

## WAIST COMPRESSION IN THE AEGEAN LATE BRONZE AGE\*

**John G. Younger**  
**Duke University**

### INTRODUCTION

Preclassical Aegean people practiced several types of body modification, but none has received much attention. In the Neopalatial period in Crete (ca. 1700–1450 BCE), for instance, there is clear evidence that hair lengths and cuts changed according to age grades, that many, if not most women, and some men wore earrings in pierced ears, and only certain men wore beards;<sup>1</sup> it is also clear that what we would consider normal grooming, including hair depilation and shaving, and the cosmetic coloring of the flesh, was practiced throughout antiquity, including preclassical Greece.<sup>2</sup>

Tattooing, temporary or permanent, may also have been practiced from the Neolithic into the Bronze Age, but there is little evidence for it in the classical period (see, however, the Thracians painted by the Pistoxenos Painter).<sup>3</sup> Neolithic terracotta figurines (ca. 5000–3000 BCE) are usually painted with stripes and other patterns on both the costume and flesh areas, and these may reflect actual painted or tattooed patterns.<sup>4</sup> In the Early Bronze Age (ca. 2300–2100 BCE), marble statuettes from the Cyclades often preserve the “ghosts” of painted patterns that once decorated the flesh areas which they protected from weathering; on many, though not all, marble figurines we can see dots about the sculpted eyes, or rows of vertical lines under them, and other patterns on the face. Since the eyes were also sometimes painted on in outline, not sculpted, it is likely that the painted decorations also reflect real decorations to the face.<sup>5</sup>

Tattooing may have been practiced in the Late Bronze Age as well (ca. 1600–1200 BCE). Mycenaean terracotta figurines are similarly decorated, but the terracotta statuettes (Fig. 1) receive

more intricate patterns like circles, rosettes, lozenges, and dots on the face; although these patterns may derive from vase painting, they seem specific, as if imitating real decorations to the flesh, whether painted or tattooed.<sup>6</sup> From Akrotiri in Thera (ca. 1500 BCE) come frescoes from the West House, Xeste 3, and the House of the Ladies that show women with red painted ears and lips, and with large red dots or blossoms from the saffron crocus painted on their cheeks.<sup>7</sup> The frescoes in Xeste 3 show girls picking saffron crocus flowers and presenting their stigmas to a seated woman, probably a goddess since she is flanked by a blue monkey and a winged griffin on a red leash. The gathering of saffron, a harvest event that probably took place in late October, may have been the occasion for women to paint crocus blossoms on their cheeks — these would be temporary adornments, and the occasion would be religious as well as agricultural.<sup>8</sup>

### WAIST COMPRESSION IN THE CRETAN NEOPALATIAL PERIOD

These early indications of body modification are interesting and each one warrants its own study, but here I want to concentrate on the Neopalatial period, the high point of Minoan culture that collapsed in a series of destructions in the mid fifteenth century; it is in this period that there is evidence for extreme body sculpting. Neopalatial art characterizes most males and females with wasp-thin waists; the art is famous, especially its frescoes, for its depictions of lithe males with bared reddish torsos and legs and of buxom women in richly decorated bodices and flounced skirts (Figs. 2–3 and Web Figs. 1–3).

---

\* Supplemental illustrations to this article are posted on the World Wide Web at <http://www.duke.edu/web/jyounger/experiments/ills.html>; these images are here labelled “Web Figures.”

When this art first came to light, in the first decade of the twentieth century, scholars of the time recognized that the slender waists of the Minoans had been produced by corsets and cinching belts. In his first report on the excavations at the Bronze Age palace at Knossos in Crete, Sir Arthur Evans included a note by his stepmother on the faience figurines known as the Snake Goddesses: “The bodies of the figures are closely confined within their bodices. . . . The lines adopted are those considered ideal by the modern corset maker,”<sup>9</sup> and he himself remarks on their girdle, “perhaps of metal” that produced their “matronly forms.”<sup>10</sup> Similarly, J. L. Myres, who excavated the peak sanctuary at Petsofa above Palaikastro, writes at length about the terracotta figurines he found there and the belt that created their slender waists.<sup>11</sup> These scholars, who lived in the Edwardian Age when tight-lacing was more commonly practiced than now, recognized its effects on the Minoan figure. Nowadays, people do not much practice tight-lacing and corsetry, but those who do and those who study it also recognize its effects on the Minoan figure.<sup>12</sup>

The idea, then, that Minoans in the Neopalatial period practiced tight-lacing to produce their slender waists, is not new. It is possible that their wasp-waists might be a physical trait of the Cretan race,<sup>13</sup> and I myself have seen such people in the island, but it is not so common a trait that the alternate theory in favor of deliberate tight-lacing needs to be abandoned. What I wish to contribute to this discussion is threefold: to reintroduce it to the scholarly discourse since tight-lacing is rarely understood today, to employ a new technology (the Internet) for presenting the type of comparative evidence that was known to Myres and the Evanses a hundred years ago and has been forgotten today, and to begin the process of speculating on the roles that tight-lacing might have played in Minoan constructions of gender and sexuality.

