

ERGASTERIA:
Works Presented to John Ellis Jones
on his 80th Birthday.

(ed.) Nicholas Sekunda

Gdańsk 2010

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Editorial Note

It was only at the beginning of this year that I received an invitation to attend the celebrations of John's eightieth birthday on 10 October 2009. When I passed on news of this meeting to Graham Shipley in Nottingham on 26 February it was Graham who first suggested the appropriateness of producing a volume to celebrate his life and work. At the time I doubted the possibilities of getting anything ready in time, and it was only in Dublin in March that Phil de Souza persuaded me that it would be possible, and put me into contact with a large number of potential contributors. The fact that this volume has arisen in such a short time is a token of the esteem and affection in which John is held by his fellow academics: both as a person and as a researcher into the past. Many others wanted to contribute, but could not do so because of constraints on time. I am sure that there are others who would have been able and willing to contribute if asked, and I ask their forgiveness for my oversight.

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Amenhotep III, Mycenae and the Laurion

During the Egyptian 18th Dynasty (D18) there is increasing evidence for contact between the Aegean and Egypt. This includes the evidence of the Minoan style wall-paintings at Tell el Dab'a (Bietak 1995; Bietak, Marinatos, and Brysbaert 2007), and the representation of Aegean peoples in several of the tombs of the nobles at Thebes (Wachsmann 1987; Rehak 1996; Rehak 1998). Egyptian material also appears in the Greek world including faience figurines of Amenhotep II at Mycenae and Tiryns (Cline 1991) and Egyptian amethyst (Phillips 2009). By the Amarna period there is considerable evidence for LH IIIA2 pottery from the Argolid at Amarna itself (Hankey 1973; Hankey 1981; Hankey 1995; see also Rehak 1998: 39), as well as a putative representation of Mycenaean mercenaries on a papyrus (Schofield and Parkinson 1984). By the end of D18 the scale of contact between different parts of the eastern Mediterranean is indicated by the cargo discovered on the Ulu Burun shipwreck (Yalçın, Pulak, and Slotta 2005; see also Padgham 2009). This paper will attempt to explore one aspect of contact between Egypt and the Aegean during the D18, namely the movement of metals. The evidence can be fragmentary as metals can be reused and recycled (see Vickers and Gill 1994).



Fig 1. Mycenaean tholos tomb III at Thorikos. © David Gill.

The Amenhotep III plaques from Mycenae

In 1886, the excavations at Mycenae started to reveal evidence that started to link the Late Bronze Age (LBA) mainland of Greece with Egypt. In that year Christos Tsountas, the director of excavations, found the first of a series of blue faience plaques. Between 1886 and 1890 he found a total of seven fragmentary plaques (Cline 1990: 202; Phillips and Cline 2005; Phillips 2007; for the context, French 2002: 94). Although it is not possible to be certain about the precise find-spots, about four of them were found in the North Quarter, apparently in the region between Buildings M and N, which may be dated to LH IIIB. Two fragments apparently from the same plaque were found by George Mylonas in 1963. These came from Room M-3 of Building M on the north side of the acropolis, which has also been dated to the LH IIIB phase (Cline 1990: 202; for the building, French 2002: 94-95).

Renewed British excavation by Lord William Taylour (see Gill 2004) in the late 1960s brought to light further examples of the plaques (Taylour 1969a; see also Taylour 1969b; Taylour 1970). One of the faience plaques was found placed in a lead container (Tzedakis and Martlew 1999: 203, no. 202) in the room with the fresco (Room 31) in the 'Cult Centre' (French 2002: 91, pl. 17; Cline 1998: fig. 7.3; Tzedakis and Martlew 1999: 202, no. 201). The plaque had been carefully split. Cline has noted that the pottery from the room dates 'the deposit to the middle of the Late Helladic IIIB period' (Cline 1990: 201). A second fragment of a faience plaque came from the backfill of Room 31, which dates to Phase VIII 'later in the LH IIIB period' (Cline 1990: 201).

The cult room in which these two last plaques were found is placed in the mid-13th century, in other words the LH IIIB1 period (Elizabeth French in Tzedakis and Martlew 1999: 191). Around 1230 BCE Mycenae appears to have been damaged by an earthquake (French 2002: 10) and the cult-centre apparently went out of use (Elizabeth French in Tzedakis and Martlew 1999: 191). The plaque had been placed along with a series of pots that had been used for ritual eating. Other finds included the ivory head of a possible cult figure, carved from an elephant tusk (French 2002: col. pl. 13). Mylonas' subsequent excavations in the region of the cult room found a further plaque fragment (identified by K. Shelton: see Phillips and Cline 2005: 320-22). This came from Fill IVa adjacent to the Cyclopean wall surrounding the acropolis. Stratified finds suggest a deposition date of LH IIIB2 and LH IIIC.

