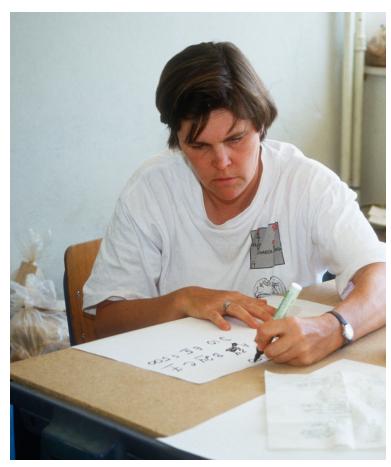


# KE-RA-ME-JA

Studies Presented to Cynthia W. Shelmerdine



Cynthia in the Hora School House. Courtesy Department of Classics, University of Cincinnati and the Pylos Regional Archaeological Project.

#### PREHISTORY MONOGRAPHS 46

## KE-RA-ME-JA

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edited by

Dimitri Nakassis, Joann Gulizio, and Sarah A. James



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### Preface

Dimitri Nakassis, Joann Gulizio, and Sarah A. James

The title of this volume, *ke-ra-me-ja*, is a woman's name that appears only once in the extant Mycenaean documentation, on Knossos Ap 639, a catalog of named women. We chose it because it means "potter" (Κεράμεια, from Greek κέραμος, "potter's clay") and combines two major strands of Cynthia Shelmerdine's many scholarly pursuits: Mycenaean ceramics and Linear B texts. It thereby signals her pioneering use of archaeological and textual data in a sophisticated and integrated way.

Like Cynthia, it is also one of a kind. The intellectual content of the essays presented to her in this volume demonstrate not only that her research has had a wide-ranging influence, but also that it is a model of scholarship to be emulated. The fact that the authors contributed in the first place is a testament to her warm and generous friendship. We hope that the papers in this volume both pay tribute to her past work and prove fruitful to Cynthia in her many continuing endeavors.



## Biography of Cynthia W. Shelmerdine

Susan Shelmerdine

Cynthia Shelmerdine credits much of her early interest in archaeology to Emily and Cornelius Vermeule who became neighbors (and fellow dog walkers) during her junior year of high school. She followed this interest to Bryn Mawr College where, when she began Greek in her sophomore year, she realized ancient Greece was her true passion. After graduating with a degree in Greek from Bryn Mawr, she studied for two years at Cambridge University as a Marshall Scholar and began to combine her interests in archaeology and Greek in work on Linear B. From Cambridge, she went on to Harvard University where she earned her Ph.D. in Classical Philology in 1977 with a dissertation that grew out of work she had done on Late Helladic pottery from Nichoria with the University of Minnesota Messenia Expedition during the summers of 1972-1975. This early background attests to her firm belief in taking an interdisciplinary approach to the study of early Greek history and signals three common threads in her scholarly work: Greek, Linear B, and Mycenaean pottery. Cynthia joined the Department of Classics at the University of Texas in 1977, teaching "all things Greek, from language to archaeology," serving twice as Department Chair, and becoming the Robert M. Armstrong Centennial Professor of Classics in 2002, before retiring with emerita status in 2008 to continue her travels and her work on Mycenaean Greece. She returned to England in 2009 as a Visiting Associate at Oxford University and Official Visitor at Cambridge University and, in 2011, as Peter Warren Visiting Professor at Bristol University.

In addition to writing a teaching commentary on Thucydides VI and an elementary Greek textbook, Cynthia has published extensively on Pylos and the evidence of the Linear B tablets for understanding Mycenaean society. Her ability to draw out the big picture from details and data in the tablets is well illustrated in this work, as it is in *The Cambridge Companion to the Aegean Bronze Age* (2008), to which she contributed and also edited. Cynthia has continued to apply her expertise in Mycenaean pottery as a codirector of the Pylos Regional Archaeological Project, in charge of museum operations and Bronze Age ceramics (1991–1996), and again as a ceramics

and historical expert for the Iklaina Archaeological Project (1999–present). Along the way, she has enjoyed sharing her love of ancient Greece and the Aegean Bronze Age with a wide audience as a regular lecturer and tour leader for the Archaeological Institute of America. As this volume suggests, however, it is her interest in and her work with students that she has enjoyed the most and that continues to fuel her passion for bringing Mycenaean society to the light of a new day.



# Bibliography of Cynthia W. Shelmerdine

### Degrees

- 1970 A.B. in Greek, Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA.
- 1972 B.A. in Classics (M.A. 1980), Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK.
- 1977 Ph.D. in Classical Philology (A.M. 1976), Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

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## List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations for periodicals in the reference lists of the chapters follow the conventions of the *American Journal of Archaeology* 111 (2007), pp. 14–34.

A	Akones "mound"	CR	Crete
AR	Arkalochori	DA	Dark Age
ARM	Armeni	dat.	dative
ASCSA	The American School of Classical	diam.	diameter
	Studies at Athens	dim.	dimensions
ca.	approximately	EDS	energy dispersive X-ray spectrography
CAP	Cambridge Amphora Project	EH	Early Helladic
Chem.	chemical group	EM	Early Minoan
CHIC	Corpus Hieroglyphicarum Inscription-	EPG	Early Protogeometric
	um Cretae	est.	estimated
cm	centimeter	fem.	feminine
comp.	composite (measurement restored on	FM	Furumark motif number
	the basis of one or more overlapping	fr.	fragment
	but nonjoining fragments)	FS	Furumark shape number

