PREFACE

The problems surrounding rulership in the Aegean world during the Bronze Age have been debated vigorously since 1876, when Schliemann uncovered the “royal burials” in the Shaft Graves of Circle A at Mycenae. Sir Arthur Evans opened a new chapter in the discussion with his excavations at the palace “of Minos” at Knossos in the beginning of this century. But the issue of the “Missing Ruler” in the Aegean was first squarely addressed in a paper of that title by Ellen Davis, presented in 1985 in a plenary session at the annual meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America in New York. Her paper is published in full for the first time here.

In recent years, the problem of the identity and role of the rulers in the Minoan and Mycenaean world and their relationship with their Mediterranean neighbors has been addressed both indirectly and directly in a number of important papers and conferences. But in 1991, when I had the pleasant and stimulating opportunity to have Nanno Marinatos as a visiting colleague for a semester at Loyola University of Chicago, we both agreed that a panel discussion dealing with the issue of rulership could prove both valuable and timely. Although we had no sense that our discussion would provide conclusive answers, it was our hope that the debate could be put on a firmer, common ground.

The present volume is the result. It represents the publication, with some additional papers, of a panel discussion presented at the annual meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America in New Orleans on December 28, 1992. The actual presentation included the papers by Eric H. Cline, Robert B. Koehl, Nanno Marinatos, Thomas G. Palaima (read with panache by John G. Younger in the absence of the author), and Paul Rehak. Ellen Davis moderated and led the spirited discussion which ensued, to which a number of individuals contributed with questions and valuable comments. It has been possible to incorporate some of these comments in the papers, and all of the participants would like to thank warmly everyone who attended or participated in the session.

At the same time, there were a number of contributors whom we had hoped to accommodate in the panel, who for various reasons could not attend. Thus additional papers are presented here by Kathleen Krattenmaker, Robert Laffineur, and James C. Wright. A number of other individuals who have already contributed to the ongoing discussion are cited repeatedly in our notes.

A note of special thanks is due to Robert Laffineur, who undertook to publish these papers as a separate volume of Aegaeum, and waited patiently for the manuscript.

One of the results of the panel discussion was the realization that all of us were using almost the same, relatively small, body of evidence, but that that corpus has never been collected systematically and catalogued. Thus, for example, the staff, spear, or skeptron is often brought into the discussion, but the complete range of iconographic examples has remained elusive. Therefore, thanks are due to John G. Younger, who undertook the enormous task of sifting through the visual sources, especially the glyptic examples, and arranging them usefully. All of the papers here can be read more profitably with an examination of his catalogue in the “The Iconography of Rulership: A Conspectus”.
In addition, we all noted that terminology continues to be a problem. Over the last century, a number of terms have come into standard usage that are poorly defined or incompletely understood, or which are given different meanings by different scholars. An attempt has been made in this volume to standardize some of the more common examples, while at the same time it must be understood that the terms still require investigation and definition.

Thus, for example, a number of generic designations have been adopted here without the quotation marks or capital letters sometimes employed: megaron, palace, throne room, central court, lustral basin, and theatre area. In the case of specific buildings like the Knossos palace and associated structures, the terms coined by Evans for areas are now used by most scholars: thus, the Knossos Throne Room, the Great East Hall, Hall of the Double Axes, Theatral Area, and Temple Tomb. Other iconographic terms have come into common parlance and will be capitalized in this volume though most of them need further definition: the Commanding Gesture, Horns of Consecration (which may neither represent horns nor have any connection with consecration). The Master Impression is the impressive sealing from Khania (CMS V Suppl. 1A no. 142); the Mother on the Mountain sealing is the composite image from fragments found at Knossos by Evans (see Younger, no. 25). Finally, several frequently discussed artifacts have conventionalized names: the Boxer Rhyton and Chieftain Cup from Ayia Triadha, and from Knossos a number of paintings: the Lily Prince, the Sacred Grove and Dance, the Grandstand Fresco, and the Toreador Frescoes. Most problematic are the terms which designate constructs such as the Priest King and the Priestess Queen.

Although we may continue to disagree on the level of interpretation, a number of sound descriptive guidelines are available, particularly for the glyptic evidence, in studies published by Younger in Kadmos (1984-1991) and in his Iconography of Late Minoan-Mycenaean Sealstones and Finger-Rings (1988).

Finally, it is our hope that this volume will suggest new directions for research and investigation. At the same time, we note the passing in recent years of two scholars who contributed greatly to our understanding of Minoan and Mycenaean civilization in general and Aegean rulership in particular: James T. Hooker and Klaus Kilian. This volume is dedicated to their memory.

Paul REHAK  
Loyola University of Chicago
ENTHRONED FIGURES IN AEGEAN ART
AND THE FUNCTION OF THE MYCENAEAN MEGARON*

It is almost universally accepted that a major function of the Mycenaean megaron was to provide a throne room for a male ruler, the *wanax* attested in the Linear B tablets 1. Architecturally, the megaron unit is so similar in form at the major Mycenaean sites of Mycenae, Tiryns, and Pylos that it clearly served a common function at most mainland palaces between their genesis in LH II-IIIA and their final phase of development in LH III B 2. The megaron, moreover, has been used as a key feature distinguishing Mycenaean from

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* I would like to thank the following individuals for discussing aspects of this paper: E. Davis, B. Lavelle, N. Marinatos, and especially J.G. Younger. When the original version of this paper was presented, Dean K. McCourt of Loyola University of Chicago graciously assisted with my travel expenses.

The following abbreviations are used in addition to those in the *American Journal of Archaeology* 95 (1991) 1-16:

DOUMAS, Wall Paintings = C. DOUMAS, *The Wall-Paintings of Thera* (1992);


FunctMinVilla = R. HÄGG, ed., *The Function of the Minoan 'Villa'. Proceedings of the Eighth International Symposium at the Swedish Institute in Athens, 6-8 June, 1992, Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Athen* (forthcoming);

IMMERWAHR, Aegean Fig = S. IMMERWAHR, *Aegean Painting in the Bronze Age* (1990);


NMA = National Archaeological Museum, Athens;

PN I = C. BLEGEN and M. RAWSON, *The Palace of Nestor at Pylos. I* (1966);

PN II = M.L. LANG, *The Palace of Nestor at Pylos. II. The Frescoes* (1969);

Schliemann cat. = K. DEMAKOPOULOU, ed., *Troy, Mycenae, Tiryns, Orchomenos. Heinrich Schliemann: The 100th Anniversary of his Death* (1990);

YOUNGER, Conspactus = J.G. YOUNGER, "The Iconography of Rulership: A Conspactus", this volume.


Minoan society, and its occasional presence outside the mainland, at Phylakopi on Melos and at Ayia Triadha on Crete, has been seen as a sign of Mycenaean influence.

Recently, the late Klaus Kilian pointed out the importance of the second, small "queen's" megaron at most sites, architecturally independent from the large "king's" megaron, and he postulated the existence of a dual system of administration at the mainland palaces. At Pylos, the duplication in both the large and small megaron of a huge central circular hearth along with heraldic frescoed griffins and lions on the walls, supports the idea that the two rooms are related in terms of function, though the notion that the large hall was used by the king and the smaller one by the queen has no real evidence to support it.

But in none of the mainland palaces is there indisputable evidence of a throne (stool with a high back) like the well-known gypsum example from the Knossos palace. Although it can be argued that the main megara probably served as throne rooms, it is rare for Aegean iconography of any period to show seated males. Since thrones are a regular symbol of rulership and divinity elsewhere in the Mediterranean, the lack of identifiable thrones and of the representation of enthroned males in Mycenaean Greece is problematic. While the Linear B tablets from Pylos and Knossos indicate that the wanax was the most important official in the Mycenaean state in later Mycenaean times, the exact use of the megaron, and its supposed function as the throne room of the wanax, is open to question.

This paper addresses several related issues. It examines the evidence for Aegean thrones on Crete and the mainland, and for enthroned figures generally, in hopes of shedding light on the problem. Although no throne has actually survived from any true megaron, several different types of seats are represented in Aegean art. Four main iconographic types of seats can be identified: four-legged stools with high backs or thrones, architectural platforms that support a seat, rocky peaks or outcrops used as seats, and the chair with crossed legs (the folding stool or campstool). Thrones and architectural platforms appear to

3 T.D. ATKINSON et al., Excavations at Phylakopi in Melos (BSA Suppl. Paper 4: 1904) 56. The Phylakopi megaron is much smaller (7.40 x 6 m.) than the large mainland examples, but is comparable in size to the small megaron at Tyrim (7.60 x 5.64 m.).

4 V. LAROSA, Hagia Triada. Ancient Crete, a Hundred Years of Italian Archaeology (1984) III, 128-135. The size of the foundations has been used to reconstruct a megaron here, though there is little other evidence for it.


6 PN II 110-118 nos. 20 C 6-34 C 43. Both hearths were also painted with running spirals: PN I fig. 73 (large megaron); 199, fig. 149 (small megaron). The animals from the small megaron are dappled with white spots or "leaves" that recall the treatment of a blue-eyed lion or panther from Knossos (PM 1 540, fig. 392b). Spotted felines (leopards rather than lions?) are now reported from Xeste 4 at Akrotiri and Tell el-Dab'a in the Nile Delta. On the palace hearths, see G. DE PIERPONT, "Le rôle du foyer monumental dans la grande salle du palais mycénien", in DARCOUZE and TREUIL, eds. (supra n. 1) 255-262.

7 In the small megaron (room 46) Blegen and Rawson (PN I 202) cite the "delicacy" of painting on the hearth as influencing their identification of the "queen's megaron", but suggest that the lions and griffins on the walls might have been appropriate for a "room assigned to a huntsman son".

