to keep in mind that these sites have not been uniformly studied and some sites are piecemeal at best when discussing comparisons. Firstly, each site is on or near a peak of a hill, within walking distance of a settlement<sup>669</sup> and are visible from that settlement (Table 4). Secondly, most of the finds from these sites were Minoanizing in form, yet locally made, except for Maleatas. Thirdly, where reported in detail, it is evident that their ceramic assemblages are dominated by vessels related to consumption (mostly drinking), suggesting some sort of consumption of liquid occurred at these hilltop sites. In turn, one can note an array of other Minoan-type objects at these sites. In conclusion, this

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<sup>667</sup> Hägg 1984, 121.

<sup>668</sup> Hägg 1984, 121.

<sup>669</sup> Except Leska, which is accessible and lies within proximity of areas of exploitations (specifically fertile land).

suggests some sort of inspiration or local desire to include Minoan objects within the cult practices across these sites.

Site Name	Architecture	Minoanizing Pottery	Accessibility	Metals	Proximity to areas of human activity
Agios Georgios	?	X	X	X	X
Leska		X	X	X	X
Philerimos		X	X	X	X
Maleatas	X	X	X	X	X

Table 4: Categories for comparisons of the possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries outside the Cyclades.

Site Name	Human Figurine	Animal Figurine	Votive Limb	Clay/stone table	Doubleaxe	Horns of Consecration	Weapon	Miniature Vessel	Animal rhyton	Stone Ladle	Shells	Pebble	Bone	Ash/Fire
Agios Georgios	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Leska		X		X		X		X				X		
Philerimos	X			X										
Maleatas	X	X		X	X		X		X				X	X

Table 5: Non-Cycladic possible peak sanctuaries: Peak Sanctuary Kit. Adapted from Briault 2007, Table 2.

One can also note how topographically, these sites meet at least two of the peak sanctuary criteria proposed by Peatfield.<sup>670</sup> Concerning material culture, for Peatfield the most important votive remains in the definition of a peak sanctuary are a figurine assemblage – specifically both animal and human figurines as well as votive limbs in significant numbers.<sup>671</sup> Again, the sites all have figurines, though Leska lacks human figurines. The question of what makes an assemblage ‘significant’ is posed. This is discussed in more detail in the following chapters, but it is apparent that these sites include some of the necessary elements to classify them as a peak sanctuary by Cretan standards.

<sup>670</sup> See Chapter One. Peatfield, 2007, 297.

<sup>671</sup> Peatfield 2007, 297.

If one were to follow the peak sanctuary kit as determined by Briault, a different picture emerges (Table 5).<sup>672</sup> Agios Georgios fulfills the greatest number of categories, while Maleatas comes second. Philerimos, fulfills the smallest number of categories by far. However, as is seen in the following chapters, that does not mean that this quantification disqualifies these sites from the possibility of earning the title ‘Minoan peak sanctuary’, since no Cretan peak sanctuary fulfills all these categories. The only two categories of objects present at all the sites are clay/stone libation tables and figurines. For reasons discussed in Chapter Four, the most important votive objects appear to be figurines. Agios Georgios and Maleatas have the most votive categories in common.

The best case for a peak sanctuary outside of Crete is Agios Georgios, where the finds are numerous and only comparable in variety and number to that of Juktas. As the only generally accepted Minoan peak sanctuary outside of Crete, Agios Georgios provides a key data set with which other possible peak sanctuaries can be compared. Leska was surely another important site that might have served either a different population on Kythera or a slightly different purpose than Agios Georgios yet has very few of the elements on Peatfield’s and Briault’s lists. Hopefully with the full publication of Leska, a clearer picture of the activity will emerge. The fact that Kythera had two peak sanctuaries is a significant similarity to the layout of peak sanctuaries on Crete and Naxos.

The character of Philerimos and Maleatas is less clear and may represent a slightly different pattern when it comes to similarity with Minoan sites and the number of Minoanizing elements. Maleatas fulfills the second greatest number of categories behind Agios Georgios, yet its location on the mainland causes most scholars to reject it as a

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<sup>672</sup> Briault 2007, Table 2.



Minoan peak sanctuary. There is no doubt that these two sites were open-air cult sites, but whether they are Minoan peak sanctuaries is more complicated. I would argue that these sanctuaries are more local and the Minoan votives are representative of a widespread cultural fashion of offering Minoan or Minoanizing objects instead of being local adaptations of Minoan peak sanctuaries. There are certain elements from Crete that were adapted at each of these sites (e.g., figurines, Minoanizing pottery (namely conical cups), offering tables, double axes, horns of consecration, and pebbles). The choice to create an open-air cult on or near a peak that included Minoanizing material suggests a deliberate choice by the local populations to incorporate Minoan religious practices into their local traditions. This survey of possible peak cult sites outside the Cyclades, then, showed how the locals, non-Cretan populations could adopt Cretan cult behavior. This clear degree of variability might reflect local interpretation of a well-known Minoan cult practice that may have been still recognizable to Cretans. Whether the same category of elements should be true for sites outside of Crete is a larger question and is explored in the following chapters.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Comparison of the Possible Peak Sanctuaries**

In the previous two chapters, it has become clear that there are certain shared characteristics among the alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries and some obvious differences. In this chapter I continue the comparative analysis of the non-Cretan peak sanctuaries, both among themselves and with Neopalatial Cretan peak sanctuaries, i.e., the main period during which we see these overseas socio-religious developments. This chapter seeks to answer the following questions. Do (or should) these sites warrant the title of a Minoan peak sanctuary? Is the behavior at the non-Cretan sanctuaries distinct from Cretan ones, and if so, how? Are there local elements at the peak sanctuaries (i.e., votives not seen at Cretan peak sanctuaries)? What was the role of peak sanctuary worship outside of Crete? A brief discussion of intermural cult activity is included to try to understand whether activities on the peaks are distinct from known cult activity in the associated settlements. As part of the chapter, a viewshed analysis of the islands allows me to discuss the intervisibility of these islands, Crete, and the settlements associated with each peak sanctuary, as a means of testing one of Peatfield's key topographic criteria, as discussed in Chapter One.<sup>673</sup> On the basis of these comparative analyses, I argue that while most of these sites have a well-defined cult function, only a few should be considered Minoan peak sanctuaries.

Before discussing the possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries, it is important to first reestablish what constitutes a peak sanctuary during the Neopalatial period on Crete. A brief discussion of the most important symbolic votives is followed by comparison with

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<sup>673</sup> Peatfield 2007, 297.

the possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. Finally, there is a brief consideration of the role of the peak sanctuary cult outside of Crete.

### Neopalatial Peak Sanctuaries on Crete

As detailed in Chapter One, there is no universally agreed upon corpus of peak sanctuaries Crete itself. While this is part-due to the varying criteria employed by different scholars, it is also due to the nature of investigation and publication record. In fact, of the possible twenty-two Minoan peak sanctuaries on Crete, only around fifteen have been properly excavated.<sup>674</sup> A similar situation exists with those alleged non-Cretan examples.

Site Name	Human Figurine	Animal Figurine	Votive Limb	Clay / stone table	Double axe	Horns of Consecration	Weapon	Miniature Vessel	Animal rhyton	Stone Ladle	Shells	Pebble	Bone	Ash/Fire
Juktas	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Petosphas	X	X	X	X		X	X	X				X		X
Traostalos	X	X	X	X							X			X
Kophinas	X	X	X	X	X		X		X				X	X
Vrysinas	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Gonies/Philioremos	X	X	X										X	X
Prinias	X								X			X		X
Pyrgos	X	X				X			X					X

Table 6: Neopalatial Cretan Peak Sanctuaries: Peak Sanctuary Kit. Adapted from Briault 2007, Table 2.

On Neopalatial Crete there are generally eight identified and agreed upon peak sanctuaries, significantly fewer than the approximately twenty-five sanctuaries that functioned in the Protopalatial period, implications of which is discussed later. The eight Cretan examples that I include in this study are: Juktas, Petosphas, Traostalos, Vrysinas, Kophinas, Prinias, Pyrgos, and Gonies/Philioremos (fig. 40).<sup>675</sup> These sites are all claimed

<sup>674</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 14.

<sup>675</sup> Soetens, et al, 2002, 165. Others have been presented, though I will focus my discussion on only these eight sites as they are the best documented and agreed upon generally by scholars.

to be associated with palatial centers, and more exclusive/elite spaces than the peak sanctuaries of the Protopalatial Period.<sup>676</sup> Four of the Neopalatial examples are concentrated around Knossos in central Crete, while three are situated in eastern Crete and one is located in western Crete (fig. 40).

On Crete the behavior at these Neopalatial peak sanctuaries centered on cult activities including the deposition of votives<sup>677</sup> (mostly in the form of terracotta human and/or animal figurines, individual limbs, offering/libation tables, pebbles, etc.), the consumption of food and drink (in the form of ceramic vessels, mostly conical and other forms of cups), and cooking and preparing of food (as documented at several peak sanctuaries with the evidence of burning and animal bones).<sup>678</sup> As seen in Table 6, all of the Neopalatial peak sanctuaries have some sort of figurines (anthropomorphic, animal, or votive limb) and evidence of ash or fire with other common finds including animal rhyta and offering tables. The ceramic remains suggest evidence for drinking and feasting at all of these sites, while evidence of storage, serving, carrying, and food preparation was found at most of the sites.<sup>679</sup> Natural rock outcrops or fissures may have been the focal features at some of these sanctuaries and, in a few cases, architecture was present (ranging from basic stone structures to large multi-roomed complexes).<sup>680</sup> Confirmed architectural remains survive at seven out of the eight sites.<sup>681</sup> As stated in Chapter One, architecture at Minoan peak sanctuaries appears to be a Neopalatial phenomenon. Since these are open-air cults, a temenos would have been important to mark off the sacred area (whether this

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<sup>676</sup> Peatfield 1990, 127; 1994, 20-21.

<sup>677</sup> Peatfield 1994, 22; 2001; Kyriakidis 2005, 147-160; see also Morris 2009.

<sup>678</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 128-138.

<sup>679</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 128-138. See Tables 7-10 for information about the specific sites.

<sup>680</sup> Peatfield 1994, 22; Karetsou 2013; Carter et al, 2021, 62.

<sup>681</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 26, Table 1.3

was through the use of built structures, the natural landscape, or, possibly, the use of pebbles).<sup>682</sup> Sakellarakis points out that identifying the temenos is impossible in some cases due to the use of trees or stones to mark the area.<sup>683</sup> But it was probably important that there was a clear divide between the sacred and profane spaces. An important element of these sanctuaries appears to be an altar, either permanent or portable (wood, for example).<sup>684</sup> Juktas is one of the few sites that have a confirmed permanent altar.<sup>685</sup> As such, the activity at these sites is generally understood as centered around consumption activities. Less well understood is the purpose of some of the material found at these sites and whether Neopalatial peak sanctuaries are elite spaces more generally than Protopalatial peak sanctuaries.

### Ritual Votives

Certain finds associated with Neopalatial Minoan peak sanctuaries have been labeled as ‘ritual’ votives due to their sacred nature: figurines, ladles, libation tables, double axes, and horns of consecration. As Kyriakidis points out, there is nothing inherent that defines them as ‘votive’, but their find context renders them as possible ‘ritual votives’.<sup>686</sup> Reviewing a few of these highly charged items to understand their purpose on Crete may shed some light on the significance of finding such items outside of the island.

According to Peatfield, figurines, when found in large quantities, are the class of items that defines peak sanctuaries on Crete (figs. 15 and 28).<sup>687</sup> Figurines can fall into three categories: anthropomorphic (female or male), animal, and votive limbs.<sup>688</sup> These are

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<sup>682</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 30.

<sup>683</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 30-31.

<sup>684</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 18.

<sup>685</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 16.

<sup>686</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 18.

<sup>687</sup> Peatfield and Morris 2019, 190.

<sup>688</sup> Peatfield and Morris, 2019, 190.

typically terracotta figurines on Crete, though rare examples of bronze figurines have been found.<sup>689</sup> Anthropomorphic figurines found at peak sanctuaries traditionally have been identified as the worshippers.<sup>690</sup> However, Morris and Peatfield have both sought to push this identification a bit further. Morris states that past scholarship on figurines has grouped them together instead of focusing on the characterizations of individuality.<sup>691</sup> This aspect of the individuality of the figurines is further supported by the fact that the figurines are not standardized in form.<sup>692</sup> In fact, the gestures among the figurines vary widely across the island.<sup>693</sup> Morris also notes that previous studies of figurines from peak sanctuaries have focused on gender, but she argues that there is not enough robust data to back up claims that certain activities appeared gendered as gestures may be more meaningful than gender.<sup>694</sup> For example, certain characteristics (small breasts, hairstyles, etc.) are not as clear as scholars have previously made it seem and thus gender should only be assigned when it is explicitly clear.<sup>695</sup>

Focusing on the gestures, Morris and Peatfield suggest that the postures of the figurines could show moments of the worship or even “true visionary epiphany through trance, healing through the sense of energy, and divination through psychological insight.”<sup>696</sup> In another publication, Peatfield argues that the figurines depicted not only a form of prayer, but instead “they seem to memorialise the action of peak sanctuary ritual

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<sup>689</sup> According to Sakellarakis, only eighteen bronze figurines have been found at peak sanctuaries: Juktas (6), Traostalos (5), Kophinas (5), and Vrysinas (2). Sakellarakis, 1996, 85.

<sup>690</sup> Morris 2009, 182 and see Peatfield, 2001 for a discussion of this.

<sup>691</sup> Morris 2009, 181.

<sup>692</sup> Peatfield 2001, 54 and Morris, 2001, 249.

<sup>693</sup> Morris 2009, 182.

<sup>694</sup> Morris 2009, 183.

<sup>695</sup> Peatfield and Morris 2019, 197.

<sup>696</sup> Morris and Peatfield 2004, 53.

itself’ as seen in Minoan frescoes.<sup>697</sup> If this is true, then the ritual at the peak sanctuary has more to do with performance and the figurines were representative of such moments.<sup>698</sup> The performative aspects of the figurines and how they functioned warrants further investigation as it could reveal a better understanding of the details of Minoan religion. Morris states that this is of high importance because “in any handmade figurine tradition there is likely to be a significant balance or tension between the perpetuation of shared characteristics of style and technique and the selection of attribute through which individual social and ritual identities might be expressed.”<sup>699</sup> Thus, the figurines suggest individuality and choice on behalf of the producers (and/or consumers) of the items. Perhaps this is reflective of individuality expressed through material remains and could shed some light on the worshippers and what occurred at these sites. As stated above, figurines have been found at every Cretan peak sanctuary, while outside of Crete figurines have been found at seven out of the nine possible peak sanctuaries (Tables 6 and 8).

While figurines are one of the most common artifacts, stone ladles are a highly charged and rarer ritual objects, with only about thirty known in the Aegean (figs. 16 and 29). The first systematic study of stone ladles by Warren noted a total of ten ladles that date to MM III-LM I, plus four more rudimentary examples that are dated to EM-MM I.<sup>700</sup> The only other publication that has systematically studied this class of objects is Bevan’s 2007 study. At that time, around twenty-nine stone ladles were known,<sup>701</sup> to which we can now add the example recovered in 2019 at Stelida.<sup>702</sup> Stone ladles are only found in cult contexts

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<sup>697</sup> Peatfield 2001, 55.

<sup>698</sup> Peatfield 2001, 55.

<sup>699</sup> Morris 2009, 181.

<sup>700</sup> Warren 1969, 49.

<sup>701</sup> Bevan 2007, 131.

<sup>702</sup> Carter et al, 2021, 75, figure 9.

at a small number of Neopalatial sites on Crete<sup>703</sup> Three have Linear A inscriptions; one from one from Juktas, one from Archanes, plus one from the non-Cretan peak sanctuary of Agios Georgios on Kythera.<sup>704</sup> These inscriptions are believed to be dedicatory formulae to female deities.<sup>705</sup> Ladles are only found at one peak sanctuary (Juktas) on Crete, while the largest concentration of ladles on Crete are associated with Knossos.<sup>706</sup> Their relatively small size make them easily portable; with the aforementioned depiction of men processing with ladles on a stone vase from Knossos, suggests that they were held in cupped hands (fig. 5).<sup>707</sup>

Ladles have been interpreted as ritual and votive objects due to their find context; their description - as heart-shaped (cordiform),<sup>708</sup> led Bevan to state that “This cardiac connection might indicate that Cretan ladles held token offerings of blood, especially given the evidence for animal and possible human sacrifice at Knossos.”<sup>709</sup> Given the concentration of ladles in north-central Crete, he further suggested that “When we see ladles elsewhere we must therefore wonder whether they are not promoting a particular Knossian ideology.”<sup>710</sup> This is particularly the case when a stone ladle is inscribed with Linear A. In fact, Sakellarakis argues that the cult activity at Agios Georgios, with its seven ladles, is a reflection of the community’s likely dependence on Knossos, a claim that is discussed in detail in the following chapter.<sup>711</sup>

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<sup>703</sup> Bevan 2007, 131; Leinwand 1980, 519.

<sup>704</sup> Bevan 2007, 131-133.

<sup>705</sup> Schoep 1994, 7-25.

<sup>706</sup> Briault 2007, 130.

<sup>707</sup> Davis 2014, 113-115.

<sup>708</sup> Warren 1969, 48.

<sup>709</sup> Bevan 2007, 131-133.

<sup>710</sup> Bevan 2007, 131.

<sup>711</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 92. While he does not say that this conclusion was made because of the stone ladle, it is nevertheless suggestive of that connection.



Davis argues that ladles might have held water, indicative of a ritualistic purpose of water, due to the fact that the liquid in ladles would have come in contact with the hands when carried.<sup>712</sup> Until someone undertakes a residue analysis of a ladle, the question as to their contents, and function remains hypothetical. Thus, this one object has significant ideological weight that has been used to describe sites with stone ladles as under Knossian influence. Neopalatial stone ladles are only found at six sites outside of Crete, three of which are possible peak sanctuaries (fig. 41).<sup>713</sup> In the Aegean four possible (or confirmed) peak sanctuaries have them: seven were found at Agios Georgios<sup>714</sup>, one was found at Troullos<sup>715</sup>, one at Stelida<sup>716</sup>, and ten+ found at Juktas (Tables 6 and 8).<sup>717</sup> If one follows the trends of Bevan, Sakellarakis, and Briault, these stone ladles could indeed represent a particular relationship with Knossos.<sup>718</sup> Alongside the contextual arguments for their religious significance, one can recall the decorated rhyton from Knossos that depicts two men processing with ladles in front of a building with horns of consecration (fig. 5).

Another common ritual object found at peak sanctuaries is the libation table, either in stone or terracotta (fig. 42). Libation tables (sometimes called offering tables) seem to date back to MM I, if not as early as EM III, on Crete.<sup>719</sup> They are typically rectangular or circular in shape usually on feet (though sometimes with suspension holes) with a carved cavity and raised rims.<sup>720</sup> The stone examples could also be decorated. When first

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<sup>712</sup> Davis 2014, 117-118.

<sup>713</sup> Bevan 2007, 132.

<sup>714</sup> Sakellarakis 2011, 349-350; Banou 2020.

<sup>715</sup> Warren 1969, 49; Caskey 1971, 494, figure 14; Bevan 2007.

<sup>716</sup> Carter et al, 2021, 75, figure 9.

<sup>717</sup> Evans 1921, 622-624; Bevan 2007; Warren 1969, 49

<sup>718</sup> Bevan 2007; Sakellarakis 1996; Briault 2007.

<sup>719</sup> Warren 1969, 62.

<sup>720</sup> Muhly 1981, 3; Karvana 2016, 353-354.

produced, they remained in a ‘small form’ until about MM III when they became larger.<sup>721</sup> Sometimes offering tables were inscribed with Linear A, with dates ranging from MM III-LM I.<sup>722</sup> Warren argues that their function as ritual items, perhaps used for libations and offerings, is assured by their find context (at peak sanctuaries, sacred caves, and domestic/palatial shrines).<sup>723</sup> These tables most likely functioned as some sort of altar used during the ritual.<sup>724</sup> At peak sanctuaries they appear to be a Neopalatial phenomenon as they are unknown at Protopalatial peak sanctuaries.<sup>725</sup> Clay or stone tables have been found at five of the Neopalatial peak sanctuaries, while six out of the nine possible peak sanctuaries outside of Crete have them, including Stelida (Tables 6 and 8).

The double axe has long been appreciated – and much discussed - as a key symbol within Minoan culture, of religious and/or political significance (fig. 37). In metal form (rather than two-dimensional emblem), the double axe could also have enjoyed a practical use as well as a symbolic function.<sup>726</sup> The sizes of these axes vary widely, with extraordinarily large bronze examples (100-120 cm+) known from Nirou Chani while miniature version in precious metals, stone, and terracotta are also known.<sup>727</sup> Several examples were made in precious metals and/or are of such small size and thinness that they appear to serve no functional purpose; such material is typically assigned a ‘ritual’ significance.<sup>728</sup> Representations of double axes are also seen in Minoan iconography.<sup>729</sup> This symbol’s meaning remains somewhat unclear due to the variety of contexts in which

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<sup>721</sup> Warren 1969, 62.

<sup>722</sup> Warren 1969, 62.

<sup>723</sup> Warren 1969, 62.

<sup>724</sup> Karvana 2016, 353.

<sup>725</sup> Adams 2017, 66.

<sup>726</sup> See Lowe Fri 2011 for a detailed discussion of their function use.

<sup>727</sup> Adams 2017, 67.

<sup>728</sup> Adams 2017, 67.

<sup>729</sup> Adams 2017, 67-68.

these items and their representation are found on Crete, though some have suggested its association with a female deity.<sup>730</sup> Double axes are found commonly at peak sanctuaries and in elite spaces within other types of site. From the Neopalatial Cretan peak sanctuaries they are documented at Juktas, Kophinas, and Vysinas, while outside of Crete, they are known from Agios Georgios and Maleatas (Tables 6 and 8).

Horns of consecration are another key Minoan symbol (represented three dimensionally in various media, or iconographically), named with reference to their similarity to bulls' horns and date as early as EM III-MM I on Crete (fig. 43).<sup>731</sup> These items have become involved in the discussion of the bull within Minoan society and, according to Adams, have a specific architectural association as seen in the multiple depictions of peak sanctuaries in Chapter One.<sup>732</sup> Their association with peak sanctuaries could support the interpretation of horns of consecration as depictions of the mountains themselves.<sup>733</sup> In fact, a colossal stone version was found in the Southwest Palace area at Knossos where the ridge of Juktas was visible between the horns.<sup>734</sup> This possible representation of the mountains is of particular interest since it could point to the significance of peak sanctuaries within the Minoan social and religious landscapes. This symbol appears to be a 'pan-Cretan' symbol, albeit with a particular concentration at and around Knossos.<sup>735</sup> Horns of consecration have been documented at half of the Neopalatial peak sanctuaries on Crete (n=4), while only two of the nine possible peak sanctuaries

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<sup>730</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 62, exact reasoning is not provided.

<sup>731</sup> Adams 2017, 66.

<sup>732</sup> Adams 2017, 66-67.

<sup>733</sup> Adams 2017, 67.

<sup>734</sup> Evans 1921, 438, fig. 315.

<sup>735</sup> Adams 2017, 67.

outside of Crete have them, namely Agios Georgios and Leska (Tables 6 and 8). Thus, this symbol, while possibly symbolic of peak sanctuaries themselves, is rarer at these sites.

These ritually charged votives are typically understood as clear Minoan objects. When they are found outside of Crete, scholars tend to assign them as Minoan or Minoanizing objects. To have such an item would carry considerable social weight and, perhaps, point to knowledge of the meaning behind the symbolic item. When found in cult contexts, I would argue that these items provide a clear connection with Minoan religious behavior. Locals desired to have certain items that signaled their knowledge of and participation in Minoan religious behavior (including peak sanctuary activities). Implications of this is discussed further in Chapter Five.

Beach pebbles are one of the more common artifacts associated with Minoan peak sanctuaries, typically numbering in the hundreds or thousands. Nowicki states that pebbles are among the critical finds for identifying peak sanctuaries,<sup>736</sup> though his study focused on Pre and Protopalatial sites; in his 1994 publication he states that it is unclear if the act of dedicating such items continued to be a feature into the Neopalatial period.<sup>737</sup> Though it should be noted that pebbles might not have been originally noted by excavators, especially if the site was excavated in the early twentieth century when such relatively inconspicuous items were either overlooked, or not deemed worthy of retention and/or publication in preliminary reports.<sup>738</sup> Nowicki states that at the Protopalatial peak sanctuaries pebbles are typically associated with the highest point of the sanctuary, which suggests a focal point of the cult.<sup>739</sup> This implies that the pebbles are a representation of

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<sup>736</sup> Nowicki 2012, 140.

<sup>737</sup> Nowicki 1994, 35.

<sup>738</sup> For example, Nowicki posits that Juktas probably would have had pebbles (Nowicki 1994, 39).

<sup>739</sup> Nowicki 2007, 23.

place, marking a specific space at the peak sanctuary. He further argues, following Peatfield, that the number of pebbles might be equivalent to one person's visit.<sup>740</sup> If this is true, then it could reveal information about the quantity and frequency of visitation at these sites. However, it might be more likely that groups of pebbles were collected by one visitor and deposited on site at one time. Pebbles are noted at three of the Neopalatial Cretan peak sanctuaries and three of the non-Cretan peak sanctuaries (Tables 6 and 8). Stelida, for instance, has over 7000 pebbles thus far documented, and it is the goal of the project to understand the spatial distribution of activities on the site. As such, further excavation, and study of the finds from Stelida might clarify the role of pebbles in off-island peak sanctuaries. The pebbles from Stelida most likely came from nearby beaches, perhaps collected by visitors *en route* to the site.<sup>741</sup>

So, what makes a site earn the title of a Neopalatial peak sanctuary on Crete (fig. 40)? Of course, the site must be topographically correct (on or near a peak, associated with a settlement or a Neopalatial palatial center, accessible, and near an area of human exploitation) and have several of the appropriate votives (e.g., figurines, double axes, horns of consecration, pebbles, libation tables, etc.). In the Neopalatial period, these votives tend to be a bit richer than in the Protopalatial, implications of which are discussed below. The typical activities at these sites are still the consumption of food and liquid (evident through the ceramic assemblages, which includes conical cups and cooking ware) and the dedication of votives (Table 6).

Yet, according to Briault, it is clear that the idea of a peak sanctuary varied across Crete and that while there might be some trends, the rituals performed at peak sanctuaries

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<sup>740</sup> Nowicki 2007, 24; Peatfield 1992.

<sup>741</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 80.

involved a range of activity.<sup>742</sup> Regional variation does not explain the different behaviors seen at peak sanctuaries within the same regional orbit and instead points to a selective adoption of particular practices at each site.<sup>743</sup> Morris agrees with this, and while focused on the individuality of figurines, argues that worship and activity at peak sanctuaries is not as uniform as some scholars make it out to be.<sup>744</sup> While there was a ‘typical shared assemblage’ at peak sanctuaries, there does seem to be a larger number of ‘richer’ finds (metals stones, etc.) associated with sanctuaries closer to palatial centers.<sup>745</sup> Another indication of selective practices is the production of terracotta figurines in local clays from the surrounding areas<sup>746</sup>, which suggests local production and consumption practices.<sup>747</sup> I would argue that this meant that there was room for choice in Minoan cult behavior and this could point to the significance of the choice on behalf of worshippers, something that has implications for sites outside of the island. Nevertheless, a site should match the topographical qualifications and have some sort of dedicatory action and consumption behavior to qualify the sites as a possible Minoan peak sanctuary.

Regarding what types of populations peak sanctuaries on Crete serve, there are two schools of thought. The first is a rustic view of these cults, which gained prominence during the 1960s to 1980s.<sup>748</sup> Faure is the main scholar who proposed this idea, arguing that peak sanctuaries were popular cults, with sailors, farmers, shepherds, and pregnant women being the main worshippers based on the lack of rich votive remains.<sup>749</sup> The second school

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<sup>742</sup> Briault 2007, 128.

<sup>743</sup> Briault 2007, 128.

<sup>744</sup> Morris 2009, 185.

<sup>745</sup> Peatfield and Morris 2019, 190.

<sup>746</sup> Morris 1993.

<sup>747</sup> Peatfield and Morris 2019, 190.

<sup>748</sup> Haysom 2018, 19.

<sup>749</sup> Faure 1967, 148

viewed peak sanctuaries as places for the elite. For example, Evans argued that these were visited by kings.<sup>750</sup> More recently, scholars, starting as early as Evans, have merged the two schools of thought, arguing that in the Protopalatial period peak sanctuaries would have begun as rural, popular cults, but in the Neopalatial, when all peak sanctuaries were concentrated around palatial centers and there is an increase in rich votive material, these sites underwent centralization and palatial control.<sup>751</sup> The metalwork and stone vases, in particular, are typically tied to elites and the number of these dedications do increase through the palatial periods as well as the investment in architecture, culminating in the Neopalatial period.<sup>752</sup> According to Peatfield, this Neopalatial centralization of peak sanctuary cult was a way for the general elite to dominate Minoan religion through ideological means and vice versa, as discussed in Chapter One.<sup>753</sup>

The fact that these sites in the Neopalatial period are typically associated with palatial centers has implications for the impetus behind the existence of similar sites outside of Crete. For example, Rutkowski states that in MM III these sites probably became incorporated in the systems of royal power.<sup>754</sup> In fact, according to Adams, Juktas may have functioned as an extension of Knossian power during the Neopalatial Period.<sup>755</sup> Specifically, she stated that “This ‘special relationship’ does not necessarily mean that Knossos monopolized activity at the ritual site, but it did provide an excellent platform for demonstrating Knossian authority.”<sup>756</sup> This is tied to how scholars discuss the rise of Knossos during the Neopalatial period as a supra-regional power both on Crete and in the

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<sup>750</sup> Evans 1921, 151-163.

<sup>751</sup> Peatfield 1987; 1990; 1994; 2013.

<sup>752</sup> Haysom 2018, 19.

<sup>753</sup> Peatfield 2013, 433.

<sup>754</sup> Rutkowski 1986, 95.

<sup>755</sup> Adams 2017, 159.

<sup>756</sup> Adams 2017, 159.

Aegean. Peatfield goes so far to label Juktas as a ‘royal’ peak sanctuary.<sup>757</sup> Such implications are discussed in more detail in the following chapter.<sup>758</sup>

In seeking to tie a peak sanctuary cult to elite/palatially controlled religion, Peatfield points to a few archaeological indicators that can be identified at Juktas. In terms of peak sanctuary rituals, Peatfield argues that one of the first elite controlled ritual acts would be the procession.<sup>759</sup> A road was identified that connects Knossos and Juktas.<sup>760</sup> This elite connection to procession, according to Peatfield, is substantiated due to the alignment of the Juktas mountain and the main entrance corridor of the Knossos, which is called the Procession Corridor due to the Procession Fresco.<sup>761</sup> In turn, there appears to be a subsidiary building at Alonaki (outside the massive temenos wall of Juktas),<sup>762</sup> comprised of multiple rectangular rooms with a central courtyard, which Karetsou connects to the Neopalatial Villas.<sup>763</sup> Room 2 was one of the few rooms in the courtyard which the function of a storage room for the procession could be hypothesized. Karetsou argues that it could have functioned as a mezzanine due to the large amounts of pottery (740 total vessels: 351 conical cups, 135 ledge-rim bowls, thirty-five straight-sided cups, seventeen straight sided cups with bevelled bases, and 107 sherds of cooking pots).<sup>764</sup> The pottery was dominated by table-ware, followed by cooking pots, and then transport and/or storage and pouring vessels.<sup>765</sup> Karetsou and Mathioudaki state that Alonaki could have functioned as a multi-

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<sup>757</sup> Peatfield 2013, 434.

<sup>758</sup> Adams 2017, 229.

<sup>759</sup> Peatfield 2013, 436.

<sup>760</sup> Peatfield 2013, 436.

<sup>761</sup> Peatfield 2013, 437.

<sup>762</sup> Karetsou and Mathioudaki 2012.

<sup>763</sup> Karetsou and Mathioudaki 2012, 86, figures 1-5.

<sup>764</sup> Karetsou and Mathioudaki 2012, 87-88.