## THE EVIDENCE

The actual evidence for Minoan tight-laced corseting is problematic for four reasons. First, Sir Arthur Evans based his discussion of corseting primarily on artistic depictions in frescoes found in the excavations of the palace of Knossos,<sup>14</sup> as well

as stone, ivory, and bronze statuettes that are now thought to be forgeries,<sup>15</sup> and it is these, unfortunately, that are now often cited in the modern literature and Internet websites as evidence of Minoan corseting.<sup>16</sup>

Second, although most Minoans depicted in art have extremely slender waists, this body construction was not universal: a few portly men are also depicted, at least two as bronze figurines and one on a relief vase.<sup>17</sup> Like the few men who wear beards, it is possible that portliness was a characteristic of a certain class (e.g., priestly) or category (e.g., eunuch) of person in Crete.

Third, no tight-laced corsets are actually depicted. Instead, three depictions of women actually show a tight-laced bodice made of cloth (apparently single-piece)<sup>18</sup> that follows the constricted lines of the wasp-waist and helps support the bared breasts; it is this that Evans and others thought might have been stiffened by metal slats to act like a corset. Since most of these single-piece bodices are depicted as opaque, it is possible that they covered a corset or are short-hand notations for the laced corset. Most Minoan fresco depictions of women are miniatures (e.g., the “Temple” fresco from Knossos),<sup>19</sup> but some large-scale relief frescoes have survived (e.g., from Pseira),<sup>20</sup> and these show the bodice clearly, and it is no corset. Similarly, the fresco above the lustral basin in Xeste 3 at Akrotiri, Thera, for instance, shows a young woman, the so-called “Necklace Swinger,” wearing a transparent bodice, open at the front (Web Fig. 4).<sup>21</sup> Her exposed breast is perhaps not fully developed, but one can see through the bodice, and there is no corset producing the slender waist or supporting the breast. And fourth, one garment that may have produced the wasp-waist is depicted frequently, but it is a special belt (discussed below) and apparently only for men (and perhaps certain special young women).

The tight-laced bodice, mentioned above, is shown worn by the three faience “Snake Goddesses” from the East Temple Repository at Knossos (ca. 1600 BCE; Figs. 3–4 and Web Figs. 2–3). One holds her two snakes aloft and wears a bonnet with a feline perched on top; the second holds the snakes against her lowered arms and wears a tall conical hat with a snake wrapped around

it; the third is fragmentary and preserves only the waist and skirt.<sup>22</sup> The costume of each woman differs in details but is roughly similar: a bolero-type jacket with short sleeves curves around and under the breasts; a short double apron lies in back and in front over a long skirt; and a moderately broad belt, slightly concave, masks the join between jacket and apron.<sup>23</sup> In addition, the fragmentary woman wears a horizontally striped skirt, and her jacket is laced under the breasts, although the arrangement of the lacing is unclear; the woman with the cat-hat wears a flounced skirt, while her jacket is secured under the breasts by a single lace with a tall loop, as if tied by a slipknot; and the woman with the conical hat wears a similarly laced and tied jacket, although a second lace, above the first, runs just under the breasts (the belt is hidden by a double girdle of snakes). All three depictions of the bodice show it laced in front and only by one or two laces (perhaps a third lies hidden under the belt). With so few laces, it seems unlikely that such a garment, if only of cloth, was the one that actually produced the wasp-waist; it may, however, have been a costume that helped retain the figure and was considered proper to wear in public.

The man's belt, however, is different (Fig. 2 and Web Figs. 1, 5–8) because the male physique is different.<sup>24</sup> When depicted with attention to detail (Fig. 2), the belt is tall, approximately 12–17 cm., concave, with a pronounced roll of material above and a smaller one below. The central concave portion of the belt appears stiff, as if made of thick hide or even metal. The rolls at top and bottom may be rouletted with vertical striations, although the lower roll is less pronounced. Another material, stone, is a remote possibility (cf., the Mayan hip yokes), if only because there are almost identical parallels to the belt in stone: the separate stone necks and necking rings of many rhyta (cf., the Sanctuary Rhyton, Web Fig. 7).<sup>25</sup>

The belt usually tops a loincloth consisting of a backflap that snugly covers the buttocks and a codpiece over the penis sheath in front. The codpiece projects in pronounced fashion with a peak at the top, as if made from some stiff material, again perhaps shaped hide or metal. I assume that the vertical codpiece is hollow, like a tube, for enclosing the penis, and that the peak at the top

reflects the tip of the uncircumcised penis; if so, then it is likely that the foreskin was infibulated (pierced) for drawing the penis up against the body and for securing it within the codpiece, perhaps by a cord much like the classical “dogknot.”<sup>26</sup> Such a reinforcement may have been necessary since the dislocation of internal organs caused by the constricting belt would have been able, under strain, to cause hernias;<sup>27</sup> similarly, the belt itself, like a weightlifter's belt, might have protected the lower back and diaphragm during strenuous activity. Occasionally the belt is associated with a kilt or with culottes and in these representations their material and that at the top of the belt is obviously cloth and richly decorated.<sup>28</sup>

