

## Introduction

The Bronze Age Cretans achieved a high degree of civilization and stability without a centralizing ruler. This civilization lasted about two thousand years on the island of Crete from approximately 3400 BP to about 1450 BP. While regional and local differences existed, there seemed to be an overarching culture which Arthur Evans (1921, 1928) following Greek mythology, named "Minoan" (Footnote on the use of the term Bronze Age Cretans) . It has been acknowledged that Bronze Age Cretans were organized into corporate groups that controlled the use of land and resources, traded with Aegean partners, practiced high level cult and rituals, venerated ancestresses/tors, arranged competitive sports, cooperative feasting, developed a full range of highly skilled crafts, visual arts, built roads, complex centers and in many cases, monumental tombs. What was the nature of these corporate groups? I suggest, like Driessen (2011, 2012), Driessen and Langohr (2014) that they were matrilineal lineages that were landholding.

This paper attempts to show the efficacy of applying selected, matrilineal kinship cultural behavior and practices as a framework to explain Bronze Age Cretan archaeological patterns. While I read several studies of historic matrilineal societies, I chose those which, I believe, have the most applicable practices for a framework that can be used to explain or test assemblages and site architecture from Bronze Age Crete. No one historic, matrilineal society is a template for Bronze Age Crete. However, I argue that Bronze Age Crete, regardless of its unique material culture, can be better interpreted with matrilineal theory than patrilineal. This study is by no means exhaustive or comprehensive. I believe it points to a framework that can be tested, modified and expanded to explain Bronze Age Crete. I have attempted to test and explain a limited number of hypotheses with the resources I was able to obtain through library

research, and I have been able to visit some of the sites as well. For archaeological data I have relied on summaries (Driessen 2002, 2014) and site layouts of Malia by Schoep (2000a, 2000b), Knossos (Evans 1921, 1928; MacDonald 2002; Warren 2002; Gunkel-Maschek 2016), ) the survey of the western Mesara by Waltrous and Hadzi-Vallianou (2005), secondary skull burial from Myrtos and Mochlos, (Soles, 2010), site architecture from Gournia (Buell and McEnroe, 2016) and Palaikastro ( Driessen, 2010; MacGillvray, 2010), use of peak sanctuaries (Hogarth, 1900, Evans, 1921, 1928; Peatfield, 1987, 1990, 1992), among other sources. My archaeological focus is on the Established House plan (Driessen, 2011), site architectural layout and the distribution of skeletal parts in tombs, caves and special structures from the Early Bronze Age to about LM IB. Work by Driessen and colleagues on “Established Houses” and house archeology support his argument for a matrilineal society and the importance of women in ritual and religious iconography (Driessen 2002, 2010, 2011 and 2012). I regret that I was unable to come across bioarcheological studies of skeletons while writing the bulk of this study. Because of this, my paper is missing relative and absolute dating of tombs and burials, genetic relationships, nutritional status, including geographical origin of certain nutrients, sexing and demographics, and life-styles, among other pertinent information.

From the early Bronze Age, and perhaps the late Neolithic, Cretan society was decentralized, complex, regional and diversified until at least until LM IA. It was a highly productive economic system that produced and engaged in luxury trade items within Crete and overseas. Its lineage system, I believe, was also complex and segmented. Therefore, I refer frequently to the complex, segmented matrilineal systems developed over centuries by the Ashanti and Minangkabau from which we can derive models with testable hypotheses for

Bronze Age Crete. I believe the Cretans practiced ancestress/tor veneration and believed in reincarnation which explain so much of their house patterns, tombs, material culture and practices. I am grateful for Somersan's (1984) insightful article for this perspective, as well as Gough's (1958) detailed study of ancestor veneration among the Nayars. I have viewed the extraordinary religious cult of the Cretans somewhat through the lens of the high importance of ritual among the Pueblos Indians (Eggan 1967a, 1967b and 1967c), while at the same time arguing for Old European Neolithic origins (Gimbutas 1996) of Cretan cult. In all these cases cult served as the most important, politically integrating mechanism of their societies.

Some sections of the study appear to be repetitive. It is difficult to compartmentalize topics and overlap necessarily occurs. On the plus side, the same topic discussed within a different context may actually strengthen the case for the Bronze Age Cretan matrilineal model. ral brother–sister dyads with her children, aunts, husbands if matrilocal and uncles and broth

### **The Matrilineal Framework**

This chapter presents a framework that is useful for interpreting the archeological culture of Bronze Age Crete and generating hypotheses that can be tested further. This framework has been selected and synthesized from several documented, matrilineal societies and analytical works. There is no, one extant or historic matrilineal society that can describe Bronze Age Crete. This framework is not simple ethnographic analogy. The framework has been gleaned from a wide range of documented historic and contemporary matrilineal societies. My selections come from two types of sources (1) analytical, (Aberle 1961; Geertz 1973; Schwimmer 1995; Schneider and Gough 1961, and Somersan, 1984), and (2) ethnographic (Afrizal, 1996; DeClene 1938; Eggan 1967; Fortes 1950; Kato 1978; Richards 1950;

Schlegel, 1984). I chose examples from segmented matrilineages like the Minangkabau of Sumatra and the Ashanti of west Africa because I believe they are relevant to Bronze Age Cretan social organization and behavior. I use residence practices from the American Southwestern Pueblo cultures (Eggan, 1967), the Ashanti (Fortes, 1950; Gough, 1961d), and the Minangkabau (Gough, 1961d) as possible models to interpret Bronze Age Cretan ward structure within settlement sites. I choose American Southwestern Indian ceremonial and ritual practices (Eggan, 1967) and Nayar ancestor worship (Gough, 1958) and Somersan's (1984) review of death symbolism in sixty matrilineal societies as frameworks for understanding the politically integrating role of religion and ancestor worship. Frequently before discussing a specific aspect of Cretan archaeological material culture, I will precede it with a "framework" chapter of relevant historic, matrilineal social practices.

Why not assume a patrilineal and a patriarchal Bronze Age Cretan society? The "elementary" family model has been applied to Bronze Age Crete from the time of Greek myths, through Sir Arthur Evans and assumed by most archaeologists who have worked in Crete. The patrilineal, patriarchal system in historic societies forms classes, a horizontal stratification of society which usually progresses to a chiefdom or a state under a single male ruler (the chief, king or priest-king). Juridical and religious powers tend to be centralized in one male figure or a few. Patrilineage usually appears in societies when individual men acquire personal wealth and moveable property which can include slaves. Men alone have power and authority in societies based on the elementary, patrilineal family. Women rarely assume public, ordained power in such societies, except possibly on the death of a powerful husband or as regent. Such a social system, I believe, is an inadequate model to explain the decentralized

prosperity, shared or diffused authority, and regionalism which remarkably provided stability to Bronze Age Cretan culture for nearly two millennia. I think Bronze Age Crete may be better explained by the matrilineal model.

### *Definition of matrilineage*

Matrilineage is a form of descent that traces lineage exclusively through females from a founding female ancestress. Matrilineage is a corporate kinship system whose members, female and male, hold land in common and venerate their ancestresses/ancestors (Footnote on minimum requirement for matriliney). The matrilineal group also jointly shares economic, religious, ceremonial, legal, jural, and political concerns and responsibilities. Both men and women are included in the matrilineage, but only females connect previous and successive generations. Only female links are utilized to trace back to a common ancestress, possibly as far back as hundreds of years ago, and forward to include successive generations (Schwimmer, 2003; Gough, 1961, p.453). Descent through female ancestors can be traced back many generations for the entire Maximal lineage or clan, or just a few generations for the household segment (Minimal segment). Descent in the female line is necessary to claim authority or ownership over land and resources (Footnote on founding ancestresses.)

Yet, as Somersan (1984) points out, to focus only on the form of descent is to miss the point of matrilineal societies. The most important aspect of matrilineal societies is that only sisters can give birth to the next generation of members, which perpetuates the matrilineage, which in turn provides for the reincarnation of their ancestral spirits into the new members of the matrilineage. A common denominator of all matrilineal societies recorded is the belief in ancestral spirits and their reincarnation into society. An understanding of matrilineal societies

requires that we see it, not in the context of descent, but in terms of the value that a society places on the regenerative power of women to perpetuate the matrilineage and honor the ancestors. Significantly, the emphasis on regeneration is specifically suggested during mortuary ceremonies performed by women (Trobriand Islanders, Iroquois), and I will argue the Bronze Age Cretans).

Matrilineal societies have varied social structures, yet all have in common (1) kinship reckoned through the maternal line, (2) matrilineal land rights passing through the female line, (3) a settled life around subsistence cultivation, horticulture, of a variety of crops (not dependent on a single crop or animal), (4) importance of female work and female worksites which tend to be more stationary than men's domain, (5) female participation in corporate decisions affecting matrilineal land management and resources, (6) the importance of female knowledge-bearing, especially in preliterate societies, of lineage descent which includes the transfer of corporate ownership, statuses of individuals, ancestor-making rituals, ancestress veneration, care and knowledge of sacred objects, and cultic (divinity/divinities) worship if present.

Matrilineal kinship structure is based on a "vertical" grouping of relatives that harken back to a founding ancestress. Yet the endogamous view of one's matrilineage is cyclical. The lineage stretches back into the past, which has relevance for the living descendants, but looks prospectively forward as deceased ancestors return to inhabit new members of the lineage completing the cycle of life. Living descendants expect to join their ancestors and the spirit world from which they came, and eventually to reincarnate into new members of the matrilineage. All sixty matrilineal societies reviewed by Somesan (1984) in the HRAF had a

belief in ancestral spirits and reincarnation. The belief in ancestral spirits and reincarnation always were found together, and in all reviewed matrilineal societies. Patrilineal and bilateral societies were inconsistent with these belief systems.

Matrilineage is a vertically organizing kinship principle from the most inclusive group (Maximal lineage or clan) to the least inclusive group, the household (Minimal segment). Members of all statuses and skills belong to the same matrilineage. Elder women of the matrilineal kinship lineage or segment define the kinds of statuses among its members, their relationships and expected duties or behaviors of all members according to a variety of rules or principles (Schneider 1961: 1-35). The majority of matrilineal societies have no class distinctions, or classes. A matrilineage integrates all its members, regardless of their status and skill level, in celebrations and ritual especially in veneration of ancestresses, celebration of rites of passage, such as initiation into the tribe or clan, feasting, divinity worship, seasonal and cosmic ceremonies, economic activities, and sports.

#### *Women and land*

Women are associated with land because they collected from it, domesticated it, and passed on land inheritance to their daughters most likely in the Mesolithic and definitely in the Neolithic. Matrilineal descent groups are found in cultivating societies that lack the (1) plough, (2) important large, domesticated animals, and/or (3) extensive irrigation (Gough, 1961:551). Settled subsistence cultivation, horticulture (gardening or collecting "fruits" of the forest or sea) seem to be a fundamental characteristic of matrilineal society. Matrilineal agricultural practices are horticultural involving the gardening of a variety of individual plants and/or collecting a variety of fruits and aquatic products. It is essentially gardening and collecting. Herding can be

included in small family units if owned cooperatively. The joint estate has to be large enough to include several different types of crops or have access to gathered fruits, etc. (Gough, 1961:450-457). This is usually practiced by women in groups, although in some matrilineal societies the husbands are expected to practice horticulture for their wives on the wife's land (Southwestern Pueblo Indians). Matrilineal horticultural practices generally allow women to remain on their matrilineal estate for most of their lives. The population that generally stays "at home" are women. Land "ownership" is assigned to the woman's lineage perhaps because of their ancestral, traditional knowledge of collecting and cultivating plants at their worksites. In the societies where husbands help with the planting, women in the household kin group, oversee the process.

In most matrilineal societies brothers, uncles, fathers, and husbands move between their own natal homes and their wives' matrilineal home. Brothers and maternal uncles, if they remain on their natal matrilineal land ( in more historically recent avuncular societies), help with horticulture, but generally are engaged in external duties such as trading, sailing, and protecting, as well as craft production, and in some cases, raiding and war. Men's work sites tend to be more varied and wider ranging than the women's horticultural sites.

Settled, subsistence cultivation generates a matrilineal joint estate, a landed estate controlled jointly by the members of a descent group. The core matrilineal unit is the sister(s) with her brother(s), not her husband. There is much councilor interaction in matrilineal societies among sisters, mothers, aunts, brothers and uncles. In large, complex, segmented matrilineal societies that are highly productive, the oldest brother or uncle of a lineage or lineage segment may remain on his matrilineal estate to oversee production, or he returns



frequently from his wife's matrilineal estate to help manage his matrilineal estate. In these cases junior men live elsewhere, with their wives or work abroad.

Matrilineal kinship is considered a stable and conservative social system that does not adjust well to social change (Eggan: 1967: 293) . Matrilineal kinship has developed considerable efficiency in carrying out many social, ceremonial and economic functions and in organizing and integrating the basic relationships ... which can extend to include affinal and ceremonial kin (Eggan 1967:42-45) (Footnote on Horizontal Integration of the tribe or village) . Matrilineal societies can integrate horizontally if they (1) extend kinship to the husband's relatives, "ceremonial relatives", or specific priests, (2) incorporate tribal or regional initiation rites of all age-graded youths, male and female, across all matrilineages, (3) share common religious practices, and (4) incorporate other matrilineages within the village or region in feasting, harvest, seasonal, equinox or solstice celebrations, rituals in common, competitions, etc. The matrilineal kinship system provides stability and continuity in social structure whatever its specific form; it looks backward to ancestors for guidance, meaning and purpose in daily life and forward to future, reincarnated, ancestral spirits to carry them out.

### *Segmented Lineages*

The lineage structure of large, complex, productive matrilineages is generally segmented. This means there are levels or segments of inclusive membership of individuals within the matrilineage. The largest group is the Maximal lineage or clan. It is most inclusive; it contains everybody who can trace his/her descent from a common ancestress many generations back. The Maximal lineage is the local group, while the clan is the same group with the same ancestress scattered over territory. In some societies the Maximal lineage can reckon

their ancestresses back hundreds of years. The Maximal lineage holds all the members of the lineage, including deceased members back to the founding ancestress. In many cases it is the corporate unit for land holding and other resources for the entire lineage. In large, complex societies the elders of the Maximal lineage may choose to focus on external relations such as foreign trade or warfare, controlling external resources such as valuable ore or minerals, fishing rights or valuable forest products. In these cases the Maximal lineage may allocate land-holding management to two or three of its Major segments which are smaller subdivisions of total lineage membership. Each Major segment has its own ancestress whom it venerates. The Major lineage segment allocates a portion of the corporately owned land to its smaller segments, usually an extended household or group of households, the Minor segment. The Minor segment includes several if duolocal. In duolocal residence the brothers and uncles remain with their natal matrilineage after marriage. The Minor segment is divided into smaller Minimal segments or individual households based on a sister-brother dyad. In addition, the Minimal segment may have a grandmother, a granduncle, if duolocal, husband if matrilocal, and certainly the sister's children. Both the Minor or Minimal segments are the productive units of a segmented lineage system. The smaller units or segments within the Maximal Lineage each have their own ancestress, down to the level of the household (Minimal Segment) which may have a founding ancestress three or four generations back.

#### *Women as corporate knowledge-keepers*

In the matrilineal societies women have another important role, in addition to being knowledgeable about plants and planting. In preliterate, matrilineal societies women are knowledge-keepers, oral encyclopedias of their lineage or lineage segment. Women pass on

land through their sisters and daughters and must know the ancestral lineage that connects them with their land. Memory of descent and the stories of the matrilineage are the most important task assigned to a highly ranked, senior woman. As the knowledge and cultic keeper for her matrilineage, the senior woman in her household or segment passes on her authority to the next older sister and so forth. Then the knowledge keeper passes on to the daughter of the oldest sister and so forth... Women's knowledge, particularly that of the elders of the lineage and of each segment, provides the blueprint for social and cultural behavior. In addition to being the matrilineage's "memory bank", she can calculate status, rights and responsibilities of each member according to birth distance from an ancestress. Among the Ashanti the sister of the chief of the royal clan is a co-chief with her brother (Fortes, 1950) with special concerns regarding women. Among the Central Bantu, there is a chieftainess who knows the titles of the royal ancestresses and performs special ritual functions (Richards, 1950). Among the Southwestern Pueblos Indians, the "Clan Mother" or senior woman of each clan (Maximal Lineage) is the caretaker of the sacred objects which are imbued with the spirit of the ancestor or divinity. She holds the sacred paraphernalia in her house. She knows the rituals and ceremonies which she instructs her brothers and uncles who generally perform the ceremonies (Eggan, 1967).

### *Marriage and Residence Pattern*

Matrilineages are exogamous (marriage takes place between matrilineages not within). Cross-cousin marriage is the preferred marriage arrangement in extant matrilineal societies (Gough, 1961) (footnote on cross-cousin marriage). This keeps property and familiarity close among the same few matrilineages. An Ashanti village contains several

matrilineages which makes exogamous marriage and residence convenient. Seventy-five percent of Ashanti married couples are from the same or adjacent village (Fortes 1950:279). In many matrilineages the residence of the married couple is matrilocal or uxorilocal (with the wife's matrilineage) as in the Hopi. Matrilocality is considered the original form of residence due to the nature of female and male work sites. Matrilocal residence occurs where there is (1) sexual division of labor, (2) sexual division of work sites with female work sites more consistent, stable and nearer to home, while men's worksites are varied, changing and may range far from home (Gough, 1961:556), (3) sexual division of work groups, with females cultivating in groups or teams, weaving, etc. while men engage in long distance trade, building, especially "public" works, roads, metallurgy.

Complex matrilineal societies that are highly productive in a variety of produce and trading goods, that hold valuable resources in joint estates, and who live in densely settled communities where land is scarce or limited, tend to have duolocal residence. This is a residence pattern where the husband and wife remain each on their own natal, matrilineal locations usually within the same village or adjacent villages, so that the spouses are able visit at night (traditional Ashanti and Minangkabau, Gough, 1961: 561). Duolocal residence requires a dense settlement pattern with several lineages whether within the same village or in adjacent villages as long as the natal homes of husband and wife are nearby. In duolocal residence both matrilineal brothers and sisters remain on their matrilineal estate. This residence pattern may have developed because highly productive, matrilineal societies cannot afford spatial separation from its out-marrying males (Schneider,1961:27).

Avunculocal residence is a form of residence that may have developed from matrilocality (Gough, 1961:552) and be a more recent historical pattern. The traditional Ashanti are duolocal. However, the northern Ashanti (Basehart,1961) and central African Bantus (Richards,1950) are avunculocal. Avunculocal residence occurs in historic matrilineages which are productive, and where the men tend to engage in trading, raiding, warfare and polygyny. It becomes the preferable residence arrangements when men of the matrilineage acquire individual movable wealth, such as shell money, cloth, slaves, guns and personal livestock (Gough, 1961:565). The brothers/uncles of the matrilineage eventually bring their wife/wives to their natal home, after years of providing marriage payment or service to the wife's matrilineage. When the marriage payment or service is "paid up", the brother/uncle brings his wife and his pre-pubertal children to his natal matrilineage. The eldest brother usually assumes authority, with councilar support of his matrilineal peers including his married sisters who may live elsewhere. He manages the estate and has authority, legal and judicial affecting members of his lineage or segment, especially his sisters' children. However, the land passes through his sisters and the sisters' children, not the brother's or uncle's children.

A note on where babies come from in historical matrilineal societies. In matrilineal societies, a common belief is that an ancestral guardian spirit enters the womb of the mother and produces the fetus. The child then carries the ancestral spirit as a reincarnation. The father "quicken" the fetus which is already formed in the mother (Central Bantu, Mayombe, Bemba, Richards,1950). In matrilineal societies children are raised by the entire Minimal segment (single household) and Minor segment (extended households) consisting of mother, aunts, grandmothers, brothers, uncles, great uncles, if duolocal. If the society is matrilocal the

children are raised with mother, grandmother, aunts and fathers in residence with brothers and uncles visiting frequently. The mother's brother has jural and legal control over his sisters' children, not their fathers. The father and the father's family may play important roles in child-raising and during initiation rituals in less productive matrilineal societies (Eggan, 1967).

### *Authority within the matrilineage*

Authority and responsibilities are shared and diffuse in matrilineal societies (Somersan, 1984; Schneider, 1961:4-7). They are shared between sisters and brothers. Matrilineal societies tend to be councilor in authority even if brothers are heads of segments in highly productive, complex and segmented matrilineages. Since land is not passed through males, the male segment head must listen to the line of women in his matrilineage through whom the corporate ownership passes. In matrilineal societies the female line of descent is the reasoning for jural corporate land ownership. In preliterate matrilineal societies elder women hold authority of knowledge of lineal descent regarding corporate land ownership. This is especially important in the case of founding lineages, or first come lineages. Furthermore, knowledge of kinship is most important as it structures the relationships, rights and duties of all members of the group.

Among the southwestern Pueblos Indians, who do not have a complex, segmented lineage system, the authority over land decisions resides in the elder group of women in the matrilineage such as in the Hopi (Eggan, 1961), Zuni (Eggan, 1961), and Cherokee (ICT Staff, 2017). The Hopi Clan Mother has ultimate authority to overturn land distribution by men. A man shows great respect for his mother as head of the household. He consults her on all important questions. Rarely is there any conflict (Eggan 1967:17-138). Among the historical

Lenape of Delaware women leaders held power to remove male leaders. The authority of the women in the household is councilar, informal and includes the presence of male kin and husbands. However, in many cases females hold decision authority over corporate land and its resources. A brother or uncle from the matrilineage is the public face of authority, but can be overruled by his sisters, mother and aunts.

Women have de facto power and high status in most matrilineal societies based on their (1) procreative powers, (2) they are the ones who perpetuate the matrilineage (corporate land ownership passes through the descent of women), (3) they are required for mortuary rituals and ancestor rites (knowledge bearers of the ancestors, knowledge of mortuary ritual, ancestor rites, and care of the sacred objects), (4) they provide new members of the group for the reincarnation of ancestral spirits (only women produce babies which are reincarnated by ancestral spirits. Women are highly valued in matrilineal societies as vital links in the complete cycle of life.

The matrilineage exercises corporate rights over its members including prescribed marriages and receipt of marriage payments. Like the nervous system is to the body, matrilineal kinship provides the structure integrating all aspects of social structure. Among the Ashanti in west Africa, each Maximal lineage constitutes the fundamental corporate group which exercises rights over its members by arranging marriage, controlling land its resources, and religious, political, jural, social, economic, and financial functions for its members (Fortes, 1950:252-284). Females and males of a matrilineage share "ownership" over the land and its resources. However, among African historical matrilineages the oldest brother of married and unmarried women tends to have considerable control over the joint matrilineal property and

lives of his sisters' children. The elder brother, approved by his peer sisters and brothers, has authority to manage the economic and legal affairs of his segment including arranging marriages for his sisters' children.

Gough (1961:546) describes the matrilineal residence (duolocal) and authority among the Minangkabau as an extended Minor segment consisting of a group of sisters, unmarried sons who generally sleep elsewhere, (brothers and uncles who are usually absent), daughters, and grandchildren. The brother or son of the oldest group of sisters, usually the eldest man of the matrilineal segment is responsible for managing the estate. In the case of major legal or jurial decisions affecting the corporate property, he would call all the segment together or the entire lineage (councilar) as he alone could not decide the outcome of corporate property which passes through his sisters. Such important concerns would require the return and presence of the entire segment for their input (councilar), because corporate land ownership passes through the females of the matrilineage (shared and diffuse authority and responsibility). The Minangkabau male segment head cannot make a major decision affecting corporate property unilaterally (shared authority). He may live with his sisters, along with his wife and children, or with his wife's matrilineage. Most often the brothers and uncles are away from home engaged in paying jobs abroad, or long-distance trade for which the Minangkabau are noted. Kato (1978:8) indicates that day to day management of affairs is in the hands of the women of the extended household. Minangkabau women transfer matrilineage corporate property to their daughters bypassing brothers and sons. In addition In all matrilineal societies female rank, personal property, rights, duties and responsibilities always pass directly through the female line.



In summary, females in historically documented, matrilineal societies enjoy (1) female councilar authority regarding corporate land and its resources, OR (2) shared public authority with their eldest brother, OR (3) informally affect the decisions of the elder brother if the sister lives with her husband's matrilineage. In a matrilineal society women have **publicly** recognized statuses, ranks, responsibilities, duties, and authority with their brothers within their own matrilineage. Women retain formal and informal power within the matrilineage which they alone perpetuate (Schneider, 1961:9) and is the source of their esteemed status (Footnote on patrilineage).

In a matrilineage the brother of the mother is legally, socially and financially responsible for her children, not the husband (2<sup>nd</sup> footnote on cross-cousin marriage) . The senior brother and sister are the dyad that share the weighty matters of the matrilineage in consultation with their peers. There exists an interdependence of female and male members, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts within matrilineal descent groups (Schneider 1961:11-12). Authority in a matrilineage is shared between senior brother and sister in consultation with their peer group. The management of activities by the group of elders is a recurring theme in most matrilineal societies (Gough,1961: 450-457 (footnote: ceramic bowls from Palaeokastro)

#### *Authority at the village/site level*

Authority at the level of the village/site/settlement is councilar among both the Ashanti and Minangkabau (both commoner and elite). Among the Ashanti the smallest local community is the multi-lineage village consisting of 4-7 exogamous clans. The Ashanti Maximal lineages occupy separate wards of the village and control separate blocks of land. The heads of the Maximal lineages select the headman of the village who usually comes from the founder

lineage. The headman's lineage has greater political status, size and extent of its land rights (Gough, 1961:481). He can call on the men of the village to engage in public works, protection, raiding and warfare.

Among the Minangkabau the village consists of 4 or more exogamous maximal lineages the heads of which form a village council. Each maximum lineage is considered the local element of a dispersed clan. The council is headed by one of higher rank, vaguely based on primacy of settlement. The superior council of heads of the Maximal lineages manages first marriages and marriage payments, trade, and approved travel outside of the village. The Major segments of each lineage, which among the Minangkabau are the land-holding segment, also form a lower council made up of Major segment heads of all the matrilineages residing in the village or township (Gough. 1961:481). Their council deals with land issues, weather, crop production, disease in the crops or herds, etc.

*Ancestress Veneration, Reincarnation, the Status of Women, and Divinity Cult*

All documented, matrilineal societies, for example, the Central Bantu (Richards 1950: 208-251), Ashanti (Fortes 1950:252-284), Hopi (Eggan:1967:17-138), Zuni (Eggan:1967:176-222), Minangkabau, (Gough, 1961) worship or venerate their maternal ancestors with some form of ritual and cult, and hold their female elders in high regard. In all sixty matrilineal societies that Somersan (1984:159-161) reviewed through the HFAF, all had beliefs in ancestors/stresses and reincarnation (Footnote on matrilineal societies, ancestral spirits and reincarnation). The ancestors provide guidance, purpose and a rationale for the matrilineage. The ancestors are concerned with the fulfillment of matrilineal women to perpetuate the matrilineage by procreation. This provides the ancestors with the possibility of return to living

members of the matrilineage (Ashanti). In addition the ancestors are concerned with proper mortuary rites, in many cases performed by women (Trobriand Islanders, Iroquois) so that the departed (1) passes to the afterlife, even if temporarily, (2) may become an ancestor to the matrilineage, (3) will be reborn in a new baby as a member of the same society. Ancestral spirit and rebirth beliefs sanctify and conventionalize the value accorded to women which is high. Women are involved in all aspects of the cycle of life from giving birth to performing the necessary rites for the soul's journey to the afterlife including becoming an ancestor, and finally to providing a baby for ancestral reincarnation. The value of women in matrilineal societies is inestimable and is based on their ability to procreate and provide mortuary rites for the departed to complete the cycle of life.

Of particular interest is the mortuary practice of the Trobriand Islanders who distinguish between the ancestral founders of the land...and other departed. The founding ancestral beings have specific identities and are associated with specific historical events. The other departed members of the lineage lose their personal identity and become simply ancestral beings of a timeless lineage identity (Weiner, 1976:233).

Ancestor veneration provides many sociological benefits for the society and its members. Remembering the ancestors/tresses through cultic practices provides a rationale for the existence of the kinship/descent structure and its hold on land. Those who bear the knowledge of the descent of ancestress, usually women, are the knowledge keeper within their matrilineage. The "actors" who perform the rituals of ancestor veneration, may be women and often brothers who may act as head of the lineage or lineage segment in a complex segmented lineage. By performing the rituals they are affirming their right to their position or status in the

line of descent of segment heads or as a priestess (Footnote on ancestor worship and status of women). They could claim to be reincarnations of previous lineage, segment heads or cult leaders. Those who prepare the special foods for the ancestors, guard and hold the sacred paraphernalia, who know the rituals are usually the oldest women of the household.

Schwimmer (1995) states that matrilineal organization is defined and sanctioned primarily through religious beliefs and a ritual system that centers on ancestress worship (Footnote on central African Bantu, ancestress veneration and claim to land).

The other aspect of religious activity held in some matrilineal societies is some form of divinity worship. This can take many forms. Sometimes the ancestors become god-like. Sometimes deceased children or lost persons become divine spirits. The Southwestern pueblos have a pantheon of gods and spirits. Divinity/ies/spirit worship generally calls for the roles of shamans or priests/priestesses who lead the rites. The sociological roles of divinity worship are important. Divinity worship transcends the lineage system and unites all the lineages through common worship. The worship may be carried out by particular lineages, but it serves as worship for all. Divinity worship integrates all the lineages in the rituals and unites them into one unit, one village, one tribe, one region, etc. In addition, this gives power and prestige to the shaman, priest or priestess as well as to his or her matrilineage.

Another important aspect of divinity worship involves initiation rituals of all youth, female and male, of a particular age grade. All the youth of a certain age from all the lineages are initiated into the larger sociological entity (village, or regional community) by priests or priestesses who perform the rituals. Upon completion of the rituals the youths now also belong to the sociological group of the village or the tribe (consisting of all matrilineages) or the region

(multiple settlements). They can be called upon in the future by the priest/priestess or shaman elder to perform works of public interest (sanctuaries, ceremonial centers, communal building projects, regional ceremonies, village protection, etc.) Finally, divinity worship is important for rituals of good weather, rain, harvest, healing of humans and animals, abundance of crops and herds, safe travel over the seas, etc. The shamans, priests, priestesses or priestly caste if it develops, is a very important sector of society which derives its power and authority from their constituents' belief in the efficacy of their work. They can yield considerable influence or power over the entire village, settlement, or region. "The religious belief structure and the concrete representation of matrilineages and other social groupings as ancestral relics establishes the rationale for assigning important corporate rights in statuses, land and people" (Schwimmer, 1995).

### **The Matrilineal Framework can Generate Predictions for the Study of Material Remains of Archaeological Horticultural Societies**

The framework, culled from existing and historically documented matrilineal societies, best fits an archaeological prototype of a highly complex, productive and segmented matrilineal, horticultural society. The earliest farmers leaving Anatolia and the Near East for Europe probably were simpler societies which may have been matrilineal. I believe the framework may have predictive value for them, the indigenous horticulturalist of North America, and probably the earliest farming/horticultural societies of Asia.

*The framework may predict how archaeological matrilineal societies migration and utilized space.*

The early farmer/horticulturalist from the Near East, if matrilineal, would have emigrated at the level of the household (Minimal or Minor segment) of a matrilineage, along

with its marriage (exogamous) matrilineal households. This would mean that a minimum of two matrilineages, that is their lower segments, would emigrate together. In many cases I suspect there would be four separate, matrilineal lower segments (marriage partners) emigrating together. (This concept is based on historically documented evidence of how the Minangkabau households emigrated from their core area in Sumatra.)

Each matrilineal household(s) settled on their own founding land attributed to the senior woman of the group. Prediction: The settlement or site would be close to the land it farmed. Residence structures, tombs or burials and cult objects or edifices would be close to this land. Within each site, each household would be capable of producing its own food, pottery, crafts and cult objects. Each group of households belonging to a separate matrilineage would replicate this pattern. This would suggest, or predict, that the archaeologist might find slight differences in pottery or craft styles at adjacent sites. Of course some of these objects may have been traded with their marriage, matrilineal partners.

Within complex, stationary, and highly productive archaeological horticultural societies, one could predict a different pattern. The archaeological remains of residences, tombs or burials, and communal spaces would still occur near the matrilineage's land. However, within the vertically organized matrilineal system of the site or settlement, archaeologists could expect to find grander residences of the heads of the lineage. These grand residences might also have storage rooms filled with crafts and commodities. In documented societies, heads of the lineage engage in distant trade and resource management for the entire matrilineage. Specialized craft houses or shops may be located near these grand residences. Smaller residences within such a site may be more specialized in the production of a craft or

commodities). The same pattern would be replicated in adjacent sites occupied by a different matrilineage, or within different wards of a large settlement because each matrilineage occupies its own ward.

#### *Material Evidence of Councilar Authority*

Matrilineal societies are, on the whole, councilar. Prediction: there would be spaces, open and architectural in which the community can gather to discuss issues especially pertaining to land and resource use. These spaces can be of any size and location: within the residence, outside the residence, in a special meeting structure, and a very large space or structure for inter-matrilineal meetings. What is not predicted is a throne room, or royal palace or paraphernalia pointing to the significance of a single, individual ruler

#### *Material Evidence suggesting Matrilineal Residence*

Matrilineal residences are larger than the average nuclear family residence. A matrilineal residence houses a grandmother, all her daughters and grandchildren, husbands (if matrilineal or uxorilineal) or brothers if duolineal. The average Minangkabau residence houses seven married women plus all her daughters, sons, and young children. This typical residence is divided into two parts: a large, open front room for work activities, communal meetings, dining and rituals. The back part is loosely divided into separate rooms for each married woman, her husband and small children. Unmarried older children sleep in the front room (girls), although in some societies the unmarried young men sleep together in shelters outside their respective household. Prediction: A matrilineal residence would be relatively large, with a large common room for communal activities. The back part would contain demarcated, smaller spaces.

Storage bins or structures most likely would be attached on the outside of the structure to the large communal end of the house.

In stationary matrilineal societies the belief in ancestor reincarnation is strong and that ancestors/tress like to return to their original households. Prediction: one may expect to find remodeling and continual reuse of the same residence generation after generation. There would be artifacts that suggest veneration of ancestors within the residence, perhaps even bones of the ancestor.

#### *Burials and Tombs in Matrilineal Societies*

In the simplest Neolithic societies burial of individuals occurred commonly inside the home and under the floor of the residence. While this does not prove the society was matrilineal, it does suggest the importance of keeping the deceased within the household after death. A persistent idea within matrilineal societies is that the reincarnated ancestors like to return to their household. The deceased was buried or maybe cremated, but put to rest near his or her family. This hints that belonging to a family unit was more important than being recognized as an important individual and buried outside the residence or community. Most likely the ancestor/tress was buried under the house floor. Skeletal analysis by physical anthropologists can clarify the sex of the individuals buried within the house.

In complex, highly productive and stable matrilineal societies, collective burial may have been common. Tombs or burials of ancestors/ancestresses would hold a significant place in the material remains of a matrilineal, horticultural society. Most notably, these burials or tombs would be collective, not individual as in a nuclear family society. Tombs may contain the entire matrilineage over many generations, brothers, their sisters and mothers, and children. There



may be a common genetic marker to test this idea. The collective tomb would have contained, or at least originally contained, the burial of the founding ancestress. All those buried in the collective tomb would be related to her (mitochondrial study?)

Within such a tomb not all the skeletons would receive special treatment after decomposition. The removal of an individual's skull from the rest of the skeleton, placed on a dais within the tomb, and painted or plastered, would suggest the special treatment of ancestor-making. Individuals who would earn this special treatment would be ancestresses of the various segments of the matrilineage, brother-managers of the most inclusive segments, and an individual (he or she) who made a special contribution for the benefit of the matrilineage.

### **Nature of Matrilineal Society in Bronze Age Crete: A Theory**

I suggest that Bronze Age Crete was organized on average into four, ranked, segmented matrilineages (through time and circumstances it may have varied between two and six), and that the same matrilineages were found throughout Bronze Age Crete. Grandmothers, their sisters, and daughters were "owners" of their lineage land and resources because of tracing ancestry through the female line which founded their land. Brothers and uncles also belonged to their sister's matrilineal group regardless of their marital status, although their children did not. Uncles and brothers may have been managers of the estate, subject to approval of the senior women of the matrilineage, but they were not owners of matrilineal land and resources. That privilege belonged to the descent of women. Most likely in Bronze Age Crete the managers were the brother-sister dyad, especially since males traveled regionally, throughout Crete and

across the Aegean. In these circumstances women of the matrilineage managed the day-to-day operations and decisions on the estate.

However, at all segment levels of the matrilineage, decisions were made inclusive of the dyad's peers. Ultimately authority within the matrilineage was councilar (Driessen 2002). To conduct important matrilineal business, each matrilineage had open courts close to their elder's homes for councilar consultation. These evolved over time into closed courts which later included a myriad of social and religious functions. Throughout the centuries councilar consultation remained a basic Cretan practice within each matrilineage, within each site (multiple matrilineages), and within each region (multiple matrilineages).

The estates were based on horticulture of a variety of cereals and crops that offered a varied and nutritious diet: wheats, barley, pulses, olives, and fruits. In addition, the Cretans collected sea food, honey, wild edibles, and ate sheep or goat, and fowl. Like advanced, productive, historic, matrilineal societies, men participated in foreign trade, bronze metallurgy, ship building, quarrying, lumber, mining, masonry, construction, export pottery, jewelry, and herding, etc. Women had public roles as priestesses in charge of regional initiation rites and divinity worship. High status women travelled in Cretan boats to foreign ports, particularly Egypt, on diplomatic missions. By the end of the Cretan era Knossian priestesses controlled much of Aegean trade and much of Crete.

The Cretans venerated their ancestors, female and male, and selected among them who would earn the status of ancestor. Candidates for female ancestress would be the (1) founder of the entire Maximal lineage, (2) founder of each segment level, (3) noted elder women who performed ancestor rites, and (4) women who performed regional initiation rites and divinity

cult. Among males an ancestor would be a (1) brother or uncle lineage or segment head, (2) someone who earned special distinction, (3) who brought back external gains to the matrilineage (precious metal ores, established new trading networks), and (4) those who were priests.

Like all documented matrilineal societies the Cretans most likely believed in the reincarnation of their ancestors. Women were uniquely equipped sociologically to carry out ancestor-making rites. Women perpetuated the matrilineage through birthing and provided new members for the ancestral spirits. Women gave the ancestral spirits a way back home and a new body to inhabit. Where did women perform ancestor rites? In the home for the Minimal and Minor segments and in, or around collective tombs or house tombs, for the larger segment ancestors. Ancestor veneration and lineage respect are materially represented by collective tombs which are always found close to their settlements and matrilineal land. If there were four wards within a settlement, there were usually four collective tombs. It is highly probable that a collective tombs or house tomb containing multiple burials represented a single matrilineage. These tombs often had external annexes or courts built outside which have evidence of feasting, presumably as a part of ancestor commemoration. Ancestor veneration and belief in reincarnation explain the continual reuse, rebuilding, and renovating of existing architectural structures. Apparently the ancestors liked to come home to the houses and sanctuaries they were used to.

Both male and female ancestors were venerated. Ancestor-making involved the selection of the skull and possibly the long bones of the deceased who would become an ancestor through rites. These bones were given special ritual treatment and were often relocated

(secondary burial). Women of the matrilineage prepared the feast, most likely the special food the ancestors and deceased liked. At periodic intervals the living descendants collected the bones of a specific individual (ancestress, ancestor) and shared a feast with them outside the tomb. Ancestress and ancestor worship was a form of matrilineal (vertical) integration. It performed the sociological function of reiterating the matrilineage's claim to land and resources through the succession of ancestresses and reinforced the role of the manager (male?) of the lineage estate and the roles of elder women or priestesses, all of whom, were part of the reincarnation cycle.

Bronze Age Cretans exercised a form of regional integration with local initiation rites. Most likely the founding matrilineage in a region produced the priestess to lead the rites for both females and males of a certain age grade. These always occurred on mountain peaks and usually within a cave. The "double-axe" divinity was invoked and the initiates usually brought a terracotta figurine (of themselves?) and left it for the goddess of periodic regeneration. Thousands of these terracotta figurines have been found at mountain cave sites. In addition the leading priestesses or shamans conducted healing and seasonal rites at these sacred sites (mountains or certain ones were sacred). This cult persisted in all regions until the early Late Bronze Age. It was an important means by which the founding matrilineage, and its priestesses, exercised rank and prestige in the region. The youth, once initiated, also belonged to the region, and could be called upon to perform specific duties for the region on behest of the head priestess.

Divinity worship was another integrating social device used Bronze Age Crete. They continued the Neolithic practice of honoring the goddess of periodic regeneration and

developed the cult into complex rites. Cretans were acutely aware of the cycle of vegetal life upon which their lives depended. Certain women of one or two matrilineages within a region became the key priestesses leading the elaborate, processual, experiential, and shamanist-like cult. For most of the Bronze Age these celebrations occurred at regional peak sanctuaries or caves located on them. They involved bull and animal sacrifice, the “double axe” representing the transfigured goddess in the form of the honeybee or butterfly, libations, and communal drinking. Some caves had altars or sacred tables with cup holders which were inscribed with Linear A. In the later periods divinity worship was practiced more inside the settlements in court centered buildings.

By LMIA Knossos divinity worship changed, probably intentionally, from the double axe ritual (representing divinity as a honeybee emanating from a sacrificed bull), into a physical representation of divinity herself in a throne room. The Knossian priestesses were consolidating their power and control of divinity worship in Crete, Thera and the colonies. The Knossian priestesses wielded considerable power and almost succeeded in consolidating their power over all Crete. Regional worship desisted and there seemed to have been only one functioning peak sanctuary near Knossos, Mt. Juktas where external divinity worship and initiation rites took place. Initiation rites and divinity worship performed the sociological function of integrating all the matrilineages within the settlement and region into a common community. By the late Bronze Age the Knossian priestesses were attempting to consolidate all of Crete by controlling these rites. Religion or cult was crucial to integrating Bronze Age Cretan society originally at the regional level and finally at the island level.

In addition to conducting ancestor, divinity and initiation rites, women also had other roles. They specialized in weaving, beekeeping and honey-making (which was considered sacred), horticulture, certain pottery production, basket weaving, and perhaps fresco painting and jewelry-making . Women may have produced the sacred tables or altars or decorated them with symbols of divinity. The highest ranked women kept the sacred double axe, an embodiment of the female divinity, in her home usually in a villa, estate House or cult house. The oldest women of each segment of a matrilineage was the “knowledge keeper” which meant she defined the cultural and social status of each member of her segment and their expected social behavior. She could recite the matrilineal ancestress descent line and history which legitimized their claim to their land. She knew vegetal and animal life cycles and the crops that could be grown on matrilineal land. She knew when to plant and when to harvest and how to prepare the food. She kept the sacred relics and ritual vessels of her matrilineage or clan. In a preliterate society all this knowledge was highly important for survival and to construct society. The knowledge-keepers or societal archivists were women in Bronze Age Crete and they were treated with high respect and regard.

Marriages were exogamous between matrilineages, and the Cretans practiced duolocal residence within settlements that had separate wards for each matrilineage. Otherwise, where settlements were small, husband and wife remained within their own sites and matrilineal household and visited at night. Frequently settlements were paired and close together which made duolocal residence feasible. Marriage could take place among any member of another matrilineage regardless of the status of the individuals. Marital partners lived in close proximity to each other but also to their respective matrilineal land. Children were raised within the

mother's household, Minimal and Minor segments, with grandmother, aunts, and uncles and older children helping to care for the youngest ones. The oldest uncle had legal and jural authority over his sisters' children. Marriage with foreign women was probably uncommon. Non-Cretan wives would not belong to any Cretan matrilineage and so would not be buried in a Cretan collective tomb. They may have filled the single, poor inhumations at various large sites. These women and their children would not have status in Cretan society, although the children would belong to their father's matrilineage.

Matrilineages were segmented with some of the horticultural and craft production replicating vertically along the lineage line. This may be why archeologically there appeared to be repetition of activities within and between wards. A single matrilineage occupied a single ward in a settlement. Segmentation also was a safety valve for the matrilineage as a whole. In good times, the lower segments would bud off and found new settlements. In austere times, the lower segments would return to the core areas which had richer soil and better water resources.

Authority within the matrilineage was councilar (elder peers) looking to the oldest brother-sister dyad for leadership. A brother or uncle may have been a segment or lineage head in which case he had a female (sister) counterpart (co-head). At the settlement level, there was a council of the heads of the matrilineages that resided within the settlement. The head of the council was most likely headed by the founder lineage. This council dealt with "external affairs", trade with other regions, foreign trade, mining, colonies, protection, etc. There probably was a lower council of the Major segment heads that dealt with local horticultural and regional issues. These councils met in open courts and eventually in closed courts.