<sup>765</sup> Karetsou and Mathioudaki 2012, 98.



purpose building which could perhaps include residences, storage areas for sanctuary goods, and areas for outdoor ceremonial activities.<sup>766</sup>

Peatfield suggests that the substantial evidence for cooking as well as the architecture implies that it was a possible refreshment site before entering the sanctuary.<sup>767</sup>

Sakellarakis points out that processions most likely would have been a common activity associated with peak sanctuaries given their representation on depictions of peak sanctuaries, as discussed in Chapter One.<sup>768</sup> He particularly references the rhyton from Knossos (fig. 5) and how the figures have outstretched hands, carrying objects (in this case ladles). Several different types of objects could be carried in processions, though Sakellarakis states that ritual vessels like stone offering tables and ladles or tripod offering tables made of plaster are more likely given their ritualistic value.<sup>769</sup> He states that high ranking members of the religious and political elite might have played a critical role in the procession from Knossos to Juktas, as seen in fragments of a wall painting known as the 'palaquin fresco.'<sup>770</sup> But he notes that the high ranking elite procession might not have been the norm for peak sanctuaries, though processions most likely would have been part of the ritual activity.<sup>771</sup>

Peatfield not only discusses processions as indicative of elite activity, but also the figurines. With Morris, he argues that the figurines display trance-like elements.<sup>772</sup> As mentioned above, Morris and Peatfield have argued that the gestures of the figurines can

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<sup>766</sup> Karetso and Mathioudaki 2012, 103.

<sup>767</sup> Peatfield 2013, 437.

<sup>768</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 78-79.

<sup>769</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 80-82.

<sup>770</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 82.

<sup>771</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 82.

<sup>772</sup> Morris and Peatfield 2001; 2004.

be linked to epiphany rituals.<sup>773</sup> Peatfield maintains that these rituals were accessed only by the Minoan elite in the Neopalatial period, and such scenes can also be seen on gold rings and these rings are an inherently elite object.<sup>774</sup> Lastly, the practice of sacrifice is a possible elite activity, according to Peatfield. Specifically, he points to the abandonment site of Anemospilia<sup>775</sup> around the time when we see increased sacrifice at Juktas which could suggest that Juktas became more elite-controlled to reinforce royal authority.<sup>776</sup> Yet, the evidence for animal bones at Juktas is rather poor, as he admits.<sup>777</sup> In fact, no bovid bones were uncovered, and only “some horns” of goats or sheep, bones of birds, and various animal bones (specifics not given), were found at Juktas.<sup>778</sup> So I would argue there might not be enough evidence to include sacrifice in his analysis. As Sakellarakis rightly points out, the mere presence of animal bones or burnt remains is not enough to argue that animal sacrifice occurred at peak sanctuaries as the burning of the carcass is not the same as a bloodletting sacrifice.<sup>779</sup> In fact, most of the peak sanctuaries have not received detailed osteological study and thus concrete information about butcher’s marks and burning is unknown. At Agios Georgios, for example, the animal most associated with sacrifice in Minoan Crete, the bull, is only represented seven individuals, while the weathering on the bones have destroyed a lot of significant information.<sup>780</sup> As such, until animal bones are studied in detail it is perhaps not possible to discuss animal sacrifice at peak sanctuaries as a common (and elite) practice.

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<sup>773</sup> Morris and Peatfield 2004, 53.

<sup>774</sup> Peatfield 2013, 437.

<sup>775</sup> Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997, 268–311.

<sup>776</sup> Peatfield 2013, 438.

<sup>777</sup> Peatfield 2013, 438.

<sup>778</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 87-88.

<sup>779</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 86.

<sup>780</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 88-89.

The elite controlled aspect at Juktas is due to, as Peatfield argues, the rich finds (jewelry, seals, and stone libation tables), the direct connection with Knossos, and the high number of Linear A inscriptions.<sup>781</sup> In an earlier publication, Karetsou argues that in MM III one can see ties to the palace in the monumental architecture (which he cites much larger than at other Neopalatial peak sanctuaries) and the palatial character of the finds.<sup>782</sup> These ‘palatial finds’ include a large number of bronze double axes, bronze figurines, clay figurines, Linear A inscriptions, stone offering tables, a gold amulet, sealings, a lead figurine, an alabaster cup, and an unusual-handled instrument.<sup>783</sup> Juktas presents an unusual case study as it is the richest and best studied peak sanctuary on Crete. As a result, perhaps scholars are too quick to make assumptions about Neopalatial peak cult based on this atypical site, similar to how Knossos is an atypical palatial site. In fact, this desire to label Neopalatial Minoan peak sanctuaries as elite shrines has been challenged by some scholars.

Haysom more recently has cautioned against the narrative of elite-controlled peak sanctuaries during the Neopalatial period.<sup>784</sup> One of his main arguments is the publication status of the sites (no site has been subject to full-scale publication record on Crete) and the small number of peak sanctuaries dated to the Neopalatial period.<sup>785</sup> He argues that there is no firm geographical correlation between peak sanctuaries and palaces during the Neopalatial period.<sup>786</sup> As is discussed below, Soetens agrees that not all the Neopalatial sites are within a sight line of a palatial center.<sup>787</sup> However, it is not as clear cut as Haysom

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<sup>781</sup> Peatfield 2013, 437.

<sup>782</sup> Karetsou 1981b, 145.

<sup>783</sup> Karetsou 1981b, 145-151, figures 13-27.

<sup>784</sup> Haysom 2018.

<sup>785</sup> Haysom 2018, 20-21.

<sup>786</sup> Haysom 2018, 21.

<sup>787</sup> Soetens et al, 2008, 155.

implies. Additionally, he points out that the ‘elite votive remains’ paired with the monumental architecture and Linear A inscriptions should not be universally accepted as ‘elite.’<sup>788</sup> For example, scholars such as Schoep no longer argue that writing was limited to the palatial elites.<sup>789</sup> Consequently, Haysom argues that when Linear A inscriptions are found at peak sanctuaries scholars should no longer assume elite activity is indicated. Regarding monumental architecture at peak sanctuaries, Haysom points out that the largest buildings at peak sanctuaries (Juktas) are the same size as ‘normal’ Minoan houses<sup>790</sup>, which suggests to him that the architecture at the peak sanctuaries could have been commissioned by numerous parts of the Minoan community, both the rich and the lower classes.<sup>791</sup> Concerning the ‘elite’ votives such as bronze artifacts (including the double axes), libation tables, and gold finds, Haysom notes that similar votives are found in settlement contexts throughout Crete, including small houses and second and third tier sites, suggesting that such finds were not monopolized by the elite members of society.<sup>792</sup> He sees the terracotta figurines of bulls and male figurines in loin cloths as symbolic of competitive events.<sup>793</sup> In sum, Haysom argues that peak sanctuaries were one venue for competition between elites and the rest of society where the focus was not on that of wealth, but instead innate ability or strength of the participants of the cult.<sup>794</sup>

While I agree that perhaps we are too quick to label activities as ‘elite’ and the idea of competition regarding votives remains a possibility, I would argue that there is evidence that elites controlled what votives would have been popular and/or appropriate for this sort

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<sup>788</sup> Haysom 2018, 22.

<sup>789</sup> Schoep 1996; 2000; 2001.

<sup>790</sup> Whitelaw 2001, figs 2.4-2.5.

<sup>791</sup> Haysom 2018, 22.

<sup>792</sup> Haysom 2018, 22.

<sup>793</sup> Haysom 2018, 24-25.

<sup>794</sup> Haysom 2018, 25.

of cult. Yet, Morris and Peatfield still argue that due to the reduction in the number of peak sanctuaries during the Neopalatial period, the concentration of the active sites around palatial centers and the domination of Knossos over Crete suggests that the peak sanctuary cult transforms “from a popular, peasant cult to an elite mechanism of religious centralization.”<sup>795</sup> The idea that Neopalatial peak sanctuaries served a more elite population than earlier peak sanctuaries could explain their lower number and their concentration near palatial centers. What, however, are the implications of such ideas for the alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries?

### **Comparison of Possible Non-Cretan Peak Sanctuaries**

As the previous chapters demonstrated, the alleged peak sanctuaries identified outside of Crete vary greatly in terms of evidence, which makes drawing concrete comparisons difficult. A similar situation occurs with the Cretan peak sanctuaries. Nevertheless, there are some identifiable trends among the possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. Before discussing these trends, it is necessary to first review the evidence briefly. As seen above, of the five possible peak sanctuaries in the Cyclades (fig. 10) (Appendix A), only Stelida on Naxos<sup>796</sup> and Troullos on Kea<sup>797</sup> have been partially excavated, while the others have been either fully surveyed (Mikre Vigla on Naxos<sup>798</sup>), partially documented (Mazareko tou Fellou on Andros<sup>799</sup>) or mentioned briefly in a few

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<sup>795</sup> Peatfield and Morris 2019, 190.

<sup>796</sup> Carter et al, 2021.

<sup>797</sup> Caskey 1971; Catling 1972-1973, 24 fig. 47; Davis 1984, 164; Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991, 100; Sakellarakis 1996, 92-93.

<sup>798</sup> Barber and Hadjanastasiou 1989; Vaughn 1989; Sakellarakis 1996, 94-96; Berg 2007b; Vlachopoulos 2016; Barber 2017.

<sup>799</sup> Koutsoukou 1992, 93-99, 373-380, fig. 62, pls. 109-110, site nos. 35-36; Sotirakopoulou 2010, 837; Belza 2018, 147-8.

publications (Marvo Rachidi on Thera<sup>800</sup>). Outside of the Cyclades, four more possible peak sanctuaries have been tentatively identified: two on Kythera (Agios Georgios<sup>801</sup> and Leska<sup>802</sup>), one on Rhodes (Philerimos<sup>803</sup>), and one on the Greek mainland (Maleatas<sup>804</sup>) (fig. 23) (Appendix A). Excavation has occurred at all these sites, although only Agios Georgios has been published in full. This, of course, leads to bias in the material, but the sites that have been excavated provide some guidelines in establishing criteria for what makes a site Minoan-inspired.

Site Name	Architecture	Minoanizing Pottery	Accessibility	Metals	Proximity to areas of human activity
Stelida	X	X	X	X	X
Mikre Vigla	X	X	X	X	X
Mazareko tou Fellou	?	X	X		X
Marvo Rachidi	X	?	X	X	X
Troullos	X	X	X	X	X
Agios Georgios	No, but mortar was found	X	X	X	X
Leska		X	X	X	X
Philerimos		X	X	X	X
Maleatas	X	X	X	X	X

Table 7: Combined categories for comparisons of all possible Non-Cretan peak sanctuaries.

As seen in Table 7, all but one of the peak sanctuaries have associated settlements within their vicinity. The one without an associated settlement, Leska, could be explained by the lack of archaeological investigation on western Kythera rather than the absence of

<sup>800</sup> Marinatos 1968, 35-36; Barber 1981, 20, site no. 50; Doumas 1983, 55-56; Morgan 1988, 156; Sakellarakis 1996, 96.

<sup>801</sup> Sakellarakis 1996; 2011; 2013; Tournavitou 2009; 2014; Sapouna-Sakellaraki 2012.

<sup>802</sup> Georgiadis 2012; 2014; 2016.

<sup>803</sup> Benzi 1984; Sakellarakis 1996; Marketou 2009.

<sup>804</sup> Papadimitriou 1948, 90-111; 1949a, 91-9; 1950, 194-202; 1951, 204-212; Lambrinoudakis 1974, 96; 1975, 167-171; 1976, 202-207; 1977, 187-191; 1981a, 59-65; 1981b, 158-160; 1983, 152-156; 1987, 53-58; 1988b, 21-2; Hägg 1984, 119-122; Sakellarakis 1996, 97 footnote 187; Briault 2007, 130-131.

a local settlement. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the excavator argued that Leska was perhaps the cult place of a smaller, more pastoral community than Agios Georgios, which would not leave the same archaeological trace as a permanent settlement.<sup>805</sup> Thus, all the possible cult sites were at least near areas of human activity and were accessible during their periods of use. Topographically these sites do fit the criteria established by Peatfield for Cretan peak sanctuaries.<sup>806</sup> Each of these sites, furthermore, was active during the Neopalatial period, implications of which are discussed in further detail in the following chapter.

### GIS Analysis

Recently scholars have started to incorporate GIS and viewshed analysis to further the study of Cretan peak sanctuaries. This sort of analysis aims to understand the relationship between peak sanctuaries and their associated settlements as well as to establish further criteria scholars can use to determine if a site is in fact a Minoan peak sanctuary. Moreover, inter-visibility between Cretan peak sanctuaries has sometimes been claimed as a central component in the cult activity and for the maintenance and construction of the political and religious landscapes.<sup>807</sup> Soetens and team were the first to incorporate GIS in their analysis of Cretan peak sanctuaries. In order to conduct this research, all sites were located by a differential GPS and the archaeological material was organized into a database based on typology, chronology, finds, landscape characteristics, and bibliography.<sup>808</sup> Then they created maps that were geo-referenced using specific maps and

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<sup>805</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 18.

<sup>806</sup> Peatfield 2007, 297.

<sup>807</sup> Cherry 1986; Peatfield 1987; Nowicki 1994; Soetens et al. 2001, 2002; 2003; 2008; Soetens 2004; 2009; Briault 2007.

<sup>808</sup> Soetens et al, 2008, 155; See Soetens 2004 for more detailed information on the database.

satellite images such as ΕΓΣΑ '87 projection (the Greek Geodetic Reference System of 1987), a DEM (digital elevation model) that was based on “a SPOT stereoscopic satellite image (50×50m pixel), slope, aspect and hill shade grids (through analysis of the DEM), digitized topographical, geological, land use, and land capability maps (on 1:50000 scale).”<sup>809</sup> With the maps created, the team ran several tests in their program including line of sight analysis, territorial modelling, cost distance analysis, and Thiessen polygons and Euclidean distance.<sup>810</sup> Such studies allows them to test whether topographical elements played a crucial role in the placement of peak sanctuaries, namely intervisibility between sites and peak sanctuaries, environmental concerns, and questions of distance and accessibility.

This incorporation of GIS analysis has concluded that almost all peak sanctuaries on Crete were intervisible from one another (fig. 44).<sup>811</sup> The only Neopalatial peak sanctuary not intervisible with any other sanctuary is Vrysinas. In fact, on Crete only two rural peak sanctuaries, both Protopalatial, do not have a 360-degree panoramic view according to Soetens.<sup>812</sup> It should be noted that when testing the visibility of peak sanctuaries with court-centered complexes on Crete, Soetens et al. found that a few important court complexes do not have a visible peak sanctuary in the Neopalatial Period, namely Malia, Zakros, Monastiraki, Myrtos, Kommos, Agia Triada, and Gournia.<sup>813</sup> Central Crete appears to have had more visibility between complexes and peak sanctuaries during the Neopalatial period.<sup>814</sup> As more intensive survey on Crete takes place, these

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<sup>809</sup> Soetens et al, 2008, 155.

<sup>810</sup> Soetens et al. 2008, 155-159. See these pages for detailed discussion of each of these tests.

<sup>811</sup> Soetens 2009, 265; Soetens et al. 2008, Figure 6.

<sup>812</sup> Soetens 2009, 264.

<sup>813</sup> Soetens et al. 2008, 155.

<sup>814</sup> Soetens et al. 2008, 155.



questions of visibility may become clearer. Nonetheless, intervisibility between peak sanctuaries seems to be an important component for peak sanctuaries as well as, typically, visibility with a settlement. It is generally thought that these lines of visibility were purposeful and was a way to link the peak sanctuaries to settlements. Thus, through the incorporation of GIS analysis, the importance of the topographical elements was a key component of Neopalatial Minoan peak sanctuaries.

While Soetens only focused on intervisibility between Cretan sites, this sort of analysis has never been extended to non-Cretan peak sanctuaries prior to the work at Stelida. As such, I have conducted a viewshed analysis of all the non-Cretan peak sanctuaries, following what has been done at the Stelida peak sanctuary by Claudette Lopez and Daniel Contreras<sup>815</sup>, with the help of Matthew Harder. The goal was to apply another tool to the alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries in hopes of understanding the purpose and function of such sites as they compare to Cretan peak sanctuaries. Harder ran the viewshed analyses by first acquiring a series of 30-meter Digital Elevation Models of the Aegean and the Cyclades from NASA Earthdata's 30-M Shuttle Radar Topography Mission.<sup>816</sup> These DEM tiles were compiled into an overarching database in ArcGIS 10.8.1. The locations of possible peak sanctuaries outside of Crete were projected onto World Geodetic System 1984/UTM Zone 35N, which I gathered, and integrated into the ArcGIS project by Harder. Visibility analyses (ArcGIS 10.8.1, Spatial Analyst tool) were then conducted with an observer height of 1.6 meters and a radius of 300 kilometers from each possible non-Cretan peak sanctuary. This visibility radius clearly presents a viewshed beyond typical

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<sup>815</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 83, figure 15.

<sup>816</sup> Personal communication with M. Harder; NASA JPL 2013. In all, 24 DEM tiles were utilized for the purposes of this pilot study.

horizon limits but offers a possible highest extent scenario, following what was done by Lopez and Contreras at Stelida.<sup>817</sup> I then used the maps produced by Harder to contextualize the findings, as discussed below. This sort of analysis seeks to answer the following questions: 1). are the possible peak sanctuaries intervisible with their associated settlements, 2). are they intervisible with other peak sanctuaries, and 3). is Crete visible from the peak sanctuaries?

From the peak sanctuary at Stelida, Grotta (the main Bronze Age settlement) is visible, Mikre Vigla is visible from the south, and on a clear day Mount Ida and the White Mountains of central and western Crete are visible (fig. 45).<sup>818</sup> From Stelida it is possible that Mazareko tou Fellou was visible. From Mikre Vigla, the situation is the same as Stelida, though with a less panoramic view due to the lower elevation of the site, though Grotta, Mt. Zas, and Stelida are all visible as well as parts of Crete (fig. 45). From Agios Georgios, the Kastri region is visible as well as large portions of Crete including western, central and parts of eastern Crete and parts of the southern mainland including Laconia and western Attica (fig. 46). Other islands are visible from the peak, such as Kea and Andros, thus it is possible that both Troullos and Mazareko tou Fellou could be visible. It is of note that Leska is not visible from Agios Georgios due to the mountain range that separates them.

From Leska, the possible area of pastoral habitation is visible as well as part of southern Laconia, a small portion of the Argolid, multiple summits on Crete (central Crete included), and multiple alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries (Troullos, Mazareko, Marvo Rachidi, Mikre Vigla, Stelida and Agios Georgios) (fig. 47). Mazareko has a rather low

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<sup>817</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 83 conducted similar viewshed analysis with a 300 km radius, but only from Stelida.

<sup>818</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 83.

visibility, with no other possible peak sanctuaries visible while the main settlements and parts of southern Euboea are visible. From Marvo Rachidi, Akrotiri is clearly visible as well as parts of central and eastern Crete and a few of the Dodecanese islands, namely Kasos and Karpathos, though no other possible peak sanctuaries outside of Crete are visible (fig. 48). Maleatas has extremely low visibility with only the low valley with the associated settlement visible. No other possible peak sanctuaries nor Crete can be seen (fig. 49). From Philerimos, Rhodes, the main settlement of Trianda is visible as well as large parts of Asia Minor, Amorgos, eastern Naxos, Syros, Mykonos, southern Attica, Kea, Ios, and Sifnos (fig. 50). It is possible that Troullos might be visible from Philerimos. Vast portions of Crete are visible, including parts of eastern, central, and western Crete. From Troullos, only portions of the mainland are visible, namely Euboea, Attica, and the southern portion of the Argolid (fig. 51). Thus, no other possible peak sanctuary nor Crete can be seen from Troullos.

The viewsheds analysis provides some clarity as to the role of these possible peak sanctuaries outside of Crete. Six of the nine possible sites have some sort of sightline of Crete, this could possibly have played a role in the selection of the site by the locals if they in fact knew which far distant island was Crete. Always the main settlement or area of habitation was intervisible with the possible peak sanctuary, thus following the standard set on Crete. What is of particular interest is when possible peak sanctuaries are intervisible to one another. Further analysis would have to clarify this, but it suggests the likelihood that the locals were aware of these other sites and sought to bring this sort of intervisibility that was present on Crete into their cult behavior. Of course, it could be simply a coincidence as these sites are far away from one another and that the first one constructed

would not have had another one to link to, but I would argue that perhaps the locals were aware of this phenomenon and wanted to imitate the arrangement on Crete. Concerning the visibility of Crete, while it might have been possible that the locals knew where Crete was, except for Agios Georgios and Leska, it would be unlikely that the locals would have purposefully picked a hill because Crete was visible due to the distance. Viewshed analysis provides another tool to examine Minoan peak sanctuaries, while view of the main settlement most likely played a key role in hill selection it should also be understood that there might not have been that many choices for nearby, accessible hills. Nevertheless, topographically, the nine possible sites outside of Crete follow the general trends that were present on Crete during the Neopalatial period. Future work incorporating GIS analysis will further clarify the role the landscape played in establishing Minoan peak sanctuaries outside of Crete. For example, least cost analysis could provide information about the optimal routes between the settlements and the peak sanctuaries.

#### Archaeological Remains from the Non-Cretan Sites

When looking at the archaeological material from non-Cretan peak sanctuaries, the situation is somewhat unclear. This uncertainty is due to the publication bias, which inherently limits our ability to understand some of these sites in detail. As discussed in Chapter One, I believe we can establish a hierarchy of scale as a pattern of determining if one particular site makes a better candidate than another for a title of a peak sanctuary. This approach follows Kyriakidis' provides a helpful guide when he states that the absence of a type of item does not necessarily imply the absence of the object from the site originally.<sup>819</sup> Such indications suggest that more extensive site studies may yet reveal predictable

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<sup>819</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 14 and 23.

patterns. This aids the establishment of a scale as I believe our understanding of these sites cannot be concrete and there are positive aspects in this flexibility. As stated in Chapter One, there is much more variety among peak sanctuaries than typically credited and this has led some scholars to draw specific conclusions on what makes a site a peak sanctuary. However, allowing for more variability while maintaining certain characteristics, as discussed below, I believe better reflects the reality of the situation.

Briault's methodology, i.e., focusing on the presence/absence of a range of 'ritual equipment', is another useful way to discuss the transmission of ritual ideas outside of Crete.<sup>820</sup> Perhaps the best approach is to construct a scale by which we can make the best cases for Minoan-inspired cult activity without arguing that we have a definite 'Minoan' cult at each of these sites, a hierarchy of peaks for instance. This, in turn, allows for a degree of local variation and interpretation of a well-known Minoan cult activity. A site must have the correct topographical elements (e.g., on or near a peak, visible from the settlement and vice versa, and accessible) and at least a high degree of Minoanizing objects. Ideally, this would involve large quantities of Minoanizing pottery, figurines, and ritual laden items (e.g., ladles, offering tables, rhyta, double axes, and horns of consecration). Such an approach could shed some light on the cultural connections in the wider Aegean networks during the Neopalatial period without the limitations of having to argue that a site is an imitation of a Cretan peak sanctuary. Thus, I would argue that the black and white classification of whether or not a non-Cretan site is a Minoan peak sanctuary is not as productive as discussing the intensity of cultural interaction by understanding these sites within their proper historical and local context.

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<sup>820</sup> Briault 2007, 123.

When determining what occurred at each of these sites, the deposition of votives, the preparation of food, burning activity, and architecture were all important indicators of cult activity at sites during the Bronze Age (Table 7). Seven out of the nine sites have indication of such activity in some form. Food and drink consumption are attested in the seven out of nine sites with detailed pottery publication. Conical cups are typical. Furthermore, at least five have surviving evidence of some sort of architecture (ranging from walls to complex buildings). This suggests some sort of organization of activity indicative of social (perhaps elite) controlled institution, though the specific purpose of the buildings is not always clear.

As a result, some generalizations can be made as to what qualifies a non-Cretan site as a Minoan peak sanctuary. Topographically a site should be on or near a peak, have an associated settlement or be located near an area where known human activity took place, date to around the Middle to Early Late Minoan period, have a cultic function as seen through specific artifacts (e.g., ladles, libation tables, figurines, etc.), and have clearly Minoanizing artifacts. Four of the sites have possible earlier artifacts (mostly in the form a few sherds), which suggests that peaks outside of Crete were a venue of activity prior to the Neopalatial period.<sup>821</sup> All the sites discussed in Chapters Two and Three fulfill the topographical requirements for a Cretan peak sanctuary, as established by Peatfield, and have several classes of Minoanizing material, including consumption ware and ‘ritual votives’ (Tables 7 and 8). The pottery suggests connections with Crete, at the minimum trade contact in which the locals could purchase Minoanizing ceramics or at least become

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<sup>821</sup> Mikre Vigla (possibly EC-MCII material); Troullos (a few pieces of earlier material); Leska (a few pieces of EH-MMIB-II pottery); Philerimos (possible earlier pottery, though Marketou has redated the material since Benz’s 1984 publication).

familiar with the popular trends of Minoan pottery, as discussed in detail in Chapter Five. This suggests some sort of desire/need to have Minoanizing items within the religious practices of these sites. The ritual material found at several of the sites (figurines, ladles, stone/clay tables, double axe, horns of consecration, miniature vessels, and/or weapons) further suggests that some sort of cult activity and consumption of food and liquids took place at these sites (Table 8).

Site Name	Human Figurine	Animal Figurine	Votive Limb	Clay/stone table	Double axe	Horns of Consecration	Weapon	Miniature Vessel	Animal rhyton	Stone Ladle	Shells	Pebble	Bone	Ash/Fire
Stelida	X	X	X	X				X		X	X	X	X	X
Mikre Vigla	X	X	X					X						
Mazarek o tou Fellou														
Marvo Rachidi														
Troullos	X			X						X				
Agios Georgios	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Leska		X		X		X		X				X		
Philerimos	X			X										
Maleatas	X	X		X	X		X		X				X	X

Table 8: Combined comparison of all non-Cretan possible peak sanctuaries: Peak Sanctuary Kit. Adapted from Briault, 2007, Table 2.

I would argue that the sites of Agios Georgios, Leska, Stelida, Maleatas, Troullos, Mikre Vigla, and Philerimos definitely show evidence of cultic activity performed that incorporated Minoanizing artifacts and some aspect of Minoan cult placement. This is based on the existence of ritual equipment and location of the sites (on a hill-top and away from settlements) (Tables 7 and 8). The preliminary investigations and publications of Mazareko tou Fellou and Marvo Rachidi make it impossible to determine the degree of Minoan influence as well as the function of these sites. Until further exploration and/or publication emerges, we cannot say whether these sites can be firmly established cult sites with any degree of certainty. Though it would be surprising if Akrotiri, such an important

Neopalatial site, did not have a Minoan peak sanctuary. The other sites, however, have clear cult activity.

As seen in Table 8, only one of the possible peak sanctuaries outside of Crete has all the artifacts in Briault's 'peak sanctuary kit'<sup>822</sup>, that of Agios Georgios. This does not automatically disqualify the other sites from earning the title of a Minoan peak sanctuary, as no firmly established Neopalatial peak sanctuary on Crete fulfills all fourteen categories established by Briault, as seen in Table 6, not even Juktas. Agios Georgios on Kythera, unsurprisingly, fulfills the greatest number of criteria (all fourteen categories), with Stelida coming in second with ten categories. The other sites rank in the following manner: Maleatas (eight), Leska (five), Mikre Vigla (four), Troullos (three), Philerimos (two), and Mazareko tou Fellou and Marvo Rachidi tied for last with zero. It should be noted that Mazareko tou Fellou has Minoanizing pottery and Marvo Rachidi has metals and some sort of pottery, any additional information on pottery or metals is lacking from the publications for each site.

Clearly Agios Georgios makes the best case for a true Minoan peak sanctuary outside of Crete, and richer in terms of finds than several Cretan sites, because of the richness of finds and the fact it is the only fully published peak sanctuary site in the Aegean.<sup>823</sup> This agreement is based on the well-known site of Kastri and the number of finds at the sanctuary. Stelida presents the next best case for a Minoan peak sanctuary as it fulfills the second the greatest number of categories and appears to be associated with the

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<sup>822</sup> Briault 2007.

<sup>823</sup> Sakellarakis 1996; Broodbank 2004. The fact that Agios Georgios appears richer than any of the Cretan peak sanctuaries might be due to the publication record of the site as it is the only fully published peak sanctuary.



important BA center of Grotta.<sup>824</sup> The other sites present a less clear situation as to whether they can (or should) be labeled a Minoan peak sanctuary. While ‘cult’ activity most likely occurs at each of these sites, the label of ‘peak sanctuary’ might not be the best title for each of these sites. Peatfield argued that after Agios Georgios, Troullos, Kea seemed to be the most convincing example of a peak sanctuary, based on the location and its association with the Minoanized site of Ayia Irini.<sup>825</sup> As discussed previously, Maleatas is controversial. There are certainly Minoan elements at this cult place yet some scholars, like Sakellarakis and Hägg, do not believe a Minoan cult site can be identified on the mainland.

Briault argues that evidence of fires, meals, and offering tables at sites outside of Crete indicates that practices were similar to those on Crete<sup>826</sup>, though the inclusion of Minoanizing items is also crucial. Clearly there are Minoanizing artifacts (pottery and ritual equipment) at each of these sites, these items are crucial because they are locally made rather than true Minoan imports. This suggests, then, some degree of local choice in the production and use of the material which would make an argument for impetus for this behavior at the local level instead of Minoan level, as discussed in more detail in Chapter Five. According to Briault, peak sanctuaries are the easiest Aegean cult spaces to imitate, which could explain their presence outside of Crete instead of lustral basins or pillar crypts.<sup>827</sup> This is because there is not standardized architecture associated with peak sanctuaries.<sup>828</sup> Instead you simply need a hilltop and certain Minoanizing ritual equipment to participate in this Minoan cult, according to Briault. That is not to say that peak

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<sup>824</sup> Carter et al. 2021.

<sup>825</sup> Caskey 1971, 392-395; Peatfield 1983, 273.

<sup>826</sup> Briault 2007, 129.

<sup>827</sup> Briault 2007, 134.

<sup>828</sup> Briault 2007, 134.

sanctuaries emerged outside of Crete simply because they are easy to imitate, but that if non-Cretans were going to incorporate a Minoan cult into their already existing practices, peak sanctuaries provide an easier choice. Exactly why non-Cretans sought to incorporate such cult behavior into their religious landscapes is significant and something that is considered in the following chapter.

While materials found at typical Cretan peak sanctuaries are present at several of these non-Cretan sites, there are some atypical dedications that perhaps are indicative of a certain degree of local variation and/or interpretation. For example, at Maleatas there is an associated settlement on the same hill, something unheard of on Crete. Briault argues that what we see at the non-Cretan sites is not a modification of typical Minoan practices, but instead a desire to actively exaggerate Cretan practices.<sup>829</sup> For example, the metal double axes are so numerous in fact that more were found at Maleatas than any other Cretan peak sanctuary besides Juktas.<sup>830</sup> Furthermore, the extensive amount of cooking and consuming of meals at Maleatas indicated by a deep layer of fatty ashes, is untypical at the Cretan sites.<sup>831</sup> While cooking and consuming occurred at Cretan sites, these are not believed to be the main activities. As Briault also notes that the altar at Maleatas is longer and deeper than any Cretan bone and ash deposit.<sup>832</sup> Lambrinoudakis rightly points out that this could be due to the long history of the site.<sup>833</sup> However, Briault is quick to state that the “sanctuary may well have been used by aspiring elite groups to assert their status by

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<sup>829</sup> Briault 2007, 130.

<sup>830</sup> Briault 2007, 130.

<sup>831</sup> Lambrinoudakis 1981a, 59; Briault 2007, 130.

<sup>832</sup> Briault 2007, 130.

<sup>833</sup> Briault 2007, 130; Lambrinoudakis 1981a, 59.

copying the practices of contemporary powerful groups on Crete.”<sup>834</sup> The implications of such an idea is explored in the following chapter.