It is possible that these belts may also be worn by richly costumed women,<sup>29</sup> though they seem looser and double. Otherwise, this special belt is worn in a variety of active occupations, mostly bull-leapers (e.g., the Knossos “Taureador” frescoes, Fig. 5 and Web Fig. 8) and bull-handlers (e.g., the gold cups from the Vapheio tholos, Fig. 2 and Web Fig. 1), boxers (e.g., the “Boxer” rhyton from Ayia Triada, Web Figs. 5–6), the workers on the “Harvester Vase” also from Ayia Triada (Web Fig. 7), and processional figures;<sup>30</sup> there are many more belted figures.<sup>31</sup> In all these examples, the torso assumes a strongly triangular shape, the chest high and shoulders flared in the so-called “pouter-pigeon” look. Occasionally, the top of the hips form a shelf, resulting from the severe constriction of the belt above.<sup>32</sup>

The bull-leapers are the most interesting;<sup>33</sup> while most leapers in frescoes are painted red-brown and are therefore presumed to be male, some leapers and their assistants are painted white, a color in fresco reserved otherwise for females (Fig. 5 and Web Fig. 9).<sup>34</sup> Apart from their color, the white and red-brown bull-leapers are otherwise indistinguishable; they have the same compressed waist with high chest (no breast development for the females, although the nipple may be painted red), and both wear the same costume (belt, loincloth with backflap and codpiece, and pointed shoes with leg-gings wrapped around the calf). The similarity between red- and white-painted leapers has caused several scholars to assume that the color convention does not obtain in bull-leaping, that females did

not leap bulls, and that the white-painted figures must be special males or leapers in another dimension.<sup>35</sup> But it can also be argued that biological males and females both leapt bulls, say during some coming-of-age ceremony for elite persons, but that the activity was gendered male, and the female participants therefore wore a male costume.<sup>36</sup> As for the females' lack of breast development, it is well known that the exercise and training that young women athletes must go through often retards or even interrupts their own maturation.

### LATER AND MODERN WAIST COMPRESSION

As for the later history of waist constriction in the Aegean, it is possible that the Mycenaeans of the Late Bronze Age on the mainland did not practice it. In some palace frescoes women and men are shown in Minoan costume and with slender waists, but these may be borrowed anachronistic features: most palace frescoes show different garb.<sup>37</sup> In the Iron Age, there is greater evidence for the cinch belt; it and its effects (triangular torso, shelf-like hips) are prominent in Late Geometric figure painting (late eighth century BCE) and the Cretan Daedalic style in sculpture (late seventh century BCE; Web Fig. 11). It is possible, therefore, that waist compression was practiced, at least at certain times, until the Archaic period, when we no longer see men and women with compressed waists depicted on Black Figure vases.

In more modern times tight-lacing has not been much practiced, although it can be traced from the early Renaissance. In the Victorian and Edwardian periods, there was a resurgence and both men and women of the upper classes occasionally practiced it to produce exaggerated hourglass figures.<sup>38</sup> After World War I, tight-lacing began to decline rapidly, and it is now relegated to the practice and curiosity of a few.<sup>39</sup> As a social practice, however, corseting has recently become an object of a scholarly attention that uses post-modern theories on sexuality to examine how our own and earlier societies have practiced body modification to express personal and social identity, class, ethnicity, sex and gender.<sup>40</sup>

Since corseting is not now much practiced or understood, it needs to be defined and characterized: corseting or tight lacing is an artificial process

that alters body shape, specifically at the waist with secondary effects at the hips and chest. Primarily, a corset compresses the waist, but secondarily it accentuates the hips and pushes the abdominal organs up into the thoracic cavity, swelling the ribs out and lifting the chest high (the high-chested "pouter pigeon" look). Long-term corseting can produce extremely narrow waists. Although the legend that "Catherine de Medici, wife of Henry II of France, set a standard of 13 inches for the feminine waist, which subsequently was copied by Britain's Queen Elizabeth I and other rulers" can be discredited,<sup>41</sup> some fetishists today strive for an even thinner waist;<sup>42</sup> a woman nicknamed "spook" achieved fourteen inches in 1999.<sup>43</sup>

For maximum and long-lasting effects, compressing the waist is a process that needs to be carried out over a long period of time, and practitioners can start being corseted before puberty. Sir Arthur Evans thus characterized Minoan waist compression: "while children of both sexes were still of very tender years, metal belts were riveted round them, to which their growing bodies adapted themselves and which remained a permanency for at least the greater part of their life."<sup>44</sup> If corseting is applied for an extremely long period of time, the ribs may become so displaced that they may not return completely to their natural position once corseting has been stopped.<sup>45</sup>

Today, the practice of tight-lacing is perfect for the virtual urban world of the World Wide Web, which allow practitioners and the curious alike to experience corseting voyeuristically, to document their own practices in web sites with text and in pictures, to "chat" about their fantasies and practices, and to "get in touch."