Crete remained immune to foreign conquest throughout most of the Bronze Age which led to the success of its society and culture. Matrilineage was a constant for its members through time and throughout Crete even though membership and the number of matrilineages could have waxed and waned due to changes in birthrates, sex ratio, migration and natural disasters. It is possible that a matrilineage(s) could have died out in the long course of events in Crete. In that case the clan or phratry (supra clan association) would have reallocated the land and responsibility to an existing, surviving lineage. Bronze Age Cretan society, with its four (?) distinct matrilineages, continued to exist fully through LMIA even while Knossos was consolidating power over much of Crete. It was not until LMIB with the intrusion of Mycenaean warriors that the Established House system began to disintegrate, eventually heralding the end of the matrilineal system.

### **The Corporate Nature of Matrilineage in Bronze Age Crete**

Archaeologists refer to the authority structure in Bronze Age Crete as “corporate” (Schoep, 2002; Driessen, 2002; Hamilakes, 2002; Warren, 2002). Gough (1961, p. 495) , a social anthropologist, defines a corporate body as a descent group, the members of which, jointly own and control a landed estate and its resources. The corporate body gains cooperation ... of its members in production, distribution of goods, inheritance of property and participation in religious or magical cults. The key to corporate structure is that the group must own property, or have rights to land, its resources, and have an authority structure. The corporate land includes the locations where all the types of crops are grown and utilized by the matrilineage, as well as all its resources. The corporate structure is a land-based or land-utilizing organization (Gough, 1961: 41, 57). A kinship unit often constitutes the corporate group which



becomes the legal entity. It holds collective rights on behalf of its members over the estate, as well as economic, political, and religious life (Schwimmer, 1995; Fortes, 1950:255).

I suggest that the matrilineal descent system fits the model of a corporate body. Given mixed forms of cultivation, matrilineal descent and inheritance, it is more convenient and stable to have the joint "estate" owned by a descent group, rather than to divide the land into individually owned plots (Gough, 1961 p. 451). All the functions of a corporate kinship entity are found in all contemporary matrilineal societies. Among the Ashanti, a contemporary matrilineal group in southern Ghana and the Ivory Coast, the Maximal lineage is the fundamental corporate group with land-holding, religious, political, social and economic functions (Fortes, 1950).

Schoep (2002) after Keswani (1996, p. 217) describes characteristics of heterarchy as a possible corporate model for Bronze Age Crete : (1) competitive autonomy among peer groups. I agree that the established matrilineages were probably competitive, especially in foreign trade, but there is little evidence of destructive behavior toward each other (2) "anarchic" non-centralization. I think the data will show that long-lived matrilineages were anything but anarchic. They probably believed themselves to be related very distantly and had formal relationships through clan membership, visits, and most likely shared communal feasting, and worship. I agree with Schoep that there was no centralized authority. (3) absence of centralized control over craft and subsistence production, (4) multiplicity of administrative and productive facilities, elite residences and burial complexes. The decentralization of craft, cult and administrative structures occurred within settlements as well as within regions. (5) broad spatial distribution of institutions and elite groups. It is possible that the same matrilineages

were found in all regions across Bronze Age Crete. In this case the local matrilineage would recognize itself as belonging to a clan scattered throughout Crete.

Hamilakes (2002) describes the corporate structure as a vertical group organized around a leader or group of leaders. The corporate group includes people of lower rank. He states that factions are extremely fragile and fluid because factions compete for followers. Factions compete with each other for materials and social resources within a larger social unit such as a kin, village or ethnic group. This competition seems to have operated at the local or regional level. I believe the archaeology does not support such a model except for the concept of vertical organization of the social group including all statuses. The archaeology of burials and house re-use over centuries indicates stability not fluidity. There is competition for resources and trade, but generations of people seem to belong to specific residential and mortuary buildings and their land. .

Driessen (2011) uniquely spells out an archaeological argument that Bronze Age Cretan corporate bodies were matrilineal. He bases his reasoning inductively from the (1) large, aggregate residences (70-100m<sup>2</sup>) with rooms and some open floor space for cultic and social activities, (2) lack of delineation or definition of many of the rooms within a residence, (3) continual reuse and re-building of the residence for use by multiple generations of the same group (4) association of the residence with a mortuary structure. Driessen interprets matrilineal social organization from the residential and mortuary complexes of Bronze Age Crete where others see patrilineage.

I am complementing Driessen's inductive reasoning by offering a deductive model to test and explain Bronze Age Cretan residential and mortuary patterns. I suggest that the

corporate body(ies) in Bronze Age Crete generally consisted of four matrilineages that are commonly found within larger sites (villages), or within a regional cluster. There needs to be at least two, but the common number of residential aggregate plus mortuary structure is four throughout Crete. This satisfies the customary preference of cross-cousin marriage between matrilineages. Most likely some of the same matrilineages were found throughout the island being part of a larger clan that segmented and migrated. Cross cousin marriage between local matrilineages would lead to regional stability over generations.

I suggest that a matrilineal corporate body consisted of all adult females and males who were descended from a common ancestress, and who held joint ownership and responsibility for a defined land and its resources. In addition, the matrilineal corporate body fulfilled all social, economic, political, legal, ceremonial, and ritual functions for the group and its members, living and deceased. Matrilineage is a vertical system for organizing society; all ranks and statuses are included within the matrilineage. The Cretan matrilineage was a stable, not a fluid social organization. It was peaceful and nonviolent because regional matrilineages were tied together through the bond of marriage and shared a common cult.

Knowledge keeping was the role of the eldest woman of the matrilineage and each segment. It was important, as shown with the care take of some mortuary remains, to know one's ancestress/ors. Land ownership and cultic knowledge passed from the senior woman to her next oldest sister(s) finally passing to the daughter of the oldest sister.

Long lineages, covering many generations, could also have been segmented. These smaller branches within the main matrilineage also commemorated their own immediate founding ancestresses. Segmentation within the matrilineage may explain the budding off and

movement of smaller segments to locations other than the core areas, and the return of population from these outlying settlements back to their own matrilineages within the core areas in unfavorable circumstances. Matrilineage may explain the long duration of relatively stable "Minoan" culture.

### **The Corporate Matrilineal Model Explains Persistent Regionalism in Bronze Age Crete**

How does the corporate model of matrilineal society explain regionalism in Cretan Bronze Age? Driessen (2002) argues for a regional settlement pattern in Bronze Age Crete that includes a specific land use area, usually associated with a port and including an external sanctuary. A very high degree of regionalism is found in the Protopalatial Period in Crete (Schoep, 2002, pp. 21-22,32) and extends well into the Neopalatial Period, or from Early Minoan through Middle Minoan and into early Late Minoan. Even though settlements within clusters changed or disappeared or new settlements appeared through time, the regional clusters persisted (Buell and McEnroe, 2016). Within a region generally there are (1) towns, villages, hamlets, and farms (2) open courts or court centered compounds of differing sizes, (3) ports, (4) large farms, estates or villas, (5) external sanctuary sites located on mountain peaks, slopes or in caves, (6) resource areas such as alluvial soil, source of water, clay beds, stone quarries, cypress woods and pastures, and (7) tombs. Thirteen regional clusters of settlements have been identified by Warren (2002:201-202) in the Neopalatial throughout Crete. Each cluster is made up of sites or settlements with usually one external sanctuary. For example, the region of Malia includes Malia and Lasithi, a sacred plateau. The region of south-central Crete includes the sites of Hagia Triada, Phaistos, Kommos and the sanctuary of Patsos Cave. The region of north-central Crete includes Knossos, Skoteino, the port of Poros, a manufacturing

town, and the sanctuary Mt. Juktas. The Hierapetra Isthmus includes the site of Gornia. The Khania Plain includes the sites of Khania/Kydonia and Akrotiri on the Island of Santorini, etc.

As early as EMIIIB Knossos, Phaistos, Plantanos and Vasiliki were regional or subregional “polities” in which a higher-ranking corporate entity had unequal (superior) access to arable land, foreign trade, prestige items, etc. (Watrous, 2005:275). During MMI-II (and through most of MMIII) Bronze Age Crete was organized into separate “polities” through vertical kinship groups which possessed substantial amounts of economic, political and religious power (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:288). These major “polities” apparently built roads and garrisons or cyclopean forts to demarcate their regions and particularly to protect their holy sanctuaries. I am calling these vertical kinship groups or “polities”, matrilineages.

Most likely there were on average four, matrilineal corporate bodies that made up each region and occupied separate wards within a major settlement. All, or part of the total number of Bronze Age matrilineages could have made up each region. This made exogamous marriages possible between matrilineages. The clustering of farms and hamlets within a region would have facilitated exogamous marriages. It is probable that Cretan marriages may have been duolocal (husbands and wives remained within their village, especially in small villages and hamlets). In the duolocal arrangement visitation by the husband or wife would be more feasible if Bronze Age Cretan villages were clustered within regions (See footnote, Gough 1961).

It is probable that the same four lineages were found in other regions throughout Crete, in Akrotiri on Santorini and other Aegean islands with Bronze Age Cretan settlers. The same Maximal Lineage dispersed through territory made up a clan, an exogamous kinship group. The clan offered extended kinship with behaviors of support, hospitality, shared

knowledge for its members and could be called upon to labor on common public works. A dispersal of the same clans throughout the thirteen regions would have contributed enormously to the political stability of Bronze Age Crete and to creating an island-wide “Minoan” culture.

In addition to the stability of the vertical kinship groups (matrilineages) through time in Bronze Age Crete, there was extensive trade within and between regions. Schoep (2002: 23-32) argues that these regions interacted with each other as equal polities. Many archaeologists have documented the extensive trade within a region and between regions from EM to MMIII which I will not repeat here (Schoep, 2002; Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005; Watrous, 2005; Warren, 2002). Also, most regions had external trade contacts with the Aegean world at least through MMII. Trade was decentralized in the sense that there was no “central” governing polity that controlled trade for the entire island during the Cretan Bronze Age.

Hagia/Agia Triada is an example of a regional antonymous site which traded with other regional centers. Hagia Triada was a thriving settlement and political center on the western Mesara during MMIIIB-LMI. It had the largest archive of locally made Linear A tablets which listed agricultural commodities. Hagia Triada was a consumer of barley, wheat, wine, figs and oil from its regional farms. External aspects of the tables, writing style, and book-keeping procedures are regional, not following any centralized authority. According to Schoep (2002:29) Hagia Triada’s exploitation of the area beyond the settlement was more “estate-like than state-like”. Detailed pottery analysis shows that it was made locally (van de Markel in Hamilakes (2002) , ft.38, p.190) . Hagia Triada traded broadly with other regions. Evidence of her seal impressions have been found in Knossos, Zakro and Sklavokambas. This suggests an island wide

trading network which may have extended to Khania in western Crete and Akrotiri on Santorini (Schoep, 2002, pp. 29, 32). Agia Triada traded Kamares pottery which was made in south central Crete (western Mesara) (Schoep, 2002, p. 19) with Knossos in the Neopalatial. I am proposing that exchange or bartered trade between regions and foreign entities was most likely carried out by the elders of the Maximal Lineages or their appointed emissaries. Elders would have controlled the local resources for the production of long distance trade. This control of resources and trade would have gained the elders of the Maximal lineage segment considerable wealth and status. Generally men, the brothers and uncles of a matrilineage, were engaged in long distance exchange as this is the case in documented ethnographic studies. Possibly men exchanged with their own clans people in the different regions they visited. Most likely women, sisters and aunts would have handled village and among village exchange within their region. This decentralized trade lent to economic stability within and between regions during the Cretan Bronze Age.

Warren (2002) states that the western territories, like most of the eastern ones, appeared to have functioned as independent political units....and retained their distinctiveness through the Neopalatial Period. This extensive trade network within and between regions served as a stabilizing factor for the society well into MMII if not later. Not only were the regional clusters independent polities, they extensively traded with one another. This intensive network of trade suggests peaceful relations for the most part and economic and social stability throughout Bronze Age Crete at least through MMIII . While the (1) structure of matrilineal organization, (2) corporate stability and (3) trade between and within regions contributed substantially to the persistence of Cretan Bronze Age culture, I believe there is another

anthropological process that contributed as well to the survival of the Cretan matrilineal system. For this we need to understand the process of segmentation and how it works in the expansion and contraction of historic matrilineal societies.

### **Matrilineal Segmentation or Budding**

When matrilineages become very large, they generally subdivide into smaller segments. All smaller units remain a part of its parent Maximal lineage because of common descent. Sometimes this results in a physical budding off and finding a new location.

When matrilineages become so large that they subdivide into segments, specific corporate functions may be allocated to the lower segments. The smaller units may take on, or share some of the corporate functions of the matrilineage, such as ritual, ceremonial, legal, social, land holding and land-assigning.

According to Gough (1961, p.491-492), in protostates and small states with higher economic productivity...localized matrilineal groups will have greater generational depth, size and definiteness of division into functionally distinct segments such as in Minangkabau and Ashanti societies. Extensive systems have segments that can count back several dozen generations and can include thousands of members. Large matrilineages can subdivide into segments based on the degree of inclusiveness of matrilineal members from a common ancestress. Where there is substantial depth of generations, large units are divided into smaller ones through a process of branching or segmentation. Each segment begins with an ancestress. This process involves the successive formation of smaller groups from the parent lineage. The number of branches at each point of division is dependent upon the number of daughters attributed to the previous ancestress. According to Schwimmer (1995), this is a



regularly recurring process. According to Gough (1961:454) in societies with settled subsistence cultivation when any order of descent group divides to form two or more descent groups, the division usually takes place between segments of like order whose ancestresses were sisters. If several levels of segments within a lineage have different estates or differential *rights* in the common estate, *there will be a hierarchy of elders or of heads of each segment* within the lineage as a whole (Gough,1961:452). In other words, there will be segment heads who are hierarchal according to their corporate holdings and access. When segments split off or bud, they increase stability for the matrilineage as a whole in that they provide some insurance against lineage extinction in the core area. If a Minor segment consolidates or returns to the core holdings of the Major or Maximal lineage, it may have a subordinate status. Other times the smaller kinship segments remain in the same core location as the Maximal lineage elders where they remain as a subordinate groups competing for land and ceremonial status (Eggan, 1967: 110).

### **Lineage Ranking, Segments and their Functions**

According to Fortes (1950, p. 255) the corporate unit or segment recognized for political, legal and ritual purposes for its entire membership is the Maximal Lineage. Maximal lineages or matrilineages are exogamous units, meaning that marriage cannot take place between individuals within the same matrilineage. The Maximal lineages can hold the following corporate functions on behalf of its membership: land owning and utilizing rights of common resources, founding ancestress worship, judicial, ceremonial, symbolic/ritual, administrative, trade, diplomacy, war with foreign powers, and control of slaves. As economic productivity and size of the descent group increases, direct management of land and resources may shift to a

lower lineage segment, the Major segment. The Maximal lineage may allocate corporate land and resources to Lower segments for the benefit of its members, but it generally retains responsibility for the legal or jural consequences of member's acts, external relations with foreign neighbors, trade and control of special or valuable resources within the group's territory and slaves or servants. The heads of the Maximal lineage may assign the corporate functions of land management and distribution to its Major segments for the benefit of its members. However, it is not a right of ownership that is transferred to the Major segment. It is the right to utilize a portion of the corporately owned land and to assign the rest to lower segments. Lower segments do not have the right of disposition of their assigned land (Kato, 1978). Only the Maximal lineage elders or head, through convening a council of all lineage members, can decide the disposition of corporately owned land. Other important functions of the Maximal lineage is to coordinate worship of the matrilineage's founding ancestress, and on occasion with the entire clan. Maximal lineages may also sponsor inter-lineage worship of a common divinity (ies). They may organize inter-lineage games, competitions, and feasts. All members within the Maximal lineage claim a common ancestry from an ancestress at least fifteen to twenty-five generations back (Schwimmer, 1995).

Maximal Lineages can be equal or ranked relative to each other. Some criteria for ranked lineages are (1) royalty or head chief (Ashanti only during time of war (Fortes, 1950), Minangkabau, (Schneider and Gough, 1961), Mayombe, Bemba, (Richards, 1950), (2) administrative duties Minangkabau, (Schneider and Gough, 1961). (3) founding lineage or precedence of settling into a territory, often the criterion for becoming the royal lineage, Mayombe, Kongo, Yao (Richards, 1950), Ashanti, (Fortes, 1950), Hopi, (Eggan, 1967),

Minangkabau (De Jong and De Josselin, 1951), Truck Islanders (Schneider, 1961) (footnote on founding matrilineage), (4) seniority of founding ancestresses Yao, Nyasaland (Richards, 1950) (footnote), (5) full time craft specialists, Minangkabau (Schneider and Gough, 1961), (6) holder of sacred objects and knowledge of cult or ceremony, Minangkabau, (Schneider and Gough, 1961), Zuni and Acoma, (Eggan, 1967), (7) urban councilors, village overlords. Ashanti (Fortes, 1950), (8) origin myth designating which clan or lineage has priority in authority and ritual, Zuni and Acoma (Eggan, 1967).

A Maximal lineage is a local or regional group of a widely dispersed clan. In a large settlement it occupies its own ward or section separate from the other Maximal lineages who occupy their own ward. A Maximal lineage dispersed throughout the group's territory is referred to as the clan. A clan in the Southwestern Pueblo Indians, is the same lineage which occurs in other villages across tribal territory (Eggan, 1961). The clan has the same founding ancestress across the territory and is an exogamous unit. Clan people are considered extended kin and are obligated to offer hospitality, protection, assistance in building houses, tombs or ossuaries for burial and worship, public works, and to support each other in reciprocal funeral rites and feuds (Eggan, 1967, Fortes, 1950, Richards, 1950). Clan people share a common ancestress, legend of origin (by the founding ancestress), common rituals, forms of greeting and joking. In some groups there is a clan house occupied by the clan mother, the most revered elder of the clan, who stores ritual paraphernalia and is the keeper of rituals for the clan as in the Hopi and Zuni, (Eggan, 1967).

Among the Hopi Indians of the American Southwest, there is a supra-clan organization called the "phratry". It is not based on kinship although it is an exogamous unit. The clans that

make up a phratry are not descended from a common ancestor. A phratry is a group of clans which have become partners as a result of sharing common experiences during their mythological wanderings following their emergence from the underground. This relates to origin myths or migration legends. The sociological purpose of the phratry organization is to reallocate land and responsibilities when a clan or Maximal lineage dies out (Eggan, 1967: 62-66). Within the phratry group there are often sharp status differences and competition for land and prestige among the matrilineages (Eggan, 1967:110). The Maximal Lineage may be subdivided into lower segments which decrease in size of membership. At lower segments people are closer in generation depth from their founding ancestress. The Major segment is found in the largest ethnographic groups, such as the Minangkabau of Western Sumatra (Gough, 1961). Corporate function of land allocation is assigned to this segment among the Minangkabau. In general, the Major segment members can trace their ancestry to a common ancestress eight to fifteen generations back (Schwimmer, 1995). The Major segment can branch into smaller, extended family or combined family units, the Minor segment that traces their descent from a common ancestress about six to seven generations back. The Minor segment consists of several, related households. The Minimal segment, the individual household, is considered the basic economic unit of the matrilineage. The core matrilineal household consists of grandmother, great aunts, mother and sisters with their children. Depending on the society or culture, the household may also house matrilineal male kin or husbands. This household counts back three to four generations to a living ancestress.

### ***The Minangkabau Matrilineal System and Migration of its Minimal Segments***

The Minangkabau are a matrilineal society in west Sumatra (4 million members) and Indonesia (4 million members) (Gough, 1961, Kato, 1978, Afrizal, 1996). The Minangkabau are an example of a complex, ranked, segmented matrilineal society. It is a society, that while still matrilineal and vertically organized, has developed a cast of the royal lineage and an almost cast of the worker/servant/farm laborer lineage. There are four to nine Maximum lineages which are dispersed throughout the Minangkabau land (clans). Each dispersed Maximal lineage throughout Minangkabau territory constitutes a clan which provides support for the travelling Minangkabau (Kato, 1978, Afrizal, 1996). The same number of Maximum lineages, four to nine, occupy a Minangkabau village site (Gough, 1961). The heads of each Maximal lineage within the village form the highest-level village council.

There are two main branches of the Minangkabau: the Bodi-Tjaniago which consist of commoner villages which are relatively egalitarian, and the Koto-Piliang villages which include ranked matrilineages which answer more directly to the authority of a king and his administrators (the royal lineage here has become a patrilineal, endogamous caste) (De Jong, 1951). Among the Bodi-Tjaniago or commoners, the Maximum lineages are not ranked. There are four or more Maximal lineages in each village which are exogamous (Gough, 1961; Kato, 1978). The heads of each Maximal lineage form a village council. Each Maximal lineage has several Major segments which have been delegated management of a section of corporate land. Their Major segment counts back 3 generations beyond the oldest living member (Gough, 1961). A Major segment generally is comprised of several Minor segments, or extended households. Each individual household, the Adap household, is considered a Minimal segment.

Each segment level of a Bodi-Tjaniago matrilineage is managed by an elder male who is chosen by popular consent of the members of that segment level.

The Koto-Piliang Maximal lineages are more elaborately segmented and stratified where genealogy, especially that of the elder male, gives him the authority to manage his segment level (Footnote on Koto-Piliang intra-lineage stratification). A Maximal lineage recognizes 200-300 people who share a descent of 12-14 generations from a common female ancestress (Schneider and Gough, 1961). The Koto-Piliang Maximal lineages are ranked according to (1) royalty, (2) king's administrators, (3) priests, priestesses, and literate religious officials and (4) full-time craft specialists (Gough, 1961: 462). The Minangkabau are a highly productive, cultivating society in which the Maximal Lineages have allocated land-owning, resource allocating, political, jural and social corporate functions to its Major segments. Each Maximum lineage has several Major segments. The heads of the Major segments within each Maximal lineage form a lower level council. Among the Koto-Piliang the Major segment is responsible for managing a portion of corporate land. It counts back 7+ generations and includes 70-80 members (Loeb, 1934). Among the Koto-Piliang Minangkabau the Major segment is subdivided into Minor segments which are land-holding units counting back 6 or more generations. They included several households. The Minor segment often has attached to it a segment of landless families (and historically slaves) who live on their land and work it for the Minangkabau. It is unclear whether such persons are immigrants from other villages, captives, or members of the matrilineal branches who lost their land. These servile persons claim lineage and clanship with their masters and observed exogamy with them (Gough, 1961). I suggest that some of these persons may have belonged to a migrant bud that somehow lost the ability to cultivate in the

new location and returned to its Minor segment in a servile capacity. The Minor segments are divided into Minimal segments or individual households, called the Adap household which is the basic, economic unit.

The Minimal segment is called the Adap household. The Adap house contains a front long room used for communal activities such as eating, rituals, entertaining visitors, and sleeping for young children. The back rooms are divided into separate bedrooms for married women and their smallest children. The average household holds rooms for seven married women starting with a grandmother, grand aunts, mother, and sisters with their children. Husbands visit at night because they remain with their natal matrilineage (duolocal residence). A brother or uncle is ceremonially head of the household. The men folk of the matrilineage actually do not sleep in the Adap house which carries the matrilineage's name. They sleep with other men in the mosque, coffee houses, or common men's places (Kato, 1978).

Corporate management and jural authority of the Koto-Piliang Maximal lineage and its segments resides in the eldest brother or uncle. The male head of the segment is necessarily present for ceremonial and jural functions. In Koto-Piliang villages headships of all segment levels of the matrilineage is vested in senior lines. The oldest uncle or brother was succeeded by his brother(s) in descending order of age; after that, he is succeeded by his eldest sister's eldest son. (footnote). However, Minangkabau men, and more recently women, travel abroad extensively for trade and work. Many women remain on their corporate land and de facto manage the day-to-day activities (Kato, 1978, p. 8).

When the Minangkabau moved from their core area in Sumatra to the outer regions, it was the Adap household that moved. The women's matrilineage was accompanied by their

husbands' matrilineal Adap households. Easily there could have been up to eight Adap households (as husbands remained with their natal matrilineage) moving together to found a new settlement in a new territory. Among the Minangkabau of Western Sumatra, their earliest documented population movement or expansion from their core interior to the rural outer areas was done by lower segments (Kato, 1978:16). The average Minangkabau Minimal segment, the Adap household, included seven married women (grandmother, great aunts, mother, sisters). and their children. Their husbands (and sons) technically did not live in their house, but during migration, the sons and brothers of the matrilineage, as well as the husband's matrilineal segments migrated as well. Hence, a migration pod mostly likely included paired matrilineal segments (related by cross-cousin marriage) and a large number of people.

### ***The Ashanti Matrilineal System and the Attachment of Slaves to the Husband's Matrilineage***

The Ashanti of southern Ghana and Ivory Coast are an example of a relatively egalitarian matrilineal society with segmentation (Schwimmer, 1995, Fortes, 1950, Basehart, 1961). There are eight Maximal lineages or clans found scattered throughout the Ashanti kingdom. There are usually four to seven exogamous Maximal lineages that reside within the same village. The headman of the village usually comes from the founding lineage (Gough, 1961). The Ashanti have non-ranked Maximal lineages or clans except for the founding lineage which became the chiefly lineage (footnote on founding matrilineage). The chief clan was ranked as royal mostly for the purpose of conducting war or raids. The royal lineage led the other lineages in war against a vagrant lineage and against colonial British forces (Fortes, 1950). The Ashanti Maximal lineage includes descent back 10-14 generations. Its head is legally appointed by his peers in a council arrangement. Historically the Maximal Lineage was the corporate decision-making



body for its members. However, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century it began to allocate this function to the Major segment (Basehart, 1961). The Major segment in Ashanti society traces its ancestry back 5-7 generations. It holds land in common and other resources under the management of an informally chosen head. The head of the Ashanti Major segment assigns garden plots and housing locations to the Minor segments or related households. The Ashanti Major segment coordinates rituals for the worship of the segment's ancestress. Among the Ashanti, the Minor segment forms an extended family compound (the mother's grandmother and great-grandmother) with its own ancestress to venerate. The oldest male in the Minor segment is the legal guardian of its assigned land and household members. However, brothers are frequently away from matrilineal land. In Fortes' time (1950) 40-50% of Ashanti households were headed by females/sisters. The original residence pattern of the Ashanti is duolocal (each marital partner remains with their own matrilineage) (Footnotes on matrilineal residence patterns and the northern Ashanti). The Minor segments can be ranked according to seniority of females. Minor segments among the Ashanti count back 4 generations to a common ancestress. The Minor segment allocates land for gardens to cultivate for the smallest family unit, the Minimal segment. Individual tenure and farm management is left to household heads (Minimal segment). Authority at the level of each segment was an elected or chosen male regardless of his genealogy or branch (Gough, 1961). The Ashanti historically raided other ethnic groups and brought back slaves. Slaves and their children became attached to Ashanti segments. However, they were of inferior social status. The children of slave women belonged to the father's matrilineage while foreign wives had no Ashanti membership in any matrilineage.

### **Matrilineal Budding Provides the Mechanism for the Expansion and Contraction of Settlements in Bronze Age Crete**

While matrilineage structure and function, clan membership, and regional exchange may explain the stability of corporate organization in Bronze Age Crete from EM through MMII or even LMIA, there is another facet of matrilineage function that allows it to adapt to changing environmental conditions. I will argue this adaptive feature is based on the principle of budding or segmentation of the Minor or Minimal segments away from the core Maximal lineage. Active segmentation or budding off permits a matrilineage to expand territorially when conditions are favorable and contract back to the core territory or matrilineal center when conditions are less favorable. This is provided by the splitting off of Minor or Minimal segments. This allowed a large matrilineage to “shed” a segment in order to found a new location, find new resources, etc. In this situation we would expect to find small villages, hamlets and farms in outlying areas, away from the core site. The outlying sites would produce commodities for their core, Major and Maximal segments. Could they also have traded within and between regions on their own? In times of scarcity, environmental challenges, etc. these outlying segments would return to their matrilineage core (Major or Maximal segments) located in the larger, original settlements for support. In situations of scarcity were the statuses of returning segments diminished relative to the larger segments? Is there evidence for such phenomena in Bronze Age Crete?

*Knossos: The late Neolithic Core settlement probably dispersed its lower segments throughout Crete*

Evans (1921:13) states that the Neolithic strata below Knossos is about 26' thick. He refers to this as a “tell” perhaps 10,000 years old. If this is so, Knossos may be the candidate for the mother site of Crete. Peatfield (2016:186) states that there was a dispersal of population

away from Knossos into the Cretan landscape in the final Neolithic. If so, did the segments take Knossian culture with them? Did a Knossian segment move to found Phaistos in the western Mesara, or near Kamares Cave? There is evidence that caves were sacred places to the late Neolithic Knossians who originally used them for habitation, but later for primary and secondary burials. The Knossian Neolithic displayed figurines of clay and stone in its habitational debris. Are late Neolithic assemblages in the western Mesara similar to those of late Neolithic Knossos? Are there architectural, artifactual, and ritual similarities between the Mesaran settlements and Knossos?

Phaistos was the earliest late Neolithic village settlement in the Mesara. The dead were buried in jars which was a contemporary practice of the north coast of Crete (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:299) . In EMI Agia Kyriaki pedestaled bowls similar to those found in north Crete also occurred inside tholos tombs. They are thought to be specialized drinking vessels for libation ceremonies to honor the dead (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:230). The late Neolithic pottery found at Mts. Jouktas, Atsipadhes, and Tuaotalas appear to represent communal, ritual action (Peatfield 2016:486-7). Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou (2005:299) state there was a remarkable variety of Mesara ceramic types in EMI. They attribute one similarity to Cyprian ceramics. Were there others that showed similarities of style and manufacture with Knossos? Were there similar assemblages and practices found in other caves and peaks elsewhere in Crete in the Late Neolithic/Early Minoan? If so, can they be related to Knossian culture and segment migration? Perhaps the strongest resemblance to the north is that of the open court ceremonial center at Phaistos (EMI). At both Phaistos and Knossos the open court ceremonial centers were built on top of Neolithic houses (settlement). Like Knossos Phaistos

appeared to have been a regional ceremonial center serving several lineages rather than a single one (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:231).

Migration in late Neolithic Bronze Age Crete could have occurred with related segment households who were connected through marriage as in the Minangkabau. Migrating segments could have moved from Knossos to the western Mesara or east to found Malia and other eastern sites. If this hypothesis proves correct, then we can theorize that the same Knossian matrilineages, for the most part, were founder lineages in other parts of Bronze Age Crete (Footnote on testing skeletal remains for affinity). The possibility that the four Bronze Age matrilineages throughout Crete were originally derived from Knossos would argue for the stability and good relations among the regions. It would also explain the headship of Knossos throughout the Bronze Age, through LMIA, because it was the core founding area for all or most of Crete. Knossos may have been one of a few settlements which had long Neolithic roots in Crete. Not only did this give these four Maximal lineages primacy in Crete, but I suggest that some of them (all ?) became founding lineages throughout Crete. The migrating segments would become a founding lineage in their new territory, but they would still be related to their primary Maximal lineage (lineage of origin) in Knossos through the principle of clanship. Eventually these founding segments became locally ranked by the timing of their arrival to the new area. They may have retained relative rank from their Maximal lineage of origin, as well.

***Matrilineal Segmentation Provides a Mechanism for Expansion and Contraction of Settlements in the Western Mesara during the Bronze Age***

“The Phaistian community, by placing the ceremonial area over Neolithic houses and intramural burials seems to have deliberately distanced itself from other Mesaran sites as the only social group in the region whose roots went back to the late Neolithic period, the time of

the first settlers" (Watrour and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:231). It is possible that the first to arrive Maximal lineage had its House in Agia Triada and buried its members in Tholos Tomb A. EM I Phaistos was the largest settlement in the western Mesara. It was village size and surrounded by hamlets, farmsteads, and fieldsites. Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou (2005:231) believe that a substantial proportion of the regional population in the western Mesara was probably derived from Phaistos. Furthermore, they state that it was possible that the rural groups (segments) periodically gathered at Phaistos to celebrate their common origins.

During favorable times and times of population growth, Minimal segments would have broken off from the Phaistos core Maximal lineage to found new settlements elsewhere. In the Late Neolithic western Mesara there were founding settlements along the Ieropotamos River which included Agia Triada (hamlet), Phaistos (village), and Platanos. The valley of the Ieropotamos River provided prime alluvial soil for these first settlements. There were settlements along the western coast, Kommos (farms) and southern coast including Lebena, and Trypeti. There were settlements in caves and valleys in highland areas including Kamares Cave on Mt. Aida and Miamou Cave in the Asterousia Mountains (Watrour and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005: 222-224). According to these authors, most Late Neolithic settlements were situated close to a perennial water source, like the Ieropotamos River, or a spring, and close to prime alluvial soil (Figure 7.1., Late Neolithic Sites in the Western Mesara, with permission from Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005).

In the EM I period there was a period of population growth and expansion. Some of this growth may have been due to the introduction of olive trees from the Near East. Olive trees grow in marginal environments and yet provide oil rich calories. The number of settlements

doubled or tripled in EMI and these rural settlements were permanent and independent (Waltrous and Hadzi-Valliano, 2005:226). I suggest this expansion took place by the splitting off of Minimal or Minor segments from the Maximal matrilineages in Phaistos and Plantanos to found new settlements in rural areas. The new sites were located on class I alluvial river bottom land and minimally arable land in the highlands. They also appeared in clusters in the Phaistos Plain, Kommos and Agio Pharango Valley. Clustering of sites made marriage between matrilineages relatively easy, (Figure 7.5, Late Neolithic-Early Minoan Sites in the Western Mesara, with permission from Waltrous and Hadzi-Valliano, 2005).

Most of the hamlet size settlements built their own “cyclopean” tholoi which were paired. Pairs of contemporary, collective tombs were found together during EMI at Agia Triada, Sivas, Kaloi Limenes, Megali Skinoi, and Chrysostomos in the western Mesara. “Almost certainly paired, communal tombs indicate separate, contemporary families residing near one another in permanent settlements.” (Waltrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:229). In addition, these authors point out that the tholoi in the Mesara have two different orientations, one solar and the other lunar, and suggest that these two different orientations represent “separate and distinct lineage groups” (Waltrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:230-231). I suggest paired, contemporary tombs represented two matrilineages related through cross cousin marriage who were residing in the same or adjacent hamlets.

What was the purpose of the prominence of “cyclopean tombs”? I suggest the founding lineage segments, through commemorating their ancestors, were able to continue to lay claim to their founding ancestress’ land. Some of the Mesara communities, Agia Triada, Koumasa, and Agia Kyriaki, built open courts next to their collective tombs by EMII, suggesting a place for

ancestress commemoration, ritual or feasting. The reverence paid to these ancestress may suggest that they were regarded as having power over the prime necessities of life such as water and fertility (Waltrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:230). This is a common belief of many contemporary and historic matrilineages, that the ancestors take an active interest in their descendants and the management of ancestral land. The rural segments dependence on their founding ancestress for their land, and the belief that the ancestors play an active role in the lives of their living descendants would necessitate "some form of social acknowledgement". By venerating their ancestors in the communal tombs, EMI communities celebrated their group identity (Waltrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:230) and proclaimed their founder's right to land.

In EMII the number of single farmsteads continued to increase substantially and the new settlements were now forced to locate on marginal agricultural land and slopes of hills. In EMII most of the western Mesara population lived in rural locations. There was real population growth in the Mesara in EMII suggesting a need for budding off from matrilineages. The main candidates for the core areas are Phaistos, Platanos and Koumasa which had all attained village size. By the end of EMII Phaistos attained a population size of about 610 people living off 4,700 hectares of land (Waltrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005: 238). Together with Agia Triada these two settlements controlled a broad area of the best arable land in the region suggesting the benefits to the "first come or first to arrive" matrilineages. In EMII Lower segments from the core areas simply had to move in order to locate new land and resources which in many cases were marginal. Many of these settlements became specialized in craft production and became skillful at intra and inter-regional trade. As settlements expanded across the western Mesara

in EMII new collective tombs were built along side. (Figure 8.1, Early Minoan II sites in the Western Mesara, with permission from Waltrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005).

In EMI and EMII Mesara settlements were composed of ranked matrilineages, as few as two and possibly as many as six, ranked on the basis of first founder or settler. Most of these segments moved to less favorable land, often becoming specialized in craft production.

Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou (2005:251) believe that the relations between the central elites (Maximal lineage elders located in villages such as Phaistos, Agia Triada, Plantanos and Koumasa) and the peripheral communities in the rural areas were economically interdependent and mutually beneficial. However, the rural settlers seemed also to guard their independence. During EMII the rural settlements (hamlets and farmsteads) in the Mesara, especially in the Asterousia Mountains, built their own collective tombs and ceremonial courts. It may have been more convenient to celebrate Minor or Minimal segment ancestresses locally, but it was also a way to retain ownership to land and resources. Therefore, it was necessary to bury their ancestors in local tombs rather than at the matrilineage's core center.

While expansion, population growth and local autonomy of rural settlers grew from EMI and EMII in marginal areas, this did not deter the rural segments from returning to their core matrilineages during the disastrous times of EMIII to MMIA. Matrilineal theory does not provide a causation for population growth or decline. Other factors, such as horticultural productivity, climate change, volcanic eruption, economic competition, and foreign interference, etc. can provide some of the causative factors to explore. Matrilineal theory provides a *mechanism* by which settlements may contract under these circumstances.



EMIII was a time of depopulation and widespread abandonment of many rural sites. Climate desiccation and soil erosion may have been causative factors. Human induced changes such as land clearing, deforestation, and loss of vegetation may have caused major episodes of soil erosion. Population loss and movement during this time due to drought have been documented in Egypt, the Near East, North Africa, Anatolia and the Aegean (Watrous, 2005:265). In Crete many settlements and cemeteries were destroyed and abandoned during EMIIIB. The Cretan countryside was largely deserted after EMIIIB with many of the rural folk returning to urban centers. In the Western Mesara, rural population returned to Phaistos and Platanos along the Ieropotamos River and Koumasa in the foothills of the Asterousia Mountains. (Watrous, 2005:266-267). Major centers such as Phaistos, Platanos, Knossos and Malia become nucleated (increased in size) while the surrounding areas became depopulated (Watrous, 2005). I suggest the core settlements increased in size mostly due to immigration of their rural segments back to their matrilineal core area. In other words, rural Minimal and Minor segments returned to their Major or Maximal segment back in the core area. This plight continue into early MMIA (Figure 9.1, Middle Minoan IA Sites in the Western Mesara, reproduced with permission from Watrous, 2005).

Whatever the causes for calamity among the rural settlements, it appeared that some of the survivors returned to their matrilineage Major and Maximal segments in the core areas (Phaistos, Plantanos, Knossos and Malia). Some of rural Minor or Minimal segments who lost their land and livelihood may have become servants, land workers, masons, weavers, etc. for the more well-off segments of their matrilineage in the core areas. Watrous (2005:270) states that this return to the urban centers would have forced some families into dependent labor,

herding, clientage, soldiering, or specialized crafts leading to greater social differentiation and stratification. I think that these rural families would still be included as the lowest, Minor and Minimal segments of their matrilineage (vertical integration) where they performed services for their matrilineage leaders. Watrous (2005:273) expresses that at the end of EM, Cretan society experienced several major upheavals which forced rural inhabitants to abandon their homes and return to their urban centers where they were put to severe economic and social disadvantage. I suggest that at this stage EMIII-MMI, rural population segments could be reunited with their Maximal lineage back in the core areas where they would have low status.

It is also possible that some of the western Mesara rural inhabitants migrated north to other centers of population such as Archanes, Knossos and Viannos where they introduced tholoi like tombs (Waltrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005: 255). It is possible that they moved in with clans people who would have been obligated to provide shelter and assistance to them. There is some evidence that during EMIII-MMI there was an increase of defensively situated or fortified sites in many areas of Crete. Yet, there doesn't seem to be much evidence for Aegean migration, invasion or interference in Crete at this time (Watrous, 2005: 275). Perhaps, this was a local response to defend existing matrilineal claims to water and arable land during drought. According to Watrous (2005:264) by the end of EMIIIB Bronze Age Crete included a number of territories, (regions ?) occupied by ranked societies.

### **The Number of Ranked Matrilineages in Bronze Age Crete**

#### *a. The Theory of Established Houses*

Driessen (2011) infers a matrilineal social organization from the ubiquitous Cretan large, multi-roomed residences, while other authors looking at the same residences, assume a nuclear

family (patrilineal or bilateral) social organization. In 2011 there was no agreement as to the interpretation of the social organization of Cretan residential and mortuary structures.

According to Driessen (2011), Cretan residences are large, usually at least 100 m<sup>2</sup> while that of nuclear families is smaller (60-70 m<sup>2</sup>). Cretan residences have many rooms with little demarcation between them. He believes the Cretan residences were multi-generational.

They usually have a cult room or area for cultic observances. Most have storage rooms within the house or near-by, as well as craft production rooms and an open room or outdoor space for meetings. These large residences were often remodeled by subsequent generations living in them, but always along the same architectural lines.

Large, architecturally notable residences are found in all time periods of Crete, including the Neolithic. They preceded "the palaces". They become especially grand by Middle Minoan. Hamilakes (2002) points out that these grand houses had a cluster of smaller residences and workshops around them. Most of the grand residences possessed valuable items such as figurines which were locally made or imported, fine bronze implements, pottery, jewelry and cult objects. Other grand houses were less grand in architecture and valuables. The Late Neolithic I house at Katsambas, the partially excavated Late Neolithic II house below the West Court at Knossos and the Final Neolithic I and II houses below the Central Court at Knossos were all large, multi-roomed structures (Driessen, 2011:9).

Driessen (2011) named these large, grand houses the "Established House", which, in my view, is a hybrid archeological plus sociological concept. According to him these large, grand residences housed a multigenerational, corporate body of kin who lived together, engaged in

subsistence activities and rituals together and shared a common origin. He argues that the “Established House” represents a matrilineal and matrilocal family group.

I would like to elaborate the “Established House” theory by applying the matrilineal framework developed previously. The architecturally notable grand houses, especially those with storage rooms, I believe belong to the elder generation of the Maximal lineage. This house was surrounded by smaller houses representing the Major, Minimal and Minor segments of the same matrilineage. Actually some of the houses for the elders of the Major segments could also have been quite grand. In any case, the houses of the elders of the Maximal lineage and those of the lower segments were close together because they (1) are of the same matrilineage (2) share the same matrilineal land and resources, and (3) venerate the same ancestresses and perform the same cultic rituals in open courts inside or outside the houses. I would argue that these Cretan, large multi-roomed houses are similar to those of the Minangkabau Adap household. The Adap household is large and holds up to seven “separate” rooms for married women of the matrilineage. In addition, both the Cretan and the Minangkabau Adap house had rooms for storage, a large space for meetings and rituals which were also places where the older children slept.

Like the Adap household, all residences of all segments within a Cretan matrilineage were multigenerational and followed the same authority structure. In the grand house (“Established House”) resided the oldest sister and brother as the dual leaders of the entire matrilineage with their younger sisters and brothers, the sisters’ children (but not the brothers’), and grandmother if living. I believe the Cretans practiced duolocal residence as is the case in highly productive matrilineal societies especially where the brothers were often abroad.

As Schneider (1961) points out, highly productive, matrilineal societies cannot afford to lose their sons to their wives' matrilineages. The "Established House" was multigenerational in two ways. First, two or three generations lived simultaneously within the residence. Second, I believe succession of matrilineal authority followed from the eldest sister to the next oldest sister until all the sisters of the oldest generation passed. Then authority went to the oldest daughter of the oldest sister of the previous generation. A sequence such as this provided stability to the entire matrilineage during the succession of leadership. In addition, the passing elder would become an "ancestor" to the matrilineage in a ritual led by her succeeding sister or daughter. I believe a sequence such as this explains the thousands of years of matrilineal stability within the Established Houses of the Cretan Neolithic and Bronze Ages.

The oldest woman of the "Established House" or elder of the Maximal lineage, and of each segment, was responsible for the ancestral knowledge of descent. This justified ownership of the matrilineal land and provided the status, relationship, and behavioral expectations of each member of the matrilineage. She memorized historical events and kept the sacred paraphernalia. She was most important in leading ancestral veneration and the "making of ancestors" through secondary burial.

With each generation of succession within the "Established House", as well as within the lower segments, revisions were made to the residential structure, but always following the previous architectural lines. The current, elder generation of the Maximal lineage who lived in the grand house administered, eventually by recording (writing), the produce of the entire matrilineage. They managed or controlled external trade and matrilineal resources (ports, fishing, mines, colonies, etc.) and held storage rooms of food stuffs for social and ceremonial

consumption and fine crafts for export. The elders of the “Established Houses” accumulated the items made for export and the surplus produce made by the lower segments of the matrilineage and kept them in storage. The elders of the “Established House” organized regional and foreign trade from their storerooms, sending the men of their matrilineage out on these missions. The elders orchestrated feasting and ceremonial events for their matrilineage and frequently with other matrilineages (Driessen, 2003). This consolidated solidarity within the matrilineage as well as maintained peaceful relations with other matrilineages in the village or region.

Some matrilineages were wealthier than others within the village or region, and I believe it had a great deal to do with who came first to the location, etc. The first arrivals got the best land for cultivation and gained the most valuable resources. I would like to emphasize that each “Established House”, e.g., residence of the Maximal lineage elders, was close to its land and resources which was founded by its ancestress. The founder matrilineage most likely was the first or highest ranked matrilineage in the region or village. Those matrilineages that arrived later (and had poorer land and resources) were of lower rank. Higher ranked “Established Houses” expressed their prestige through monumentality and architectural elaboration of both residence and tombs. They had more heirlooms, fine crafts, and decorative and personal arts than the lower ranked matrilineages.