8 See Younger, Conspicuous nos. 92-114.


10 See in this volume the analysis by T. PALAIMA, and for a listing of the relevant texts, YOUNGER, Conspicuous.
be primarily Minoan, the campstool is primarily Mycenaean, and rocky seats are shared by both cultures. The many Mycenaean small terracotta figures on 3- or 4-legged thrones which survive in relatively large numbers 11 are preceded by a few much earlier terracotta men and women from Minoan peak sanctuaries who are seated on stools 12.

However, nearly all the seated figures of identifiable sex in Aegean art are women 13. If we exclude the figures of indeterminate sex, seated males appear primarily as small banqueters in frescoes at Knossos and Pylos; otherwise the evidence for seated male figures is virtually nonexistent, outside of models from Minoan funerary contexts and peak sanctuaries. Either we must assume that the Mycenaeans felt no need to develop an imagery for seated male authority figures -- despite the obvious importance of thrones in most other contemporary Mediterranean cultures with whom they were in contact -- or suggest that the seats in megara may have been used instead by women. This suggestion does not at all deny the importance of the wanax, but implies that the organization of Mycenaean society was much more complex than we have imagined.

I. Minoan Thrones

While it is usually assumed that each Minoan palace served as the seat of one ruler 14, the evidence for a formal throne room is present only at Knossos. The Knossos Throne Room, which was among the earliest areas of the palace excavated by Evans, contains a gypsum throne set against the middle of the north wall, to the right as one enters from the central court through a vestibule (Pl. XXXIIa) 15. This throne consists of three separable parts: a base slab, the stool, and a back-slab 16. Directly opposite the throne is a sunken pit or lustral basin, a specifically Minoan architectural unit of uncertain function 17.

This stone seat has reasonably been considered a translation from a wooden prototype because it was carved with curving legs which suggest joinery (Pl. XXXIIIa) 18, and after the discovery of the stone seat Evans commissioned a wooden example which he placed in the vestibule of the Throne Room 19. This stone throne seems earlier than the final phase of development of the Throne Room, since its back is embedded slightly in the plaster of the last renewal of the walls. This replastering, and its fresco decoration with wingless griffins and palm trees, is usually dated to LM II-IIIA but might be as early as LM IB 20, in which case the throne is even earlier 21.

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11 E. FRENCH, "The Development of Mycenaean Terracotta Figurines", BSA 66 (1971) 101-187. For examples, see MycWorld 190 nos. 164, 165. Since many of these figures wear polos headdresses, they are assumed to represent women.
12 YOUNGER, Conspectus nos. 105, 106. There seems to be no direct link between the earlier and later terracotta figurines.
13 YOUNGER, Conspectus nos. 115-169; cf. section III: seats.
14 G. CADOGAN, Palaces of Minoan Crete (rev. ed. 1980) 13, identifies the Knossos Throne Room as a shrine with a "kingly area" in the Hall of the Double Axes.
15 PM IV 906 fig. 881 (during excavation), 915 fig. 899.
16 PM IV 915-919.
17 G. GESSELL, Town, Palace and House Cult in Minoan Crete (SIMA LXVII: 1985) 22-26. No examples have been found on the mainland, and only one in the Cyclades (in Xeste 3 at Akrotiri).
18 PM IV 905.
19 PM IV 919 fig. 893.
21 An enthroned woman appears in a scene with women and palm trees on a LM IIIA fresco from Ayia Triada: IMM ERWAHR, Aegean Fig 181 AT no. 5.
In addition, the undulating outline of the back of the stone seat resembles the object which appears above (or behind?) the top of the shrine façade on the Sanctuary Rhyton found in the Zakros palace 22. Since the shrine on the rhyton is surrounded by rockwork with leaping agrima, it has been argued that the undulating shape above the roof represents a mountain peak, and the connection between palace and peak seems to be an important aspect of Minoan neopalatial civilization 23. Despite its place of discovery, much of the iconography of the Zakros rhyton seems Knossian in inspiration, and the suggestion has been made that during LM IA-B, architectural imagery spread throughout the island, perhaps disseminated from Knossos 24. Similar undulating outcrops are represented on an ivory pyxis fragment from the Dendra tholos 25, and on an ivory mirror handle now in the Rethymnon Museum 26; on both ivories, the central object is flanked by one or more of the Aegean genii which sometimes attend seated women 27.

Two low stone seats have been found in the service rooms to the Throne Room. A gypsum seat which lacks legs or back was found in the Room of the Woman’s Seat 28 directly north of the Throne Room proper, and a similarly shaped limestone seat (Pl. XXXIVa) was found in the so-called Kitchen 29 to the west of the Throne Room. Both rooms originally formed part of the Throne Room complex, but in the last phase of the palace direct communication between the Throne Room and the adjacent service areas was blocked 30.

Two other stone seats were found in the general vicinity of Knossos 31. A low stone seat similar to the examples from the service area of the West Wing was found at Myristis 32 on the north slope of Mt. Juktas (Pl. XXXIVb), in a field just below the Minoan shrine at Anemospilia. A backless stone stool found near Katsamba (Pl. XXXIIIb) 33, now on display in the Heraklion Museum, greatly resembles the Knossos Throne Room seat in height but its base and back slabs did not survive, if indeed these components ever existed. At some point, the upper surface of the seat was hollowed into cups like a kernos.

It has also been claimed that the Knossos palace and some surrounding buildings included emplacements for wooden thrones that have not survived, but all these identifications are problematic. In the Throne Room Anteroom, there is a gap between the benches lining the north wall, into which Evans restored a wooden seat based on the stone throne from the next room 34. His restoration fits the available space, and he reported the discovery of some carbonized wood, but no base slab was present 35. In the Hall of the Double Axes in the East Wing of the palace, Evans identified a calcined mass with the

26 Autopsis, July 1993. I am grateful to J.G. Younger for the chance to discuss the piece at the time.
27 P. REHAK, “The ‘Genius’ in Mycenaean Greece: The Later Development of an Aegean Cult Figure”, forthcoming in CMS Belohei 5.
28 PM IV fig. 877.
29 PM IV fig. 877; 926-927, 927 fig. 899. For the changing use of the Throne Room area, see W.-D. NIEMEIER, “On the Function of the ‘Throne Room’ at Knossos”, in FunctMinPal 163-168, 164 fig. 1: plan.
30 PM IV fig. 877.
31 A third, found at Prinias, may be Minoan or later: YOUNGER, Conspectus no. 254.
34 PM IV 2.904 fig. 879.
35 See the plan in PM IV fig. 877, pgs. 904-905.
impressions of fluted flanking columns as the remains of another supposed seat or throne. These remains have long been enclosed in a glass casing which precludes the possibility of direct study, but this construction -- whatever it is -- deserves cleaning and renewed study in order to determine its exact purpose. A conjectural throne emplacement was identified within the "reception area" in the West Entrance of the Knossos palace for which there is no actual evidence. Once again, Evans restored a throne like the one in the Throne Room (Pl. XXXIIIB).

Evans also suggested that two other buildings at Knossos housed thrones: the Royal Villa just north of the palace and the House of the Chancel Screen to the southeast. The central architectural unit of the Royal Villa consists of a porch and inner hall, at the back of which is a raised dais with a central niche, set off by balustrades from the rest of the room (Pl. XXXVIIa). Although Evans argued that the niche contained the remnants of a throne, this suggestion remains doubtful. The niche is too narrow for a chair, and the cuttings in the gypsum revetment slabs framing it suggest at least two phases of use. This area too merits reinvestigation, but in the meantime the identification of the niche as a throne emplacement seems impossible given the conformity of width of the extant throne and stools. A somewhat better case can be made for the House of the Chancel Screen, where a stone slab at the back of a room could have served as the dais for a "seat of honour", as Evans supposed, but again no throne was preserved (Pl. XXXVIIb).

It seems significant that no other Minoan palace has produced evidence of a throne room as defined at Knossos, even Phaistos which was given a monumentalized west entrance shortly before the palace was destroyed. A platform in the west wing loggia of the Mallia palace is too small to have supported a throne. Another suggested throne emplacement, in room 24 in House ZA at Mallia, is also unlikely. Thus, there is no reason to think that an important function of any Cretan palace or villa was to house a throne room except at Knossos. The West Wing of the Knossos palace, moreover, is unique in having three stone seats in close proximity to one another, though in the final (Mycenaean) phase, the rooms with the two low seats were cut off from the Throne Room proper.

Although thrones are generally lacking on Crete, the stone bench with panels or "triglyphs" is a common feature of neopalatial palaces and villas. Multiple examples occur in the Knossos Throne Room and Anteroom, and others are known at Ayia Triadha, Phaistos, Mallia, Pyrgos, Nirou Khani, and even Xeste 3 at Akrotiri on Thera. Though these seats seem suited to accommodating groups rather than important single figures, they deserve renewed attention.

II. Mycenaean Thrones

There is even less evidence for stone thrones on the Mycenaean mainland, though the placement of the Knossos throne against the right wall of the room is assumed to have been

36 PM III 333-338, figs. 223, 224, 339 and 225.
37 This point was noted by E. Davis in her remarks on the oral version of this paper.
38 PM II 2 672-678; figs. 427-429 (in the last, the restored throne resembles the Throne Room example).
39 PM II 2 396-413, Suppl. pl. XX A. See esp. figs. 232 and 238 for the restored throne; IV 205 and fig. 156.
40 PM II 2 391-396, 394 fig. 225, 392 fig. 224; IV 1 205 and fig. 156.
41 W. GRAHAM, The Palaces of Crete (rev. ed. 1987) 121 and n. 17, dismisses the idea that rooms 69-69a served as "a great hall where the king sat in state to receive visitors".
42 Minoan Religion 109.
43 GRAHAM (supra n. 41) 65-66. In House ZA, benches line three walls of the room, with a gap at the NE corner where the excavator restored a window or door and Graham a throne.
the result of similar factors that influenced the placement of thrones in the Mycenaean megaron, since this is the side of the megaron that is emphasized in the decoration of the floor at Tiryns and Pylos.