At Agios Georgios, there are several non-traditional elements. For example, presence of bronze figurines is atypical. Bronze figurines at Cretan peak sanctuaries are extremely rare (Juktas has only six).<sup>835</sup> Banou points out that the bronze figurines from Agios Georgios probably account for 40% of all known Minoan bronze figurines.<sup>836</sup> Steel argues that the bronze figurines reflect a “local reinvention of Minoan cult practices.”<sup>837</sup> Excavators also found lumps of unworked *lapis lacedaimonius*, Spartan basalt, and *rosso antico* from Laconia, the dedication of which is rare in the Aegean.<sup>838</sup> Briault states that stone and metal dedications could be reflective of Kastri’s role as a trading node between the Peloponnese and Crete.<sup>839</sup> Banou, on the other hand, argues that due to the low number of metal finds from Kastri, perhaps the bronze votives from Agios Georgios are instead indicative of overseas visitors involved in the metal trade, instead of only native Kytherians.<sup>840</sup> Specifically, she points to the evidence for the manufacture of bronze votives from the sanctuary as indicated by bronze waste and the rough manufacture of several bronze figurines, namely irregularities visible on the surface that were caused by incomplete casting and/or smelting or mold overuse.<sup>841</sup> Study of six waste fragments show that the quantities of copper, lead, and silver may be indicative of reuse of older alloys.<sup>842</sup> Thus, in Banou’s view, Agios Georgios was an international site that served multiple

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<sup>834</sup> Briault 2007, 130-131.

<sup>835</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 85.

<sup>836</sup> Banou 2017b, 4.

<sup>837</sup> Steel 2012, 25.

<sup>838</sup> Briault 2007, 130.

<sup>839</sup> Briault 2007, 130.

<sup>840</sup> Banou 2017b, 5.

<sup>841</sup> Banou 2017b, 5; Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 11-76.

<sup>842</sup> Banou 2017b, 5-6; Varoufakis 2012, 241-246.

populations. Briault argues a similar framework when she states “much of the material from Agios Georgios is suggestive of a deliberate reworking of Cretan ritual practices, perhaps in order to advertise the island's uniqueness while at the same time making clear...that Cretan cult practice was both welcome and well understood.”<sup>843</sup> Thus, for Briault the individuals worshipping at Agios Georgios were adding their own interpretation of the cult, but maintained similar enough practices to Cretan cults that Minoans would recognize them. This idea is also supported by Steel, but she specifically states that “the objects found at the peak sanctuary clearly illustrate Minoanizing cult activity, albeit with certain idiosyncrasies which might reflect local choices.”<sup>844</sup> Her use of the term ‘Minoanization’ is important, and she is not the only one to use it. Broodbank and Kiriati also use the phrase and state that the peak sanctuary at Agios Georgios provides evidence of a “symbolic Minoanization of space.”<sup>845</sup> It is generally agreed that the worship at the peak sanctuary of Agios Georgios has a ‘local flair’ but is still reminiscent of Minoan worship on Crete. I would argue that this is a way to understand all the possible peak sanctuaries outside of Crete.

Troullos on Kea is another non-Cretan site that has been the subject of much debate among scholars. Peatfield has argued that its close proximity and general lack of finds makes it an unlikely peak sanctuary.<sup>846</sup> Briault generally agrees, stating that perhaps Troullos was a ‘short-lived experiment’ that has clear ritual activity including an offering

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<sup>843</sup> Briault 2007, 130.

<sup>844</sup> Steel 2012, 25.

<sup>845</sup> Broodbank and Kiriati 2007, 268.

<sup>846</sup> Hägg and Marinatos 1984: 164, n. 23.

table and stone ladle, but overall insufficient material to fulfill the label of a peak sanctuary.<sup>847</sup>

The site of Stelida also has some uncommon and new finds worthy of mention here, although based only on a preliminary investigation of the site. Like Agios Georgios, Stelida has several bronze figurines and only a few ‘possible’ parts of terracotta figurines.<sup>848</sup> One of these is an extremely rare small bronze bull figurine.<sup>849</sup> Several key components of traditional Minoan peak sanctuaries are admittedly missing from Stelida at this point: namely confirmed terracotta figurines, double axes, horns of consecration, and weapons.

The site of Mikre Vigla on Naxos presents an unclear case study. Since the site has only been surveyed, many questions remain as to the function of the site. However, the vast amount of architecture as well as domestic finds suggest the site is a settlement, according to Barber and Hadjianastasiou.<sup>850</sup> In fact, they argue that the architecture most likely represents small, modest houses. It is clear that there was a strong Minoan influence at the site from the vast amount of Minoanizing pottery dating from the MC-LC I as well as a few examples of Minoan imports.<sup>851</sup> The 140 terracotta figurines found during the survey of Mikre Vigla found in the building at the top of the peak are of interest as there are a few examples dated to the EC II-III when they more closely resemble Cycladic figurines, while a majority date from the MC to possibly Early LC when there are clear comparisons to Cretan figurines.<sup>852</sup> Barber and Hadjianastasiou state that it is possible that this building was some sort of shrine, though they are not fully convinced.<sup>853</sup> Thus, if Mikre

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<sup>847</sup> Briault 2007, 131.

<sup>848</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 76 and 92.

<sup>849</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 76-78, figure 11 D and E.

<sup>850</sup> Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 139.

<sup>851</sup> Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 140.

<sup>852</sup> Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 130-131; Sakellarakis 2020, 160-161.

<sup>853</sup> Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 140-141.

Vigla was indeed a settlement with houses and domestic activities and one building at the top that acted as some sort of shrine, it would be very atypical of a Minoan peak sanctuary.

Leska on Kythera typically follows the standard of Minoan peak sanctuaries, though, as discussed above, a known settlement is not associated with the site. However, perhaps the most important type of find that Leska lacks are figurines, as no terracotta or metal figurine of any sort have been uncovered.<sup>854</sup> Although the excavations have yet to be fully published, other than the ‘lack’ of characteristics (architecture, settlement association, figurines, animal bones, and ash/fire), atypical finds have yet been published.

The site Philerimos on Rhodes presents yet another complicated picture as the site is not fully investigated and is very disturbed by later building activity. While there are clear Minoan and Minoanizing material found at the site, there is also a degree of Mycenaean elements with a few of the finds.<sup>855</sup> Yet, the finds are so few that besides a suggestion of a cultic function, it is nearly impossible to determine the extent of Minoan inspiration until the site is further investigated and published.<sup>856</sup>

So how does one interpret these differences in cult material at possible peak sanctuaries outside of Crete? We can turn to Akrotiri as a case study that could serve as a model for thinking about these non-Cretan sites. Marinatos extensive work at the site has sought to understand how Minoan culture impacted the local religion. As discussed in Chapter Two, Marinatos attempted to identify cult behavior within the town. By studying the material throughout site and comparing it against Cretan cult practices she identified a few differences. One of the differences is that common Minoan cult items (such as double

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<sup>854</sup> Georgiadis 2012, 11.

<sup>855</sup> Marketou 2009, 75-76.

<sup>856</sup> Marketou 2009, 76.

axes, altars, snake tubes, and terracotta feet) are not found in shrines.<sup>857</sup> While other Minoan cult items are found in shrines (offering tables, libation jugs, rhyta, handleless cups, shells, animal-shaped rhyta, stone offering vessels, horns of consecration, and red pigment).<sup>858</sup> Additionally, there are certain particular Theran vessels important to cult that are absent on Crete (nipped ewers and *kymbai*, for example).<sup>859</sup> She argues that certain Minoan elements were adapted by the local populations. In a later publication, she discusses the organization and practice of religion at Akrotiri as a ‘Minoan-Cycladic syncretism. By this she means the assimilation of certain elements from one religion to another.’<sup>860</sup> This syncretism of religious practices and iconography by, she believes, the elite class most likely had political components as well.<sup>861</sup> Thus, if this idea of Minoan-Cycladic syncretism hypothesized at Akrotiri can be applied beyond Thera, it could explain the presence of ‘unusual’ elements at peak sanctuaries outside of Crete. This is discussed in more detail later.

### **Conclusion**

As seen in Tables 6 and 8, only one site of all identified alleged Minoan peak sanctuaries (both on Crete and outside of the island) fulfill the categories of the ‘peak sanctuary kit’. Several of the non-Cretan sites rank higher than the Neopalatial Cretan ones by this measure. Their ranking from greatest to lowest number is as follows: Agios Georgios (fourteen), Juktas and Vrysinas (thirteen), Stelida and Petsophas (ten), Kophinas (nine), Maleatas (eight), Traostalos (six), Prygos, Gonies, and Leska (both five), Prinias

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<sup>857</sup> Marinatos 1984, 175.

<sup>858</sup> Marinatos 1984, 175.

<sup>859</sup> Marinatos 1984, 176.

<sup>860</sup> Marinatos 1990, 370.

<sup>861</sup> Marinatos 1990, 375.

and Mikre Vigla are (both four), Troullos (three), Philerimos (two), and Mazareko tou Fellou and Marvo Rachidi (both zero). So, what does it mean that three of the possible nine peak sanctuaries outside of Crete rank just as high if not higher than accepted Neopalatial Cretan peak sanctuaries in terms of their material? If a non-Cretan site ranks higher than a Cretan one, it would be more likely that we could assign the label of a Minoan peak sanctuary based on the number of types of finds at a site.

This phenomenon begs the question: what constitutes a peak sanctuary outside of Crete and can we determine a set of criteria to shed light on the issue? The answer cannot be as clear cut as one would hope. However, what is clear is that the topographical characteristics established on Crete appear to be mimicked outside the island (i.e., on or near a peak, an associated settlement, intervisible, and accessible). Artifacts should include Minoanizing items (pottery and non-ceramic finds) as well as clear indication of consumption activity. Quantity of evidence is a significant indicator of length of activity and should be plentiful. In addition, there will most likely be atypical material found at these non-Cretan peak sanctuaries, as a reflection of local adaptation of the cult. As discussed above, the best examples found outside of Crete are Agios Georgios and Stelida. This has as much to do with the publication record of the sites as well as the clear Minoan influence on the material. Leska and Troullos present good cases for a Minoan peak sanctuary. Maleatas appears to be a cult site, but its Minoan quality is less convincing. Mikre Vigla appears to be more of settlement than a true Minoan peak sanctuary, although the hilltop structure and the figurines likely represent cult activity. Without more information on the sites of Philerimos, Mazareko tou Fellou, and Marvo Rachidi it is



impossible to tell. Philerimos, however, most likely has some sort of cult activity, the later occupation of the site complicates the picture.

As stated above, most of the Neopalatial peak sanctuaries on Crete are associated with palatial centers. Furthermore, all the possible peak sanctuaries outside of Crete were active (if not initiated) during the Neopalatial period. Some scholars have pushed for this phenomenon to be tied to the rise of Knossos as the main center on Crete. Adams argues further that there is a sense that the Knossians were the driving force behind the innovations in figural art and their promotion overseas.<sup>862</sup> Thus, one may ask what were the purposes of these sites outside of Crete and what do they signify?

The incorporation of a very distinct Minoan cult (the Minoan peak sanctuary) throughout the Aegean appears to have been popular. The material, when detail is provided, appears to be mostly locally made as evidenced by atypical dedications or characteristics uncovered at a few of the possible peak sanctuaries. I believe the way we should think about these possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries is as a case of syncretism, i.e., the merging of two traditions into one, which could explain the atypical characteristics of these sites. The Minoanizing material could be understood as an intentional statement of local identity. The amount of 'ritual votives' associated at these sites suggest a degree of understanding of the symbolic value of such items and the desire to include these items in the cult activity. Like the Neopalatial peak sanctuaries, there appears to be a degree of selective adaptation of certain cultural traits at these sites.

As argued above, certain sites are most likely non-Cretan peak sanctuaries, namely the sites of Agios Georgios and Stelida, but a case could also be made certainly for Leska

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<sup>862</sup> Adams 2017, 229.

and Troullos might have been a short-lived experiment. However, while the other sites appear to have certain Minoan elements and could be argued as being a cult site, I believe there is not enough clear evidence that these can (and/or should) be understood as a local iteration of a Minoan peak sanctuary. The inclusion of a small amount Minoanizing material is not enough to earn a site the title of a Minoan peak sanctuary outside of Crete. It is still not clear why local, non-Cretan communities adapted characteristics of Minoan cult at peak sanctuaries. As goods and people moved, so did the sharing of ideas and cultural behaviors. The practice of a cult like the Minoan peak sanctuary seems to be an indicator of this movement of ideas.

## Chapter Five

### Conical Cups and the Archaeology of Cult

This chapter seeks to clarify the role of peak sanctuary worship during the Neopalatial Period outside Crete, with a particular focus on why these sanctuaries emerged. The following questions are addressed in this chapter. Is this phenomenon tied with the emergence of a ‘Minoan’ culture, specifically with the rise of Knossos (i.e., Knossianization)? Or a more standardized Aegean *koine*? Or are there other possibilities? Tied to these questions is the Minoanization debate and the choice the local populations had when in contact with a distinct cultural practice. Theories such as identity theory, *chaîne opératoire*, mobility studies, and social network analysis aid this discussion. A case study on the Stelida conical cups is an integral component of this chapter. As the most common artifact associated with peak sanctuaries, conical cups have been used as an index of Minoanization in the Aegean.<sup>863</sup> The rich assemblage of conical cups at Stelida offers an opportunity to explore site function and identification of the worshippers through a single class of objects. This analysis challenges the traditional narrative of Minoan dominance that denies or ignores the possibility of local choice. Furthermore, this study can further illuminate the process of adaptation of Minoan practices outside of Crete.

I argue that the alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries and the spread of conical cups outside of Crete are both the result of the emergence of a cultural *koine*. By *koine* I mean a strong indication of a distinct culture and identity that goes “above and beyond any regional socio-political variations.”<sup>864</sup> When specifically discussing the development of a *koine* during the Neopalatial period, scholars look to the Minoans since they have long been held

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<sup>863</sup> Wiener 2011, 364.

<sup>864</sup> Adams 2017, 183.

as the dominant culture of this period. In terms of identifying instances of a cultural *koine*, Gorogianni states that there are certain categories of material that can be pointed to: pottery (imports, emulation of shapes, decoration, use of potter's wheel), cooking technology (tripod cooking pots), textile production (upright loom), administrative technologies (metrology, writing), wall paintings, architecture, and religious practices.<sup>865</sup> She argues that such technologies and material “ultimately transformed Aegean culture and everyday experience, and resulted in the forging of a Pan-Aegean *koine*. This widespread cultural change has often been called ‘Minoanization’.”<sup>866</sup> Thus, in regard how I use the term Aegean-wide culture *koine* is, it is a “broader trend towards cultural homogenization and standardization.”<sup>867</sup> Adams tied Minoan *koine* specifically to the Cretan elites, though states that Neopalatial Crete could be largely understood as a participant in an Eastern Mediterranean *koine*.<sup>868</sup> For purposes of this project, when I discuss an Aegean-wide cultural *koine* during the Neopalatial period, I mean a distinct trend towards cultural assimilation with Minoan and Minoanizing material at the center of the discussion.

For purposes of this project, I am interested primarily in the evidence of religious practices and pottery. A mountain (or hill) top cult site with heavily Minoanizing material was one means of expressing participation in this cultural trend as it is a distinctly Minoanizing context. When examining the associated settlement evidence from these sites (e.g., Chapters Two and Three), one sees that Minoanizing material is prevalent but not the dominant find. For example the prevalence of Minoanizing and Minoan pottery found at

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<sup>865</sup> Gorogianni 2016, 145.

<sup>866</sup> Gorogianni 2020, 55.

<sup>867</sup> Gorogianni 2020, 69.

<sup>868</sup> Adams 2017, 229.

the Demetrokalli Plot on Naxos<sup>869</sup>; the vast amount of Minoanizing material from Akrotiri (pottery, cult objects, frescoes, architecture)<sup>870</sup>; the Minoan elements in terms of pottery, wall paintings, administrative technology, textile production, cooking technology, architecture, and religious practices at Ayia Irini<sup>871</sup>; or the Minoanizing pottery, small Minoan finds, and Minoan style tombs from Kastri.<sup>872</sup> This suggests that while local communities adopted aspects of Minoan culture, it was not an all-packaged deal. At every site there is still a strong sense of traditional material, with Minoanizing trends (both in the form of artifacts and technology) being an element, but not the only aspect of the culture. Thus, the adoption of certain Minoan characteristics was not homogenous. It differed not only based on context (settlement versus cult) but also across different places in the Aegean. As discussed in Chapter Four, no two Neopalatial peak sanctuaries (either on Crete or outside the island) are alike. This suggests that the local communities chose what to incorporate into their existing systems, which can be explained through syncretism. I use the term syncretism to mean the assimilation of specific elements from one religion into another.<sup>873</sup> At Akrotiri, as seen in Chapter Four, Marinatos argued that the organization and practice of religion can be described as Minoan-Cycladic syncretism.<sup>874</sup> I believe that the assimilation of religious practices can be applied to the peak sanctuaries. In this view, the ‘Minoans’ did not force their practices onto the locals, but the locals were selective in their integration of Minoan practices. The implications of such an idea are discussed in further detail below.

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<sup>869</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1993, 259.

<sup>870</sup> Berg 2019, 214-256.

<sup>871</sup> Gorogianni 2016, 145, Table 8.4; Gorogianni 2011, 642.

<sup>872</sup> Branigan 1981, 32.

<sup>873</sup> Marinatos 1990, 370.

<sup>874</sup> Marinatos 1990, 370.

To investigate these ideas, I utilize four concepts: identity, mobility, *chaîne opératoire*, and social network theory. Questions of identity within archaeology has been a more recent phenomenon in the latter part of the twentieth century.<sup>875</sup> Insoll states it is vital to understand that “identities are not static, but rather are actively constructed.”<sup>876</sup> As a result, questions of identity must be considered within specific historical and social contexts, which are also understood as constantly changing. Langdon notes that one’s identity is never simply singular, but that the categories of one’s identity (age, class, gender, lineage, ethnicity, etc.) are fluid and contextual.<sup>877</sup> In turn, the evidence archaeologists are left with “is only part of a larger social discourse shaped by perceptions and expectations.”<sup>878</sup> What is missing is people’s lived experience, something that cannot be understood only through the archaeological record.<sup>879</sup>

For purposes of this project, religion is a key variable in the construction of identity that can be traced archaeologically.<sup>880</sup> Insoll argues that we should view all aspects of life as being influenced by religion.<sup>881</sup> In this way of thinking, as discussed below, peak sanctuaries could be viewed as a means to influence other aspects of life for the locals. It is within this specific cult space that local populations can express certain cultural trends. Another important aspect of cultural identity for this project is that of social class. Current concerns with class and status in archaeology has been concerned with class and status for

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<sup>875</sup> See Meskell 2007 for a detailed discussion of this history with a particular focus on gender and the body; see Jones 2007 for a discussion on the archaeology of identity and ethnicity; see Rowlands 2007 for a discussion on politics and identity.

<sup>876</sup> Insoll 2007, 6.

<sup>877</sup> Langdon 2010, 33.

<sup>878</sup> Langdon 2010, 33.

<sup>879</sup> Langdon 2010, 33.

<sup>880</sup> Insoll 2007, 2-3.

<sup>881</sup> Insoll 2004, 22, figure 2.

a long time which emerged from a wider trend of social archaeology.<sup>882</sup> Brumfiel has argued that elites were not the only class that could create change within the society, but that lower classes could as well.<sup>883</sup> It has largely been assumed within the field of the Aegean Bronze Age that elites established the cultural trends, but perhaps such ideas should be challenged as modern scholars must be careful not to construe modern ideas from ancient societies.<sup>884</sup>

Mobility and trade theories have emerged with the discussion of the movement of goods, people, and ideas during antiquity after Horden and Purcell's 2000 book.<sup>885</sup> According to Cresswell, there are four aspects to mobility: different scales of movement (small scale movements to large global flows), movement of artifacts and people, mobilities relation to placement, and the different politics of mobility.<sup>886</sup> Knappett and Kiriati have argued that archaeologists have focused primarily on aspects of population movements, and thus a specific focus on the exchange of objects and ideas is lacking.<sup>887</sup> This lack is particularly pertinent to this project because most of the discussion surrounding the possible purpose of the Minoan peak sanctuaries in the Aegean has been focused on the Minoans, which limits the discussion to unilateral notions. Through such a lens, the Stelida conical cups are relevant as not simply local imitations of Minoan vessels, but as a contribution to the larger discussion of shared ideas in both production techniques and contexts of use. In this way, then, mobility theory allows scholars to consider the movement

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<sup>882</sup> Meskell 2007, 25-26.

<sup>883</sup> Brumfiel 1992; Meskell 2007, 26.

<sup>884</sup> Meskell 2007, 31.

<sup>885</sup> Horden and Purcell 2000.

<sup>886</sup> Cresswell 2011, 550-558; Knappett and Kiriati 2016, 2.

<sup>887</sup> Knappett and Kiriati 2016, 3.

of goods, people, and technology in terms of the connectivity of cultures through antiquity with less focus placed on elite behavior.<sup>888</sup>

While focusing on elite behavior is understandable because it is more archaeologically visible, it fails to create a representative picture of Neopalatial Aegean behavior in terms popular cultural trends. Knappett and Kiriati argue that such a view assumes that mobility and commerce were the domain of only a select few – a view that probably does not reflect reality<sup>889</sup>, which is similar to what Brumfiel argues.<sup>890</sup> While the material at peak sanctuaries can be wealthy, a detailed analysis of the Stelida conical cups offer evidence that these sites could have served multiple socio-economic populations.

Questions surrounding the amount of choice local communities had in the adoption of certain foreign cultural practices has been raised throughout this dissertation. In order to discuss choice in the archaeological record it is necessary to remember “that material culture actually constitutes social relations and meaning making.”<sup>891</sup> One of the methodologies for understanding choice at the craftsperson level is through employing the *chaîne opératoire* in one’s analysis of material culture, which is “an approach that unpacks production traditions or practices into a sequence of technical actions, from clay choice to forming technique to firing strategy.”<sup>892</sup> This approach has been used on BA Aegean pottery in multiple contexts. For example, Boileau’s work on Mycenaean pottery in the Levant focuses on identifying immigrants working within the production sphere.<sup>893</sup> In

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<sup>888</sup> Knappett and Kiriati 2016, 4.

<sup>889</sup> Knappett and Kiriati 2016, 6. This idea will be discussed in more detail below, but it is an important idea to continue to consider throughout the discussion of the movement of goods and people through antiquity.

<sup>890</sup> Brumfiel 1992.

<sup>891</sup> Dobres and Robb 2005, 162.

<sup>892</sup> Abell and Hilditch 2016, 157.

<sup>893</sup> Boileau 2016, 119.



particular, she attempts to identify different markers of mobility, their geographical history, and the social identity of the markers.<sup>894</sup> Within the Cyclades, Abell and Hilditch use the *chaîne opératoire* at Ayia Irini as a means of discussing pottery production and consumption acts in order to understand social practices.<sup>895</sup> They argue that by examining the *chaîne opératoire* at Ayia Irini they can tell that the local potters made different choices depending on the shape of the vessel and time period. In this way, potters integrated new Minoan techniques within their technical repertoires.<sup>896</sup> The implication of this integration is discussed in more detail below.

This method – and its theoretical underpinnings - offers a way of understanding more clearly the relationship between the production of certain Minoan vessel types within, and beyond Crete, with a particular focus on the Stelida conical cups. The *chaîne opératoire* in particular allows “for a closer examination of the potters’ choices, know-how and skills at each stage of the production sequence, make it possible to distinguish, among a mixed assemblage, the products of artisans belonging to different technological traditions.”<sup>897</sup> As such, my project strives to incorporate components of this methodology in order to better understand the production of the conical cups and which (an) entity(/ies) control(s) the choices made in the process: local potters or Cretans. In turn, this allows me to shed light on the adaptation of the Minoan peak sanctuary in the Aegean.

A third useful approach is social network theory. Kristiansen argues that it is a combination of “agent-based materiality studies with quantitative analytical techniques...

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<sup>894</sup> Boileau 2016, 120.

<sup>895</sup> Abell and Hilditch 2016, 157.

<sup>896</sup> Abell and Hilditch 2016, 163-164.

<sup>897</sup> Boileau 2016, 127.

[which seeks] to overcome the dichotomy of macro versus micro theory.”<sup>898</sup> While I will not be conducting a social network analysis at this stage of the project, it is nevertheless helpful here. Other scholars have discussed connectivity in antiquity without using a particular theory or methodology. For example, with the participation within larger networks comes increased exposure to distant cultures and new means of communications.<sup>899</sup> Of course, direct exposure was reserved for a small part of the population, but it indirectly increased exposure through artifacts within the larger group.<sup>900</sup> As such, one should keep in mind that through the trading of goods, part of the cultural knowledge from other groups enters the consumer society, whether directly understood for its original reference or not. Within the context of conical cups, it seems that such items would have been made for a particular reason: to imitate a different culture’s material.

Similarly, it has been argued by Knapp and von Dommelen that encounters with other cultures allow for existing identities to be reconstructed and new hybrid identities to be formulated.<sup>901</sup> They also stress that this construction of a new culture through the acquisition of new objects is valuable for understanding mobility and cultural contact in which results in the construction of identities.<sup>902</sup> One question or issue that arises when using this approach is the inherent meaning associated with the ownership of a foreign object.

Manning and Hulin discuss this to a degree, arguing that a lot of work has been done on imports, but they neglect to address the perception of such imports within their

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<sup>898</sup> Kristiansen 2016, 155.

<sup>899</sup> Kiriati and Andreou 2016, 129.

<sup>900</sup> Kiriati and Andreou 2016, 130.

<sup>901</sup> Knapp and von Dommelen 2010, 5.

<sup>902</sup> Knapp and von Dommelen 2010, 6.

find context. They state that the meaning of having a foreign object is typically assumed rather than debated.<sup>903</sup> They further state “that local concepts of value are related to the means of acquisition open to consumers, and the prejudices that they bring to them.”<sup>904</sup> This is important to keep in mind while considering choice in the Neopalatial period. Lastly, Knapp and von Dommelen ask whether objects aided in creating contact between different social groups or in distancing them.<sup>905</sup> Such ideas clearly borrow from the concept of the social biography of objects. What about the adaptation of manufacturing techniques to create a different culture’s object?

The non-Cretan peak sanctuaries are most likely indicative of the emergence of an Aegean wide cultural *koine*, the implications of which are discussed in more detail below. But I believe Knossos might have served as an innovator of cultural trends. Conical cups from non-Cretan peak sanctuaries can provide a means of identifying such trends. Sakellarakis and Carter et al. argue that the peak sanctuaries of Agios Georgios<sup>906</sup> and Stelida,<sup>907</sup> respectively, appear to have a direct relationship with Knossos. In what way? As goods and people moved, so did the sharing of ideas and cultural behaviors. The practice of a cult like the Minoan peak sanctuary seems to be an indicator of this movement of ideas. By focusing on a specific assemblage, I argue that such nuances can be illuminated through a detailed analysis. In the instance of a non-Cretan peak sanctuary, there are both Minoan and Cretan traits to discriminate. As a case study, the conical cups from Stelida can suggest an approach.

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<sup>903</sup> Manning and Hulin 2005, 271.

<sup>904</sup> Manning and Hulin 2005, 271.

<sup>905</sup> Knapp and von Dommelen 2010, 6.

<sup>906</sup> Sakellarakis 1996, 92.

<sup>907</sup> Carter, et al. 2021, 91-92.

## Conical Cups: Introduction

Handleless conical cups (henceforth ‘conical cups’) are simple, mass-produced drinking vessels known in the thousands from peak sanctuaries.<sup>908</sup> They are believed to have been associated with ritual gatherings and then discarded/deposited on-site. Because they are so well-known on Crete, the cups are viewed as emblematic of Minoan presence or influence across the southern Aegean and have therefore become a key dataset for engaging with questions concerning the nature of supra-regional contact and cultural identity in the Neopalatial Period.<sup>909</sup> At Stelida much of the peak sanctuary material was locally produced, including the conical cups, a claim based on macroscopic examination of the fabric.<sup>910</sup> My main research question is what can the locally made cups at Stelida tell us about the cultural identity of the users acting within a heavily ‘Minoanized’ context.

Here I present a detailed, preliminary analysis of the significant conical cups. Following methodological approaches applied to other Minoanized ceramic assemblages,<sup>911</sup> I explore what the technological aspects and production methods tell us about the individuals making the Stelida cups. Specifically, I am interested in if I can tell whether the local potters borrowed wholesale Minoan manufacturing practices or if I can identify instances of innovation. In comparing the Stelida cups with both Minoan and Cycladic (including other Naxian sites) assemblages, it emerges that the Stelida conical cups are more similar to Knossian cups than cups found at other Cycladic islands. This

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<sup>908</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 66.

<sup>909</sup> Wiener 2011.

<sup>910</sup> Personal communication with V. Mastrogiannopoulou.

<sup>911</sup> Gillis 1990a, 98-117; 1990b, 63-93; 1990c; Wiener 1994, 17-26; 2011, 355-368; Berg 2004; 74-95; Hilditch 2014, 25-37; Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 91-113; Groggianni, et al. 2016, 195-220.

suggests that Stelida functioned as a specific Minoanized cultic site that was heavily influenced by Crete.

Conical cups are one of the most common Minoan ceramic vessel shapes; they are always small and usually undecorated. These cups are all-purpose vessels, used to hold food and drink<sup>912</sup>, but they are also used as lamps in some contexts,<sup>913</sup> and are found in varied contexts: domestic, funerary, cultic, etc.<sup>914</sup> The earliest examples on Crete date to EM II-III<sup>915</sup> but they become widespread on the island by the Neopalatial period.<sup>916</sup> With these cups being found at every Cretan BA site they are viewed as emblematic of Minoan cultural practice, whereby their recovery at several other sites throughout the Aegean<sup>917</sup>, such as Thera, Kea, Melos, Kythera, Rhodes, other Dodecanese Islands, Iasos, and various places on the Greek mainland,<sup>918</sup> is recurrently viewed as evidence for Minoanization.<sup>919</sup>

On Crete conical cups vary typologically by region until LM IA, when forms become standardized,<sup>920</sup> with Knossian potters seemingly setting the trend.<sup>921</sup> New cultural practices are formed in the Neopalatial period and the conical cups are viewed as part of token hospitality and standardized Minoan iconography.<sup>922</sup> Thus, on Crete, a way to show one's cultural aptitude was through the use of a conical cup to display one's knowledge of

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<sup>912</sup> Berg 2004, 77. The feasting function is based off the fact that conical cups are found in almost all find contexts in the Cretan world and are assumed to be part of the standard Minoan kitchen set (Wiener 1990, 135).

<sup>913</sup> Wiener 1984, 20; Gillis 1990a, 111-112 as discussed below in more detail, the burning traces on some cups suggest that they were used as lamps based on the location of the traces.

<sup>914</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 92.

<sup>915</sup> Gillis 1990a, 98.

<sup>916</sup> Hilditch 2014, 29.

<sup>917</sup> Gillis 1990a, 98.

<sup>918</sup> Hilditch 2014, 29.

<sup>919</sup> Gillis 1990a, 98; Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 98.

<sup>920</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 96.

<sup>921</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 97.

<sup>922</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 98-99.

the popular cultural trends of the time. But the question arises as to whether or not the same popularity of the conical cups occurs outside of Crete.

Conical cups are extremely common in ceramic assemblages of the MC III-LC II period in the Cyclades.<sup>923</sup> The three sites with conical cups that provide us with the best typological studies of these vessels in the Cyclades are Akrotiri<sup>924</sup>, Phylakopi<sup>925</sup>, and Ayia Irini.<sup>926</sup> These cups were created on the wheel<sup>927</sup> and are indicative of the reappearance of the wheel in the Cyclades after the end of EC.<sup>928</sup> Thus, along with the adaptation of the conical cups comes the Minoan wheel-fashioning technique.<sup>929</sup> The implications of this are discussed in more detail below. The wheel appears to be a marker of participation in cultural networks that is inherently tied to certain production technology. This technological knowledge might be an exclusive behavior for certain parts of the population.

On Naxos, conical cups have been recovered from contexts spanning the MC III-LC IIIA periods, with assemblages published from Mikre Vigla,<sup>930</sup> Grotta,<sup>931</sup> plus two

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<sup>923</sup> Davis and Lewis 1985, 84.

<sup>924</sup> Gillis studied 550 intact conical cups from Akrotiri, though it should be assumed that the number of conical cups from the site were most likely in the thousands as many of these cups would have been tossed from early excavations, like we see at Ayia Irini. Gillis 1990a.

<sup>925</sup> Berg studied 305 LCI-II conical cups, but, like Akrotiri and Ayia Irini, it should be assumed that these cups would have numbered in the thousands, but many were discarded in early excavations. (Berg 2004, 80).