The plaques have been studied by Cline, Lilyquist and Phillips (Cline 1990; Lilyquist 1999; Phillips and Cline 2005; Phillips 2007). It now seems that the Mycenaean fragments represent some eleven original plaques (Phillips and Cline 2005: 327; Phillips 2007). Earlier studies had suggested six to nine plaques (Cline 1990: 202-03. For earlier estimates: Hankey 1981: 45). Cline has proposed that the hieroglyphs were added by two separate craftsmen (Cline 1990: 205). He suggests that the plaques were probably originally c. 20x11 cm, carrying the inscription (Cline 1990: 205):

'The good god Neb-Ma'at-Re, son of Re, Amenhotep, Ruler of Thebes, given life'.

It seems possible that the plaques were 'of the type intended for use in the foundation of a temple or shrine' (Cline 1990: 206). However it does not appear that they were used in this way at Mycenae. Cline considers that the Mycenae plaques 'were probably all part of

a single commission and executed at about the same time during Amenhotep III's reign, possibly for a specific purpose' (Cline 1990: 209; see also Phillips 2007: 488).

The three main contexts for the plaques at Mycenae point to a date within the LH IIIB period. However Amenhotep III is usually thought to be contemporary with the LH IIIA1 period (Hankey and Warren 1974; Rehak and Younger 2001: 391 Table 1; see also Shelmerdine 2001: 332, Table 1; Phillips 2007: 491, fig. 4). In other words, if the plaques arrived in Mycenae shortly after they were made, they would have been about 100 years old 'at the time the building was destroyed' (French 2002: 91. Cline suggests a 150 year gap: Cline 1990: 209). In other words the plaques would have been displayed elsewhere at Mycenae from LH IIIA1, and at some point transferred to the site of the cult centre subsequent to its destruction by the earthquake during LH IIIB.

A lead isotope analysis by Brill placed one of the plaques excavated by Taylour in the Laurion field ('Type L') (Cline 1990: 210; Lilyquist 1999: 305. For early aspects of Brill's work: Brill and Wampler 1967). This contrasts with the lead that appears to have been used in D18 (see also Stos-Gale, Gale, and Houghton 1995). This raises three possibilities: first, that the plaque was made at Mycenae, using Laurion lead; second, that the plaque was made in Egypt using a lead glaze that had been derived from Attica; third, that the sample had been contaminated by the lead container in which it was found (Cline 1990: 210; Phillips 2007: 489). Lilyquist has drawn attention to the unusual nature of the double-sided inscriptions at Mycenae while acknowledging that the script is 'good Egyptian paleography' (Lilyquist 1999: 304). In other words the plaques do not appear to be local imitations: the person who wrote the texts knew what they were doing.

Bronze Age Remains at Thorikos

The lead isotope analysis of one of the plaques from Mycenae has suggested Laurion as the likely source. Even if the lead in the glaze of the plaque had been absorbed from the adjacent lead container, it is a reminder that the mines in the Laurion were being exploited at this time. Bronze Age material has been found on the Velatouri hill at Thorikos (Camp II 2001: 311-15; Travlos 1988: 430-45). The earliest activity seems to go back to the Early Bronze Age (Spitaels 1984. See also Rutter 1993; reprinted in Cullen 2001: 110). The status, and perhaps prosperity of the area, is reflected by the presence of two LBA tholos tombs, dating to the 16th and 15th centuries. Tomb III dated to the 15th century (LH II) was excavated in 1893 and re-examined in 1968 (Mussche 1986: 63-67, nos. 82-84a) (Figs. 1-4).

The paucity of excavated LBA remains in the Laurion need not disprove that the area was being exploited for silver and lead (Muhly 2003: 144). It has been suggested that during the LBA Laurion took over from the island of Siphnos as the main source for silver and lead in the Cyclades (Gale and Stos-Gale 1981b); and on Crete, Laurion became the main source from the Middle Minoan period onwards (Gale, Stos-Gale, and Davis 1984: 390; Branigan 1968). Part of the reason may be that the veins of ore at Laurion were more easily exploited than on Siphnos, and thus they could supply the growing demand for silver (and lead) (Gale, Stos-Gale, and Davis 1984: 399). Pottery found at Thorikos suggests growing imports from the Cyclades and Crete from the end of the

Middle Bronze Age, in other words coinciding with the Neopalatial period (Gale, Stos-Gale, and Davis 1984: 397). This could imply that Crete was becoming the intermediary for trade in Laurion silver. Certainly the investment in mining, processing and long-distance transport of lead and silver probably reflects the growing role of palace-based economies. The amount of silver from the Tôd Treasure, coming from a Middle Kingdom (D12) context in Egypt, may reflect the acquisition of Aegean silver during the reign of Amenemhat II (1911-1877 BC) (Warren 1980: 495-96; Cadogan 1983: 515-16; Warren 2000: 26. For possible Anatolian links: Maxwell-Hyslop 1995. Maxwell-Hyslop noted that the ingots came from two sources: the Taurus, and the north Aegean, Thasos or Chalkidiki).