No trace of a throne or its support has been found in the earliest surviving megaron of LH IIB date at the Menelaion site near Sparta. This building in both its phases has been considered a forerunner to the later palaces, but is usually termed a "Mansion" rather than a palace.

At Mycenae, the side of the megaron that might originally have contained the throne had collapsed and has since been reconstructed. Although the megaron is not a Minoan feature, the floor of the Mycenaean megaron (along with that of the vestibule) was encircled by slabs of gypsum that were imported from Crete, surely a reference to the distinctive and widespread use of this material in neopalatial architecture.

Wace identified a room at the west end of the palace court at Mycenae as a possible throne room. There, a painted plaster rim encloses a rectangular sunken area that might have supported the (wooden?) dais for a throne. A similar depression with a raised lip was found in the Pylos main megaron. No traces of dais or seat were found at Mycenae or Pylos, however, and Wace's "throne room" at Mycenae also lacks the hearth which characterizes the large and small megaron in the other palaces.

After Wace finished his excavations in the Mycenae palace proper, Papadimitriou investigated a square sunken area (ca. 1.10 m. on a side) in the south end of the gypsum-paved porch of the megaron, and suggested that this might have supported the dais for another throne. His sounding in the porch was never fully published, but his discovery in this area of a gypsum block with a hollow in its upper surface, plaster "offering tables", and an ornately carved block (column abacus?) with running-spiral decoration suggest an important (cultic?) installation here though not necessarily the existence of a throne.

In the main megaron at Tiryns, a painted square with elaborate borders is assumed to mark the location of the throne against the middle of the right wall in the IIIB phase of the palace; a similar square was marked in an analogous position in the small megaron. Fragments of a carved stone podium with running-spiral decoration (Pl. XXXVIa-b) belonging to the IIA phase of the main megaron are actually the best surviving evidence for a missing throne, since they can be reconstructed as a throne dais (1.36 x 1.85 m.), larger and much more elaborate than the plain gypsum slab that served as a dais under the Knossos throne. But once again there were no traces of a throne.

46 WACE (supra n. 45) 186-188.
47 WACE (supra n. 45) 187: "Against the north wall is an elongated space, .82 m. from east to west, 1.08 m. from north to south. It was originally sunk about .015 m. below the level of the rest of the floor...On the south is a plaster rim projecting .02 to .03 m. above the surface of the floor, broken at the top, and about .015 m. wide; it is preserved for the length of .17 m."
48 BCH 80 (1956) 380 fig. 1. J. PAPADIMITRIOU, Praktika 1955 (1960) 230-231, fig. 7, pl. 78 b. Both Wace and Papadimitriou may have been influenced by Evans's proliferation of thrones about Knossos.
49 Nauplion Museum 13551: H. PLOMMER, "A Carved Block from the Megaron at Mycenae", BSA 60 (1965) 207-211; B. WESENBERG, Kapitelle und Basen (1971) 4 no. 4, pl. 8.
50 G. RODENWALDT, Tiryns II. Die Fresken (1912; repr. 1976) pl. XIX.
51 RODENWALDT (supra n. 50) pl. XX.
Even in the main megaron (room 6) at Pylos, a rectangular depression (1.07 x .90 m.) in the floor with a raised rim, at the right side of the room, might have held the (wooden?) base of a throne but no actual indications of a chair have survived. Within the fill of the depression was a small collection of precious objects (perhaps the remnants of a foundation deposit?) Adjacent to the depression is a channel terminating in a circular depression at each end, perhaps for libations since the channel contained a dark residue and a jug was apparently painted on the wall dado above it. The small megaron nearby (room 46) includes a round hearth but no traces of a throne emplacement against any of the walls.

III. Thrones in Perishable Materials

Since the indications of thrones in the mainland megara are tenuous, the archaeologival evidence for other types of Mycenaean furniture becomes essential. Carved ivory spindles found at Thebes may have formed the legs or struts of an ornate throne. And the Pylos Ta tablets which record an important ceremony make an inventory of 5 chairs under the term to-no (θόνος) along with 15 footstools (τα-ρα-νυθοφωνος). These articles were manufactured of expensive imported woods and decorated with ivory, gold, and blue-glass paste. The pairing of footstools and chairs suggests that they were stored in sets.

The Ta tablets record an occasion narrated to the scribe in which the wanax undertook some official action in regard to one Au-ke-wa, a damokoro or village functionary. The verb used, te-ke, has been interpreted either as “buried” or “appointed”. Although Mycenaean tombs occasionally contained limited amounts of furniture, the number of chairs and footstools mentioned here, along with a considerable inventory of drinking vessels, suggests the investiture ceremony when Au-ke-wa was appointed damokoro. If this ceremony was held indoors, the main megaron is the only room in the palace large enough to have accommodated a display of all the furniture, and these tablets imply that a group of men was seated together for the occasion.

Since there is no evidence of extensive ivory-working at Pylos, such furniture might have been manufactured elsewhere and brought to Pylos as diplomatic gifts. The Oi tablets from within the citadel at Mycenae mention workers in blue glass, and the House of

53 P N I 76-92, esp. 87-88.
54 P N I 88, 91-92.
55 P N I 88, fig. 73; P N I 178-179 no. 2 M 6, pls. 108, 141.
56 P N I 197-203. Blegen and Rawson mention two slight impressions on the floor which might represent settings for furniture (201-202) but there is no suggestion that these formed part of a throne emplacement.
59 CHADWICK (supra n. 58) 332-346.
60 E.g., footstools or boxes, along with some wooden coffins.
61 O. KRZYSZKOWSKA suggests this form of exchange in the case of an ivory head found in Cyprus: “The Enkomi Warrior Head Reconsidered”, BSA 86 (1991) 107-120.
the Shields and House of the Sphinxes outside the citadel 63 seem to have served for the storage or manufacture of furniture before their destruction at the end of LH IIIB:1. Ivory inlays found in workshop areas at Thebes 64 may also have been used to decorate furniture including chairs and footstools. These excavated inlays complement the Linear B references to elaborate and highly valued furniture mentioned above, although the surviving tablets may have been written after such furniture ceased to be manufactured 65.

A number of ivory footstools have also been found which presumably were meant for use with chairs. Several of these footstools were found in Mycenaean tombs in the Argolid and on Crete 66, while other examples have been recovered at Mycenae and Thebes 67. The high-status woman buried with the remnants of a bull and horse sacrifice and a set of bronze vessels in Tholos A at Archanes in LM IIIA:1-2 had an ivory footstool decorated with figure-eight shields and warrior's heads 68, showing that such martial iconography was not restricted to men 69.

IV. Iconographic Evidence

Given the dearth of evidence for actual thrones except at Knossos, it is worth examining the iconographic evidence for seated figures from glyptic and wall-painting to supplement our picture. Here, the nature of the sources of evidence deserves particular emphasis.

Most of the glyptic evidence originated in the period before the construction of the mainland megara in LH IIIA-B. J. Younger has argued that hard stone seals were no longer being carved in Aegean workshops after LH IIIA:2 70, though many earlier products of this craft remained in circulation and use until the end of the Mycenaean age or even later.

Wall-paintings with seated figures constitute an even more restricted phenomenon: they occur primarily in the neopalatial period on Crete, and are largely representative of developments at Knossos. In a recent survey of Aegean painting, S. Immerwahr has emphasized the fact that there appears to be no figural wall-painting on Crete before the new palace period (MM IIIB-LM IB), and its most advanced representations in relief fresco die out with the destructions at the end of LM IB 71. Both the Grandstand and Sacred Grove and Dance frescoes from Knossos include large numbers of seated women, in contrast to the

64 S. SYMEONOJOLOU, Kadmeia I. Mycenaean Finds from Thebes, Greece. Excavations at 14 Oedipus St. (SIMA XXV; 1973) 44-62.
65 Pylos tablet Ta 714 mentions a chair decorated with gold and glass “phoinikes” -- griffins or palm trees; the latter are represented by ivory cutouts found in the Argolid: MycWorld 219 no. 205 and col. fig.
66 PURSAT (supra n. 57) pl. II.3 (Midea tomb 8). Another has been reported from a tomb at Phylaki Apokoronou on Crete.
67 PURSAT (supra n. 57) pl. IV.1 (Mycenae akropolis); pl. IV.3 (Thebes). Both are decorated with figure-eight shields like the example from Archanes (infra n. 68).
70 J.G. YOUNGER, “The Island Sanctuaries Group: Date and Significance”, in W.-D. NIEMEIER, ed., Studien zur minoischen und helladischen Glyptik (CMS Beiheft 1; 1981) 263-271. I. Pini adds his support to this but contends that the soft-stone Mainland Popular Group, seals which were never used for impressing sealings, continued into LH IIIB, perhaps even IIIC.
71 The “Saffron Gatherer” might date to MM IIIA, according to S. Hood (personal communication, 1992). The latest datable relief fresco occurs in the LM IIIA period at Ayia Triadha: IMMERWAHR, Aegean Ptg 181 AT no. 5. This figure has a relief border; the scene includes a seated woman. The painting unfortunately has never been illustrated.
smaller, standing men in both scenes 72. Other fragments of elaborately dressed and bejeweled women which once decorated the palace walls, the “Ladies in Blue” 73 and “Lady in Red” 74, have been restored as seated though their chairs are not preserved. Other fragments with dress patterns may belong to more seated women 75. During the neopalatial period, other large-scale women, some of them perhaps seated, are represented at other Minoan sites with strong Knossian connections: Khania 76, Katsambas 77, Palaikastro 78, and Pseira 79. Seated mural women even appear on some of the minoanized Cycladic islands, including Thera (discussed below), Melos, and the Argolid, notably Mycenae 80.