<sup>926</sup> Davis and Lewis note that there were thousands of conical cups from Ayia Irini (in their study alone they study 1,800 intact cups) but note that many thousands more were only briefly noted and then discarded from earlier excavations (Davis and Lewis 1983, 84-85). Thus, there is no way to know the exact number of conical cups, but I would assume that there would have been several thousand at least.

<sup>927</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 101.

<sup>928</sup> Berg 2019, 154. The wheel was first used in the Cyclades during the Kastri Group when it was used to make pottery of Anatolian origin. But it was not until the Late MC that we see it used on a wide scale.

<sup>929</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 101.

<sup>930</sup> Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 92.

<sup>931</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1993, 259.

burial assemblages, from Aila<sup>932</sup> and Chosti.<sup>933</sup> The ones from Mikre Vigla are made in the standard Minoan technique, on the wheel, with cut-away string marks on the bases and pronounced grooves on the interiors.<sup>934</sup> These traits date the cups to Late MC to Early LC. While a detailed report on the Grotta conical cups is yet to be published, they are said to be locally made and thus, according to Vlachopoulos, are not sufficient for supporting the ‘Minoanization’ of Naxos.<sup>935</sup> The highly Minoanized context at Stelida, however, requires a reconsideration.

Conical cups have been noted at six of the nine alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries.<sup>936</sup> There are 166,753 fragments of conical cups from Agios Georgios<sup>937</sup>, 290 confirmed conical cups with 1,000+ other known fragments at Stelida, 149 conical cups from Troullos, eleven confirmed from Mikre Vigla<sup>938</sup>, plus unconfirmed quantities from Leska.<sup>939</sup>, and Maleatas.<sup>940</sup> At both Agios Georgios and Stelida, conical cups account for around 80-90% of the total ceramic assemblage,<sup>941</sup> a figure that appears to be broadly in line with what one sees at Cretan Neopalatial peak sanctuaries.<sup>942</sup> Thus, within this heavily Minoanized context, conical cups serve as a perfect case study for understanding some of

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<sup>932</sup> One conical cup was found in Tomb 24, which is dated MMIII-LMIA. Stephanos 1903, 57; 1905, 224; Papathanasopoulos 1963, 129-30, pl. 62, grave no. 23; Papagiannopoulou 1991, 304; Marthari 2009, 43-44.

<sup>933</sup> Stephanos 1909, 116; Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979, 333-334. This tomb was discovered by Stephanos in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but it has never been relocated. The publication record mentions possible MM conical cups.

<sup>934</sup> Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 92, nos. 214–223.

<sup>935</sup> Vlachopoulos 2016, 124.

<sup>936</sup> Not enough information has been published about Mazareko or Mavro, but no conical cups were noted in the publications of Philerimos.

<sup>937</sup> Sakellarakis 2020, 66.

<sup>938</sup> Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 92 and 109.

<sup>939</sup> The conical cup is the dominant vessel form at Leska, but accounts for less than 60% of the overall ceramic assemblage - Georgiadis 2014, 47.

<sup>940</sup> Lambrinouidakis 1981a, 59.

<sup>941</sup> Tournavitou 2009, 219; Carter, et al. 2021, 69.

<sup>942</sup> Kyriakidis 2005, 128-129, Table 7. Cups are by far the most common pottery form found at the Cretan peak sanctuaries. However the question of how many conical cups are found at each are unknown due to the poor publication record.

the nuances of the local adaptation of Minoan practices.<sup>943</sup> As stated earlier, these vessels were multi-functional vessels that were used in a variety of contexts. At peak sanctuaries, they were probably most commonly used as drinking vessels, thus indicative of drinking activity. Local communities had their own drinking equipment prior to the adaptation of the conical cups. In the Cyclades the Cycladic cup and paneled cup were the common drinking vessels prior to the Neopalatial period, though they continued to be produced (to a lesser extent) throughout this era.<sup>944</sup> However, participants of the non-Cretan peak cults chose to use an object that showed knowledge about the Minoans and about a way of performing a particular ritual rather than using traditional local pottery.

#### Conical Cups: Stelida

At Stelida the conical cups dominate the ceramic assemblage, accounting for about 85% of the assemblage. For my analysis of the Stelida cups, I followed the methodology of Carole Gillis<sup>945</sup> for her precedence-setting work on conical cups, but I supplemented more updated methodologies by Berg<sup>946</sup>, Knappett<sup>947</sup>, Knappett and Hilditch<sup>948</sup>, Hilditch<sup>949</sup>, Nikolakopoulou<sup>950</sup>, and Gorogianni, et al<sup>951</sup> as appropriate. In the summer of 2021, I studied all 290 of our X-find conical cups, i.e., the cups which were at least 1/3 preserved, recorded 3-dimensionally, and photographed *in situ*. I detailed typical

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<sup>943</sup> This will be something I incorporate in my ongoing research on the Stelida conical cups. Namely, do we see a higher degree of adaptation of Minoan techniques with the conical cups than the rest of the Minoanizing assemblage? What about Naxian Neopalatial pottery more generally?

<sup>944</sup> For descriptions of Cycladic cups see Davis 1986, 85 and Nikolakopoulou 2019, 157; for information on paneled cups see Davis 1986, 85. There are a few other cups such as the cylindrical handless cups (both with a plain rim and a flaring rim) which were popular in the early MC period (Nicolakopoulou 2019, 158-159).

<sup>945</sup> Gillis 1990a, 98-117; 1990b, 63-93; 1990c.

<sup>946</sup> Berg 2004; 74-95.

<sup>947</sup> Knappett 2016, 97-111.

<sup>948</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 91-113.

<sup>949</sup> Hilditch 2014, 25-37.

<sup>950</sup> Nikolakopoulou 2019, 167 and 305.

<sup>951</sup> Gorogianni, et al. 2016, 195-220.



measurements (height, rim diameter, base diameter, thickness), fabric (i.e., the study of the clay body to determine the matrix and inclusions of minerals in the original source of the clay), surface treatment, manufacturing elements, any traces of fire, and any other information of note. All of this information was collated into a database using Microsoft Excel and organized based on Trench first and then subdivided based on types (fig. 52). This has allowed me to determine what types of conical cups we have, which in turn establishes their chronology, and production technique(s). The Stelida assemblage also included at least 1000+ conical cup fragments; this material was not included in my study because they did not permit the full range of measurements to be collected.

Most of the Stelida conical cups are made of a fine- semi-fine, micaceous fabric based on macroscopic inspection of the vessels.<sup>952</sup> This fabric may correlate with the petrographically identified ‘Plain Ware Group’ from Mikre Vigla.<sup>953</sup> The other main fabric group is granodiorite-granite fabrics which are also found in Naxian Later Neolithic – Bronze Age assemblages.<sup>954</sup> Thus, the conical cups from Stelida are almost exclusively locally made using local clay sources on Naxos. This is the typical practice outside of Crete, as these cups are rarely exported.<sup>955</sup>

In terms of categorizing the cups, there is unfortunately a lack of typological standardization across the field as each site has set its own typology. I follow the standard set at Stelida by applying here the terminology used at Knossos where more distinct

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<sup>952</sup> Carter, et al. 2021, 70.

<sup>953</sup> Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 152-153; Carter, et al. 2021, 70.

<sup>954</sup> Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 150-152; Hilditch 2008, 288-292; Carter, et al. 2021, 70.

<sup>955</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 101.

classifications are established (conical, broad, and shallow, and tall) than is typical of Cycladic publications.<sup>956</sup>

At Knossos, there are three types of conical cups, which are then subdivided into two groups. The first is the ‘broad and shallow type’ (types 1A and 1B), which is dated to MM IIB – MM IIIA Late (fig. 53; 1a and 1b).<sup>957</sup> Type 1A is the larger version and is characterized by a flat or ledged rim, curved walls or a pronounced base.<sup>958</sup> The second is the ‘conical smaller form’ (types 2A and 2B) dated to MM IIIA Early – MM IIIB (fig. 53; 2a and 2b).<sup>959</sup> The differences of these subgroups is that 2A has an irregular profile versus a regular profile (2B).<sup>960</sup> 2A is dated to MM IIIA Early, while 2B is dated to MM IIIB.<sup>961</sup> Lastly, there is the ‘tall and conical cup’ (types 3A and 3B), which Knappett, et al. date from MM IIB-MM IIIA Late (fig. 53; 3a and 3b).<sup>962</sup> The differences between 3A and 3B is the profile, with 3B bell-shaped, while 3A is has a straight, conical profile.<sup>963</sup> It is in LM IA that we see a standardization in the form of conical cups on Crete where the smaller 2B becomes the standard across the island.<sup>964</sup>

In contrast, the practice in the Cyclades is to subdivide the groups based on height. For example, at Akrotiri, Late MC conical cups are found in a variety of forms ranging from low to high forms with variations in height, base (broad/narrow), and straight or curved body walls.<sup>965</sup> Nikolakopoulou notes that the height can vary from 3-6 cm; rim 7.5-

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<sup>956</sup> Knappett et al. 2013.

<sup>957</sup> Knappett et al. 2013, 14, fig 1.6; Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 95, it is the left cup in fig 4.7.

<sup>958</sup> Knappett et al. 2013, 14.

<sup>959</sup> Knappett et al. 2013, 14-15, fig 1.6; Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 96.

<sup>960</sup> Knappett et al. 2013, 14.

<sup>961</sup> Knappett et al. 2013, 15.

<sup>962</sup> Knappett et al. 2013, 15, fig 1.6; Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 96, it is the right cup in fig 4.7.

<sup>963</sup> Knappett et al. 2013, 15.

<sup>964</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 96.

<sup>965</sup> Nikolakopoulou 2019, 167.

13 cm; and the base diameter from 3.5-6 cm.<sup>966</sup> Gillis noted two types of LC I conical cups from Akrotiri: lower cups (3-4.5 cm in height) and higher cups (6.5-7.4 cm in height) (fig. 54).<sup>967</sup> At Phylakopi there are four types of conical cups: saucer-type, low, bell-shaped, and tall (fig. 55).<sup>968</sup> It appears that these cups did not become standardized at Phylakopi, thus the variation in form continues from Late MC to LC II.<sup>969</sup> At Ayia Irini there are three types based on height in the Late MC to LC I period: low, medium, and high (fig. 56).<sup>970</sup> In LC II we see a standardization in the form of the cup following the smaller conical type 2B from Knossos.<sup>971</sup> In order to understand the extent of the influence of Crete (namely Knossos), comparing the Stelida conical cups with the typology of Knossos allows for meaningful analysis.

Most of the Stelida cups have little of the body preserved, thus making a strict identification sometimes difficult. In fact, only forty-five of the 290 cups (16% of the conical cup assemblage) have complete profiles. Out of the 290 cups, 260 appear to be of the ‘conical type’ (specifically type 2B from Knossos) – accounting for 90% of the conical cup assemblage (figs. 57-58). Thus, a date of MM IIIB can be assigned for the Stelida cups. Twenty-seven cups are ‘broad and shallow’ cups (type 1B) (9%) (figs. 57 and 59). There is one specimen of the ‘tall types’ (type 3A) (0.34%) and two rhyta (0.7%) (fig. 57). There are several parallels of the Stelida cups from MM IIIB deposits at Knossos including the KS 178 Group and the Vlachakis Plot.<sup>972</sup> There is also directly comparable material from

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<sup>966</sup> Nikolakopoulou 2019, 167.

<sup>967</sup> Gillis 1990b, 66.

<sup>968</sup> Barber 2008, 155-156. Barber does not provide exact specifications for this division.

<sup>969</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 104.

<sup>970</sup> Davis and Lewis 1985, 85.

<sup>971</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 103-104.

<sup>972</sup> Hatzaki 2007, 160-172, Fig. 5.6, Table 5.6; Rethemiotakis and Warren 2014, 15-59, Figs. 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.12, 3.13, 3.14; Carter, et al. 2021, 71.

Sissi, specifically the court-centered building, again dated to MM IIIB.<sup>973</sup> We can also point to a several miniature conical cups from Stelida.

Most of the cups' bases were very weathered (n=168/290. 58%); however, where one had a wheel preserved surface it could be noted that one hundred and eighteen of the Stelida conical cups have string marks (40% of the conical cup assemblage, 97% of group where a well-preserved surface survived) (fig. 60C). As discussed in detail below, the string marks indicate use of the potter's wheel. The evidence of string marks does not seem to correlate based on type about half of the broad and shallow types (n=14/27, 52% of broad and shallow assemblage) have string marks preserved. One hundred and four have the conical form cups have string marks (40% of conical assemblage). Thus, as is the case on Crete, no matter the form of conical cups, the Stelida cups were almost exclusively wheel-fashioned.

	<b>Stelida</b>	<b>Aegean examples calculated by Gillis 1990a</b>
<b>Height (cm)</b>	3.9	3.8-4.2
<b>Base Diameter (cm)</b>	4.02	3.6-3.8
<b>Rim Diameter (cm)</b>	6.11	7.5-8.5

Table 9: Average measurements of conical cups from Stelida versus those studied by Gillis 1990a.

<sup>973</sup> Caloi 2018, 19-27, Figs. 12-16, Table 1; Carter, et al. 2021, 71.

The average height of the Stelida cups, calculated only with complete profiles (n=35/290), is 3.9 cm (Table 9). Four of the cups with full profiles are of the broad and shallow type, their average height is 3.38 cm. Thirty-one of the cups with complete profiles are of the conical type, their average height is 3.5 cm. This average height is a bit smaller than the average of all conical cups in the Aegean that Gillis included in her study dated from MM III – LM IA.<sup>974</sup> The average base diameter for the entire assemblage is 4.02 cm, which is slightly larger than the average base diameter determined by Gillis (Table 9).<sup>975</sup> For the twenty-seven broad and shallow cups the average base diameter is 4.1 cm. The conical type of cup average base diameter is 4 cm (n=260). The average rim diameter is 6.11 cm (Table 9). For the conical type of cups, the average rim diameter is 6 cm (n=260) and for the broad and shallow it is 7.3 cm (n=27). This is smaller than the average calculated by Gillis.<sup>976</sup> The average thickness is 1.07 cm. However, Gillis states that base thickness does not seem to have manufacturing significance and thus does not quantify it in her study.<sup>977</sup> During LM IA on Crete<sup>978</sup> and LC II in the Cyclades conical cups become more uniform in shape and size.<sup>979</sup> At the time of this study, I do not see instances of standardization in the Stelida conical cup assemblages, nor do I see any evidence of LM IA types at Stelida. Part of the problem is due to the poor preservation on many of the cups (e.g., full profiles, high level of fragmentation, and poor base preservation), but in general with the date of MM IIIB of the Stelida conical cups, one would not expect standardization

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<sup>974</sup> Gillis 1990a, 105. The average height of cups studied by Gillis is 3.8-4.2 cm.

<sup>975</sup> Gillis 1990a, 106. Average base diameter is 3.6-3.8cm. She notes that Akrotiri bases have a slightly larger diameter, averaging from 3.3-4.1 cm.

<sup>976</sup> Gillis 1990a, 107. Average rim diameter is 7.5-8.5 cm. The smaller size of Stelida conical cups could be explained by the small number of full profiles preserved. Thus, this will be retested in the future.

<sup>977</sup> Gillis 1990b, 66.

<sup>978</sup> Hilditch 2014, 30; Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 96.

<sup>979</sup> Davis and Lewis 1985, 85; Berg 2004, 74-85; Gorogianni, et al. 2016, 210.

at this time on Naxos. As more cups are excavated at Stelida and studied, I will conduct further analysis to determine if this is still the case.

The evidence of string marks 40% of the conical cup assemblage, 97% of group where a well-preserved surface survived, indicate that they were cut off the wheel while interior ribbing supports some sort of finish on the wheel (fig. 60).<sup>980</sup> This was expected as conical cups both on Crete<sup>981</sup> and the Cyclades<sup>982</sup> are always wheel fashioned. In fact, within the Cyclades, the conical cup is one of the first shapes made on the wheel.<sup>983</sup> Thus, the cups were made using Minoan pottery techniques as the wheel was utilized in Crete and was reintroduced to the Cyclades during the Later MBA period through Minoan interaction.<sup>984</sup> It would be interesting to see if the conical cups from Naxos tend to be wheel made more often than other ‘Minoanizing’ pottery, but that is part of a larger project and relies on study of non-published data.<sup>985</sup> The meaning behind the potter’s wheel is discussed below.

There is also evidence of linear incisions having been cut into the base of thirteen cups before firing (4.5% of the conical cup assemblage). Nine of the cups have marks on the base (two of which also have a mark on the body).<sup>986</sup> One of these cups is of broad and shallow type, the other eight are conical type cups. These could be possible potter’s marks.

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<sup>980</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 99.

<sup>981</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 92.

<sup>982</sup> Conical cups were made on the wheel at Phylakopi beginning in the Second Palace Phase (Berg 2004, 79); at Ayia Irini the conical cups are wheel made from the outset (Berg 2004, 79); at Akrotiri the conical cups were wheel fashioned from the outset (Nikolakopoulou 2019, 167).

<sup>983</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 102-103.

<sup>984</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 99-101; Gorogianni et al. 2016, 199.

<sup>985</sup> Detailed study of pottery from other Naxian sites of this period is lacking. However, the conical cups, when production technique are noted, appear to follow the Minoan techniques.

<sup>986</sup> These cups are: DG-A/044/814/X-Find 50; DG-A/052/885.3/X-Find 6; DG-A/52/888.1/X-Find 26; DG-A/52/889.2/X-Find 5; DG-A/52/889.2/X-Find 8; DG-A/52/900.3/X-Find 21; DG-A/55/915.1/X-Find 12; DG-A/52/884.2/X-Find 23; DG-A/52/888.1/X-Find 30.

In the Cyclades, more generally, sometimes potters marked their pots, though it does not appear to be that common of a practice based on the number of potters marks published.<sup>987</sup> In regard to function, the marks could be a maker's mark, to note capacity, commodity, price, provenance, or destination.<sup>988</sup> Two of the cups (one broad and shallow, one conical type) a similar form of marks, with two straight lines joining to make a corner (fig. 61).<sup>989</sup> A similar type of mark is reported on some of the MC III – LC I period pottery from Phylakopi<sup>990</sup> and on five vessels dated to the MC at Akrotiri<sup>991</sup>, though not on conical cups. Other marks include one straight line and an oval impression (fig. 62)<sup>992</sup>; a wedge shaped on the outer edge of the base (fig. 63);<sup>993</sup> double linear marks (fig. 64);<sup>994</sup> a deep round impression (fig. 65);<sup>995</sup> and a single linear mark (fig. 66)<sup>996</sup>

Six of the cups have marks on the outside of the body.<sup>997</sup> One of these cups is of broad and shallow type, the five are of the conical form. These marks are all in the form of a short, straight line (fig. 67). A slightly similar form of a mark is noted on six pots at Akrotiri (dated to the MC period), though again not on any conical cups.<sup>998</sup> At Phylakopi this type of mark is noted as the most common form of potter's marks identified by Bailey

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<sup>987</sup> See Bailey 1996 for a study on Phylakopi potters marks; see Bikaki 1984 for a study on Ayia Irini potters marks; see Nikolakopoulou 2019 for information on potter's marks found at Akrotiri.

<sup>988</sup> Bikaki 1984, 42.

<sup>989</sup> DG-A/44/814/X-Find 50 and DG-A/52/884.2/X-Find 23.

<sup>990</sup> Bailey 1996, 105-147, (numbers 4, 5, 7, 11, 18, 53, 54, 78, 82, 115, 122, 127, 165, 176, 207, 267).

<sup>991</sup> Nikolakopoulou 2019, 227. These marks are called chevron/triangular grooves. Three vessels belong to Phase C of the MC period, one to Phase B, and one to Phase A.

<sup>992</sup> DG-A/52/885.3/X-Find 6.

<sup>993</sup> DG-A/52/888.1/X-Find 26.

<sup>994</sup> DG-A/52/889.2/X-Find 5.

<sup>995</sup> DG-A/52/889.2/X-Find 8 and DG-A/55/915.1/X-Find 12.

<sup>996</sup> DG-A/52/900.3/X-Find 21 and DG-A/52/888.1/X-Find 30.

<sup>997</sup> These cups are: DG-A/52/884.2/X-Find 23; DG-A/52/886.4/X-Find 37; DG-A/52/888.1/X-Find 16; DG-A/52/888.1/X-Find 30; DG-A/55/914.2/X-Find 13; DG-A/56/929.3/X-Find 4.

<sup>998</sup> Nikolakopoulou 2019, 226. These marks are called grooves. The marks are found in Phase A – C of MC at Akrotiri.

for vessels of MC – LC I date.<sup>999</sup> The other marks noted on the Stelida cups have comparisons with examples from Phylakopi.<sup>1000</sup>

However, in regard to the types of marks on the conical cups, there are few good, published parallels. At Akrotiri, Nikolakopoulou states that potter's marks are not attested on conical cups.<sup>1001</sup> Furthermore, in none of Gillis' work did she note potter's marks. There are however, two conical cups with possible potter's marks at Phylakopi one is dated to the MC period and the other to LC I,<sup>1002</sup> plus another two inscribed cups from Ayia Irini dated to Period VI (LC I / LM IA).<sup>1003</sup>

Study of potter's marks from the Cyclades during the period of interest is limited to Ayia Irini<sup>1004</sup> and Phylakopi.<sup>1005</sup> Bailey notes a linear mark on the side of a Gray Minyan bowl of MC date from Naxos, but no find location or citation is provided.<sup>1006</sup> In general, however, potter's marks both from Naxos and on conical cups are poorly understood. It would appear, nevertheless, that the potters on Naxos who made conical cups for Stelida sometimes chose to mark their cups. The marks, most similar to those found at Stelida, Bikaki notes are most likely to indicate maker's marks, provenance, or destination.<sup>1007</sup> More generally, she ties the emergence of potter's marks in the MBA to a more centralized system of control at Ayia Irini.<sup>1008</sup> While such conclusions with the Stelida cups are

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<sup>999</sup> Bailey 1996, 90.

<sup>1000</sup> Bailey 1996, 90. See pages 105-147 for drawings of all the marks.

<sup>1001</sup> Nikolakopoulou 2019, 167.

<sup>1002</sup> Bailey 1996. Number 101 in catalog – the mark, located low on the side, is described as “1 round impression, part of vertical line”, 251-252. This cup is dated to MC. See page 121 for a drawing. The second cup is number 159 in the catalog – the mark, located on the base, is described as “3 oval impressions. Very faint”. This cup is dated to LC I. See page 130 for a drawing.

<sup>1003</sup> Bikaki 1984, 27, VI4 and VI-5. There is also one marked conical cup from Period VII, though this is much later than the Stelida cups (VII-11).

<sup>1004</sup> Bikaki 1984.

<sup>1005</sup> Bailey 1996.

<sup>1006</sup> Bailey 1996, 148.

<sup>1007</sup> Bikaki 1984, 43.

<sup>1008</sup> Bikaki 1984, 43.



tentative at this time due to the number of marks known, I would suggest that the marks on the Stelida cups are most likely maker's marks that might be tied to a more centralized system of control associate with Grotta. As stated above, the type of cup did not determine whether it would be marked nor what type of mark it received. Thus, it does not appear that the type of conical cup predetermined the mark. Further study on pottery from other Naxian sites of this time period could shed further light on these marks.

It is of interest that Knossos produced very few potter's marks (forty-eight)<sup>1009</sup> while Malia seems to have the largest number of marks (281).<sup>1010</sup> On Crete, almost all the potter's marks were limited to coarse ware and mostly date to MM III, whereas in the Cyclades we see marks on both coarse and fine.<sup>1011</sup> Visible linear marks are very common as a form of Minoan potter's marks.<sup>1012</sup> This is a similar mark to those seen on the Stelida cups. But the number and variation of the marks on Crete differs based on the site. Bailey suggests that on Crete the marks were more of local significance than might have been the case in the Cyclades due to the fact that marks never occurred on the more highly valued pottery.<sup>1013</sup> There is no consensus as to the purpose of the marks on Crete, though some suggest a mark for the kiln attendant or representing the name of the pots' recipient.<sup>1014</sup> I would argue, however, that it is not possible to state that the marks on the Stelida cups were related to either Cretan or other Cycladic marks. It seems like it was simply a common practice to marks select pots for a distinct purpose, perhaps a maker's mark.

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<sup>1009</sup> Bailey 1996, 189; see Brice 1961; Evans 1901-1902; 1921; Popham 1969.

<sup>1010</sup> Bailey 1996, 191; Godart and Olivier 1978.

<sup>1011</sup> Bailey 1996, 201. See pages 188-196 for a list of all the Cretan sites included in the study.

<sup>1012</sup> Bailey 1996, 201.

<sup>1013</sup> Bailey 1996, 202.

<sup>1014</sup> Bailey 1996, 199-201.

Pertaining to use, or post-depositional activities, it can be noted that fourteen of the conical cups studied (4.8%) had traces of burning (fig. 60D), all of which are of the conical type form.<sup>1015</sup> Cups with burnt rims would most likely have been lamps.<sup>1016</sup> Cups with burning traces partially inside, on the entire outside or a variation of the two, would most likely be indicative of another function, secondary burning, or conditions of the earth.<sup>1017</sup> However, the burning marks on the Stelida cups seems more of a result of the latter rather than functioning as lamps. Due to the placement of the marks (rarely on the rims), perhaps the cups were thrown in a fire or subject to secondary burning.

In turn, twenty-five cups (8.6% of the assemblage) have plaster on the interior and/or exterior (fig. 68). Four of these cups are of the broad and shallow type, twenty-one of the conical type. The plaster in the cups is interesting and appears to be rare, at least in publications. Since there is a lot of plaster at Stelida<sup>1018</sup>, it could be a result of the large number of plastered items – perhaps it was trendy to fill a cup with plaster to dedicate, or reflective of applying plaster. Conical cups full of plaster have been found in the Aegean<sup>1019</sup>, including at Sissi<sup>1020</sup> and at Akrotiri.<sup>1021</sup>

Returning our attention to Naxos, conical cups made using similar production technique to those attested at Stelida are documented from the Demetrokalli Plot in Grotta.<sup>1022</sup> Similarly, both the deep and shallow conical cups that dominate the Stelida

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<sup>1015</sup> Gillis 1990a, 110-111.

<sup>1016</sup> Gillis 1990a, 111.

<sup>1017</sup> Gillis 1990a, 111.

<sup>1018</sup> Carter, et al. 2021, 78.

<sup>1019</sup> Papadaki 2017, 224-235.

<sup>1020</sup> Personal communication with M. Pareja.

<sup>1021</sup> Conical cups full of plaster are on display at the Thera Museum, though none have been published as of yet.

<sup>1022</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1989 212; Vlachopoulos 2016 124, Fig. 7.9; Carter, et al. 2021, 71.

assemblage are also reported from Mikre Vigla.<sup>1023</sup> The ones from Mikre Vigla were similarly locally made using the standard Minoan technique, on the wheel, with cut-away string marks on the bases and pronounced grooves on the interiors. Elsewhere within the Cyclades there are comparable examples for the Stelida conical form cups from MC III-LC I Akrotiri<sup>1024</sup> and Caskey's Type M cups at Ayia Irini.<sup>1025</sup> The broad form of cups are also known at Phylakopi in the Low cups of trench ΠA LC I deposits<sup>1026</sup> and the Northern Sector of House A, the Western Sector and Area B at Ayia Irini of Period VI (LC I / LM IA) date.<sup>1027</sup>

From the perspective of the *chaîne opératoire*, it is clear that the conical cups from Stelida clearly follow the pottery production trends established at the palatial center of Knossos (both in terms of shape and manufacturing technique) as appears to be the general case for the conical cups in the Cyclades, though I believe there is more variety in form during the MM IIIB period at Akotiri, Ayia Irini, and Phylakopi than at Stelida. Other centers on Crete, such as Palaikastro have different forms of the conical cup before standardization in the LM IA. There are still the broad and conical forms, but the broad form has a ledge rim and the conical form as a slight s-profile shape.<sup>1028</sup> Similarly to Palaikastro, there is variation in the MM III cups from Malia until standardization in LMIA. The typical form of these cups is a low raised base and curving wall, but the rims vary (straight, everted with lip, ledge lip, or flat top).<sup>1029</sup> Within the Mesara, conical cups in MM

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<sup>1023</sup> Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 92, Fig. 14, 214-215; Carter, et al. 2021, 71.

<sup>1024</sup> Gillis 1990b, 66; Carter, et al. 2021, 71.

<sup>1025</sup> Davis and Lewis 1985: 85; Carter, et al. 2021, 71.

<sup>1026</sup> Davis and Cherry 2007, 298; Carter, et al. 2021, 71.

<sup>1027</sup> Gorogianni et al. 2016, 210; Carter, et al. 2021, 71.

<sup>1028</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 96; see figure 4.8.

<sup>1029</sup> Gillis 1990c, 59.

III are so poorly made that Van de Moortel finds no regularity in this vessel shape.<sup>1030</sup> Thus, at this point I believe Stelida's cups follow only the forms at Knossos in MM IIIB. This suggests a more direct relationship with Knossos than with other Cretan centers.

Nevertheless, the Stelida conical cups are locally produced and have local elements (i.e., potter's marks), although rudimentary in form with an overall lack of finish on some. Thus, the potters were most likely local Naxians who desired to pot like the Minoans, for use by community members who participated in a very Minoanized cult space. The question of how this transfer of knowledge came about arises.

### **Transfer of Cultural Knowledge: The Potter's Wheel**

As stated above, Stelida's conical cups were wheel fashioned, as evidenced by the interior ribbing and string marks on the base. This follows the general trend of conical cups found both on Crete and throughout the Aegean. Wiener states that conical cups remain the "clearest evidence of the pervasiveness of Minoanization in the Aegean" due to the use of Minoan manufacturing techniques.<sup>1031</sup> This is because the potter's wheel is reintroduced to the Cyclades in the Later MC period through the production of Minoanizing pottery.<sup>1032</sup> Berg argues that this might be a reflection of the Cycladic population associating the wheel technology with the Minoans.<sup>1033</sup> The production of the conical cups on a potter's wheel suggests a desire to copy Cretan practices and create as perfect a Minoan imitation as possible.<sup>1034</sup> Specifically Berg argues that this technology may have been a way for the communities to showcase "a society's wealth, know-how, and cultural tolerance in order

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<sup>1030</sup> Van de Moortel 2002, 197.

<sup>1031</sup> Wiener 2011, 364.

<sup>1032</sup> Berg 2007, 141.

<sup>1033</sup> Berg 2007, 141.

<sup>1034</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 105.

to enhance religion, political aspirations, and attract trade from regions beyond the local exchange network.”<sup>1035</sup> Furthermore, Berg highlights that the conical cups found in the Cyclades are very similar to the color of Cretan fabric and this could be explained by “the desire of the consumers to purchase a perfect copy of a desirable Cretan object, which encouraged local potters to imitate it as closely as possible.”<sup>1036</sup> This practice, in this view, suggests then that the conical cup was a significant cultural symbol within the Aegean. As such, the incorporation of the Minoan manufacturing technique of wheel throwing could have had multiple implications within communities beyond that of merely craft production.

Non-Cretans decided to imitate the entire ‘conical cup package’ to “imitate socially recognised symbols and practices (and hence for customers to demand such a product)”<sup>1037</sup> with an emphasis on Knossian practices.<sup>1038</sup> It should be noted that the adaptation was not homogenous across the Aegean. Ayia Irini seems to have an earlier relationship with Crete as there is a higher percentage of Minoan and Minoanizing artifacts (mostly pottery) in the earlier MM period than other Cycladic sites, like Akrotiri and Phylakopi.<sup>1039</sup> In regard to the wheel itself, it was utilized a little later at Phylakopi and Akrotiri than Ayia Irini and the wheel was used for local and Cretan shapes at Akrotiri and Ayia Irini, but at Phylakopi it was used only for Cretan shapes.<sup>1040</sup> This suggests that Ayia Irini was quicker to apply Minoan techniques and that different communities used the wheel in different ways. While the inhabitants of Phylakopi were more hesitant to employ the potter’s wheel for their local

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<sup>1035</sup> Berg 2007, 142.

<sup>1036</sup> Berg 2004, 79.

<sup>1037</sup> Berg 2004, 80.

<sup>1038</sup> Berg 2004, 240.

<sup>1039</sup> Abell 2016, 76; Nikolakopoulou 2009, 33; Papagiannopoulou 1991, 119; Hood 2007, 248, 250, 253; Berg 2007b, 111, fig. 22.