From these web sites we learn that modern corsets (Fig. 6) wrap around the waist and are tall enough to extend from the top of the hips to the chest; tall corsets may cover the chest, while short corsets stop short of the breasts or, in the case of men, just under the sternum and rib cage. The corsets usually are of a sturdy material, strengthened by vertical slats or stays, and wrap around the front of the body to be laced tight at the back. Tightly laced corsets produce the constriction and narrowing of the waist that is desired, as well as the uplifting of the chest above, shelf-like hips

below, and a pronounced S-curve of the back (Fig. 7 and Web Fig. 12).<sup>46</sup>

This S-curve can be further enhanced by a special S-bend corset that forces the buttocks to protrude at a pronounced right angle behind the torso,<sup>47</sup> a posture similar to that seen on many Late Geometric vases. Another extension of the corset, the spoon, can enhance the narrow waist by compressing the buttocks, hips, and upper pubic region; the spoon is, like the corset, made of a sturdy material, sometimes a metal plate, and, like a double salad spoon, fits over front and back of the hips and buttocks and compresses them together.<sup>48</sup> Perhaps this device is similar to the double apron worn by the Snake Goddesses (Fig. 3 and Web Figs. 2–3).

During the process of waist compression, the tightly laced corset does not need to be worn constantly, but may be replaced by a tall belt, to be worn during sleep and exercise; it continues the constriction but allows the organs inside a bit of respite.<sup>49</sup> Such a belt is available today commercially (Fig. 8 and Web Figs. 13–14) at slightly over \$100, and it is specially designed to produce effects similar to those produced by the corset.

## UNDERSTANDING MINOAN WAIST COMPRESSION

What would the corset and constricting belt have done for the Minoans? We may infer some of the emotional and physical effects by studying the contexts in which Minoan men and women wore cinch belts and laced bodices, at least those contexts that were depicted. For more information, we may adduce comparative ethnographic material, but this must be done carefully. Certainly some of the physical effects of tight lacing may be considered more or less the same, regardless of the culture or time in which it is practiced; the emotional and psychological effects, however, may be quite different, depending on the social constructions of the meaning of those physical effects. Nonetheless, I think it is valuable, when contemplating the Minoan significance of waist compression, to consider the experiences of our contemporaries who practice it, so as to gain thereby a wide range of experiences and expressions, which we may draw upon when we construct our own understanding of the Minoan practice.

In the following discussion, therefore, I rely on Kunzel's account of the modern effects that waist compression produces, both physical and emotional, for it draws upon both theoretical models and nineteenth and early twentieth century first-person accounts;<sup>50</sup> additional information can be found in more first-person accounts and in fiction on today's websites.<sup>51</sup>

We start with the viewer, since, in a way this is the person for whom the entire process is done; in most modern cases, this is a lover who laces up the corset and confines the subject in it. It is possible to lace oneself, but all practitioners who document their experiences describe themselves as going through waist compression literally at the hands of someone else who has the power to constrain them in the corset or belt and the power to release them. The process itself is likened to a bondage scene and can be as sexually charged. Minoan art does not depict the person who fastened the bodice or laced the belt, although there are dressing scenes: a fragmentary fresco from Akrotiri's House of the Ladies<sup>52</sup> once depicted a woman with pendulous breasts bending toward another and handing her a flounced skirt,<sup>53</sup> and figures carrying robes on gold signet rings<sup>54</sup> may also refer to ceremonial dressing scenes.

To all who view the person who is corseted, the compression of the waist and its secondary effects call attention to the body, especially to the areas above and below the point of constriction, to the breasts of women and chests of men and to the pubic area of both; that women expose their breasts and men their chests in Minoan art and that men wear a prominent codpiece are all appropriate to the heightened display of these areas. For the subject, the corset and belt serve both as an implement of tension and release (a process basic to sexual pleasure); in modern times, both these processes are usually applied by another person who then controls the amount of tension and the timing of the release, in much the same way that a master may control a slave. The compressed waist itself becomes an object, the focus of another person's grip and thus mastery—in the movie-musical "The King and I" (1956), Yul Brynner thus takes Deborah Kerr before starting their musical number "Shall We Dance?" The thin wasp-waist separates the upper