The “Established Houses”, e.g., elders of the Maximal lineage, the entire matrilineage for that matter, were competitive with other “Established Houses”, competitive but not adversarial. “Established Houses” within a region or village were all united through exogamous marriage. All the youth of a village or region of all the matrilineages participated in initiation

rites at peak sanctuaries, and all matrilineages throughout Crete shared a common cult revering the goddess of periodic regeneration.

Archaeologically we should be able to count the number of “Established Houses” or matrilineages within a village or region within the same unit of time. We should also be able to establish the relative rank of such groups based on the elaboration of their residences, monumentality of their funerary structures, and the amount of prestige items found in both. A cautionary note is that during prosperous times, the houses of the Major segments were quite large and prestigious. They may be confused with the residence of the Maximal lineage. These residences would be in proximity to each other and they would use the same matrilineal collective tomb.

Finally, Driessen (2011, p8) notes that there is a spatial association of the “Established House” with its funerary structure. Many of the funerary monuments are within 200 m of the settlement; some as close as 10 m. The close proximity between domestic and funerary structures suggests that, in the mind of Bronze Age Cretans, there was a connection between the living and the dead. “The ...funerary areas imply the dead were never very distant and remained integrated in community life” (Driessen 2010:114). In addition, there is a clear link between residence, tomb and surrounding landscape. If the “Established House” is of high rank, the funerary structure will mimic this status in its monumentality and prestige items. The concentration of value is a consistent feature of Established Houses and their associated funerary structures. These residences have storage areas within or without to store export items. I would add to Driessen’s comment that the wealthy Established House represent a matrilineage of high rank.

Importantly, Cretan tombs were not those of single individuals as in nuclear societies. Cretan tombs were collective (1) all the burials of the group, the entire matrilineage, were buried within one tomb, or (2) the burials were in individual pits or containers, but found in a collective, "house" tomb. Peatsfield (2016:487-488) points out that Early Minoan monumental tomb structures have courtyards and built structures next to them (for family memorial services and feasting?). He believes the tombs became the ritual and symbolic monuments of an extended family kinship structure. Significantly, in almost all these collective funerary structures some skeletons are unnoticed (unmodified), while others, in the same tomb, received special notice and treatment. Those selected for ancestor making were treated as secondary burials usually in the same tomb alongside those who were not marked for ancestor making. Those marked for ancestor making were likely the elders of the Maximal lineage or "Established House". Cretan tombs often were used for hundreds or a thousand years and contained many generations of the same kin group (matrilineage). Burials were of the whole group regardless of individual status and the collective tomb belonged to a particular "Established House" (actually to the entire matrilineage). According to Peatfield (2016) the tomb was...the symbolic monument of an extended family kinship structure and the burial point of contact between the living and the ancestors. The social behavior implied by these collective burials reflect that of a matrilineage rather than that of nuclear family (ies).

I think we can summarize the theory of "Established Houses" as follows:

1. The "Established House" represents the seat of the matrilineage. It is a concept that refers to both an architectural structure and its sociological occupants. It refers to the monumental residence of the elders of the Maximal lineage ( or Major segments).



2. "Established Houses" or matrilineages were ranked most frequently by who arrived first, second, etc. into the territory. The first matrilineage to arrive was the founder and took the best arable land and resources. This was reflected materially in the embellishment of residential buildings, the monumentality of collective tombs, and in the amount of prestige items in both.
3. The "Established House" had its own funerary structure for the entire matrilineage. The funerary structure was in close proximity to the matrilineages' houses and land suggesting a continual relationship between the living and deceased. Some funerary structures had courts and cooking areas adjacent to the tombs indicating that routine rituals were performed by the living descendants for the deceased. The collective tomb reflected the rank of its "Established House", or matrilineage by its architecture and burial gifts. All members of the matrilineage with all statuses were buried in the collective tomb. This is unlike individual burial found in nuclear societies. In the matrilineal collective tomb, notable individuals were buried along side all other members of the matrilineage. Those selected for ancestor-making were marked for special treatment (secondary burial). Therefore, it is plausible to count the number of collective tombs within the same time period to ascertain the number of matrilineage in the area.

b. *Example from Archanes Phourni*

The settlement of Archanes in central Crete probably housed highly ranked matrilineages, perhaps THE matrilineages, that sent segments throughout Crete. These matrilineages, I suggest later, may have gathered at the large, regional court-centered building

at Knossos which was the ceremonial center for the region of north central Crete. Archanes Phourni cemetery was an elaborate, monumental and perhaps the most prestigious cemetery in all of Crete. It was in use by prestigious Cretans in collective tombs starting around 2400 BCE (EMII) and later by Mycenaeans, buried individually in rock lined pit graves, and Cretan/Mycenaean "priestesses" buried in Mycenaean shaft tombs until about 1,000 BCE (LMIII ) (alpha-omegaonline.com). The cemetery was located atop a small hill very close to the settlement of Archanes. On one side of the cemetery was a splendid view of the plain, and the Archanes town and court centered building. On the other side of the hill was a view of Mt. Juktas, one of the most prestigious sacred peaks in all of Crete, and definitely most sacred to the matrilineages that gathered at Knossos. This was a prime cemetery for the most prestigious matrilineages in Crete.

The north central Cretan way of burial was placing individual burials inside a collective tomb or house. Individuals were buried in larnakes, clay sarcophaguses, pithoi, or in simple pits within a collective tomb. While Archanes-Phourni is a complicated cemetery that included Cretans, Mycenaeans and poor inhumations, I think possibly a total of three Cretan matrilineages were represented here. The first tomb built at Phourni, and therefore the oldest, was Tholos Tomb E dated to about 2400-2300 BCE (the bottom layer (EMII). The top layer of Tomb E is dated to 2100-2000 BCE or MMIIA. I am suggesting that this represents one matrilineage, not two, as it showed rebuilding and repurposing of an older structure. There were a large number of burial offerings in the EMII layer including the earliest seals found in Crete. This points to the primacy of Archanes matrilineages, the elders of their Maximal lineages and their role in trade. In the MMIIA layer there are 56 burials, 36 in larnakes and

pithoi, the rest on the ground between the larnakes ([minoancrete.com/phourni](http://minoancrete.com/phourni)). The earliest larnakes were placed against the walls of the tholos. Later ones were placed in the center until finally, larnakes were placed on top of each other three deep. This demonstrates that north central Cretans, while receiving individual burials, were placed together with their matrilineage in a collective tomb.

The second Cretan collective tomb is Tholos Tomb B which was built before 2000 BCE. It continued in use for the burials of "royal descent" up to LMIIIA ([minoancrete.com/phourni](http://minoancrete.com/phourni)). Tholos Tomb B is a large, rectangular complex with a tholos tomb in its center. The floor of the tholos was raised and the tomb had benches built-in all around its walls. It had two extensive, side chambers; one included a pillar crypt whose walls were plastered and decorated with frescoes. The pillar crypt was added in MMIA during the second phase of building (remodeling and repurposing). As a result of this rebuilding, Tholos Tomb B became two-storied. A silver pin with Linear A inscription was found in the crypt. Tholos B itself was built on top of a pre-palatial funerary complex which housed several rooms containing larnakes with skulls (secondary burial of ancestors). Rebuilding on top of previous funerary structures is typical of Cretan, matrilineal burial practices. I suggest that the Cretan members of the original funerary structure and those of Tholos B belonged to the same matrilineage. It was necessary for deceased ancestors to remain close to their settlement, and be buried in the same tombs generation after generation. This meant the living descendants had to add chambers, or layers or build on top of existing funerary structures. A pillar crypt signified a sacred place within the tomb for cultic worship and perhaps veneration of a high status individual who may have led such rituals for the community. Girella (2016) states that while use of Archanes-Phourni

cemetery waned during the Neopalatial, communal gathering, feasting and consumption continued particularly outside Tholos Tomb B (MM III-LM I). The ancestresses and leaders of this highly ranked matrilineage were not forgotten by their descendants through LMI.

Tholos Tomb C, dated to EMIII, 2250-2100 BCE, may represent the third matrilineage at Archanes-Phourni. The deceased (45) were buried within the collective tomb either in larnakes, pithoi or in the ground. Many finds were buried under the larnakes and below the surface burials (minoancrete.com/phourni). Tholos Tomb C does not appear to have been as prestigious as the matrilineages represented in Tholos Tomb B or E. All three matrilineages appear to have been wealthy and held high status with the one represented by Tholos Tomb B enjoying the highest rank.

Archanes Phourni had poor burials along the margin of the necropolis in peripheral areas. Were these the rural folk who returned to the urban center? Other explanations include marriages between Cretan men and foreign women, or servants or slaves who was attached to a greater House. Skeletal analysis would be helpful to determine sex, age, affinity, and infirmity.

*c. Examples from the Western Mesara*

The western Mesara was settled in the Late Neolithic possibly at Kamares Cave on Mt. Ida. The most durable and prominent late Neolithic sites were Phaistos and Platanos which claimed the best arable land along the Ieropotamos River (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:221--231). . Whether these sites were founding segments from central or eastern Crete remains to be tested (footnote). The Phaistos settlement is unique in the Mesara because it is the only site to have individual burials through time. During EMI these individual burials

occurred in jars like the tradition of the north coast of Crete. (Does this suggest the migration of a founding lineage from the north?)

Otherwise, tombs in the western Mesara were collective, containing many burials (skeletons), presumably of many generations of the same matrilineage. There is no evidence of a grand tomb for an individual, male or female, warrior, king or priest in the western Mesara. The notion of rank can be inferred from the discrepancy of wealth found between collective tombs, and their architectural elaboration or lack thereof. We can ask whether such discrepancies are found in the western Mesara

Phaistos was settled along the Ieropotamus River in prime alluvial bottomland for growing crops, cereals particularly. Eventually Phaistos became the large ceremonial center for the region, while the settlement at Agia Triada became the preferred site for the Established Houses of the Phaistos community. In Agia Triada there were most likely two Maximal matrilineages. By EMI and EM II tholos (collective) tombs A and B served the two Established Houses (matrilineages) at Agia Triada. The same tombs persisted in use through MMI. Tholos tombs A and B showed considerable differences in size, annexes, and wealth as displayed in burial grave goods and in the addition of ritual space built outside. Tholos A had annexes and ritual spaces built outside the tomb while tholos B did not. Tholos A was much larger than tholos B and continued to have annexes added to it through time. Tholos A had wealthier grave goods while Tholos B had fewer and more modest burial goods. I suggest, Tholos A represented a very wealthy matrilineage of high rank while Tholos B represents a poorer lineage of lower rank. Is it possible that the founder principle entitled the matrilineage of Tholos A to the best arable land, resources and eventually to control inter-region and foreign

trade? Tholos A contained a rich assortment of prestige items and wealthy objects including daggers which were noted prestige item in Bronze Age Crete.

The Phaistos/Agia Triada community seemed to have deliberately distinguished itself from other Mesara sites as the only social group ...whose roots went back to the Late Neolithic period, the time of the first settlers in the Kamares Caves and the western Mesara (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:231). I suggest that Tholos A clearly represented the senior, ranked matrilineage in Agia Triada and most likely the founder matrilineage for Agia Triada and Phaistos. These two sites, from the Late Neolithic through the Late Bronze Age, alternatively or together, exerted their prestige and status throughout the Mesara.

Many other sites are found in the western Mesara from EMI onward. Did they come from branching segments from the two Maximal matrilineages at Agia Triada/Phaistos? Skeletal analysis and comparison would help answer this question. In favorable conditions Minor or Minimal segments most likely branched off from the two Agia Triada lineages to found settlements in less favorable soils and mountains in the western Mesara. There they also built their own collective tombs close to their sites and segment-held land, rather than return to Tholos A or B near Agia Triada. (In difficult conditions, the Minor and Minimal segments most likely did return to the core areas along the Ieropotamus River.

EMI settlements at Sivas, Kalo Limenes, Megali Skinoi and Chrysostomos had pairs of communal tombs found adjacent to their settlements (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:229). This would suggest two matrilineages at each of the above settlements. Their Established Houses and associated tombs are paired most likely because of the practice of duolocal residence and the universally preferred cross cousin marriage between two

matrilineages (footnote on cross-cousin marriage). Two paired tombs also suggest the founding segments may have come from the two lineages that supplied Tholos A and B near Agia Triada. (Skeletal biology and chemistry could help answer these questions.)

In the Agio Pharango Valley there were six tholos tombs during the EMII and five during the MMIA suggesting five matrilineages. The other explanation is that the tholi belonged to individual segments that were scattered in the valley but all of which came from original two matrilineages. (Skeletal analysis can answer this.)

In EMI Koumasa in the Mesara there were two tholoi; by EMII there were four tholoi suggesting the presence of four Maximal lineages, or budding from two original matrilineages. Dating would help establish the synchrony or diachrony of these tholos tombs and skeletal analysis would establish relationships among the burials in the tholoi.. One of the tholoi, Tholos B, had a rich assortment of grave goods or prestige items. This matrilineage most likely was the dominate or senior ranked matrilineage in the village. It may have controlled the village trade with other sites and regions. Three of the tholos tombs had a singular, female vessel figurine which may have represented the maternal ancestress for the lineage in each tomb (Peatfield 2016:488).

Platanos had one tholos tomb (Tholos A) in EMII with wealthy grave goods (founder matrilineage?), and by MMIA two new tombs were built. Tholos B at Plantanos, built later than tholos A, lacked much of the grave goods found in Tholos A. The third burial site at Plantanos was Tholos Gamma which contained simple inhumations in trenches without burial goods, perhaps a similar situation to that of Archanes. Such simple inhumations without grave goods occur elsewhere in the Mesara during MMI at Agia Triada and Phaistos. They could also

represent graves of non-Cretan, married women who would have no matrilineage on the island. (Bio-chemical-physical analyses of skeletal remains can suggest answers to relationships and even duration of the tombs.) Watrous (2005: 261) suggests these simple burials were servant or slave inhumations possibly not belonging to any Cretan matrilineage. So, as far as we can ascertain Plantanos had two Maximal matrilineages by MMIA

At Agia Triada, Platanos, and Koumasa in the Mesara there was a concentration of wealth or discrepancy in prestige items in one tomb over the others (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005). The richer collective tomb had more bronze daggers and other prestige items. Were these the founding matrilineages at their respective sites? It is possible that the founder principle was operating in the Mesara, that is lineage or lineage segments were ranked in the order that they arrived to new territory. Perhaps, also they were ranked by their Maximal matrilineage of origin. By EMII the number matrilineages in the western Mesara may have numbered between two and four total and were clearly ranked. Ranking is a form of vertical hierarchy. Some matrilineages had more access to land, resources, trade and prestige items.

Social differentiation relating to rank appears both in housing and tombs in the western Mesara, and there was no centralized chiefdom or kingdom. The EMII material record is best interpreted as the product of a ranked rather than a stratified (horizontal) society (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2006). It would seem that there were two to four matrilineages in the western Mesara between EMII and MMI.

*d. Example from Malia*

MM II Malia was a thriving and wealthy settlement or town. The town appeared to have four demarcated, living quarters or wards divided by E-W and N-S internal walls (Schoep,



2002b). Each ward had distinguished architectural residences, administrative centers with storehouses, courts and sanctuaries. Schoep (2002b) suggests these divisions reflect four groups based on affiliation. I suggest each ward was inhabited by a single matrilineage with its Established House, and residences for the Major, Minimal and Minor segments, courts and sanctuaries. Bronze Age Cretan matrilineages, like historical matrilineages, occupied distinct, and separate quarters of a town. The proximity of four matrilineages within Malia made cross-cousin marriage and duolocal residence convenient. There were open courts, small and large, within each ward for matrilineal councils. In the center of the town was a large court centered building ("palace") where all matrilineages could have met for feasts, sports, and cultic activities.

There is one clear candidate for an Established House in Schoep's 2002b paper, the Quarter Mu. It consisted of house A and house B which were contiguous with each other. Both had two stories and the same floor plan. They included workshops, storage rooms, sanctuaries, courts and paths. The west façade of Building A consisted of ashlar masonry, an indication of prestige. The living, cultic and councilar rooms were found on the first floor of each house. . Both houses had a sunken room (lustral basin) presumably for ritual cleansing, light wells, and most significantly a Minoan Hall. The hall had pier and door partitions which could change the size of the hall. The hall was used for councilar meetings of the Established House. A partitioned hall could have been used just for the elders of the Maximal lineage. A full Minoan hall could have been used for the elders of the Maximal lineage and heads of the Major segments, or the entire matrilineage. The southern part of House A was used for administration. The upper floor was used for workshops which produced seals, pottery, stone

vases, and bronze goods. (Kilns and furnaces were not located near the House.) The store rooms were filled with luxury items, not all made in Malia. They included fine pottery with appliques of animal, plant or sea life, fine pottery figurines, three sided beaded prisms, stone vases, libation tables, and bronze tools and weapons, etc. The upper floor of Building B included clay tablets with hieroglyphic inscriptions which may have tallied the inventory.

Unique for north eastern Crete, Malia had collective tholos tomb(s) for its departed. There were four funerary structures each within walking distance from its own ward in the town. It appears that there were walls that guided each social group to its respective funerary building. Of all the tombs Chrysolakkos was the most monumental, elaborate and the deceased were buried and later gifted with the most burial goods. The Chrysolakkos tholos appears to have represented the most outstanding matrilineage of the settlement, the highest ranked and possibly its founding lineage. Chrysolakkos' monumental construction and burial goods reflect imitation of Egyptian nobility.

The MMII town of Malia suggest that its distinct wards represented four matrilineages. Within each ward there were a range of residences including the Established House, at least at Quarter Mu, a range of courts, sanctuaries and many workshops for a variety of crafts. There were four funerary buildings who had external town walls that seemed to guide the residents of each ward to their own mortuary structure. The matrilineage represented by Quarter Mu and Chrysolakkos tomb may have been the founder and most prestigious of the four. Yet, wealth seemed to be prevalent in all the wards which produced a range of crafts and carried out regional and foreign trade unhindered by any central authority. In MMII Malia the

Established Houses (four) “reigned”. They married each other. They celebrated and competed in the large, court centered building in the center of town. They were creative and peaceful.

e. *Examples from Eastern Crete*

In northern and eastern Crete there seemed to have been more house burials containing multiple, individual burials in jars or pithoi. The same situation of ranked tombs, most likely each one representing a separate matrilineage, appeared in eastern Crete at Mochlos and Vasiliki (Waltrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005). In east Crete at Vasiliki there are two large, two-storied EM IIB houses (Established Houses) that dominated the summit of the settlement (Waltrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005), possibly representing two Maximal Lineages. These two Established Houses most likely provided marriage partners for each other. The elders of these “Red Houses” imported Aegean copper and in the early years may have controlled the copper trade all over Crete. The Vasiliki settlement also produced and controlled the production of highly valued Vasiliki ware which was exported widely. There were small, modest houses located to the south/southwest of the summit that Waltrous and Hadzi-Vallianou suggest belonged to workers, dependents, servants or slaves to the Red Houses occupants. I am suggesting that these houses may have belonged to the lower segments, either the Minor or Minimal, of the two main matrilineages, represented by the two Red Houses. These lower segment houses were the producers for their matrilineage while the elders of the Established Houses, Red Houses, were responsible for inter-regional and foreign trade.

In summary, it seems that in the western Mesara, north central and eastern Crete from EM II through the Neopalatial period, there were no fewer than two, and no more than five (more typically four) Maximal Lineages that formed the backbone of a ranked, rather than a

horizontally stratified society in Bronze Age Crete. It is possible that the same Maximal lineages were found throughout Crete and were ranked in their “new” location based on the founder principle. It is possible that all Cretan matrilineages originally descended from the north central matrilineages that surrounded Knossos and therefore were related through clanship.

### **Matrilineage and Village Pattern in Historic Societies**

Another way to estimate the number of vertical kinship groups or matrilineages is by examining the demarcation of wards within major settlements. First let us understand how historic matrilineages arrange themselves within settlements. Among contemporary matrilineal groups there are basically two arrangements for matrilineages within a settlement: One lineage or several. Those societies that have one matrilineage in a village are simpler in economy and have little or no lineage segmentation, for example the Trobriand Islanders (Gough, 1961:479-481), and the Mayombe of central Africa (Richards, 1950). The Kongo of central Africa can have one matrilineage per village or up to two to three. Each matrilineage has its own headman, ward, and land rights (Richards, 1950).

The second group has several matrilineages living within the same settlement or village. Gough (1961, p. 494) suggests that multilineage communities or villages are common at the highest level of economic production in matrilineal societies. Such societies include the Ashanti of southern Ghana and the Ivory coast (Richards, 1950; Basehart, 1961, the Minangkabau of Sumatra and Indonesia (Gough, 1961; Kato, 1978; Afrizal, 1996); , the Hopi and Zuni of the American Southwest (Eggan 1967), and the Truk Islanders (Schneider, 1961:202-233). I believe the Ashanti and Minangkabau societies are good models for Bronze Age Crete because of their relatively high level of economic productivity, foreign trade and segmented kinship system.

Among the Ashanti there are five to eight Maximal lineages that make up a village which can number 500-1,000 people, or more. Each Maximal lineage occupies a separate ward or residential quarter and forms a coherent neighborhood in the town. Each Minor segment forms its own coherent neighborhood within the Maximal lineage's ward (Schwimmer, 1995; Fortes, 1950; Basehart, 1961). The eight Ashanti Maximal lineages are found throughout the territory of the Ashanti kingdom where they constitute a clan. Having several exogamous matrilineages within the same village makes it easier for marriages to take place between them. The Ashanti support arranged marriages, preferably cross-cousin, within the same town. Cross-cousin marriage manages the alliance system between matrilineages and controls resources. When Ashanti women marry, they may remain in their natal home and the husband remains in his natal home (duolocal), probably the historic model. In the twentieth century it became more common for the woman to go with the husband to his matrilineage (virilocal) only after his lineage paid a sufficient marriage payment to her lineage. When an Ashanti brother married, he tried to bring his wife to live with him, if his lineage paid the full marriage payment. At any rate, a cluster of sites or settlements makes duolocal residence viable (Cough, 1961). The Mayombe also have several matrilineages within the same village. Among the Central Bantu generally marriages take place within the same village or neighboring village (Richards, 1950).

This pattern is repeated for the Minangkabau. The Minangkabau have multi-lineage villages or townships which can number 1,000 to 2,000 people. Among the Koto-Piliang Minangkabau there are four or more Maximal lineages within a village. The Minangkabau village is managed by a council of Maximal lineage heads, usually headed by one of highest rank (Gough, 1961:470). Within the village the Maximal lineages of the Minangkabau occupy

separate wards (Cole, 1936, p. 23). Like the Ashanti, the Maximal lineages are dispersed throughout the Minangkabau area where they constitute a clan.

Among the Minangkabau marriage for the couple is completely duolocal. Each married partner remains with their natal matrilineage. The Minimal household of the Minangkabau consists of related married or marriageable women of the same matrilineage. The average Minangkabau household has rooms for seven married women (grandmother, great aunts, mother and aunts, daughters). (Brothers and older sons sleep with men elsewhere.) Married sisters have their own rooms for nocturnal visits from their husbands and for the smallest children. Duolocality requires a dense settlement pattern preferably in multi-lineage communities or closely spaced villages (Gough, 1961:561). Among the Zuni, Maximal lineages or clans live in wards or units with the single, large Zuni village (Eggan:1967:202)

### **Matrilineages and Wards within Bronze Age Cretan Settlements**

Driessen (2012) offers that within towns there were large, multigenerational kinship groups that were living in co-residential architectural blocks even as late as LMIIIB. C. Kroeber (1917) observed that “clans (Maximal lineages) are to be viewed as “coordinated divisions of a community with parallel and equivalent functions”. Within the MMII town of Malia, Schoep (2002b, p.117) states that administration, craft specialization, locations of ceremonial/religious activity and features of monumental architecture seem to be repeated in different areas of the town. This spatial repetition of the above activities makes the most sense when viewed as reflecting the activity of different groups (Schoep, 2002b, p.120). She identifies four “social group based on affiliation” that may have built four main administrative, storage, and cult compounds for their corporate functions in Malia: (1) Quarter Mu, (2) Magazine Dessenne, (3)

Villa Alpha, (4) and an unexcavated complex (in 2002) where a four-sided Cretan Hieroglyphic bar was found (Schoep, 2002b, p. 118.) I suggest that these groups were four different Maximal lineages. Schoep also points out that from the EMII through MMIB and later, there was simultaneous use of at least 4 burial complexes “which might indicate the existence of marked group differentiation in death” (Schoep, 2002b, p. 119. I recommend a DNA study of the skeletal material of the burial complexes to test the hypothesis of affinity within the burial complex and among them, if this has not been done. I suggest that each collective tomb belonged to one Maximal lineage that occupied one ward in Malia. Small, medium and large court centered compounds were found in different sections of the town, as were several villas or “elite complexes” (Schoep, 2002, p. 117). The villas could represent the homes of the heads of Maximal and Major lineage segments. There are several sanctuaries and cult rooms located in complexes which also are “scattered” within and outside of town.

In MMIB Malia there was intensive construction including that of residential quarters. Four residential wards can possibly be identified. They are bounded by internal, large walls with north-south and east-orientation (Schoep, 2000b, p. 120). Both sets are perpendicular to each other. She states, “These internal, dividing walls may have delimited residential districts along with elite residences located in different areas of town”. I suggest that these locations, each containing villas, houses, cultic structures, communal buildings, and workshops, represent the separate wards of four distinct matrilineages. It appeared important to reconstruct over the original structures which is in keeping with ancestor veneration and reincarnation belief systems. Hamilakis (2002, p.191) points out that “there is no clear spatial boundaries between the elite court centered complexes and commoner residences” within each ward. That is

because all statuses are included within a matrilineage which is vertically organized from the Maximal head through Major elders to Minor and Minimal segments. “Clusters of large court centered complexes, replication of public spaces, type and elaboration of material culture, replication of feasting and drinking ceremonies indicate that the sites were not hierarchical...” (Hamilakis, 2002, p. 190).

Within each of these matrilineal wards at Malia, lower segments would have their own neighborhoods. Parallel economic activity was probably replicated in each of the four wards by a different matrilineage, and I suggest there may have been stylistic differences or craft specialization that can be found between the wards. Chaimazi pottery, which is a unique product of MMII Malia seemed to be the product of a particular workshop (Schoep, 2002b:115). Within a single matrilineal ward we can hypothesize that lower segments might have taken on different aspects of corporate function. Therefore, we might even expect to find some archeological diversity of material culture within each ward.

Gournia, a Bronze Age settlement in eastern Crete “probably had four synchronous wards, perhaps more diachronically” (Watrous, et.al. 2015). (Figure 1. 2010-2012 Gournia site plan drawn by D.M. Buell and J. McEnroe, with permission from Matt. Buell). Near Gournia was the settlement of Mochlos. The settlement was on the southern side of an island/peninsula in northeastern Crete. The LMI settlement was arranged in a grid pattern into four blocks. Between each block was a narrow street that ran north from the shoreline. The other streets ran east-west ([minoancrete.com/Mochlos](http://minoancrete.com/Mochlos)). This is a basic Cretan village pattern, and I would suggest that a separate matrilineage occupied each block totaling four contiguous matrilineages.



Palaikastro had a 2,000 year history from the late Neolithic through the end of the Bronze Age (and actually beyond). By MMIB it was a well-planned town with a wide, paved main street, cross streets and drainage gutters. Impressive large homes lined main street. MaGillivray and Sackett (2010) state that there were nine sectors in the town. However, it is not clear whether this is a cumulative number over time with each rebuilding (Figure, Palaikastro town plan with permission from Tim cunningham). In each sector there seemed to have been at least one spacious house, probably the home of “wealthy traders” (MacGillivray and Sackett, 2010: 570-581). Driessen (2002) states that each clan had a house with a large hall and a sunken room (lustral basin) surrounded by four columns. I suggest these “wealthy traders” were Maximal lineage heads who controlled interregional trade between regions (Zakro, Knossos) and foreign trade with Egypt and the Levant. Furthermore, the authors suggest that the “occupants of the house blocks consisted of extended families or clans, including people of some standing (status) whose interests were coherent, rather than competitive.” I suggest that each Bronze Age ward at Palaikastro contained the homes, workshops and courts of one matrilineage, including the estate homes of the elders of the Maximal and Major lineage segments and modest homes of Minor and Minimal worker segments of craftspeople and artisans. Three of the town blocks contain a central, four column hall with a sunken room (lustral basin). I argue later that this architectural feature was related to Bronze Age Cretan divinity worship and seemed to have taken place within matrilineal wards. There were five to six collective tombs just outside Palaikastro suggesting that there may have been five -six matrilineages occupying the town from Early through Middle Minoan Periods, or the same matrilineage built a second tomb. DNA analysis would help here.

At Palaikastro several blocks have workshops and storage capacity for oil, wine, grain and luxury items such as fine ceramic wares, stone vases, ivory, precious metal and linear A documents. Finished objects in bronze and ivory have been found in many of the elite houses at Palaikastro: bronze vessels, axes, knives, small ivory figurines of young boys, relief plaques of herons and nautilus, probably from small box lids. Bronze working was on site. There must have been many potter's workshops throughout the town as several potter's wheels have been found. The same is true for loom weights (weaving) which are found throughout Palaikastro. Stone carving (cups, lamps, bowls) was local even though some of the techniques and materials echoed Egyptian influence.

Cult rooms and artifacts are found in the large, spacious homes of the wealthy such as rooms with sunken central rooms surrounded by four columns (a shrine or cult room to divinity). A shrine was found inside building #5. These homes also contain cult objects, rhytons, figurines, double ax stands and fine marine style vases. The elders of each Maximal or Major matrilineage seem to have carried out cultic activities for the entire lineage and participation was open to all members of the matrilineage. None the less, there was a widespread dispersal of special objects associated with cult activity at Palaikastro suggesting that all homes, regardless of segment level held cultic activities, most certainly of ancestress worship. (MacGillivray and Sackett, 2010: 578). They further state that, "Special is the widespread participation of the town's inhabitants in social activities which were not carried out by either a political or priestly palatial class" (MacGillivray and Sackett, 2010:576). The vertical organization of several, segmented matrilineages living in separate wards within Palaikastro could explain

the repetitive (even if diverse), material remains of cult, craft production and trade within and between wards.

Regarding the village at Knossos. Gaignerot-Driessen (2016:21-28) writes that it seemed to have had four separate, residential blocks, each of which contain several residences. Even as late as LMIIIC “there were distinct nuclear families living in co-residential blocks” which she equates with kinship groups. I suggest that Knossos had four matrilineages which seem to correspond with the four to five Bronze Age grand Houses or villas in the vicinity of Knossos’ grand court center complex. The grand Houses would have housed the elders or heads of their respective Maximal lineage. Clearly these four, matrilineal heads were a powerful group at Knossos in trade, cult and perhaps most importantly, with their status as the original founder matrilineages for all of Crete.

A common practice in Cretan settlements, large and small, grand and modest, is the rebuilding or repurposing of older structures. The remodeling or rebuilding is always on top of the prior structure. According to Drissen and Langohr (2014) “Judging from the large scale of many Minoan residential complexes between the Late Neolithic and LMIIIC and the localized palimpsestic rebuilding, time after time, often repeating the same plan, an intergenerational investment by strong social groups is detected.” I argue that the same matrilineage is repurposing the building of their ancestress by renovating or building on top of the ancestress’ structure. The belief system probably was that rebuilding on top of previous structures was a way of keeping the ancestress and ancestors happy. The ancestors reincarnate and would most likely want to occupy the same or similar structures. The repurposing of a building or building on top of a prior structure is a strong indication of the significance of the ancestral structure

and claim to that location by a single, closely related group (matrilineage) over a long period of time.

### **Historic Matrilineal Household Economy and Authority**

Women working in groups to collect wild edibles and cultivate crops seemed to have initiated a kinship-based society with female descent (Gough, 1961). Such a society would have revered female elders and ancestors as the “knowers” who worked and had intimate knowledge of the land. Based on contemporary and historical matrilineal societies, grandmothers, aunts and mothers hold “quiet authority” in such household, while uncles and brothers are the visible face of “leadership” especially with external relations. In highly segmented matrilineal societies, a group of elders may select a male as lineage or segment head. While the male segment head may be responsible for managing the estate, the estate only passes through the female line. Therefore, most decisions are councilar. Elder matrilineal males and females of a household share decision-making over the corporate land and resources. In the MMI-II ceramic bowls from Palaikastro, there are scenes of a group of elders meeting, etc. (MacGillivray and Sackett, 2010: 577).

Among the Hopi of the American Southwest there are twelve villages scattered on three mesas or plateaus. Each village is politically and economically independent. Each village contains several Maximal lineages or clans. There is no one political authority or head in the traditional Hopi village, although there is a ceremonial chief. The Hopi chief of the village is elected and has mostly representational and ceremonial functions. He does not settle disputes. Authority is dispersed through the ritual and ceremonial system (organized by clans/Maximal lineages) which encompasses several societies and includes all members of the village in one

way or another. Hopi political organization has been hard to characterize because authority is phrased in ritual rather than secular terms and is not concentrated in any single position (Eggan 1967:106).

The Hopi live in a dry environment with unpredictable rainfall. They rely on springs and underground seepage for cultivation. Their primary crop is maize. Secondary crops include beans, squash, melons, peaches, chiles, onions and sweet corn. Their tools include a wooden digging stick, weed cutter, and rake. They collect wild berries, fruits, nuts and tubers. They hunt deer, antelope and rabbit. There are no full-time craft specialists. Each household makes its own tools, pottery, weaving, and crafts (Gough, 1961:459-460).

The Hopi have a division of labor between husband and wife. Husbands live with their wives (uxorilocal or matrilineal residence) and are expected to cultivate crops on the wife's matrilineal land. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was considered "unsafe" for women to work the fields. The Hopi women own the land and the crops produced from it as well as the house. The Hopi husband has an economic obligation to support his wife. Young, unmarried brothers work the matrilineal land, and all men engage in hunting. The clan mother (head of the matrilineage on each mesa) has ultimate authority over cultivation decisions made by husbands and matrilineal men (Eggan:1967; Schlegel, 1984).

A Hopi man moves into his wife's household at marriage and helps to support her and the household by cultivating her land, hunting game and gathering wood. The woman's married brothers live with their wives in other matrilineal households. However, the wife's brothers and uncles have more say in their natal matrilineage than the husband. The married brothers and uncles return frequently to visit, assist, and especially to retrieve the ritual paraphernalia of

their lineage to perform in ceremonies. A Hopi household consists of a married woman and her husband, her married sisters and their husbands, grandmother and her husband, aunts and their husbands, unmarried brothers and children of the matrilineal women.

The traditionally Zuni Pueblo economy resembled that of the Hopi. The men did the horticulture of several varieties of maize, beans, and squash. Men also hunted mule deer, rabbit, antelope, mountain sheep and bison. Men would engage in collective hunting of the larger game. Turkey and dog were domesticated. After the Spanish, sheep became a herd animal usually under male ownership. Women gathered wild plants; men chopped and collected wood. Eggan (1967:194) points out that "individual authority among the Zuni is almost lacking". A group of women in the household held the important positions and were the decision-makers. They "owned" the house, its furnishings, the fields of the matrilineage. While men own the sheep (since the time of the Spanish). The husband, who lived with his wife, is expected to work in her fields. (This means her married brothers are living and working on his wife's land, that of another matrilineage.)

The Ashanti of the Gold Coast of Africa live in two ecological zones: the northern zone is savannah and orchard and is subject to drought and flood. The northern zone is cultivated by the men of the matrilineage and the primary crops are yams and guinea maize. Metal tools are used by the Ashanti (Gough, 1961:461). Northern Ashanti men generally remain on their natal land and in time may succeed in bringing their wives to live with them (avuncular residence). Ashanti society is segmented and each segment head is generally led by the eldest brother. His position is not just determined by genealogy but by his personal skills, and his selection

depends on the approval of the male and female elders of his segment. He is considered a trustee of the corporate land and resources, not its outright owner (Basehart, 1961).

In the southern zone of the Ashanti land the ecology is different. The forested plateau is extremely fertile and gets plentiful rain. Mostly women work the fields with the metal digging tools. They cultivate twelve crops and collect palm products. Men herd goats, hunt fowl, and attain craft specialization in gold, iron, copper working, hand pottery, and wood carving. Men were absent frequently for mining, long distance trade, raiding for slaves and warfare. In the south duolocal residence was still the main pattern, (Fortes, 1950: 262), which Gough (1961: 461) considered the original residence pattern for the Ashanti. Fortes (1950: 279) recorded that the majority of marriages were from the same village or nearby village. Men ate with their lineage and their wives brought food to them there (Basehart 1961:289). Ashanti husbands and wives cultivated their own respective matrilineal lands. The Ashanti household of matrilineal brothers and sisters was originally the traditional economic unit for joint (corporate) production and consumption. The head of the household segment (Minimal) could be either a man or a woman (Basehart, 1961:288).

The Minangkabau of Western Sumatra cultivate at least sixteen crops. Women were technically responsible for cultivating these crops on matrilineal land and minor fishing, but not wet rice agriculture. However, for the most part women and men of the matrilineage do not perform field labor. Lower segments of multiple lineages in historic times formed an endogamous "caste" of laborers to perform this work. The Minangkabau tend fish pools, grow chickens, herd goats, cattle and buffalo. The Minangkabau have lineages specializing in crafts whose menfolk trade in glasswork, copper, gold metal work, wood carving and building.

Women are known to be part-time specialists in ceramic production and weavers of fine gold cloth. Men spend a good part of their time in maritime trade, or in modern times, seeking jobs elsewhere in Indonesia (Footnote on Minangkabau long distance trading). Usually there is an elder brother of the Minor and Minimal segment levels who manages the corporate estate. He brings his wife to live with him on his matrilineal estate, although the pattern of residence for the Minangkabau for all other men is strictly duolocal. Much of the day to day decision making for the corporate holdings, however, falls to women because the segment heads (lineage males) are frequently away. The women of the matrilineage run the estate or farm with defacto authority (Kato, 1978:8). Young Minangkabau men and women who find work abroad return home for core celebrations, rituals of life passages, corporate land decisions and selecting a segment head (Afrizal,1996).

### **Economy, Possible Division of Labor, Social Roles and Authority in Bronze Age Crete**

MacGillivray's work at Palaikastro (2010) showed that the Bronze Age Cretans had a varied and healthy diet. They cultivated domesticated plants (hoe cultivation) and gathered wild plants. Cultivated plants included emmer and einkorn wheat, barley, peas, lentils, bitter vetch, dwarf chickling, horsebean, olives, grapes figs, pears, pomegranates, plums, and melons. They gathered wild herbs, edible weeds, bulbs, mushrooms, some were used for medicinal purposes. Saffron, which was gathered, and honey (the bee was "domesticated") were used in rituals and high end trade. They herded and ate goat and sheep, their most common meat. There were few cattle bones, probably only consumed after a ritual or sacrifice. In addition, they hunted duck and partridge, collected snails and engaged in shoreline fishing with line and hook or by nets. Very common were the smallest fish, anchovies or sprat which can be netted



close to shore. These were preserved in small ceramic jars as salted fish. They did some deep sea fishing from boats as is evidenced from octopus and eight other deep sea species of fish including sting ray. The Cretans had many grills and cooking pots. Most likely meat and seafood were grilled, roasted or stewed with vegetables. They preserved their food by smoking, drying, salting or pickling with a combination of olive oil, vinegar and salt.

Watrous and Hadzi-V (2005:225-226) have presented a division of labor in late Neolithic Crete, that for the most part, I think is applicable to the Bronze Age. I have expanded their list based on ethnographic matrilineages and Bronze Age Cretan archaeology. Women for the most part remained close to their household and matrilineal land. If they traveled, it would be mostly to settlements within their region for local exchange and social visitation. (In the latter part of the Bronze Age priestesses or a female elder from a prestigious matrilineage may have traveled to Santorini or possibly Egypt (Biers, 1996). Women cultivated a wide range of crops and collected wild edibles and fished close to the shoreline. Their activities reflected both their domestic production and public involvement in trade and cult for their lineage and region. They were weavers of domestic clothing and fine fabrics for ritual wear and trade. They wove baskets for daily use and trade. I suggest women assembled jewelry from the pieces men forged from glass, gold, silver and semi-precious stones (Footnote on womens' production). Much jewelry was worn with Cretan apparel, many other pieces were exported. Women were the basket weavers that supported a range of domestic collecting, storing and trading purposes. They produced domestic pottery as well as pottery for trade (Footnote on woman potter, 800 BC Crete). Women may have made pottery seals to denote their matrilineage's trading transactions (footnote on identical seal impressions...). Most likely women made votive

figurines for initiation, healing, fertility and regeneration rites and those ritual objects (altars, libation vessels, etc.) needed for divinity worship. Possibly in the later Bronze Age, priestesses were the fresco painters in the major court centers (LMIA). (footnote on fresco painting). As society became wealthier and more complex, women's position in cult or religion actually became stronger. Women's roles as priestesses in cult provided the mechanism for integrating the matrilineage, as well as the region as a whole. Women of the matrilineage and or priestesses tended the beehives which were sacred. They collected honey for ritual libations, domestic use and export. Honey was highly valued domestically and as an export item. By Late Minoan the Knossian priestesses either held a monopoly over honey production or controlled its production throughout the island. Knossian priestesses became the core hierarchy that attempted to control and centralize the Cretan economy over much of the central island by the late Bronze Age. There was no monarchical priest-king or priest-queen at any time in Crete, but by the Late Bronze Age, a hierarchy of four or fewer priestesses of the main Knossian matrilineages most likely held sway over the island.

Men, on the other hand, in these highly productive, segmented matrilineages were most likely expected to enrich the matrilineage by means other than cultivating the land. Men probably became the metal workers in bronze (weapons for status and export, work implements and ritual objects) and gold and silver (figurines, seals, rings and other jewelry). Metal objects showed a wide distribution which suggests a decentralized economy until the LMIB. In addition to women potters, they may have produced high end pottery for exchange with other Cretan regions and foreign trade. Men were the ship and shipyard builders, carpenters, mariners and merchants of foreign trade as well as the protectors of sea-faring

ships. They were deep sea fishermen and divers. They mined in quarries for suitable stone, clay, gems, copper, and minerals. They traded abroad for obsidian, gold, silver and tin . They built their own matrilineal Minimal houses as well as the fine estates or villas for their matrilineal heads. They built roads, court- centered buildings, large collective tombs, and the famous“cyclopean” walls. They tended to the ritual bull and herded goats and sheep. They participated along with their sisters in the veneration of their matrilineal ancestresses. They may have become segment heads, subject to the council of elders in their matrilineages.

It is difficult to visualize and understand matrilineal roles in contemporary societies, much more so for the Cretan Bronze Age. In order to do so I have used Geertz’s concepts of ethos and world view as guides (See footnote on Geertz). The following tables may appear redundant, but I think they are necessary to jog our thinking along the way to what matrilineal roles may have looked like. I have attempted to present hypothetical roles as behaviors some of which may be tested in the archaeological context. The hypothetical roles for women in Crete are presented in Table 1. and those of men in Table 2.

Table 1. Women’s Hypothetical Economic and Social Roles in Late Neolithic and Bronze Age Crete (based on comparative ethnography and Cretan archaeology)

1. Women’s most important role was the biological perpetuation of the matrilineage, continuing the vertical system of descent through the female line, and providing new members for ancestral reincarnation.
2. The lineal group of women (with their children), sisters (with their children), and aunts and grandmothers contributed economically by cultivating einkorn and emmer wheat, barley, figs, olives, legumes, grapes, etc., collecting wild vegetation including saffron, gathering shellfish, marine crab, snails and netting sardines/sprat in coastal areas.
3. Senior women, grandmothers or sisters held corporate authority/inheritance of the matrilineage’s land and resources and passed it on to their daughters. Their authority was tacit and councilar. Perhaps, there was recognized a dyad of elder sister

and senior brother who provided guidance or management of their segment and lineage along with their peer council of elders. However, if so, these male segment heads (brothers and uncles) were frequently away trading, building, quarrying, etc. Women held defacto corporate decision making.

4. Care of the sacred bees perhaps by specific matrilineal priestesses. They tended beehives, collected domestic honey for libations, ritual use, domestic use, preserving and export.

5. Preparation of wheat, bread, honey, sacrificed bull and saffron as ritual foods in ancestress veneration and divinity worship.

6. Milking goats and sheep, cheese making.

7. Food preservation: salting, drying or pickling food for storage; domestic food preparation

8. Trapping birds, hare and small game; Juveniles of both sexes may have been taught to do this

9. The "knowledge keeper" of family, segment, lineage, and clan ancestry. Keeper of origin and migration myths, of rituals and ritual objects. Senior woman assigned status, roles, duties and responsibilities of each member of her lineage or lineage segment. Matrilineal social structure and behavior depended on women's knowledge, especially the elder women. Lineage status, kinship and ritual knowledge were passed on from mother to daughter. Matrilineal land was passed from mother to daughter, not to the sons.