<sup>1040</sup> Gorgianni et al 2016, 213.

pottery. Thus, Minoan influence in the Cyclades was not as straightforward as typically argued.

How exactly did local potters learn how to produce pottery (albeit mostly Minoanizing) on a wheel since the wheel was largely unknown to them at this point? As stated above, the fact that the potter's wheel in the Cyclades was used almost exclusively for Minoanizing shapes early on suggests that the wheel was tied directly with the Minoan culture.<sup>1041</sup> Increasing Cycladic imports could possibly mean direct contact with Crete and Knossos, as discussed below, and this might be one of the main ways the knowledge of the wheel and conical cups spread to the islands. Abell points out that many of the crafts that were Minoanized would have had required long periods of apprenticeship to perfect the crafts, which suggests direct and long-lasting contact between Cretan and non-Cretan crafts people.<sup>1042</sup> Hilditch states that the 'humble' conical cup is a useful marker to track technological adaptation as it is a fairly simple shape to produce, yet it would take long-term contact between the Cretan and Cycladic potting communities for this transfer to occur.<sup>1043</sup> A time commitment was necessary because, in order to perfect the technique, it would "require a long-term investment, the physical learning and copying of bodily gestures and positions."<sup>1044</sup> Yet it is hard to establish in the archaeological record evidence of such an intense, long-term contact between craftspeople.<sup>1045</sup> According to Broodbank and Kiriati the evidence from Kythera suggests that Cretans were on Kythera working as potters based on the use of new production techniques, creation of Cretan style pottery

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<sup>1041</sup> Berg 2007, 141; Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 102-103.

<sup>1042</sup> Abell 2016, 76.

<sup>1043</sup> Hilditch 2014, 34.

<sup>1044</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 107; Roux and Corbetta 1989.

<sup>1045</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 107.

utilizing local clay sources but different clay sources than the ‘indigenous Kytheran’ potters as early as EM I-II<sup>1046</sup>, but such evidence is not available for other sites. I would argue that it is extremely difficult to identify foreign potters instead of a simpler interpretation of local emulation.

Cycladic potters would have had to come in contact with Cretan potters in some way. Craftspeople most likely would have been mobile, able to travel throughout the Aegean on commissions or seeking new skills.<sup>1047</sup> In regard to the Stelida cups, then, local Naxians would have most likely learned their practices from Knossian traditions, perhaps via batches of Knossian vessels<sup>1048</sup> or, more likely, visitation (Knossians to Naxos or vice versa) of potters.<sup>1049</sup> But the specifics of this relationship cannot be known archaeologically. In sum, to make a conical cup (or any Minoanizing pottery) on the wheel, one would have to take the time to perfect this new technique. This suggests that it was not a simple process, but a well-thought-out decision and desire to learn how to create pottery like the Minoans that would have been recognizable to the Minoans (e.g., wheel-fashioned conical cups).

### **Transfer of Cultural Knowledge: Emulation of the Minoans?**

Thus, the question arises as to whether conical cups can be used to track the influence of Minoan, or more specifically Knossian influence? It can be agreed that conical cups outside of Crete imply connections with Crete. Since these cups are almost always made using local clay sources and found in a variety of contexts (settlements, burials, and

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<sup>1046</sup> Broodbank and Kiriati 2007, 265; Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 107.

<sup>1047</sup> Davis and Groggianni 2008, 347; Nikolakopoulou and Knappett 2016, 104.

<sup>1048</sup> Nikolakopoulou and Knappett 2016, 109.

<sup>1049</sup> Nikolakopoulou and Knappett 2016, 109 argue that a mastery of a new form of manufacturing technique would take more time than occasional informal contact.

cult spaces in Crete and outside the island) the cups cannot be seen to have had an inherently ritual function. I do not agree with Wiener that conical cups indicate the presence of Minoan people.<sup>1050</sup> Yet, there was clearly a desire to have a Minoanizing object and produce it utilizing Minoan techniques. Nikolakopoulou and Knappett point out that Minoanizing influence, with regard to pottery, is apparent in three aspects: the increase in Cretan imports and production of Minoanizing vessels in local fabrics, the adaptation of pottery consumption practices (which they state is indicative of a deeper level of penetration), and lastly the use of Minoan technological skills and traits in pottery production.<sup>1051</sup> As seen in Chapters Two and Three as well as above, the first aspect is visible within these local communities both in the form of imports and in Minoanizing vessels. The second is manifested in the conical cups at Stelida and the non-Cretan peak sanctuaries more generally. Clearly local communities are adapting Cretan cultic practices within their own religion using Minoanizing artifacts (both consumption ware and votives). The last category is evident by the adoption of the potter's wheel in these communities to make pottery. Thus, if one follows Nikolakopoulou and Knappett's argument, these local communities at question were clearly influenced by the Minoans. A question of what this influence means arises.

As stated above, conical cups have been found at sites all over Crete and at every 'Minoan' site in the Aegean.<sup>1052</sup> Knappett and Hilditch state that on Crete "the appearance of the conical cup across the island occurs hand-in-hand with the emergence of Knossos as a supraregional power."<sup>1053</sup> Hilditch further states that with Knossos becoming the cultural

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<sup>1050</sup> Wiener 1984, 20.

<sup>1051</sup> Nikolakopoulou and Knappett 2016, 109.

<sup>1052</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 92.

<sup>1053</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 98.



hub on Crete, there is a greater role of cult practices in the daily life of Minoans. In this same instance the standard drinking vessel becomes the conical cup on Crete.<sup>1054</sup> The conical cup, then, becomes tied to the role of Knossos as a cultural center on Crete and cult activities are included in this package.

Knappett and Hilditch theorize that conical cups outside of Crete indicate the emulation of both production and consumption practices.<sup>1055</sup> Within the peak sanctuaries, conical cups are a further indication that the local populations sought to adapt the Minoan cult practice. Knappett and Hilditch even posit that the conical cup was an iconic indicator of Minoan identity.<sup>1056</sup> They tie this directly to the rise of Knossos. This is accompanied by a sudden increase in Cycladic imports to Crete in the early Neopalatial period, especially to Knossos.<sup>1057</sup> Nikolakopoulou and Knappett argue that this might reflect the increased mobility of craftspeople seeking to master new skills “in the context of forming a new social identity.”<sup>1058</sup> They describe this new social identity as ‘becoming Minoan’ which is more visible in ceramic manufacturing than any other craft.<sup>1059</sup> In their reading then, craftspeople were a highly mobile group of the population who were welcomed into communities as they learned new techniques. Through learning new techniques, their identity changed as they become more ‘international’ in their style; able to produce highly desirable, ‘foreign’ style goods.

Across the Aegean, locals decided to manufacture this extremely common Minoan form, using Minoan technology and local clay. It is through creations of new environments

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<sup>1054</sup> Hilditch 2014, 30.

<sup>1055</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 101.

<sup>1056</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 106.

<sup>1057</sup> Nikolakopoulou and Knappett 2016, 111.

<sup>1058</sup> Nikolakopoulou and Knappett 2016, 111.

<sup>1059</sup> Nikolakopoulou and Knappett 2016, 111.

that cultural practices are manifested. For Nikolakopoulou and Knappett it is these instances of learning and adapting in which this new social identity emerges.<sup>1060</sup> It is possible that these new creations were not directly attributable to Knossos but were “consciously and perhaps even competitively sustained by all communities involved.”<sup>1061</sup> Such an idea allows room for the local potters to express their own choices. Thus, I believe Nikolakopoulou and Knappett go too far in stating that craftspeople ‘became Minoan’ by learning new techniques. Instead, the desire and, perhaps even need, to learn new techniques reflects this new cultural *koine* in which Minoan goods are highly desirable but not the only popular trend.

The appearance of conical cups on their own need not to equate with Minoanization of the culture in general. However, with the combination of other Minoan artifacts, architecture, and cultic practices, as at Stelida, a case could be made for the appearance of a cultural *koine* in which the conical cups serve as some sort of indicator. Native Naxians most likely came to Stelida to participate within a ‘Minoan socio-religious framework’ with Minoanizing material and the spatial and cosmological attributes (albeit with room for local interpretation). My ongoing work on the conical cups from Stelida will seek to clarify this issue, as discussed in Chapter Six, as well as try to shed some light on both the producers and users of the conical cups at Stelida. The same could be said for the other identified non-Cretan peak sanctuaries with Minoanizing material.

### **The Non-Cretan Peak Sanctuaries**

If the Stelida conical cups can be understood as the manifestations of a new social identity by which non-Cretans sought out Minoan technologies through the learning and

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<sup>1060</sup> Nikolakopoulou and Knappett 2016, 113.

<sup>1061</sup> Nikolakopoulou and Knappett 2016, 113.

use of Minoan technology, can the same be said about non-Cretan peak sanctuaries? For example, could the peak sanctuaries be an ‘imported’ idea that comes with the increased interaction with Crete? The simple answer is yes. The idea of an open-air cult site that uses Minoanizing material was most likely the result of increased interaction with Crete. As the evidence currently stands, there does not seem to be earlier MBA ritual activity on hills. As stated in Chapters Two and Three, four of the non-Cretan peak sanctuaries surveyed here do have evidence of earlier activity but none of the material appears to be from Minoan influence.<sup>1062</sup> Thus, a possible way to think about it is that the new imported idea is not the open-air cult site, but the incorporation of certain types of material into the cult practices. Specifically, the desire to manufacture and include Minoanizing material within a cult space is something new. As such, the cult behavior and activities could have changed with the introduction of these new types of material. Thus, these sites could be understood as the product of the Minoanization of peak cults, but as of right now there does not seem to be firm evidence of such sites existing post EBA II prior to Minoanization.

This approach is not new in the field of the Aegean Bronze Age. In fact, several scholars have, with a particular focus on the Cyclades, tended to argue that the local population adapted certain aspects of Minoan ways due to social and/or economic reasons.<sup>1063</sup> As discussed in Chapter Four, there are local elements and/or atypical finds at many of these sites, such as the bronze figurines, lumps of unworked stone, and close proximity of settlements. These elements are indicative of local adaptation of a Minoan cult, i.e., syncretism. For our purposes syncretism can be thought of as a part of the process

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<sup>1062</sup> Mikre Vigla (possibly EC-MC II material); Troullos (a few pieces of earlier material); Leska (a few pieces of EBA-MBA IB-II pottery); Philerimos (possible earlier pottery).

<sup>1063</sup> Abell and Hilditch 2016, 156; See Davis 1984; Davis and Lewis 1985; Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2005; 2008; Davis and Gorogianni 2008 for examples.

of cultural integration for the creation of identities,<sup>1064</sup> much as the adaptation of craft production is a way of creating new identities. Clack argues that syncretistic fusion typically involves the creation of new religious narratives and expressions.<sup>1065</sup> We see this syncretism in the non-Cretan peak sanctuaries where new religious arenas outfitted with new culturally laden pottery forms were utilized by local communities to showcase their participation in wider socio-cultural networks and even their new hybrid identities.

### **How and Why Did This Sharing of Cultural Knowledge Occur?**

How is this tied to the Minoans (or more specifically, Knossos)? Did local populations throughout the Aegean know of the Minoans and seek to imitate their pottery and cultic practices simply because of the status of the Minoans? As stated earlier, several scholars point to Knossos as the main cultural center in the Neopalatial Period. For example, Adams argues that there is a sense that the Knossians were the driving force behind the innovations in figural art and its promotion overseas.<sup>1066</sup> Knappett and Hilditch generally agree with this. They state that Knossos was successful in this promotion because of the multi-varied approach in its extension of power.<sup>1067</sup> One of these approaches was the creation of the simple plain ceramics that were widely recognizable, iconic, and embedded in everyday routines, i.e., the conical cups.<sup>1068</sup> For Knappett and Hilditch, “If such a conjunction of the iconic and the indexical was thus an effective strategy for extended palatial power, then the conical cup conveyed this combination in a very simple, condensed way.”<sup>1069</sup> If this is correct, then it was through the Cycladic communities’ capability of

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<sup>1064</sup> Clack 2011, 229.

<sup>1065</sup> Clack 2011, 231.

<sup>1066</sup> Adams 2017, 229.

<sup>1067</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 109.

<sup>1068</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 109.

<sup>1069</sup> Knappett and Hilditch 2015, 109.

incorporating Minoan artifacts within their local communities that fostered the adoption of certain cultural trends. The non-Cretan peak sanctuaries would serve as another piece of evidence for how the Minoans were able to exert their influence over local communities.

In this view, non-Cretan peak sanctuaries were arenas in which certain cultural trends emerged through a form of syncretism. The Stelida conical cups show this. Again, the process was selective. There is no one package that was adopted within the Aegean during the Neopalatial period. This selectiveness was most likely due to multiple factors such as the context in which the cups are used, the users of the cups and their status in society, or how important local traditions were in these locations. As stated earlier, the creation of a new identity is not a static process.<sup>1070</sup> Thus, it should not be assumed that the adoption of Minoan peak sanctuary practices would have been homogenous and fixed. Instead, local communities most likely constantly adapted. Furthermore, the needs and desires of communities differed based on the local traditions. This is where the concept of syncretism can shed some light on the processes. As seen on Kythera, for example, the worshippers at Leska and those at Agios Georgios chose to incorporate different material within their cultic practices.<sup>1071</sup> Local communities most likely interacted with and/or had knowledge of the Minoans, but their exposure of cultural knowledge differed, as mobility studies have shown.<sup>1072</sup> It is through these encounters that new identities are formed.<sup>1073</sup> There are certain characteristics that make a site a likely peak sanctuary, but there are nuances in the material remains. This is one of the reasons why it is so hard to identify Minoan peak sanctuaries, both on Crete and in the Aegean.

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<sup>1070</sup> Insoll 2007, 6.

<sup>1071</sup> See Chapter Three.

<sup>1072</sup> Kiriati and Andreou 2017, 130.

<sup>1073</sup> Knapp and von Dommelen 2010, 5.

The question arises as to how this transfer of knowledge and practices would occur and why the Minoans were interested in these smaller communities. As argued by numerous scholars, Ayia Irini was a key site for the Minoan access to the Lavrion mines.<sup>1074</sup> And as seen in Chapters One and Two, the Cyclades would have offered island resources and products, but also mainland ones through the trading routes, like the Western String.<sup>1075</sup> In fact, the imported Cycladic, Milesian, and Dodecanesian pottery to MM IIIA Knossos “suggests that palatial elites there were actively cultivating new exchange relationships with the wider Aegean in that period.”<sup>1076</sup> In order to unpack this a bit more, a case study of the island of Naxos, the largest island in the Cyclades, provides some clarity.

There are several advantages of Naxos serving as an active member of trade for both other Cycladic communities as well as the Cretans. One of these is the geographical position of Naxos and the nodal point Grotta occupied in several trade networks.<sup>1077</sup> As Carter et al. argue and as discussed in Chapter Two, scholars have long argued that Grotta could have served as an intermediary between several important centers in the Aegean, such as Thera, Kea, Ios, and access to the Lavrion mines.<sup>1078</sup> Connections between Naxos and the eastern Aegean islands and Anatolia has also been argued, highlighting how Naxos could have served as an intermediary to a much wider audience than other islands.<sup>1079</sup>

A key aspect to Naxos’ significance is its natural resources with arable land, ability to cultivate numerous crops, support large numbers of sheep and goat, and suitability for

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<sup>1074</sup> Abell 2016, 77; Davis 1979.

<sup>1075</sup> Abell 2016, 75.

<sup>1076</sup> Abell 2016, 74.

<sup>1077</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 89.

<sup>1078</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 89; see Wiener 1990; Hadjianastasiou 1993; Mountjoy and Ponting 2000, 178-179; Berg 2006, 4-6.

<sup>1079</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 89-90; Davis et al. 1983; Carter et al. 2016, 22-24, 26-29, Fig. 14; Knappett et al. 2011.

cattle grazing unique in the Cyclades.<sup>1080</sup> The surplus supplies would have been for, of course, local consumption, but also trading and gifting<sup>1081</sup>, thus presenting Naxos as one of the only suppliers of certain goods. Evidence of Naxian products in the form of four pithoi in the Temple Repositories of Knossos provides evidence for direct trade between these two communities.<sup>1082</sup> These pithoi are most likely Naxian in origin.<sup>1083</sup> As Carter et al. discuss, one of these vessels is inscribed with Linear A, prior to firing, that has been understood as an offering to Knossos.<sup>1084</sup> This suggests that possibly not only did Naxos have a direct relationship with Knossos, but that there were individuals on Naxos who knew Linear A.

Hadjianastasiou<sup>1085</sup> and Carter et al.<sup>1086</sup> hypothesize that emery may have played a significant role. The island is the main source of emery (located in northeastern and southwestern Naxos) in the Aegean, an important abrasive exploited as early as the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BCE.<sup>1087</sup> Emery was used in the production of stone artifacts (figurines and vases, for example). Thus, Cretan interest in Naxos was most likely partially driven by the need for emery.<sup>1088</sup> The study of emery found outside of Naxos has been undertaken by Boleti.<sup>1089</sup> There is some evidence of Naxian emery on Crete during the Bronze Age.<sup>1090</sup>

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<sup>1080</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 90; See the following for more information Broodbank 2000, 70-77, Figs. 14 and 17; Crow et al. 2011; Dimakopoulou 1990; Televantou 1990; Matsuki 1979, footnote 24.

<sup>1081</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 90; Cosmopoulos 1998, 141; Hadjianastasiou 1993, 257, 260.

<sup>1082</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 90-91.

<sup>1083</sup> See Carter et al. 2021, footnote 217 for more information.

<sup>1084</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 91; Christakis 2010, 54-55; Vlachopoulos 2016:121.

<sup>1085</sup> Hadjianastasiou 1993, 261. Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989 suggest the same idea as a reason why Mikre Vigla would have been an important trading center on Naxos.

<sup>1086</sup> Carter et al. 2021, 91.

<sup>1087</sup> Kouka 2004, 271–280; Boleti 2006, 277–278. Emery is also found in southwestern Anatolia and smaller sources are found on southern Paros, northern Iraklia, northern Ios, northeastern Sikinos, Samos and Ikaria.

<sup>1088</sup> Younger 1981, 32; Krzyszkowska 2005, 12; Belza 2018, 98.

<sup>1089</sup> Boleti 2017.

<sup>1090</sup> Belza 2018, 98.

These sites include Kommos,<sup>1091</sup> Knossos,<sup>1092</sup> Mochlos,<sup>1093</sup> and Pseira.<sup>1094</sup> Naxian emery has also been found at Akrotiri.<sup>1095</sup> Emery residue has also been found on some artifacts at Knossos including unfinished seals dated to MM IIIB–LM I and stone vases dated to LM IB–LM IIIA.<sup>1096</sup> As Gorogianni 2020 states, trade and exchange allowed for the Cyclades to be brought into the discussion of cultural influence during the Neopalatial.<sup>1097</sup> Naxos serves as only one example, but there is ample evidence suggesting that there were highly desirable reasons why Cretan communities would be connected with off-island communities.

As stated in Chapter Two, there has been much debate about the impetus of Minoan activity within the Cyclades and the choice of traders is no different. Cherry and Davis argue that the other Cycladic islands acquired mainland material (Minyan and later) through secondary distribution from the Western String communities,<sup>1098</sup> but Schofield states that the evidence is still inconclusive.<sup>1099</sup> The most difficult question to answer is who the traders were. It is generally assumed that the traders were Minoans.<sup>1100</sup> However, such an assumption does not afford the islanders much choice. Schofield states that the part played by the Cyclades was most likely the handling of transit trade, specifically they were probably interested in access to certain profit that was derived from their position within this network.<sup>1101</sup> She envisions that certain sites would have acted as ‘a port of call’

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<sup>1091</sup> Blitzer 1995, 447.

<sup>1092</sup> Evely 1984, pl. 209, 11.

<sup>1093</sup> Carter 2004, 61–107.

<sup>1094</sup> Dierckx 1995, 89; Betancourt 1999, 65–66.

<sup>1095</sup> Marinatos 1974, pl. 67a; Michailidou 2001, 428.

<sup>1096</sup> Warren 1969, 160; Heimpel, Gwinnett and Gorelick 1988, 208; Belza 2018, 98.

<sup>1097</sup> Gorogianni 2020, 55.

<sup>1098</sup> Cherry and Davis 1982.

<sup>1099</sup> Schofield 1982b, 14.

<sup>1100</sup> Davis 1979; Hadjianastasiou 1993; Belza 2018.

<sup>1101</sup> Schofield 1982b, 18–19.



meaning that these would have been stops along the trade route where the goods were transferred and some authority took control of control of traffic and extracted the dues to which it was entitled.<sup>1102</sup> While some of these ideas are hypotheses, the construction of fortifications administrative buildings, use of Minoan systems of measurement, Linear A, and imported and imitated Minoan pottery could serve as evidence for ports of call.<sup>1103</sup>

Dietz also argues that trade routes between Crete and the mainland were controlled by the Cycladic peoples, not the Minoans from MC III-LC IA.<sup>1104</sup> Mountjoy also finds no secure evidence of a Minoan thalassocracy in the Cyclades.<sup>1105</sup> To determine who the actual traders were is most likely not possible; instead, we should assume that there were multiple levels of control. In fact, Schofield states that middleman versus state control is not necessarily an either/or proposition, as information from the Near East suggests.<sup>1106</sup> Most likely we have flourishing overseas trade that was closely regulated in the islands by traders and the local elites.<sup>1107</sup> This interpretation allows for flexibility of trade and more likely represents what was occurring in the MC-LC periods. Clearly not only material, but even certain cultic trends were imported from Crete. As such it was through the processes of trade and interaction that these communities were in contact.

## **Conclusion**

Communities in the Aegean were clearly very well connected to one another as seen by the extensive amount of non-local material (in the form of imports and adaptations). As stated above, a detailed study of the conical cups from Stelida show the

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<sup>1102</sup> Schofield 1982b, 19.

<sup>1103</sup> Schofield 1982b, 19.

<sup>1104</sup> Dietz 1997.

<sup>1105</sup> Mountjoy 2004, 399.

<sup>1106</sup> Schofield 1982b, 20.

<sup>1107</sup> Schofield 1982b, 21-22.

nuances of this interaction and how Minoan material and cultural habits were highly desired by off-island communities. Such ideas and material were exchanged through both trading networks as well as the movement of people. Perhaps we can imagine a scenario in which a Naxian elite visited Crete and participated or became familiar with this Cretan cultural package, specifically peak sanctuaries, and wished to involve their local community in similar cultural practices. The exact movements of people are unknown given the indirect evidence provided by the archaeological record.<sup>1108</sup> But it was most likely though a multi-scale approach of both people and objects that created the environment in which an Aegean-wide cultural *koine* became popular.

Outside of Crete, local populations sought to partake in the cultural trends of the time. With the adaptation of Minoan culture (material, technology, and knowledge) came shared cultural beliefs. As with the conical cups, non-Cretan peak sanctuaries can be understood as a means of expressing one's cultural knowledge in the Neopalatial Aegean. As stated above, this process of integrating aspects of the Minoan cultural package was not a fixed or wholesale phenomenon. Local populations chose to adopt certain aspects as they saw fit. This is clear when the possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries are examined. However, the close analysis of Stelida conical cups have shed some light on the question of the degree of Knossian influence. Future avenues of research are discussed in the following chapter. More detailed analysis of multiple classes of material as well an Aegean wide study of conical cups from all the alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries will clarify the degree of Knossian influence. Local populations, nevertheless, clearly desired to incorporate aspects of Knossian cultural practices into multiple parts of their lives. These

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<sup>1108</sup> Nikolakopoulou and Knappett 2016, 114.

cult spaces are just one such space in which a new environment to incorporate a well-known Minoan practice with Minoanizing material could have taken place. The main material cultural indicator of Minoanizing processes (networks, etc.), were the iconic conical cups.

## Chapter Six Conclusion

My aim was to discuss the alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries as a case study for the investigation of cultural interaction and exchange in the Neopalatial Aegean, with a focus on the influence of Minoan culture in the sphere of religion beyond Crete. These cult sites have never been the subject of a dedicated study. Due to the nature of some of these sites, the study was not able to be as uniform between various sites as hoped. Nevertheless, some conclusions can be put forth, as discussed below. These findings have large scale implications for the Aegean Bronze Age scholarly field.

Most importantly, perhaps, it has been shown that the long-held assumptions of the Minoan thalassocracy Minoanization need to be reworked to accommodate the nuances of material and the choice of local Aegean communities. It can no longer be assumed that Minoan culture dominated local Aegean populations, as the theory of Minoanization suggests. Local populations made clear, selective decisions in the implementation of foreign, cultural material and ideologies within their own traditions. This led to the creation of new cultural identities in these communities. As argued in Chapter Five, the creation of a cultural *koine* in the Neopalatial period likely spurred these Cycladic communities to selectively adopt aspects of a larger cultural package with strong connections to Knossos. The non-Cretan peak sanctuary site played a central role in the manifestation of this phenomenon. This cultural *koine* is most likely tied to the rise of Knossos as a supra-regional power. The focused study on the conical cups from the Stelida peak sanctuary suggested this tie to Knossos and further showed that the local potters of Naxos made deliberate choices in how they chose to utilize Minoan pottery traditions within their own

system. The following chapter summarizes the major takeaways of this research project as well as laying out future avenues of research.

As stated in Chapter One, this project formed out of the discovery of a non-Cretan peak sanctuary at Stelida, Naxos in 2019.<sup>1109</sup> While working on the material, a question arose as to the purpose and number of these peak sanctuaries throughout the Aegean. In 2010, Sotirakopoulou questioned that if non-Cretan peak sanctuaries did exist, the field would have to “pose anew the question over the myth or reality of what was called ‘The Minoan Thalassocracy’.”<sup>1110</sup> As such, this project has attempted to take on this question and further investigate the realities of cultural exchange and influence in the Aegean during the Neopalatial Period. For the first time, all the identified and published non-Cretan peak sanctuaries have been examined in a comparative analysis.

In Chapter One, I discussed how the study of Minoan peak sanctuaries has been fraught with debate and inconsistent archaeological examination. This is the case for both Cretan and non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. In fact, before Sakellarakis’ 1996 article, few acknowledged the existence of possible Minoan peak sanctuaries outside of Crete.<sup>1111</sup> Thus we have been left with inconsistent documentation and examination of these cult sites. This, paired with the doubts about even the existence of these sites, has led to a lack of overall understanding of Minoan peak sanctuaries and their existence beyond the borders of the island. As discussed in detail in Chapter One several scholars have sought to clarify the situation on Crete.<sup>1112</sup> But such an approach has not been applied to possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. As such, this dissertation has sought to remedy the problem. Through the

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<sup>1109</sup> Carter et al. 2021.

<sup>1110</sup> Sotirakopoulou 2010, 837.

<sup>1111</sup> Sakellarakis 1996.

<sup>1112</sup> Peatfield 1983; 1987; 1990; 1992; 1994; Kyriakidis 2005; Briault 2007.

detailed survey of all the identified possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries, I tested methodologies used to analyze the Neopalatial Cretan sanctuaries. I have proven that these methodologies can be applied for non-Cretan sites, as long as there is room provided for local adaptation of the cult in the material remains.

Several issues have emerged in this study, namely the combined lack of formal archaeological investigation of certain sites and/or the absence of detailed publications on excavated assemblages. What can be said from a review of the extant literature, that local populations in the Aegean sought to incorporate foreign material culture and ideas into their cultural practices. Non-Cretan peak sanctuaries are particularly significant since they are specialized cult spaces where Aegean communities negotiated and asserted their socio-cultural identities. Lastly, in Chapter One I surveyed the concept of Minoanization and how some scholars now argue that we need to appreciate degrees of local choice operating at these types of sites. though a few scholars still believe in the concept of Minoan colonies.

In Chapters Two and Three, nine alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries were surveyed along with the settlement evidence surrounding the sites. I argued that while there is clear Minoan interaction and/or influence at several of these sites, there is not enough evidence at two of these sites (Mazareko tou Fellou, Andros and Mavro Rachidi, Thera) to identify their function. The other seven sites have clear Minoanizing material, but as is the case on Crete, the evidence varies widely. The two best examples of non-Cretan peak sanctuaries are Agios Georgios, Kythera and Stelida, Naxos.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the Cyclades have been the focus of much research and have played a central role in the Minoanization debate. The five identified possible peak sanctuaries in the archipelago vary greatly in terms of how they have been

investigated. However, there are clear, identifiable trends present across these five sites. All the possible peak sanctuaries are located within walking distance from a settlement and visible from that settlement. A large majority of finds are locally made and are mostly in Minoanizing forms. When details are known about the finds, consumption wares dominate the pottery at each of these sites (mostly conical cups), suggesting some sort of feasting or consumption of food and liquid occurred at the hilltops. The best case for a non-Cretan peak sanctuary in the Cyclades is Stelida, with Mikre Vigla and Troullos following. The two other sites need to be investigated in much greater detail before any firm analysis can be performed (Mazareko tou Fellou and Mavro Rachidi). But cult sites should play a central role in the reconstruction of Cretan-Cycladic connections during the Neopalatial period. Lastly, the religious sphere is relatively understudied within the Minoanization debate and continued inclusion of this realm of activity can perhaps recenter the traditional views of Minoanization.

The identified possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries outside of the Cyclades were surveyed in Chapter Three. These four sites have similar characteristics to the identified sites in the Cyclades. All these sites are on a peak of a hill, within walking distance of a settlement (except for Leska) and are visible from that settlement. Most of the finds are locally made and are mostly in Minoanizing forms, except at Maleatas.<sup>1113</sup> Consumption wares are the dominant pottery form. This suggests that the consumption of food and liquid played a key role in the activities at the hilltops. The sites of Agios Georgios and Leska (both on Kythera) serve as the best examples of a non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. Philerimos

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<sup>1113</sup> This statement is in reference to the overwhelmingly Mycenaean elements of the cult. While there are a few Minoan elements, it is generally agreed that Minoan peak sanctuaries cannot exist on the Greek mainland due to the many cultural differences. See Lambrinouidakis 1981a; Hägg 1984; and Sakellarakis 1996, 97 footnote 187 for a more detailed discussion of this.

and Maleatas are harder to assign as non-Cretan peak sanctuaries given the material remains. But it appears that Minoanizing material was included in cult activity, even if these two sites cannot, at this stage, be labeled as peak sanctuaries.

As seen in Chapter Four, while there are commonalities among all Neopalatial Cretan peak sanctuaries, no two sites are the same. This trend continues outside of Crete, which makes strict identification of these sites sometimes difficult. Using Briault's 'ritual equipment' kit<sup>1114</sup>, I showed that there are typical behaviors performed at the non-Cretan sites. The deposition of votives, the preparation of food, burning activity, and architecture are all important indicators of cult activity at sites during the Bronze Age. Seven out of the nine sites have indication of cult activity in some form. Regarding, the consumption of food and liquid, when information about the pottery is published in detail, it is seen that seven out of the nine sites have consumption wares (typically in the form of conical cups). Furthermore, at least five have surviving evidence of some sort of architecture (ranging from walls to complex buildings). This suggests organization of activity, though the specific purpose of the buildings is not always clear. Many of the behaviors identified at these sites through the 'ritual equipment kit' follow the patterns of Cretan peak sanctuaries.

When attempting to draw conclusions about these sites, it is important to focus on the local interpretation of this well-known Minoan cult. As it is clear that local populations sought to incorporate Minoanizing material within several aspects of their traditions. To earn the title of non-Cretan peak sanctuary, the most fundamental aspects are the topographical element, as discussed in Chapter Four, and an abundance of Minoanizing material in the form of consumption ware and votive depositions. However, there will most

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<sup>1114</sup> Briault 2007.



likely be local elements (either in the form of material culture or behavior). Syncretism serves a particularly useful model for describing the combination of Minoanizing material and concepts operating in a non-Minoan context with non-Minoan actors.

It can be argued that Briault's system does work for identifying non-Cretan peak sanctuaries for the most part. However, since these sites will most likely have local adaptations, (or unusual finds) room for these differences should be allowed. Identifying and labeling these differences as a form of syncretism would provide some clarity in the understanding of cult spaces in the Aegean. Syncretism can be thought of as a part of the process of cultural integration for the creation of identities.<sup>1115</sup> The question of the creation of new identities has been a fundamental concern in this project. As seen earlier, identities are not static<sup>1116</sup> and when individuals or communities assert new identities, new ideas and behaviors are also formed. Only through the detailed study of these cult sites' material remains can scholars begin to understand the nuances of cultural change in the Neopalatial Aegean.