g	grams	MY	Mycenae
GC-MS	gas chromatography-mass	Myc.	Mycenaean
	spectrometry	N	Nikitopoulou tomb group
h.	height		(Tourkokivouro)
ha	hectare	no.	number
HARP	Hora Apotheke Reorganization	nom.	nominative
	Project	pers. comm.	personal communication
HM	Heraklion Museum	pers. obs.	personal observation
Hom.	Homeric/Homer	PG	Protogeometric
HT	Hagia Triada	PH	Phaistos
ICP-MS	inductively coupled plasma mass	PIXE	particle induced X-ray emission
	spectrometry	PK	Palaikastro
IKAP	Iklaina Archaeological Project	pl.	plural
INAA	instrumental neutron activation	PN	place name
	analysis	POR	Poros Herakleiou
IO	Juktas	PR	Prassa
kg	kilograms	PRAP	Pylos Regional Archaeological
KH	Chania		Project
km	kilometers	pres.	preserved
KN	Knossos	PY	Pylos
KO	Kophinas	Py/GC-MS	pyrolysis/gas chromatography-mass
L	Lambropoulos/Lakkoules group	•	spectrometry
L.	length	RCT	Room of the Chariot Tablets, Knossos
lat. inf.	latus inferius	rest.	restored (measurement restored de-
LC	Late Cycladic		spite missing segments of profile)
LD	Lustrous Decorated	RLWM	Red Lustrous Wheelmade
LH	Late Helladic	SEM	scanning electron microscope
LM	Late Minoan	sg.	singular
m	meters	SY	Syme
M	tombs excavated by UMME at	T	Tsagdi group
	Nichoria	TH	Thebes
masc.	masculine	th.	thickness
m asl	meters above sea level	TRO	Troy
max.	maximum	UMME	University of Minnesota Messenia
MC	Middle Cycladic		Expedition
mcg	micrograms	v	verso
MGUA(s)	"Minoan Goddess(es) with	V	Veves
	Upraised Arms"	WAE/ICP or	r ICP-AES inductively coupled plas-
MH	Middle Helladic		ma atomic emission spectrometry
ml	milliliters	XRD	X-ray diffraction
MM	Middle Minoan	XRF	X-ray fluorescence
MN	man's name	ZA	Zakros



# The Minoan Goddess(es): Textual Evidence for Minoan Religion

Joann Gulizio and Dimitri Nakassis

Minoan religion is one of the most important and most vexed—topics in the Aegean Bronze Age.\* At stake is not only our interpretation of Minoan society and culture but also the impact of Minoan religion on Mycenaean and historical Greek religion. Most studies of Minoan religion rely primarily on archaeological, architectural, and art historical evidence, and they examine the nature of cult equipment, locations of religious activity, and representations of ritual performances (Pötscher 1990; Marinatos 1993). Yet disagreement still exists about whether the Minoans worshipped one or more gods. These studies focus on archaeological and art historical evidence without considering a powerful, if problematic, data set: the textual record of the Late Bronze Age, specifically those documents written in Linear A, the script of the Minoan palaces, and Linear B, the script of the Mycenaean palaces.

Using the Linear A and B texts as evidence for Minoan religion is far from simple. Linear A, which is contemporary with Minoan religious practice, is undeciphered and therefore difficult to use as a source for Minoan religion without making unwarranted assumptions. Linear B, in contrast, is much more straightforward to use, having been deciphered, but it is the script of a later "Mycenaean" or "Mycenaeanizing" period in Cretan prehistory (Driessen and Farnoux, eds., 1997). In the Final Palatial period (ca. 1500–1300 B.C., in ceramic

<sup>\*</sup>This paper was inspired by an offhand comment made by Cynthia at the 11th Mycenological Colloquium in May 2000, held in Austin, Texas. An abbreviated version was presented by the authors at the 98th Annual Meeting of the Classical Association of the Middle West and South in April 2002, Austin, Texas.

terms Late Minoan [LM] II-IIIB early), archaeological and textual evidence strongly argues for the hegemony of Mycenaean Greeks at Knossos and Chania as evidenced by new mainland style burial customs (Preston 1999, 2004) and administrative documents written in Greek with the Linear B script (Popham 1976; Haskell 1997). The Linear B texts largely reflect the needs of Mycenaean administrators, and as such they do not simply reflect Minoan religion. We must somehow "filter" the data from this later period in order to retrieve information about earlier Minoan religious practice. This is not a simple process, as it is generally felt that the break between Neopalatial and Final Palatial Crete is a strong one, both in general cultural terms and with respect to religion, and we should therefore expect a great deal of change from one period to the other (Driessen and Macdonald 1997, 97-98; Rehak and Younger 1998, 164).

The historical context of the Linear B texts of Knossos and Chania is therefore one of rapid change, and we cannot expect the texts to reflect preexisting Minoan beliefs in a straightforward way. Nevertheless, these changes can hardly have entailed complete rejection of Minoan beliefs (Hägg 1997). It would be very surprising indeed if no Minoan divinities whatsoever were preserved in the Linear B texts, given the extensive influence of Minoan palatial culture on Mycenaean elites. For instance, approximately three-quarters of the anthroponyms on the Knossos tablets do not have clear Greek etymologies, and some, if not most, of these names are certainly Minoan (Baumbach 1983, 1992; Melena 1987; Firth 1992-1993). This fact presumably attests to the continued participation of local Minoans in Knossian administration, and we might therefore expect to find evidence for their local gods in the Linear B texts from Crete.

### Why Minoan Monotheism/Bitheism?

We begin by examining why some scholars advocate for a monotheistic or bitheistic religious system for Bronze Age Cretans. Sir Arthur Evans, excavator of Knossos and founder of Minoan archaeology, was the first to propose an essentially monotheistic Minoan religious system with a "Great Goddess" and her much less important satellite the "Dying God" (e.g., see Evans 1912, 279-280; 1921-1935, III, 456-457). Evans was openly indebted to and influenced by James Frazer's work (Evans 1921–1935, I, 3 n. 4; Dickinson 1994, 174). Frazer and Evans had inherited the idea of the ancient, primitive Mother Goddess from Bachofen and other 19th-century scholars who were operating under a Romantic paradigm of human evolution (Hutton 1997, 92-93). A generation later, Martin Nilsson argued against Evans, advocating a polytheistic view of Minoan-Mycenaean religion (Nilsson 1950, 288, 292, 389-425). Today, scholars are essentially split into two camps, one that follows Evans (Marinatos 1937; Persson 1942; Alexiou 1958; Warren 1977; Peatfield 1994) and another that follows Nilsson (Marinatos 1993, 2000; Dickinson 1994; Watrous 1995; Goodison and Morris 1998). These camps appear to be in a deadlock,

despite more than 100 years of new archaeological finds and intense scholarly debate (Gesell 2004, 143–144).