10. The sacred object maker, and carried out secondary reburial; Matrilineal women orchestrated household, segment, lineage, and clan ancestress worship. They prepared ritual food for ancestor veneration and made votive objects, altars, vessels, etc. Women collected the skulls or bones of their ancestress/tors for secondary burial rituals. Often the ancestor's bones were brought outside the matrilineal collective tomb to "participate" in the communal feasting. The authority or power of women within the matrilineage was not only in land knowledge but also in their belief of ancestor reincarnation and in their ancestress' attachment to their Houses and land.

11. Highly ranked matrilineal priestesses conducted divinity worship at regional peak sanctuaries and later within court centered buildings. This role intensified and ultimately centralized at Knossos, where the priestesses of no more than four maximal lineage(s) may have become specialized in ritual and cultic worship almost to the point of becoming a "class" or "caste" of priestesses for most of Crete, Thera and the Cycladic colonies. Some of these priestesses practiced snake handling to assume its vitalizing

power, to establish her authority, and to use the snake in healing, rain-making, restoring vitality, etc.

12. Priestesses may have been the group that domesticated and kept bees. Bees were considered transfigurations of divinity and honey was their divine food. Honey was also exported as a luxury item.

13. The authority of the priestesses was significant. Their goal was to have all the youth of all matrilineages obedient to them through the regional initiation rites. Equally significant, was the role of priestesses in integrating the region through divinity rites at peak sanctuaries. Regional integration and stability depended on the authority and cultic activities of high ranking priestesses.

14. Painters of house walls and sacred ritual objects, frescos in court centered buildings; plastering and painting of offering tables with fine floral designs

15. High level women created Cretan hieroglyphics (based on Egyptian or Babylonian writing) as mnemonics for sacred chants.

16. Painted Linear A on ritual pottery or had it inscribed on libation tables at peak sanctuaries. This suggests a votive/religious use of Linear A.

17. Along with brother arranged for intra-lineage and inter-lineage celebrations, sports, competitions, festivals and feasting at open and court centered compounds

18. Participated in Inter-family and inter- lineage trade or exchange within the region. Most women traveled locally within the region, but could travel to visit clanswomen in other regions on special occasions.

19. In the latter Bronze Age priestesses from high ranking matrilineages traveled to Santorini to promote trade, cultic rites and to Egypt for diplomacy (Biers, 1996).

20. Textile production, spinning and weaving, for ritual, domestic use and export.

21. Pottery production including terracotta figurines for rites of passage and good health or healing rituals, figurines for fertility, representations of aspects of female divinity (bird goddess, bee goddess), votives for the regeneration of the seasons, toys, spindle whorls, loom weights; pottery production for domestic use. Some women became specialized in fine pottery for trade. Ceramic seal makers for their matrilineage.

22. Basket weavers for a variety of domestic uses: storing clothing, cloth, jewelry, collecting wild and cultivated edibles, including small sea food

23. Jewelry makers: possibly gem carving or ivory carvers?; Jewelry assembling, assembled the semi-precious stones and metals to create jewelry for domestic use and export
24. Bull leaping, acrobatics and boxing as sports for young girls, other sports too; girls took part in inter-matrilineal competitions, regional competitions
25. The matrilineal household (Minor and Minimal segments) with female and male relatives all took care of the children.
26. Either the female elder of the segment or lineage head or council of elders addressed "misbehavior" by female members of the lineage.

Table 2. Men's Hypothetical Economic and Social Roles in the Late Neolithic through Bronze Age (based on comparative ethnography and archaeology)

1. Brother may have shared with sister decision making and field management of corporate land holding and resources. This may have worked more consistently for the elders of the Maximal lineage who controlled interregional and foreign trade and major resources for the matrilineage. This ideal may not have been practically carried out in day to day operations for lower segments as men were frequently away from the household. The nature of matrilineal authority is councilar in historic societies, and I believe it was the same for most segment levels in Bronze Age Crete.
2. Brothers shared with sisters of the household, segment, lineage, and clan, matrilineal worship of ancestors. (In historic ethnographic matrilineages, brothers and uncles are the "face" of ritual and ceremony while sisters and aunts bear the knowledge of the ancestresses, appropriate rituals and women prepared the sacred objects and food for the ancestresses.) Brothers and uncles belonged to the same matrilineage as their sisters and venerated the same ancestresses.
3. Brother took most of the responsibility which was shared with the sister for arranging intra-lineage and inter-lineage celebrations, sports, competitions, and festivals at open courts and court centered compounds
4. Men of the matrilineage had the responsibility of protecting and increasing the matrilineage's corporate wealth, in other words, activities outside of horticulture.<sup>8</sup> They were expected to provide for the matrilineage in ways other than horticulture, for example, herding, quarrying, mining, metal working, trading, ship building, fine crafts, etc.
5. Senior brother or uncle trained his sister's male children of his segment proper behavior, craft specialization especially in quarrying, mining, metal working, (daggers, swords, metal

figurines, seals, metal jewelry), carpentry, masonry, ship building, construction of roads, public buildings, houses, etc. and long distance trade;

6. Senior brother and or sister created Linear A writing, a syllabary, for sacred use and later administrative recording.
7. Elder men of the Maximal lineage became scribes with Linear A to record items of trade, barter, record keeping. (Maybe elder women were scribes too; they would be local).
8. Senior brother was the legal authority over his sisters' children. He arranged marriages for his sisters' children (cross-cousin), usually within the settlement or a nearby village.
9. Either the male elder of the segment or lineage head or council of elders addressed "misbehavior" by male members of the lineage.
10. Hunting and deep sea fishing; sheep and goat herding.
11. Maintaining the ritual bull
12. Exchange/trade with other regions within Crete, and beyond: Cyclades, Levant, Egypt, Mainland
13. Ship building, harbor building and maintenance
14. Mariners, sailors and soldiers for protection of the fleet
15. Masons, quarry-digging for clay, stone; mining for precious metals, semi-precious stones
16. Carpenters, builders, architects (houses, court centered buildings, roads, drainage, tholos tombs, defensive structures
17. Protection/defense; warriors; African slave traders?
18. Specialized craftsmen: Bronze smelting, Copper forging, obsidian flaking, high value ceramics for trade or exchange, sculpting of metal and ivory figurines, gold and silver jewelry, ceramic and metal seals, stone carving and vase making
19. Wine making
20. Olive oil production (presses)
21. Bull leaping as a sport for young men, competitive sports

22. Hieroglyphic and Linear A scribes and inventory takers, a task probably held by Maximal or Major lineage heads/elders or their administrators; most likely a form of recording inventory and transactions, but also found on religious/cult objects
23. Metal seals and rings to mark matrilineal trade goods.

### **Matrilineal Segmentation Possibly Explains the Decentralized Economy and Trade in the Western Mesara**

This section briefly summarizes the work and observations of Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou (2005:233-252) in the western Mesara from the point of view of economic decentralization. Driessen () is of the same opinion for most of Crete. Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:249) state that “there is no centralized storage facility in the Mesara and no centralized redistributive economy in EMII. EMII horticultural practices benefited from dry farming. As a result the Mesara villages developed surplus that could be stored for future consumption or traded. Large storage jars or pithoi appear in village size settlements and there are storage rooms. “Large scale community storage may already have taken place outside the centralized buildings from an early phase onwards...during the Protopalatial Period there is as much evidence for large-scale storage outside as within the Palaces, *in each case connected to a larger residential complexes or open courts*. This connection continues into the Neopalatial Period” (Driessen and Langhor, 2014). In EMII the Mesara population increased and moved into the foothills, mountain slopes, and less arable land in rural areas. I propose that segments of lineages budded off and moved into these areas. Olives and legumes could grow in less favorable soil and herding of sheep and goats became a source of milk, cheese and warm clothing. More notable is the proliferation of specialized craft production in these outlying regions: bronze weapons, imported ivory for seals, jewelry made from imported semi-precious stones, steatite vases, gold and silver jewelry (imported metals), etc. There were clay beds for



pottery production and steatite in the Asterousia Mountains to make fine stoneware. Some of these smaller sites, hamlets or farmsteads, produce fine specialized pottery. In the Western Mesara there were *seven* distinct high quality ceramic styles that appear to be exchanged from the segments in the outer regions to the core settlements (Agia Triada, Platanos) in the alluvial plain. I suggest that some of the high quality ceramics remained with the heads of the Major lineages in Agia Triada, Platanos, Koumasa; some were traded north in exchange for Aegean metals and obsidian. The Minor or Minimal segments of a lineage in the Asterousia Mountains produced ceramics and sent it to their elders of their Maximal Lineages in the core areas (Agia Triada, Lebena, Plantanos, and Koumasa). The elders of the Maximal lineages in the core areas may have dominated interregional trade in fine goods, and exchange or trade with Egypt, the Cyclades, and the Levant.

In EMII there are prestige items found in the premier tombs at Agia Triada, Platanos, and Koumasa in the Mesara. Was this wealth the result of elders of certain matrilineages controlling trade? Some of the prestige items may have remained in the possession of the elders of the Maximal lineages. The production of bronze daggers, a prestige item rather than a war weapon, seemed to have been made or primarily used at central (alluvial) settlements such as Agia Triada, Plantanos and Koumasa. Bronze daggers were placed in certain collective tombs perhaps representing elite lineages. Some prestige daggers were traded to the north of Crete, in exchange for more copper, tin and obsidian. Mesaran trade extended to the Cyclades and Attica for obsidian, copper and gold. Gold goods were found only in tholos tombs in Agia Triada and Plantanos suggesting their control by elders of one or two Maximal lineages. Another prestige item found in the Mesara was Vasiliki ware imported from the site of Vasiliki in eastern

Crete. It is interesting that the Mesara exported several kinds of high-end pottery, and imported a fine pottery from eastern Crete.

The fine painted ware from various locations in the Asterousia Mountains in the western Mesara was widely exported across Crete including Knossos. The "Agios Onouphrios" style ceramic from one workshop in this region was found in Agia Kyriaki (southern Mesara), Koumasa (eastern Mesara) Phaistos and Knossos. The west or southern coast of Mesara sent coarse ware to Knossos. Was it possible for Major and Minor segments to export directly to other regions? Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou (2005:243) seem to think so. "A high proportion of Mesara craftspeople specializing in pottery, stone vases and seals seem to have been rural dwellers" (Watrous and Hadzi-V, 2005:242).

This pattern of decentralized, but most likely lineage managed, production applies to seals and stone vases as well. There are several small sites in the highlands that produced these items. There are ten sites that have seals in the Mesara. Agia Triada had the largest number of seals, followed by sites in the Asterousia Mountains and at Lebena. Other seals seem to have been used locally. Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou (2005:241) state that seals could be made at small, marginal sites. Their production, like that of ceramics and stone vases, was decentralized. Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou (2005:249-250) state that seals were only used for exchange within the community; they may have functioned at the household or Minor segment level and between settlements in the Mesara. Seal production and usage was decentralized, not centralized. I believe they were made by lineages or lineage segments.

The source of steatite for valuable stone vases was in the Asterousia Mountains, while the production of steatite vases was made at Lebena on the south coast of the Mesara. Stone vases

were exchanged with the alluvial core settlements (Plantanos, Phaistos, Agia Triada and Koumasa), and were a valuable item for elders for trade. As with ceramics, I suggest the Minor or Minimal rural segments were exchanging with their Maximal Lineages elders in core areas (Agia Triada, Plantanos, Koumasa,) for agricultural products, copper, tin, obsidian, and some traded wares. At the same time some of these smaller segments may have traded directly with other regions.

There was no centralized storage facility in the Mesara during EMII. There is no evidence for a centralized, redistributive economy (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:249, 290). This economy, I believe, was in the hands of two-four matrilineages found within larger settlements in core areas.

Segmented lineages can explain how each of the regions in Bronze Age Crete produced highly skilled crafts in their local style. Most of the regions produced the same class of wares: fine pottery, seals, stone vases, bronze daggers, jewelry, etc. Most of the highly valued items are traded abroad or to other regional Cretan centers. Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou (2005:243) suggest three types of networks had been established in the Mesara by EM or MMI. I have added the lineage concept: (1) The heads of Maximal lineages in Agios Triada and Plantanos traded directly with the north coast region. (2) The heads of the Maximal lineages in the core areas traded with other sites within the Mesara region including with their own lineage segments and those of other lineages. (3) The smaller sites in the Mesara, founded by segments from the core area matrilineages, traded directly with the north coast region.

I suggest that men who traveled long distance to other regions of Crete with their products, visited or stayed with their clan relatives in these settlements where they were able to

exchange ideas and knowledge of their craft. I suggest that clan kinship extended throughout Crete. The same two-six matrilineages that recur at sites throughout Crete, were the social mechanism for sharing *knowledge* of craft production while allowing for local creativity to produce unique styles. That can explain why a region such as Agia Triada/Phaistos *had at least seven fine ceramic styles*. That may explain why small groups of households in the hills can produce such fine, quality wares suitable for export. These individuals are not only trading with their regional centers, but some are also traveling to their clan relatives in other settlements where they shared ideas.

The high quality and individuality of Cretan crafts, especially ceramics, were valued overseas in Egypt and in the great court centered buildings at home (MacGillivray and Sackett, 2010: 577). The creativity of Bronze Age Cretan artisans has been noted by many researchers. It is a testament to the relative equality of the sexes, decentralization of society, de-emphasis of power in relationships, the integration of all statuses of membership within the matrilineage, sharing of ideas among clan people of different regions, and sport-like competition among matrilineages. The material patterns of trade at all segment levels reflect a freedom to create because of the security and culture of the matrilineal system. I believe that some form of decentralized economy and trade persisted in Bronze Age Crete up to MMIIIA-LMIA at the time of an earthquake , a view proposed by Driessen (2014).

### **Religion in Pre-Literate Societies**

Geertz (1973:88-125) has written eloquently on the role of religion in societies. Religion is a cultural and symbolic system within a society that connects the cosmological, through transformative experiences (rituals and myths), to the individual that leads to normative social

behavior. Religion tunes human actions to an envisaged cosmic order and projects images of cosmic order into the plane of human experience. Religion is important because in many societies it shapes the social order. In these societies belief systems do not simply interpret social and psychological processes in cosmic terms, they shape these processes. Religion is a belief system that informs, organizes and directs individual and societal behavior. In some societies it provides status and authority especially on individuals who conduct religious rites. The conductors of religion (priests and priestesses) acquire power and authority in their social systems.

Religious belief and ritual mutually confirm one another. Ritual, the world imagined and the world lived, turn out to be the same world fused under the agency of a set of symbolic forms. Rituals are always intimately connected to a group's basic values and convictions (Maran, 2014:584). Rituals are a stylized, normative behavior that connect and perpetuate values within a society.

Religious meanings are stored in sacred symbols such as figurines, rings, seals, paintings, images, effigies, fetishes, sanctuaries, shrines, altars, rituals, dance, song, poetry, music, prayer, and myths. Religious symbols serve to articulate a belief system about the cosmic order and earthly reality which functionally create a people's *ethos and world view* (footnote, Geertz 1973: 88-125). The use of symbols and religious communication promote a style of living that is prescribed by the authorities in society. As importantly, the individual's participation in religious rituals defines his/her place and role in these societies and motivates his/her behavior within it.

Religious authority can be decentralized as in the Hopi, or controlled by a group as in the Zuni, or by a caste of priests as in the Minangkabau, or a single priest as in the Acoma. These models of religious-political integration may be used to understand the diachronic changes in Bronze Age Cretan religion and society from Neolithic/Early Minoan through the Late Minoan periods.

### **The European Neolithic Roots of Bronze Age Cretan Religion**

Sir Arthur Evans (1921, 1928) believed the Cretans had an indigenous development of religion although they borrowed elements from Anatolia, Mesopotamia and especially Egypt. Maran, (2016:581-594) cautions (1) against assuming that similar symbols in other cultural contexts may carry the same meaning and that (2) meanings can change over time within the same culture. Colin Renfrew writes that “inferences about the nature of practices from material remains can... be attempted by recognizing patterns of relationships among...features in their context” (quoted in Maran, (2016:584). If, for a moment we reflect on the material culture of Christianity, Judaism, or Hinduism that has survived thousands of years, using the same symbols, the same normative design to sanctuaries and temples, and the same type of cult objects that are found in the them and in the home, we can appreciate the persistence of religious belief reflected in these material artifacts and architecture in complex societies regardless of societal and geographical change.

Maran (2016) emphasizes the “extraordinary importance of ritual movement in Minoan and Mycenaean palaces”. Ritual or sacred movement, was needed to perpetuate cohesiveness within a society that did not possess sacred texts. The memory (myths, rationales, etc. ) had to be reinforced by repetitive, face to face, verbal communication along with instrumental, dance

and processional activities. Cretan religion is considered shamanistic and experiential, implying trances, altered states and ecstasy at the same time performative and ritualistic (Peatfield and Morris, 2012). Religion according to Maran is a "system of practice". These practices among Bronze Age Cretans were most assuredly verbal (spoken and chanted); they were sung and danced accompanied by instruments (images on frescoes, potteries, seals and rings); and they were processional. The indigenous peoples of the American southwest also transmit and practice their beliefs using these modalities. Among the Southwestern Pueblo Indians and Cherokee, religious beliefs and cult practices are transmitted orally by the senior women of the matrilineage to their brothers and uncles who perform the rituals. Women are held in high status and authority because of their knowledge and direct matrilineal descent. In these systems the societal role of senior women is most important for the perpetuation, not only of their religion, but of society itself (women orally transmit knowledge of the matrilineal descent and status of every individual within the matrilineage) . Was this the case in Bronze Age Crete?

The religion of Bronze Age Crete is the culmination of Old European Neolithic and Chalcolithic religion and culture, 6500-3,500 BCE (Gimbutas, 1996). The origins of Bronze Age Cretan religion run long and deep and are found in Old Europe. Old Europe includes an area from western Ukraine in the east, through southeastern Europe, the Balkans, Aegean and the western lip of the Anatolian peninsula. Initially Neolithic religion may have been the personification of family and vegetation that the people depended on. The Pueblos Indians extend kinship terms to aspects of nature which are metaphors for the most important human relations. For the Pueblos sun becomes the metaphor for father, earth becomes a metaphor for mother, water becomes a metaphor for grandfather, fire is associated with grandmother, corn

is associated with brothers and sisters, or as in the Acoma with the supreme goddess herself, and certain animals are associated with healing.

### ***Sacred Positions of Water, Snake, and Bird***

The concept of the genesis of the universe from an elemental aqua-substance extends back in time to the Neolithic-Chalcolithic. For prehistoric people, the mystery of life lies in water, its oceans, lakes or rivers (Gimbutas, 1982:95-96). The cultic workshop of Bronze Age Cretans included sacred springs or spring shrines such as at Syme (MMI) (Peatfield, 2016:489). Like the indigenous peoples of the Americas, Neolithic Europeans ascribed aspects of divinity to animals. The snake was created out of cosmic water and in turn was one of the cosmic creators of living things (Gimbutas, 1982:112-147). The image of two spiraling snakes was cosmogonic or an act of creating. Snakes were usually associated with water signs (parallel lines, V's, chevrons, zig zag lines, dots and perforations or holes). The cosmic snake, like the primordial water bird, ruled over the life-giving force of water. The snake is frequently depicted on pottery as oppositional pairs expressing energy, movement and vitality. The snake secured that nature's cycle would be maintained, and that nature's life-giving powers would not diminish (Gimbutas, 1996:94-95). The snake was a stimulator and guardian of the spontaneous life energy.

Among the Nayars of southwestern India, the snake god guards the fertility of women (Gough, 1958:450). In Cretan iconography the snake had the function of protecting human protuberances (breasts, penis) that produced life-giving fluid. In figurines and pottery, it presumably gave life-giving creative power to bodily protuberances male and female. Snakes on



terracotta figurines was supposed to bring forth milk from the breast, fertility from the abdomen, and energy from the phallus.

Images of the snake goddess are found in the early Neolithic of Old Europe. The snake image is depicted graphically both in the Neolithic of Europe and in Bronze Age Crete in the form of graphic snakes, and wavy lines, and spirals. The snake spiral reached a peak of Neolithic expression by 5,000 B.C in Old Europe. In the Vinca (central Balkan) and Cucuteni/Tripilye cultures (Romania, Moldova, and western Ukraine) of Old Europe there are separate shrine buildings that have images of the (1) snake god, (2) bird goddess or (3) goddess of periodic regeneration. In the early 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC site of Cascioarele in Romania a large sanctuary was discovered. On its western wall was a circular terracotta medallion painted with red spirals (Gimbutas, 1982:71-72). These "spirals" on a medallion had a significant position in the sanctuary which may have been dedicated to the cosmic snake god. The room had a terracotta bench that was painted with curvilinear ribbons. Perhaps the bench was an altar with the symbolic pattern of snakes. In the early Neolithic (Tripilye) of western Ukraine in the site of Sabatinovka II dating approximately to the late 6<sup>th</sup> or early 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, in a large temple or sanctuary there was an altar or raised platform at the far end of the hall (footnote on Cretan dais or ledges) (footnote on raised platform). Eighteen stylized figurines with large buttocks and snake heads were seated on the raised platform. One figurine held a snake or phallus emanating vertically from the pubic triangle (Gimbutas, 1982:72-73). Were the snake heads, associated with large buttocks and the pubic triangle, promoting generation of life?

At the Bronze Age Cretan site of Gournia on the summit of a hill there was a LMI shrine. Inside the shrine was a low plastered earthen table surrounded by four tube-shaped vessels.

The tube-shaped ceramics had snake loops on either side. One tube-shaped vessel was entwined by two ceramic snakes. A female terracotta figurine had a snake coiling about her waist and another snake covering a raised arm (Evans:1921:508) There were more terracotta snake heads and figurines of small birds. The complex associations and context seem to warrant Gimbutas' (1982:75) interpretation that this small building was a shrine for the snake god (creative energy of the world and fertility).

Snake covered pottery was found in the house southwest of the court centered building in LMI-II Knossos. At the entrance to this house stood a large jar containing clay, perforated vessels covered with terracotta snakes. The water vessels or "strainers" covered with terracotta snakes in LMII Knossos may have been a sacred tool in a ritual to the comic snake to bring vital water to all living things. In the shrine of the double axe at Knossos was found a formally dressed woman wrapped with snakes (Evans, 192:155), most likely not a goddess herself but a priestess representing a ritual act of calling forth the creative power of snakes. A similarly dressed and snake wrapped formal female figurine made of faience was found in the eastern repository of Knossos' treasury (Evans, 1921:444, 495). Evans believed the snake entwining a female figurine lent her the creative powers of the snake god. I agree with Evans and believe snake handling was demonstrated by priestesses living in Knossos in the Neopalatial. They took on the power of the snake for healing, bringing forth rain, reviving nature's creative energy, etc. He notes the spiral design found with bull reliefs at Knossos (Evans, 1921:223). A spiral fresco was found in the throne room dating to MMIIIA according to Evans (1928:366), perhaps the earlier throne room. A spiral form pattern was found in the east hall of Knossos (Evans, 1921:405). The ceiling of Knossos court centered building has white spirals painted on a blue

background with yellow rosettes (Marinatos, N 2016). In the northeast storage rooms at Knossos ceramics dating to MMI-II have the spiral decoration. Knossian polychrome pottery abounds with spiral forms. Spiral frescos cover the walls in rooms three and four of Xeste 3 in Akroteri. These walls are covered with enormous blue and red spirals forming an interlocked pair. At the center of the spirals is a rosette (Marinatos, N 2016), another symbol of nature's creating. Even in LMI these interlocked spirals seem to represent cosmic snakes in the act of creating, a gift from Old European cult. Spirals are painted on tables of offering in the Phaistos pillar crypts, and in many other Cretan locations great and small. Spiral motifs were found on EMIII pottery from Mochlos.

The tradition of making perforated vessels are found in all areas of Chalcolithic Old Europe (Gimbutas, 1982:75) and may have been used for rain rituals. In Old European mythology perhaps it was believed that the snake came out of cosmic water and could bring water or rain to earth. Remarkably, this concept through the material remains of perforated vessels, continued through several millennia particularly in Crete.

The water bird is also a symbol of cosmic creation. The cosmic bird, like the snake originated from primordial water. The water bird depicted graphically was a crane, goose, duck, owl, or diving bird. Worship of the water bird goddess probably represented the need for water by Neolithic farmers. In the sixth millennium BC in Macedonia and elsewhere there was a general desiccation of the environment which most likely created the need in people to carry out rain rituals (Gimbutas, 1982:113). Through depiction in statuettes and graphic designs on pottery and their use in human ritual, these bird gods were viewed as being able to provide rain water for living things. A clay model of a bird goddess sanctuary dates back to the end of the

sixth millennium BC in Romania (early Vinca). The Neolithic Vinca culture (5,000-3,500 BC) of the central Balkans was resplendent in pottery depicting the head, eyes and beak of the water bird (goddess) along with parallel lines of streaming water. The water bird goddess seems only to have been associated with producing rain. Many images of bird goddess are bird-woman hybrids. The bird goddess seems to represent a feminine divinity. In the Neolithic mound of Porodin in southern Yugoslavia, several terracotta house-models were found. Each had a "chimney" which were modelled in the image of a masked, beaked, large-eye goddess with a necklace spreading over the roof (Gimbutas, 1982: 67-68). The Cucuteni/Tripilye culture (Neolithic) provided many replicas of sanctuaries that hold terracotta bird goddesses with upraised arms.

Bronze Age Crete abounds in images of birds and snakes. In the Protopalatial period the bird goddess was represented on cult vases, dishes and altar tables. At Phaistos a figurine of a beaked lady with snake curls and snake arms was found. In Prepalatial Malia and Mochlos vases with hollow breasts, owl eyes, wearing many necklaces and zig zags (bird goddess with feminine attributes associated with water symbols) have been found (Gimbutas, 1982:146). In Bronze Age Crete terracotta images of water birds and doves occur on the headdress of statuettes of the goddess of periodic regeneration. Water birds are found at the very top of Cretan tripartite shrines (Nilsson,1950). The water bird is depicted on the sarcophagus from Agia Triada (LMIII). The water bird is depicted graphically on top of sacred pillars at Knossos. Evans (1921:223-4) recognized seated birds as symbolizing the descent of divinity into the possessed object (pillars). The water bird was bringing its creative powers to the sacred pillars. These ceramic and pictorial depictions of a water bird or snake with water symbols might have been viewed by

prehistoric peoples as embodying the power of the goddess. These objects, ceramic water birds and snakes were fetishes or sacred objects found broadly in homes, tombs, and in public sanctuaries. Their use in ritual may have been to imbue the power of the goddess to produce rain for people and vegetation. (The Pueblos Indians and Ashanti hold sacred objects in their homes which are brought out for public ceremonies.) Doves are also frequently found on the headaddresses of terracotta female statuettes. Doves may have been considered messengers from these divine gods. While the snake represented water, vitality and fecundity, the water bird represented the creative and nourishing power of water. The Old European divinities *nurtured* the world with moisture, rain, vitality, fecundity, and periodic regeneration.

### ***The Cosmic Egg: Symbol of the Goddess of Periodic Regeneration***

Either the snake goddess or water bird goddess created the cosmic egg. The formation of the world and the beginning of life for Neolithic farmers came from the cosmic egg. The primordial or cosmic egg, was usually represented as a double or split egg. The iconography goes back at least to the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC. where it was frequently found on Neolithic Tripilye/Cucuteni vases. The egg is usually enveloped in water represented by parallel lines. The Cretan symbolic cosmic egg is usually a double or split egg enveloped in flowing water with snakes winding across the center of the egg. The Cretan egg may have been the symbol of the beginning of new life, but regeneration cannot occur without the energizing activity of twirling snakes. (Sometimes the energizing animals are sacred fawns or dogs.) The primordial egg abounds in Cretan frescos, pottery, shrines, altars and carved into the throne at Knossos. The cosmic egg decorated the façade of Knossos facing the west court, and occurred in part of the wall painting in the throne room dating from LMIB or LMII (Gunkel-Maschek, 2016:258).

According to Alexiou (1969:82) the image of the split egg became the ideogram of the goddess of regeneration. The cosmic egg, which was engraved on the stone chair of the throne room at Knossos, and painted on Cretan frescoes and shrines, most likely reflected her regenerative power.

Another form of the cosmic egg is the rosette which more typically looks like a flower or vulva. It is more earth-bound than the cosmic egg. It represents the beginning of life, animal, human and vegetative. Rosettes are also found frequently in shrines, as decorations at Knossos, painted on ritual tables, altars, Knossian polychrome pottery, and carved into steatite bowls. In the south east House of Knossos a ritual table was found in the anteroom to the pillar crypt. It was painted deep red with white rosettes (Evans, 1921:405).

### ***The Cross and Circle***

The cross in old European and Cretan mythology probably represented the four seasons of temperate Europe (spring, summer, autumn and winter). The cross within a circle represents the year as a journey through the four seasons involving death, rebirth, ripening, and waning or harvesting (footnote on the cross). In Tripilye settlements cross-shaped platforms were found in their houses with votive offerings. They also occurred in Tripilye model shrines.

Tripilye/Cucuteni Neolithic pottery abounds with the motifs of snakes, spirals, cosmic egg, rosettes, circles, lines and dots, etc. all of which are found in Cretan pottery and decoration.

The Neolithic farm family imaged the symbol of the cross within a circle to promote and ensure the continuance of the cycle of seasonal regeneration (Gimbutas, 1982: 70, 89). This Neolithic symbol is also found in Cretan Bronze Age material, frequently associated with chevrons (water symbol). In areas of Old Europe today the notion still exists in folklore that it is necessary or

even essential for humankind to bring about the natural cycle of periodic regeneration through the making of seasonal sacred objects and performing rituals.

### ***The Bull and Horns of Consecration***

Wild cattle or aurochs were fierce animals, powerful and well built. It was a major accomplishment of prehistoric peoples of southwest Asia to domesticate aurochs around the ninth millennium BP. The bull must have symbolized male strength, vigor, aggressiveness and power (and were most likely tamed by men). Wall paintings at Catalhoyok show men hunting wild bull. One of the earliest veneration of bull's heads (bucrania) and horns is the settled Near Eastern society at Catalhoyuk, a site in southern Anatolia that is dated 7500-6400 BCE. Here the auroch was hunted and was being domesticated. Bucrania were brought into the main room of the house, pasted into walls, or set onto benches with the horns protruding into the room. Frequently the bucrania were plastered to look life-like and covered with red ochre, a practice these prehistoric people also performed on their deceased. Human deceased and bucrania were "buried" inside the house (German, website) suggesting a important symbolic value to both the family member and the hunted or domesticated bull.

Biological understanding of procreation was probably not understood in the Neolithic and Bronze Age. The belief system probably held that the female could regenerate new life inside her from an ancestral spirit. However male energy was necessary for the "egg" to vitalize. Therefore powerful symbols of male potency were venerated from early Neolithic times, over a wide area of Old Europe and the Near East. The bull was worshipped as a powerful invigorator of life. In cultures where male divinity manifested itself, it was usually in the form of a bull.

Hunting societies had a shamanistic relationship with the animals they hunted, e.g., animals had spirits that needed to be placated. As societies transitioned to collecting and domesticating plants and animals, and became more sedentary, the bull became a ritual animal of sacrifice to the divinities of season. The power, masculinity and fecundity of the bull was still venerated, but now it was needed to empower the gods to bring about the vegetal cycle of life. From the power of the bull came its ritual power in sacrifice. From Neolithic times through the Classical and Biblical Periods the bull was the primary, sacrificial animal. Whittaker (2016) states that cattle were the most prestigious sacrificial animal in the sixth millennium. For example, In the early Tripilye temple site of Sabatinovka II (about 7,500 years ago) there was as a large shrine that showed the preparation of bread as a ritual. Near the oven was found a dish with burnt bones of a bull. On the large platform or dais sat sixteen terracotta, female figurines on horn-backed stools (did these female figurines represent successive ancestresses of a matrilineage?) To the right of this altar/dais was a single clay chair one meter wide with a horned back. This chair seems to have been for an overseer, perhaps the current, elder woman of the matrilineage or a head priestess (Gimbutas, 1982:72-73) . In the Neolithic of Old Europe the bull as a sacrificial animal was used extensively. On the other hand, cattle in Bronze Age Crete were never raised in large numbers for meat or leather. Rather the bull was a ritual animal representing the male energizing principle in nature. It was the primary sacrificial animal in sacred rites to bring about the appearance of the Bee or Butterfly goddess of periodic regeneration. It was also used in the gymnastic sport of bull grappling which was probably dedicated to the goddess.



There was a feminine side to bull symbolism, and that involved the head and horns of the bull. In Neolithic shrines of Old Europe there were life-size bucrania, real or replicas of bull's head and horns, placed high on the structure (Gimbutas, 1982: ). Was it possible that bucrania, horns or replicas were somehow visualized as possessing powers necessary to vitalize the activity of a feminine divinity? The bull's horns simulate a crescent moon which, in the ancient Old European world view, was perhaps a symbol of feminine divinity. So the horns and bucrania belonged to feminine divinity while the body of the bull replicated masculine power and vitality. In Bronze Age Crete images of the bull and bucrania, were frequently found with rosettes, birds, flowers or vegetation (Whittaker, 2016) suggesting its symbolic role in periodic vegetal regeneration. In addition to figurines, many structures and models from Old European Neolithic sites to the Palace of Knossos in Bronze Age Crete contained "horns of consecration" on the architecture, usually at the top . Why? I believe this had to do with the sacrificial theme of the bull to elicit the epiphany of the goddess of periodic regeneration.

The sacrifice of the bull had a cosmic significance. From the Neolithic in Old Europe through the Bronze Age in Crete the bull was the necessary sacrifice to release feminine divinity (the world's procreative powers). This divinity was released from the head and horns of the sacrificed bull usually in the form of a honey bee or butterfly, and her release or appearance was necessary for the periodic regeneration of vegetation/crops. This symbolic pairing of a bull's head and bee was found in a bone bucrania from the late Tripilye/Cucuteni (4<sup>th</sup> millennium BCE). From the site of Bilcze Zlote in northwestern Ukraine, a bull's head with horns was carved out of bone, and on its frontal bone, a honey bee with a (human) female pubic triangle, and insect head and arms were incised with dots (figure 178, p. 188).

### The Honey Bee and Butterfly

What was the significance of the honey bee? Why did the goddess transfigure into a honey bee or butterfly at sacrifice? Humankind collected wild honey probably at least 9,000 years ago in Old Europe. By around 7,000 BP the earliest indication of apiculture (beekeeping) had been discovered in Turkey with beeswax in a ceramic cooking pot. Apiculture spread with Neolithic farming into the Aegean and quickly into Old Europe (Roffet-Salque, 2016) probably along with domesticated cattle. Honey was valued for its sweetness and medicinal properties, beeswax for its emollient, waterproofing, adhesive and medicinal properties. Ancient farmers noticed the association of bees and butterflies with flowering plants, and perhaps believed these amazing creatures were responsible somehow for the renewal of vegetation. Ancient farmers may have held a mystical belief that bees and butterflies were “little gods” securing the renewal of flowering plants including crops. While the bee was domesticated, the butterfly was not, yet both were highly associated with periodic renewal of vegetation.

Bronze Age Crete became a master of apiculture and exported honey and bee products throughout the Aegean. This honey trade eventually became more centralized under Knossian control at the end of the Middle Bronze Age. According to Engel, et.al, (2009) Knossos had a system of high status apiculture as evidenced by hives, smoking pots, honey extractors, and other beekeeping paraphernalia. Egyptian hieroglyphics depict “Keftiu” or Cretans with their bee products. Cretan beekeeping was a highly valued industry unknown to contemporary Indo-Europeans, including Mycenaeans (Gimbutas, 1982:184). The practical nature or “industry” of apiculture on the one hand, was explained or interpreted by pre-scientific, mystical and mythological thinking, on the other. The queen of a bee hive that produced sweet and curing

food from flowers could surely represent or “be” the queen of periodic vegetation. To make sure the queen Bee would return to secure periodic regeneration of vegetation, a sacrifice was needed. Looking again at the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium Tripilian bone bucranium with a queen bee incised on it, we graphically see the connection between the bull’s sacrifice and the emergence of the queen Bee (Figure 178, p. Gimbutas, 1982). This graphically repeated symbolism was a motif of Old Europe which reached a height of artistic expression and ritual in Bronze Age Crete. The sacrifice of the bull and veneration of bull’s horns, prevalent in Bronze Age Crete, was necessary for the epiphany of the Bee goddess and the regeneration of vegetation.

Another form of symbolic, material association of the bee and the bull had been found in Neolithic Old Europe with great frequency. It is the association of a horned shape stand with a hole in the center to hold a pole or standard. Excavations of the Vinca culture (6190-4800 BCE) of the central Balkans have produced hundreds of horned stands with a central hole to hold a perishable object. This foreshadowed the Cretan horned stone bases with a central hole that held a ritual double axe, which was actually a representation of the Bee or Butterfly goddess. Whittaker (2016: 109-114) points out that in the Cretan Bronze Age the double axe is associated with replication of a bovine head, horns of consecration, flowers, vegetation and birds. The association of the bull with the double axe go back in Crete at least as far as Early Minoan and occurs in central and western Crete. Evans asserts that the large double axes in Crete were made of thin bronze and often covered with gold leaf. The stem of the “axe” was not long enough to swing, and he believed the double axe could not have killed a bull. Instead he believed the double axe was used for ritual purposes (Evans 1921:425). Gimbutas clearly shared this view (1982). The “double axe” was not an axe at all, in the sense that it could not be

used to kill a bull. It was a depiction of the bee or butterfly goddess who rose from the sacrificed bull's horns. Evans (1928:333) perceived the connection between the sacrifice of the bull and the divinity of the double axe.

A LMIII shrine of the double axes in Knossos had a stamped clay floor with many bowls and vases. In the back was a raised dais with a pebble surface that held a plaster tripod, cups and jugs. On a higher platform there were two pairs of horns made of white stucco. Each of the horns had a central socket or hole which was meant to receive the shaft of the double axe. Leaning against one of the horns was a double axe of steatite. On the side of the horns stood terra cotta figurines, perhaps idols and votaries (Gimbutas 1996:78; Evans 1928:317; Gaignerot-Driessen 2016:21-28). I suggest that the horns of consecration holding the steatite double axe represented symbolically the sacrifice of the bull and the epiphany of the Bee/Butterfly goddess with devotees looking on. It is remarkable that the "old religion" prevailed even into very late Minoan times in spite of Mainland takeover.

### **The Bee/Butterfly Goddess of Periodic Regeneration**

The Neolithic Period introduced the concept of goddess of periodic regeneration which was quite different from the Paleolithic veneration of fertility votives (Venus figurines and painted images of pregnant wild animals), or the later Indo-European Mother goddess (Footnote on Indo-European concept of Earth as Great Mother). Horticultural societies shifted to a dependence on vegetation and crops for their sustenance while still collecting and hunting. Settled farming communities observed, perhaps for the first time, the *cycle of vegetative life*: sprouting or greening, maturation (fruit, seed), waning or dying, and regeneration. The farming family depended on nature's cycle for their very own sustenance and felt the need to do

something to ensure its continuance. It became necessary to ritualize the cycle of life. In the Neolithic belief system human ritual intervention *was necessary* to bring about this renewal or regeneration of life. This belief system, the necessity of human ritual activity to ensure nature's regeneration, is still prevalent in folk customs of Ukraine, eastern Europe and other part of Europe today.

The goddess of periodic regeneration was not the cosmic goddess of all creation. (That credit might go to the Bird or Snake goddesses.) She was not a fertility votive or a mother goddess. She was not a consort goddess. She was perhaps the most important goddess in Old European and Bronze Age Cretan societies. Gimbutas refers to her as the "Great Goddess" (1982). She was the goddess of life and death and the regeneration of life (Footnote on Old European Goddess). "She was the product of a sedentary, matrilineal community and she encompassed, at the same time, an archetypal unity and multiplicity of the feminine nature" (Gimbutas, 1982:152-158). She was the giver of life and all that promotes fertility. She was the wielder of the destructive powers of nature. She also contained masculine representation. She was frequently represented as an androgynous figure with massive arms and shoulders and a phallus-shaped head. Gimbutas' (1982) analysis of her many representations led her to believe that there was only, very gradual, stylistic change over the course of 4,000 years in Old Europe. The image of the great goddess and her sacred symbols remained remarkably stable in the east Balkans and western Ukraine. The double or split egg, rosette, and pubic triangle are her symbols. The doe and dog are her sacred animals. Cave stalagmites, which were represented as architectural pillars in Cretan court centered buildings and estate houses, were sacred objects imbued with her spirit.

The goddess of periodic regeneration appeared from the sacrificed bull in the form of butterflies or bees which represented her appearance (Gimbutas 1982:181). The double axe is likely a representation of a bee or butterfly, the great goddess herself, that ensued from the sacrificed bull. Depictions of the epiphany of the goddess as a bee appeared on a head of a bull carved from bone in late Tripilye/Cucuteni (Neolithic), western Ukraine (Gimbutas, 1982, Figure 178). Bronze Age Cretan rings, seals and carved gemstones often show priestesses or votaries involved in ritual or ecstatic dancing, offering libations, to a woman who is usually seated on a tripartite platform. This woman usually has a larger feminine body than her devotees and is depicted with a bee or butterfly head. These compositions stylistically, metaphorically reflect elements of a beehive, its activity and dynamism as the bees surround their queen.

### **Cretan Religion as a Culmination of Old European Belief System**

Symbols and figurines of the various Old European deities, such as bird, snake, goddess of periodic regeneration as a bee or butterfly, cosmic egg or rosette were frequently found in houses and shrines and sanctuaries in the Neolithic of Old Europe and continued through Bronze Age Crete. From the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium (BP) through the end of the Bronze Age, cosmic religious symbolism including the goddess of periodic regeneration permeated home shrines (Minimal segment) up to and including the elegant Cretan estate Houses which arguably housed the heads of the Maximal Lineages. Here is an example of an early Tripilye temple from the site of Sabatinovka II, about 5,000 BCE (Gimbutas, 1996:72) which foreshadowed the temple rooms of Bronze Age Crete. The shrine is a rectangular building 70 sq. meters with a narrow entrance. Each part of the shrine served a different cult purpose. The narrow entrance was paved with flat stones and the rest of the floor was plastered in clay. A bone figurine was

found at the entrance. About half way in on the right there was a large bee-hive shaped oven at the base of which was a female figurine (representing the person or priestess performing the sacred baking?). To the right of oven were several pottery vessels. One dish was filled with the burnt bones of a bull; another pot had a small cup inside (to mix a substance, honey, with the ground grain?); a brazier or incense burner (?); a group of five saddle querns and a row of five terracotta figurines. The figurines are seated with their bodies leaning backward. (Are they observing the ritual, or will they be transformed by it, as their bent back position suggests?) It seems that this process of making bread from grain was a ritual. That ritual along with the cremated bull (did some cremated bull go into the bread?) perhaps was “necessary” to bring about the regeneration of the earth through the appearance of the great goddess. At the farthest end of the building was a large altar (2.75 x 6 m) covered with 4-5 layers of clay paster. Sixteen female figurines were found all seated on horn-backed stools. The figurines had snake heads, full buttocks with marked pubic triangle. In some of these figurines a phallus or snake grows out of the pubic triangle and is clutched by the figurine’s hands. (Regeneration, re-creation and renewal came from the goddess, but only with the energizing help of the male.) Next to the altar was a clay throne or chair one meter wide and originally covered with split planks. (The seat of the head priestess or honored head of the matrilineage?) The total number of figurines found in the sanctuary were 32. Were the figurines placed one by one over time? Their presence near the oven with the burnt bull bones indicate that the sacred grinding and baking of bread may have been considered necessary for the goddess to appear and renew the earth.

In the early Neolithic of Old Europe, there may have been a vertical kinship system based on a line of women who worshipped the goddess of periodic regeneration. Women's consistent, ritual practice involving a sacrifice bull and baking bread in a beehive shaped oven was perhaps deemed necessary to ensure the goddess of periodic regeneration would return. I believe this type of cultic practice and social organization persisted in an even more complex form in Crete until the end of the Bronze Age.

Many components of this early Neolithic material, ritual complex can be found in Bronze Age Crete: (1) the bull as a ritual sacrifice, (2) a dais or raised platform which held sacred objects, (3) preparation of ritual food and drink with associated cups, dishes and vessels, and (4) an indication or representation of an important, living elder or priestess who oversaw the ritual proceedings. We find this association of ritual and cultic artifacts in Bronze Age Crete (except that the Cretan oven was a movable object). The goddess of periodic regeneration as represented in large terracotta figurines found at Knossos was the "source of all vegetation (Evans: 1928: 277). She holds wheat and poppy capsules and lilies. Her head dressing is surrounded by doves (celestial messengers) and snakes twine around her arms or bodice" (cosmic creators that call life into being). Evans (1928:277) points out "...throughout these changing impersonations we still feel ourselves in the presence of essentially the same divinity rather than with separate mythological entities like those of later Greece".