Turning back to the specific sites in question, I argue that seven out of the nine sites have clear cult activity and the sites of Stelida, Agios Georgios, and Leska can be called non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. Mikre Vigla, Troullos, and Philerimos have an abundance of Minoanizing material, but until further excavation and study takes place, I would argue it is safer not to call them non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. Maleatas presents an interesting case study as it is a mainland site. As discussed in Chapter Three, several scholars do not believe that a peak sanctuary can exist on the mainland. Maleatas is a cult site and the locals sought to incorporate Minoanizing material within their ritual activity. However, I agree that there

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<sup>1115</sup> Clack 2011, 229.

<sup>1116</sup> Insoll 2007, 6.

is not an overwhelmingly enough amount of Minoanizing elements to label the site a peak sanctuary, in the Minoan sense. This site warrants a localized study in its regional context to try to explain these peculiarities. Finally, as stated above the sites of Mazareko tou Fellou and Mavro Rachidi have only been preliminarily investigated. It is wholly possible that these sites could be peak sanctuaries (especially Mavro Rachidi with its proximity to Akrotiri). But detailed investigation of the site and study of the material must occur. In sum, the possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries showcase a similar situation to what is occurring on Crete. Detailed publication and analysis are needed to draw finite conclusions as to the function and purpose of several of these sites.

The preliminary study of Stelida's conical cups in Chapter Five served as a means of investigating one of the ways in which the influence of Knossos spread throughout the Aegean as an indication of cultural change. This case study showed that the conical cup was utilized in local cultures both in terms of pottery production but also use. Through appreciating the *chaîne opératoire*, the local Naxian potters desired to emulate Knossian pottery traditions. This is known by the shapes and manufacturing techniques of the Stelida cups. Other indications of local actors and behaviors include the potter's marks and utilization of local clay resources. As such, this study revealed how the spread of Knossian material culture infiltrated a specific local context. Taking a pan-Aegean perspective, as seen in Chapter Five, conical cups appear in every 'Minoanized' context. This Minoan object was desired by non-Cretan populations, but almost always locally manufactured and hardly ever imported.<sup>1117</sup> These conical cups show up in a variety of contexts, but at peak

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<sup>1117</sup> There are a few conical cups of Naxian fabric found at Ayia Irini. N. Abell personal communication; a handful of imported Cretan conical cups have been found at Akrotiri dating to MC Period Three (Nikolakopoulou 2019, 305).

sanctuaries (both Cretan and non-Cretan) they appear to be the standard vessel for drinking purposes. My preliminary study on the Stelida cups suggest that the local potters who made cups for use at Stelida followed the trends of Knossos. Future study will see if this is the case for other Naxian conical cups, or if the special context of Stelida explains the Knossian connection.

The combination of the conical cup study and detailed examination of the possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries shows that it was the ability of incorporating Minoan material culture within local communities that fostered the adaptation of certain cultural trends. The non-Cretan peak sanctuaries functioned as another arena where local communities engaged with Minoan cultural ideas and material. But, as stated throughout this project, this was not a case of cultural domination. Instead, non-Cretan populations played an active role in the selection of Minoan material. The decision of adopting foreign elements was not homogeneous and differed for multiple reasons, as discussed in Chapter Five. As this project has shown, the detailed study of cult spaces is a fruitful avenue for future research. The evidence has been mentioned in passing for decades but has been generally neglected. Nevertheless, the comparative survey focused on the religious sphere and the pertinent material offers a potential model for understanding processes of cultural interaction and exchange in the Neopalatial Aegean.

This project has raised perhaps more questions than answers. Thus, this is the beginning of a larger project that has two parts. The first seeks to further understand the role of non-Cretan peak sanctuaries within the Minoanization debate. Possible future avenues of research, then, includes firstly on-site visitation, survey (architectural and pedestrian), and potential excavation of a number of these identified sites. In addition to

this, it would be useful to revisit the material from each of these sites with the goal of detailed publications. Only with the further study of these sites, could we begin to understand the extent of this phenomenon. This paired with more detailed GIS related work could clarify the topographical elements and inter-relation of these identified sites. An end goal could be work dedicated to surveying other hill-stop sites across the Aegean with the goal of identifying other possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries to further test the existence of this phenomenon. Embedded in such a study would be the careful analysis of earlier prehistory to attempt to identify earlier hilltop worship outside of Crete in order to understand the tradition of such activity. This would further clarify how and why the peak sanctuaries developed outside of the island.

The second part of this larger project is dedicated to conical cups. Firstly, my work on the Stelida conical cups is ongoing and part of a larger study of the Stelida pottery. Part of this project includes the detailed comparative analysis of conical cup assemblages throughout the Aegean, with a particular interest on Cretan assemblages. However, it would be of great benefit to conduct a comparative analysis of the conical cups from all the possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. This will allow me to understand the nuances of the adaptation of Minoan ceramic technologies. A study of this kind, in turn, will further illuminate local choice and the spread of Knossian influence throughout the Aegean.

In conclusion, the Minoanization debate has been at the center of understanding cultural exchange and interaction during the Neopalatial period. The detailed study and inclusion of cult spaces in the Aegean sheds light on how this interaction was manifested in the material record. I argue that only through the detailed, comparative analysis of the non-Cretan sites can the question of religion be brought into this debate. It is clear that

further study must take place. However, cult spaces, perhaps, provide the perfect avenue for understanding the creation of new identities as these spaces serve as one of the few arenas in which cultural exchange is more easily exhibited.

## Appendix A: Catalogue of Noon-Cretan Peak Sites

The sites are organized geographically, with a specific focus on topographical elements and relevant material remains.

### Cycladic Islands

#### *Andros*

##### Mazareko tou Fellou

Situated on the rocky hill on the NW slopes of Charakas, Mazareko tou Fellou was identified by Koutsoukou during a field survey. This site has not been extensively excavated or surveyed. Material at the site dates from MC-LC and Classical. Thirty-five sherds of prehistoric pottery were noted, which include both fine and coarse ware (bridge-spouted jars, goblet, tripod cooking vessels, pithoi, kylixes, and stirrup jars). Also found was a small, pierced disc of local green schist. A retaining wall was noted, though the date is not firm. Topographically, Mazareko tou Fellou is near the sites of Maroniti and Kastri.

##### Bibliography:

Koutsoukou 1992, 93–99, 373–380, fig. 62, pls. 109–110, site nos. 35-36;  
Sotirakopoulou 2010, 837; Belza 2018, site 9, 58, 147-8.

#### *Kea*

##### Troullos

Troullos is located on a hilltop about 500 meters north of Ayia Irini. Caskey undertook a small excavation at the site during the 1966-1970 campaigns. The site was later surveyed by Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani as part of the Kea Survey. Artifacts uncovered include pottery (149 conical cups, twelve tripod vessels, a spout of a plain sauceboat of EH type, Matt-painted wares, jugs, jars, pithoi), a stone ladle, stone libation tables, a head of an EC figurine, thin bronze strips, a bronze u-shaped object, five pieces of obsidian, and a bronze figurine with a pin stuck into it. A rectangular enclosure with two drum structures was also found, partially paved with local marble. In addition to a few earlier finds, the majority of the artifacts date to MC III-Early LC I.

##### Bibliography:

Caskey 1971; Davis 1984; Cherry, Davis, and Mantzourani 1991; Sakellarakis 1996; Belza 2018, site 31, 161.

#### *Naxos*

##### Mikre Vigla

Mikre Vigla is positioned on a low hill on a promontory in western Naxos about eight kilometers south of Grotta. The site was surveyed by Barber and Hadjianastasiou in 1985, but never excavated. Artifacts uncovered mostly date to MC-LC I, with a few earlier and post-prehistoric finds. Pottery makes up the bulk of the material, including both imported (Minoan and Melian wares), and local (both Cycladic and Minoanizing forms). The bulk of the material is consumption forms (cups, serving vessels, storage vessels, and cooking ware). Other finds include 140 terracotta figurines, spindlewhorls, loomweights, painted plaster, one piece of bronze, and stone artifacts (obsidian, marble and emery fragments, and chert). Several structures were uncovered, most of which have been interpreted as domestic and one possible shrine.

#### Bibliography:

Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, 63-162; Vaughn 1989, 150–159; Hadjianastasiou 1993, 257–262; Sakellarakis 1996, 94-96; 2020, 160-161; Berg 2007b, 125-128; Hilditch 2008, 292; Vlachopoulos 2016, 119-124; Barber 2017, 455-466; Belza 2018, site 58, 30-37, 70-71, 98-105, 176.

#### Stelida

Rising 151 masl, Stelida is situated on a double peak promontory about three kilometers from Grotta. The site was identified by René Treuil in 1980, and surveyed and excavated by Tristan Carter beginning in 2013, with a primary focus on the Pleistocene deposits. The peak sanctuary was uncovered in 2019 and has been the focus of the excavations since. To date this is comprised of a majority of the finds include pottery. Mostly Minoanizing forms – conical cups, tripod cooking-pots, jugs, jars and amphoras, with a small number of ritual vessels such as cup-rhyta, miniature vases, and lamps. Non ceramic finds include plaster, lithics (chert and obsidian), mica-schist, emery, marble, granite, pebbles, pumice, charcoal, shells, libation tables, bronze (strips, figurines, etc.), a stone ladle, and animal bones. Architecture has been uncovered, consisting of a rectangular building, terrace walls, pavers (schist and granite), and a granite threshold block with a mason's mark. The bulk of material dates to MM IIIB, with lesser quantities of LM IA date.

#### Bibliography:

Carter et al. 2021, 66-90.

#### *Thera*

#### Mavro Rachidi

The site of Mavro Rachidi rises above Akrotiri and has been preliminarily reported by several scholars, though not subjected to systematic survey nor excavation. Reported finds include pottery, painted plaster, pieces of a stone vessel, and metals. No further details

about the finds are known. Several walls were also mentioned. The site has been tentatively connected to a possible iconographical depiction of a peak sanctuary in the North Wall (Upper Zone fresco titled “The Meeting on the Hill and the Pastoral Community”) in the West House at Akrotiri. The general date is Late MC to LC I.

#### Bibliography:

Marinatos 1968, 35-36; Barber 1981, 20, site no. 50; Doulas 1983, 55-56; Morgan 1988, 156-158; Sakellarakis 1996, 96; 2020, 37-38; Belza 2018, site 106, 192

### **Dodecanese Islands**

#### *Rhodes*

#### Philerimos

Situated 267 meters above the site of Trianda, Philerimos was first investigated by Monaco in 1925, then published by Benzi in 1984, and restudied by Marketou in 2009. Material at the site dates from MM to Byzantine, though it is famous for an Archaic sanctuary to Athena. The BA material includes pottery (carinated cups, bridge-spouted jars, high-spouted jug, and cylindrical jars), a brazier, a loomweight, several stone vases (serpentine lid, two stone bowls, alabastron, and a Minoan cup), a fragment of a large basin, two marble pommels, a bronze mirror, a marble discoid weight, and two cast bronze adorants. No architecture dated to BA. The chronology has been debated. According to Marketou’s recent restudy is correct, the bulk of material dates to LM IA, with some Mycenaean material dating from LH IIIA2-III B.

#### Bibliography:

Monaco 1941, 48; Benzi 1984, 93-105; Sakellarakis 1996, 93-94; Marketou 2009, 74-76, 91; 2014, 183

### **Ionian Islands**

#### *Kythera*

#### Agios Georgios

The well excavated and published site of Agios Georgios rises 350 masl and four kilometers from Kastri. It was first investigated by Sakellarakis from 1992-1995 and re-excavated by Banou from 2011-2015. Material at the site is extensive, but generally dates from MMIB-LMIB, with a majority of material dating to the Neopalatial period. The bulk of artifacts is pottery (conical cups, incense burners, pithoi, fineware, rhyton, amphora, and jugs). Other material includes 113 bronze figurines, a small number of terracotta figurines, metal votive weapons, jewelry, beads, an ox-hide ingot fragment, stone vases (including seven stone ladles), melting debris, libation tables, horns of consecration, double axes,



pebbles, spindle-whorls, loom-weights, shells, animal bones, stone tools, lumps of unworked rock crystal, lapis lacedaimonius, Spartan basalt, and rosso antico. While no architecture survives at the site, traces of painted plaster and mortar suggests possible architecture.

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Sakellarakis 1996, 81-99; 2011; 2013; Tournavitou 2009, 213-230; 2011, 757-776; 2014; Sapouna-Sakellaraki 2012; Banou 2017a, 231-241; 2017b, 1-11; 2018, 47-57; 2020, 199-206.

Leska

Situated on the middle summit of Mount Mermigkari, Leska was surveyed and excavated by Georgiadis. The site has been only preliminarily published. The majority of the material dates to the Neopalatial period, though a few sherds dating to tEH and MM IB-II have been noted. The bulk of material includes Minoanizing forms such as conical cups, tripod cooking vessels, straight-sided cups, jugs, bowls, kalathoi, and miniature vessels. Other finds include clay balls, horns of consecration, two basins, a conical cup made out of local porous stone, fragmented marble libation tables, thirty pebbles, unworked local chert, a stone pounder, an obsidian blade, a globular bronze pinhead, a short rectangular bronze sheet, a broken and partly melted piece of bronze, a bronze pendant in the shape of a helmet, and part of an animal figurine. No architecture was reported.

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Georgiadis 2012, 7-24; 2014, 41-53; 2016, 295-302.

**Mainland Greece**

*Argolid*

Maleatas

One site on the mainland with possible Minoan influence is Maleatas, placed on Mount Kynortion at Epidauros. This site is part of the larger sanctuary to Asklepios and named after the father of Asklepios: Apollo Maleatas. It was first investigated by Papadimitriou from 1948-1956 and then by Lambrinoudakis starting in 1974. Due to the historical architecture, the site is heavily disturbed. Artifacts include pottery (including early forms of Vapheio cups, stemmed cups, and conical cups), figurines (phi, psi, an abstract form, and animal figurines), stone finds (fragments of a steatite rhyton, undecorated stone vases, seals, and a LHII lentoid seal), and metal finds (bronze double axes, weapons (full swords, votive swords, daggers, and spearheads), and a bronze animal-like rhyta)). BA architecture at the site includes two terraces: a large platform with an ash altar and another, larger terrace with a low retaining wall with small sacred rooms. An

associated settlement is found upslope from the site, dating from MH-LH IIIB. The material at Maleatas dates from LH I-LH III.

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Papadimitriou 1948, 90-111; 1949a, 91-99; 1949b, 361-383; 1950, 194-202; 1951, 204-212; Lambrinoudakis 1974, 93-101; 1975, 162-175; 1976, 202-209; 1977, 187-194; 1981a, 59-65; 1981b, 151-181; 1983, 151-159; 1987, 52-65; 1988b, 21-29; Hägg 1984, 119-122; Sakellarakis 1996, 97 footnote 187; Briault 2007, 130-131.

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## FIGURES

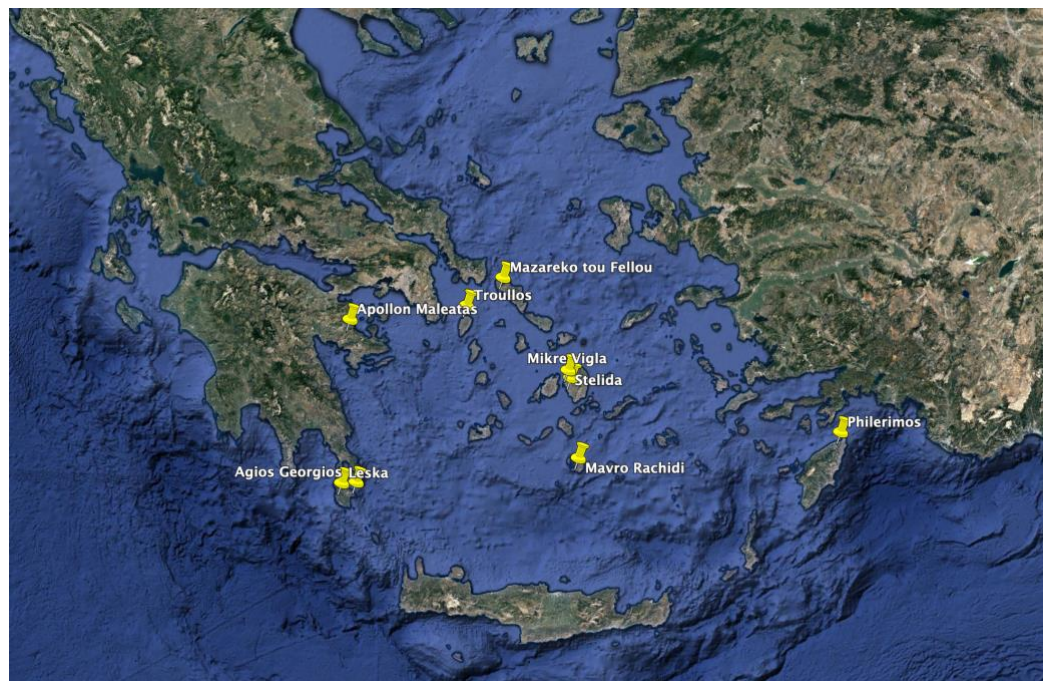


Figure 1: Map of all possible non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. By author.

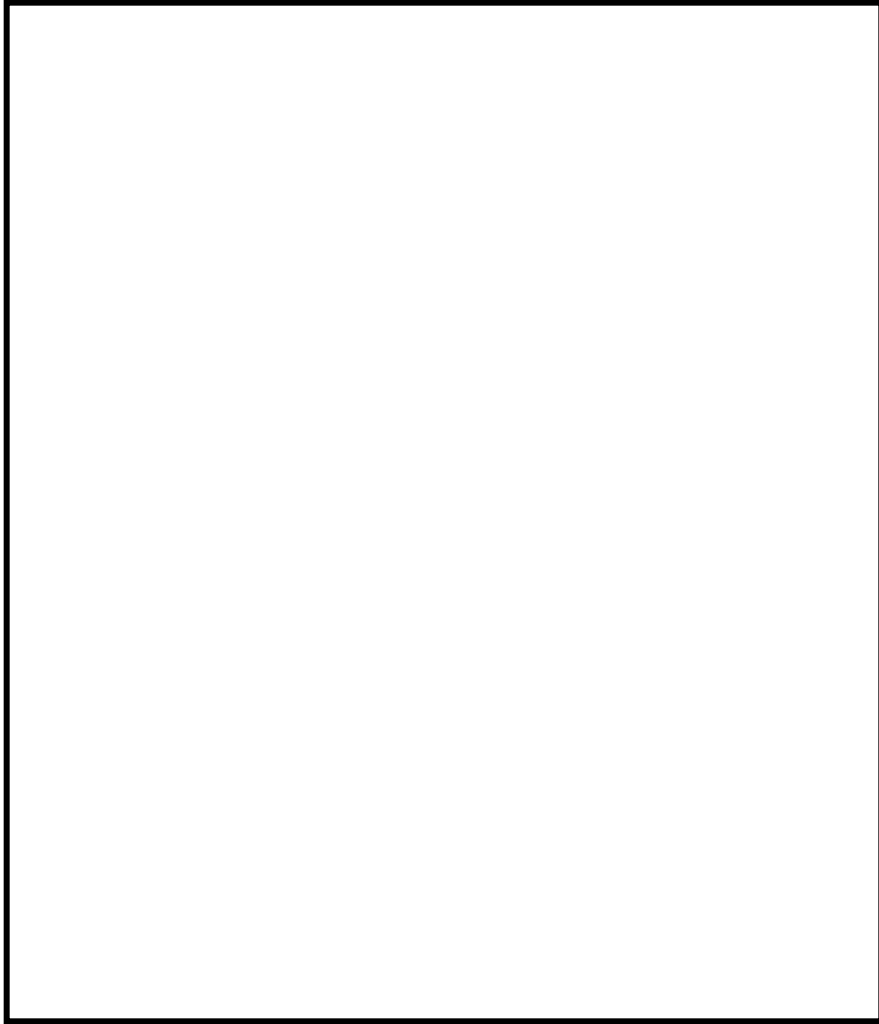


Figure 2: Top image: locational shot of Stelida; Bottom image: Trenches 44 and 47.  
From Carter et al. 2021, fig. 3.

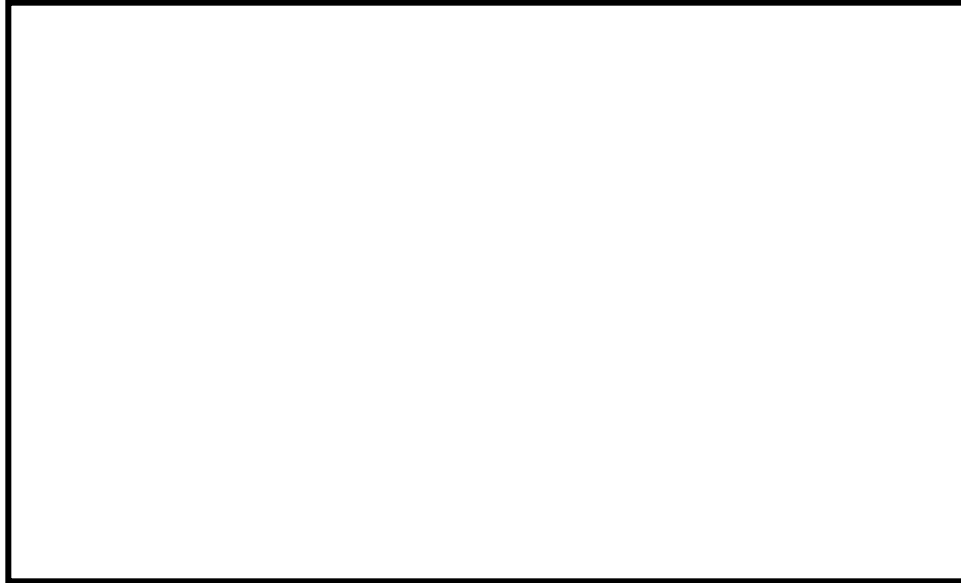


Figure 3: Image of Mount Juktas from the shore. From Peatfield 2013, fig. 1.



Figure 4: Fragment of a stone relief vase from Gypsades at Knossos depicting a peak sanctuary. From Rutkowski 1986, fig. 95.

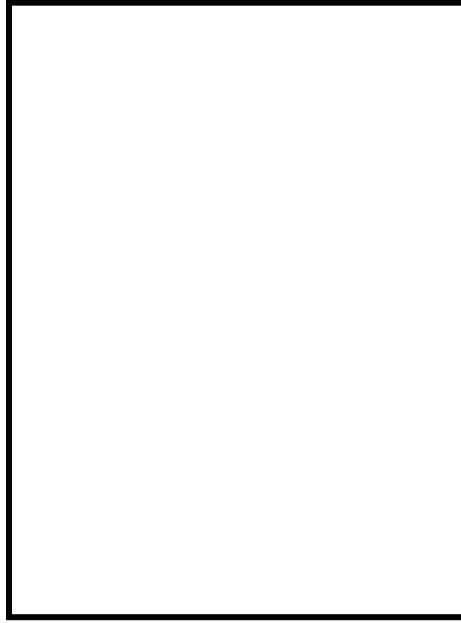


Figure 5: Relief decorated rhyton from Knossos showing processing males with ladles. From Evans 1928, fig. 486.

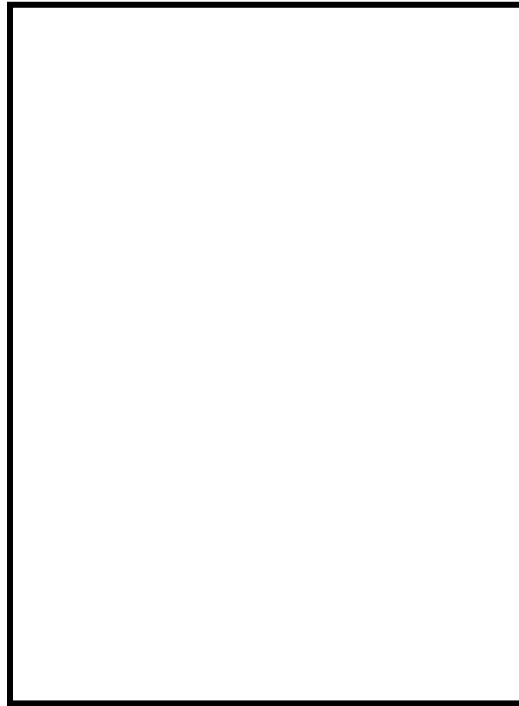


Figure 6: Rhyton from Zakros. From Tully 2021, fig. 2.1.





Figure 7: Detail of the building from the Zakros Rhyton. From Tully 2021, fig. 2.2.

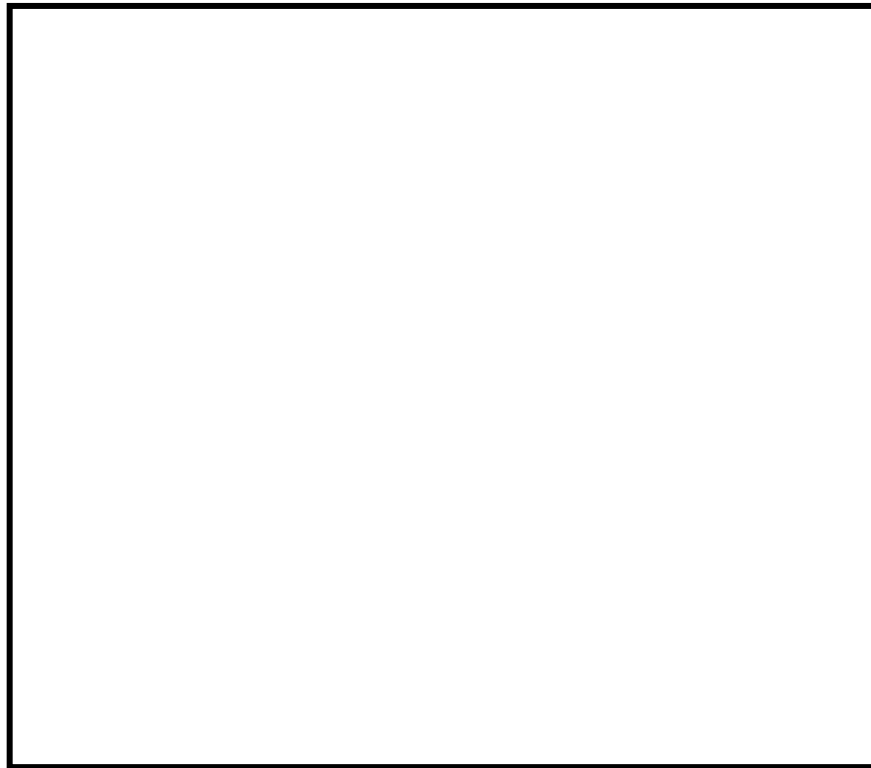


Figure 8: Reconstruction of the peak sanctuary from the Zakros Rhyton. From Sakellarakis 2020, fig. 7.

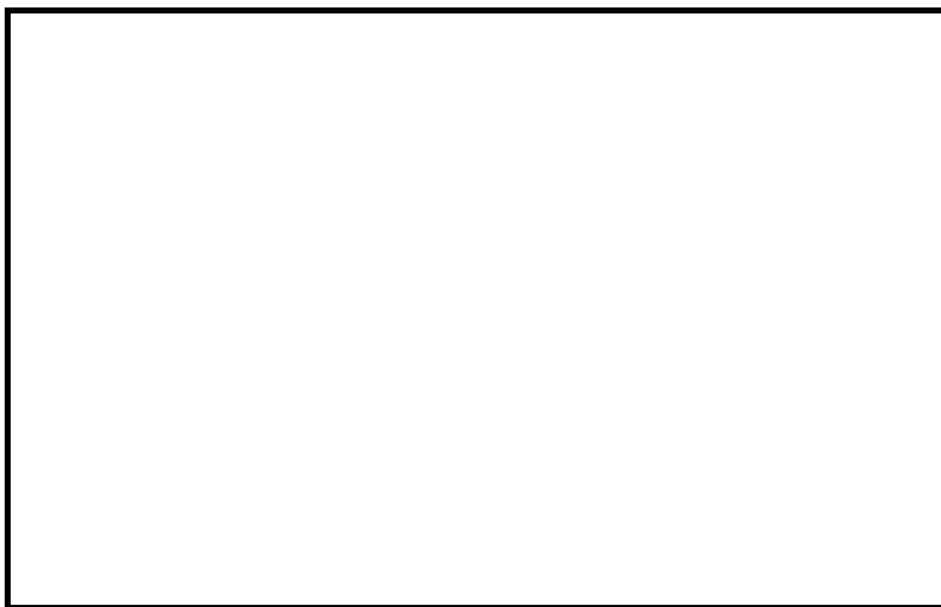


Figure 9: Sealing from Knossos. From Sakellarakis 2020, fig. 19.

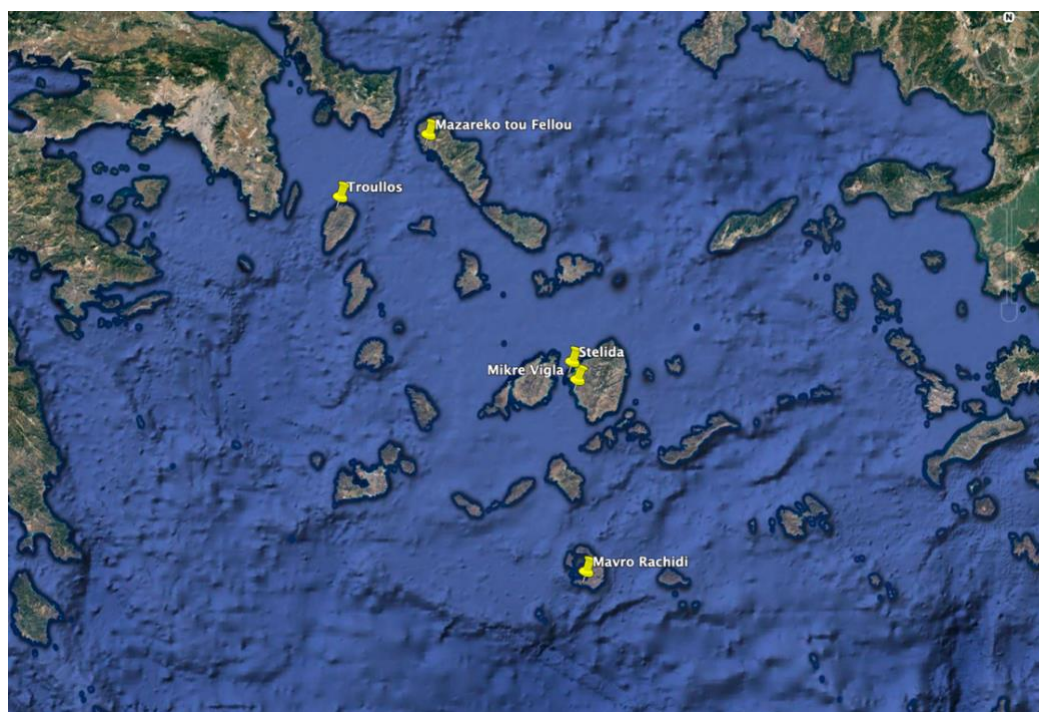


Figure 10: Map of possible Cycladic peak sanctuaries. By author.



Figure 11: Map of Western String Islands, Naxos and Crete included from emphasis. By permission, M. Harder.

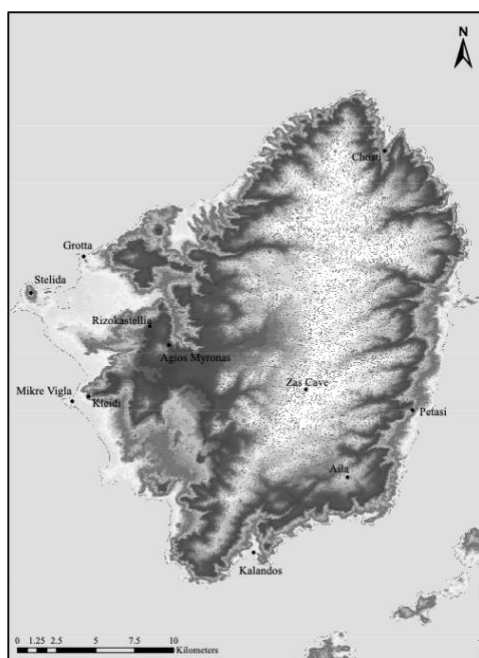


Figure 12: Map of Naxian sites with MC-LCI material. By permission, M. Harder.