Evans's influence on modern studies of Cretan religion is still great (Nilsson 1950, 392 n. 3; Rehak and Younger 1998, 141). For example, Evans's work heavily affected the seminal survey of historical Cretan religion by R.F. Willetts, who accepts wholesale Evans's claim that Minoan religion was dominated by a "Great Goddess" indistinguishable from the goddess represented by Neolithic figurines across Europe, Anatolia, and the Near East (Willetts 1962, 54). Willetts's own research was very much a continuation of Evans's, in that he sought to trace the impact of Minoan religion as a system that centered around a "Great Goddess" on later Cretan cults and religious practices (Willetts 1962, 119). Yet much of the evidence mobilized to support his theory consists of later Greek mythological traditions and outmoded concepts of what constitutes "primitive" cognition (Persson 1942; West 1965, 154–155). For example, Willetts asserts that "moon-worship played a conspicuous part in the development of the Minoan goddess" in order to argue that Roman identifications of Britomartis and Diktynna with the moon derive from Minoan times (Willetts 1962, 181). However, Willetts's evidence for Minoan "moon-worship" consists of general claims to the effect that primitive societies universally think of the moon as stimulating fertility and that there are "special associations of the moon with the physiological functions of women" (Willetts 1962, 78–79).

Ronald Hutton's (1997) historical survey of the Neolithic Great Goddess shows conclusively that the "Mother Goddess" theory originated with (and continued to be supported by) scholars who associated the primitive with nature and irrationality, both of which were gendered female. One of Hutton's examples is the classicist Jane Harrison, who was important in the transmission of the idea of the "Goddess" (Harrison 1903, 1912). She argues that an earlier matriarchal society was replaced by a patriarchal one: "Matriarchy gave to women a false but a magical prestige. With patriarchy came inevitably the facing of a real fact, the fact of the greater natural weakness of women" (Harrison 1903, 285). That the idea of a monotheistic pre-Greek Mother Goddess religion came into being under the influence of Romantic, evolutionary, and sexist theories should give us pause. The theory is evolutionary because it posits a natural and inevitable progression from a primitive, irrational, natureloving matriarchy to a modern, rational, cultural and industrial patriarchy; it is sexist because it posits essential qualities of masculinity and femininity according to polar oppositions.

Of course, none of this actually refutes the theory that Minoan religion was dominated by a single

goddess. But while Evans could be reasonably confident in his reconstruction of Minoan religion, a number of the supports of his argument cannot now bear its weight. Central to Evans's Mother Goddess was the idea that primitive religion generally—and that of Anatolia specifically, whence the Minoan "race" originated—was dominated by a great female nature goddess. However, the empirical basis for this theory and recent resurrections of it, notably by Marija Gimbutas (1974, 1991), have repeatedly come under attack both on theoretical and empirical grounds (Ucko 1968, 409-419; Fleming 1969; and more recently, Talalay 1994; Conkey and Tringham 1995; Meskell 1995; Tringham and Conkey 1998; Lesure 2002). These critiques point out that the Goddess theory rests upon naive interpretations of scanty material evidence. Female figurines are asserted to represent goddesses without argumentation or consideration of other possibilities (Haaland and Haaland 1995). Worse, female figurines are interpreted as goddesses, while similar figures of males, sexless humans, or animals are not remarked upon (Nilsson 1950, 291–292; Ucko 1968, 417; Goodison and Morris 1998, 117). The Minoan archaeological and iconographical evidence for a single goddess has been effectively critiqued by Oliver Dickinson, who argues that the theory of a goddesscentric Minoan religion owes more to Evans's influence than to a critical evaluation of the material (Dickinson 1994). In fact, the subjective approaches so often taken in interpreting Bronze Age iconography have served to feed the fire first started by Evans. For this reason, it is worth reexamining images of the divine during the Late Bronze Age on Crete.

### The Iconography of Bronze Age Religion

Studies of Minoan religion largely rely on iconographical evidence. Images on wall paintings, pottery, sarcophagi, and signet rings often depict what are commonly believed to be rituals and divinities, but no clear way to distinguish between individual gods has been established (Evans 1921–1935, II, 277; Marinatos 1993, 149). Indeed, the generic conventions of Minoan art give the impression of much homogeneity in the representation of divinity, assuming that we can even identify divinities

in Minoan art (Wedde 1999; Thomas and Wedde 2001). But iconographical evidence must be treated with some caution, since systems of iconography and systems of belief do not necessarily directly correlate. For example, while the religious iconography of the mainland Mycenaeans is dominated by representations of females, Linear B texts make it clear that a number of important male divinities were worshipped (Mylonas 1966, 160). In fact, we may go so far as to suggest that at Pylos, Poseidon

(po-se-da-o) was the chief divinity of the state, based on his prominence in the Es series, his probable connection with the Pylian king, and the important position of a shrine of Poseidon (po-si-da-i-jo) on the Pylos text Tn 316, not to mention the epic tradition of Poseidon's worship at Pylos in the Odyssey (Cook and Palaima 2001). Yet not a single image of Poseidon can be clearly identified in the archaeological record.