body with its breathing, feeling, and thinking from the lower body with its sensations of motion and sexual energy. Waist compression makes normal body positions uncomfortable; practioners tell how sitting cross-legged on the floor is preferable to sitting in chairs (is this why the elite women in the Knossos “Grandstand” and “Dance in the Grove” frescoes sit on the floor, their legs tucked under them?).<sup>55</sup> Waist compression practically eliminates abdominal breathing (so necessary for singing), forcing the subject to breathe mainly from the chest, and quickly in (palpitating) gasps (perhaps it is for this reason that the three singers on the Harvester Vase are the only youths on the vase depicted not belted, but cloaked).<sup>56</sup> Because of this constriction of breath and the dissociation of upper torso from the legs, the subject feels light, even light-headed, as if floating or flying. The high-chested, pouter-pigeon stance is exaggeratedly erect and taut (and therefore phallic), and this tenuousness (as if the waist could snap), combined with the extreme dissociation between upper and lower body, almost demands that the subject, when walking, use quick, exaggerated movements, short steps that produce swiveling hips, rocking shoulders, and fluttery arm gestures.<sup>57</sup> All these effects and sensations focus attention on the practioner’s body; it becomes an object to both viewer and subject.

The sensations produced by tight-lacing seem particularly appropriate to the Aegean depictions of bull-leaping: the lithe agility and quickness of movement that is necessary, the risk of being severed by the bull’s horns,<sup>58</sup> the act of flying across the bull, the erect tiptoe stance upon landing, and the sexualized contrast between the fragility of the leaper and the power of the male bull (Fig. 5 and Web Figs. 8–9).

## CONCLUSIONS

Bull-leaping is obviously a dangerous procedure, and erotic. In fact, Minoan art is well known for precisely this kind of thrill; in polite essays, however, scholars discuss its sensuousness, *joie de vivre*, and impressionism of form and color. Minoan art, however, is disturbing to modern audiences: it privileges women as powerful people<sup>59</sup> although modern societies tell us that matriarchy is a myth;<sup>60</sup> it depicts nature in such profusion that

landscapes resemble paradise in riot,<sup>61</sup> its lush scenery and genteel compositions, have lured many scholars into imagining the Minoans as a uniquely peaceful and non-violent people,<sup>62</sup> were it not for the hint of human sacrifice and cannibalism;<sup>63</sup> even more disturbing is the contrast between the many, overwhelmingly sensuous images and the fact that there is “virtually no sexual or erotic art, no depictions of sexual intercourse, no representations of intimacy, no hand holding, no embracing, no kissing.”<sup>64</sup> This alone should make the Minoan culture of the Neopalatial period unique in the history of the human race.

The simplest explanation for the lack of any erotic depiction is that Neopalatial art was a formal construction, and it was not its purpose to give us viewers glimpses of overt Minoan sexuality, but rather covert reflections of it. In my study of Aegean music, I argued that the depiction of musicians and musical performance was severely restricted, perhaps because of music’s “ability to arouse sexual passion through its rhythms and constructions of climax and cadence” was thought threatening and difficult to control. For that reason “representations of music were carefully designed to represent to us only certain people as the producers of music, only certain instruments, and only certain occasions.”<sup>65</sup> In the Minoan practice of waist compression, we may be seeing the same thing, an exercise of control over a body that threatens to go out of control: a body that needs to fly, a control that needs to hold it firmly in its grasp.

Minoan art relegates off stage, as it were, the unseen person who must have laced the corsets and fastened the belts; but what we are allowed to see are the men and women on stage who feel helplessly constrained and disembodied, who pant for breath, and experience agitated feelings so heightened and on the edge that leaping over bulls is not just a reality but also a metaphor for a life lived. Again, off stage, an unseen person must have released them from this compression, by unlacing and unfastening their constraints. But since art has the opportunity to fix society’s full range of lived experiences into vistas, and Minoan art chooses to deny overtly expressed sexuality, I wonder if the social constraint on overt sexual expression was ever truly removed; perhaps it was put on and off

physically, like the corset and belt, but was never removed psychologically. It is probably significant that Minoan art, and texts as well, never let us see the power that exercised this control; powerful Minoan women are depicted, and goddesses, but never any person defined or labeled “ruler”<sup>66</sup>—in the succeeding Mycenaean age we see the ruler’s throne and we know his title, “wanax.” But the Minoan power that literally gripped its people in an erotic thrall does not appear at all.

### NOTES

\*Several of my students have done research on some of the topics here; I am especially grateful to Erika Lynn Field and Adia Morris. I am also indebted to Paul Rehak for his suggestions and comments, and for the use of his drawing for Figure 3.

<sup>1</sup> For hairstyles and jewelry, see J. G. Younger, “Bronze Age Representations of Aegean Jewelry,” *Eikon*, edited by R. Laffineur and J. Crowley (*Aegaeum* 8; Liège 1992) 257–93, esp. 288–89, summarizing Diana Withee, “Physical Growth and Aging Characteristics Depicted in the Thera Frescoes,” *AJA* 96 (1992) 336, and E. N. Davis, “Youth and Age in the Thera Frescoes,” *AJA*, 90 (1986) 399–406; and for beards, see J. Betts, “The Seal from Shaft Grave Gamma—A “Mycenaean Chieftain?” *Temple University Aegean Symposium*, 6 (Philadelphia 1981) 2–8.