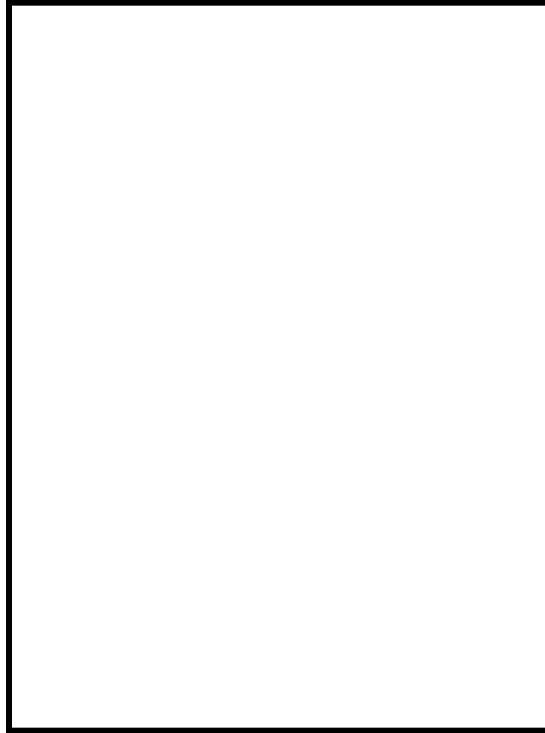


Figure 13: Site Plan of Mikre Vigla. From Barber and Hadjianastasiou 1989, fig. 2.



Figure 14: Image of the hill of Mike Vigla from the beach facing North. By permission, photo by K. Harper.

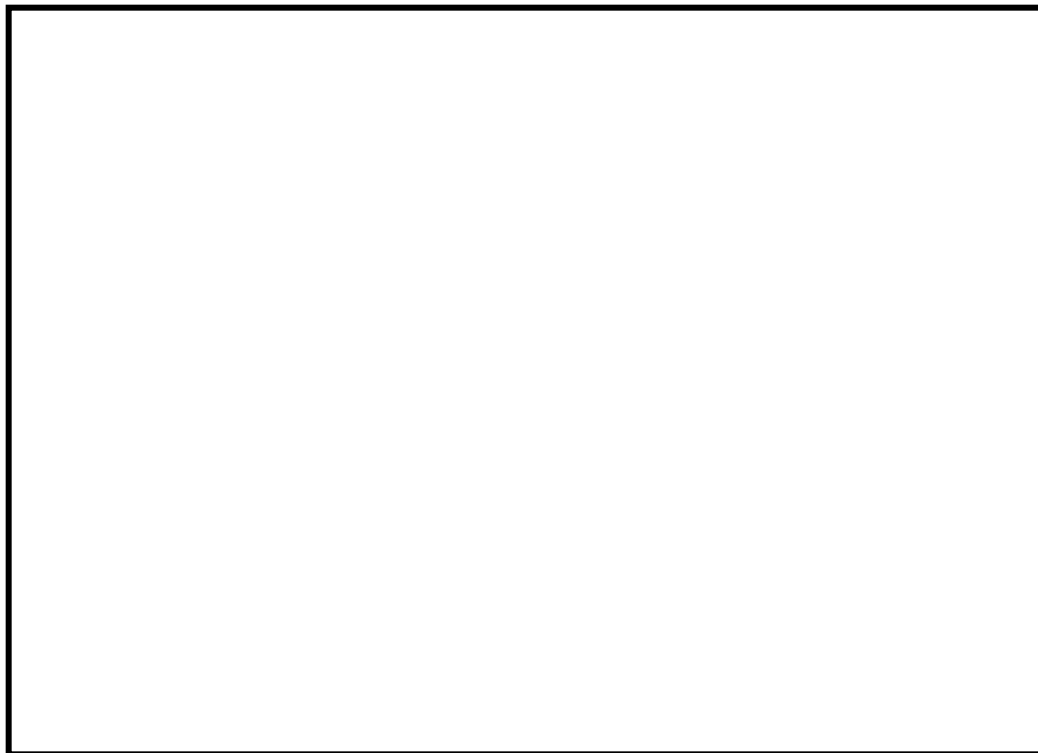


Figure 15: The terracotta figurines from Mikre Vigla. From Barber 2017, figs. 32.3-32.7.

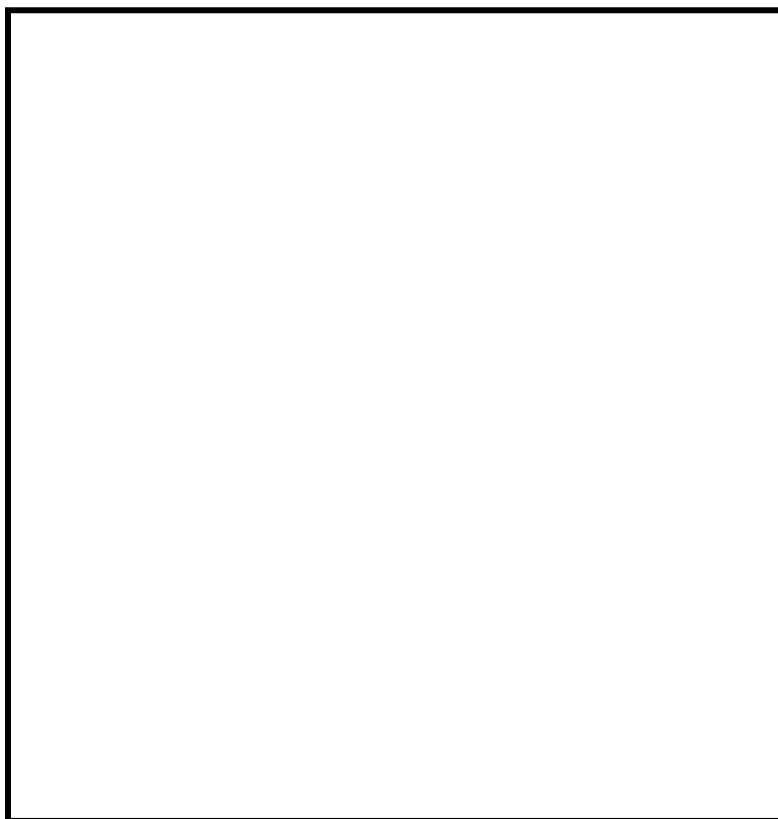


Figure 16: Stone ladle from Stelida. From Carter et al. 2021, fig. 9.

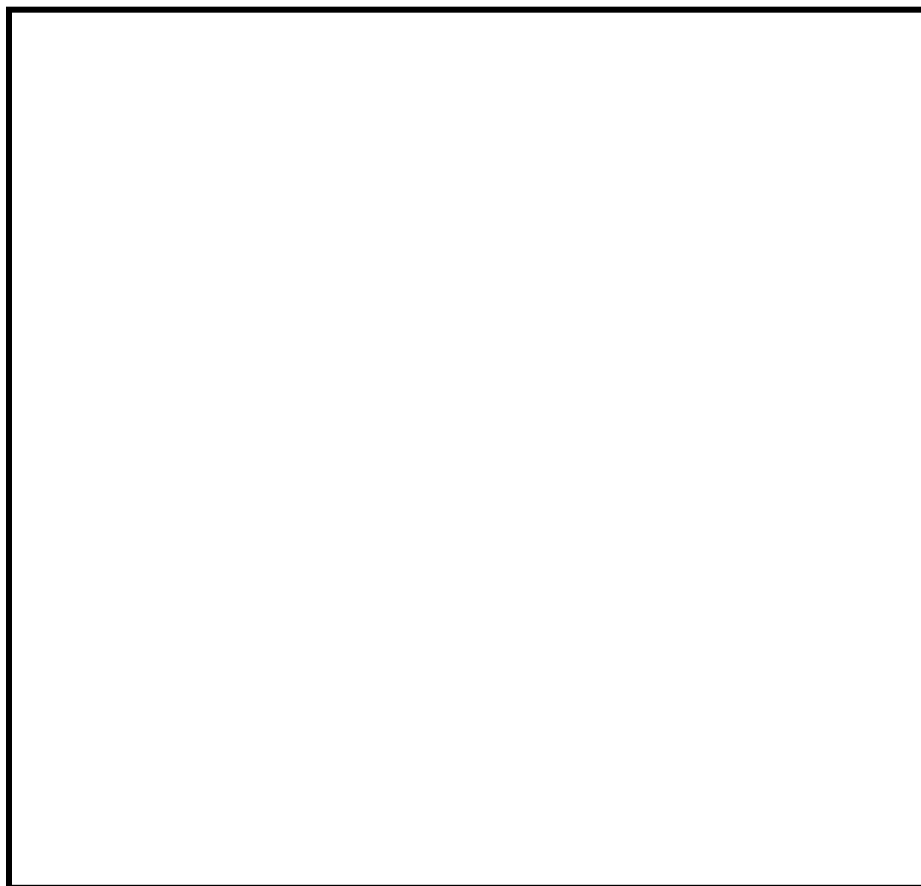


Figure 17: Top: drawing of the remaining walls on the top-most peak at Stelida (N. Jackson); Bottom: a section of the walls. From Carter et al. 2021, fig. 4.

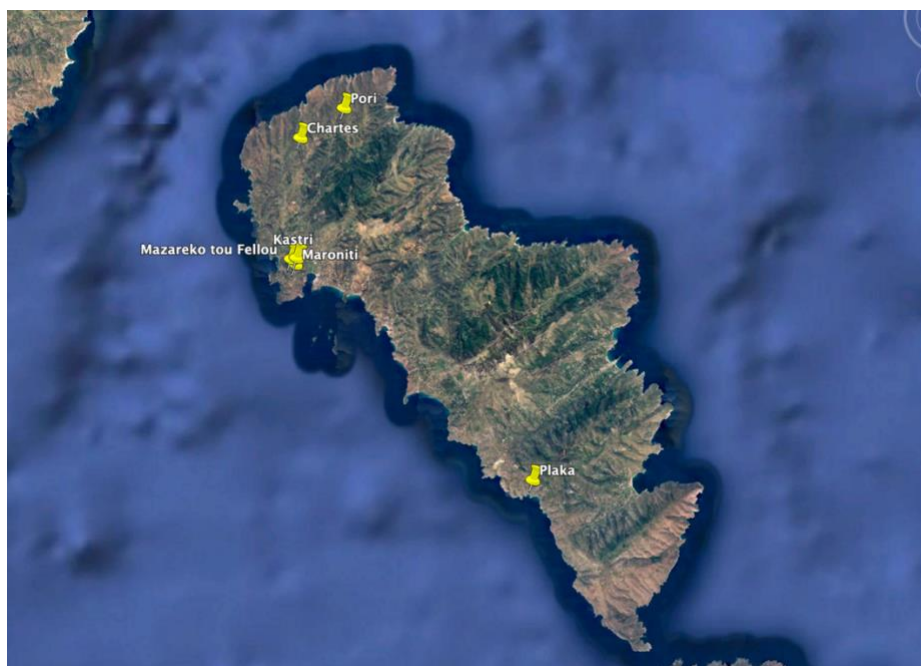


Figure 18: Map of Andros of sites mentioned in text. By author.



Figure 19: Map of Theran sites mentioned in text. By author.



Figure 20: Meeting on the Hill, Pastoralism, Shipwreck, and Warriors from the North Wall (Upper Zone) in the West House at Akrotiri. From Morgan 1988, pl. 122.



Figure 21: Map of Kean sites mentioned in text. By author.

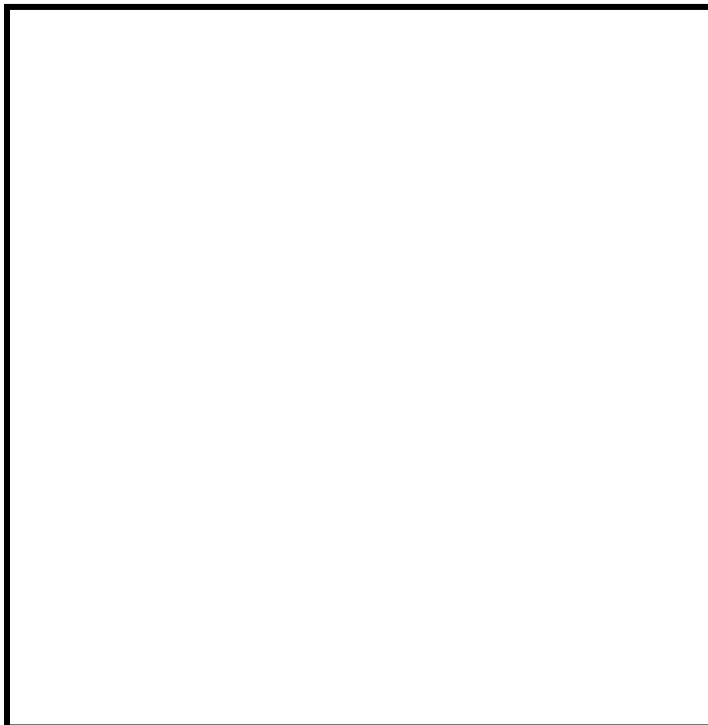


Figure 22: Architecture at Troullos. From Caskey 1971, fig. 13.



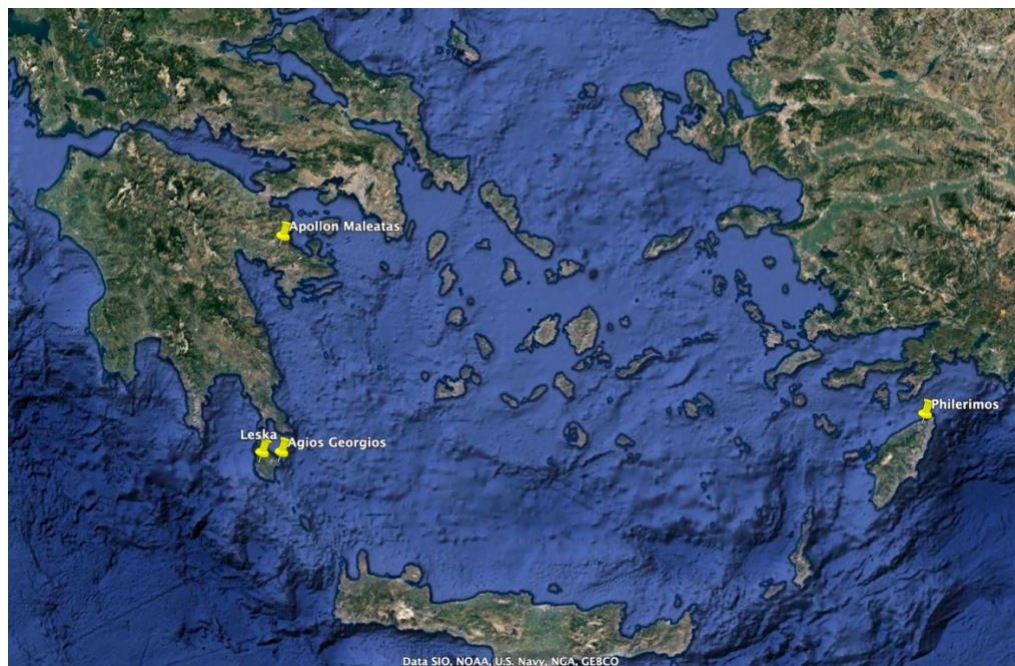


Figure 23: Map of possible peak sanctuaries outside the Cyclades. By author.

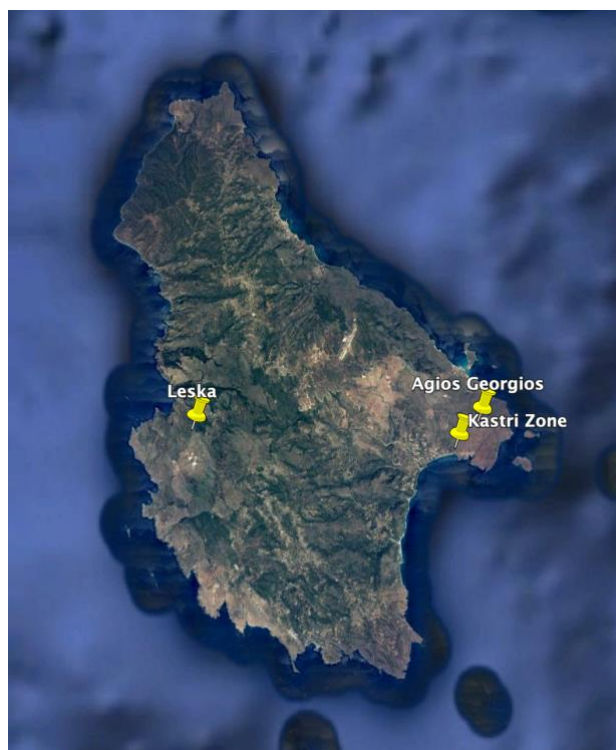


Figure 24: Map of the main sites of interest on Kythera. By author.

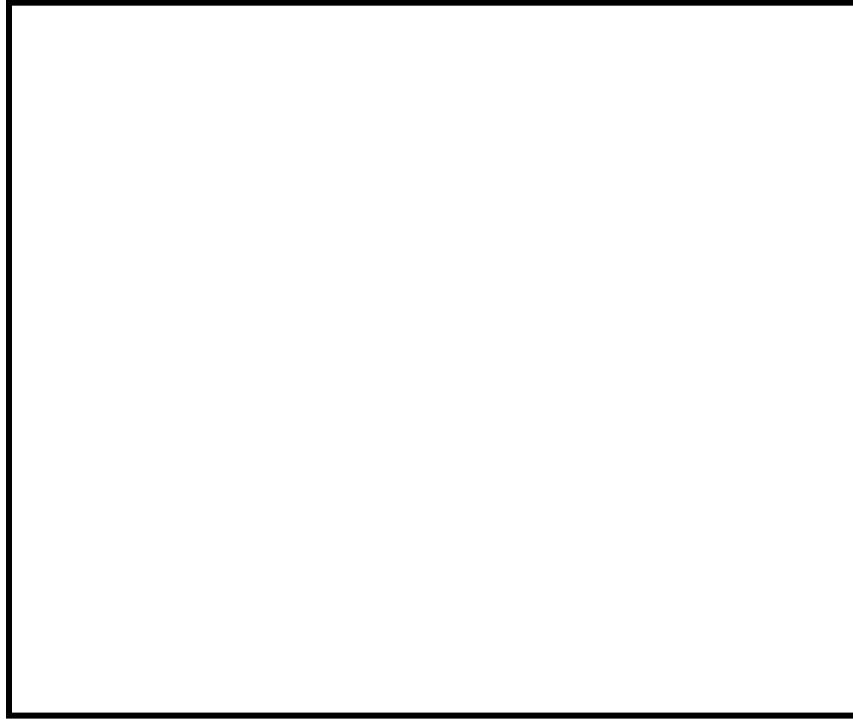


Figure 25: Map of 80+ Neopalatial Sites from the Kythera Island Project, from Bevan 2002, fig. 2.



Figure 26: Layout of Agios Georgios, from Sakellarakis 2012, 294.



Figure 27: Agios Georgios as seen from the south. From Georgiadis 2012, fig. 9.



Figure 28: A selection of bronze figurines from Agios Georgios. A. E1, B. E34, C. E73, and C. E77. From Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, pls. 1, 21, 32, 36, respectively.

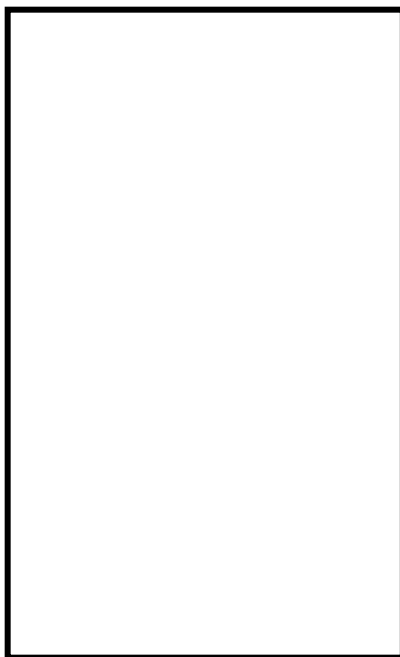


Figure 29: Linear A inscribed stone ladle from Agios Georgios. From Sapouna-Sakellarakis 2012, 494.



Figure 30: The summit of Leska as seen from the East. From Georgiadis 2012, fig. 4.



Figure 31: Map of the MBA-LBAIA sites on Rhodes. By author.

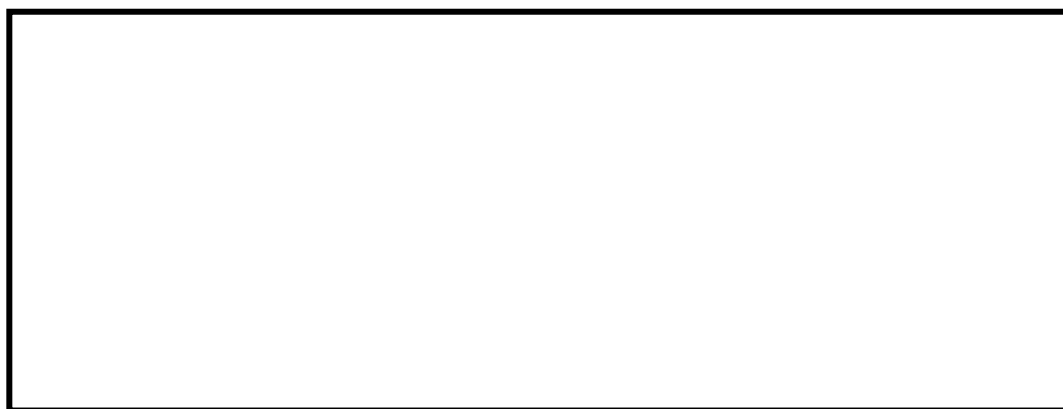


Figure 32: The summit of Mount Philerimos. From Marketou 2008, fig. 18b.

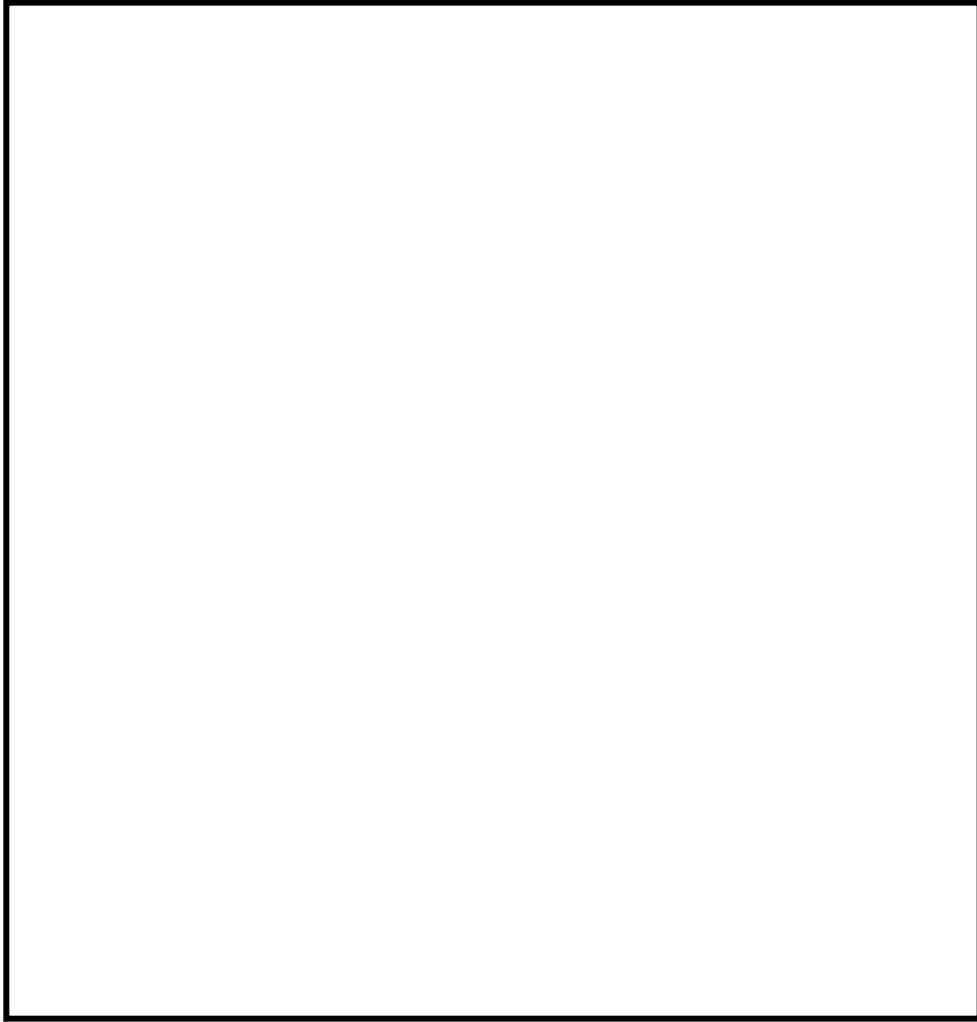


Figure 33: Site 4 on Rhodes. From Marketou 2009, fig. 7.

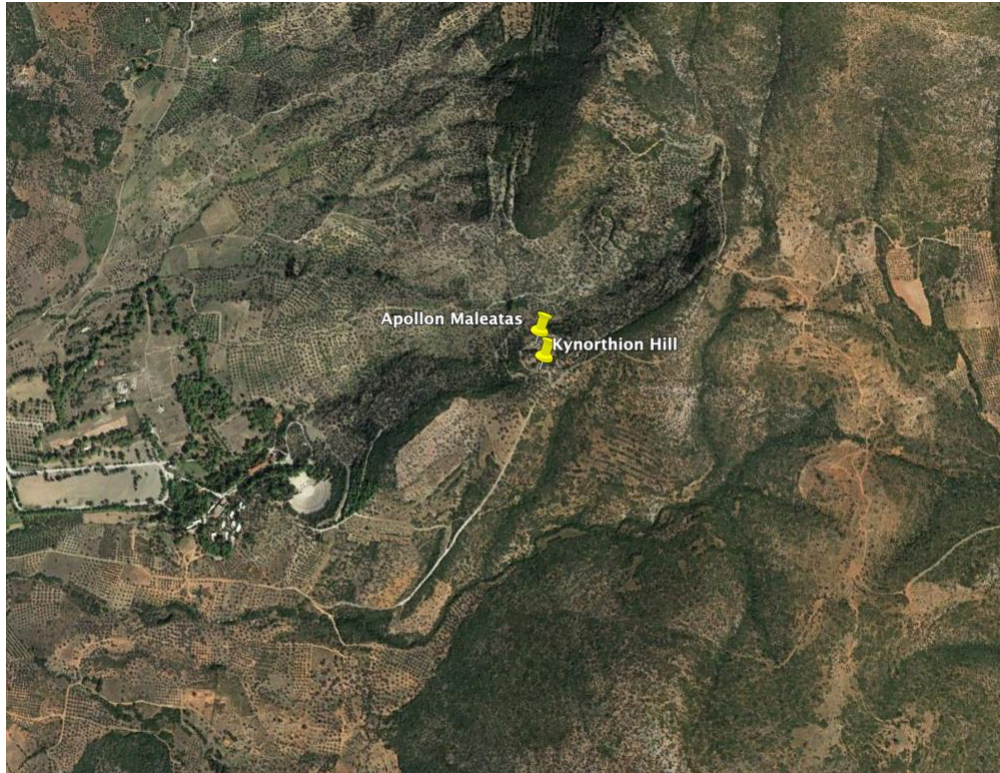


Figure 34: Map of the settlement and sanctuary on the mainland mentioned in the text. By author.



Figure 35: Buildings associated with the settlement near Maleatas. From Lambrinoudakis 2002, fig. 1.



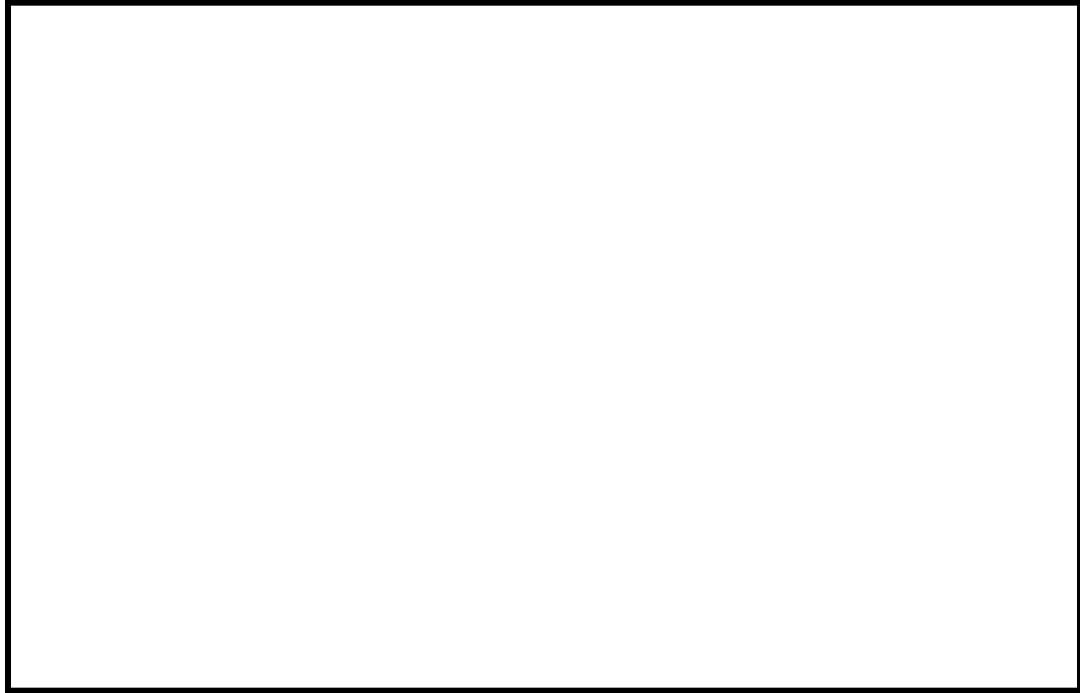


Figure 36: Plan of the open-air altar area at Maleatas. From Lambrinoudakis 1981, fig. 3.



Figure 37: Large Minoanizing double axe. From Lambrinoudakis 1981, fig. 10.

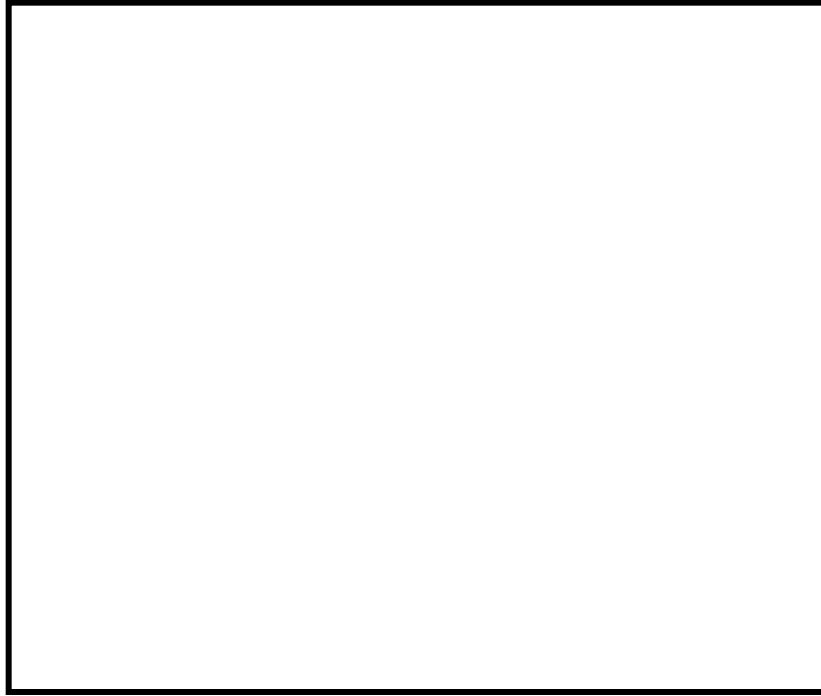


Figure 38: Smaller double axes. From Lambrinoudakis 1981, fig. 12.