Assessing religious iconography during the Mycenaean occupation of the palaces on Crete is more problematic. Beginning in the Final Palatial and continuing into the Postpalatial period, the clearest examples of the iconography of divinity consist of large terracotta statues of goddesses with upraised arms, conventionally called "Minoan Goddesses with Upraised Arms" (or MGUAs; see Alexiou 1958; Rethemiotakis 1997). While some scholars consider MGUAs to be a purely Postpalatial phenomenon (Peatfield 1994), it seems clear that they originated in LM IIIA (Gesell 1985, 41-42; 2004, 134; Rethemiotakis 1997; 1998, 66-68; Rehak and Younger 1998, 164), when Mycenaeans dominated Central and western Crete. Although MGUAs are generally similar in terms of their overall design, variations are common, particularly in the position of the hands and the symbols attached to them, such as snakes, birds, and poppy heads (Gesell 1985, 48–49). Largely on the basis of these figures, a number of scholars have proposed an essentially monotheistic religious system for Late Bronze Age Crete (Gesell 1985, 54). Others, such as Peatfield, have stressed that the use of different symbols attached to the MGUAs reflects an attempt to distinguish each as an individual, that is, as different aspects of a single goddess or different goddesses (Peatfield 1994, 33-35; Rehak and Younger 1998, 171, citing Coldstream 1977; Gesell 1996). However, the symbols attached to MGUAs do not significantly cluster in such a way that we can clearly distinguish between them, as Gesell's careful study shows (Gesell 2004, 144); indeed, some MGUAs bear no symbols at all (Gesell 2004, 140). Gesell attempts to distinguish between "bird goddesses" and "snake goddesses," a division frustrated by the fact that these symbols sometimes appear on the same figure (Gesell 2004, 139-140).

Thus, the iconography of the MGUA does not allow us to clearly distinguish between separate female divinities, nor are we able to interpret the seeming nonexistence of male divine images. However, the Final Palatial origin of the MGUA correlates quite well with the presence of Mycenaeans, when textual evidence clearly attests to a polytheistic religious system. Despite the continued uncertainty over the date(s) of the destruction(s) of Knossos and the chronology of the Linear B tablets (Driessen 2008, 70-72), it seems likely that LM IIIA:2 shines at Knossos and Hagia Triada were built when the Mycenaean administration was still active at Knossos (Gesell 1985, 41-42, 74-75; 2004, 134; on Hagia Triada, see La Rosa 1985, 53-54; Watrous and Blitzer 1997). At Chania, the fragmentary remains of a LM IIIB shrine, which include the face of a half-life-sized ceramic figure and snake tubes, have been found in a pit along with a stirrup jar inscribed in Linear B (Hallager 2001, 178, with references). Contemporary textual evidence at Chania reveals polytheistic religion at this time: KH Gg 5 records religious contributions to (the male divinities) Zeus and Dionysus at a sanctuary of Zeus (Hallager, Valaskis, and Hallager 1992; Hallager and Andreadaki-Vlasaki 1997). At the end of the Bronze Age on Crete, then, we have clear written evidence for a complex polytheistic religious system that is not reflected in the iconography (Goodison and Morris 1998, 131). A parallel scenario is present on the Greek mainland in the Late Bronze Age, where homogeneity in iconography contrasts with definitive textual evidence for polytheism.

For these reasons, we argue that iconography on its own cannot elucidate the nature of Minoan religion. Even if one argues that the MGUA cult was a popular (as opposed to elite) cult in the Final Palatial period (Mersereau 1993, 15; Gesell 2004), an argument problematized by the fact that MGUAs occur at sites important to Mycenaean administration on Crete, the fact remains that the MGUAs, arguably the clearest archaeological and iconographical evidence for a divinity, provide a partial—and for our purposes inadequate—picture of Cretan religion. To help clarify the issue, we now turn to the textual evidence.

### Using Linear B as a Source for Minoan Religion

The lack of consensus about fundamental aspects of Minoan religion contrasts with our knowledge of Mycenaean religion, for which we have ample textual evidence in the form of Linear B tablets. Studies of the Mycenaean epigraphic material have identified many theoryms, ritual actions and their material expression, and the names of cult locales. As mentioned above, these texts have been largely ignored in recent debates on Minoan religion (Marinatos 2000), perhaps because the tablets do not describe "pure" Minoan religion (Coldstream 1977, 3; Warren 1987, 40). For instance, the presence of Zeus in the earliest Linear B tablets from Knossos indicates that the Mycenaeans have brought some divinities (or at least theoryms) with them to Crete, for Zeus's name has a clear Indo-European etymology. However, a number of terms in the Linear B tablets at Knossos that have been interpreted as divine names based on their context and analogy with identifiable theoryms have no clear Greek or Indo-European etymology. We propose that some of these divine names may be "Minoan," by which we mean that they relate to the language spoken by the Cretan population prior to LM II and written with the Linear A script. We believe that Minoan theonyms can be identified using the following two criteria: (a) they will be found only on tablets from Crete; and (b) they will exhibit "Minoan" linguistic features. If these criteria are met, a further analysis of the context of these divinities in the Linear B tablets (and their interconnections with each other) may serve to support our identifications.

### Theonyms Found Only on Tablets from Crete

A number of divine names are attested in the Linear B tablets at Knossos but are absent from the mainland sites of Pylos, Thebes, Mycenae, and Tiryns. In addition, some of these divinities appear to be important figures in the religion of Mycenaean Knossos, based upon the frequency with which they occur on the tablets and the quantity of offerings made in their honor. Two possible scenarios may explain this phenomenon: (1) these divinities are local gods, whose worship is acknowledged by the Mycenaean administration at Knossos (Hägg 1997; Hiller 1997), or (2) these divinities are absent from the mainland due an accident of preservation, namely the incomplete recovery of Linear B records at these sites. The latter may certainly be claimed for the sites of Mycenae and Tiryns, and perhaps even Thebes, where a much smaller quantity of tablets has been found in comparison to the material from Pylos and Knossos. It may be significant, however, that all of the divinities known from Thebes and Mycenae are also honored at Pylos (see Table 10.1).