The belief system of Bronze Age Crete is the culmination of Old European Neolithic beliefs. This is not to discount borrowings from Egypt and Mesopotamia. However, I agree with Evans (1921) that Crete's religion was its own. Crete is a large island which for many thousand years lived in relative peace from invasion from mainland populations, unlike the island of



Cyprus. Crete is also a fertile land with varied landscape and a gentle climate. It is subject to earthquakes and tsunamis, but not enough, to prevent the development of a culturally and economically rich society from the early Neolithic to nearly the end of the Bronze Age. The Neolithic roots of Bronze Age Cretan religion and society are seen archaeologically beneath the central court at Knossos. The Neolithic remains under the court not only had houses, but also terra cotta figurines of bulls, birds, and female torsos often incised with plant motifs (Evans, 1921). The core practices of matrilineal social structure, ancestor veneration, and divinity worship may have stemmed primarily from Old European Neolithic roots.

### **Cretan Cultic World View and Ethos**

Bronze Age Cretan religious beliefs, with its roots in the Old European Neolithic, formed an ethos and a world view that helped construct society and guide its people in normative behavior. This cultural belief system organized the Cretan social system and the place of individuals within them. While it is impossible to know the minds of prehistoric men and women, we can glean some clues from their landscape and architectural places of worship and the ritual artifacts found there. I am going to present a hypothetical world view and ethos of Cretan Bronze Age youths following Geertz (1973) in the first person.

Our matrilineal systems tell us whom we are related to through our mothers. Some lineages are more powerful or prominent because (1) we have been at this location since time immemorable, or (2) we trace our mothers back to the first priestesses of the goddess of regeneration, or (3) our mothers and uncles came first into this fertile valley. All matrilineages have a specified relation with other matrilineages in our region. Some matrilineages are subordinate, others are superior to our own. We venerate our maternal ancestors, and for

certain rituals and anniversaries we bring their bones into our houses or celebrate with them outside their tombs. Their spirit is in our land, the ancestors are with us, they are interested in what we do, we are united with them through our rituals and sacred objects; we return to them when we die, and they return to live in us. They brought us here and provided us with land, seeds, crops and resources. They showed us how to cultivate the land and utilize its resources.

As a girl I know my status, rank, duty and responsibilities to my matrilineage and to the other matrilineages in my region when we have special celebrations of the goddess of periodic regeneration, the harvest, or compete in games and athletics in our court centered buildings. I learn about my duties to our land, resources and ancestresses from my mother, maternal aunts, and grandmothers. I learn all the rituals necessary to connect us with our ancestresses and goddesses. I learn certain sacred crafts from my womenfolk such as taking care of bees, gathering honey and saffron, preparing mead libations and food, weaving ritual clothing, making ritual pottery, preparing altars, shrines and making the statuettes or figurines that we use in prayer, or as a votive figurines of our brothers and sons, sisters and daughters for their initiation ceremonies. I learn how to box at an early age and to somersault over bulls. Of course, I learn how to grow and grind grain and pulses, prepare bread or porridge, make cheeses, honey, collect saffron, and take care of young children along with women, brothers and uncles of my segment. As a female I am a reflection of the goddess bearing the cosmic egg. From me and all females, life renews itself with the help of ancestral spirits. That is why priestesses are so important at all segment levels. I am needed to participate in rituals to ensure that the goddess will return to bring us renewed vegetation, successful crops and fertile herds. Everything we (women and men) do, work, play, build, create, worship, etc. has to

reflect and support the active creation of life in nature and the cosmos. Everything we do has to be a veneration of the sacred cycle of the great goddess. Without our veneration, she will not return. For this purpose, all female elders are priestesses within my matrilineage, and while we worship her in our homes, the priestesses of high ranking matrilineages conduct her worship at peak sanctuaries or external shrines or large court centered buildings in which all matrilineages in the region attend. The first matrilineage (highest ranking) within our region produces a long line of priestesses that lead all the settlements in our region to our peak sanctuary, or sacred cave or sacred grove or large court centered building to worship the goddess. Only these priestesses can bring about the epiphany of the goddess through animal sacrifice and ritual. Sometimes she is accompanied by a brother or uncle priest.

Our female elders also know the line of descent through females of our matrilineage. This lineal knowledge is recited and chanted frequently on any occasion where we sit down together, weave, work and eat. Most importantly our lineage ancestry is recited on the anniversaries of our departed ancestresses. If my status and rank is sufficient, I conduct the ancestor/ress rites at the family's (matrilineage) tomb. Only a woman can separate the skull of a deceased woman and conduct the rites to make her an ancestor. I put her skull on on a dais, altar or table inside the tomb. I plaster and paint the skull chanting the sacred hymn. My brother performs these sacred rites for a brother or uncle segment head. At certain times of the year my brother and I, along with our segment, conduct veneration rites at the tomb. Afterwards we feast together with our ancestors with special food and drink in courtyards next to the tomb. Sometimes we bring their skeletons to the lineage feast after the ritual.

As a boy I learn social, ritual and economic duties from my maternal uncle. I learn at least one high craft (metallurgy, carpentry, mining, stone masonry, ship building, sailing, architecture, high end ceramics, jewelry making, etc.) from them. I am available to help in the fields, plant olive and fig trees, harvest crops, press olive oil, and press grapes to make wine. As needed by the high priestess of the region, I am available to help the builders quarry stone, fell trees to build roads, houses, shrines, shipyards, ships and court centered buildings. I participate in athletic games and sports including bull leaping. I join my uncles on long distance trading expeditions overseas and deep-sea fishing. Boys and girls are obedient to the elders at each segment level of the matrilineage. That is a lot of people to be accountable to! I can be reprimanded by any elder, but usually that is my mother's brothers. As a male I am necessary to energize the renewal of life. Without me, regeneration would not occur, not in nature, nor in animals and plants or in ourselves. My matrilineage is segmented, and I, or my uncles and brothers, may be segment or lineage heads. These means that we are technically managers of our sisters' and mother's estate. However, we are away from our land much of the time, and I rely on my sister for day to day management. I may have the rank of priest in my matrilineage which allows me to assist in divinity and initiation rituals with my sister, mother or aunt priestesses. If my rank is elder in the segment or lineage, I may be expected to conduct the rituals of ancestor worship whether in the home or family tomb, especially if the ancestor were a former brother or uncle segment head. I depend on my mother, aunts and sisters for the lineage knowledge, making and keeping the sacred objects, preparing the feast, and participating in the rites. As an elder or head of my segment, I will separate the skull of the previous uncle or brother segment head and place it on a dais usually within the collective

tomb. I recite special hymns to my ancestor and pray that I am worthy to replace him. If this ancestor achieved special status in life, the segment may build a special room or even building dedicated to him (or her).

### **Bronze Age Cretan Cults: Ancestor Veneration, Divinity Worship, and Initiation Rites**

There seems to have been three general categories of indigenous cult in Bronze Age Crete from Early Minoan (or Late Neolithic) until the final destruction or take over in late Minoan. One was ancestress/or veneration which was centered within the matrilineage and had very deep roots (Late Neolithic if not earlier). Worship was held within the household, at all segment levels, inside or immediately outside collective matrilineal tombs, early on in caves and rock ledges (usually secondary burials), and for higher ranking matrilineages, possibly in their own court centered buildings. Cretan matrilineages may have originally venerated their ancestress(es) at the location of their first settlement which was usually in caves (Neolithic settlements). Ancestor worship of previous lineage or segment heads was conducted by current leaders (brother or uncle) of the lineage or lineage segments. In the Cretan case the heads of lineage segments could have been males (brothers) or females (sisters). This type of worship was intra-lineage.

Eventually these early cave sites became the site for the second type of worship. This was divinity worship, which by Middle Minoan times, entailed the entire region of settlements within it. Divinity was worshiped by all the matrilineages in the region with a common cult. A common divinity, the goddess of periodic regeneration and other cosmic gods were worshipped throughout Crete lending a cultural uniformity to the island. All the matrilineages within a region were involved in divinity worship. Worship took place at peak sanctuaries, sacred caves,

sacred groves, springs, external built sanctuaries and later in grand court centered buildings within town. Perhaps through most of the Cretan Bronze Age divinity worship was decentralized and certainly performative, by MMIII if not sooner regional divinity worship was organized and led by acknowledged high ranking priestesses of high ranking matrilineages. Its religious purpose was to vitalize the goddess of periodic regeneration, so that vegetation and crops would renew and animals would produce offspring. Its secular purpose seemed to have been the integration of the regional community by a high ranking matrilineage thereby confirming its own superior status.

Divinity worship was practiced in the homes which contained rooms or alcoves with altars and sacred objects like the double axe, snake pottery or perforated (rain) vessels, etc. In Established Houses, the homes of the elders of the Maximal Lineage or Major segment, self-purification probably occurred in sunken rooms (lustral basins), and divinity worship occurred at or in pillar crypts (the pillars being imbued with the spirit of the goddess). Divinity cult objects are found everywhere in a Cretan settlement Divinity worship, as well as ancestor veneration, were movement oriented, ecstatic, rituals, which usually entailed a procession to the site, followed by ritual chanting, drinking and/or feasting. This produced an ecstatic, altered state of consciousness in the worshipers (Peatfield and Morris 2012).

One of the cultic and social roles of divinity worship involved initiating the youth of all matrilineages into "service of the goddess". These initiation rites were carried out in caves at regional peak sanctuaries and were most likely led by a regional priestess(es), one or a few acknowledged from the founder matrilineage of the region. Initiation rites served a most vital social function of integrating groups, specifically all the matrilineages in the region into a

coherent, regional social group. These youths, like their predecessors, could be called upon for sacred and secular building projects, such as court centered buildings, roads, fortifications, external sanctuaries, and any activity that was deemed necessary for the region as a whole. Initiation also secured the status of the founding matrilineage and its elders, priestesses and priests who officiated the rites. Youths now had an additional authority to answer to, that of the chief priestess(es) and priests who conducted their initiation rites. To understand how ancestor worship may have functioned in Bronze Age Crete, let's look at ancestor worship in a few historic matrilineal societies.

### **Ancestor Worship in Matrilineal Societies**

Ancestor worship among historical matrilineal societies is always associated with reincarnation of the ancestor into the living community's new members (Somersan, 1984). Functionally ancestor worship connects the living descendants to the land of their ancestors. It is a practice by which the living descendants continue to claim the authority of the use of the land of their ancestors. This may be the key sociological function of ancestor worship. Connecting ancestor worship to the continued use of their land is prevalent among the Central Bantu (Bemba, Mayombe, Kongo) (Richards, 1950). Among the Mayombe and Bemba the matrilineal ancestral guardian spirits/ancestors are attached to the land. Both brother and sister participate in the worship of matrilineal ancestors. Among the Zuni Indians the ancestors guide, protect, and nourish current human life. The deceased ancestors are believed to be *active* in the lives of their descendants and need to be propitiated (Eggan 1967).

The cult of ancestor worship occurs in the matrilineal segment that "owns" the land. Among the Nayars of southwest India this segment is the household group (Gouph, 1958) or

Minimal segment. The Nayars are a caste which traditionally produced warriors for the king. The eldest brother or uncle would manage the estate which he held in custody for the entire matrilineage. Brothers and uncles were often not home while women remained on the matrilineal estate. Since the Nayars are part of a larger caste society, the matrilineage is worked and maintained by tenants and serfs of lower castes. The elder male of the household was also responsible for propitiating the lineage ghosts for the matrilineal household. The lineage ghosts were all male, as were the generational heads of the household, even though descent was reckoned through the female line.

Each traditional Nayar home had a room devoted to the lineage ghosts. In the room or shrine were small, low stools on which a particular ghost came to sit on the days the offerings were made. The commoner Nayar rotely remembered those male elders who died in the last 100 years and those who were remarkable in warfare, or for adding to the wealth of the matrilineage. In some households the shrine is also a place of worship for the household's variant of the goddess, the chief deity of the Nayars. Usually a group of households in a village possessed a temple dedicated to the chief goddess who was viewed as the village goddess.

Aristocratic Nayars had a special building south of the ancestral home dedicated to ancestor and goddess worship. The names and achievements of their male household heads were written down and could go back 20 or more generations, or 200-300 years. In these families the lineage ghosts and chief goddess are housed together in the same building. Since the Nayars were a military caste, they often left their swords, which became the property of the goddess in the special building. Lineage ghosts and goddesses are to be propitiated. In Nayar thinking, if they are not treated properly in cult, the lineage ghosts or goddess will execute



misfortune on the entire household. (One person's malfeasance is the cause of misfortune for the entire household.) Nayar lineage ghosts are oriented toward the living. The forebears retain affection for their lands and houses and continue to be interested in tangible good things, particularly food and drink.

In the Nayars, propitiation of lineage ghosts occurs during the new moon in certain months of the year. Women of the household prepare each lineage ghost his special, favorite meal. Several meals for several segment ghosts are prepared in this way and are immediately carried by the head and junior men to the shrine. Women do not accompany the men to the shrine. The elder with junior men go into the shrine with the food and shut the door. The men place each meal in front of the stool designated for a particular segment ghost so that the ghost may partake of the essence of the meal. After a few minutes the elder opens the door and distributes the food to be eaten by all members of the matrilineages in the household. Gough (1958) does not report any other rituals within the shrine itself. Apparently the quality of each special meal for each ghost is the critical factor in propitiation. Women of the matrilineage prepare the special meals; men of the matrilineage present them. Ancestresses play only a minor part in the cult of lineage ghosts. In this caste society Nayar women are subordinate in life to their male kin and subordinate in death to the male ancestral spirits of their household. The cult of lineage ghosts closely resembles the everyday brother-sister adult relationships in the Nayar household. In Nayar religion the supreme moral authority of the mother finds its expression in the cult of the goddess. The goddess is stated to be the supernatural counterpart of the mother (Gough, 1958). However, she is not the goddess of regeneration, associated with

earth cycles and vegetation renewals. The Nayar mother goddess is more like a pieta with temperament.

According to Fortes (1965:122-142) in African cultures, ancestor worship serves to support the jural authority of the living lineage head (male) in a succession of lineage heads. Ancestors symbolize the continuity of the social structure....of the authority and right they once held and transmitted to their successor. According to Fortes ancestor worship is an extension of the authority component in the jural relations of successive generations. It is not the whole man, but only his jural status as "parental" personage vested with authority and responsibility, that is transmuted into ancestorhood. From the African and Nayar perspective the male lineage or segment head was responsible for, and successor to, the lineage ancestor's cult. This, along with (shared?) responsibility for matrilineal land management, authority over sister's children, and external trade or warfare are the most important roles a man can have in a matrilineal society.

Ancestors are not all the deceased of the matrilineage. A deceased lineage or segment head has to receive particular rites in order to transform him into a generational ancestor. In order to do this, the "dead had first to be brought back home again", re-established in the family and lineage through rites. Even then, the ancestor will not receive ancestor ritual services until he manifests himself in the life of his descendants and is enshrined (Fortes, 1949:329). The candidate for ancestor worship is always a particular person. He (or she) was the lineage or segment head. He is always named in the maintenance rites that follow. His successor, a living lineage or segment head, and his other descendants, believe he has continued relevance for them, not as a ghost, but as a regulatory focus for the social relations

of his kinship group. The ancestral spirit validates the vertical kinship structure, statuses and roles, of his living descendants within the matrilineage. The ancestral spirit is rarely a nebulous being; it is a known person. After death and rituals converting the deceased to an ancestor, he/she often becomes attached to a relic or stool (Nayar, Ashanti). This object “holds” the ancestral spirit. The ancestral spirit resides in the object, making the object sacred.

The Ashanti are well known for their ritual stools which embody the incarnated ancestral spirits of their matrilineage (Fortes, 1950). These ancestral stools are kept in a special room that serves as a common repository for the lineage as a whole. Every six weeks special ancestor ceremonies are held where the family stools are removed and offered sacrifices of liquor, domestic animals and other foods to propitiate the ancestral spirits. The ancestral spirits are believed to intervene in human affairs of their lineage, especially if misdemeanors or misbehaviors occur, or propitiations are not given properly. The role of the ancestor, according to Fortes, is to pass on jural authority to his successor, and maintain the structure and functions of lineage descent.

### **Ancestress/Ancestor Veneration in Bronze Age Crete**

Waltrous and Hadzi-Vallianou (2005:230) point out that by Early Minoan I, farming became sedentary, and “working a specific land surrounding the settlement became a long term investment that spanned many generations. Under such circumstances the community’s dependence on one’s elders/ancestors, (particularly women, my addition), would have become an important reality requiring some form of social acknowledgement”. The economic functions of the lineage focus on land ownership or stewardship which is invested in the ancestors. The lineage elders act as trustees for their land (Schwimmer, 1995). In other words, the land

“belongs” to the ancestors of the matrilineage (footnote, Somersan). This is a strong reason to revere them, and both male and female ancestors were venerated in Bronze Age Crete. The other reason to revere ancestors/tresses, of course, is reincarnation.

Petras Kefala was a Late Neolithic/Early Minoan I settlement in a rock shelter near Petras Kefala mountain. The rock shelter contained redeposited bones (secondary burial or relocation burials?) and grave goods. The north slope of Petras Kefala mountain contained a cemetery of house tombs dating to MMIB-MMIIA which was rich in grave goods (Driessen, 2014). Again we have an example of burying the ancestors in the house or site which they once inhabited, even if their descendants later moved down the mountain to the valley.

Solis (2010) presents cogent arguments for specific ancestor worship in Bronze Age Crete. His criteria based on the archaeological record includes (1) skull retention, (2) secondary burial with associated ritual, (3) household altars, (4) collective tomb altars, and (5) feasting with the ancestors in the home and communally. I suggest that a segmented, matrilineal kinship system might explain these archaeological associations. I believe that Bronze Age Cretan ancestors were known individuals who had a specific relationship and reincarnation with their matrilineage. The Cretan ancestor retained his or her life status in death, and bestowed it upon a specific descendant. The worship of a matrilineal ancestor by his/her descendants was a form of (1) validation for the descendants' continued access and use of matrilineal land, the (2) matrilineage's rank, the (3) authority of successive lineage and segment heads and (4) kinship relationships within the matrilineage. If this were the case in Bronze Age Crete, then specific, deceased members of the matrilineage could have been selected for special treatment i.e.,

ancestor veneration as they are in historic segmented matrilineages. (footnote on Hopi egalitarian matrilineages.....)

### *Cretan Primary Burial*

The body was deposited into a matrilineal tomb or a group collection of graves for its decomposition. In many individual cases this was the first step and not the final destination for every member of the group. The deceased lineage head or religious leader was placed in his or her matrilineal tomb or House tomb or larnake associated with a matrilineal House for decomposition, as were the other members of the same matrilineal group. (Footnote on DNA affinity...) (Footnote on the the correspondence of matrilineage with collective tomb and ward within a site.) These selected individuals, candidates to become ancestors, were designated by certain markers in their primary burial, perhaps by inverted conical cups or other objects (Maggidis, 1994). Girella (2015:205) considers the inverted cup as a mnemonic placed near the mandible...of the dislocated cranium or leg. At Lebena Zervou III tholos a skull was given a juglet and a strand of gold sheet was attached to the skull after decomposition (Hood, Huxley and Sanders, 1959:223).

### ***Cretan Secondary Burial or Ancestor Selection***

Becoming an ancestor required one's skull to be selected after a certain degree of decomposition. The living descendants, led by the sister-brother dyad, returned to the tomb and disarticulated a particular skull, sometimes with the long bones following the mnemonics. The decomposing body was marked by an artifact making it easier to select. A skull that had a conical cup placed next to it would be recognizable to the sister-brother dyad. This skull was selected and removed from its skeleton, minus the mandible. For example, at Archanes

MMIB/MMIIA a skull was removed from a tomb and move to building 19. Next to the skull certain objects were placed: a flat stone interpreted as an altar, three vases dating to the same period, a “fruit stand”, a jug and goblet (Driessen 2010: 114). This skull belonged to an important ancestor, important enough to separate his or her skull from the rest of the deceased relatives and moved to another building. An altar was necessary, along with the vessels presumably carrying food and libations, to carry out rituals necessary to make this skull into an ancestor. Brother or sister or both performed the ancestor-making ritual for this matrilineal lineage or segment head. Skull retention or selection among Bronze Age Cretans appeared to be specific and individual, a (1) person known for his/her accomplishments for the matrilineage, (2) Maximal lineage or segment head, (3) priestess or priest etc. ( Footnote on sex and age of selected skull). Every step of “making an ancestor” was accompanied by ritual and communal feasting at the collective funerary area (Girella 2016:207).

Once decomposed, generally the skull (sometimes the long bones ) were selected. Some skulls were plastered and painted to give it a life-like appearance for example at Archanes Phourni (Girella 2016:205). . If the skull belonged to a lower segment head, elder or household priestess, it would be placed on a dais, altar or displayed in a rock-niche or in a sarcophagus within the primary burial place (collective tomb, house tomb). This would be the ancestor’s secondary burial location. In some cases the skull was removed to a cave or rock shelter, perhaps an original settlement of the matrilineage because ancestors liked to return to their original houses. Rituals or rites making the skull an ancestor would have accompanied this secondary relocation. The skull, after the rites, became the “sacred object” for the matrilineage

because it housed the ancestor's living spirit. After the ancestress/tor rites, the skull was able to participate in the life of the matrilineage.

It seems that Maximal lineage and possibly Major segment heads were removed to a specially made sanctuary adjacent to the home, or to a designated room in a villa where they were displayed on an altar. It is assumed that rites and rituals accompanied these steps in ancestor-making. Most likely the verbal rites were performed by the appropriate descendant head. At specific times during the year, libations were poured and food was offered to the skull (Soles, 2010), by the heads of the Maximal and Major segments during anniversary ancestor/tress veneration ceremonies. Many times ancestor skulls or their entire skeletons accompanied the anniversary feastings.

There are many examples of "secondary burial" or skull selection in the Cretan archaeological record: Archanes, building 19 and tholos B, Ayios Giorgos-Tourtouloi, Mansion 1 at Petras, in the villa at Epano Zakros, mansion B2 at Mochlos and room 12 at the Zakros Palace, Sissi-Bouffo, Hagia Triada Archanes Phourni (Girella 2016:209), and there may be other examples at Palaikastro and Quarter Nu, Malia (Driessen, 2010:107-109). What stands out in the above sites is that these selected skulls were placed in high ranking villas, House tombs, or court centered buildings. I argue that these were known individuals to their matrilineage, most likely they were Maximal or Major lineage heads, individuals who made outstanding contributions to his/her matrilineage, or priestesses or priests. During this secondary burial rite, the skull was brought back into the "home" or to a sacred place to continue the cult of ancestor-making which included passing their authority to a living descendant. Rituals were most likely carried out by the segment leader who inherited the same position of the deceased

member and by priestess/priest who inherited her or his cult position. By converting the deceased into a "living ancestor", he or she would bring benefit to the living descendants. Ancestor-making continued at least through LM1B in Crete.

The current leader of the Maximal lineage had the most important status of organizing commemoration of the founding ancestress and the prior Maximal lineage heads. She or he would organize the entire matrilineage for ancestor veneration. Early on, this may have taken place in caves or peak sanctuaries. Through the middle Minoan years veneration of founder, leaders and priestesses probably took place in external shrines or sanctuaries and even in matrilineal court centered buildings which housed the venerated skull. Drinking and feasting by the matrilineage followed, often with the skull or skeleton of the venerated ancestor participating. The veneration of the founding ancestress or Maximal lineage head surely took place close to the matrilineage's land to ensure their claim.

In the case of the ancestresses, priestesses, and heads of Major segments, as mentioned earlier, their living replacements most likely conducted their rites at the collective matrilineage tombs, either inside at altars or dais, or outside in open or closed court settings. Some skulls may have been stored in villas or a special room in a villa or in an external shrine associated with the villa. Minor and Minimal segments venerated their household ancestors within the home. They too would have brought the skull or long bones of their segment founder into the home. They would have altars or shrine rooms located in the home or close to their homes. The rites would be performed by the living elders of the household.

Two remarkable examples of possible ancestor veneration have been recorded from early Minoan times to late Minoan times, suggesting the very importance of this cultic practice.



The Myrtos skull (EMII), found by itself in a shrine room, was that of a 20–30-year old male (Warren 1972), while the Mochlos skull (LM1B) also found by itself in a shrine was that of a young adult female (Soles 2010). No other skulls or skeletal remains were found with each skull in their respective shrines. Both skulls were selected presumably from their respective primary burial and placed in a secondary location (shrine). This constitutes secondary burial. Each skull was placed alone in a new location which happened to be a shrine. In addition, they were brought offerings of food and drink. Clearly each one was deemed an important person when s/he was living and then in death. The shrine with the Myrtos skull had a hearth and low benches on each side. Like the Ashanti or Nayar lineage elder, the Cretan elder with a few of his/her lineage members would have brought libations and offerings to the skull, performed the propitiary ritual, and then sat and conversed with his or her predecessor (Warren, 1972). These offerings were made to and for the individual ancestor, not to a generalized entity. The living descendant who offered the propitiation most likely “replaced” the ancestor in authority, responsibility and status within their matrilineage. Veneration of the ancestor and conversations with him or her for wisdom and guidance was one aspect. The other aspect was petitioning the ancestor for acceptance and validation of his or her replacement by the new descendant leader.

Generalized worship or veneration of the dead (plural) could have occurred in the tomb or adjacent to the tomb without any necessity to single out a particular skull. However, the two skulls from Myrtos and Mochlos were separated and distinguished from other members of their tomb for special treatment. They were important persons. Each of these two skulls happened to be located in a shrine adjacent to a room or wing that held a figurine of the female deity.

This suggests that the person of each skull was an important individual within their own matrilineage, either as a leader of a lineage or a priest/priestess for the goddess, or both.

### ***Living Ancestral Spirits***

The difference between a skull that was entitled to its own separate shrine, like Myrtos and Mochlos, and that of a skull on a rock altar inside its collective tomb reflects the different status of the individuals within a segmented, matrilineal system. The lower and higher status ancestors belonged to the same matrilineage. However, they received different treatment after death. The ancestor with its own shrine could have been the leader of the Maximal lineage or its head priest/priestess. The skull in a pit inside the collective tomb could have been an elder of a lower segment of the lineage. Matrilineal kinship is a vertical social system that retains all statuses of individuals. Regardless of the status level of the individual within a segmented matrilineage, the skull, secondarily reburied and propitiated transforms into a living ancestor. The skull becomes the spirit of the ancestor and will continue to be honored and propitiated.

After the rites of secondary burial and rituals of prayer by name, offerings and libations, etc. the skull is no longer a remnant of a dead person. The skull becomes incarnate with the spirit of the ancestor. S/he becomes a living ancestor who partakes in the life and rituals of his/her descendants. S/he continues to participate in the life of his/her descendants. Secondary burial with continued offerings transforms the dead into an ancestor. The skull becomes imbued with his/her very own spirit. These two examples from Myrtos and Mochlos span almost the entire Cretan Bronze Age. This strongly suggests that ancestor worship was a profound cult with strong socio-kinship meaning and purpose for Bronze Age Cretans over a long period of time from probably the late Neolithic (Phaistos) to LMIB. According to Girella

(2016:210-211) this long term deposition of bones and artifacts and their manipulation created a special link between the tomb and landscape which emphasized corporate identity and produced communal cohesion.

### ***Feasting with the Ancestors/Ancestresses***

After the propitiation ceremonies and the transformation to ancestorhood were completed, the segment or entire lineage celebrated by feasting inside or outside the collective tomb. Many collective tombs had large courtyards adjacent to them with benches and hearths and remains of platters, jugs and food. There is ample evidence throughout Bronze Age Crete for adjacent courtyards and spaces that held residuals of cookery, plates, jugs, etc. for example at Kanilari, Archanes, Ayios Charalambas, (Soles, 2010), and the Mesara tholoi. From EMI in the Mesara, tombs were built with adjacent open court, or with attached rectangular rooms. In these adjacent courts specialized pedestaled bowls were found (Agia Kyriki, Hagia Triada, Koumasa,) which suggest that ceremonies were held in honor of the ancestors with libations (wine? mead?). At EMIIIB Lebena, in the Mesara, cult rooms were added to tomb II which contained offerings and libations to the dead. Watrous and Hadzi-Vallaniou (2005:230-244) point out that this material complex at collective tombs marked the identity of the group, buried and living, and possibly their matrilineage's claim to the surrounding land and resources. The veneration of ancestresses and ancestors reinforced and maintained the integrity of the matrilineage and the status of descendant lineage and segment leaders.

Back to the exceptional individual in the Mochlos shrine, Soles (2010 :332-333) reported the remarkable find of David Reese who analyzed the faunal remains of the Mochlos LMI feast. He found the remains of two human skeletons which were brought to the feasting area

to sit among the living descendants. One skeleton was found on a bench where living members would have sat, and the other was located not far from the cooking fire. These individuals were not eaten. Their bones had no butchery or tooth marks. This is a remarkable example of the necessity of having the *physical presence* of an ancestor feasting with the living. As Fortes (1949) said, "the dead had to be brought back home". This ancestor was not a dead skeleton, or a generic ancestor, but the incarnation of a specific person known to his or her living descendants who was sharing a meal and communing with them. "Clearly people were feasting in outside spaces adjacent to both shrines at Mrytos and Mochlos (Soles, 2010) and not only that, but their ancestors were as well!

### ***Non-Ancestors***

As distinguished as the Myrtos and Mochlos skulls were by their secondary burials in external shrines, most secondary burials of skulls occurred within the collective tomb of their own matrilineage. However, not everyone in the collective tomb was entitled to become an ancestor, only certain skulls were selected. What happened to the unselected skulls (and bones) in the primary burial place? It seems they were moved aside or removed to ossuaries to make room for a new body to decompose in the matrilineage's collective tomb (primary burial). The ossuary at Hagios Charalambos Cave contained long bones stacked neatly with skulls on top which may have numbered up to 1,000 individuals (Driessen, 2010:111). They were accompanied by complete or broken vases, musical instruments, bronze figurines, and seals (Girella 2016:205, Driessen and Langohr, 2014). While not selected as ancestors and moved from their primary burial place, they were nevertheless, revered family members who were remembered with respect by their descendants. These "stacks of bones" might have become

the generalized ancestors of the matrilineage for whom gifts were laid or an altar placed near them. (See Footnote on DNA affinity).

Human remains, whether primary or secondary, have been found in caves from the Final Neolithic, and in other locations, throughout the entire Cretan civilization to its end accompanied by ceramics and other material remains suggesting a communal ritual relationship with the deceased (Peatfield, 2016; Girella 2016). This practice suggests that ancestor veneration (and belief in reincarnation) was intrinsic to the matrilineal society of Neolithic and Bronze Age Cretans.

### **Sacred Mountain Tops (Peak Sanctuaries) and their Caves**

The landscape and nature were sacred to the Cretans: springs, trees, insects, wild animals, birds, snakes, flowers, vegetation, creatures of the sea. The Cretans may have believed that all nature, animate and inanimate had spirits within them. Most importantly was the belief in the sacredness of mountain peaks and caves (Crooks, Tully and Hitchcock, 2016). Mountain peaks and their caves were sacred to the Cretans from Neolithic times through the Late Bronze Age (Peatfield, 1990, 2012, 2016; Warren, 2002; Evans 1921). Peatfield (2012) and Crooks, Tully and Hitchcock (2016) point to an animistic cult that was probably part of the every day experience of Cretans. Cretans possibly experienced direct communication with the animate landscape through human ritual and by so doing, empowered themselves. The material remains of these rituals left at mountain peaks and caves from the earliest Bronze Age suggests a possible underlying belief system in a feminine divinity with regenerative and healing powers. These ritual material remains suggest a feminine divinity was worshiped and the sacred cave was her abode. Specific mountain peaks and caves were singled out for her worship

within each of the regions. Twenty-five sacred peaks have been identified throughout Crete from Middle Minoan times (Crooks, Tully and Hitchcock, 2016). Evans (1921:159) believed that the “earliest religious practice worshipped the rocky peak itself which represented the sanctity of the whole mountain as the indwelling place of the goddess”.

Kamarea Cave, located 6,000 ' up on Mt. Ida , held a MMIA assemblage that seemed to be directed solely to the goddess. A clay pyxis or round container with a lid was found. Did it hold saffron or honey or some other sacred object as a gift? There were bronze figurines, exquisite Kamarea polychrome ware as well as ritual libations vessels, and terracotta bulls, some with small human figures clinging to the horns (Evans 1921: 159-160). There was an exquisite vessel made from an egg with gold fittings (Dawkins and Laestner 1913). A villa nearby the cave on the mountain may have housed a priestess during times of ritual observance. Kamarea Cave may have been devoted solely for the worship of the goddess of periodic regeneration.

At the Late Neolithic peak of Atsipadhes Tsaotalos, Early Minoan sites of Mt. Juktas (possibly Late Neolithic) and Petsofa, lots of pottery were found suggesting communal ritual (Driessen 2014; Peatsfield 2016). Mt. Juktas was used as the premier site for divinity worship from MMI through MMIII probably due to its proximity to Knossos and the founding matrilineages. Evans (1921:156) referred to Mt. Juktas “as the sacred peak of the Mother Goddess”. According to him the cyclopean wall built on the east side of the mountain preceded the foundation of the Knossian court center building. This would suggest that worship, or communal ritual action with feasting, took place early on at Mt. Juktas and prior to the full construction of the court centers at Knossos. There were ritual objects such as an engraved

libation table, and "limestone ladle" both with linear A inscription similar to that found on the engravings on the libation table at Psycho Cave (Evans 1921:159). These cult objects argue for cultic/divinity worship. In addition there were votive deposits of full bodied human terracotta figurines which suggests that Mt. Juktas was a sacred place for initiation rites as well.

Cretans traveled to great heights to pray for the healing of themselves and animals as represented by terracotta effigies which were left behind at Petsofa peak sanctuary. This site was used as early as Late Neolithic or Early Minoan (Peatfield, 2016; Evans, 1921:155). At Petsofa a massive number of terracotta models of parts of the human body, painted red for men and white for women, were found along with some full figure human terracotta figures. The human body parts could have represented a votive or prayer for healing, and the full figurine, a dedication of thankfulness after the healing. In addition, miniature figurines of animals including bulls were found. The clay offerings of animals were possibly given in lieu of sacrifices, or as votives for animal fertility, or the petitioning for healing of injured limbs of animals. Was this site particularly used for healing rituals? I suggest that, wherever the goddess was believed to have dwelled, were places where petitions (votives) could be left for the healing of humans and animals.

Other caves were the sites of the earliest settlements in Crete (late Neolithic) (Peatfield, 2016) which may have provided the substance for an origin myth of the Cretans. Later, when a matrilineage settled down in the valley, it might have continued to bury its deceased in the old settlement cave, acknowledging that ancestors like to return to their original place of habitation. In some of these caves secondary burials were found as part of the ritual of ancestor making. Other caves contained the stacked bones of possibly generalized ancestors that were

removed from tombs to make room for the newly deceased. Miamou Cave in the Mesara was originally inhabited very early, but by EMII it was used for collective burials of this founding lineage. At the Haghia Charalambos Cave dating to MMII the bones of over 400 individuals have been identified, some as secondary burials (Driessen, 2014). Musical instruments, figurines and seal stones (of leaders of the matrilineage or its segments?) accompanied the bones. The power and the draw of the cave continued for a long time, maybe it never ceased, even while later settlements built their tombs close to matrilineal land and by the Neopalatial Period, cult was brought into court centered buildings.

Another cult that took place on regional mountain peaks was initiation. Initiation rites of all matrilineal youth, female and male, of a certain age grade took place at certain sacred peaks. The purpose of initiation rites for the youths was to render their service to divinity and to acknowledge the role of the regional priestesses over the matrilineages. The youth left behind full human terracotta effigies. During the Protopalatial period thousands of clay figurines were left at peak sanctuaries “memorializing the spiritual experience or were used to activate it” (Peatfied 2016). Whatever the purpose of the clay figurines in terms of experiencing the initiation, I believe they were purposely left behind as an eternal pledge to the goddess from the youths who were initiated into her service. Some of these terracotta figurines have some individualized markings which may suggest a particular person. Before we go further with presenting initiation rites in Bronze Age Crete, let’s take a brief look at the social role of initiation in historic matrilineal societies

### **Social Function of Initiation Ceremonies among the Southwestern Pueblos Indians**



Among historic matrilineal groups Initiation ceremonies often take place in locations, real or symbolic, where the group believes itself to have originated. Among the southwestern Pueblo Indians this is the Underworld, an underground place of origin. Therefore, Pueblo Indian initiations take place in subterranean cult rooms called "kivas" that are built within the settlement (Footnote on Kivas). There are certain features of initiation among the Pueblos (Footnote on pueblo) that may relate to Bronze Age Cretans (after Eggan (1967):

1. After fasting and prayer the youths are brought into the "place of origin" where they have an encounter with the ancestors.
2. Afterward, the initiates undergo ritual change of clothing, washing of the head, given food to eat, and a new name for his/her lifetime
3. Girls participate in the early initiation rituals, but the final initiation ceremonies are reserved for boys who thereafter became "men".

The Hopi clans or Maximal lineages (Footnote on Eggan's use of the terms lineage and clan) are egalitarian (Appendix One). Each clan is responsible for a ceremony or ceremonies which it provides for the entire pueblo or settlement. The women of each clan hold the knowledge of the ceremony as well as any sacred paraphernalia. Mostly men are the presenters of the ceremonies although women participate to some extent. Among the Hopi, initiation ceremonies are the main form of societal integration in an egalitarian society. This may have been the case in Neolithic Crete or possibly very early Bronze Age.

The Acoma Pueblo (site, settlement, and community) has centralized control under a single priest from a high-ranking clan. The priest or "cacique" claims descent from the female goddess that all the pueblo worship. Among the Acoma, initiation has the same general features as the Hopi, but the initiation takes place in the head priest's "kiva". Other members of the pueblo are involved with the ceremony, but are ultimately responsible to the head priest. When the initiates have completed their rituals, the head priest presents the new "members"

of the pueblo to the entire village. Among the Acoma Indians, "tribal" initiation is a form of integration that supersedes the clan or lineage (Footnote on Eggan's use of the term "tribal"). It serves to integrate all members of the village into allegiance to the head priest who in turn serves the goddess (Appendix Three). The purpose of initiation among the Pueblo Indians is societal integration.

### **Bronze Age Cretan Initiation Rites at Sacred Mountain Peaks and Caves**

Initiation of youths had a different socio-political purpose and requirements from ancestor worship. For one, initiation was required of all youth at a certain age across all matrilineages. Like the Pueblos, initiation rites in Bronze Age Crete were carried out in sacred places. The Pueblos held initiation rites in a subterranean room called a kiva, while the Bronze Age Cretans held them in sacred mountain peaks and caves. I would venture to say that initiation rites were not carried out in court centered buildings. The mountain peak was sacred to divinity and the youths were dedicating their service to her.

Peak sanctuaries with their caves became popular as sites for the initiation of youth, both male and female, from EM through MM III. There were approximately twenty-five peak sanctuaries throughout Crete during MMI and MMII. The founding matrilineage in the region which, at one time may have lived in the peak sanctuary, most likely claimed the authority to carry out initiation rites. It was the main mechanism for integrating youth across all lineages, including possibly immigrant individuals into a Cretan world view and ethos. It was also an important social mechanism for consolidating the position of the highest ranked matrilineage with her priestesses in the region.

Some degree of regionalism persisted through the early Neopalatial Period where Warren (2002) describes thirteen peak sanctuaries in Crete. Archaeological evidence for initiation rites came from the thousands of human terracotta figurines found at peak sanctuaries and hardly any (simple terracotta figurines) at court centered buildings. Whatever their function during the ritual or procession, these terracotta figurines were left behind like a pledge or token of their owner's devotion (Footnote on terracotta figurines). While Peatfield (2016) emphasizes the experiential and ecstatic aspect of Cretan ritual, I argue that the initiation rites were led by a priestess or a group of priestesses and priests. The procession to the peak was quite laborious and physically demanding. It took hours or even days to accomplish. (Consider the Lasithi plateau where Psychro Cave is located.) I believe this procession was led by a priestess(es) singing chants and performing rhythmic movements, while priests played the lyre or other instruments. All initiates participated in the singing and rhythmic movements while walking (processing) to the mountain. Initiation rites were a supra-matrilineal, regional event and were the most important, socially integrating mechanism for the entire region. They also reinforced the rank of the matrilineage(s) that produced these priestesses and priests and their unequivocal role (and power) in integrating the region.

During MMI-III initiation rites were very important for integrating matrilineages within a region, while at the same time highlighting the role of the ranked matrilineage. Petsofa was the MMI peak sanctuary above the court centered building at Palaikastro. The sanctuary had terraced walls surrounding plaster benches. Within the sanctuary were more than a thousand, locally made terracotta figurines as offerings, red for males and white for female (Evans 1921:155). Many have arms bent over the chest with clenched fists (MacGillivray and Sackett,

2010:566-7). These youthful figurines, male and female, may have been presented to the divinity/goddess as a votive for the youth's pledged service. In addition, there were massive numbers of terracotta parts of humans, animals and miniature vessels. Evans (1921) considered Petsofa a shrine and votive station. I suggest terracotta body parts were petitions to divinity for healing.

Mt. Jouktas, the peak sanctuary of for the region of Knossos (and beyond) provided "massive" amounts of cheap, newly fashioned, votive figurines. This sanctuary was used from MMI through MMIII and ultimately became one of the few peak sanctuaries in use toward the end of Cretan civilization. Mt Jouktas was used before the sanctuary complex of Knossos was built. Evans (1921: 156-159) considered Mkount Jouktas a sacred mountain to the Cretans, and ultimately the construction of Knossos was tied to its landscape. A massive cyclopean wall on its east side of Mt. Jouktas enclosed the sanctuary. A votive deposit on a foothill of Mt. Jouktas contained a libation table, and "ladle" both inscribed with Linear A. This may point to the role of the priestess/priest who conducted the ceremony and perhaps, who were also the scribes who incised the ritual artifacts with Linear A. The foothill shrine may have been the first stop on the pilgrimage to the peak conducted by priestesses. At the peak there were many figurines especially male figurines with penis sheathes and holding a dagger. (The dagger was a status symbol primarily.) There was also a figurine of a woman in full dress, unflounced with an open bodice. She wore a conical hat. She probably represented a priestess officiating at the initiation of the youths. Such a woman/priestess may have led the pilgrimages to the cave or peak sanctuary or awaited their arrival in her full regalia.

Other peak sanctuaries have been excavated such as Upper Zakro where many votive, terracotta figurines have been found suggesting they were initiation sites (Evans 1921:146) and Psychro Cave. A peak sanctuary was located at Vrysinas (MMII-LMIA), with most finds dated to MMIII. Hundreds of clay figurines have been found along with Cretan hieroglyphic seals and bronze figurines (Driessen and Langohr 2014). A testable hypothesis at the thirteen identified Neopalatial sanctuaries (Warren, 2002) would be to determine whether large numbers of full bodied terracotta figurines were left in them. If so, these indeed may have been used as initiation centers in the Neopalatial Period.

Watrous, (1996:64-72) suggests the artifactual complex at peak sanctuaries represents the institutionalization of initiation of young men and women into the adult community by the "state". I would suggest that initiation was for all the matrilineages in the region. I am suggesting that Initiation rites were a regionally, socially integrating mechanism. Dedication ceremonies of young men and women in Bronze Age Crete to a divinity, or at least to a sacred location, would have made the region a socially, tight knit community. It would have also reinforced the status of the region's high ranking matrilineage with its priestesses. Besides initiation rites, the founder matrilineage derived ultimate social power by providing priestesses who served the goddess of periodic regeneration at the regional peaks.

The prevalence of initiation rites of youth at peak sanctuaries and caves throughout Crete corresponds to the rise of a hierarchy of priestesses within each region during Middle Minoan. Most likely the priestesses come from founder matrilineages which may have claimed early settlement in these caves. These matrilineages with their priestesses asserted their right to conduct ceremonies and initiations at peak sanctuaries and caves for the divinity. The Zuni

(Southwestern Pueblo tribe) have many priests arranged in a hierarchy made from the five largest clans/Maximal lineages. The priest of the North is at the top of the hierarchy, followed by the Sun Priest, his spokesperson, followed by several groups of priests who are also ranked and are specialized in rain making, healing, sun worship, war protection, and ancestor worship (Appendix Two). Middle Bronze Age Crete may also have had such a hierarchy of priestesses within each region.

Initiation rites provided one important mechanism for the relative cultural cohesion and peaceful relationships within and among the regions of Bronze Age Crete. The initiated youth pledged loyalty or at least devotion to a "higher power" that resided on mountain peaks and that was above the level of the matrilineage. Among the southwestern Pueblo Indians initiation rites are one of the most important ceremonies of the village. They initiate young men and women (men more extensively than women) into the village community. Among the Hopi (Appendix I) and Acoma (Appendix Three) initiation of youths, predominately young men, is the most important tribal integrating social mechanism. In Bronze Age Crete these initiation rituals usually took place on the peak sanctuary of the region representing the sacred ground of the divinity and in many cases the earliest home of the founding matrilineages. I don't think the ancestor of the founding matrilineage became the regional divinity. Such a transfer or succession of one matrilineage's ancestor as a divinity for all matrilineages does not occur in the ethnographic literature. On the other hand, placing the initiation rites at a peak sanctuary of a founding matrilineage gave that matrilineage and its priestesses the status to conduct these ceremonies. This would be possible if all the clans in Bronze Age Crete shared the worship of the same female divinity, (goddess of periodic regeneration), her many

manifestations and lesser gods. This would have made it possible for initiated youths to feel part of a broader "Cretan" community. The worship of a common constellation of goddess and lesser gods in Bronze Age Crete and her colonies mostly assuredly contributed to a common culture regardless of regional and local differences.