<sup>2</sup> K. Papaefthimiou-Papanthimou, “Σκεύη και σύνεργα του καλλωπισμού στον κρητομυκηναϊκό χώρο” (PhD diss., Aristotle University, 1979), and “Μινωικές και μυκηναϊκές μαρτυρίες για τον καλλωπισμό,” *Αρχαιολογία* 31 (1989) 8–13.

<sup>3</sup> M. Robertson, *Art of Vase Painting in Classical Athens* (Cambridge 1992) 157; and I. C. Storey, “Philoxenos ... of doubtful gender,” *JHS* 115 (1992) 182–84.

<sup>4</sup> L.E. Talalay, “Body Imagery of the Ancient Aegean,” *Archaeology* 44 (1991) 46–49, and *Excavations at Franchthi Cave, Greece*, vol. 9: *Deities, Dolls, and Devices. Neolithic Figurines from Franchthi Cave, Greece* (Bloomington/Indianapolis 1993) 161–68.

<sup>5</sup> P. G. Preziosi and S. S. Weinberg, “Evidence for Painted Details in Early Cycladic Sculpture,” *Antike Kunst* 13 (1970) 4–12. For another illustration,

see G. Perrot and C. Chipiez, *History of Art in Primitive Greece: Mycenaean Art* (London 1894) vol. 2, 184–85.

<sup>6</sup> E. French, “Mycenaean Figures and Figurines: Their Typology and Function,” *Sanctuaries and Cults in the Aegean Bronze Age*, edited by R. Hägg and N. Marinatos (Stockholm 1981) 173–77, figs. 8 and 9, and eadem, “Chapter VI: The Figures and Figurines,” *The Archaeology of Cult: The Sanctuary at Phylakopi*, edited by C. Renfrew (London 1985) 209–80.

<sup>7</sup> K. Doulas, *The Wall-Paintings of Thera* (Athens 1992) pls. 6 & 7, 9 & 10, 24 & 25, 118 & 119, 125 & 126, and 131 & 132.

<sup>8</sup> P. Rehak, “The Aegean Landscape and the Body: A New Interpretation of the Thera Frescoes,” *From the Ground Up: Beyond Gender Theory in Archaeology. Proceedings of the Fifth Gender and Archaeology Conference, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, October 1998*, edited by Nancy L. Wicker and Bettina Arnold (*BAR-IS* 81; Oxford 1999) 11–22.

<sup>9</sup> M.M.L. Evans, “Note on the Dress of the Goddess and of the Votary,” a contribution in A. J. Evans, “The Palace of Knossos. Provisional Report for the Year 1903,” *BSA*, 9 (1902–1903) 1–153, esp. 80–81.

<sup>10</sup> A. J. Evans (supra n. 9) 74–87.

<sup>11</sup> J. L. Myres, “Excavations at Palaikastro, II: §13. The Sanctuary-site of Petsofā,” *BSA* 9 (1902–1903) 356–87, esp. 363–65.

<sup>12</sup> For practitioners of corseting, see, for example, T. B. Lierse, “L.I.S.A. (Long Island Staylace Association),” at: <http://www.staylace.com/index.html> (updated 14 September 2000; accessed 15 September 2000) *passim*, and /gallery7.htm; E. Riley, “The History of Corsets,” at: <http://redrival.com/elisabat/corset.html> (updated 2000; accessed 15 September 2000); and Axfords “History of Corsets,” at: [http://www.axfords.com/corsets/catalogue/corset\\_history.html](http://www.axfords.com/corsets/catalogue/corset_history.html) (updated 2000; accessed 15 September 2000). The American Museum of Natural History, New York City, held an exhibit (20 November 1999–29 May 2000) of a variety of body modifications, including corsetry: “Body Art: Marks of Identity. 20 November 1999–29 May 2000,” at: <http://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/bodyart/> (updated 1999; accessed 15 September

2000); and Discovery Communications Inc., Discovery Channel Online, “The Human Canvas,” at: <http://www.discovery.com/exp/humancanvas/humancanvas.html>, esp. /corseting.html (updated 1999; accessed 15 September 2000). For the only book study, see D. Kunzle, *Fashion and Fetishism: A Social History of the Corset, Tight-lacing and Other Forms of Body-sculpture in the West* (Totowa 1982).

<sup>13</sup> J.D.S. Pendlebury, *The Archaeology of Crete: An Introduction* (London 1939) 267; and F. Schachermeyr, *Die minoische Kultur des alten Kreta* (Stuttgart 1964) 123.

<sup>14</sup> A. J. Evans, *Palace of Minos* (London 1921–1935) vol. III, 447–52.

<sup>15</sup> D. Gill and C. Chippendale, “Material and Intellectual Consequences of Esteem for Cycladic Figures,” *AJA* 97 (1993) 601–59; C. Verlinden, *Les Statuettes anthropomorphes crétoises en bronze et en plomb, du IIIe millénaire au VIIe siècle av. J.-C.* (Louvain-la-Neuve 1984) 229, pl. 102.