Table 10.1 provides all of the identifiable theonyms recorded in the Linear B tablets, based on current scholarly consensus. The status of some divinities, such as i-pe-me-de-ja, di-ri-mi-jo, and ti-ri-se-ro-e, has been interpreted either as divine or semidivine (Mühlestein 1979). In either case, they are clearly recipients of cult and therefore are included in our list. Note that no theonyms are attested in the tablets from Tiryns, and only a few divine names occur on tablets from Mycenae, Thebes, and Chania. A comparison between the divinities at Pylos and Knossos, however, is particularly revealing. A core number of divinities occur at both sites (Potnia, Hermes, Zeus, Diwia, and Poseidon), including all but one of the divinities found at Thebes (Hera). Interestingly, a significant number of divinities recorded at Knossos do not occur on the Pylian tablets, and vice versa, a fact that suggests that there were substantial distinctions in the religions of Crete and the Greek mainland (Hägg 1997; Boëlle 2004). Our explanation of this phenomenon is that at Knossos, local Minoan gods and nonlocal divinities, presumably introduced from the Greek mainland, were given offerings by the palatial administrators.

		<b>Greek Mainland</b>	С	rete	
Names	Pylos tablets: 1,026 signs: 28,500	Thebes tablets: 337 signs: 3,733	Mycenae tablets: 68 signs: 1,762	Knossos tablets: 3,369 signs: 26,088	Chania tablets: 5 signs: 34
Potnia	po-ti-ni-ja	po-ti-ni-ja	po-ti-ni-ja	po-ti-ni-ja	
Hermes	e-ma-a <sub>2</sub>	e-ma-a <sub>2</sub>		e-ma-a <sub>2</sub>	
Diwia	di-u-ja / di-wi-ja	di-u-ja / di-wi-ja		di-u-ja / di-wi-ja	
Hera	e-ra	e-ra			
Zeus	di-we / di-wo			di-we / di-wo	di-we / di-wo
Poseidon	po-se-da-o-ne			po-se-da-o-ne	
Dionysus	di-wo-nu-so				di-wo-nu-so
Artemis	a-te-mi-to / a-ti-mi-to				
"Divine Mother"	ma-te-re te-i-ja				
Posidonia	po-si-da-e-ja				
Iphimedia	i-pe-me-de-ja				
Drimios	di-ri-mi-jo				
"Thrice-Hero"	ti-ri-se-ro-e				
	pe-re-*82				
"House-Master" (?)	do-po-ta				
	ma-na-sa				
Enualios	e-nwa-ri-jo(?)			e-nu-wa-ri-jo	
Ares				a-re	
Earth Shaker				e-ne-si-da-o-ne	
Eileithyia				e-re-u-ti-ja	
Erinys				e-ri-nu	
Paion				pa-ja-wo-ne	
				pi-pi-tu-na	
				mba?-ti	
				pa-sa-ja	
				si-ja-ma-to	
				pa-de / pa-ze	
				qe-ra-si-ja	

Table 10.1. List of divinities recorded on Linear B tablets from different sites.

### The Presence of "Minoan" Linguistic Features

A number of theonyms that appear only at Knossos are not explicable as Greek and exhibit features that may be identifiable as Minoan. Although Linear A remains undeciphered, it is possible to detect Minoan linguistic features by examining the signs and sign sequences on Linear A tablets, especially in comparison to those on Linear B tablets. This procedure is possible because the Linear B script of the Mycenaeans was adapted from the Linear A syllabary, in much the same way that the later Greek speakers adapted the Phoenician alphabet to write the Greek language (Bennet 2008, 19–22), and the Mycenaeans retained the phonetic

values for many of the signs they borrowed from Linear A (Packard 1974; Duhoux 1989; Palaima and Sikkenga 1999). On this basis, we can identify the following features as distinctively Minoan: (1) the dominance of the vowels a, i, and u; (2) initial reduplication; and (3) the presence of distinctive signs or sign sequences present in Linear A but used in Linear B to write non-Greek words. On their own, each of these features can be identified in unproblematically Greek names, but as a group they suggest that *pi-pi-tu-na*, *mba?-ti*, *pa-sa-ja*, *si-ja-ma-to*, *pa-de*, and *qe-ra-si-ja* may be tentatively identified as Minoan theonyms.

By comparing the signs and the frequency of signs used in both Linear A and Linear B, it has been shown that the Minoan language is predominantly composed of syllables ending in the vowels a, i, and u (Packard 1974, 113–115; Duhoux 1989, 72–74; Palaima and Sikkenga 1999, 600). Mycenaean Greek, on the other hand, utilizes more syllables containing the vowels e and o. Based on this information alone, three of the theonyms in question conform to the Minoan trivowel phonology: *pi-pi-tu-na*, *mba?-ti*, and *pa-sa-ja*.

In addition, many words in Linear A exhibit initial reduplication, that is, the first two syllables of a given word are represented by the same sign (Lejeune 1972, 203-209). The divine name pi-pitu-na conforms well to these linguistic features. It contains only the vowels that are presumed to be Minoan and exhibits initial reduplication (referring in this case to the double pi- at the beginning of the word). Though these spelling features, and the fact that this divinity is attested only at Knossos, would be enough to identify pi-pi-tu-na as a Minoan divinity, a few additional pieces of evidence may strengthen its Minoan identification. First, the sign sequence tu-na is present in Linear A in the term KU-MBA?-NA-TU-NA-TE found on a cylindrical stone cup that was part of a religious assemblage from the Neopalatial town of Apodoulou (Gesell 1985, 69). The tu-na ending may also be reflected in a Cretan divinity known in the historical period as Diktynna (Furumark 1953; 1954; Hiller and Panagl 1976, 301). The connection between pipi-tu-na, KU-MBA?-NA-TU-NA-TE, and Diktynna is admittedly circumstantial, although all three can at least be connected independently with Cretan religion. In any case, the more definitive linguistic features of pi-pi-tu-na and the fact that this divinity is honored only at Knossos strongly suggest that pi-pi-tu-na represents a Minoan divinity.