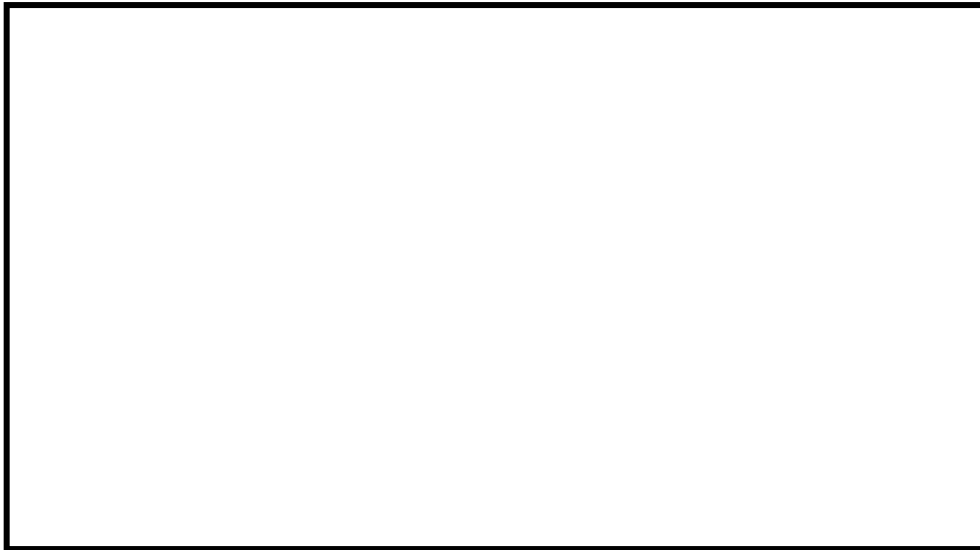


Figure 39: Mycenaean-like weapons. From Lambrinoudakis 1981, fig. 13.



Figure 40: Map of Neopalatial Peak Sanctuaries on Crete. By author.

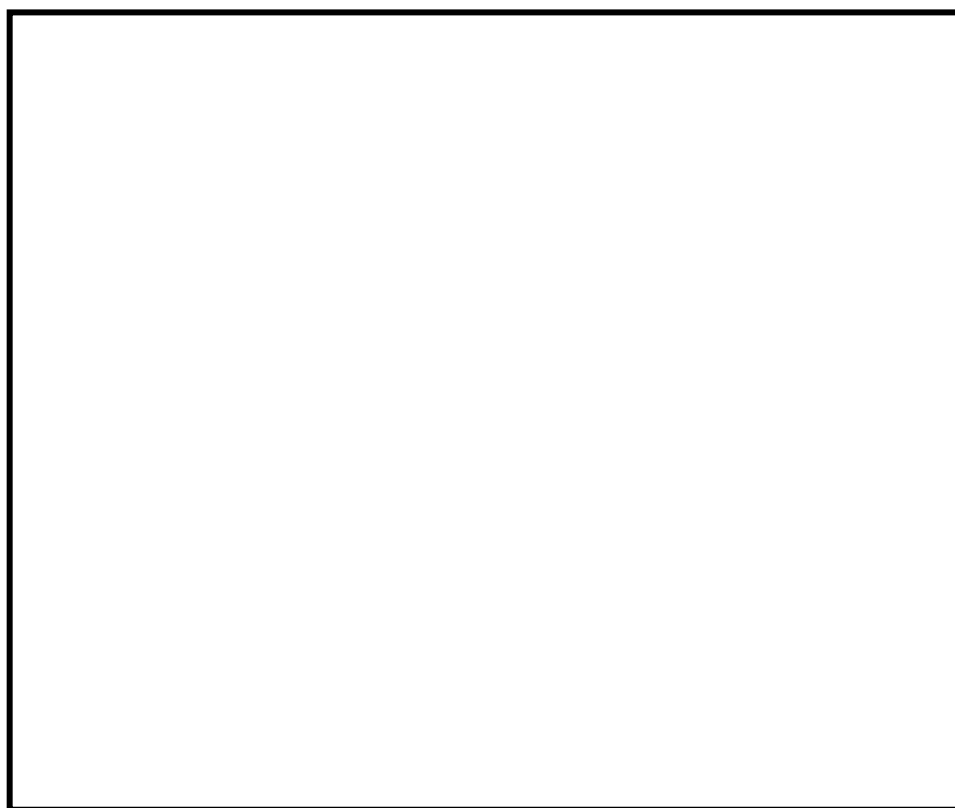


Figure 41: Distribution of Neopalatial ladles. From Carter et al. 2021, fig. 10 (modified from Bevan 2007: fig.6.19 by M. Harder).

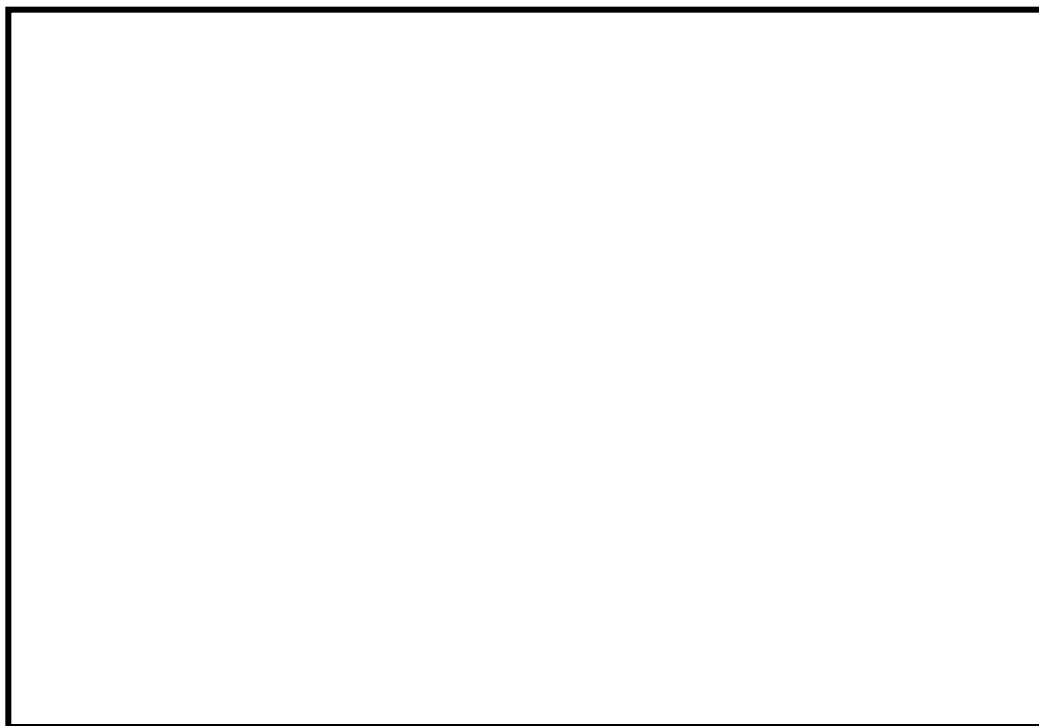


Figure 42: Clay offering table from Agios Georgios. From Sakellarakis 2020, fig. 29.

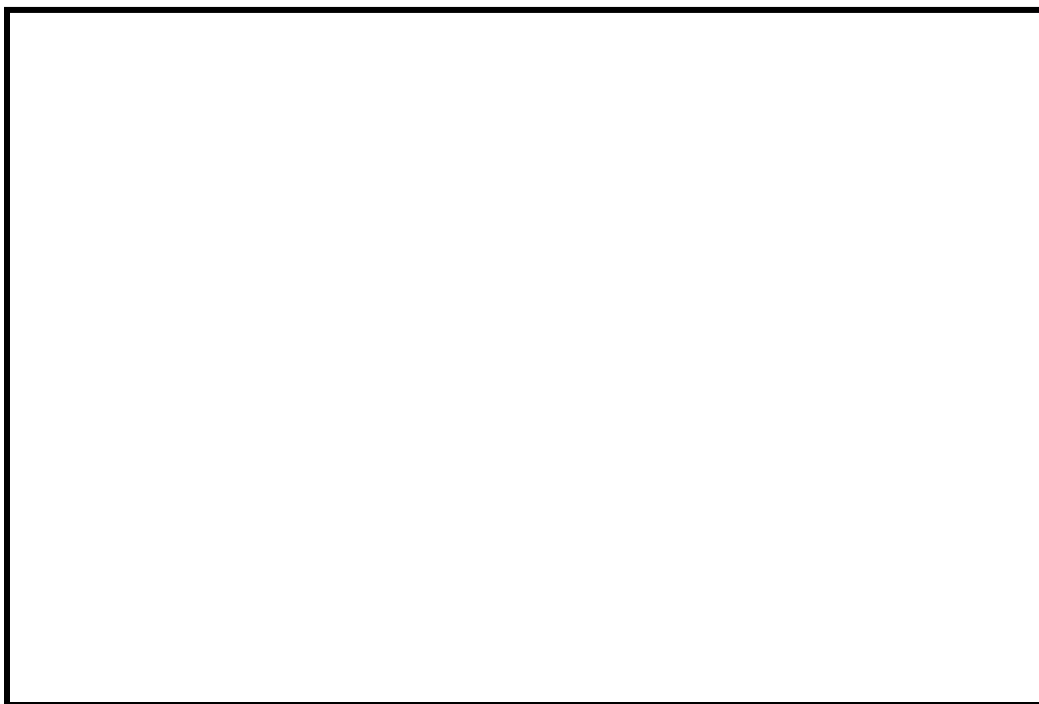


Figure 43: Clay horns of consecration from Agios Georgios. From Sakellarakis 2020, fig. 27.



Figure 44: The lines of sight between the Cretan Neopalatial peak sanctuaries. From Soetens et al. 2998, fig. 6.



Figure 45: Viewshed analysis of the Stelida Peak Sanctuary and Mikre Vigla. From Carter et al. 2021, fig. 15.

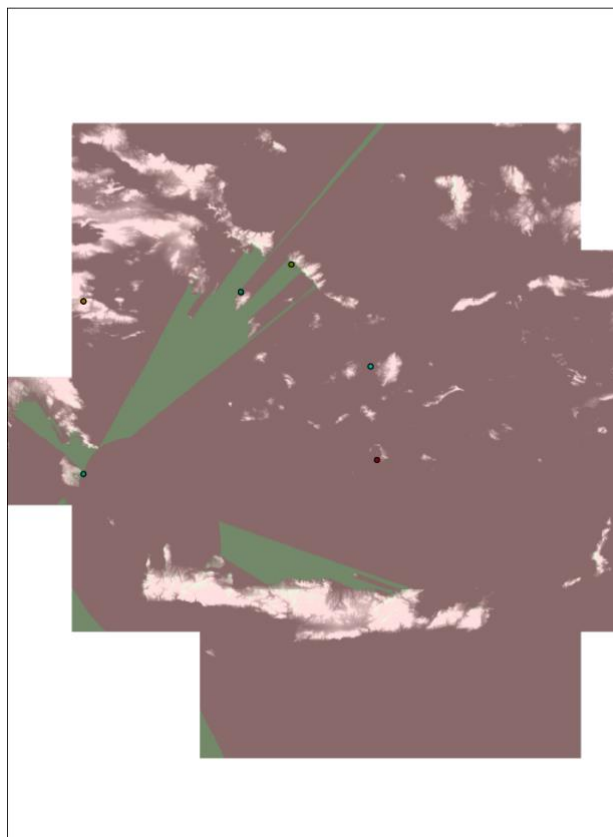


Figure 46: Viewshed of Agios Georgios. By permission, M. Harder. Green dot on Kythera represents Agios Georgios, while the other dots represent the other alleged, non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. The green signifies any visible locations from Agios Georgios.

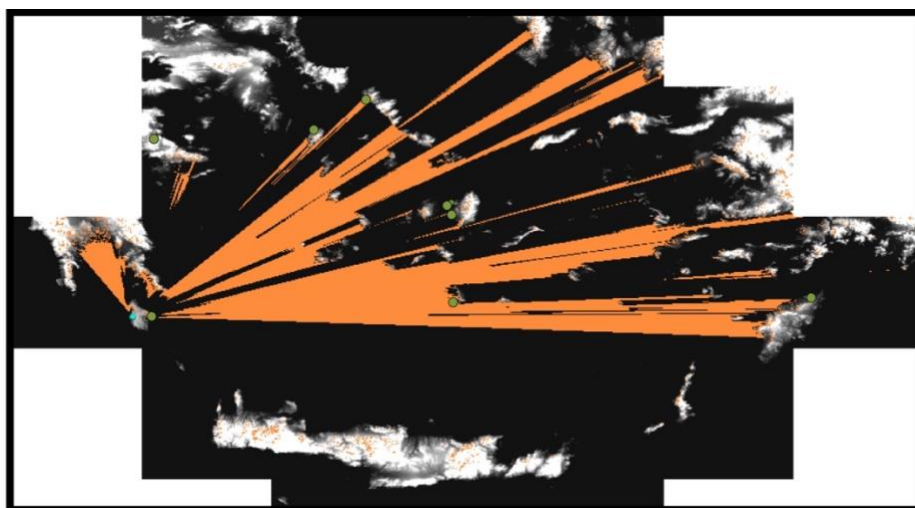


Figure 47: Viewshed of Leska. By permission, M. Harder. The green dot on the western side of Kythera represents Leska, while the other dots represent the alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. The orange signifies any visible location from Leska.

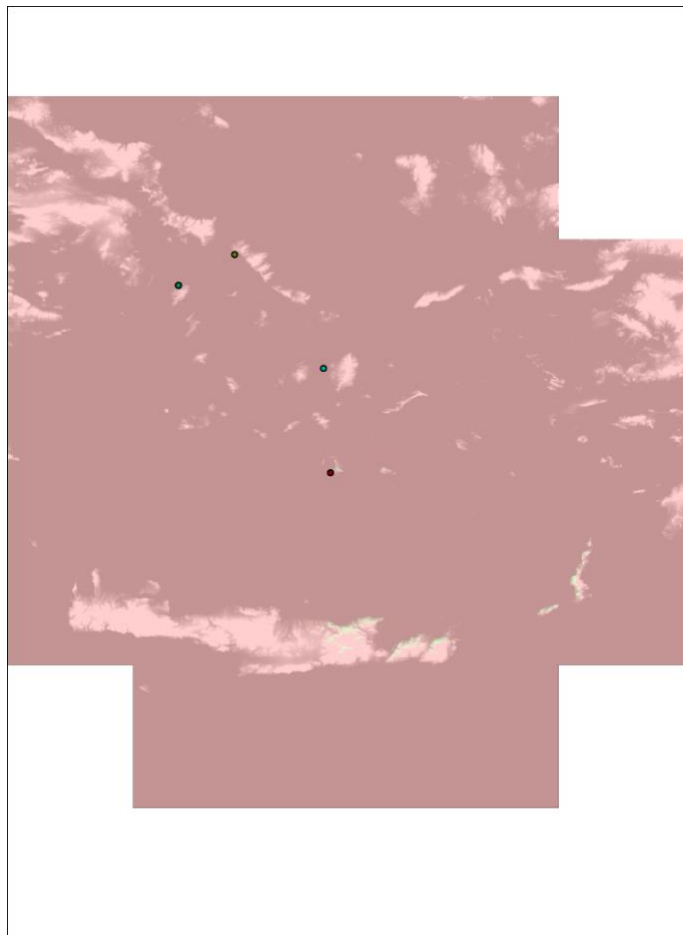


Figure 48: Viewshed of Marvo Rachidi. By permission, M. Harder. The red dot represents Mavro Rachidi, while the other dots represent the alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. The green signifies any visible location from Mavro Rachidi.

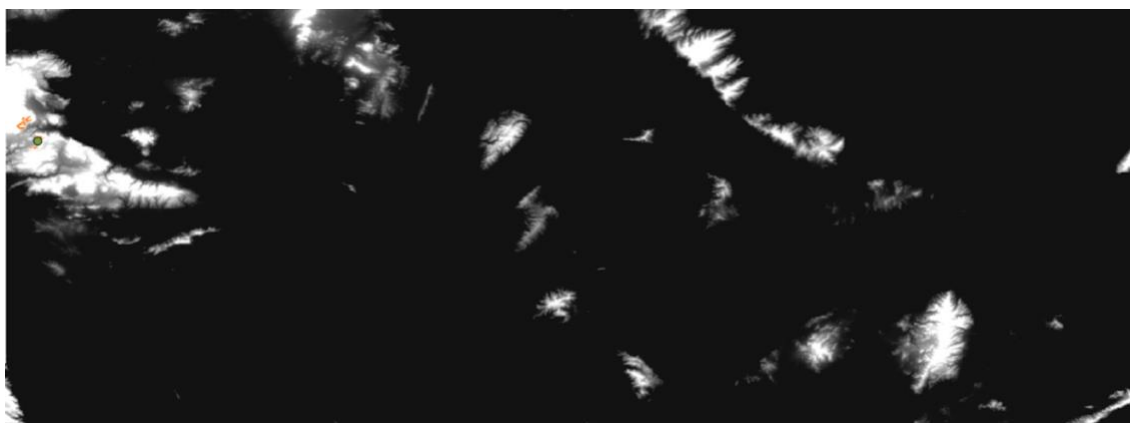


Figure 49: Viewshed of Maleatas. By permission, M. Harder. The green dot represents Maleatas. The orange signifies any visible location from Maleatas.

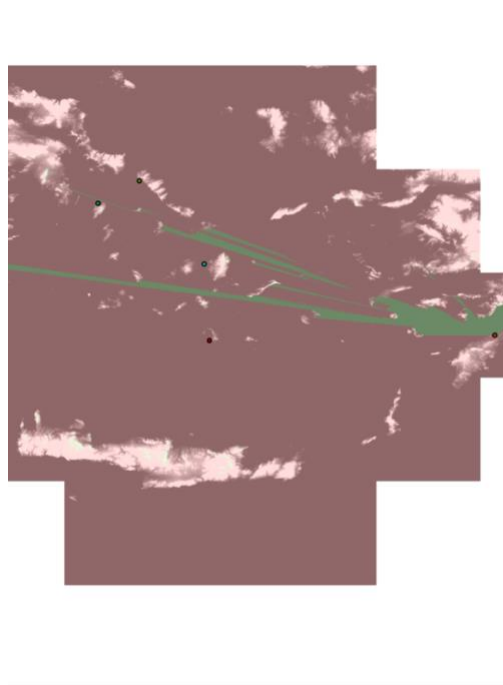


Figure 50: Viewshed of Philerimos. By permission, M. Harder. The red dot on Rhodes represents Philerimos, while the other dots represent the alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. The green signifies any visible location from Philerimos.

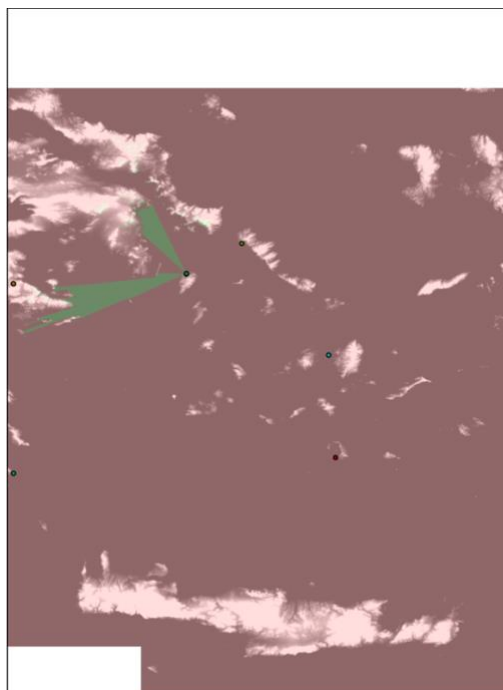


Figure 51: Viewshed of Troullos. By permission, M. Harder. The green dot on Kea represents Troullos, while the other dots represent the alleged non-Cretan peak sanctuaries. The green signifies any visible location from Troullos.



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Figure 52: Preview of my database in Microsoft Excel. This shows the categories of information I noted and the different way I subdivided the data to draw conclusions and seek comparisons across the site.

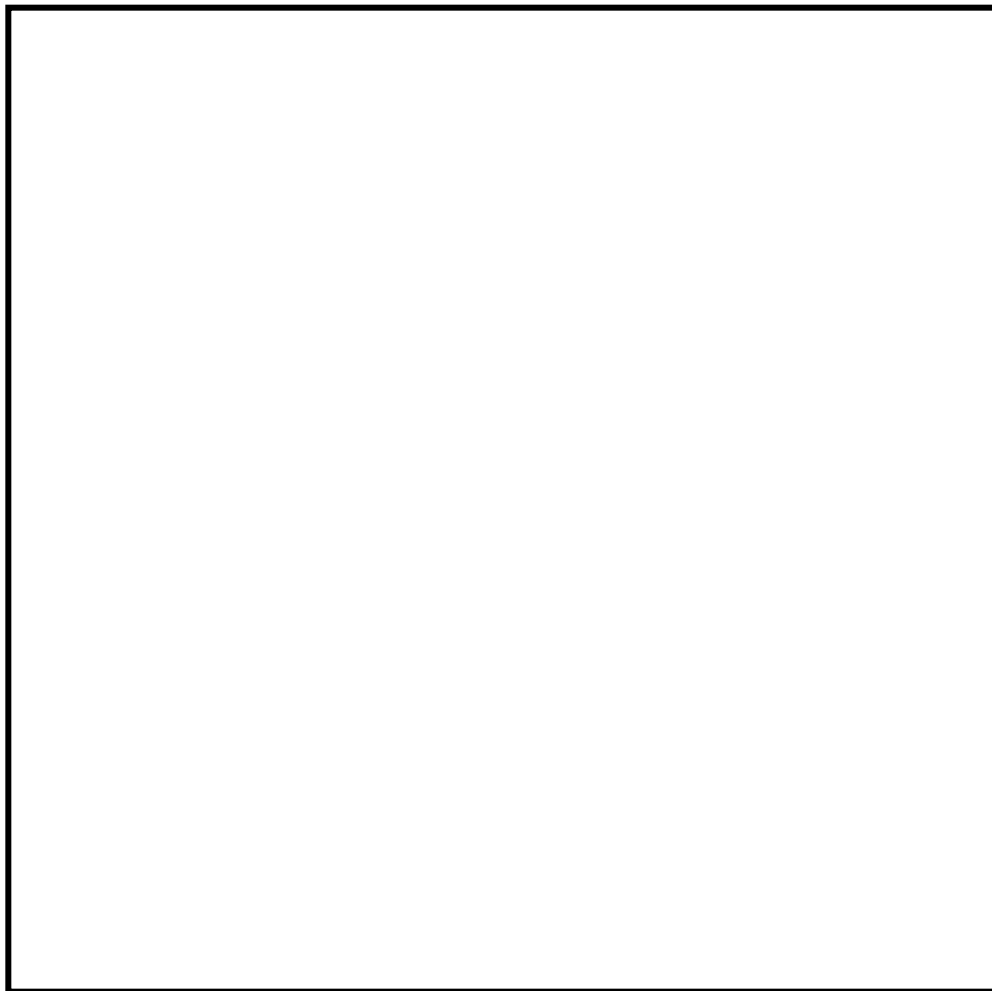


Figure 53: Conical cups typology from Knossos. From Knappett et al. 2015, fig. 1.6.



Figure 54: Selection of 'low' conical cups from Akrotiri. From Gillis 1990a, fig. 4.

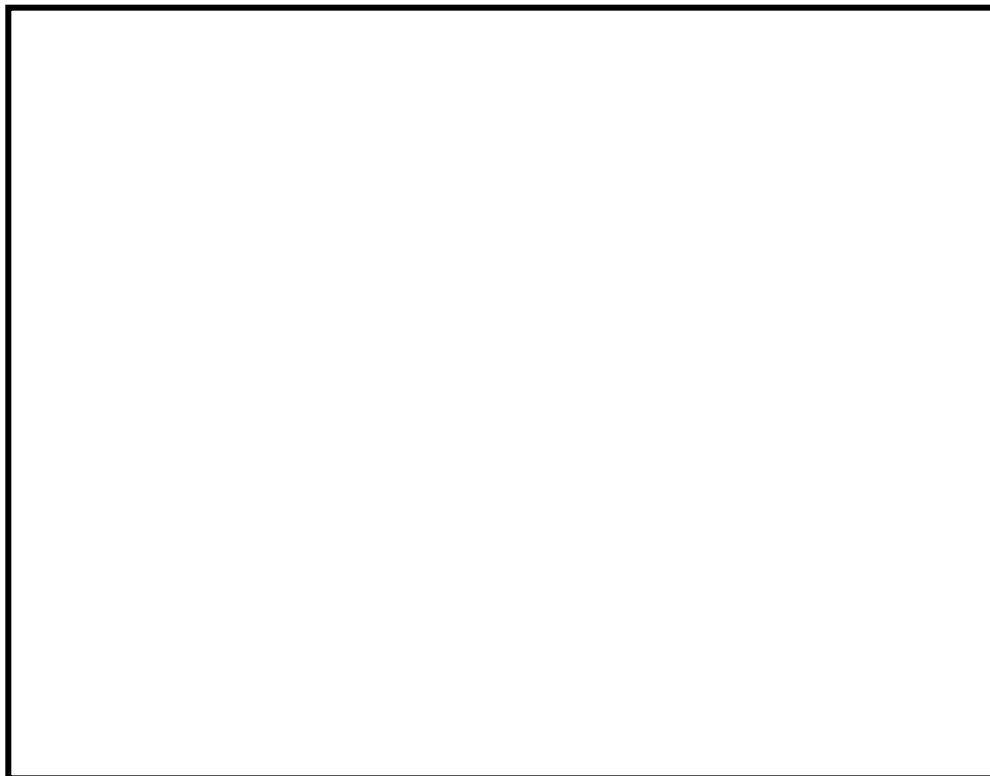


Figure 55: Phylakopi Conical Cups. Number 752 – Saucer type. Numbers 753-757 - Low type. Numbers 758-759 – Bell-shaped type. Numbers 760-762 – Tall type. From Barber 2008, fig. 40.

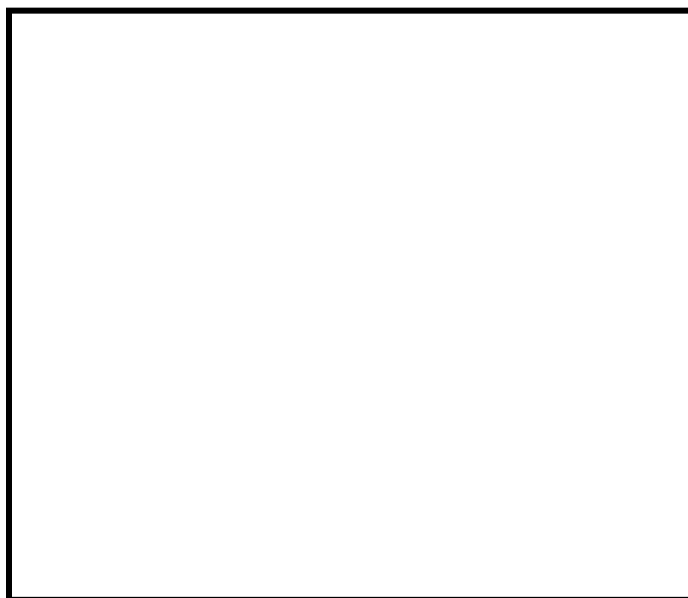


Figure 56: Type Chart for 'handleless' cups at Ayia Irini. Cups L1-4 (low types); Cups M1-4 (medium types); Cups H1-4 (high types). From Davis and Lewis 1985, fig. 5-3.

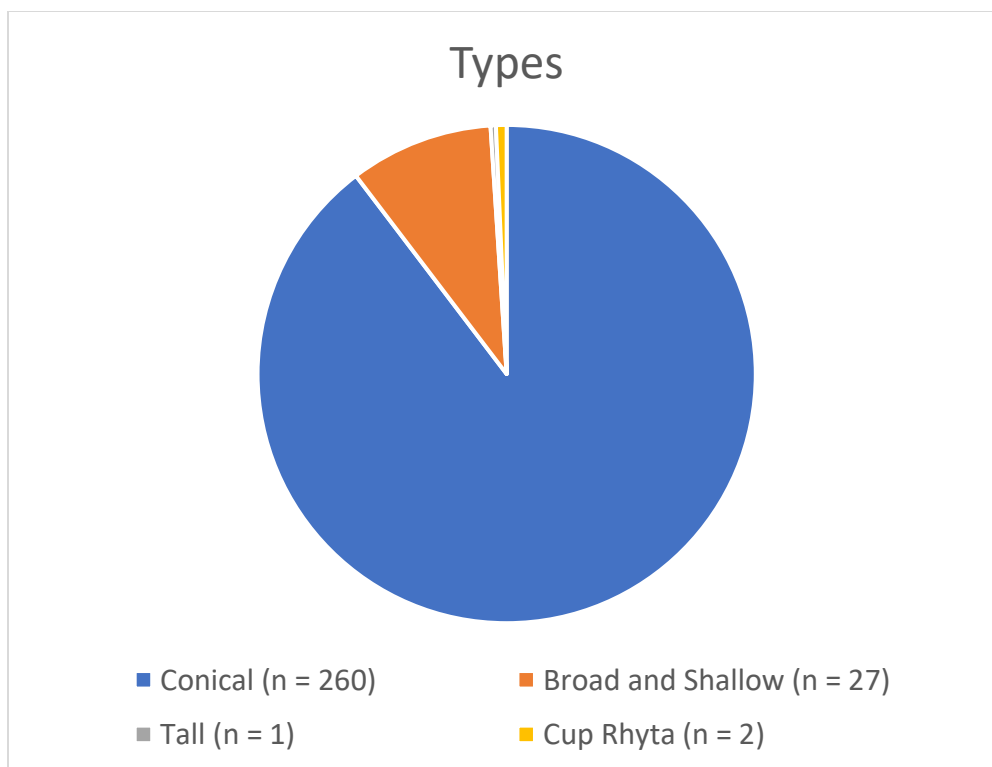


Figure 57: Graph of types of conical cups from Stelida. By author



Figure 58: Conical example of a conical cup from Stelida. From Carter et al. 2021, fig. 6, E.



Figure 59: Broad and shallow example of a conical cup from Stelida. From Carter et al. 2021, fig. 6, B.



Figure 60: C. string marks on the base of a conical cup from Stelida; D. interior ribbing from a conical cup from Stelida and has burning marks. From Carter et al. 2021, fig. 5.



Figure 61: Mark on base of conical cup, emphasized with arrow, from Stelida that is seen on a few bases.

DG-A/044/814/X-Find 50. Photo by author.



Figure 62: Mark on base of a conical cup from Stelida – straight line and oval impression, emphasized with arrow.

DG-A/052/885.3/X-Find 6. Photo by author.



Figure 63: Mark on the base of a conical cup from Stelida, emphasized by arrow. Wedge shape?

DG-A/052/888.1/X-Find 26. Photo by author.



Figure 64: Mark on the base of the conical cup, emphasized by arrows. Two semi-linear marks

DG-A/052/889.2/X-Find 5. Photo by author.



Figure 65: Mark on base of a conical cup from Stelida - deep round impression, emphasized by arrow.  
DG-A/052/889.2/X-Find 8. Photo by author.



Figure 66: Mark on base of a conical cup - one linear mark.  
DG-A/052/900.3/X-Find 21. Photo by author.





Figure 67: Mark on body of a conical cup from Stelida, emphasized by arrow.  
DG-A/052/888.1/X-Find 30. Photo by author.



Figure 68: Example of plaster on the interior of a conical cup from Stelida, emphasized by arrow. Photo by author.

### Vita

Kristine A. Mallinson was born June 19, 1993, in Toledo, Ohio. She received her B.A. in 2015 in Classics with honors after writing a thesis entitled “The Representation of Others in Ancient Greece: An Examination of Persians, Scythians, and Amazons” from Denison University. She began her archaeological career in 2013 when she participated in the Azoria Project and in 2014 as a participant in the Summer Session at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. She earned her M.A. in 2017 with a thesis entitled “Stories of the Dead? A Reexamination of Helladic Tombs at Asine and Prosymna” in Classics with an emphasis in Archaeology from Texas Tech University. In 2017, Kristine joined the department of Art History and Archaeology at the University of Missouri for her doctoral work. She has participated in several archaeological projects but is a longstanding team member of the Stelida Naxos Archaeological Project.