<sup>16</sup> For example, Kunzle (supra n. 12) pl. 8; and Riley (supra n. 12).

<sup>17</sup> Verlinden (supra n. 15) nos. 30, pl. 14, and 31, pl. 15; S. Marinatos and M. Hirmer, *Crete and Mycenae* (New York 1960) pl. 104 below.

<sup>18</sup> Myres (supra n. 11) 384, fig. 4.

<sup>19</sup> Evans (supra n. 14) vol. III, color pl. XVI.

<sup>20</sup> Evans (supra n. 14) vol. III, fig. 15A; P.P. Betancourt and Costis Davaras, eds., *Pseira II: Building AC (the “Shrine”) and Other Buildings in Area A* (Philadelphia 1998).

<sup>21</sup> Doumas (supra n. 7) pl. 101.

<sup>22</sup> Evans (supra n. 14) vols. I, color frontispiece, figs. 359–62, and III, fig. 306; Marinatos & Hirmer (supra n. 17) color pl. XXIV, pl. 70; and K. P. Foster, *Aegean Faience of the Bronze Age* (New Haven 1979) pls. 8–11, fig. 10.

<sup>23</sup> Bernice Jones, “Revealing Minoan Fashions,” *Archaeology* 53.3 (May/June 2000) 36–41, demonstrates the costume with a live model.

<sup>24</sup> Lierse (supra n. 12) /c&s.htm.

<sup>25</sup> The Sanctuary Rhyton from Kato Zakro: P. M. Warren, *Minoan Stone Vases* (Cambridge 1969) 43 P249, 36 P195, and 87; N. Platon, *Zakros: The Discovery of a Lost Palace of Ancient Crete* (New York 1971) pls. on pp. 165 & 168; and J. W. Shaw, “Evidence for the Minoan Tripartite Shrine,” *AJA*

82 (1978) 429–48. Other rhyta: Warren (above) P480, P481, P488b; and Evans (supra n. 14) vol. II, fig 537b. And faience rhyta: Foster (supra n. 22) pls. 42, 43, 53, and 54.

<sup>26</sup> E. C. Keuls, *The Reign of the Phallus: Sexual Politics in Ancient Athens* (Berkeley 1985) 68, figs. 50, 51, 56.

<sup>27</sup> Pendlebury (supra n. 13): 117; P. Rehak, “Aegean Breechcloths, Kilts, and Keftiu Paintings,” *AJA* 100 (1996) 35–51, esp. 39–41.

<sup>28</sup> Rehak (supra n. 27).

<sup>29</sup> H. Tzavella-Evjén, “The Ring of the Queen,” *Celebrations of Death and Divinity in the Bronze Age Argolid*, edited by R. Hägg and G. C. Nordquist (Stockholm 1990) 171–74.

<sup>30</sup> Marinatos & Hirmer (supra n. 17) color pls. XV [Cup-Bearer fresco] and XVII [Taureador fresco]; and b/w pls. 100 [Chieftain cup], 103–105 [Harvester vase], 106–107 [Boxer rhyton], and 180, 182, 184 [Vapheio cups] the Cup-Bearer from Knossos.

<sup>31</sup> For a detailed list: E. Sapouna-Sakellarakí, *Minoikon zoma* (Athens 1971).

<sup>32</sup> Verlinden (supra n. 15) no. 133, pl. 59, a bronze figurine.

<sup>33</sup> J. G. Younger, “Bronze Age Representations of Aegean Bull-Games, III,” *Politeia*, edited by R. Laffineur and P. B. Betancourt (*Aegaeum* 12; Liège 1995) 507–45.

<sup>34</sup> Mary Ann Eaverly, “Color and Gender in Ancient Painting: A Pan-Mediterranean Approach,” in Wicker & Arnold (supra n. 8), 5–10.

<sup>35</sup> Younger (supra n. 33) 514–16, & n. 25; and S. D. Indelicato, “Were Cretan Girls Playing at Bull-leaping?” *Cretan Studies* 1 (1988) 39–47.

<sup>36</sup> P. Rehak, “Construction of Gender in LBA Aegean Art: A Prolegomenon,” *Redefining Archaeology: Feminist Perspectives*, edited by M. Casey, D. Donlon, J. Hope, and S. Wellfare (Canberra 1998) 191–98. On a black-figure kotyle by the Amasis Painter (Louvre A479; J. D. Beazley, *Attic Black-Figure Vase Painters* [Oxford 1956] 156, no. 80; Gundel Koch-Harnack, *Knabenliebe und Tiergeschenke* [Berlin 1983] figs. 24, 25, 43), a man gives a gift to a nude, white-painted *hetaira* [prostitute] whose body is actually that of a youth with a high chest and no breast development.

<sup>37</sup> Rehak (supra n. 27) 48–50.