The Mycenaeans also retained some Linear A signs representing purely Minoan phonemes. In Linear B, the signs \*56 (representing mba?), \*22 (representing mbi?), and \*47 (phonetic value unknown) are reserved exclusively for writing non-Greek toponyms, personal names, and technical loan words (Melena 1975, 66; 1987; Palaima and Sikkenga 1999, 602–603). These signs are found predominately in tablets from Knossos and, most importantly, in the divine name mba?-ti, attested on KN Fp 13 as a recipient of oil. The use of a purely

Minoan phoneme in this divine name strengthens the interpretation of *mba?-ti* as a Minoan theonym.

Three additional theoryms may also show features of the Minoan language: qe-ra-si-ja, pa-de, and si-ja-ma-to. At first glance, these words clearly contain the vowels e and o, which are not among the more common vowels used in the Minoan language. However, some e- and o-syllables do occur in Linear A. The o-series is very infrequent in Linear A, reflected in the fact that the Mycenaeans needed to invent most of their signs for syllables containing o, namely the syllabograms for do, jo, mo, no, go, so, and wo (Palaima and Sikkenga 1999, 604 n. 15). The e-series in Linear A is a bit more common in comparison to the o-series, and consequently fewer e-syllable signs had to be invented for Linear B: only pe and we (Palaima and Sikkenga 1999, 604 n. 15). For this reason, Linear A may be understood as a four vowel language, in which the fourth vowel is something close to the vowel e. This is a universal feature of four vowel languages; that is, if a language consists of four vowels, these vowels are always a, i, u, and either ə or i (Crothers 1978, 116).

For this reason, we believe that some Minoan divine names may contain the vowel -e. We begin with qe-ra-si-ja. First, interpreting qe-ra-si-ja as a Greek word has been problematical; several proposals have been made, but none have been universally accepted (Aura Jorro 1993, 195-196). Perhaps this is because the name is in fact Minoan. To support this proposal, it should be noted the sign QE does occur in Linear A. Moreover, the Linear A evidence suggests that the phonetic value of the sign QE is similar to that of QA, since they are sometimes interchangeable (Facchetti 1996). The ending of qe-ra-si-ja in -i-ja may appear problematic, since this sign sequence is a common adjectival ending in Mycenaean Greek, giving it the appearance of a Greek word. However, the i-ja ending is also attested fairly frequently in Linear A (e.g., SE-TO-I-JA on PR Za 1b and SU-KI-RI-TE-I-JA on HT Zb 158b, among others). Therefore, qe-ra-si-ja, which at first glance appears deceptively "Greek," does in fact also conform to Minoan spelling conventions.

Another theonym that may be Minoan is *pa-de* (with the variant spelling *pa-ze*), one of the most common divinities in the Knossos tablets and one who lacks an acceptable Greek etymology. Like

qe-ra-si-ja, pa-de linguistically does not appear to be Minoan because of the -de ending. However, the syllabogram -DE was present among the Linear A signs; that is, -de was not one of the signs that the Mycenaeans had to invent for the Linear B script. Contextual evidence may strengthen the identification of pa-de as a Minoan divinity. This theonym is found on two tablets from the Room of the Chariot Tablets (RCT) at Knossos in a deposit that contained the earliest collection of Linear B, dating to the beginning of the Mycenaean occupation of Crete (Driessen 1999). These tablets record the name pa-ze or \*padje, a variant of pa-de (Risch 1987, 291). The fact that the name of this divinity exhibits two different spellings may attest to its non-Greek nature. The form pa-ze only occurs in the RCT, a chronologically earlier archive, and pade only occurs in the later archives, suggesting that the spelling of this name is not static; that is, it is not a stable Greek word. Rather, syllabogram -ze, representing the sound -dje, retains the palatalization of the consonant, which is a feature of the Minoan language. The change in spelling indicates that the Mycenaean scribes of the RCT chose to be more accurate in rendering this foreign divine name by representing the semiconsonantal glide. Yet over time the spelling, and presumably the pronunciation, was simplified to pa-de. In addition, pa-de seems to have been a very important divinity at Knossos. This theonym is found on at least eight different tablets (more than any other divinity), on a greater variety of tablets (Fp, Fs, Ga, C, and V), and in two temporal horizons. Given the spelling variations of the name, its frequent occurrences on the Knossos tablets (and not at all in mainland texts), the fact that no convincing Greek reading of pa-de exists, and that it conforms to Minoan spelling conventions, it is likely that pa-de refers to a Minoan divinity. This divinity was of such importance at Knossos that it was given offerings by the palatial administrators in the earliest recorded tablets from this site.

The name si-ja-ma-to may also refer to a Minoan deity. This divine name uses syllables that are predominant in the Minoan language with the exception of the final -o. However, Michel Lejeune demonstrates that there is an alternation between Linear B words ending in -o and Linear A words ending with -u, such as qa-qa-ro and QA-QA-RU (Billigmeier 1969, 179; Lejeune 1972, 203-209). This is particularly true of masculine personal names that, in Linear B, exhibit initial reduplication, which Lejeune believes may be Minoan in origin. The o/u alternation can perhaps be explained by the reflex of Greek-speaking Mycenaeans to adapt Minoan personal names to the Greek language by making them conform to the masculine second declension with a nominative ending in -ος. If this interpretation is correct, si-ja-ma-to represents a masculine theorym, making it one of the few instances where the gender of a Minoan divinity can be inferred. The syllable si- suggests that si-ja-ma-to is a loan word, since initial  $\sigma$ - in Proto-Indo-European words would have already changed to a rough breathing in Mycenaean Greek, such as e-qe-ta (hekwetās) from the Indo-European root \*sek\*-. We consequently believe that si-ja-ma-to represents a Mycenaean adaptation of a Minoan theonym, since it otherwise conforms to Minoan spelling conventions.