Several iconographic types of seat can be identified briefly here; for the complete range of examples the reader will also want to consult J. Younger’s catalogue in this volume.

A. Footstools

Only four Aegean figures are represented using footstools, and all these are women. One is the enthroned woman on the famous gold ring from the Tiryns Treasure (CMS I no. 179, discussed further below) who holds a chalice while a procession of genii with jugs approaches (Pl. XXXVIIa) 81. A similar woman, seated on a throne and flanked by genii and griffins, appears on an unpublished sealing from Thebes 82. A group of fresco fragments found in a dump near the Pylos palace includes the large “White Goddess” which M. Lang reconstructed as seated; approaching her is a procession including a possible priestess whose feet overlap a white object resting on the groundline 83. This white object has sometimes been interpreted as a pyxis and its lid 84, but its position on the groundline in the scene makes it far more likely that this is an ivory footstool 85. Another fresco fragment, found near the Cult Center at Mycenae, preserves female (white) feet resting on a pi-shaped yellow footstool (Pl. XXXVIIb) 86. This may be a late and simplified version of a scene like the Pylos composition, since fragments with women in procession were also found nearby 87.

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72 IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 173 Kn no. 15 (Grandstand), Kn no. 16 (Sacred Grove and Dance), pls. 22, 23.
73 IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 173 Kn no. 11.
74 IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 173 Kn no. 12.
75 IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 173 Kn no. 13, 172-3 Kn no. 14; 179 Kn uncatalogued no. 6. The woman in the “Jewel Fresco” may also have been seated: IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 172 Kn no. 9.
76 IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 181 Ch. no. 1: relief of life-sized woman.
77 IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 182 Ka no. 1: miniature fragments which may be textile patterns.
78 IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 182-183 Pa no. 1.
79 IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 184 Ps no. 1.
80 IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 189 Ph no. 2, and My uncatalogued.
81 CMS I no. 179. Although the figure appears sexless, her cap is one worn by women and sphinxes, but not by men.
82 REHAK (supra n. 27).
83 PN II 83-85 no. 49 H nws (White Goddess); 85 no. 50 H nws, col. pl. D.
84 Cf. the pyxis carried by a woman in the Tiryns procession, ROSENWALDT (supra n. 50) pl. VIII, X.1, 3.
85 It was so identified by M. LANG in PN II 85.
86 NMA 11636: KRITSELE-PROVIDI, Τοιχογραφίες τού βραχειοτάτου Κεντρού τῆς Μυκήνης (1982) 42-42 no B3, pl. 6b; IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 191 My no. 4, fig. 33a (drawing); MycWorld 183 no. 153 and col. fig.
87 KRITSELE-PROVIDI (supra n. 86) 43-53, passim; fragments from corridor M.
B. Thrones

A number of Aegean representations include four-legged seats with curved supports which recall the carved struts of the Knossos throne, or chairs with backs which can properly be called thrones.

Important in the present discussion is a LH II gold ring found in tomb 66 at Mycenae 88 showing the so-called “sacra conversazione” between a large seated woman and a much smaller male standing before her who holds a staff or skeptron at an angle (Pl. XXXVIIc). The curved supports of her seat recall the carving of the Knossos throne; the surface of the ring behind the chair has been gouged to create a heap of ovoid objects which could represent a mountainous outcrop 89, a less formal rendering perhaps of the undulating shape of the Knossos throne back. It is significant that the man with the skeptron -- an attribute usually identified with kingship 90 -- is the standing, rather than the seated, figure.

On another gold ring, from tomb 91 at Mycenae 91, a long-skirted figure of indeterminate sex sits on a chair with a high back, holding a female griffin on a leash (Pl. XXXVIIId). The seat on this ring, represented in profile, recalls that on the unpublished sealing from Thebes which also includes a footstool. On the Thebes sealing, these elements are set atop a platform resting on incurved bases.

An ivory mirror handle from Mycenae tomb 2 shows pairs of antithetic women seated on chairs with curved struts which resemble the Knossos throne 92. Each woman is shown with arms bent at the elbow and forearms raised, with hands grasping branches or bunches of vegetation, an artistic topos which is repeated twice more in Mycenaean art 93.

C. Architectural Platforms

The architectural platform which supports a seat seems to be characteristically Minoan. It occurs a number of times on sealings and rings, including the related depictions seen on a clay sealings from the Knossos palace (Pl. XXXVIIe) 94, and another from Zakros (Pl. XXXVIIIb) 95. In some cases, these platforms may represent relatively small, temporary constructions 96; in other examples, the architecture is surmounted by Horns of Consecration and seems more massive, as on a gold ring said to be from Thebes (Pl. XXXVIIIa) 97. A sealing from Khania 98 includes a set of platforms with two female figures, one standing and one seated.

Such small-scale glyptic representations seem to derive from large-scale fresco compositions that once decorated the walls of some Minoan palaces and villas. None of these paintings has survived from Knossos itself, but such a composition was found in room 4 of

88 NMA 2971: CMS I no. 101.
89 See, e.g., the paper by T.G. PALAIMA, this volume.
90 Cf. the rockwork of the mountain on another gold ring, CMS I no. 292.
91 NMA 3181: CMS I no. 128.
92 NMA 2399-2413: POURSAT (supra n. 25) 80 no. 270, pl. XXIV.
93 E.g., on the Minet el-Beida pyxis lid where a woman sits on an incurved base: M.-H. GATES, "Mycenaean Art for a Levantine Market? The Ivory Lid from Minet el Beidha/Ugarit", Eikon 77-84. Cf. the pose of the frescoed “Grain Goddess” from the Mycenaean Cult Center: P. REHAK, “ Tradition and Innovation in the Fresco from Room 31 in the ‘Cult Center’ at Mycenae”, Eikon 50-58, pl. X 1a, c; XIII a.
94 PM II 2 767 fig. 498.
95 PM II 2 767 fig. 499.
96 See, e.g., the small platform resting on a pavement on a sealing from Khania: CMS V Suppl. 1A no. 175.
97 Benaki Museum 2075: CMS V 1 no. 199; Minoan Religion 191 fig. 198.
98 Khania Museum 2097: CMS V Suppl. 1A, no. 177; Minoan Religion 162 fig. 198.
the important neopalatial villa at Ayia Triadha. The fresco was burnt in the LM IB destruction of the villa, and it is not quite clear now whether the associated woman is sitting or standing; she seems rather to sway and might be dancing.

Much better preserved is the platform painted in the upper storey of Xeste 3 at Akrotiri on Thera (Pl. XXXVIIIc). Despite the Cycladic style of the fresco, with the figures painted against a white rather than a colored background as on Crete, the iconography of the scene reveals close Minoan inspiration. One wall in a scene of crocus-gathering in a mountainous landscape includes a woman, probably a goddess, seated on a platform of beams resting on blocks and incurved bases. She is attended by a leashed griffin and a blue monkey; at a slightly lower level of the platform, a girl empties crocus blossoms into a wide-mouthed basket. The throne of this figure is unusual, since it is backless and resembles a series of yellow cushions. Because the scene shows the harvesting of saffron crocus, her seat might consist of bales of dyed cloth.

The depiction of the beams in the Thera painting is very similar to that on the Ayia Triadha fresco, and incurved bases are represented on fresco fragments from the west wing of the Knossos palace. A more stylized pair of bases is painted on either side of the stone seat in the Throne Room.

Evidently these iconographic elements could be combined in different ways. A sealstone from Pylos shows griffins reclining on one of these platforms supported by incurved bases. And the unpublished Thebes sealing shows a woman seated on a platform who is flanked by both griffins and genii, but she lacks the monkey of the Thera fresco.

The discovery of four incurved limestone bases in the porch of the palatial building at Arkhaneas Tourkogeitonia suggests that such temporary platforms may actually have been set up in the paved court outside. But no functional incurved bases have been found on the mainland, even though they are represented on the Mycenaean Lion Gate relief and on a fresco fragment from the Pylos palace. And yet, the mainland finds of the Pylos sealing indicates that the Mycenaens had been introduced to the iconography of Minoan platforms, even if they chose not to adopt it.

D. Rocky Peaks or Outcrops Used as Seats

Both Minoan and Mycenaean art share the depiction of women seated on rocky outcrops. Again, there is a certain amount of variety among these scenes. A sealing from Ayia Triadha shows a large woman seated on an outcrop; before her is a smaller woman who seems to be offering a conical rhyton (Pl. XXXVIIIb). On a sealstone from Armenoi

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100 DOUMAS, *Wall Paintings* pl. 122; *Minoan Religion* 206-207 fig. 213.
101 DAVIS (supra n. 20) 214-226.
102 Initially identified by Evans, *PM II* 2 608 fig. 381d.
103 ΝΜΑ 8321: *CMS I* no. 282.
104 A suggestion by N. Marinatos would put all 4 in a line to support a platform, but the tops of the bases are not very wide (ca. 0.51 m.). If the four from Arkhaneas were actually used as bases for a platform, they might have been arranged at its corners; such an arrangement would exactly match the stone table with a raised rim (L. 1.73 x W. 1.02 m.) preserved at the site.
105 M. SHAW, "The Lion Gate Relief of Mycenaen Reconsidered", in *Philya Έτη εἰς Γ. Μυλανόν* (1986) 108-123.
106 *PM II* 105 no. 3 C 20, pls. 46, 132. The reconstruction by P. de Jong seems wrong; the fragments should probably be restored with a rampant animal at each side with its forehooves resting on top of the base.
107 *PM II* 2 768 fig. 500; *Minoan Religion* 162 159 fig. 142.
tomb 24, a seated woman touches a rampant lion (Pl. XXXVIIIId)\textsuperscript{108}; on a sealing from Khania Kastelli (Pl. XXXVIII)\textsuperscript{109}, the animal is an agrimi. A sealstone in Geneva recalls the composition on the ring with the “sacra conversazione”, with the woman now seated on a high outcrop and floating elements in the field\textsuperscript{110}.