### **Psychro Cave: An Example of Regional Divinity Worship and Initiation Rites**

In use since Late Neolithic or EM I-II through MM IIIA Psychro Cave may have been the most frequented shrine in all Crete. Psychro Cave was perhaps one of the most sacred caves used in the veneration of the goddess of periodic regeneration. It is found on Mt. Dikte on the Lasithi ridge of central Crete about 8,000 feet above sea level. It may have had a very early settlement giving that matrilineage a founders rank (Watrous 2005:272). To approach it by car is a journey; to walk on foot in a spiral procession around this sacred mountain to the cave at the top must have been most impressive to view and ecstatic for the participants. The cave resembles metaphorically a great womb. It has a brief upper chamber that descends almost vertically into the lower chamber which has a pool with many stalagmites and stalactites. Many artifacts were found in both chambers even though the initial archaeology was destructive. Hogarth (1900) briefly describes some of the remaining finds. The upper cave had a black steatite libation table with four legs and three cup holder sockets on the top. It had a central projecting disk below the table to rest most likely on a stalagmitic cone from the cave floor. It had Linear A inscriptions which Evans (1921:636) believes was used for dedicatory inscriptions on votive and religious vessels. The upper cave at Psychro had a stucco altar with Linear A inscriptions. The altar was surrounded by strata of ashes containing the bones of sacrificed bulls, goats, sheep, deer and boar. There were quantities of pottery, countless ceramic cups for

food offerings, votive double axe blade and other votive objects in bronze, terracotta, and bone. There were as many as thirty libation tables in the cave probably over the course of time. There were stone and ceramic lamps. The sherds were dated to MM III. There was a bronze ritual double axe that fit into a socket of black steatite in a stepped platform. The libation tables with cup holders, Linear A inscriptions, sacrificed bulls, etc. and the ritual, double axe mounted in steatite suggest that a sophisticated, priestly hierarchy organized, orchestrated and performed the ceremony of the epiphany of the goddess from a sacrificed bull into a honey bee or butterfly, depicted as the double axe.

This upper cave seemed to have served the purpose of worshipping the goddess of periodic regeneration. The classic elements of Cretan ritual were there. Altars or libation tables with sockets to hold cups possibly for libations or cremated bull, sheep or goat, etc. Most likely one person, a supreme priestess served at the altar. Possibly she used the Linear A inscription as a spiritual invocation to bring forth the deity. Associated with the altar was the “appearance” of the goddess in the double axe (bee or butterfly) which was mounted in a platform holder. There was also evidence of communal sharing, perhaps at the level of the priestesses (priests) from the ceramic remains.

The lower cave required a descent of several hundred feet into a broad cavern at the bottom of which was a pool. Surely the descent required torches and lamps most likely led by the priestesses who were chanting. This descent would have enhanced an altered state of consciousness especially for the initiates. Initiation seems to have taken place in the lower chamber. Here in the lower cave at Psychro small offerings were tucked into niches within the stalactites such as small double axes, knife blades, and needles. Votive gifts seem to have been



left for the divinity; some had two Linear A signs which might have personalized the gift from the giver (“personalized” votives of clay male figurines have also been found at Tylissos near Knossos ) (Evans 1921:495). In this lower cave was a pool. Statuettes of males and females and engraved gems were found in the mud around the pool and in the pool itself. Possibly the youths were initiated with water in the pool in the bottom cave. Water symbolized the ultimate, cosmic source of life harking back to Neolithic belief systems. Initiation rites may have taken place within the lower cave next to, or in the pool, which may have symbolized cosmic water. Water at Psychro Cave may have been an essential part of the initiation rites baptizing young people of a particular age set into a life of service to divinity. The initiated youths were then bound in allegiance to the oversee of the hierarchy of priestesses who “ran” the regional community. The young initiate in turn left a gift for divinity or a personalized statuette of him/herself to be remembered. The complex associations of artifacts suggest that the rites by the pool in the lower cave at Psychro, were sophisticated, and required extensive coordination and orchestration by priestesses who not only carried sacred knowledge, but could claim special mediation or relationship with divinity. In the pool was found a gem known as the crystal lentoid. It had an engraving of a woman in a flounced skirt blowing a triton shell. Near her in the engraving was a table with horns of consecration out of which a plant or tree is growing. There are two more plants adjacent to the horns. The plant or tree represents the regeneration of nature from the “sacrifice” of the sacred horns who has appeared because of the invocation of the priestess with the shell.

Psychro Cave was clearly an important cult place for the Bronze Age Cretans. Most likely this cave, and other regional peak sanctuaries, were used periodically or cyclically for (1)

worship of the goddess in her transfiguration via the double axe (representing the honeybee or butterfly) through the sacrifice of animals (bull was primary), and offerings of food and drink, (2) initiation and offering of regional youths, male and female, for a lifetime of service to the goddess and obedience to the hierarchy of priestesses. (These youths left behind to the goddess their pledges in the form of votives, plaques, and statuettes, some of which had double inscriptions of Linear A, perhaps a name?), and (3) prayers and special petitions by devotees including terracotta partial limbs, and figurines of animals tucked into the stalactites for the curing and well-being of both people and livestock.

The hierarchy of priestesses, who led this process regionally, were consolidating their position and power within their region. Possibly the top two matrilineages within each region, who were united by cross-cousin marriage, formed hierarchies of priestesses who held regional, political sway. These ranked priestesses were in charge of (1) public, communal, divinity worship (2) initiation rites of all youths from all matrilineages of a certain age in the region, and (3) special ceremonies for healing and curing, and most likely good weather, rain, good harvest, abundant herds, general fecundity, safe sailing for long distance trade, and sanctification of court centered buildings and other public worshipping sites. Their roles and activities were highly visible and probably part of everyday public ritual. The proximity of Psychro Cave to Knossos and Malia suggests the main matrilineage(s) of these sites were assuming more power during MM III .

### **Cretan Cult**

The essence of Cretan cult, whether individually experienced, or led by priestesses was ritualistic. Material descriptions of aspects of Cretan ritual abound in seals, rings, frescoes,

larnakes, pottery and probably Linear A if we could decipher it. Driessen (2002:8) states that in preliterate societies remembrance occurs through rituals. Rituals are a specialized kind of communication during which the past (and the divine, my addition) is re-created in the present. In preliterate societies religious ideas need to be re-created again and again in performances so that they become palpable, visual, and able to generate emotional experiences. Rituals are inextricably related to places both material and artificial (Driessen, 2002:8). Rituals are carried out at specific places and or times. *Ritual is a form of theatrical, sensory memory communication.* Rituals are always intimately connected to a group's basic values, convictions, and connections to religion, economics and politics (Maran, 2016:582-584). Colin Renfrew in Maran (p. 584) notes the extraordinary importance of ritual movement in Minoan and Mycenaean "palaces", the result of which creates a cohesiveness within a society without written sacred texts. These rituals relied on memory and were probably preserved, protected and guarded by elders and priestesses. Most of these rituals remained pretty constant throughout the Cretan Bronze Age. What was their ultimate purpose for society? I think cult was a form of cultural cohesion that permeated all aspects of Cretan society throughout Crete. According to Driessen (2002) social integration can be achieved through wide acceptance of a broadly shared cognitive code. Many preliterate societies were anything but centralized and homogeneous. They were held together more by ideologies and cosmologies than by political authority (Hamilakes, 2002:185).

Ancestor worship among the Cretans may have been a brother-sister series of rituals for the matrilineage, but divinity worship transcended the matrilineage and was a trans-Cretan experience. Material evidence of divinity worship has been found within the family (household)

(and at all segment levels within the matrilineage), in all matrilineal Houses and court centers within sites and at peak sanctuaries. When divinity worship involved a large community, it took place at peak sanctuaries, within great Houses or regional court centered buildings. Large scale cultic worship most likely was orchestrated and led by females from high ranking matrilineages. These were rituals that involved all matrilineages in the region. In the public spheres the higher ranking matrilineages produced priestesses, some priests, and musicians to carry out community and regional level worship.

### **Cretan Symbols of the Goddess of Periodic Regeneration**

Prominent symbols of Cretan religion, found in caves and sanctuaries, are from the earliest times. Most have their roots in the Neolithic of old Europe. One symbol, the double axe seems to be unique to bronze age Crete. The double axe was found at Mochlos, Chameizi, Vasiliki, Phaistos and Agia Triada (Wittaker, 2016) as well as Knossos and Plantanos. The symbol of the double axe is found throughout Crete, and Evans (1921:447) considered it the special aniconic form of the supreme Minoan divinity. The double axe formed the center of domestic cult in countless smaller dwellings. The double axe symbol was carved into pillars in the pillar crypts of estate Houses and court centered buildings. It occurred as a short stemmed, gold leaf, covered bronze axe held in a horn shaped base. Some of the double axes are huge in width with gold leaf covering a bronze, lead or soft stone base. The stem is never long enough to be a handle and the bronze is too thin, not sufficiently strong enough for axing (Evans, 1921:425). Evans (1921:425) considered the bronze double axe a ceremonial, ritual implement. He thought the Cretans revered the double axe as a divinely possessed fetish that had inherent magical powers. It was an object worthy of worship because a spirit inhabited it (Evans 1921:440).

Evans (1921:447) wrote “that throughout Crete the special aniconic form of the supreme Minoan divinity was the double axe. Knossos, the palace sanctuary itself was the House of the Double Axe. The double axe formed the center of domestic cult in countless smaller dwellings.”

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At Plantanos in tholos A, the double axe occurred with representations of bovine heads, horns of consecration, flowers, vegetation, and birds, in other words with a wide array of living things. This may have been an allusion to divinity’s rebirthing of souls in reincarnation. Since the sixth millennium, cattle especially the bull, were the most prestigious sacrificial animal, and remained so until the end of antiquity (Whittaker, 2016). Why is the bull’s head associated with the double axe? The double axe is a symbolic representation of the honey bee which was “domesticated” for human use around the ninth millennium in the eastern Aegean, most likely in Anatolia (Seeley, 2019). The double axe also can represent a butterfly. The Cretans were well known bee keepers and exporters of honey as known from Linear B tablets (Crane, 1983). The food of the honey bee was probably thought of as a gift from the goddess to Bronze Age Cretans. The honey bee became the representation of the goddess in her epiphany. The insect that provided the “sweetness of life” was ritualized as the appearance of the goddess. In this manner the goddess is represented with an insect’s head...that of the honey bee or butterfly (See footnote on the butterfly), as she emerges from the horns of consecration, representing the sacrificed bull’s head. This ritual is presented performatively by the sacrifice of the bull, the procession of women and men carrying the double axe over the presence of the horns of consecration. The double axe (like pillars) are the fetishes or sacred objects of Bronze Age Cretans (footnote on fetishes). In their world view, the double axe and pillars are imbued with the spirit of divinity. Quintessential Cretan divinity worship is a culmination of Neolithic beliefs

and rituals (along with early Anatolian “imports”, cattle and honey bee). Perhaps, what is uniquely Cretan is the depiction of the honey bee/butterfly as a “double axe”. (footnote, Evans 1921:447, the double axe represented divinity.)

The depiction of the traditional ritual of the epiphany of the goddess is depicted as late as on the LM IIIA2 sarcophagus from Agia Triada (Evans 1921:440, Privitera 2016). (See footnote on A gia Triada sarcophagus) A procession of priestesses (painted white) bearing libations in vessels leads. A lyre playing priest follows them, who in turn is followed by three men (painted red) each bearing a sacrificed animal. This procession is being observed by a significant male behind a sacred tree. The procession approaches two pillars perhaps representing pine trees or stalagmites. Both pillars are crowned with double axes (butterfly/bee/goddess). On top of each double axe is a water bird (god of creation). The priestesses carry libations (bull’s blood, honey or mead?) in sturdy vessels, and the first one is pouring her libation into a large, two handled vessel which is perched between the two pillars. The border of the scene is decorated in rosettes (symbolic of feminine creation) and spirals (snake-creator) that end in a rosette.

There are several important symbolic elements here. The status of the female priestess is very high in that she alone presents the sacrifice/libation to the pillars and double axe, both of which are imbued with the spirit of the goddess of periodic regeneration. Only a priestess can present this offering to the goddess. The men bear the sacrificed animals, play a musical instrument and another does the observing. The goddess of periodic regeneration is in the double axe. Her spirit is there and her divinity is “crowned” by the perching of the water birds of creation on top of the pillars. The goddess is served by sacrifice and by her priestesses; she is

apparent/immanent in the pillar, double axe and rosettes. Her power to regenerate vegetative and animal life is blessed by the snake god and the bird god of creation. This scene, which is quite late (LMIIIA2), expresses quintessential Cretan divinity worship.

### **Earliest Worship of the Goddess Occurred on Mountain Peaks and Caves**

We have discussed that caves on mountains offered a liminal landscape for several different kinds of ritualistic behavior. Many early settlements were located on mountain slopes such as at Petras Kefala. Soon thereafter the original settlement became the matrilineage's burial site even when the settlement moved into the valley (Driessen, 2014). Other peaks and rock shelters became the relocation site for the generalized ancestors of the matrilineage and simply became an ossuary. There were other mountain peaks and caves that were selected for honoring the goddess of periodic regeneration because it was believed she inhabited these peaks. Material remains of ritualistic behavior specific to divinity worship and/or initiation rites have been found at these sites. Material culture suggesting divinity worship includes altars, Linear A inscriptions on altars and "ladles", double axes, animal sacrifices especially bull, ritual pouring vessels, and large amounts of pottery suggesting communal participation have been found at peak sanctuaries. Some of these sites have been used since the earliest times, Late Neolithic and Early Minoan, for divinity worship. According to Watrous (2005) Kamares Cave, Mount Jouktas and Psychro Cave were early worshiping sites from Late Neolithic or Early Minoan. It appears then that peak sanctuaries, caves and/or the sacred landscapes were the earliest and original centers for divinity worship. Kamares Cave on Mt. Ida dates back to MMIA with exquisite polychrome ceramics, terracotta miniature bulls with acrobats grappling the horns, and an eggshell and gold vessel as possible gifts for divinity. A nearby Idaean Cave also

seems to have been used to worship the goddess. When court centers were built, a little later, they were positioned with prominent views of the peak sanctuary e.g., Knossos viewed Mt. Jouktas, Phaistos viewed Mt. Ida with its Kamares and Idaean Caves. This was repeated in all the regions of Crete that had peak sanctuaries and court centered buildings.

The mountain slope may have been the first settlement of a matrilineage in the region which provided the reason for it to claim primacy or first rank. This claim gave the founding matrilineage primacy in producing priestesses that carried out divinity worship and initiation rites at a peak established as the abode of the goddess. It is doubtful that the ancestor of one high ranking matrilineage evolved into the goddess of periodic regeneration over all matrilineages. The goddess of periodic regeneration is a very old European, Neolithic belief. On the other hand, a first ranked matrilineage, associated with an early worshipping site, may have spurred its priestesses to claim primacy for divinity worship in the entire region. In this regard, Protopalatial Malia may have produced the leading matrilineages which extended its control into the Lasithi mountains by placing garrisons at various entrances to the sacred cave (Psychro) of the goddess. Psychro Cave was most likely tended to by priestesses from Malia at least up to MMIII. From EM through at least early MM III, worship of the Cretan divinity was carried out by regional hierarchies of priestesses, as well as performing initiation rites within the region. Most of the large scale community worship occurred at regional peak sanctuaries and their caves.

#### **The Social Uses of Open, Closed Courts, and Court Centered Buildings:**

The court centered buildings do not seem to be administrative centers in control of the Minoan economy (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:290), but rather their defining characteristic was their large courts and ritual paraphernalia (Marinates, 1993). Scholars have



argued that Bronze Age Cretan society was matrilineal and councilar in authority. If so, where did the councils meet? Courts form a continuum from small and simple to grand and most elaborate (Driessen and Langohr 2014). Schoep (2002a) states that large and small “palaces” filled the Minoan landscape. There were lots of small court centered buildings within settlements, and courts were found within large estate Houses. The signature architectural feature of the Cretan Bronze Age is the central court. Schoep (2002a:32) states that the most distinctive feature of the “palaces” were the presence of large courts that allowed a gathering of a large group of people. This was *the* distinctive feature of court centered buildings; they were communal, built for large gatherings. The central court prevailed as a consistent architectural feature of Cretan settlements, whether within or outside the settlement, from the late Neolithic to the end of the Bronze Age. According to Driessen (2002:11) the difference between ceremonial, public, monumental court centered buildings and private monumental architecture is gradual. All have a central court. There seemed to be a democratic or egalitarian element in the distribution of court compounds. Furthermore, he suggests that decisions were made in assemblies of constituent groups of society within these courts (Driessen 2002:11).

I argue that courts, small and large, were, primarily and fundamentally, the forum for the assembly of a matrilineage or inter-matrilineal council. Depending on the size of the settlement, the central court associated with a matrilineage could be small or large. It depended on the size of the Maximal lineage or its clan. The court could be outside the House, but more likely, in large estate Houses the central court was inside such as at Kommos (Schoep, 2002a). The elders of the Maximal lineage would have assembled all the members of the matrilineage to the House’s central court or to a court adjacent to the House for a matrilineal

council. All members of a matrilineage needed to be present for serious matters concerning unusual disposition of matrilineal land, its resources or relocation of the matrilineage or a segment (migration), or building a new tomb. Smaller courts could have been used by Major or Minor segments for their council meetings. Minimal segments most likely would have been able to discuss matters within the household (footnote on a court becoming a hall). Courtyards have been found next to monumental tombs. These would have served as places of ritual, feasting and celebration with one's matrilineal ancestors.

Larger courts, open or closed, could have been built communally by a number of matrilineages within a large settlement. Hamilakes (2002:192) states that within major settlements the court centered building and open spaces were used for large scale public gatherings. I suggest these settlement court centers would hold inter-matrilineage or village councils (possibly a council of the heads of the Maximal lineages, and a lower council made of the heads of the Major segments of each matrilineage). Large, complex court centered buildings in major regional sites, such as Knossos, Malia, and Phaistos held meetings, festivities, competitions, games, performances, divinity worship, and feasting for the region's matrilineages.

From the Late Neolithic, open courts or open areas have been found within or near settlements. Driessen and Langohr (2014) state that at Knossos and Phaistos there were social practices of feasting and ritual activity that took place in large, open areas within the settlement from the Late Neolithic. These sites were accompanied by ritual pottery and large, butchering deposits. I suggest that open courts were initially used for matrilineal councils whether for administrative concerns, cult or games. Small courts were used for intra-matrilineal

councils, and larger ones were used for a gathering of a clan from several regions, or for inter-matrilineage councils that must have met regularly in large villages. Very large courts, such as the large regional court centered buildings, would have entertained representatives from the matrilineages of an entire region. The council meetings would have been followed by fellowship with communal feasting, dancing, music, performances, singing, etc.

Driessen and Langohr (2014) point out that in the Late Neolithic the Knossos and Phaistos centers started out from large open areas where these activities took place. From EM through EM IIB at Phaistos, Knossos and Malia, courts existed with subsidiary buildings around them to house the equipment needed for these communal activities. They state that such courts occurred at smaller settlements as well, such as at Vasiliki and Fournou Korifi. Very early on, perhaps in the Neolithic, competitive sports among local matrilineages were carried out in the open courts such as boxing, racing, pole jumping, boulder lifting, etc.

By early MM I the open courts became court centers with adjacent buildings attached to house the cups, vessels and equipment for feasting. Courts were used for a large aggregation of people who were known locally or regionally. Driessen and Langohr (2014) suggest that the more elaborate court center buildings took time to construct. Petras and Monastiraki date from MM IIA, Kommos from MM IIB, Galatos MM IIIA and Gournia and Zakros from the Neopalatial period. Again, these were elaborate constructions that most likely held large aggregations of people from their regions.

Divinity cult, began to “descend” from the mountain into the large, regional court centers during MM times. These court centers, including the older ones at Phaistos, Knossos and Malia, included a full view of their divine landscape, the view of the sacred mountain.

During MM III divinity worship began to move into the large, regional court centers under the guidance of the regional priestesses. By the end of MM III Evans (1921) suggested that the construction of a domestic quarter for a priestess was begun at Knossos court center. By LM IA she had definitely moved in....to the domestic quarters (not for a queen, but for the highest ranking priestess of the region). While I agree with Driessen (2002), Driessen and Langohr (2014), Schoep (2002a:32), Marinatos, (1993) and Hamilakes (2002) that by the Neopalatial the major court centered buildings were used for ceremonial purposes (regional divinity worship), that was not the only purpose for communal gatherings. Even through LM IA many of the regional centers persisted with their inter-matrilineage councils, athletic competitions, feasting, games, performances, and regional cultic activities. On the other hand, by LMIA the ritual of divinity cult had changed at Knossos which affected north central Crete, Akrotiri and the colonies.

Hamilakes (2002:190) points out that "palatial centers" were arranged in clusters which often seem to be located in close proximity to each other. He refers to clusters of major sites with court centered buildings in the Neopalatial. The Mesaran cluster included Phaistos, Kommos and Agia Triada. The north central Cretan cluster included Knossos, Archanes, Tylissos, Amnissos, Poros, and Nirou Chani. According to Hamilakes (2002: 190) they seemed to perform similar functions which are not drastically different from one another. The histories within these sites within the same cluster ...seem to be closely linked.

I suggest each court centered building within the site or village was used by a particular Maximal matrilineage. The court centered building served the matrilineal council, but also could have been used to host inter-matrilineal gatherings with the settlement. The observation that

sites or settlements seemed clustered along with their court centers makes sense with duolocal marriage arrangement where husbands remain with their own matrilineage. One matrilineage would want to cultivate a friendly, even if competitive, relationship with its marriage partners.

### **Cult Architecture Derives from Caves**

Divinity worship, other forms of cult, and the increasing importance of conspicuous consumption was moved from the mountain peaks and caves into court centered buildings within settlements during Middle Minoan. Regional celebrations and cult most surely were conducted within the large, regional court centered buildings. During this process the Cretans brought the architecture of the caves into the sacred architecture of Estate Houses and small and large court centered buildings. I suggest the symbolism found within Middle Minoan court centered complexes and elaborate Houses, as well as Neopalatial architecture, derived from natural elements found in sacred caves. Stalactites, which may have represented the goddess in caves and received gifts and remembrances from devotees, were transformed into pillars in homes and centers. Parts of stalactites were found in the debris of the Little Palace indicating they were literally brought in from the cave, most likely from Mt. Jouktas. The constructed pillar, tapered like a stalactite, was built inside a crypt, hall or sunken room. The pillar replaced the stalactite in representing (or being) the goddess. Frequently a double axe (transfigured deity as a honeybee) was carved onto pillars at Malia, Knossos and Phaistos. The double axe represented the epiphany of the goddess from the ritually sacrificed bull who appeared as a butterfly or honey bee. The purpose of engraving a honeybee (double axe) onto a pillar was to imbue the tapered pillar with her power.

There are rooms with pillars (hall of pillars) in elaborate homes and centers which must have been cult rooms or sacred places of divinity worship. In basements and lower levels pillar crypts existed which were furnished with ritual objects. Evans believed that pillar rooms served a religious purpose, especially the deep basement chambers with pillars (1921:146). Perhaps this was an architectural way of bringing the cave into the house, court center or sanctuary.

At Phaistos the pillar crypts contained low benches, table of offerings with designs of bulls and snakes, conch shell, cups, bowls, stone pounder for grain, clay lamps, large polychrome pot, steatite libation bowl decorated with rosettes (Evans 1921:220-223). At Knossos in one pillar crypt was found a terracotta miniature pillar shrine with altars and sacral horns. There are water birds perched on the pillars "creating the sense of the descent of divinity into the pillar" (Evans 1921:224). "When approached by invocations and offerings, the Goddess would infuse her spiritual being with the pillar" (Evans, 1928:322). The southeast cult house of Knossos had a rectangular room with one pillar. The pillar was engraved with a double axe on one of its upper blocks. At its base was a pyramidal gypsum block which held a double axe clearly representing the epiphany of the goddess. An ivory knot (sacral knot worn by priestesses) was found in the anteroom along with a six-legged offering table (Evans 1921:441)

I think the pillared crypt is a representation of a sacred cave in which the divinity inhabited. This sacred construct was brought into Cretan architecture for rituals that can elicit the divinity within the house or court centered building. This became a visible, centralized activity of the priestesses within the center or House. At Malia, a sunken room became a pillared crypt with the double axe or honey bee repeated on one of the pillars symbolizing the presence of the goddess. At Hagia Triada there was a pillar crypt possibly dating to MMI. The

floor of this crypt held a polychrome vase in the form of a dove (or water bird?). On a clay floor above this pillar crypt were cups with Linear A inscription which Evans (1921:616) suggests had a religious character.

Sunken rooms (lustral basins) found in court centered buildings and Houses, may have represented the symbolic descent into the cave where the spirit of divinity was believed to be encountered, hence the offering tables, libation vessels, and cups of offering found in these rooms. Four pillars (denoting the presence of the goddess), either surrounded the sunken room or were located on one side. This prevalent architecture may have satisfied the need to bring the cave into the home or center where rites could most readily be carried out by the priestess or family elder. MM III Knossos had a sunken room in the southeast "palace" angle. Its dimensions were 2.2m x 2m. and was lined and paved with gypsum slabs. There were five steps that led down into it which were flanked by a short balustrade. On the floor was a clay flask for holding oil according to Evans. Was it possible that visitors to court centered buildings and matrilineage Established Houses had to undergo "purification" rites before meeting with the elders, high priestess, or entering into communal religious rites (Evans, 1928: 331)? Evans believed these sunken rooms were not basins to hold water, but used for an anointing ceremony. Baetyls were rounded or pointed large stones that were brought down into the settlement more commonly in the Neopalatial. They may have symbolized the mountain peak.

### **Middle Minoan I and II: A time of Widespread Wealth, Artistic Creativity and Cretan Cults Performed within Regions**

MMI saw a blossoming of trade with Egypt, Anatolia, the Levant, the Cyclades and the Mainland with prosperity resounding throughout the Cretan Island. Watrous (2005:256)

indicates a wide distribution of wealth in the Mesara which was not just confined to the main Houses or centers. Dispersed wealth is also documented for central and eastern Crete as well. The number of elite houses in Vasiliki increased from one-two in EM IIB to eight in MM IA (Watrous 2005:261). These elite houses could have housed the elders of the Maximal and Major segment heads. There was extraordinary creativity, vitality, and experimentation in the ceramic arts. There were adoptions of new artistic techniques (Peatfield, 2016). I am suggesting that the matrilineal system at all segment levels encouraged this creativity. As a result, there certainly was economic benefit. Perhaps, trading and traveling with clan relatives in other regions contributed to the stimulus of design.

In addition to decentralized wealth and artistic creativity was the local cultic worship of many manifestations. Peatfield (2016) considers this period a flowering of Cretan religious expression. Cultic expression was found at all levels of the matrilineage (households) and in settlement shrines where most likely the elders of the segment levels and matrilineages led the cultic experience. Ancestress/tor veneration continued at the tombs and at secondary burial locations. Regional sacred mountain peaks and caves were busy with initiation rites as evidenced by an abundance of clay figurines left behind, and divinity worship conducted by local priestesses. The landscape was sacred, and there were local rites at spring sanctuaries and olive groves where spirits of nature were worshiped. All these rites were performative and ecstatic according to Peatfield (2016). The rituals affected the worshipers as much as those who led them. Worship of divinity flourished regionally with priestesses probably crediting their local prosperity to their religious petitions.



Everywhere in Bronze Age Crete, on pottery, in sculpture, painting, engravings, seals and seal stones, there are the horns of consecration with a hole in the center to hold the double axe or honey bee which represents the epiphany of the goddess of regeneration from the sacrificed bull. Almost “everywhere” are symbols of vegetation, plants or trees for which the goddess of regeneration is responsible and with whom she also appears. Evans (1928:277) noted the “constant intrusion of religious elements into the affairs of ordinary life. He thought religion was a marked feature of Minoan life which was also very busy and prosperous.

Gimbutas (1996) and MacGillivray (2010) point out that religious or cultic objects are “everywhere” in Bronze Age Crete, in the (1) home (altars, incense burners, shrines, rhyta or ritual vessels either on altars or altar platforms. Most likely elder women within the Minor and Minimal segments led the worship for the family in which all members participated performatively; (2) Within the settlement, in public spaces, courts and Houses there were shrines, double axes with stands, horns of consecration, ritual vessels, cups, sunken rooms, (lustral basins for purification rites?), and pillared rooms. These services were most likely arranged by the heads of Major segment or Maximal lineage and/or their priestesses; (3) In tombs symbols of divinity have been found suggesting a belief of return in the afterlife; (4) Significant cultic activity took place on peak sanctuaries. Mountain peaks and caves (twenty-three of them during MMI and II) had the most visible archaeological assemblages pointing to divinity worship. I believe these rites were led by a hierarchy of regional priestesses who assuredly took credit for Cretan prosperity as a result of their communion with the goddess.

MacGillivray and Sackett (2010:576) believe that the complex association of cultic artifacts and structures implies that Bronze Age Cretan participants celebrated a complex cultic

activity, evidence of which is found island wide. Divinity worship continued on mountain peaks, caves, sacred groves, and external sanctuaries. Depictions found on rings, seal stones and seals showed a divinity associated with plants or trees or sacred olive groves (emphasizing regeneration of vegetation). Frequently on these items a single woman, interpreted as a goddess, is depicted on a mountain peak with or without a sanctuary, but usually with a guardian dog or lion at her side. Peatfield (2016) considers that the Protopalatial period represents an apogee of Cretan religious expression.

During Middle Minoan times regionalism and decentralization seemed to have prevailed. MacGillivray and Sackett (2010:576) believe that these cultic and social activities were decentralized, conducted regionally or within site. Most likely priestesses from high-ranking Maximal lineages conducted a variety of ceremonies in a variety of locations within the region and in court centers. They had considerable influence over all the matrilineages within the region. The hierarchy of priestesses regionally may be analogous to the Zuni (Appendix Two), although the Cretans most likely had women conducting the divinity and initiation ceremonies.

Around MM II divinity worship was brought into large, communal court centers within major regional sites, but the sacred peaks were prominently viewed from them. There was a strong visual, and presumably spiritual, relationship between the external sanctuary and the internal court centered complex of the regional main site. Regional peak sanctuaries and caves continued as worshipping sites through MM III but were reduced in number, from twenty-three sacred peaks to thirteen. Is it possible that elite priestesses brought worship into the settlement court centered building where they were more prominently visible? Did this extend

their influence and control? The worship in court centers seemed to have been carried out by a small group of priestesses/elites who had their own small dining room (found at MM II Phaistos and Malia) supplied with cult objects (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:288-9; Gesell, 1985: 120). By bringing communal cult into the settlement, ranked matrilineal priestesses were visible on a daily basis at their craft.

### **Villas/Estates: Established Houses of the Heads of Matrilineages**

The prosperity of MMI and II led to rather large, and elaborate villas which held storerooms, cult rooms and adjacent workshops. Driessen (2011) uses the concept of Established House to refer to the large, multi-room, residential structures which he argues were occupied by a matrilineal family. I suggest that Driessen's Established Houses are the elaborate, wealthy homes of the elders of the Maximal lineage (the heads of the entire matrilineage) or a Major segment. These elders most likely controlled interregional and Aegean trade with the products made by their lower segments. These Established Houses occupied villas or estates throughout Crete from the Final Neolithic Period into the Late Minoan.

By the Neopalatial Period villas were often two stories with staircases, pillar crypts, sunken rooms (lustral basins), storerooms, fine crafts, export or imported pottery, silver, gold and gem jewelry, cult objects such as double axes and their bases, ritual vessels, and decorated altars, etc. These villas or Established Houses had their own seal which identified the matrilineage in trading. They had storage structures, record-keeping documents, and ceremonial rooms (Hamilakes, 2002). Hamilakes (2002) states that the villas were not isolated; on the contrary they were surrounded by settlements, and he views the villas as centers of authority. The settlement around the villa consisted of houses of less grandeur, simple homes.

Hamilakes (2002) sees the urban and rural villas as seats of factions which organized social gatherings, ceremonies and operated on a local and regional level. I view the villas as the seats or Established Houses of the Maximal or Major matrilineage heads, and the adjacent settlement as the lower segments of the same matrilineage. Matrilineage is a vertical system of integration so these lesser houses were most likely the Minor and Minimal segments that belonged to the same matrilineage as the grand House. The lower segments may have been the producers of food and local crafts which their elders in the Major and Maximal segments traded inter-regionally or abroad.

According to Driessen (2014) there is evidence of matrilineally organized houses from the Late Neolithic through LMIIIC. He points out that even as early as the Final Neolithic large, multi-roomed, residential complexes were found in Gazi, Aphodite, Kephali and Khania. These sites contain centralized buildings with outside, large scale communal storage and open courts.

Houses, grand and small, were rebuilt using existing structures and repeating the same house plan. Driessen (2014) states this demonstrates the intergenerational investment of a social group into the existing house plan. I argue that these matrilineal houses believed in the reincarnation of their ancestresses/tors into subsequent generations. Apparently the ancestors liked to return to reside in their original home.

Driessen (2011) has presented a careful argument based on ethnography and material remains of residence and tombs that Bronze Age Cretan society was matrilineal and matrilocal. Some of the data he uses are as follows: (1) The size of residence is considerably larger in a matrilineal household than in a patrilineal household. (2) There is an absence of double walls or subdivisions that is routinely found in a nuclear family home. In the Cretan homes, "It is

almost impossible to isolate internal sections.” (Driessen, 2011) . (3) The Cretan houses have communal, architectural features, such as large, empty rooms or halls. In like fashion, the Minangkabau Minimal segment, or the Adap household, shares architectural features present in Bronze Age Cretan residences. The Adap household on average houses seven women, a mother, her sisters, aunts and grandmother along with children, brothers and uncles. The large house is divided into two sections: the front half was undivided and essentially a communal space for working, eating, rituals and sleeping for young children and unmarried girls. The back half was divided into private rooms, one for each married woman, her husband (nocturnal visits) and the youngest children. Unmarried men of the Minangkabau Adap household do not sleep there at night. They sleep in coffee houses or mosques with other unmarried men. Married brothers and uncles sleep at their wife’s matrilineal Adap household (duolocal residence). However, all brothers and uncles eat, work and perform family rituals in their matrilineal Adap home during the day (Kato, 1978). Like their sisters they are descended from the same household ancestress. The Minangkabau matrilineages are highly productive and segmented. Under these circumstances the matrilineage cannot afford spatial separation from their matrilineal men (brothers and uncles), so the residence pattern of married men is duolocal (Schneider, 1961a). Men remain with their matrilineal residence by day (or perform their work activities outside) and visit their wives in another matrilineal Adap household at night. Marriages are local within the settlement, adjacent village, or region. Men in matrilineal societies tend to spend time away from home in trading or working. Women are the constant feature of the spatial locus of a matrilineage. This is the case for the Minangkabau and traditional Ashanti, and most likely was similar for the Bronze Age Cretans. I believe the

duolocal system worked for the Bronze Age Cretans because they too were a highly productive society that needed their men folk for external trade, sea-faring, and communal building projects.. The Cretan matrilineal system, I suggest, like the Ashanti and Minangkabau, was complex, segmented and duolocal.

I have argued that Bronze Age Cretans practiced duolocal residence. This would require a minimum of two Established Houses surrounded by their associated settlement (lower segments) with their matrilineal tomb in close proximity to practice cross-cousin marriage easily. More often there were four Established Houses around a major court centered building (Knossos), or in designated wards within a site (Palaikastro, Malia) or region. Each Established House was near its matrilineal land (for horticulture, gathering, and herding), its tomb, and cave, if the cave was utilized as their first settlement and then subsequently for secondary burial or relocation of bones.

As Driessen (2011) and others have pointed out, residential structures, large and small, were reused, renovated, and rebuilt. If forsaken, a gift or sacrifice was placed inside the building. Multiple generations used the same structure as residence over and over again. This can only be explained by the model of matrilineal society which revered ancestors and believed in their reincarnation (Somersan, 1984). In other words, fundamental to matrilineal society is the belief that an ancestor will be reborn into a newborn member of the same matrilineage (in many cases). It is believed that the ancestors want to return to their homes and residences and that they retain a strong interest in their land and the behavior of their descendants (Nayars, Ashanti).

### **Established Houses were widespread in Crete during the Early Neopalatial Period**

The Established House system was widespread during the early Neopalatial (MM III-LM IA) throughout Crete even while the Houses surrounding Knossos were extending their power. At Palaikastro Driessen (2002) states that each clan had a large House with a large hall and a sunken room (lustral basin) surrounded by four columns. The sunken room with columns represented a ritual space that a person may have entered into first. The large hall inside the House would have been used for matrilineal meetings, celebrations, feasting and receptions for trading partners. Such Houses were regularly distributed on different blocks along "Main Street". He states that Knossos and Tylissos followed a similar pattern as probably did Mochlos as well ([minoancrete.org/Mochlos](http://minoancrete.org/Mochlos)).

Schoep (2002a) argues essentially that an Established House existed in the Villa Reale in Agia Triada. Villa Reale was a central, high-profile building built in the early Neopalatial Period (MMIII-LMIA) with architectural influences from Knossos. It was in close walking distance to Phaistos court centered building, and a settlement was organized around the House, most likely its own lower segments. It consisted of two buildings on two sides of a courtyard (the court of the shrines). At the juncture of the two buildings was the "most important part of the building". It contained the main hall, rooms with benches and an archive of sealings. The buildings held apartments, light wells, shrines, storage rooms, workshops, staircases, porticos, frescoes and courts ([minoancrete.org/agtriada](http://minoancrete.org/agtriada)). Agia Triada contained some of the largest collection of Linear A documents many of which were kept at Villa Reale along with sealings. The Linear A tablets recorded agricultural commodities such as wheat, barley, wine, figs and oil (Schoep, 2002a). Some extraordinary objects were found at Villa Reale including the Boxer vase and the

Harvester vase. The famous sarcophagus (larnax?) was found in a nearby cemetery ([minoancrete.org/agtriada](http://minoancrete.org/agtriada)).

While the reconstruction of the court center at Phaistos faltered in MMIII and was effectively abandoned, Agia Triada prospered in all respects. I would identify this House as the seat of the elders of a Maximal Lineage who were most likely the scribes as well. They produced the tablets to record the inventoried commodities and created their own matrilineal sealings to identify their products. The Villa Reale matrilineage collected commodities from its settlement and possibly beyond and traded them far and wide. Neopalatial Villa Reale's trade network has been identified by its matrilineal seal impressions found at Sklavokambos, Knossos, Zakro, Akrotiri, and perhaps Khandia. Knossos may have been an influencer and consumer of Agia Triada's production, but it certainly allowed the matrilineage at Villa Reale to prosper in the early Neopalatial. In addition, with the shrines located within Villa Reale and without, I suggest the matrilineage produced priestesses (priests) that served, not only the matrilineage, but neighboring ones as well. There were other prosperous Houses as well in the region: Kommos' building T (MMIII) had a central court for the meeting of the matrilineage, Khandia's central House stored documents in the form of rondels that recorded tripods, textiles and baskets (Schoep 2002). A great number of Mesaran, Neopalatial households were involved in trade. The economy was not centralized. The prominence of grand Houses in the Western Mesara seemed to have persisted through early LMI and their worship continued at their local peak sanctuary.

That the matrilineal system was widespread and vibrant during the early Neopalatial Period is evidenced by the widespread distribution of the Established House system throughout



much of Crete: Achladia, Ayios Giorgios, Ayia Photia, Siteia, Klimataria, Myrtos-Pyrgos, Gournia, and Mochlos are just a few examples of these Established Houses (minoancrete.org). These villas were centers of small settlements (Wiener, 2016) most likely their matrilineal segments. The Houses administered the economic and craft activities associated with their matrilineal land and resources, recorded the commodities on tablets, applied the matrilineal sealings to them, engaged in regional and far-ranging trade, celebrations and feasting (inter-matrilineal and clan), participated in local and regional initiation and divinity rites, offered hospitality to visitors, and, of course, observed their own internal, matrilineal observances (ancestress/tor rites and local divinity worship). The Established House system which, as the seats of the heads of several Maximal matrilineages, was the foundation of economic productivity in early Neopalatial Crete.

Warren (2002) believes that thirteen regions persisted in the Neopalatial period. Within many of these regions, villas or Established Houses seemed to be the main structures which were surrounded by settlements, their lower segments. The settlements and villas were not fortified and there was easy access to them. Warren (2002) argues there was no inter-settlement factionalism or conflict during MM IIB – LM IA. There was competition, but he believes it was peaceful. This would suggest that in early LM the matrilineal system was very much intact throughout Crete and their control was still regional, even though Knossos was extending its power and influence.

### **Knossian Power**

Nevertheless, the influence of the Knossian Established Houses was pervasive in the early Neopalatial and there is debate as to how extensive it actually was. Wiener (2016),

Driessen and Langohr (2014) and Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou (2005) (view the court centered building of Knossos as a central authority over all of Crete in LMI. Other scholars dispute this centralization ( Warren 2002; Schoep 2002a; MacDonald 2002). For sure the Knossian matrilineages excelled at their major trade routes with Egypt and the Near East and elsewhere through their connections with the trade hub at Akrotiri on Thera. Warren's (2002) view is that the Knossian (matrilineages) controlled all central Crete until the end of LM IB and the source of this secular power was overseas trading. Other parts of Neopalatial Crete did not display Knossian influence (eastern regions including Zakros and Palaikastro and possibly the far western region, Chania ) while Agia Triada did. The Knossian matrilineages established roads throughout Crete and colonies throughout the Aegean (for precious metals and other resources).

The Cretan road system was key, according to Evans (1928:97,224) for the uniformity of culture in the Neopalatial. By late LMIA the Cretan world becomes standardized under the aegis of the matrilineages of Knossos. This includes the sites of Malia, Agia Triada, Kommos and the Cyclades which were unified under the rule of Knossos (Wiener 2016). He suggests that the Knossian center was a military power. I believe the matrilineages around Knossos and at other Cretan sites produced fine bronze weaponry...mostly for export. There is no evidence that Cretan matrilineages fought each other or waged war in the Aegean (Warren 2002). What then was the source of Knossian power during the Neopalatial?

### **The Knossian Northcentral Region and its Established Houses**

To understand this, we need first to understand the functions of court centered buildings in the Cretan context. From Late Neolithic times (if not before), Knossos (Phaistos and

Malia) were large, open courts that hold matrilineal council meetings, inter-matrilineal councils, competitions, feasting and ceremonies. They were not palaces. By EM IIB these open spaces added buildings to their large central and west courts (Driessen, 2014; minoancrete.com). Still, they were not palaces; they were spaces for matrilineal councils, meetings, competitive sports, and feasting. You might say they represented Cretan matrilineal and inter-matrilineal public works projects. In MM, they became centers of cult because symbols of mountain and cave were brought into court centered buildings (and villas). Knossos led the way, and I believe its four (?) Maximal Lineages provided priestesses who led the cultic rituals at Knossos, and over much of Crete and its colonies. Knossos is acknowledged as the oldest site in Crete, dating to 7000 BCE. Its "tell" on Kephala Hill is 40 ft deep according to Evans (1920). At least two Knossian matrilineages may have sent their Minimal segments (like the Adap household) to the Mesara Plain to found the Phaistos settlement around 4,000 BCE and another two Minimal segments possibly founded the Agia Triada settlement at the end of the Neolithic (or Agia Triada could have been founded by Minimal segments from Phaistos.) The Knossian matrilineages, I believe, were the original founder lineages of central Crete and the Mesara which gave them (Knossos) an inherent authority or supremacy over these settlements. The Knossos matrilineage(s) may have had the same relationship with Malia.

Where then were the matrilineal Established Houses that made up the region that utilized the Knossian court centered complex? Definitely in the settlement surrounding Knossos. In addition, I think we need to look a little farther out in north central Crete at major sites that formed a necklace around Knossos. Archanes, Nirou-Chani, Tylissos, Amnissos, and Kastelli Pediadas appeared to be some of the main sites of Established Houses that supported

the regional court center at Knossos. These sites in particular had large, high-profile buildings (Schoep 2002a) or cemeteries.