On the basis of the linguistic evidence, at least six divinities—which occur only at the site of Knossos—exhibit features of the Minoan language. These divinities may in fact be Minoan gods and/or goddesses that are being honored by the Mycenaean administrators at Knossos. To support this theory, we now examine the context of these Minoan theoryms within the corpus of Knossos tablets.

#### The Contextual Evidence for Minoan Divinities

The linguistic evidence for identifying these six theoryms as Minoan is reinforced by a close contextual reading of the tablets. These gods occur on a limited number of tablets and tablet series at Knossos and seem to be closely connected with each other. Many of them can be found in the

Knossos Fp series, a unified group of tablets that records offerings of oil to gods, sanctuaries, and religious officials. All of the recipients in the Fp series, which can be definitively identified, are religious in nature. In addition, most of the tablets in the Fp series begin with a month name, often

followed by the Linear B word for month (*me-no*), a characteristic of Linear B tablets that have religious significance (Trümpy 1989). The longest and perhaps most important text in this series is Fp 1, whose text is as follows:

```
Fp 1
.1
       de-u-ki-jo-jo 'me-no'
.2
      di-ka-ta-jo / di-we OLE s 1
.3
      da-da-re-jo-de OLE s 2
.4
      pa-de OLE s 1
.5
      pa-si-te-o-i
                     OLE 1
.6
      qe-ra-si-ja
                     OLE S 1
.7
      a-mi-ni-so,/pa-si-te-o-i s 1[
.8
      e-ri-nu, ole v 3
.9
      *47-da-de OLE V 1
.10
      a-ne-mo,/i-je-re-ja v 4
.11
       vacat
.12
      to-so ole 3 s 2 v 2
```

Fp 1 is a page-shaped tablet that records allocations of oil to a number of recipients and concludes with a total quantity of oil recorded on the tablet (to-so OLE 3 s 2 v 2). Here, pa-de and qe-ra-si-ja are included along with a number of known divinities, including "Diktaian Zeus" (di-ka-ta-jo / di-we), "Erinys" (e-ri-nu), and "all the gods" (pa-si-te-o-i). In addition, a number of place names are recorded, indicated by the allative suffix -de (da-da-re-jo-de, a-mi-ni-so-de, and \*47-da-de), and it can be posited that these places are locations of cult. Finally, a cult official, a-ne-mo-i-je-re-ja, is also a recipient of oil, presumably on behalf of the deities that she serves.

The divine interpretation of pa-de, qe-ra-si-ja, and the other divinities discussed in this paper is based on the fact that they are written in entries parallel to identifiable theoryms and to pa-si-teo-i ("all the gods"). Of course, they are also parallel to place names (a-ni-mi-so and \*47-do) and a cult official (a-ne-mo-i-je-re-ja), but it is unlikely they could be one of these. All of the place names in the Fp series contain the allative suffix -de, which is not the case for any of the divinities discussed in this paper, except for pa-de. However, this divine name is also attested in the dative case (pa-de-i) on Ga 953, showing the -de ending is not functioning on Fp 1 as an allative, but is part of the root of the word. It is also unlikely that the words we identify as theonyms are cult officials. The only identifiable cult official in the Fp series is *a-ne-mo-i-je-re-ja* ("the priestess of the winds"), and her offering is always recorded after the offerings to the gods and cult locals. This is not the case for the divinities discussed in this paper, whose offerings are recorded among the other known divinities or with *pa-si-te-o-i*.

The names *pi-pi-tu-na*, *qe-ra-si-ja*, *mba?-ti*, and *si-ja-ma-to* are also found in the Fp series. As a point of comparison, we will examine one of these tablets more closely. Fp 48 records oil offerings made during the month of *wo-de-wi-jo*, whose texts is as follows:

```
Fp 48
```

.1 wo-de-wi-jo, 'me-no' / si-ja-ma-to OLE s 2 .2 pa-de, s 1 qe-ra-si-ja s 1 pa-si-te-o-i s 1 .3 a-mi-ni-so-de, / pa-si-te-o-i OLE s 1

Unlike Fp 1, the other Fp tablets are small, leaf-shaped tablets and do not contain a total quantity of oil. On this tablet, *si-ja-ma-to*, *pa-de*, and *qe-ra-si-ja* occur alongside *pa-si-te-o-i*, which points to their divine nature.

The use of pa-si-te-o-i itself is worth discussing in more detail. Despite its obvious and undisputed Greek etymology, this term occurs only at Knossos. It seems likely that it is used as an allencompassing term, probably meaning something like "to all the divinities not specifically stated." This kind of terminology is common in ancient documents, especially in prayers and treaties between foreign states. For example, a treaty between the Hittite king Mursilis and Duppi-tessub of Amurru includes a long list invoking various specific gods, especially storm gods from many different cities, as well as more general references to divinities, such as "the Lulahhi gods (and) the Hapiri gods, . . . the gods and goddesses of the Hatti land, the gods and goddesses of the Amurru land, [and] all the olden gods . . ." (Pritchard 1969, 203-205; Beckman 1996, 54-59). Such generalizing terms would have been used in a treaty between warring states for various reasons: it allowed the Hittites to include the gods of the foreign peoples in this treaty (even though they might not have known their specific names), to express their dominance over newly conquered territories, and to insure that the treaty, which all the gods have been called upon to witness, will be honored by both parties. We propose that pa-si-te-o-i is being used in a similar way in the Knossos tablets, that is, as a means to ensure that all local divinities are included in ritual offerings. In addition, we believe it is significant that the term *pa-si-te-o-i* is never used on tablets from the Greek mainland. On the mainland, Mycenaean Greeks always referred to their gods specifically by name on tablets recording ritual offerings. On Crete, however, the use of the term *pa-si-te-o-i* would have been necessary in order to include all of the many local, Minoan divinities. For this reason, we believe that the exclusive use of *pa-si-te-o-i* only on Crete is, in itself, indicative of Minoan polytheism.