Once more, a derivation from large-scale painting can be suggested. During LM IA-B, several relief frescoes were executed on Crete showing women who have been restored as seated on rocks. These include a pair of figures from a possible shrine at Pseira\textsuperscript{111}, and a similar seated relief woman has been identified at Khania though the seat is not preserved\textsuperscript{112}. One of the most unusual examples of this topos is the seated “wounded woman” on one wall of the lustral basin in Xeste 3 at Akrotiri. She appears to be crossing one leg over the other knee, and blood streams from one foot which is raised over a crocus blossom\textsuperscript{113}. While a variety of identifications have been proposed for this individual\textsuperscript{114}, her position in the center of the wall corresponds to that of the goddess on the wall of the room directly above it\textsuperscript{115}, implying that there may be some thematic link between the two\textsuperscript{116}.

There is some indication that the topos of women seated on rocks was spreading to the mainland early in the Mycenaean age, for it occurs on a large gold ring from the Acropolis Treasure at Mycenae which is dated on stylistic, not stratigraphic, grounds to LH II\textsuperscript{117}. This ring has been considered a pastiche of Minoan and Mycenaean elements by J. Hooker, since the scene includes both a large central seated woman and a tiny floating figure to one side.

The topos of the woman seated on rocks is also translated into ivory, on a plaque found at Mycenae\textsuperscript{118}. Here, the woman sits in the bent-arm pose noted on the ivory mirror handle mentioned above; although her forearms are missing, she may once have held branches or vegetation like the other individuals of this type.

E. The Folding Stool or Campstool

One of the most commonly depicted Aegean seats is the folding stool or campstool, a type of seat that is also well-represented in New Kingdom Egypt\textsuperscript{119} and in Middle Bronze Age Syria\textsuperscript{120}.

Campstools are represented several times on the Knossos sealings. One shows an odd figure with a bulbous head, probably a monkey, which Evans dubbed the “Young

\textsuperscript{108} Khania Museum, no inv. no.: CMS V no. 253; Minoan Religion 153 fig. 127.
\textsuperscript{109} Khania Museum 1501-1526: CMS V Suppl. IA no. 175; Minoan Religion 152 fig. 125.
\textsuperscript{110} CMS X no. 261; Minoan Religion 191 fig. 199.
\textsuperscript{111} IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 184 Ps no. 1.
\textsuperscript{112} IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 181 Ch. no. 1.
\textsuperscript{113} DOUMAS, Wall Paintings pl. 105; Minoan Religion 206 fig. 212, 208 fig. 214.
\textsuperscript{114} Most recently by N. MARINATOS in Minoan Religion 208-209.
\textsuperscript{116} The wounded woman is certainly not a crocus gatherer as Marinatos has suggested (supra n. 114), despite the presence of a crocus blossom under her foot, since she is older than the other flower pickers and lacks a basket.
\textsuperscript{117} CMS 1 no. 17. For discussion see HOOKER (supra n. 2) 197-199, and REHAK (supra n. 69).
\textsuperscript{118} NMA 5897; POETERS (supra n. 25) 19 no. 48, pl. IV.
\textsuperscript{119} E.g., the Tomb of Tutankhamen (mid 14th c. B.C.) which included a chair with folding legs -- the so-called “ecclesiastical throne” -- and representations of the king seated on similar chairs: C. DESROCHES-NOBLECOURT, Tutankhamen. Life and Death of a Pharaoh (1963) col. pl. IV.
\textsuperscript{120} E.g., on an ivory plaque found in the tomb of the “Lord of the Goats” at Ebla: P. MATTHIAE, “Two Princely Tombs at Ebla”, Archäologica 33 (1980) 9-17.
Minotaur"121, while another shows a woman in a flounced skirt, seated on a campstool and bending at the waist to take an object from a container held by a standing male 122.

The most problematic example of the campstool appears in the Palaquin Fresco found in the Knossos palace 123. Neither Evans’s original reconstruction of the Palaquin Fresco, nor a more recent attempt by N. Marinatos 124, is completely satisfactory. Although it is clear that two individuals are seated on folding stools, none of the flesh of the robed figures is preserved to indicate its sex. Clearly indicated, however, is a framework around the seats reminiscent of the struts enclosing a “carrying chair” (which preserves traces of a seated figure) on a model from the Loomweight Basement 125.

M. Cameron linked the Palaquin Fresco with a chariot scene showing a man in a robe with diagonal bands who leads a tethered bull 126. If the two compositions are indeed related, the man in the chariot might be leading the bull toward the seated figures. Both the charioteer and some of the figures in the Palaquin Fresco wear sword baldricss; since one cannot fight in a long robe, the swords here must be indicators of rank or status. But the meaning of this scene (or scenes) remains obscure.

The three best-known representations of campstools are important to our discussion because all are associated with drinking: the Tiryns Treasure ring, the Campstool Fresco from Knossos, and the banqueters from the Pylos megaron murals. The Pylos banqueters, it should be noted, do not sit on proper campstools 127; instead, the artist has rendered their seats as solid-painted “hourglass” shapes, but the inward curve of the sides of these seats is close to the campstool shape.

Of these, the Tiryns ring (Pl. XXXVIIa) is probably the earliest (LH II), though like many gold rings it is dated only on stylistic grounds 128. The large oval bezel shows a woman with headdress and chalice, enthroned on a tasselled 129 campstool with throne back, her feet resting on a footstool; she is approached by a line of genii with pitchers, above a grounline of triglyph and half rosette decoration.

The triglyph-rosette design recurs as a textile pattern on the dress of an important woman in the Knossos procession fresco 130 which may be approximately contemporary with the ring. As a dado, the pattern occasionally occurs in glyptic, as under the recumbent griffin on a gold cushion from Pylos 131. Actual stone dado blocks with this design have been found at Knossos near the fragments of the Campstool Fresco 132, and similar slabs were used at

121 PM II 2 763 fig. 491.
122 PM IV 2 387 fig. 322.
124 Minoan Religion 69-71, 71 fig. 60.
125 A new study of the models from this deposit by R. MERCEREAU will appear in BSA (1994).
126 CAMERON (supra n. 123).
127 I thank Ellen Davis for emphasizing this important detail.
128 NMA 6208: CMS I no. 179. The ring was actually found in a mixed Geometric context and has been suspected of being a forgery. The close correspondence between the figure’s robe and the one worn by the woman with sword in the painting from room 31 in the Mycenaean “Cult Center” argues in favor of the authenticity of the ring, as does the correspondence of the footstool to the Linear B ideogram for this object.
129 This detail recurs in the Campstool Fresco, where the tassels are painted red.
130 PM II 2 729 fig. 456a, 723 fig. 450 B 14, Suppl. pl. XXVI.
131 NMA no. 7986: CMS I no. 293.
132 PM II 2 591 fig. 368.
Mycenae to decorate the palace 133 and façade of the Atreus tholos 134. The device recurs in paint at the base of the walls in the porch of the Mycenae megaron and its courtyard 135. The most ornate stone revetment of this type, inlaid with blue glass, was placed around the walls of the porch of the Tiryns megaron 136.

Behind the back of the chair, a bird (eagle?) appears to grasp a sacral knot like the one attached to the dress of La Parisienne on the Campstool Fresco 137. A stone matrix from Mycenae was used to produce jewelry in the form of similar birds 138, and gold ornaments with related animals were found in SG V 139.

Many of the elements on the ring have parallels among the Cretan imports in the Shaft Graves at Mycenae. The chalice of the goddess resembles two alabaster examples, one from SG IV 140 and the other from V 141. The jugs of the genii correspond to the silver ewers found in graves Alpha and IV 142, and a faience mount from III 143. Imported Minoan faience “sacral knots” came from IV as well 144.

The chalice of the goddess also has a clear Minoan pedigree, as has often been noted. In addition to the alabaster examples from the Shaft Graves, another was found in the Rhyton Well at Mycenae, and parts of several more are now in Nauplion 145. The largest cache of such vessels was found in a LM IB destruction deposit in the Zakros palace, but P. Warren has catalogued many more examples 146. Most of these came from Crete, but parts of three more were found at the minoanizing site of Ayia Irini on Kea 147.

Related to the woman on the Tiryns ring is the enthroned figure of indeterminate sex with a goblet who appears on an unusual pictorial krater fragment from Tiryns with a chariot race (Pl. XXXIXa), dating to the end of LH IIIB:2 148. The goddess on the earlier ring holds up a Minoan chalice rare in contexts later than LM IB, whereas the krater figure holds a Mycenaean kylix with a good LH IIIB pedigree. The chair itself is clumsily drawn, and floats slightly above the groundline, but could be taken for a throne or a campstool with a back.

A single terracotta hand clutching a goblet, found at Amyklai in Lakonia 149, may have belonged to another seated woman, on analogy with the figures on the Tiryns ring and krater fragment. When complete, this figurine would have been just under life-size, and thus is among the more remarkable examples of coroplastic art from the mainland.