The Archanes court centered building and settlement lie under the current town of Archanes, Tourkogitonia district. It may have had two-three storied wings, workshops, large halls, and frescoes ([second.wikipedia.org/wiki/palast\\_von-archanes](https://second.wikipedia.org/wiki/palast_von-archanes)). The court seemed to have been large ([cretanbeaches.com/archanes](https://cretanbeaches.com/archanes)) which suggests a meeting place for matrilineage(s) and possibly for animal sacrifice (?) but certainly feasting. The court had a platform with an altar that had fragments of cult vessels, animal bones, and a drainage channel ([second.wiki/wiki/palast\\_von-archanes](https://second.wiki/wiki/palast_von-archanes)). Archanes is 6.8 km south of Knossos and is located on a fertile plain with natural springs. In Bronze Age times Archanes provided water for Kephala Hill through its aqueducts ([en.wikipedia.org/archanes](https://en.wikipedia.org/archanes)). Among the material remains was a model of a two-storey house, possibly representing an Established House of a matrilineal higher- status elder. Archanes was clearly an important settlement to Knossos. It provided water, produce, other commodities and perhaps most importantly a cemetery(ies) for the burial of high-ranking women , some of whom may have come from Knossos.

The cemetery of Archanes was only 950 m from the settlement and was connected to it by a paved path ([second.wikipedia.org/wiki/palast\\_von-archanes](https://second.wikipedia.org/wiki/palast_von-archanes)). The cemetery was in use from 2400 BCE to 1,000 BCE or into Mycenaean times. There were three Cretan large house tombs, each of which contained dozens of well protected burials ([alpha-omegaonline.com/archanes-fourni](https://alpha-omegaonline.com/archanes-fourni)): Tholos Tomb B was built at the end of EBA and “used for burials of royal descent” up to LMIIIA ([minoancrete.com/phourni](https://minoancrete.com/phourni)); Tholos Tomb C, one of the best preserved pre-palatial tholos tombs in Crete, dated to EMIII (2250-2100 BCE); Tholos Tomb

E which was the first tomb built in Phourni cemetery dated to 2400-2300 BCE or EMIII. Wiener (2016) suggests that these impressive burial sites at Phourni-Archanes were for the Knossian lineages. Perhaps the most striking data came from later tombs. In Tholos Tomb A, a single high status female was buried in the 14<sup>th</sup> century BCE along with a sacrificed horse and bull's head. She was buried with much jewelry including a gold ring that showed a Cretan cult scene. Was she a high ranking Cretan priestess still practicing Cretan cult in the 14<sup>th</sup> century? Was she local to Fourni or was she from Knossos? Tholos Tomb D contained the single burial of a woman dated to LMIIIA2, or after 1350 BC. The wealth of the woman indicates a second most important burial after that of Tholos Tomb A ([minoancrete.org/fourni](http://minoancrete.org/fourni)). Archanes court centered building was demolished in the "final destruction" of 1450 BCE, while the cemetery at Fourni continued in use through Mycenaean times.

Amnissos was most likely the port of the matrilineages of Knossos. Much of the settlement is submerged today under the sea. Amnissos was situated at the mouth of the river Amnissos. Its fresh water begins at Mt. Ida, runs through Kateras Ravine to the site of Amnissos where it becomes the Amnissos river and flows out to the sea. One LM IA villa has been excavated at the site. It had two storeys, ten rooms a paved court, a hall, shrine, etc. Frescoes were painted on the walls of the second storey giving the name "House of Lilies" by the excavator to the villa. Clearly as a source of fresh water and port this site was important to the matrilineages around Knossos. It was destroyed in 1450 BCE along with other major sites in Crete except Knossos by Mycenaean Greeks ([Wikipedia.org/wiki/Amnissos](http://Wikipedia.org/wiki/Amnissos)). Poros just north of Knossos on the sea was probably also used a Cretan port.

Another gem in the necklace around Knossos was the port settlement and LMIA/B villa or Nirou Khani not far from Amnissos. It was a magnificent House, two storied, forty rooms on the ground floor alone, two courtyards, and two storage areas, etc. The north storage area housed perishable goods while the southern storage area housed a plethora of cult items. The list is quite long and it has been argued that the number of cult items suggest some were for export or travel ([minoancrete.com/nirou](http://minoancrete.com/nirou)). Among the many cult items found were four, huge bronze double axes coated with gold foil, each one placed in stepped, steatite base. Evans (1921:405) stated that the principal chambers were entirely devoted to cult. I would like to suggest that Nirou Khani was the Established House of a line of high status priestesses. These ladies (lady?) served at the court centered building at Knossos, most likely Mt. Jouktas and perhaps at Psychro Cave. However, the lady or ladies who lived at Nirou Khani most likely had the main role to travel abroad (Akrotiri, the Cyclades, and possibly Egypt) to perform rituals with the objects she/they brought with her/them .

Tylissos was a Cretan town just to the west of Knossos. There were two main houses (House A and C) and a smaller house (House B) that may have been used as an annex for storage. Houses A and C were built at the very end of MM III (1600 BCE). The town seems to have been settled in EMII-MMII. No court centered building has been found at Tylissos. Much of the architecture was palatial in nature and similar to Knossos. House A was the most impressive of the three buildings. It was built with ashlar masonry; it had pillared courts, porticos, lightwells, storage rooms, a Minoan Hall (footnote on Minoan Hall). North of the Hall was a sunken room (lustral basin). Weaving was performed in House A and four large bronze cauldrons were found in room five along with Linear A tablets and sealings. The mansions were

able to obtain large amounts of copper. House A appears to have belonged to the heads of a Maximal Lineage. House C was built about the same time as Houses A and B. It was at least two stories with three staircases leading to the upper floors. There were fragments of frescoes that fell from the upper floor and Linear A tablets. It had a possible shrine, store rooms, a sunken room and a residential area. I suggest this house belonged to the heads of a second matrilineage at Tyliisos. The people of Tyliisos even used their local peak sanctuary on Pyrgos hill above the site until LMIA. Tyliisos appears to have been the settlement of two major matrilineages who possibly may have controlled the copper trade for north central Crete, and possibly beyond. The Houses were destroyed in LM IB (1450 BCE) ([minoanarchaeology.com/tyliisos](http://minoanarchaeology.com/tyliisos)).

Kastelli Pediada was settled during the Neolithic in one of the most fertile areas of Crete east of Archanes. (Was it settled by a Minimal segment from Archanes or Knossos?) By MM IB the settlement surrounded a central two story, large building (House). Kastelli was an important pottery manufacturing site. The pottery produced at Galatas and Kastelli Pedidadas had an indigenous cultural tradition which often imitated metal ware. It was imported by Knossos for tableware and may have had high symbolic value as it was used for ceremonial activities and feasting. In MM I Kastelli Pediada, its matrilineage(s) operated independently but this ceased in the early Neopalatial Period (Rethemiotakis, G. and K.S. Christakis 2004). Did it come under control of a higher lineage segment closer to Knossos? I believe these sites that circled the court center at Knossos were the economic basis of the Knossian north central region. These Established Houses were the administrators and traders of their matrilineages industrial and commodity production. They were close enough to each other (or within the same settlement)

to sustain duolocal marital residence. These sites served as ports, sources of water, possibly a burial location for the Knossian Established Houses, home of a high ranking priestess, and as producers and traders of bronze and fine pottery.

I believe it was possible for the seats of these Maximal Lineages to have gathered at the grand court centered building at Knossos to conduct inter-matrilineal councils, competitions, feasting, diplomacy and cult. These sites, and perhaps there are others, produced evidence of trade, documents, tombs, and community storage facilities that provided the economic support for the large regional center at Knossos which permitted supra-regional gatherings, cult and feasting. The items in grand Houses' storage facilities were mobilized for large scale community events usually of a highly ritualized character at court centered buildings (Driessen 2014). The "necklace" of matrilineal Houses around Knossos were situated close to their land, resources, ports, Mt. Jouktas and their supra-regional court centered building at Knossos. These grand Houses and sites, arranged in a circle around Knossos, were engaged in regional and Aegean trade from early Minoan times through late Minoan. For the seats of Knossian secular, economic power we need to look at these north central Cretan sites as well as possibly some Mesaran sites.

What then was Knossos? The answer has been given many times....a large, court center building for communal gatherings (Driessen 2014) which later became a magnificent shrine completely dedicated to the worship of a female divinity ( Evans 1921, 1928; MacDonald, 2002; Gunkel-Maschek, 2016; Cameron 2005). Knossos, and other court centered buildings, were a uniquely Cretan creation, an architectural space for the gathering of matrilineages and their celebrations. Court centered buildings were not seats of centralized secular power. They were



not homes of kings or queens (Driessen 2002). They were not palaces, even though in LMIA priestesses did move into a few selected court centered buildings. Evans called the court centered building at Knossos “the shrine of the double axe”. The entire building was devoted to the ceremonial ritual of cult in LMIA. MacDonald (2002) named LMIA Knossos as the “Frescoed Palace”. He states that LMIA Knossos emphasized cult, not secular power. Gunkel-Maschek (2016) states that by LMI the Knossian court centered building itself is represented not only as a focus of ritual...but as the earthly abode of divinity and the seat of her human agent. Was this then the real source of Knossian (central Cretan) power and where did this source of power reside?

### **The Matrilineal Basis for Cretan Woman/Priestess' Power**

Land and resources passed from ancestress to the eldest daughter of the ancestress, from there to her sisters in descending birth order, after that to the eldest daughter of the eldest sister and so on. Men, while belonging to their mother's matrilineage, did not inherit the land or resources. This is why in historic matrilineal societies, men can manage a matrilineage, but important decisions regarding the land and resources depend on the entire council of that segment, especially women. In addition, ancestor worship was most likely prevalent in Bronze Age Cretan society probably from the Neolithic era. Women, most likely, had the main role in venerating their ancestress...with brothers and uncles particularly venerating former segment heads (males or male and females). Women were the only vehicle for regenerating the next generation through the reincarnation of the ancestors.

Birth order of daughters and sons was probably very important in assigning the roles of priestess and priest in the segment. I suggest that the first daughter and first son held these

statuses. Every segment level from the Maximal lineage down to the Minimal (household) segment produced, in most cases, a priestess and a priest who carried out ancestral veneration. All members of the segment participated, and the veneration was performative, ecstatic, etc., but, I believe, that a designated birth-order of sisters and brothers led these veneration in a complex, segmented matrilineage. Ancestress/tor veneration took place at all segment levels including the Maximal Lineage. The priestess and priest of the Maximal Lineage household, (Established House) most likely led the veneration and feasting at the matrilineal tombs or at the secondary burial sites of the ancestors.

This same cultural structure and process, I believe, was prevalent in divinity worship. Cult was performed at all segment levels within the matrilineage. The only difference from ancestor veneration was that cultic worship was shared with other matrilineages locally and regionally. Within settlements and regions there were courts of all sizes where local matrilineages could meet, hold council meetings and share divinity worship. Shared cultic worship also took place regionally at sacred mountain peaks and regional court center buildings. I suggest that the priestesses/priests of the Maximal Lineages of the region participated together in conducting regional cultic worship. Matrilineages were ranked, and I suggest there was a hierarchy of priestesses/priests at the regional level that reflected these differences. The first born sister of a highly ranked matrilineage would be the main priestess for divinity worship.

### **The Knossian Houses of Priestesses**

Possibly for most of MMIII the necklace or ring of Established Houses in northcentral Crete around Knossos held the residence of both secular power (elders of the Maximal

Lineages) and that of religious power (their matrilineal priestesses). The secular power of the Knossian matrilineages extended through central Crete, Malia, Agia Triada, Akrotiri and other Cycladian colonies. The secular goal was to control much of the foreign trade of Crete through Akrotiri with the Mainland, Egypt and Near East, as well as the mineral resources of the Cycladic islands (MacDonald, 2002; Wiener, 2016). The secular power of the matrilineages remained in the ring of great Established Houses outside Knossos. At the end of MM III and through LM IA the priestesses from these same, northcentral matrilineages moved into houses next to the Knossian court center building and into the great center itself. These houses became the homes of priestess from the northcentral matrilineages but not their Established Houses. Was their purpose strictly religious, cultic or was it political and economic? Were these homes for the priestesses strictly cultic homes? Did the Knossian ring of matrilineages want to control exchange and trade in Crete through the power of the priestesses? In this case the Knossian priestesses curtailed the usage of the court center at Phaistos for ceremony (footnote on Phaistos) while most likely took over the court center at Malia after the MMIIB earthquake (footnote on Malia). The Knossian priestesses promoted a uniformity to material culture that had the imprint of Knossian style, and hailed Mt. Jouktas and the Knossos court center as the main centers of divinity cult for much of Crete.

The presence of the Knossian northcentral priestesses was possibly part time in the houses surrounding the Knossos court center building, but some may have settled permanently in the Little Palace and within the Knossos court center building itself. These priestesses' houses that surrounded Knossos were not full-fledged administrative Established Houses. The priestesses' houses, and some were quite grand, were simply cult houses that

were for the most part, temporary homes for priestesses. There are several candidates for priestess' houses that date from different times, but most are early Neopalatial. Immediately outside the Knossos court center are, South House( MM IIIB/LM IA) (Lloyd, 2011), House of the Fallen Blocks or House of the Chancel Screen (MM IIIA) (Evans, 1921; Mathioudaki, 2019), Southeast House (House of the Sacrificed Oxen) (MMIIIA)(Evans, 1921; Mathioudaki, 2019), Little Palace (Neopalatial) (Evans, 1921;sites.dartmouth.edu), Royal Villa (Neopalatial) (sites.dartmoluth.edu), House of Frescoes, (The Northside House) (LMI), (Warren,1985) and perhaps more. Both the Little Palace and Royal Villa were north of the court center.

The Little Palace was a large and impressive mansion linked by a bridge at the second storey to the "Unexplored Mansion" which seemed to house storage and work areas. The Little Palace may have had three stories. It had a Minoan Hall, and three pillar crypts in the basement. The famous bull's head rhyton of black steatite was found in the one of the pillar crypts (Evans, 1921:425). In a pillar sanctuary Evans (1921:311) reported a double axe with a black steatite base. In the southwest pillar crypt there was a small, lead image of a snake "goddess" (Evans:1928:322). There was a shrine, a sunken room (lustral basin) and a room with a toilet. Pieces of stalagmites, natural stone concretions, had fallen from the upper floor into the sunken room suggesting the continuing, cultic/divinity significance of cave stalagmites. Also fallen from the upper floor into the sunken room were horns of consecration and animal figurines. The Peristyle Hall was the largest room on the ground. It had eight columns located around the square hall. It was accessible from all directions. It was across from the Minoan Hall. The Little Palace was occupied as late as LMIIIB when it was deliberately set on fire (minoancrete.org/little\_palace).

According to Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou (2005) the Royal Villa was built in MM III and remodeled in LMIA with Knossian architecture, frescoes and had Knossian fine vases. The Royal Villa was three stories tall with a Minoan Hall and pillared halls. A well- preserved pillar crypt was found whose ceiling was supported by large tree trunks. The crypt had a central pillar in a gypsum floor. Around the pillar a channel and two basins or cists had been cut into the floor possibly to catch liquid offerings. The Little Palace has a small hall with a closet and a possible bathroom, possibly a residential quarter (sites.dartmoluth.edu).

The Southeast House (MM IIIA) had two levels with many rooms with frescoed walls. It had a pillar crypt that was preceded by an anteroom that had a ritual table. The table was painted deep red with white rosettes (female fertility). The crypt had pyramidal shaped blocks of gypsum next to each pillar. Each gypsum block had a hole or socket presumably to hold a double axe (symbol of female divinity as butterfly or honey bee) (Evans, 1921:425). Most of these residences had ritual double axes some coated with gold foil (Evans 1921:379-425).

Perhaps the smallest Neopalatial house next to Knossos court center was the South House. It was a two level house with eight interior spaces on the ground floor and two full basement rooms, one of which was a pillar crypt. It had a Minoan Hall, sunken room, upper and lower columnar halls, and a bathroom with lavatory. According to Lloyd (2011) most of the rooms on the ground floor had built in features that suggest they were used for cultic activities. Elegant silver ceremonial vases and fresco fragments were found. There were little to no architectural features to indicate food preparation, craft work or manufacturing. According to the author it may have been used only for short periods of time and for special purposes such as ceremonies and receiving dignitaries.

These houses next to the Knossos court center all have cultic, ceremonial and meeting rooms. They do not have workrooms or magazines or tablets (Linear A) or sealings or storage pithoi that were found in the administrative Established Houses that circled the Knossos court center in the northcentral region. These cult houses probably were the residences of priestesses and priests who came from the Established Houses to perform supra-regional cultic ceremonies at the center, receive guests from foreign countries and prepare for travel within Crete and to Akrotiri on Thera and beyond. The power of the Knossian matrilineages over much of Crete was cultic or religious. This power was administered by its very own priestesses who resided temporarily or permanently in the priestess houses immediately outside the Knossos court center or within the center itself.

### **Head Priestess(es) Moved into Knossos Court Center**

In MM III, the Knossos court center was an accessible, open ceremonial center that welcomed the community. Large numbers of people (for the region and beyond) were accommodated for ritual, ceremonial, and social activities (MacDonald, 2002). During late MM III the basic layout of the Throne Room in the West Wing of Knossos and the head priestess' quarters in the East Wing (Queen's quarters or Domestic quarters) were established. At the end of MM IIIB there were a series of earthquakes island wide. Knossos was severely damaged, but the open court and West Wing remained mostly intact. Rebuilding took place that excluded sections of the community that had lent their support to the original project (MacDonald, 2002) (footnote on Neopalatial dining quarters just for the elite). By LMI Evans (1921:134, 414) referred to Knossos as the "House of the Double Axe". With its multiple sanctuaries it became

“the” Cretan center of cult, rather than a location for regional council meetings and social activities. Essentially it became “closed to the public”.

Beginning in MM III and reconstructed in LMIA residential quarters were built in the East Wing of Knossos. At the same time an attempt was made to construct a residence in the northern part of the southeast insula at the court center at Knossos (Evans 1921:560) (See footnote on southeast Insula). In the East Wing a great east hall on the ground floor with frescoes was rebuilt, and below this hall were storage rooms or bins. The East Wing may have been three stories high which was connected by a grand staircase. The grand staircase was five flights and separated the “Queen’s” room from the large Hall of the Double Axe on the ground floor. Evans (1921:311) described a Hall of the Double Axe, and a triple divided “Hall of State Reception”, probably a Minoan Hall, in which he claimed the remains of a wooden throne was found against the north wall. North of the Hall of the Double Axe was the Hall of Colonnades, perhaps a pillared hall (Evans 1921:357). In the east pillar sanctuary there were two shallow vats possibly for food offerings and libations (Evans:1921:440).

The residential quarter (the “Queen’s” quarters) had a light well, was constructed with ashlar masonry and decorated with tree symbols with branches. Evans (1921:311) noted the low benches in the “Queen’s” room and suggested there may have been other female occupants. A bathroom, washing closet, toilette and drainage system were adjacent to her room (MacDonald, 2002). Next to her bathroom was a “treasury” or a storage cist for cult objects (Evans, 1921:357). In an eastern repository Evans (1921:495) described elegant faience cult objects executed with extraordinary skill, objects of porcelain, figures of the snake “goddess” (priestess?) with the snake entwining the figure. According to MacDonald (2002)

there was a sequence of rooms that led from the Hall of Colonnades (Hall of Pillars? sacred) through the priestess's room into the Hall of the Double Axe (sacred).

The cultic architecture of the East Wing seemed to suggest that the occupant(s) was a priestess, not a queen, and that her role was to oversee cultic ceremonies at Knossos and most likely beyond. The data point to the cultic significance of the East Wing which was also a residential quarter for a female(s). We would expect the occupant(s) of the East Wing to be involved with cult. This suggests that the head priestess(s) of a northcentral Knossian matrilineage moved into Knossos itself. This was a bold and novel move, because for over two thousand years, court center buildings were not residences. MacDonald (2002) wrote that a significant female apparently moved into the domestic quarters at Knossos in MM IIIB or LM IA into the East Wing. Evans (1921:311) also suggested that priestesses may have moved into Knossos at the end of MM III. There was no king's megaron in MM IIIB (MacDonald, 2002). MacDonald (2002) believed the residential quarter was for a priestess, and I suggest it was for the highest ranking priestess of the northcentral matrilineages. Gunkel-Maschek (2016) believed that Cretans saw a female authority who occupied the court center building.

### **Knossos Extended its Power and Influence during MMIII and LMIA**

in LMIA Knossos becomes the "frescoed palace" (MacDonald, 2002) which emphasized the control of the Knossian elite over religious ceremonies and foreign trade. In LM IA access to Knossos is heavily restricted on all fronts. In LMIA the court centered building at Knossos officially became the residence for a priestess/es. The "Frescoed Palace" graphically depicted the role of the priestess and her acolytes in cult. If the seat of power moved into the court centered building, that power of that seat was religious (Warren, 2002). Knossos (and her head



matrilineage/priestess(es) gained more power and authority over Crete and Cretan colonies in the Aegean through LMIA. According to Weiner (2016). Cretan colonies expanded overseas to Rhodes, Miletas and the Cycladic Islands. Crete was at the height of its power and Knossos was at the helm. The Cretan world becomes standardized, although the economy remained somewhat decentralized until LMIB (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:297).

Knossos took control of the western Mesara by LMIA after the earthquake (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:297). Phaistos and Malia became demoted as independent centers and became incorporated under Knossian hegemony, Phaistos by MM IIB (Driessen 2014) and EMIII for Malia ([minoancrete.com/malia](http://minoancrete.com/malia)). What rebuilding occurred at Malia after earthquakes was done in the Knossian style. Agia Triada was restored with Knossian architectural features. The Knossian matrilineage(s) promoted their primacy in trade with Egypt, Levant, Mesopotamia, and the Cyclades (Knossian colonies), curtailing trade from other Cretan sites (Wiener, 2016). Most of Knossian trade went through Santorini as an important nub in its network. The Knossian high priestess traveled to Thera(Santorini) to carry out the cult of the Enthroned Goddess and to ensure the Knossian trade networks. There were lots of Cretan colonies in the Cyclades, Rhodes and Anatolia that mined tin and copper. During LM IA Knossos traded with Egypt, the Near East and Kea and rose to the height of its power prior to the Santorini eruption. The high priestess may have engaged in foreign diplomacy herself especially with Egypt.

Weiner ( 2016) considers the Pax Minoica the result of Knossian power over a “unified” Crete in LM IA. According to Weiner, Knossos unified Crete, and Knossos was its capital with central authority. Knossos built roads and fortified way stations throughout Crete and he

believes Knossos became a military power. Cretan culture becomes somewhat standardized especially at Malia, Agia Triada, Kommos, and the Cyclades under Knossian influence. Mount Jouktas and the Lasithi caves become the predominant worshipping sites for divinity for all of Crete. Regional worship at peak sanctuaries was mostly curtailed. Knossian priestesses may have joined priestesses from Malia to conduct ceremonies at Psychro Cave, but most of the peak ceremonies took place at Mt. Jouktas. As time went on most cultic activity left the peak sanctuaries and moved into Knossos' court centered building (MacGillivray,2010). A dramatic presentation appeared in the Throne Room, in LMIA which apparently replaced the cultic ceremonies in the open court and at peak sanctuaries. Was the face of Knossian power cultic, embodied in its priestesses? Was religion the best way the Knossian matrilineages could exert their power over much of Crete?

What happened to the organization of Knossian matrilineages? Perhaps, they too were becoming centralized, under the control of a single matrilineage at Knossos like the Acoma Pueblo (Appendix III). External threats were the reasons the Acoma consolidated control under one matrilineage with its leader claiming authority from their female divinity. The Acoma Pueblo Indians had many conflicts with the Spanish, other Indians and Americans. They eventually consolidated power under one matrilineage which was headed by one priest who was deemed the husband of the Mother-Creator (Eggan, 1967:223-247) ( Appendix III).

Did the Cretans fear some external power? Or, were the Knossian matrilineages emulating the theocracies of Egypt and Syria? If so, why did not this imitation take place before LM IA ? Was consolidation a natural and inevitable, political process for the Cretan matrilineages, particularly the northcentral ones?

Knossos consolidated its power, but it appears that it did not destroy the other Houses or matrilineages in LMIA. Warren (2002:206) states that “Knossian activity seemed to be confined to overseas trading rather than political control over all the regions”. According to him “the western territories/regions like most of the eastern ones appeared to have functioned as independent political units with similar hierarchical internal structures to those of Knossos. “The Cretan central region (Knossos) was headed by a ruler who could have been a religious person and likely to have been a female” (Warren, 2002). Did the Knossian priestess/priestesses act under their own initiative or were they influenced by outsiders?

Did Cretan religion change after the late MM IIIB eruptions? The belief system seems to have remained the same, but the ritual changed from the sacrificed bull-double axe ceremony to that of the enthroned goddess. By LM IA the Knossian priestess(es) were the only ones entitled to lead these ceremonies and may have even formed a “caste”. In this case the priestesses and priests of the highest ranking matrilineages may have only married each other, much like the priestly caste among the Minangkabau (Gough, 1961).

### **The West Wing of Knossos – the Sanctuary of the Divine Priestess**

Possibly the sanctuary complex in the West Wing was begun in MM III before the MM IIIB earthquake. The layout of the anteroom, throne room, sunken room (lustral basin), pillar rooms (with double axes incised on the pillars, symbols of divinity), repositories for cult objects including figurines of the high priestess entwined by snakes, and store rooms most likely were started in M III (Evans, 1921:423; MacDonald, 2002; Gunkel-Maschek, 2016; minoancrete.org/Knossos). Yet the room and material remains Evans excavated were probably

from LM II or LM III. Evans (1921:422) thought the throne room dated to LM II. The restored throne room (not necessarily the throne) has been dated to LM IA (Gunkel-Maschek, 2016).

MacDonald (2002) states that the LM IA throne room became heavily restricted for access on all fronts. Control of access was the primary concern in LM IA for all of Knossos, which was so unlike the open, cultic services in the central court in MM III for a large community. In LM IA the priestesses and elite (or their advisors) who oversaw the repairs and reconstruction of the court center building rebuilt it exclusively for them and invited dignitaries.

Evans (1921:4) wrote that the throne room teemed with religious suggestion. He suggested that it was designed for religious function, not ruling or administrative. I argue that the throne room was reconstructed to underscore the power of the priestesses who clearly extended their power through much of Crete, Thera and the colonies through the ritual of the enthroned goddess cult during late MM III and LM IA. The gypsum throne located on the north wall of the throne room was not typical for Bronze Age Crete. It appeared later than the room, possibly installed in LM IB (Gunkel-Maschek, 2016). A stone or wood throne was typical of the mainland (Wace 1962, chapter 12). Cretan goddesses or priestesses were always depicted seated on a tripartite platform that was portable. Regardless, the gypsum throne in Knossos was sculpted with Cretan cultic motifs. The scalloped or wavy edges of the back of the throne may have been painted and may have represented cosmic snakes. (Snake goddess figurines were found in nearby repositories; [www.minoancrete.org/knossos2](http://www.minoancrete.org/knossos2) ). There appeared to be a cosmic egg under the seat between the front legs. The legs themselves appeared to have a plant-like form. The gypsum seat of the throne was sculpted to cradle the seater. The overall impression of the petite throne is that of a feminine chair upon which a woman, most likely a

high priestess sat (Warren, 2002; Marinatos, 2010:53-54; Driessen, 2003:57-61; Gunkel-Maschek, 2016).

The griffin fresco was added in LM IB or early LM II which was preceded by an earlier wall painting that may have included griffins, half-rosettes or cosmic eggs and landscape, (Gunkel-Maschek, 2016). The griffin is a symbol and guardian of divine power. The griffins depicted on the walls of the throne room appeared to support and guard the persona of the woman who sat on the throne. The griffin frescoes were heraldic and essentially a new image for Bronze Age Crete. As a concept and visual image, the griffin most surely derived from the mainland, Egypt or the Near East. I would like to point out that the Cretan griffin possessed a snake tail which represented cosmic creating power (footnote on Cretan griffin). Evans (1921) described a spiral fresco in the sanctuary next to the throne room which was a symbol of the cosmic snake. It is possible that the priestess who sat on the throne was skillful with the snake ceremony. Wace (1962, chapter 12) believed that the throne room had its counterparts on the mainland (Tiryns, Mycenae and Pylos) but not anywhere else on Crete.

We can view the throne room as a symbol of what may have been happening at Knossos during LM IA. Cultic performance no longer took place in the central court with a large group of participants/community as in early MM III. Rather in LM IA it took place in a small throne room, which together with the anteroom, Evans (1921) estimated held only about thirty people ([www.wikipedia.org/wiki/throne\\_room\\_knossos](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/throne_room_knossos)). The throne room was separated from the anteroom by a pier and door partition. In turn the anteroom was separated from the central court by a double pier and door partition. The community could not enter freely into the sanctuary, nor were they invited. The throne room had stone benches up against the walls, but

these were probably not for spectators, but rather for a distinguished group. The throne room appeared mysterious and inaccessible to all except a select few. Rather, it resembled an innermost sanctuary that was usually located at the farthest end of a Greek temple.

(minoancrete.org/Knossos.2). When Evans excavated the throne room he found a stone alabastra which bore mainland, painted decoration (Wace, 1962, chapter 12). Driessen (2002) attributes the structure of the throne room to mainland influence. When did Mycenaean influence begin with the priestesses of Knossos, MM III, LM IA or LM IB?

### **The Pageantry of the Seated Goddess (or High Priestess) LMIA**

How then did the Knossian priestesses exercise power over much of Crete and the colonies? In LM IA Cretan court centered cult only occurred at Knossos. Knossos was no longer a community center, but was seen as the earthly abode of divinity and the seat of her human agent (Gunkel-Maschek, 2016). Gunkel-Maschek (2016) believed that Cretans saw a female authority who occupied the court center building, and who personified the presence of the female divinity on earth. In LM IA the head Cretan priestess herself became the fetish imbued with the power of the goddess. By claiming to be the direct representation of divinity on earth, the high priestess of Knossos assumed considerable power over cult, Cretan territory and Aegean trade. The Knossian priestess(es) could now exert conformity over Cretan cult, social order and the means to regulate both. In LM IA religious pageantry shifted from priestesses carrying out the ritual of bull sacrifice to release the goddess as a honey bee, to the deification of the chief priestess as the persona representing divinity. She was no longer seen bearing the double axe, or associated with it, because she replaced it (Gunkel-Maschek, 2016). In LM IA the chief priestess was the sacred object, the fetish, the person imbued with the spirit of divinity.

Gunkel-Maschek (2016) gives a good description of the possible pageantry that took place in the throne room and anteroom at Knossos. No other court center building could produce this performance independently; the pageant could only be performed by a Knossian high priestess. The high priestess created a performance in the throne Room at Knossos with a limited number of select guests invited to view her. She is seated in person on a throne at Knossos only. Elsewhere she sat on a portable, tripartite platform which is more typically Cretan and which facilitated easy transport. In the Knossian throne room, viewing her is initially closed off to the selected spectators in the anteroom. However, within the throne room itself there were benches built into the three walls that may have held other priestesses and/or significant male authorities. Perhaps there was incantation, music and chanting emanating from the closed throne room.

When the pier and door partitions opened, she seemed to appear suddenly, the divine representation of the goddess in profile seated on a petite throne (Gunkel-Maschek, 2016). She was viewed in full regalia and perhaps there were snakes entwining her torso. She is surrounded by symbols of the goddess: half-rosette/cosmic egg, biconcave base, and vegetation. At some point the high priestess may have reached for a tube and released snake(s) that she held or allowed to encircle her body. The snake represented cosmic creation and the stimulation of life-giving fluids. The priestess may have danced, encircled with snakes. The viewers may have seen her as a divine being, uniting with cosmic creation and bringing it forth to regenerate the earth. Whatever the make-up of the pageantry, it had to have been dramatic and convincing, because it had a powerful effect on her followers.

The image of the enthroned goddess or seated female authority first appeared in Crete in LM IA and persisted until the end of LM I. These images were found throughout Crete and the colonies on frescoes, ivory boxes, seal impressions, rings and Mycenaean signet rings. Her power was everywhere. What were the motive and effects of the divine representative on earth? (1) The Knossian priestesses were able to bring a good portion of Crete and probably the colonies under their control. (2) They enforced a uniformity of material culture and cult over Crete and the colonies. (3) The Knossian matrilineages were able to monopolize to a significant degree a lucrative Aegean trade with Egypt, the Levant and Syria. (4) The Knossian matrilineages were able to monopolize the trading hub at Akrotiri on Thera. (5) The priestesses were able to consolidate the Knossian "empire" through religion. The Knossian matrilineages now had the authority to regulate society, its social order, and in large part, control Aegean trade. For this purpose the priestess(es) travelled to most parts of Crete, and to Thera which was the hub of Knossian commerce.

### **Have Goddess (Enthroned Female Authority); Will Travel**

It was necessary for the high priestess and her entourage to travel throughout Crete, Thera, and the colonies carrying the message of her divinely inspired power. Akrotiri on Thera was the most important trade hub for the Knossian matrilineages. To control and manage their access, the Knossian priestesses set up cult houses that visually transmitted clear images about their seated authority. In the cult house of Xestes 3 there was a fresco that showed the priestess/goddess seated on a tripartite platform, a more typical Cretan divine seat (Ute-Gunkel-Maschek, 2016: 255-262). The goddess is accompanied by a griffin and a monkey, both symbols of solar power according to Marinatos, (2016) (Footnote on solar goddess). The



goddess is served by girls and appeared to be overseeing a ceremony or ritual, as well as looking after her people (Gunkel-Maschek, 2016). The physical layout of rooms was similar to that of the throne room, and a similar pageant most probably took place here by the visiting Knossian priestess(es) who were the only ones who could perform as the goddess.

The pageantry and visual performance of the Knossian priestesses was portable and taken to many places thanks to the portable nature of the tripartite platform. Solis (2016) describes what the platform looked like from a relief on a pyxis box lid found in the House of the Lady with the Ivory Pyxis in Mochlos. The tripartite platform was decorated with rosettes (fertility), the cosmic egg (cosmic and world regeneration) and was carried on wooden beams. When stationary, the beams rested on concave "altars" (domus). The seated goddess spectacle could be taken anywhere in the Cretan world. There are frescoes and objects that showed the enthroned goddess in Akrotiri, Knossos, Chania, Galatas (Gunkel-Maschek, 2016), Mochlos (Solis, 2016), Poros (Driessen, 2016) and Archanes and Malia (Solis, 2016). Solis (2016) believes the priestess(es) were residents of every town in Crete and elsewhere. I think there were not enough Knossian matrilineal priestesses to live all over Crete and the colonies. If there were two-four Knossian matrilineages, and if the first born daughter of an ancestress became the priestess (and so on down the segments), I don't think there would have been enough high priestesses to live all over Crete and the colonies. Lower segment priestesses (first born females) would be acolytes of their Maximal lineage high priestess.

At the site of Mochlos Solis (2016) gives an example of a cult house which is situated near the ceremonial center. He refers to this house as "The house of the Lady of the Ivory Pyxis". In my opinion it was probably not an Established House. It was most likely temporary for

the visiting priestess(es) from Knossos. The priestess and her acolytes served as representatives of the goddess in the cult house and most likely performed there and at the ceremonial center which was the largest building in the LM I town (Solis, 2016, [minoancrete.com/mochlos](http://minoancrete.com/mochlos)). The cult house was three storeys high. Outside, there was a fire pit with a burnt offering in front of a window on the first floor. Solis (2016) suggests the priestess could have been viewed in her full regalia through the smoke of the burning pit at the window. Exquisite jewelry was found made of semi-precious stones, some of which came from Afghanistan, the Levant and Egypt. Some of the stones were believed to have healing power. A pyxis box contained a scene of the descent of the goddess and a procession of two females and two males coming toward her. The ivory box contains a relief of a female seated authority who offered a lily to a superior male person. Besides jewelry, the box contained pins including a straight pin with a rosette. Solis (2016) believes that the priestess's regalia came from Knossos.

It seemed that the Knossian priestesses were on a mission throughout Crete and the islands. They represented the authority of the Knossian matrilineages over much of Crete and the colonies and they, the priestesses, oversaw Aegean trade through the hub at Akrotiri. Solis (2016) emphasizes the important role religious pageantry played in Cretan cult. It could be performed (transported) around the island and was one of the principle means the Cretans (Knossian priestesses) used to regulate society.

In LM IA images occurred with the first appearance of a single, male authority figure, the "hero" (Solis, 2016). He is a tall male who approaches the goddess with his left arm behind his back. He has the power and authority to communicate with her. The goddess extended an outstretched hand to him as if signifying his presence. On an ivory box from Mochlos, the

solitary male appeared to receive a coronation lily from the goddess (Solis (2016)). In other images he is standing alone, not participating in the ritual but overseeing. Who is this male figure? Is he a matrilineal brother or uncle, or a Mycenaean lord? Cretan men appeared within the ritual of the double axe bearing the sacrificed animals, playing instruments and even as the prince (priest?) of lilies (the goddess's chosen flower). The single authoritarian male image that appeared in LMIA, I believe, is not a Cretan matrilineal male, but a Mycenaean lord. If the Thera/Santorini eruption occurred in 1525 BCE (Driessen ), when the Cretan trade hub was destroyed, then an opportunity arose for Mycenaeans to takeover the Cretan trade routes.

### **Burials of Knossian Priestesses**

Highly significant, cultic individuals were buried within Knossos, outside Knossos and at the "royal" tombs in Phourni-Archanes. Analysis of the skeletal material would confirm whether the bones were female. I believe the high priestesses were buried in these exceptional tombs from LM IA into the Mycenaean period. Girella (2016:208) describes the "temple tomb" at Knossos. The tomb was a pillar crypt within the court centered building, and the crypt contained both primary and secondary burials. The crypt had a double locking system of crypt doors. This alone suggests the importance of the individuals buried within. It was atypical to bury anyone within a court centered building, even a cult center. Only an individual(s) of most high-ranking cultic significance would have qualified for this honor. The inner crypt was used for the primary burial of, I believe, the newly deceased high priestess. The outer pillar crypts were used for secondary burials of the skulls and skeletons of previous high priestesses. All these individuals apparently earned the right to be interred within the "Great Sanctuary of the Double Axe", or in other words within the Knossos court center. According to matrilineal

ancestress practice, these burials suggest a lineage of high priestesses. Horns of consecration and the double axe (honey bee) were incised on the façade of the pillar crypt suggesting a strong continuity with the old-time ritual.

The Tomb of the Double Axe was found outside Knossos (Evans, 1921:440). It was a columnar (pillar) shrine cut into rock in the shape of a double axe (honey bee/epiphany of the goddess). It is not known how many skeletons were placed in this tomb. According to Evans within the sepulchral chamber were found vases for libation. Within the vault there was a niche at the head of the sepulcher that was fitted as a shrine. It contained double axes and ritual vessels (Evans, 1928:277). Clearly this tomb was for a high-ranking, cult individual who had the strongest association with the old-time ritual of the epiphany of the goddess as a honey bee. I suggest a high-priestess(es) was buried within this tomb.

Burials of high-ranking Cretan cultic females were found in Mycenaean chamber tombs at Phourni-Archanes, the Cretan and Mycenaean cemetery just north of Archanes. Chamber Tomb A has been compared to the royal Mycenaean tombs at Mycenae and Orchomenos. In Chamber Tomb A, a single female skeleton was found in a side chamber. She was buried in a clay larnax with many gold objects. Her jewelry was made of gold and precious stones. Her rings showed cult and religious scenes which suggest she was a priestess (minoancrete.com/phourni). There were several bronze vessels of exceptional quality and an ivory decorated wooden chest in her chamber (alpha-omegaonline.com). Close to the entrance to her side chamber were the remains of a dismembered horse and a bucranium was found enclosed within a wall. Although the tomb is dated to the 14<sup>th</sup> century BCE and is clearly Mycenaean in architecture, the lady buried within seemed to be a highly ranked religious

person of the old Cretan religion. Unlike the earlier collective tombs and secondary burials of Cretan matrilineages, the individual female burial in Mycenaean chamber tomb A suggests a not only her distinction and importance but also a preparation for an afterlife. Perhaps, the belief in matrilineal reincarnation was waning or gone.

Another important female was buried in a Mycenaean chamber tomb (Tomb D) at Archanes-Phourni. This tomb dates to LM IIIA2 or after 1350 BCE, slightly later than Tomb A. Her jewelry and adornments indicate her wealth or prestige, second only to the woman buried in Tomb A ([minoancrete.com/phourni](http://minoancrete.com/phourni)).

The two women lived during the final days of Knossos during the period of Mycenaean domination. Was the original Cretan religion prevalent or waning in Crete in the 14<sup>th</sup> century? The Mycenaeans brought the pantheon of Greek gods with them to Crete (Ventris and Chadwick, 1973). It was a totally different religion from the Cretan notion of cosmic and earthly renewal, and there was no belief in reincarnation. Perhaps, the Mycenaeans used elements of Cretan religion to control Crete under the aegis of the Cretan high priestess who herself may have been beholden, or married to the Mycenaean lord. A theory proposed by Watrous (2005:273) referring to Linear B writings, states that Late Bronze Age palaces had "worgiones" a religious order of the local elite who gathered at banquets to celebrate a common ancestry of the founder, patron deity and the king. If Cretan priestesses married Mycenaean warrior lords then their children, following the Mycenaean patrilineal model, would inherit the kingship.

The famous Hagia Triada sarcophagus, a painted and portable, limestone larnax (LM IIIA2), was most likely used for the local elite who were probably members of the Knossian administration (Privitera 2016), The sacrificial painting depicts the "old time" Cretan religion

celebrating the epiphany of the goddess in the form of a bee/butterfly (double axe) from the sacrificed bull. The sarcophagus was discovered inside a small, rectangular tomb built above ground and placed just a few meters away from MM I and II Cretan tholos tombs. Privitera (2016) noticed that the peculiar layout of the tomb of the painted sarcophagus had a Mycenaean character. According to her the person who had the tomb and sarcophagus built (possibly for her/himself?) claimed a relationship or ancestry with the families of the tholos tombs, while also being of the new order (belonging to Mycenaean overlords). She observed an iconographic connection between the Casa VAP house in Agia Triada, whose residents were most likely priestesses, and the painted sarcophagus. These important individuals may have been buried inside the tomb of the painted sarcophagus. Furthermore, she states that members of this local ruling group depicted themselves, not as warriors or hunters so often depicted in Mycenaean iconography, but as individuals endowed with priestly functions being in direct contact with the supernatural world (Privitera, 2016). I suggest the Hagia Triada larnax may have been for the last of the line of Cretan priestesses celebrating the goddess of periodic regeneration.

### **Persistence of Cretan Religion**

Cretan religion persisted in parts of Crete to the end of the Minoan period and in some aspects into the Mycenaean and classical periods. The Sanctuary, or the Shrine, of the Double Axes in Knossos dated to LM IIIA2 may have been used through LM IIIB. The sanctuary held all the sacred elements of old Cretan religion: a platform or dais or altar at the far end of the sanctuary that held the sacred objects, a set of horns of consecration with sockets to hold bronze double axes, figurines including that of a priestess entwined with a snake, a sea-shell

floor, ritual vessels for offerings, etc. (Evans, 1928:336-343). Who worshipped in this sanctuary? It would only be an elite person and probably the current high priestess.

Gesell (2004) describes the “popularization of the Minoan palace goddess” in LM II and LM III in central Crete . She states that small shrines, similar to that of the Shrine of the Double Axes at Knossos, became more widespread throughout central Crete and the Isthmus of Ierapetra in Late Minoan times (LM IIIB and LM IIIC). She observed that that the “goddess with upraised hands” was a new symbol in Cretan cult in LM III. The question is whether the crude terracotta figurine represents the goddess (like the seated goddess or the goddess of periodic regeneration) or a worshiper petitioning the goddess (Gaignerot-Driessen, 2016). The old Neolithic motifs of snake entwined on vessels, snake tubes and terra cotta female figurines and birds on tiaras persisted to the end of Minoan times. It seems that the particularly Knossian cult of the snake priestess persisted after the Mycenaean takeover and became prevalent in small towns of central Crete.

The Agia Triada sarcophagus was dated to LM IIIA2 (Privitera 2016). The scene painted on the outside of the larnake is definitely that of the original Cretan ritual with a high priestess pouring a libation into a vessel between two pillars. On top of the pillars were double axes crowned with the cosmic water bird. The high priestess is followed by other priestesses, who in turn are followed by Cretan males bearing animal sacrifices and playing instruments. Meanwhile, a solitary, authoritarian male looks on the procession and ritual. Is this male a Mycenaean overlord?

An unusual sanctuary, Simi, appeared in MM III on the south side of Mount Dikte, the same mountain on which Psychro Cave is located. At this location a spring emerged from the

rocks; perhaps its waters were considered sacred. The sanctuary is surrounded by a rectangular wall and a paved walkway on the outside (for a procession?). A rubbish pit inside the wall contained the remains of animal bones, cups and pots indicating feasting took place. Inside, what may have been a tripartite shrine. were found libation tables with linear A inscription, cult vessels and symbols of the double axe and horns of consecration. A number of bronze figurines were found, and the male figurines outnumber the females by 2:1 (minoancrete.com/simi) .

What was the cultic purpose of the sanctuary of Simi? Clearly the elements were those of the Cretan religion. Plausibly Psychro Cave was the main site on Mt. Dikte for goddess worship and initiation rites. Could the Sanctuary of Simi have been a place of worship for Cretan priests, or more broadly, for Cretan matrilineal males who might have felt threatened by the Mycenaeans? Its remarkable duration indicated that the Sanctuary of Simi remained in use during the second Neopalatial, through LM IB, through the violent destructions of 1450 BCE, through LM IIIC and later.