Another tablet series on which possible Minoan divinities occur is the Ga series, and it records allocations of different types of spices. Terms *pa-sa-ja* and *pa-de* (in the dative form *pa-de-i*) are found on tablet Ga 953 [+] 955, as shown below. Like the tablets of the Fp series, Ga 953 begins with a month name (*wo-de-wi-jo*), which points to a religious context. On this tablet, *pa-de* receives a quantity of coriander indicated by the ideogram *KO* and an allotment of fennel that is described as *ko-no*,

an obscure term whose meaning is unknown. An offering of fennel indicated by the term *ko-no* is placed immediately after the divine name *pa-sa-ja*. However, the tablet is broken at this point, so the amount of fennel allotted to *pa-sa-ja* is unknown. Interestingly, *pa-sa-ja* also occurs on a very fragmentary tablet with the term *si-ja-ma-to*. Unfortunately, this tablet is incomplete, and no additional information is provided. Nonetheless, this broken tablet suggests at the very least that *pa-sa-ja* and *si-ja-ma-to* may function in the same capacity.

Using textual evidence, we have identified six Minoan divinities in the Mycenaean Linear B tablets. In addition, we propose that use of *pa-si-te-o-i* exclusively in the Knossos tablets is further evidence that the Minoans worshipped a number of different divinities. Each of the Minoan divinities identified in this paper appears at least once on the same tablet with the term *pa-si-te-o-i*. Moreover, we believe that *pa-si-te-o-i* may unify these divinities into a cohesive group and reinforce their Minoan identification.

```
Ga 953 [+] 955
```

```
.1 wo-de-wi-jo-jo ,/me-no [ //] ri-jo-de ,

.2 ko-no , MA 3 ko-ri [ ] 2 pa-de-i , ko-no MA 2 KO т 1[

.3a [ ] pa-si-te-o-i ,

.3b pa-sa-ja , ko-no , [ ] a-mi-ni-so-de , MA 2 KO т 4
```

#### Discussion and Conclusions

We realize that, taken individually, the identification of these Minoan divinities may not be completely persuasive to proponents of a monotheistic/bitheistic Minoan religious system. Admittedly, if only one or two theonyms conform to our criteria, our results would be less convincing. Several theonyms corresponded to our criteria, however, and when these theonyms are examined collectively their identification as Minoan deities is further strengthened. The fact that these six deities occur on many of the same tablets demonstrates that they are closely interconnected within the Knossian Linear B corpus (Fig. 10.1). The interconnections between these divinities are indeed striking. Not only do all of these divinities occur

with *pa-si-te-o-i*, but they also appear with at least one other Minoan divinity (except for *mba?-ti*).

Further associations can be posited by examining the month names in which these various divinities receive their offerings. Most of the offering tablets are leaf shaped and presumably would have been rewritten onto page-shaped tablets that record the total offerings for each month, such as Fp 1. When different leaf-shaped texts that have the same month name are studied together, the interconnections between the theonyms increase significantly. For example, Fp 6 and Fp 15 were written in the same month, associating *qe-ra-si-ja* and *mba?-ti*, who receive offerings on those texts. In addition, *qe-ra-si-ja*, *pa-sa-ja*, *pa-de*, and

*si-ja-ma-to* all receive offerings in the month *wo-de-wi-jo* on Ga 953 and Fp 48.

It is also worth noting that divinities from the Greek mainland rarely appear on the same texts as the divinities we identify as Minoan, and when they do, they are clearly local. Thus, "Diktaian Zeus" (di-ka-ta-jo di-we) appears on Fp 1 with pasi-te-o-i and pa-de, and "Potnia of the Labyrinth" (da-pu<sub>3</sub>-ri-to-jo po-ti-ni-ja) appears with pa-site-o-i on Gg 702. Both of these gods have names with clear Indo-European etymologies yet are described with reference to Cretan cult places. It is unclear whether these are Greek divinities established in preexisting Minoan places of worship or conflations of Greek and Minoan divinities. But since each text records a specific occasion when offerings were made, the fact that "Minoanized" Greek gods appear in the same texts with Minoan gods suggests that they are recipients of the same offerings at the same places at the same times.

In conclusion, we believe that the Linear B tablets at Knossos provide important evidence relevant to the debate about Minoan religion; in some ways, it is the best evidence. After all, Linear A, the administrative script of the Minoan palaces, is undeciphered and will likely remain so for the foreseeable future. Minoan iconography is highly formulaic and cannot be used to "read" Minoan religion in a straightforward way, since individual deities cannot be clearly identified, much less distinguished from each other. While Linear B belongs to a period of rapid change associated with the "Mycenaeanization" of Crete, it seems clear that Minoan divinities and cult places were fully incorporated into the religious practices observed by palatial administrators

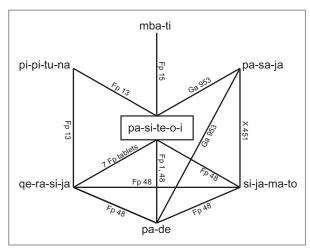


Figure 10.1. Interconnections among hypothesized "Minoan" deities in the Knossos texts.

of Knossos. In some cases, mainland divinities appear to be Minoanized, but the names of Minoan divinities, such as pi-pi-tu-na, mba?-ti, pa-sa-ja, si-ja-ma-to, pa-de, and qe-ra-si-ja, are more often preserved. Furthermore, these divinities are contextually linked in the tablets, suggesting that their cults were associated with each other both spatially and temporally. Finally, the use of pa-si-te-o-i suggests that palatial administrators were scrupulous to include all local gods in their ritual offerings. Reading Minoan religion in Mycenaean administrative documents is not simple. But the Linear B evidence, when read with close attention to context, strongly supports a polytheistic model for Minoan religion. The burden of proof, therefore, falls on those who would argue for a monotheistic or bitheistic Minoan religious system.

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