133 WACE (supra n. 45) 236-237, 236 fig. 47 a (from the propylon).
135 WACE (supra n. 45) 235, 234 fig. 46: NW corner of porch.
137 IMMERWAHR, Aegean Fig 176 Kno. 26.
138 NMA 1019; MycWorld 219 no. 204, 218 col. fig. Dr. Demakopoulou kindly allowed J. Younger and me to examine this mould in 1993.
139 NMA 689; KAR0 52, pl. XXVI:60; Schliemann cat. 310 no. 262, 311 col. fig.
140 NMA 600: KAR0 600, pls. CXXXVI, CXXXIX.
141 NMA 854: KAR0 854, pl. CXXXVIII.
142 NMA 511: KAR0 110, fig. 40; Schliemann cat. 292-293 no. 240 and col. pl.
143 K.P. FOSTER, Aegean Faience of the Bronze Age (1979) 140-141, 138 pl. 45, 139 pl. 46.
144 NMA 555, 554: KAR0 114, pl. CLI; Schliemann cat. 295 no. 242-243 and col. fig.
146 P. WARREN, Minoan Stone Vases (1969) 36-37 no. 15; chalices.
147 WARREN (supra n. 146) 37.
149 H.-G. BUCHHOLZ and V. KARAGEORGHIS, Prehistoric Greece and Cyprus (1973) 103 no. 1247, pl. 1247 a, b.
V. Seated figures and the function of the Mycenaean Megaron

Let us return to the original question. If we accept that the emplacements in some or all of the mainland megaras supported thrones, who then sat on them? In his reconstructed view of the interior of the Pylos main megaron, P. de Jong supplied a bare-chested male wanax sitting on a throne that resembles the one at Knossos 150.

Other elements than the existence of thrones have been used to support the view that the megaron served as the throne-room of the king. The decoration of the main megaron at Pylos should furnish clues to its use, despite the extremely fragmentary nature of the pictorial program. Nevertheless, we are in a better position at Pylos than at any other site to evaluate the decoration, thanks to M. Lang’s careful initial publication and to L. McCallum’s recent restudy of the fragments 151. But as J. Younger’s measured reconstruction of the east wall in this volume indicates (see the foldout, this volume), we have less than 5% of the decoration even of the best preserved wall, and any arguments about the program in the megaron as a whole are highly tentative at best.

Among the Pylos megaron murals, three elements of the composition seem pertinent to an analysis of the function of the room. One element consists of fragments of heraldic griffins and lions found near the center of the north-east wall; another from the south end of the east wall consists of a banquet scene with a harpist, a bull, and men in diagonally banded robes seated at tables. Additional men in diagonally banded robes appear on a fragment found near the south wall, to the west of the doorway 152. A third scrap of painting shows a stone jug, which has been restored to the dado above the channel in the floor of the room 153.

The careful recording of fresco fragments fallen from the east wall indicates that a reclining wingless griffin and lion existed to the right side of the throne depression 154. Despite the lack of evidence at Pylos for a matching heraldic pair to the left of the throne depression, the wingless griffin strongly recalls the fragments of similar creatures in the Knossos Throne Room 155. Since both lions and griffins are often represented as antithetic pairs in Aegean art, it seems perverse not to supply a matching pair of animals on the other side of the Pylos throne emplacement, and in the Knossos Throne Room as well.

Although such an arrangement is a reconstruction in both cases, antithetic griffins flanking a central enthroned woman occur on the new Thebes sealing mentioned above. It has also sometimes been argued that the lions, appearing at Pylos but not at Knossos, are more consistent with male iconography 156, and in her discussion of the Pylos frescoes, McCallum adduced an amethyst cylinder from a LH I-II context in the Kazarma tholos (Pl. XXXIXb) with an anthropomorphic figure flanked by a lion and griffin as a parallel for the much later Pylos megaron animals 157. But the skirt of the individual on the cylinder indicates that it is a woman rather than a man. And a cushion seal found in a LH IIIA context at Tiryns showing a woman holding a griffin (Pl. XXXIXc) 158 confirms the suitability of this association.

150 PN I, frontispiece.
151 L. MCCALLUM, Decorative Program in the Mycenaean Palace of Pylos: the Megaron Frescoes (Univ. of Pennsylvania Ph.D. diss., 1987; UMI 8804933).
152 PN II 81-45 H 6, pls. 29, A.
153 PN II 178-179 2 M 6, pls. 108, 141.
154 PN II 99-102, 194-196.
155 PM IV 910-913, col. pl. XXII.
156 Note, for example, that an amethyst cylinder from the Kazarma tholos shows a man driving a chariot drawn by lions, an interesting conflation of hunting metaphors: CMS V 2 no. 585.
157 Nauplion Museum (no inv. no.); CMS V 2 no. 584.
While lions and griffin appear as attendants of both male and female figures of authority, either heraldic lions or griffins flank the woman on sealstones who wears the “Snake Frame” headress of multiple horns surmounted by the double axe or labrys: several studies have associated her with the function of the Knossos Throne Room, though she is never shown seated 159. While such glyptic representations are much earlier in origin than the Pylos paintings, the same woman appears as a standing figure on sealings from the palace in its LH IIIb phase, where she is flanked by antithetic genii and bulls 160.

But there are also two Mycenaean paintings contemporary with the Pylos frescoes that show lions and griffins with women rather than with men. One is the LH IIIb:2 shrine fresco from room 31 in the Cult Center at Mycenae which depicts a yellow lion leaping across a woman with sheaves of grain who may be a goddess 161. And another fresco fragment found nearby shows a helmeted woman or “warrior goddess” carrying a small (baby?) griffin 162 in a composition reminiscent of a cushion seal mentioned above. Thus both animals are associated with women in paintings of the late Mycenaean age, contemporary with the Pylos megaron murals.

The banqueting scene from the right end of the south-east wall of the Pylos megaron has also been adduced in support of the identification of the room as a throne room for the wanax 163. These fragments include male banqueters in diagonally banded robes seated on campstool-like chairs at tripod tables; nearby, a long-robed harpist holds his lyre while a white bird -- surely a baby griffin because of its coloring and crest 164 -- flies toward the throne. A bull also appears, perhaps as animal sacrifice.

While L. McCallum has recently interpreted these festivities as part of a message of political stability for the Pylian kingdom under its wanax, the closest parallel for such a banqueting scene is the Campstool Fresco from Knossos, in which La Parisienne and another, more fragmentary seated woman, are present 165. The importance of drinking and music to the function of the Pylos megaron is suggested by the pantries grouped around and behind the megaron which were crammed with kylikes 166, and several miniature examples of these cups were found in the megaron itself 167. One of the Pylos sealings from the Wine Store, inscribed across its face with the Linear B ideogram for “Wine” 168 is important in this context because it was impressed by a ring carrying a procession of figures, including a lyre-player, approaching a large seated figure, a woman, not a man (Pl. XXXIXd).

In both the Pylos megaron frescoes and the Knossos Campstool Fresco, the men wear long “Syrian” robes with diagonal bands (Pl. XLa) similar to the costume of some lyre-

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159 R. HÄGG and Y. LINDAU, “The Minoan ‘Snake Frame’ Reconsidered”, OpAth 15 (1984) 67-77. J. Younger points out to me that she may be apotropaic or a guardian of the dead: two look-alike sealstones with this figure (CMS I nos. 144, 145) were found in niches on either side of the stomion of Mycenae chamber tomb 515.

160 NMA 8552: CMS I no. 379.

161 A case for her divinity is argued in REHAK (supra n. 93) 50-57, pl. XVIII a.

162 NMA 11652: MycWorld 182 no. 149, 181 col. fig.; IMMERAHR, Aegean Ptg 192 My no. 9.

163 MCCALLUM (supra n. 151) passim.

164 Cf. the similar creature on the Ayia Triadha sarcophagus. Griffins alone among fantastic animals in the Aegean hatch their young from eggs in nests and show miniature (young) animals along with the adults: cf. CMS I no. 304, and the griffins with nest on a LH IIIc pyxis from Lefkandi: MycWorld 128 no. 68 and col. fig.

165 IMMERAHR, Aegean Ptg 176 Kn no. 26.

166 PN I pls. 359-366.

167 PN I 89: “close to...the western column [of the hearth] stood a fairly large table of offerings made of clay, coated with fine stucco...On it lay two miniature two-handled kylikes, probably votive offerings”.

168 NMA 8539: CMS I no. 361.
players \(^{169}\) and men on Minoan sealstones who have been called "priests". This costume may appear first on Crete on an imported cylinder seal found at Mochlos \(^{170}\). For the most part, the Minoan men in these robes appear on sealstones of MM III-LM I date \(^{171}\), a few examples of which were imported to or imitated on the mainland in the period immediately after the Mycenaean Shaft Graves (LH II A-IIIA:1) \(^{172}\). In glyptic, these men may hold a lunate axe and a bird, or restrain a leashed griffin.

N. Marinatos has argued that these men are actual priests, following a suggestion by Evans \(^{173}\). But they are never shown as sacrificants at sacrificial tables, where individuals wearing "hide skirts" have a better claim to be the officiating priests \(^{174}\). The diagonally-banded robed men instead carry axes or a mace which are emblems of status derived from the Levant \(^{175}\), not tools for bloodletting. If anything, these men are middle administrators rather than priests, for there are too many of them to represent a palace’s single wanax.

Even the diagonally banded robed man in a LM II-IIIA fresco from Knossos who drives a chariot followed by a bull \(^{176}\) may be another official who supplies the animal for sacrifice but does not kill it. Although the deceased represented as the recipient of a bull sacrifice on the LM III A Aria Triadha sarcophagus is a man, the contemporary high-status woman interred in tholos A at Arkhanes was equipped with the remnants of a funerary bull-sacrifice, along with her ivory footstool and wine-drinking service of bronze vessels \(^{177}\).

