

MINOAN ZOOMORPHIC CULTURE

Since the earliest era of archaeological discovery on Crete, vivid renderings of animals have been celebrated as defining elements of Minoan culture. Animals were crafted in a rich range of substances and media in the broad Minoan world, from tiny seal stones to life-size frescoes. In this study, Emily Anderson fundamentally rethinks the status of these zoomorphic objects. Setting aside their traditional classification as “representations” or signs, she recognizes them as distinctively real embodiments of animals in the world. These fabricated animals – engaged with in quiet tombs, bustling harbors and monumental palatial halls – contributed in unique ways to Bronze Age Aegean sociocultural life and affected the status of animals within people’s lived experience. Some gave new substance and contour to familiar biological species, while many exotic and fantastical beasts gained physical reality only in these fabricated embodiments. As real presences, the creatures that the Minoans crafted artfully toyed with expectation and realized new dimensions within and between animalian identities.

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MINOAN ZOOMORPHIC
CULTURE
BETWEEN BODIES AND THINGS

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for Elías and Camilo,
and their happy hum

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★

Certain discussions in the present book appeared in earlier form in other contexts:

Chapter 2: "The Reinvented Social Somatics of Ritual Performance on Early Crete: Engagements of Humans with Zoomorphic Vessels," In K. Morgan, ed., *Pomp, Circumstance, and the Performance of Politics: Acting Politically Correct in the Ancient World*. Oriental Institute Seminars. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago; *in-press 2024*.

Chapter 3: "The Poetics of the Cretan Lion: Glyptic and Oral Culture in the Bronze Age Aegean," *American Journal of Archaeology* 124 (3); July 2020: 345–379.

Parts of Chapter 5 and 6: "Intuitive Things: Helmets, Shields, Ikria and the Uniqueness of Aegean Composites," In T. Palaima and R. Laffineur, eds., *ZOLA: Animal Connections in the Aegean Middle and Late Bronze Age*. Leuven: Peeters, 2021:149–160.

CHRONOLOGY

Dates BCE	Period	Crete	Cretan period	Cyclades	Mainland	Mainland period
3100–2700	EBA	EM I	Prepalatial	EC I	EH I	
2700–2400		EM IIA	↓	EC II	EH IIA	
2400–2200		EM IIB	↓	EC II	EH IIB	
2200–2000		EM III	↓	EC III	EH III	
2000–1900	MBA	MM IA	Protopalatial	MC I	MH I	
1900–1800		MM IB	↓	MC II	MH II	
1800–1700		MM II	↓			
1700–1600		MM III	Neopalatial	MC III	MH III	Early Mycenaean
1600–1525	LBA	LM IA	↓	LC I	LH I	↓
1525–1450		LM IB	↓	LC II	LH IIA	
1450–1400		LM II	Final Palatial		LH IIB	↓
1400–1300		LM IIIA(1-2)	↓	LC III	LH IIIA(1-2)	Palatial
1300–1200		LM IIIB	Postpalatial		LH IIIB	↓
1200–1070		LM IIIC	↓		LH III C	Postpalatial

Chronological table adapted from Shelmerdine 2008: 4 fig. 1.1, and Knappett 2020: xv.

Abbreviations EBA: Early Bronze Age; MBA: Middle Bronze Age; LBA: Late Bronze Age. *Aegean Chronology* EM: Early Minoan; MM: Middle Minoan; LM: Late Minoan; EC: Early Cycladic; MC: Middle Cycladic; EH: Early Helladic; MH: Middle Helladic; LH: Late Helladic. *Egyptian Chronology* OK: Old Kingdom (2700–2136); FIP: First Intermediate Period (2136–2023); MK: Middle Kingdom (2116–1795); SIP: Second Intermediate Period (1795–1540); NK: New Kingdom (1540–1070).