<sup>38</sup> Kunzle (supra n. 12).

<sup>39</sup> T. B. Lierse, "The Corsetorium — WebRing," at: <http://member.aol.com/cic12142/index.html> (updated 2000; accessed 15 September 2000).

<sup>40</sup> American Museum of Natural History, New York City (supra n. 12), and Discovery Communications Inc. (supra n. 12).

<sup>41</sup> Kunzle (supra n. 12) 320–22

<sup>42</sup> Lierse (supra n. 12) /Btape.JPG

<sup>43</sup> Lierse (supra n. 12) /pu4spook.htm

<sup>44</sup> Evans (supra n. 14) vol. III, 444–48

<sup>45</sup> Discovery Communications Inc. (supra n. 12) /corseting.html, and /image1europe.jpg.

<sup>46</sup> See Lierse (supra n. 12) /cabinet1.jpg

<sup>47</sup> B. Ramm, "Babba's Corsets Residence," at: <http://www.BabbaRammDass.de/Seiten/corset-residence/Welcome.html> (updated July 2000; accessed 15 September 2000), esp. his web site <http://www.s-c-u-d.de/Media/CorsetResidence/11.jpg>.

<sup>48</sup> Lierse (supra n. 12) /oxygen.jpg.

<sup>49</sup> Lierse (supra n. 12) /shoppe.htm, and /corst248.jpg.

<sup>50</sup> Kunzle, 1982: *passim*, esp. 1–65 & 301–39)

<sup>51</sup> For example, Electra, "Electra's Web: Corsets," at: <http://www.electrasweb.com/corsets/index.html> (updated 2000; accessed 15 September 2000), esp. "My First Week in a Corset": /corset\_1stwk.html; Stephen, "Tight Tales: Corset Fiction," at: <http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Workshop/6870/index.html> (updated 9 September 2000; accessed 15 September 2000), esp. Jamie's "The Corset Research Archive," /Guest/jamie/intro.html; and Pinkie, "Pinkie's Corsetry Pages," at: <http://ms.ha.md.us/~hotpink/corsets/> (updated 1999; accessed 15 September 2000), esp. "Diary [23 May - 2 September 1999]": /diary/.

<sup>52</sup> Doumas (supra n. 7) pls. 7, 10, 12.

<sup>53</sup> S. P. Murray, "The Enigmatic Lady in Yellow from the House of the Ladies," *AJA* 103 (1999) 315; S. P. Murray, "The Clothing Scene from the House of the Ladies," *Festschrift for Sara A. Immerwahr* (2000 forthcoming).

<sup>54</sup> For example, W. Müller and I. Pini, eds., *Corpus der minoischen und mykenischen Siegel*, vol. II: *Iraklion Archäologisches Museum*, fasc. 6: *Die Siegelabdrücke von Aj. Triada und anderen zentral- und ostkretischen Fundorten* (Berlin 1999) no. 11.

<sup>55</sup> Evans (supra n. 14) vol. color pls. XVII & XVIII.

<sup>56</sup> J. G. Younger, *Music in the Aegean Bronze Age (Studies In Mediterranean Archaeology pocket book 96; Jonsered 1998) 7–9, 74–75, pls. 1 top, and 2.*

<sup>57</sup> See the "Dance in the Grove" fresco from Knossos: Evans (supra n. 14) vol. III, color pl. XVIII.

<sup>58</sup> See the leaper on the Boxer rhyton gored at the waist: Marinatos & Hirmer (supra n. 17) pl. 107 top.

<sup>59</sup> P. Rehak, ed., *The Role of the Ruler in the Prehistoric Aegean (Aegaeum 11; Liège 1995) passim.*

<sup>60</sup> J. Bamberger, "The Myth of Matriarchy: Why Men Rule in Primitive Society," *Women, Culture and Society*, edited by M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere (Stanford 1974) 263–80.

<sup>61</sup> M.A.S. Cameron, "Unpublished Paintings from the 'House of the Frescoes' at Knossos," *BSA* 63 (1968) 1–31.

<sup>62</sup> C. G. Starr supplies the necessary correctives: "The Myth of the Minoan Thalassocracy," *Historia* 3 (1953) 282–86; and "Minoan Flower Lovers," *The Minoan Thalassocracy: Myth and Reality*, edited by R. Hägg and N. Marinatos (Göteborg 1983) 9–12.

<sup>63</sup> I. A. Sakellarakis and E. Sapouna-Sakellaraki, "Drama of Death in a Minoan Temple," *National Geographic Magazine* 159.2 (February 1981) 204–23; and P. M. Warren, "Knossos: Stratigraphic Museum Excavations, 1978–1982," *Archaeological Reports* 29 (1982–1983) 63–87.

<sup>64</sup> Younger (supra n. 54) 55; and Rehak (supra n. 35).

<sup>65</sup> Younger (supra n. 54) 54–60, especially 57 and 60.

<sup>66</sup> Rehak (supra n. 57).