Finally, there is the painted jug restored to the wall dado adjacent to the throne emplacement at Pylos, perhaps indicating that the floor channel was used for libations. Similar jugs are held by white (female) fingers on LH IIIB wall-paintings from Thebes \(^{178}\), Tiryx \(^{179}\), and Mycenae \(^{180}\). And the seated goddess on the earlier Tiryx ring, discussed above, holds a libation chalice. The only man holding a veined stone vessel belongs to the Knossos Procession Fresco from the West entrance corridor, and even he is walking toward a woman, perhaps a priestess, in the center of the scene \(^{181}\).

The main argument can be summarized as follows. Because of the existence at Knossos of an image of seated men in long robes drinking under the leadership of an enthroned woman in the Campstool Fresco, and because of the existence of similarly garbed men at Pylos plus the hundreds of kylikes in and about the megaron, I suggest that a major

\(^{169}\) J. Younger reminds me that the Pylos harper is only holding, not playing, his instrument. For the bard on a LM IIIB pyxis from Kalami Apokoronou, see MycWorld 149 no. 105 and col. fig.

\(^{170}\) DAVARAS and SOLES (supra n. 9) 38-39, 38 fig. 1. The seal was found with EM II-MM IB pottery. J. Younger mentions that the cylinder shows signs of recutting, a feature of many imported seals. Cf. another import, CMS II no. 306.

\(^{171}\) See YOUNGER, Conspectus II B: people in garments with diagonal banding, nos. 35-54.

\(^{172}\) E.g., CMS I nos. 223, 225, 229 (all from the cist in the Vaphelo tholos), and CMS V Suppl. 1A no. 345, from Routsi tholos 2 near Pylos (Chora Museum 2726).

\(^{173}\) Minoan Religion 127-141.

\(^{174}\) J. SAKELLARAKIS, "Kuppelgrab A von Arkhanes und das kretisch-mykenische Tieropferritual", PZ 45 (1970) 135-219. For individuals in hide skirts, see e.g., the Aria Triadha sarcophagus. Another of these individuals has recently been identified on the Knossos Procession Fresco: C. BOLOTIS, "Nochmals zum Prozessionsfresco von Knossos: Palast und Darbringung von Prestige-Objekten", in FunctMinPal 145-155, esp. 148-149, 149 figs. 4 a, b.

\(^{175}\) Numerous examples were found at Byblos in the Temple of the Obelisks. See N. JIDEJAN, Byblos through the Ages (1968) pls. 73, 75; H. ERKANAL, Die Äste und Beine des 2. Jahrtausends in Zentralanatolien (Prähistorische Bronzezeit IX:8: 1977) pls. 19, 22-26.

\(^{176}\) IMMERWAHR, Aegean Ptg 175-176 Kn no. 25.

\(^{177}\) J. and E. SAKELLARAKIS (supra n. 68) 72-85.

\(^{178}\) IMMERWAHR, Aegean Ptg 200 Th. no. 1, 116 fig. 32 f.

\(^{179}\) RODENWALD (supra n. 50) pl. pl. X 2.

\(^{180}\) NMA 11,646: KRITSELE-PROVIDI (supra n. 86) 51 no. B-25, pl. 7b.

\(^{181}\) PM II 2 724 fig. 451.
function of the Mycenaean megaron is for communal drinking. Both at Pylos and at Knossos, there are too many men in diagonally-banded robes for them all to be kings, but they could represent important officials in the state, shown in the paintings under the direction of a woman, perhaps a priestess or queen, who led the toasting. This is not to deny the importance of the wanax, but to suggest that in the megaron an enthroned woman held an important ceremonial role. It seems clear that social drinking was an important function during all stages of Mycenaean society, and J. Wright has recently suggested that this practice was adopted by the mainlanders starting in the SG period.

VI. The Representation of Male Figures of Power in the Aegean

A problem remains. If the wanax of the Linear B tablets is so important to Mycenaean society, why then is he apparently not represented in any of the artistic sources? His absence in the iconographic material, most of which belongs to the Minoan or early Mycenaean period, may suggest that his function is a relatively late development.

In contrast to the seated women discussed above, three basic types of male figure of power or authority can be identified in the Aegean, all of them standing. One type, the man saluting with spear or skeptron, surely includes gods (as in the case of a miniature descending male figure on a gold ring in the Ashmolean Museum (Pl. XLb) but might include rulers (the Master Impression) or even initiates and votaries if the men holding outstretched staffs on the Chieftain Cup and the Naxos cushion seal (Pl. XLC) have been identified correctly. What is usually not pointed out is that there seem to be no representations of the Commanding Gesture created after the LM IB destructions on Crete, with the exception of a LM IIIA painting from Knossos and the LH IIIB.2 fresco from the Cult Center at Mycenae, both of which depict women in this pose. Moreover, none of the surviving figures with the skeptron -- of either sex -- is seated.

A second type, the Master of Animals, dominates or slays lions or griffins. Such individuals could conceivably be either gods or heroes. Some Masters maintain control over leashed animals, both exotic (like griffins) and domestic (like dogs). These include the so-called "priest" in a diagonally banded robe on a lintoid from the Vaphieo tholos.

182 Potnia mentioned in the tablets would make a better candidate for this individual than for a goddess; in no instance does the word occur in such a way as to preclude identifying her as a human authority.

183 J. WRIGHT, "Empty Cups and Empty Jugs: The Social Role of Wine in Minoan and Mycenaean Societies", in P. MCGOVERN, S. FLEMING, and S. KATZ, eds., The Origins and Ancient History of Wine (in press). I am grateful to the author for sending me a copy of his manuscript in advance of publication.

184 PM 160 fig. 115.

185 Khania Museum no. 1563: E. HALLAGER, The Master Impression (SIMA LXIX: 1985); CMS V Suppl. 1A no. 142; MycWorld 210-211 no. 191, 211 col. fig. E. Hallager kindly allowed J. Younger and me to examine this sealing in 1993.

186 For illustrations, see S. MARINATOS and M. HIRMER, Crete and Mycenae (1960) pls. 100-102; R. KOEHL, "The Chieftain Cup and a Minoan Rite of Passage", JHS 106 (1986) 99-110.

187 Naxos Museum (no inv. no.): CMS V 2 no. 608.

188 IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 175 Kn no. 24, pl. 43.

189 IMMERWAHR, Aegean Pig 141 My no. 6, pls. 59, 60.

190 Note that the Mycenae fresco figure seems to flex her arm and the hand holding the staff; this is thus not the usual form of the Commanding Gesture.

191 One of the best known examples occurs on a jasper ring from tomb 88 at Mycenae: NMA 2852: CMS I no. 89. See J. YOUNGER, The Iconography of Late Minoan-Mycenaean Sealstones and Finger-Rings (1988) 156-158, for other glyptic examples. The wide diffusion of this motif is illustrated by its appearance on Cypriot ivories. See, e.g., MycWorld 72 no. 4, 73 col. fig. (ivory mirror handle with man fighting lion). Other examples include CMS II 3 no 167 (Master with lion and griffin).
XLD)\textsuperscript{192}, the kilted man on a seal in Heraklion\textsuperscript{193}, and the man wearing a penis-sheath who tethers a large winged animal (griffin or sphinx?) on an ivory plaque from Dendra\textsuperscript{194}. A man followed by an unleashed griffin appears on a cylinder seal from Routsi tholos 2 near Pylos\textsuperscript{195}. But the Master of Animals seems absent in any form from mural painting, though M. Lang suggested that one was originally present in the Pylos main megaron\textsuperscript{196}.

A third type of male authority can be distinguished on the basis of pose. Thus, the standing male with arms bent and hands clasped on chest, who appears on a seal of LM IIIA:1 date in the Benaki Museum (Pl. XLa) has sometimes been considered a god because he is flanked by a genius with pitcher and a winged agrimi\textsuperscript{197}. The man on the Dendra ivory plaque, mentioned above, is in the same pose. The recently discovered ivory "kouros" from a LM IB destruction level at Palaiikastro stands in a similar pose, and is thought by some to represent a youthful divinity\textsuperscript{198}. But the same pose had earlier been considered appropriate for Middle Minoan terracotta figurines of votaries dedicated at the peak sanctuary of Petsosa near Palaiikastro\textsuperscript{199}. This pose needs restudy: it is often used for Masters, but it does not seem to indicate wanax-status.

VII. A Solution to the Problem

This synopsis of the evidence confirms that the vast majority of the representations of seated figures in Aegean art of the late Bronze Age are women, and that there exists no established image for the representation of the seated male except in groups (Pl. XLa). All images of the male with skeptron, moreover, show him standing rather than enthroned.

For the early (MH-LH I) phase of Mycenaean society\textsuperscript{200}, I frankly see no evidence for the existence of the wanax in the archaeological or iconographic record. We have the Shaft Graves of Circle B and A at Mycenae, which seem to include the burials of élite men, women, and children who are essentially primi inter pares\textsuperscript{201}. None of the Shaft Graves includes the burial of one individual per generation who is singled out as a king.

This situation is mirrored exactly in the art of the period, where we see groups of élite fighters, from the line of shielded but indistinguishable warriors in the West House Miniature


\textsuperscript{194} NMA 7359: POURSAT (supra n. 25) 168 no. 359, pl. XXXVIII.

\textsuperscript{195} NMA 8334: CMS I no. 285.

\textsuperscript{196} PN II 196.

\textsuperscript{197} Benaki Museum no. 1517: CMS V no. 201.


\textsuperscript{199} For illustrations, see PM I 152 fig. 111h, i; MARINATOS and HIRMER (supra n. 186) pl. 15.

\textsuperscript{200} On the early Mycenaean age, see now J. RUTTER, "Review of Aegean Prehistory II. The Prepalatial Bronze Age of the Southern and Central Greek mainland", AJA 97 (1993) 745-797.