Cretan religion persisted as long as it could in Crete, but after the final destruction of Knossos, LM IIIA2, it was generally replaced by the Mycenaean pantheon of Greek gods. However, an ambiguous female deity, Potnia, persisted through Linear B times. She was served by a coterie of priestesses and appeared to be a general female goddess of life and waters. (Ventris and Chadwick 1973) Surely aspects of the goddess of periodic regeneration re-emerged into the classical goddesses of Demeter and her abducted daughter Persephone. Greek women carried out this secret, sacred ritual to renew vegetation, wheat and other crops. The symbol of the snake is found on the classical Greek and modern symbol of healing, the



caduceus, a short rod entwined by two serpents. The snake was the Cretan symbol (Old Neolithic) of revitalization, healing and stimulus of life's fluids.

### **The End of the Cretan Matrilineal Established Houses**

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At the end of LM IA, earthquakes preceded the Thera eruption generally dated to 1525 BCE. Shortly thereafter, in LM IB, the presence of Mycenaean warriors is indicated by Linear B tablets found in Crete (footnote on Linear B). Mycenaeans may have kept the façade of Knossian theocracy going for about three -four generations while they consolidated their control over Crete. While Cretan religion survived to the end of Late Minoan and possibly beyond, the Established Houses did not fare so well. 1450 BCE seems to be the agreed upon date by archaeologists for the extensive, violent and deliberate destruction of villas throughout Crete. These were the Established Houses (Driessen and Langohr, 2014) which, in my view, were the seats of leaders/elders of the Maximal lineages. The leaders/elders of the Maximal lineage were the administrators of the productive economy of their matrilineage. They were the economic, corporate holders of their matrilineage's land and resources. I suggest the Mycenaean overlords got rid of them first. The lower segment settlements were less affected as they were the productive units now being controlled by the Mycenaean overlords.

There is plenty of evidence for a sudden, violent selective destruction at the end of LM IB that is not always explained by natural causes....the only convincing agent to explain most of LM IB fire destruction is human action (Hamilakes, 2002:184). The destruction of Established Houses and court centers seemed to have been coordinated throughout Crete. At the end of LM IB Mochlos was destroyed by fire. The destruction of the shrine area was the focus of extreme violence as were objects with religious images such as an ivory box with a goddess

image (Peatfield, 2016). The presence of human bones in the destruction point to a violent attack (minoancrete.com/Mochlos). The four-storey villa of Ayios Georgios was destroyed in LM IA or by the end of LM IB (minoancrete.com/villas and their cemeteries). The “country house” villa at Myrtos-Pyrgos was selectively burned down in LM IB. The surrounding houses in the settlement (lower segments) were not burned down (Hamilakes, 2002). The fire was deliberately started at the villa. Malia’s court centered building and the Established Houses which were vassals to Knossos also were destroyed in 1450 BCE (minoancrete.com/malia). The targeting of important buildings at this time has been noted in other parts of Crete (minoancrete.com/pyrgos). In Agia Triada the Villa Royal (Villa Reale) was destroyed by fire in the generalized destruction of 1450 BCE which was at the end of LM IB. The Villa Royal was deserted until a Mycenaean overlord built his megaron on top of the wing of the Villa Royal (minoancrete.com/agtriada). The Mycenaean rulers found Agia Triada a useful location for their control of the Mesaran economy. Many Linear B tablets were found at this location. Phaistos, or what was left of Phaistos in LM IB, was destroyed by fire (Hamilakes 2002:191). At Palaikastro an ivory male statuette, (perhaps an image of an ancestral lineage head?) was deliberately smashed and burned (Peatfield 2016).

During LM IB there was a substantial drop in the Cretan population whether caused by introduced diseases, exile to Mycenae for servitude, or the result of conquest. The matrilineal Houses/villas in the western Mesara and elsewhere are destroyed, Agia Triada, Phaistos, and Kommos were destroyed by fire. Agia Triada is rebuilt and became the Mycenaean administrative center of the western Mesara. New settlements seem flung to marginal areas

hinting at a dispossession of land or the intensification of an agricultural surplus for a “newly emergent elite” (Watrous and Vallianou, 2005:297).

The cult houses surrounding Knossos were destroyed or damaged by the earthquakes, Thera eruption or invaders. The Little Palace at Knossos was damaged by the earthquakes that preceded the Thera eruption (end of LM IA). Of all the cult houses that surrounded Knossos, it alone was repaired although the Minoan Halls were eliminated, and the lustral basins (sunken rooms) were filled in. The presence of Myceneans has been documented from LM II on, if not before. It is possible that the Little Palace remained the residence of the Knossian high priestess and became the residence of the Mycenaean overlord. It was the only cult house that was in use until LM IIIA2 when a fierce fire, most likely deliberately set, destroyed it. After this destruction the Little Palace was reoccupied in LM IIIB as evidenced by pottery from this time period ([www.minoancrete.com/Little\\_palace](http://www.minoancrete.com/Little_palace)).

All the court centered buildings in Crete were destroyed in 1450 BCE. Knossos was damaged but repairs were made cheaply ([minoancrete.com/Knossos](http://minoancrete.com/Knossos)). Knossos was dubbed the Linear B palace by MacDonald (2002), and most likely became the Mycenaean administrative center for northcentral Crete. Knossos was the seat of the new ruling elite for a while as long as the Knossian priestesses were useful to the Mycenaean overlords. All peak sanctuaries were abandoned except for Mt. Jouktas where now the Greek god, Zeus, was presumably born in Psychro Cave. The economy of Crete became centralized in LM IB (Watrous and Hadzi-Vallianou, 2005:290). There was a huge advance in the production and quality of bronze weaponry by Crete or its colonies in LM IB (Wiener, 2016). Knossos remained in less splendor until LM IIIA2 (1325-1300 BCE) when it was destroyed and abandoned (MacDonald 2002).

Under the Mycenaean rulers Cretan artisans, masons, stoneworkers, metalworkers, etc. (brothers, uncles, husbands and sons), may have been sent to the mainland to build the cyclopean citadel of Mycenae and to forge the gold masks, jewelry and fine ware for the ruling house. With the destruction of Cretan villas and Houses came the demise of the matrilineal system. Patrilineage, patriarchy and a horizontal class structure with a different ethnic group at the top became the new ruling system. In Late Minoan II-III, or soon thereafter, the elemental family became institutionalized in Crete through marriage between Mycenaean warriors and Cretan women.

### **Conclusions on the Matrilineal Nature of Bronze Age Crete**

Crete's insular position allowed a unique social system to develop relatively unhindered from its Neolithic roots for about two thousand years. I argue that there were extended kin relations throughout Crete which were, perhaps, the strongest factor in maintaining peaceful relations between settlements and creating island-wide social stability. In contrast, contemporary city states (kingdoms) in the Near East and the Mainland, were aspiring and some were succeeding in creating empires over disparate peoples. The relative isolation on the island sustained the Cretan system for a long time (Evans, 1928: 19; Driessen, 2002). This society was matrilineal most likely from the Neolithic through Late Minoan and held together more by ideologies and cosmologies than by political authority" (Hamilakes, 2002:185). Extensive island-wide matrilineal kinship made this possible.

1. The Bronze Age Cretan matrilineal system passed corporate ownership of land and resources through the female line, from ancestress to eldest daughter and so forth. A woman's children always belonged to her matrilineage. The males born into a

matrilineage remained with it their entire lives. However, their children belonged to his wife's matrilineage. The eldest son of the ancestress had legal custody of his sisters' children, and it was preferred that his sister's son marry his (maternal uncle's) daughter. This is the cross-cousin marriage that all matrilineal societies prefer. In this manner, the maternal uncle and nephew belonged to, and produced for, the same matrilineage. Most likely the first born daughter and son had special cultic status with respect to ancestor worship and divinity worship. In addition this brother-sister dyad was most likely responsible for day to day management of matrilineal, corporately held land and resources. The eldest son could have been a matrilineal segment head. Daughters probably in ranked order most likely led the ecstatic observances of ancestress veneration and divinity cult. This matrilineal kinship system is one explanation for the stability of Bronze Age Cretan society.

2. The concept of an entire matrilineage owning land and resources explains the corporate nature of Bronze Age Crete. No one individual has the authority over matrilineal land. The female members of the matrilineage own the land and resources while often the males manage it. The most important decisions regarding the land and resources demands full participation of all members of the matrilineage or the segment, especially the women. These meetings occurred in open courts. Courts were, for the most part, in Cretan prehistory equated with matrilineal councils.
3. Regionalism in Bronze Age Crete can be explained by on average of four matrilineages synchronously living in a region. The matrilineages are united through cross-cousin marriage and were peaceful with each other throughout the Cretan Bronze Age. They

shared a common peak sanctuary for divinity worship and in many cases a common port. Court centers (open or built) had a few purposes. The largest ones were centers of inter-matrilineal council meetings, athletic competitions, ceremonies and feasting for the matrilineages of the region.

4. Matrilineal segmentation explains the budding or migration of Minimal segments (households) into new territory and their return to their core, matrilineal areas in difficult times. If an average household the Minimal segment, consisted of several married sisters plus brothers, elders and children, they would only migrate IF the marital household accompanied them, assuming duolocal marriage (husbands lived for the most part with their own matrilineage. Marriages were exogamous). Households, representing the Minimal segments of up to four matrilineages could have numbered a lot of people. These migrating Minimal segments (households) would have become the founding matrilineages in the new territory with new status.
5. Matrilineages were ranked relative to each other on the principle of founder or first to arrive. The first matrilineage, or segment, to arrive acquired the best land and resources. This explains the unequal distribution of wealth among the matrilineages within a region especially in terms of tombs or burial sites .
6. The shared material culture and creativity of the Cretans went beyond that of regional differences and suggests there may have been a clanship relationship and sharing of craft knowledge with the same extended matrilineage (clan) across Crete.
7. Marriages were exogamous between local matrilineages within the region, and probably arranged by the senior brother. Marriage residence was duolocal which explains the

close proximity of villages to each other and the ward system within larger towns. In a highly productive, matrilineal society the matrilineage cannot afford to lose its male kin. Brothers and uncles produce for their natal matrilineage. Husbands visit their wives in the wife's Minimal segment or household, in the evening. During the day husbands produce for their own natal matrilineage. Duolocal residence with adjacent villages (within the region) also contributed to the peaceful stability of the Cretan landscape.

8. The Maximal Lineage held all the members of a particular, local matrilineage. The members were all descended from a common ancestress. The elders of the Maximal Lineage who were closest to the ancestress, lived in the very fine mansions or villas that were especially prevalent in the Neopalatial across Crete (Established Houses). Its elders were the administrators of the matrilineage's economic production. The matrilineage was economically self-sufficient. The elders of the Maximal Lineage held the land and resources for the entire matrilineage. Most likely in Bronze Age Crete the Maximal Lineage elders assigned the management of land to its Major segments which were smaller units of kin. Each Major segment descended from a closer, common ancestress (who of course was descended from the Maximal Lineage's ancestress). In the Cretan context I believe the elders of the Maximal lineage preferred to handle Aegean trade, trading the production of their matrilineage with foreign ports. This was highly lucrative. This made their villas and mansions (Established Houses) quite outstanding. Land management was most likely assigned to the Major segment, the elders of which, also lived in very nice homes. Smaller homes (Minor and Minimal Segments) surrounded these villas. Similar material goods can be seen in all segment levels with the lower ones

(Minor and Minimal) producing and the higher ones (Major and Maximal) storing, managing and trading. Matrilineal kinship is a vertically organizing system.

9. The Established Houses, villas and mansions, especially noted during the Neopalatial, were the homes of the elders of the Maximal Lineages. Around, near or in these mansions were store rooms for commodities, workshops, craft rooms (weaving), and cult rooms or sanctuaries. In these villas hieroglyphic and Linear A writing were found as well as sealings. Sealings may have designated the matrilineage as well as the commodity for trading. Some of the nicer homes could have belonged to elders of the Major segments who were the designated land and production managers for their matrilineage. Vertical kinship organization dictated that all segment levels live around the mansion or villa of the Maximal Lineage heads. This formed the small, surrounding settlement of lesser houses around the mansion. Such matrilineal settlements were prevalent throughout Bronze Age Crete until the final destruction which targeted the mansions, the homes of the matrilineal heads.
10. Economically each matrilineage within a region was self-sufficient. Mostly women and children cultivated their land by hand (horticulture) for a range of cereals, pulses, figs, olives, grapes, etc. They herded goats and sheep, collected shoreline seafood, wild edibles and hunted small game. Women, sisters, aunts and grandmothers, were the day to day managers of the land and herds. They made the local pottery for home use, terracotta movable ovens, tables, figurines for cult and initiation ceremonies. They could have been the skillful potters of fine ware. They assembled gems and silver or gold



to make fine jewelry. They were skilled weavers and dyed clothing, some of which was traded abroad. Their garments were elaborately made and beautiful.

In a highly productive matrilineal society men added economic value by activities other than cultivating. Cretan men could have herded large numbers of sheep and goats or managed the herds in summer pasture in the mountains. Surely they excelled at craft making (bronze, silver, gold, stone ware, and fine pottery). They were the main traders for these wares travelling all over Crete and the Aegean. Frequently brothers and uncles were away from the matrilineage on long distance trading or they were involved in ship building and public works projects for the elders and the priestesses. Men were frequently on call by the elders of their segment or matrilineage heads for duties away from the home base. Hence women managed the day to day operations of their segment.

11. Small villages were clustered together; in that case a matrilineage occupied a small village and needed to be near others for exogamous marriage and duolocal residence. Within larger towns a N-S, E-W grid of streets was the customary pattern. The grid of streets delineated wards within the town usually four synchronously. A separate matrilineage with the homes of the Maximal lineage elders and Major segment elders, occupied a distinct block or ward along with their lower segments.
12. The function of Cretan open courts was to hold matrilineal meetings. Courts range from small to large, within the household and outside. Smaller courts held the lower segments at their council meetings; larger courts held the entire matrilineage. The

regional courts hosted inter-matrilineal meetings, ceremonies, games, athletic competitions and cult.

13. Cretan matrilineages operated on a councilar system for important decisions from the household (Minimal segment) through the Maximal lineage and inter-matrilineal meetings. They used open courts for these purposes. Within a town or cluster of small villages the heads of the Maximal lineages formed the local council. Their topics dealt with externals such as foreign resources, trade and rebuilding after an earthquake. The heads of the Major segments of the town or village cluster also could have met to discuss common problems with food production.
14. Bronze Age Crete was a horticultural society where land passed from ancestress to oldest daughter and so on. In addition, non-material statuses, such as priestess and priest, probably passed to the first-born daughter and son. Their roles were most important for ancestress/to veneration and divinity worship.
15. Crete was unique in that the Neolithic value system persisted through the Bronze Age. Much of Bronze Age Cretan religion had its roots in the Old European (including the western lip of Anatolia) Neolithic.
16. Ancestor veneration is an inherently important value system in all matrilineal societies, and it was so for the Neolithic and Bronze Age Cretans. Most surely they held the belief of reincarnation of the ancestress/tor back into the same matrilineage. This explains the continual repurposing of the same buildings over and over again, especially houses, burial sites and sanctuaries. It also explains the placing of a ritual token into a building if it had to be abandoned. Apparently the ancestors like to return to their homes.

17. Ancestor/tress veneration explains secondary burial practices which is a cultic process of making a deceased family member into an ancestor. Bones not deemed ancestors were generally stacked to the side of a large tomb, or moved to an ossuary to make room for new primary burials. Generally, the non-ancestors were still treated with respect as cultic objects were left with them in many cases.
18. From the Neolithic through the Middle Bronze Age, Cretans worshiped the goddess of periodic regeneration on mountain tops. All the regions of Bronze Age Crete had their own sacred mountain peak until very Late Minoan when only Mt. Jukta remained. Why the goddess is associated with a mountain peak is a mystery. In addition, she was worshipped in the home, at all segment levels and regionally at the sacred mountain peak. While worship was ecstatic, performative with dance and musical instruments, it may have been led by designated first born daughter and/or son within the segment. Certainly by Middle Minoan times priestesses and priests led a procession of regional worshipers to the peak. There may have been a hierarchy of priestesses and priests, like the Zuni model, based on the principal of when the matrilineage arrived to the region. There must have been specialization among the cult leaders within the matrilineage based on birth order, or arrival sequence of the regional matrilineages. Perforated vessels (sieves) could have been performed by rain priestesses/priests; healing by snake-held priestess; etc. The role of priestesses became increasingly important and centralizing from MMIII through LM. In Middle Minoan, however, cultic worship of the goddess was brought down from the mountain peak and moved into the regional court center.

19. Cretan divinity worship was Neolithic in its roots. The cult was that of the goddess of periodic regeneration and her epiphany was brought forth by the sacrifice of the bull, particularly the head of the bull. Her epiphany was denoted by the appearance of the honey bee or butterfly (double axe) which ensured the renewal of corps and vegetation. Hence bees are associated with the bull, particularly the bucranium, and the goddess is depicted with a bee head in sealings, rings, gem stones, etc. Generally, priestesses are shown making ritual offerings to the goddess. This ritual persisted for over a thousand years until LMIA.
20. During the Neopalatial the north central Established Houses or matrilineages, gained more control of foreign trade and resources through their hub at Akrotiri. These founding matrilineages were the highest ranking in Crete and met at their regional court center at Knossos. They accomplished control over Aegean trade by centralizing Cretan cultic worship through their priestesses. The priestesses moved into cult houses outside and into Knossos. The number of cult houses surrounding Knossos points to a priestly hierarchy. These cult houses may have been temporary except for the Little Palace. The domestic quarter in the East Wing of Knossos was either used by the high priestess to prepare for ritual while she resided at the Little Palace, or she moved into the domestic quarter. The snake priestess, as depicted in faience statuettes, may have become the premier ritual of the high priestess of the throne room at Knossos. The priestesses travelled throughout Crete, Akrotiri and the colonies as the “appointed” representatives of divinity.

21. At no time, however, did the Knossian matrilineages destroy the Established House system throughout Crete in MMIII and LMIA.
22. The enthroned goddess or her representative appeared in LMIA in Knossos (the throne room) and in Akrotiri. It seems that the ritual of the sacrificed bull was no longer carried out at Knossos. I believe it persisted, however, elsewhere on the island. Instead the high priestess performed some kind of ritual (with snakes?) that was viewed only by twenty-thirty invited spectators who watched from the ante-room.
23. In LMIA Knossos clearly changed from an open, multi-purpose, municipal court centered building (MMIII) into a restricted, open- only- for- a- select- few cultic center. The throne room itself was reminiscent of a Greek inner shrine and begs the question of when Mycenaean influence started.
24. At some point in LMIA-LMIB Mycenaean "visitors" not only appeared in north central Crete, but exerted their influence and eventual control over the island and its colonies through the Knossian priestesses. The Knossian priestesses were "useful" to the Mycenaeans. High priestesses were buried at Archanes-Phourni as late as LMIIIA in Mycenaean rock cut chamber tombs. The Shrine of the Double Axe was used at Knossos, probably by the high priestess, as late as LM IIIA. Cretan religion persisted in some decentralized form for a while and transmuted into aspects of Greek religion.
25. The Cretan matrilineages did not do so well. In the general destruction of 1450 BCE most villas and mansions throughout Crete, the homes of the elders of the matrilineages, the Established Houses, were targeted and destroyed. The lower

segments, residing in the smaller houses surrounding the villas, generally survived....to serve new masters.

### **Appendix One: Egalitarian Hopi Clans Control Rituals and Ceremonies that Regulate Society**

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Eggan (1967:17-138) has compiled and analyzed ethnographic sources on the Hopi, an indigenous Indian population of the American southwest. They have four villages, each one located on top of a separate mesa or high plateau. Each village is economically self-sufficient and politically independent of the other villages on other mesas. There is no political regional integration among the villages and mesas. Nor is there an indigenous tribal organization. The clans/actually they are Maximal lineages, are generally egalitarian (13). The "first to arrive", the Bear clan, is ranked highest and is given precedence in ceremony. Most clans are responsible for a specific ceremony or ritual. Most Hopi ceremonies are for the benefit of the entire village. The ceremonial organization is complex and engages adult men fully without the need for hierarchy or social coercion. A clan sponsored ceremony or ritual is organized through multi-clan societies which are carried out in subterranean, rectangular rooms called kivas.

There is no written language among the Hopi so the clan mother, or senior woman of the clan is entrusted with the special knowledge of the ceremony or ritual. A paramount belief of the Hopi Indians of the American southwest is that "life as the highest good, resides with the female principle activated in women and in Mother Earth" (Schlegel 1984:44-52). The senior woman keeps the ritual apparatus in her "clubhouse" or clan house which is her household and the lineage center. She and selected women of her household are entrusted with sacred knowledge and paraphernalia, not only for the matrilineage/ancestors' worship, but also for the "tribal"/village ceremonies for which her clan is responsible. She provides this knowledge

and paraphernalia to her brothers, sons, and uncles who by and large are the main actors in the village ceremonies, although women do participate. The mother's brother selects a nephew who will succeed him and is trained by his uncle in the ceremonial rites which reflect clan legends and stories. Women are the keepers of sacred knowledge and hold the power of the sacred fetishes; men are the visible face of the ceremonies.

According to Hopi mythology, rituals were "assigned" to specific clans by a deity before the Emergence from the underworld. The order of arrival of clans at the various villages parallels their present ceremonial precedence (Eggan, 1967:219). Some of the ceremonies dramatize the myth as to how the clan came to the village and offered its ceremony in exchange for land and position within the village (Eggan, 1967:89-109). The clan/Maximal lineage that is responsible for a ceremony organizes it on behalf of the village as a whole. A clan takes charge of its designated ritual and furnishes the priests. There is no single head priest or hierarchy of priests in the Hopi village. The tribal (actually village) ceremonies take place in underground rectangular chambers which symbolize the underworld from where the Hopi emerged. The major ceremonies are carried in these "kivas"<sup>11</sup> (Eggan, 1967:96). Among the Hopi the tribal integrating rituals are carried out by men. Women attend tribal ceremonies and join tribal societies, but mostly men dramatize, provide the chief priest, and take clan leadership of initiation and most other tribal ceremonies.

While the Hopi rituals and ceremonies include all lineages and are village integrating mechanisms, there is a single clan or lineage that controls each ceremony. Religious ceremonies conducted by all the clans (actually Maximal lineages) are *for the benefit of all the members of the village and* have served for hundreds of years as the main, lateral integrating

system in Hopi society. A Hopi "political" system is barely discernible. All answers to outsiders about political authority are phrased in ritual terms (Eggan, 1967:58).

Hopi ceremonial organization follows a ceremonial calendar. The clans and societies that perform the ceremonies vary in degree from village to village. The ceremonial organization is complex and is briefly summarized as follows. (1) The Katsina cult venerates specific and generalized spirit ancestors of the village and carries out the first two initiation ceremonies. (2) Men's societies (fraternities) are numerous and provide a social environment for men as well as the mechanism for carrying out the ceremony particular to that society. Members of societies include a variety of different lineages within the village. Four "tribal" societies cooperate in carrying out the third and final Tribal Initiation of young boys. Societies meet in kivas, rectangular, subterranean rooms that represent the underworld from which the Hopi emerged. This is where most of the ceremonies, rituals and dances are performed. Other societies specialize in ceremonies to bring rain, success in war, clowning (family issues), and curing. (3) Among the Hopi Indians women can join the men's societies, but also have women's societies which are open to all women regardless of which lineage is in charge of the ritual. Women's societies generally parallel men's societies. Some of their main functions are curing and fertility. The controlling lineage of these rituals provides a chief priestess who is usually assisted by her brother (or husband)). Women control rites pertaining to curing, fertility and matrilineal ancestress worship, while men are involved in most cross-clan or tribal ceremonies. (4) Tribal Initiation is the third and most important ceremony in integrating boys into the village as a whole. The boy becomes a "man" with a new name and is now eligible participate in all



tribal ceremonies. (5) The winter solstice ceremony is the most important ceremony of the Hopi calendar.

### **Tribal Initiation among the Hopi**

The initiation rituals among the Hopi dramatize the emergence of the Hopi from the underworld and prepare the novices for their position in the underworld after death (Eggan, 1967:93-94). It seems fitting then that the first two initiations are carried out through the Katsina Cult where the initiates are brought into the "underground" (kiva) and are ceremonially "whipping" by katsinas (masked men) possibly to reinforce obedience to long ago ancestors. In the first katsina initiation both boys and girls, age 8-10 years participate. Their "ceremonial" father or mother (from a different clan of the child) supports them throughout their initiation ceremonies. They bring their "sons" and "daughters" to the kiva. The novices have prepared by fasting and prayer offerings. Then they are whipped by the katsinas. Afterwards they are taken to the homes of their ceremonial father or mother and their heads are washed. Each initiate is given a katsina name. The next day the initiates observe the Powamu ceremony and see the katsinas dancing unmasked in the kivas. Secrecy is worn from the younger children about the role of the masked men. This is the end of tribal initiation for girls. Girls join one of three women's societies under sponsorship of their ceremonial mother after the first katsina initiation. Women's societies play a minor role in the ceremonial cycle of the village (Eggan 1967:51).

After about a year, boys return to the kiva for the second Katsina ritual. This too involves whipping by katsinas. After this second whipping the boy is introduced to the ancestors or "cloud people" who have returned in the form of katsinas. Again, he is sworn to

secrecy about the masked men (from the younger children). The boy has a change in ritual status. He is given a new name. He has earned the privilege of returning to the underworld at death, and he has acquired a new set of relations through his ceremonial father and the society that sponsored his initiation. Before his third and final initiation into the tribe he is inducted into various men societies, especially those of his ceremonial father. Each society gives him a name for the ceremony they perform).

Girls go through a change of status at about age 10. This takes place in her father's matrilineal household. The father's sisters arrange his daughter's hair in small whorls after she grinds corn for a day for her aunts. Depending on the mesa this change of status may occur around puberty (which may be a Navaho influence). The girl goes to the father's sister's house and grinds corn for four days in a women's group. At the end of four days the aunts wash the girl's hair and give her a new name. On the Second Mesa girls who have arrived at puberty perform this ritual during the Summer Solstice ceremony. The culmination of the rite in all mesas is the aunts arrange her hair in "butterfly whorls". The girl is given a new name. The celebration of the status change is a feast prepared by her household lineage for the entire village (Eggan 1967:50-51). Women in groups cultivating and preparing food seems not only to be an organizing principle for matrilineal social structure, but also one presented in ritual that seems to promulgate women's unique role in providing sustenance for their families.

### **The Third and Final Tribal Initiation for Boys among the Hopi**

These ceremonies are the most jealously guarded of all Hopi ceremonies. They initiate a boy into becoming a man and taking his ceremonial place in the "tribe"/village. The Tribal Initiation is carried out by one of four men's societies which are found on all mesas. They

cooperate in the periodic initiations during the annual ceremonies in November. Eggan

(1967:50-52) presents the rituals which are summarized below:

1. The boys are brought by their ceremonial fathers to one of the societies' kiva where they remain for four days under restricted and supervised behavior. They will be reborn under the care of their ceremonial fathers.
2. On the fourth night the spirits of the dead return and participate in rituals.
3. Many rituals that they will undergo or that the members of the society will perform are symbolic of the original Emergence of the Hopi from their underworld home.
4. The Chief of the Kwan society, in the role of God of Death ritually kills the neophytes who are brought back to life "as men" with the aid of their ceremonial fathers.
5. The young men are introduced to the deceased members of the society and are prepared to take their place in the afterworld.
6. The next morning, the young man goes to the ceremonial father's household where the ceremonial father's sisters wash the young man's head and give him a new name. This is his adult name and will stay with him his entire life. The ceremonial father presents his "son" with a special shirt and dancing costume that he made.
7. The next four days the young men participate in public performances of their societies. They hunt rabbits and present them to the ceremonial father's sisters as a thanks. The youth's parents prepare lots of corn meal which is delivered to the ceremonial relatives.

Tribal Initiation is a prerequisite for the young men's participation in the other ceremonies, such as the winter solstice ceremony, the keystone of the Hopi ceremonial system.

The winter solstice ceremony is owned by the Bear clan who provides the village chief. He does not have much in the way of secular authority, but normally acts as a chief priest assisted by

the elder male heads of other important clans for this most important ceremony. Every

household in the village participates in the winter solstice ceremony and receives benefits

(Eggan:1967:97). Tribal Initiation touches on the following elements of expected Hopi male

behavior:

- (1) obedience to elders (members of the society, ceremonial father, etc.),
- (2) respect and reverence for deceased ancestors who led the Hopi from the underworld to their present village,
- (3) turning away from childish behavior and taking on the responsible behavior of an adult men
- (4) display gratitude toward his ceremonial father's family which extends his kinship relationships laterally into another clan/Maximal lineage

As a result of his initiation into the tribe/village the young man has achieved the right to full participation in the ceremonial life of the village which is mostly organized and performed by men, and to receive blessing from his father's sisters who wash his head and give him his adult name. Tribal Initiation gives young men important roles and status within a matrilineal society. There are numerous male societies, each with a different function and purpose, that a man can join, although he usually joins the societies of his ceremonial father. Each society performs important functions for the village as a whole. Men's roles through the various societies benefits the welfare of the entire village.

The ceremonial cycle and rituals generally manage to assuage competition and strife among the Hopi. There is no secular or central authority of any kind within the clan, village or tribe (other than what has been imposed by the federal government). There is no central authority for the Hopi as a whole. Authority is phrased in ritual, rather than secular terms, and it is not found in any single position. Within each village there is a hereditary group of priests or chiefs/lineage heads, but they have minimum secular authority (Eggan: 1967:103). The village chief usually comes from the Bear clan who normally acts as chief priest in the winter solstice ceremony. He is assisted by the heads, acting as priests, of several important clans/ Maximal lineages. The village chief is sanctioned by mythology in terms of the order of arrival of the

clans. The village chief is supposed to watch over his people and protect them with a “good heart”. He does not settle disputes or quarrels; these problems should be settled by clan heads. The Hopi “tribe” and “tribal council” as a politically representative body to the outside was organized by the U.S. federal government.

Among the Hopi, the ceremonial system contributes to the welfare of the entire community/village (Eggan, 1967:104). This is illustrated by what happened when the ceremonial system was disregarded in the new Hopi village of New Oraibi. Here the ceremonial system has been largely given up under the influence of the federal government and missionaries. As a result, there is a loss of feeling for clanship and the obligations of extended kinship. This has been accompanied by the decline of societies (that perform the ceremonies) and a general disintegration of community life (Eggan, 1967: 106). For some, perhaps especially matrilineal societies, the loss of ceremony results in the loss of the social structure.

### **Appendix Two: Hierarchical Priesthoods, Ceremony and Authority among the Zuni Indians**

The Zuni had separate villages like the Hopi until the Americans forced them into one large village. Eggan (1967:176-221) and others have emphasized the central role of religion in Zuni life. Zuni life is oriented around religious observance, and ritual has become the formal expression of Zuni civilization. The foundation of Zuni ceremonialism is the cult of the ancestors. Everybody participates in their worship, and ancestors are mentioned in every other ceremony. *The (deceased) ancestors guide, protect, and nourish current human life.*<sup>10</sup> The deceased ancestors are believed to be *active* in the lives of their descendants. The ancestral spirits are identified with clouds and rain. Zuni priests pray to special groups of ancestors that affect the village as a whole; the ordinary Zuni prays to his ancestors. In the ceremonial cycle

each kiva group (fraternity) is required to dance three times annually, summer, winter and fall during which the katchina spirits are present in the village. Katchinas are transformed lost children into happy, beautiful beings and may also represent generalized ancestors of the village.

The Zuni, like many of the southwestern pueblo Indians extend kinship terms for aspects of nature which are metaphors for the most important human relations (Eggan:1967:176-212). Sun becomes the metaphor for father, as a source of life. At sunrise the people make a daily offering to the sun. The sun priest is the most holy man in Zuni and the most revered. He is the keeper of the calendar and his ultimately held responsible for the welfare of the community. He comes from the largest clan, the Dogwood clan. Earth becomes a metaphor for mother, a source of regeneration. Sky Father and Earth Mother created mankind. Water becomes a metaphor for grandfather, without which life is not sustained. There are twelve priesthoods, called rain-makers are responsible for rain. Their priesthood position is hereditary within particular matrilineages (uncle to sister's son). They come from certain lineages and households in which the women are in charge of the fetishes. The families or households that are in charge of sacred objects for the village are considered the important families (ranked). Fire is associated with grandmother which makes cooking possible and provides warmth (clothing) in winter. Corn is associated with brothers and sisters who are the sweet products of sun, earth and water, and which is cooked with fire. Eventually these metaphors become transformed into sacred objects worthy of veneration.

Based on the worship of ancestral spirits, the Zuni have developed a large number of esoteric cults. Each cult is devoted to the worship of a special group of supernaturals. Each cult has a priesthood, a body of secret rituals, a permanent location of the fetishes (sacred

objects)<sup>15</sup>, special households of worship and a calendric cycle of ceremonies. Six major types of cult have been identified: (1) cult of the sun, (2) cult of rain, (3) cult of the Katchinas, (generalized ancestral spirits, gods) (4) cult of the Katchina Priests deals with fecundity, (5) cult of the war gods, (6) cult of the beast gods (concerned with curing). In addition, Zuni religion is transected by six cardinal directions (which include up and down), and the summer and winter solstices which bisect the ceremonial cycle in two. Ceremonial organization, priesthoods, societies, the kiva organization, and the clan system are all transected by six planes of cardinal directions superimposed on an earlier dual system based on summer and winter solstices (Eggan 1997:213). According to Zuni mythology during their early migrations, the gods and culture heroes named groups of human-kind and creatures in terms of their relations to Earth Mother and Sky Father. Earth Mother is associated with children of summer, the summer solstice, and south; Sky Father is associated with children of winter, the winter solstice and north.

The ceremonial cycle is controlled by a ranked hierarchy of priests from the five largest clans (maximal lineages). Zuni ceremonies are associated with particular lineages or households of important families. In these households (lineages) the elder women take care of the fetishes or sacred objects. She acts as the trustee for the fetish for the community as a whole. She relates the mythology and purpose of the fetish to her brothers and uncles who carry out the ceremonies. The elder woman passes on her knowledge and stewardship to her sister or daughter. In Zuni thinking the sacred objects (fetishes) have been associated with the same household (lineage) since the beginning of Zuni. The sacred objects were given to the leaders of the lineage by the gods (Eggan:1967:215). The Zuni believe the power of the priests

resides with the fetish from his matrilineal household. Brothers and uncles of the matrilineage provide the priests which direct and perform the ceremonies. Among the Zuni only men perform the ceremonies. The priests are part of a priesthood, for example, the cult of rain has 12 priesthoods, each one having two -six members, one of which may be a woman. There is a hierarchy among the priests in a priesthood with a chief priest at the top. He passes on his position to a child of his matrilineage. The hierarchy of priests, simplified below, is conveyed by ritualistic myth held by the Dogwood clan (Eggan: 206-211):

1. The Dogwood clan provides the chief priest of the north
2. The chief priest of the north selects the Sun priest who acts as his spokesperson. The Sun priest must come from the Pikchikwe clan, the Mother Clan of the tribe.
3. The Sun priest selects two War Gods priests, who represent the twin children of the sun. In mythology, the War Gods twins led the Zuni to victory and taught them the proper rituals.
4. The Bow (as in bow and arrow) priesthood is the executive arm of the religious hierarchy. Membership originally was gained through killing an enemy. However, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the Bow priests have been appointed by the chief priest of the north. They are leaders in war and protectors of the village.
5. The heads of the kadcina society act as advisers

This group, which makes up the council of priests, is the principal political authority in the village. It is not strictly vested in one priest. It is councilor. The ultimate control of the Zuni village is the hierarchy of priesthoods who are responsible for community welfare (Eggan:1967:218). Their duties include impersonations of deities, timing of tribal initiation, carrying out the ceremonial calendar, handling questions of tribal policy, and appointment of secular officers. They have the welfare of the pueblo in their hands. They are considered too sacred to be concerned with secular quarrels, so they appoint a set of secular officials to handle these matters and to deal with external relations (Eggan:1967:210). In addition, there are numerous societies which carry out the ceremonies under the direction of the appropriate



priesthood. For example, the Beast Gods are twelve curing societies that include men and women for medical practice. The most highly developed rituals are found with healing or curing societies. They hold ceremonies in the fall and winter. During the winter solstice, they meet in the ceremonial houses and make prayer sticks for the ancients, culture heroes and deceased members of the village.

Kroeber ( 1916: ) perceives that the Zuni community is solidly welded, cross-tied and intricately ramified through its religious system. The ceremonial system requires a number of priesthoods, hierarchically arranged, who manage the intersections of directional and dual principals and to a lesser extent, clan action to control all religious life. The tribal organization (the village) is much stronger in Zuni than among the Hopi due to its religious hierarchy and complex ceremonial system (Eggan 1967: 217). Eggan (1967:219) also points out that factors such as the relative size of clan groups and greater concentration of population have been influential in the relative decline in importance and organization of the Zuni clan (Maximal lineage) system...but more so is the integrative needs of the community as a whole. So greater clan size and population size of the village may call for greater village-wide integrative social mechanisms than just the clan system alone. Clan is less important to the Zuni in ceremonial organization than it is to the Hopi. Zuni tradition throughout is concerned with the people as a whole, scarcely at all with the fortunes of individual clans (Eggan 1967: 219). The Zuni, by developing a strong centralized organization have been able to maintain the unity of the community under modern conditions (Eggan 1967:221). Zuni mythology serves to mirror Zuni institutions *as if they had always existed* or presents them as coming into being through the

activities of the ancestors or culture heroes. Where institutions change, the myths are generally brought into ultimate concordance (Eggan:1967:214).

### **Appendix Three: Centralized Religious Control in the Acoma Southwestern Indians**

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Acoma organization is noted for its strong, centralized control in the hands of a single, ruling priest from a particular matrilineage (Eggan: 223-247,304). The Acoma pueblo consists of the original village (Old Acoma) which is used as a ceremonial center and winter home and two summer villages that are closer to the fields. Marriage occurs within the village among exogamous clans (Maximal lineages). The Acoma consists of 18-19 clans (Maximal lineages) who do not own the land. The land of the pueblo is communally owned or owned by the "cacique", or head priest. He allocates or assigns land it to households/lineages. The assigned land remains with the lineage as long as it is worked by the family.

The sociological development of centralized theocratic control has been the result of conflict and warfare between the Acoma and invading Indians and Spanish, (Eggan;1967:249-250). The Acoma pueblo fought against nomadic Indian enemies, brutal conquest by the Spanish in 1598, the Pueblo Rebellion against the Spanish in 1680, and other battles. According to Eggan in order to maintain their unity and survival, the events of the historic period forced the Acoma to create a village level organization that was centralized and flexible to make and enforce decisions. This village level organization subordinated the clan system and societies to one ruling clan (Antelope) and to its head, the cacique. The cacique is considered the father of the Pueblo, father of the katchinas and concerned with the welfare of everybody. The cacique is a hereditary position in the Antelope clan. He is installed by Antelope clansmen and kiva chiefs.

His successor is his sister's son. This position gives stability to the pueblo and avoids disputes over succession (Eggan 1967:250).

Mythology also evolved to support this centralized system Eggan (1967: 223-247).

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latiku is one of two sisters who created people and all the things people need. She instructed people in their duties and responsibilities. She is called "mother" and is representative of the earth. She receives the soul after death in the Place of Emergence where she resides. She is held in great respect and affection. Her sacred object is a corn-ear fetish which not only represents latiku, *but actually holds her power*. The cacique and other religious officials are her representatives in the village. He is called the sun, and is referred to as the husband of latiku. The cacique is considered the father of the people and the katchinas<sup>13</sup>. Special flint knives are his representative fetish. According to myth, latiku appointed the first born man of the Antelope clan as cacique and father of the katchinas.

The Katchina cult is very important to latiku and is the most important cult to the Acoma. The katchina ceremonies and dances are necessary to bring rain to the pueblo, venerate ancestors and lost children, and to enlist the protection of these spirits. The functions of the Katchina cult are to bring rain and blessings of the spirits, and initiate 6-9 year old boys and girls into the "tribe"/ pueblo. The initiation rituals are carried out in the kiva of the antelope clan, with only boys and men playing an important role by impersonating the katchinas. Women remain as the genealogy and ritual keepers of their matrilineages. Males, particularly among the Acoma, are the face of ritual, especially those of the Katchina cult and societies (village level). The Katchina cult is the integrating mechanism that initiates young children, boys and girls into the "tribe", actually the pueblo or village. The Katchina cult and organization is directly under the

control of the Antelope clan and the cacique, head priest. The young initiates will have allegiance to the cacique and leaders of the Antelope clan over their own clans.

All the southwestern pueblo tribes arrange for a "ceremonial" father or "mother" to initiate their young. The ceremonial father may be from the father's clan/Maximal lineage or be a friend of the family. Not only is the ceremonial father involved in imitation of his youth but also either his wife (Acoma) or sisters (Hopi). Kindred terms and behavior is extended to the ceremonial father and his female relatives who become kin. This is another mechanism for lateral integration among clans in the southwestern pueblos as husbands and wives belong to different clans. Since boys follow through with the tribal societies with their village integrating ceremonies, the ceremonial father usually remains an important figure in his life, especially among the Hopi and Zuni. The girls do not continue with tribal societies to the extent of the boys. Girls' base and socio-economic strength lies in their matrilineage and later as elder clan heads. Initiation is a profound rite among the southwestern pueblos. It defines unity among clans within the pueblo. The following elements are involved with initiation in the Acoma (Eggan 1967:234-235).

### **Acoma Initiation**

1. The initiation takes place only in the Antelope clan's kiva where an altar is erected. The War chief is in charge.
2. The initiates are brought in and are "whipped" by katchinas (masked men impersonating katchinas.)
3. The ceremonial father and wife provide food for the initiate and puts feathers in his/her hair.
4. The child is given a (new) name that will remain with them their entire life. The new name symbolizes the new relationship between the novice and the members of this clan (Antelope).

5. The ceremonial father and his wife take his initiate home where she washes his head and provides new clothes.
6. The initiate is brought back to the cacique's kiva where the initiate is bathed in front of an altar erected by the medicine men.
7. The mother's brother presents the initiate to the cacique. The katcinas are now unmasked and the cacique tells the initiates the history of the katsinas and why men impersonate them. The initiates are sworn to secrecy.
8. The cacique formally presents all initiates as members of the village and the boys, as members of the kiva organization (societies that conduct ceremonies).

The function of the Katcina initiation from the Acoma point of view is to give the youth "a new life". Its sociological function is to integrate all members of the pueblo (from all clans/lineages) into the village/ "tribe" with allegiance to the cacique and the Antelope clan. Chiefs of other societies and clans are involved with the Katcina initiation, as well as women. The Katcina initiation ceremony is a village integrating affair for the adult members of the village as well. The War chief coordinates the initiation, the Antelope clan provides the kiva and the altar, the Medicine men's society set up the altar in the cacique's kiva, certain men masquerade as katcinas, the ceremonial father and his wife perform ritual acts for the initiate, the mother's brother presents the new member to the head priest. While all adult participants are subordinate to the Antelope clan and the cacique, they also play an important role in the actual proceedings. The ceremony serves to integrate the adult men and women who perform in the ceremony as well as the youths.

It is interesting that the Antelope clan and the cacique uphold traditional Acoma practices: matrilineage, societies (Medicine, War, Hunter), tribal/village initiation, and the kiva. It differs from Zuni and Hopi practices in that the Acoma cacique appoints the leaders of the

societies and kivas and basically controls directly or indirectly all ceremonial life in Acoma. The Antelope clan selects the secular officers of the pueblo who deal with outside contacts: a governor, two lieutenant governors, plus two other positions. So indirectly the cacique and elders of the Antelope clan control external relations.

In Acoma by centralizing control in a single clan and subordinating societies and clans to it, the pueblo has retained stability and the conserving power of the clan system while achieving flexibility in meeting new situations (Eggan:1967:251).

Among the southwestern pueblo Indians sacred knowledge lies with women in their extended households. The women own the house, and land which is associated with the household, the locus of economic activity and sacred rituals. Their husbands, who come to live with them, work the fields and provide for her and her matrilineage. Crops are stored in the household under the keeping of the women who cooperate together to process for food. The house may be a ritual center where sacred objects and paraphernalia are stored. While the women are the "knowledge keepers" of the matrilineage and religion, as well as keepers of the sacred objects and paraphernalia, they look to their brothers and maternal uncles to perform the ceremonies and rituals. Their married brothers and uncles return to their natal household to cooperate in these ceremonies. Highly ranked matrilineages produce priests to organize and lead the ceremonies. These southwestern pueblo Indians have a theocratic system of social control. The Hopi are the least centralized, the Zuni, perhaps intermediate, and the Acoma tightly controlled. I believe each of these levels of theocratic integration is relevant to understanding Bronze Age Crete in its early, middle and late development.

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