Fresco 202, to the niello Lion Hunt dagger 203, to the silver Battle Krater 204, to the Epidaurus stone vase fragment 205. In glyptic duels of this time (found mostly in the graves of women, incidentally), no hero shines forth that we can clearly call by name: these are anonymous warriors who are usually very evenly equipped 206. Even at the very end of the Mycenaean age, the early LH IIIC Warrior Krater shows two files of almost indistinguishable warriors, but it is a woman standing to one side who gesticulates as they depart 207.

Beginning in the LH IIA period and continuing until early LH IIIB, nine tholoi were built around the citadel at Mycenae 208, probably because of the difficulty of reopening the Shaft Graves for subsequent burials 209. Although the Mycenae tholoi were thoroughly robbed of their contents, we can assign six of them to the LH IIA period alone on architectural grounds, and these appear in pairs in three geographic locations which may reflect landholdings around the citadel. Their numbers and relatively short period of construction suggest that we again have collective tombs that cannot -- at least at Mycenae -- represent the burial places of individual kings 210. Instead, the Shaft Graves and tholoi at Mycenae better support a model of collective leadership, perhaps with functions allotted on a rotating basis or related to landholdings.

For the LH IIA and B period outside Mycenae, there is visual evidence from a few important unplundered tholoi which give us a glimpse of what we are lacking from the Argolid graves. From Vaphieio 211 at the beginning of this period, and from Routsi tholos tomb 212 at the end, we have "princely" burials with large personal hoards of seals, several of which show a new type of important male figure borrowed from Crete wearing the diagonally banded robe. The Routsi tholos included one seal of this type, while the cist of the Vaphieio tholos held three such representations 213, along with an imported axe of "Syrian"

203 BUCHHOLZ and KARAGEORGHS (supra n. 149) 56 no. 682, pl. 682.
205 MORGAN (supra n. 202) pl. 193.
206 E.g., on CMS I no. 16, with the so-called “battle in the glen”. Two seals and three gold cushions were found in SG III at Mycenae, which are thought to have contained the bodies of women, and these were used as jewelry: J. YOUNGER, "Non-Sphragistic Uses of Minoan-Mycenaean Sealstones and Rings", Kadmos 16 (1977) 141-159.
207 BUCHHOLZ and KARAGEORGHS (supra n. 149) 76-77 no. 1025, pl. 1025.
208 A.J.B. WACE, "Excavations at Mycenae. IX. The Tholos Tombs", BSA 25 (1921-23) 283-402.
210 Similar arguments were presented by E. FRENCH in an unpublished paper, "Tomb Rho at Mycenae". I am grateful to the author for giving me a copy of her paper. Based on his examination of the skeletons, Angel suggests an average reign of just 4 years each for the waraktes buried in Grave Circles A and B: J.L. ANGEL, "Human Skeletal from Grave Circles at Mycenae", in G. MYLONAS, O Ταφικός Κύκλος B των Μυκηνών (1973) 373-428, esp. 392.
type and the famous gold repoussé cups. In the continuing discussion of whether the cups are of Minoan or Mycenaean manufacture, we seem to have lost sight of the fact that the imagery of bull sports and capture are a specifically Knossian feature, suggesting that like the occupants of the Mycenaean Shaft Graves the Vaphieo "prince" had a direct relationship with, and access to, this major Minoan center. Both the Vaphieo and Routsi princes are good candidates for early wanaktes, but their tombs were also shared by other individuals, presumably members of their families.

The LH II A period is contemporary with LM IB, which ends on Crete with the widespread destructions across the island. At the time of these destructions, or shortly thereafter, a Mycenaean administration establishes itself at Knossos, where the earliest deposit of Linear B documents (the Chariot Tablets) has now been suggested to date to LM II-III A. A number of Minoan centers seem to have become Mycenaean outposts before Khania and Knossos suffer major destructions that preserve their other Linear B archives -- destructions that we may now place firmly at the end of LM III B:1, settling a long and occasionally bitter controversy. The individuals in diagonally banded robes continue to be represented in wall and vase painting, but not on seals, and it has been suggested that the Campstool Fresco shows Mycenaeans learning Minoan wine-drinking customs.

It is only toward the end of this period of transition on Crete, so hazily understood by us, that I believe we see the appearance on the mainland of palaces with megara and, perhaps, the appearance of what Kilian has called the "wanax ideology". At this point, the pharaoh Amenhotep III of Egypt may have recognized a single individual as king at Mycenae, and have sent him a diplomatic mission which left traces in the archaeological record over the next century and a half. That other Mediterranean powers may have recognized a king or kings in the Aegean (their "brothers" or "sons") does not necessarily indicate, however, that they had an accurate understanding of Mycenaean political institutions.

But no new Mycenaean iconography seems to be created after the geographical shift in power in the Aegean in order to represent this newly developed ideology, and instead most art forms show signs of decline and even extinction prior to the end of the Mycenaean age.

214 For illustrations, see MARINATOS and HIRMER (supra n. 186) pls. 178-185. For a careful analysis and discussion, see: E. DAVIS, The Vaphieo Cups and Aegeean Gold and Silver Ware (1977) 1-50.
215 E.g., the relief frescoes of bulls and paintings of bull leapers, both male and female. For examples, see IMMERWAHR, Aegean Ptg 171 Kn no. 8 b; c; 174 Kn no. 21; 176 Kn no. 29 (a late renewal). In this volume, Davis reidentifies some of the fragments of the Lily Prince as a female bull-leaper: IMMERWAHR, Aegean Ptg 171 Kn no. 7. Significantly, the bull frescoes and reliefs decorated the major entrances, facing and greeting the visitors, and bulls and bull-leapers in relief decorated the walls of the Great East Hall on the opposite side of the Central Court from the Throne Room complex.
218 J. WRIGHT (supra n. 183).
221 See E.H. CLINE, "‘My Brother, My Son’: Rulership and Trade between the LBA Aegean, Egypt, and the Near East", this volume.
Relief frescoes and stone vessels with pictorial scenes are not produced after the LM IB destructions on Crete, and hard stone seals are not carved after the end of LM/LH IIIA.2 222. The only artistic media really developed by the Mycenaeans after the emergence of the mainland centers appear to be gold and glass jewelry production, and painting, both vase and fresco. And most of the surviving Mycenaean murals that decorated the palaces show variations of scenes that derive from earlier Minoan models, with a few notable exceptions 223. By the time of the surviving mainland Linear B tablets (LH IIIB:1-2) there is little indication that the Mycenaeans are carving figural ivories or hard-stone seals, working in faience 224, or producing stone 225 or metal vessels; almost all these objects still in circulation at the end of the Mycenaean age seem to have been heirlooms.

The last big projects at Mycenae were architectural rather than artistic: the construction of the tholoi of Atreus (LH IIIA:2) and Clytemnestra (early IIIB:1) and the “Western Bulge” of the citadel wall that encloses the Cult Center and Grave Circle A (mid/late IIIB:1) 226. The destructions recorded for buildings outside the walls at Mycenae at the end of LH IIIB:1 227, roughly contemporary with destructions at Thebes, Gla, Knossos and Khania 228, signal the impetus for a general retreatment in the Mycenaean world that is also visible in the final architectural modifications of the Mycenaean citadel and the Pylos palace in the years -- or even decades -- before they were destroyed 229. The wanax, once he evolved, may have ruled over a world poorer in some ways than that of his predecessors.

I would suggest that one possible reason there is no identifiable iconography for the wanax is that his role on the mainland was defined only after Aegean iconography had essentially become set, and he is documented in the Knossos and Pylos tablets only after Aegean art forms, including most sculpture, had ceased, leaving late Mycenaean artists with only vase and wall painting with which to express themselves, their society, and their rulers 230. The world of Minoan-Mycenaean art and the world of the Linear B tablets are not only distinct: they are chronologically exclusive.

Even in the tablets, Mycenaean society seems to have been based on several interrelated figures of authority who represented different power bases: the wanax (a borrowed, non-Indo-European word and concept), the lawagetas (based transparently on the laos, or people, perhaps marshalled as a military host), the damokoro (from the damos or demos), and potnia (“she who has power” in Greek, probably a secular title, not a divine name). The picture that emerges from the tablets is one of a system of authority based on several sources that were gradually but perhaps unevenly integrated over time.

If we postulate a general model of collective rulership through most of the Mycenaean period with a number of interconnected, perhaps family, members occupying positions of

222 YOUNGER (supra n. 70).
223 The painting from room 31 in the Cult Center at Mycenae seems to show considerable innovation: REHAK (supra n. 93) 39-62.
226 FRENCH (supra n. 209) 124-125.
228 See OLIVIER (supra n. 217).
229 SHELLMERDINE (supra n. 2) on Pylos; cf. IAKOVIDES (supra n. 227) on Mycenae.
230 The one sketch of a standing male on the reverse of Pylos tablet Oe 106 does not indicate the existence of a confident wanax iconography; we know nothing about the figure on the tablet except that he wears a kilt: see T. PALAIMA, “Mycenaean Scribal Aesthetics”, Eikon 63-75, pl. XXd.
authority, it is easy to imagine women playing an important role in forging the cohesion of the group. Wine-drinking is important in creating a sense of social and political bonding and well-being. The repeated representation of seated women, and their recurring association with drinking and pouring, suggests that a main function of the throne in the large megaron may have been as the seat for a woman who oversaw there the symposia reflected in the Pylos paintings. I would thus argue that the megaron served not as the great hall of the wanax where he dispensed justice and prepared his followers for battle, but rather as a communal center for drinking and feasting which included a position of prominence for a seated woman, possibly the Potnia or queen. We may lack the image of a single, enthroned male ruler, not because the Mycenaeans refused to borrow or could not create such an image, but rather because the concept of an enthroned figure was not, in Mycenaean society, that of a man, but that of a woman.

Paul REHAK
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