Study of lead and litharge from Ayia Irini on the island of Kea points to the importance of Laurion as a source from the Late Cycladic (LC) period onwards (Gale, Stos-Gale, and Davis 1984: 394). Evidence of litharge from LC I Thera also supports the theory that Laurion silver was extracted away from Attica (Gale and Stos-Gale 1981b: 213-23; Gale, Stos-Gale, and Davis 1984: 401).

Much of the analysis has been done on lead, but it needs to be remembered that the relatively large amount of lead available for study also reflects the extraction of silver which is less visible in the archaeological record (Gale, Stos-Gale, and Davis 1984: 394. For the same phenomenon in archaic Laconia: Gill and Vickers 2001). There are numerous examples of lead from Mycenaean sites on the mainland. Attic examples are likely to come from Laurion, though that link has not been demonstrated in all cases; the lead from the Athenian acropolis and the chamber tombs in the agora has been subject to a lead-isotope analysis and appears to come from the Laurion (Stos-Gale and Gale 1982: 473). Lead wire has been found in Chamber tomb VIII from the area of the Athenian agora dating to LH IIIA, and from Chamber tomb XXVI dating to LH IIIA2 (Stos-Gale and Gale 1982: 471). A lump of lead dating to the LBA was found on the stairway on the north slope of the Athenian acropolis; it weighs 4.1 kg (Broneer 1933: 352) (Fig. 5). Other pieces of lead from the Mycenaean fountain-house weighed 4.64kg and 12 kg (Broneer 1939: 415-16). These probably should come from a LH III B context (Stos-Gale and Gale 1982: 470). Broneer suggested other pieces of thin sheeting from LH contexts on the acropolis had perhaps been used as covers (Broneer 1939: 416). Lead fragments are known from the area round the later Athenian agora, such as those from the fill of a well perhaps in the LH IIIB-C horizon (Stos-Gale and Gale 1982: 471). Other lead and silver objects come from the Late Bronze Age site of Perati near Porto Raphti in eastern Attica; the site is significant for its proximity to the Laurion (Stos-Gale and Gale 1982: 467; for a convenient plan of the excavations, Travlos 1988: 370, fig. 462). Lead has also been found at Mycenae (Stos-Gale and Gale 1982: 470-71). Mycenae seems to have been in a position to acquire Laurion silver from the late Middle Helladic period onwards (Stos-Gale and Gale 1982: 476).

Laurion is recognised as one of the sources for silver and lead in Egypt, perhaps as early as the prepalatial period (Stos-Gale and Gale 1982. For observations on the earliest contact: Gale, Stos-Gale, and Davis 1984: 398). During the LBA Laurion lead and perhaps silver were apparently exported to Egypt; examples include two pieces from Tel el-Amarna, as well as a D18 piece from tomb D 199 at Abydos (Gale 1980; Stos-Gale, Gale, and Houghton 1995; see also Cline 1990: 211).



Fig. 1. Location of Mycenaean tholos tomb III on the east side of Velatouri hill. © David Gill.

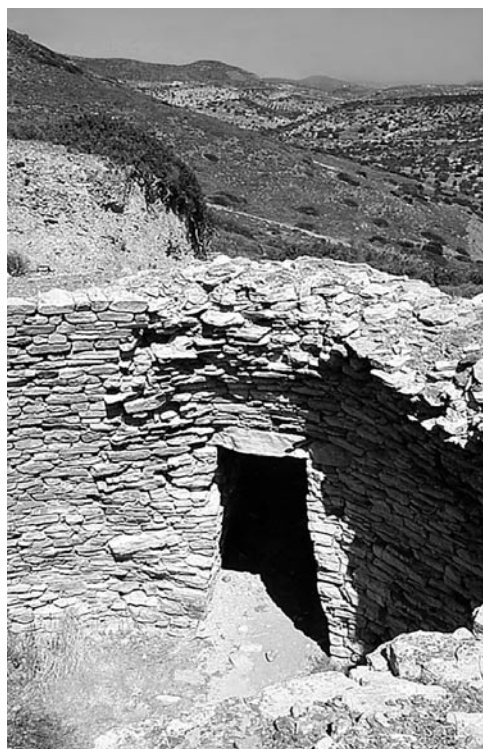


Fig. 2. Tholos tomb III looking north-west. © David Gill.



Fig. 3. Dromos of tomb III. © David Gill.



Fig. 4. Peninsula with the church of Agios Nikolaos looking towards Makronissi. © David Gill.



Fig. 5. Lead sheet from Mycenaean deposit. Athens, Akropolis Museum 350 (after Broneer 1939). Photo courtesy American School of Classical Studies at Athens.

Amenhotep III and the Aegean

The plaques from Mycenae are part of a substantial body of evidence that suggests links between Egypt and the Aegean during the reign of Amenhotep III. These associations can be demonstrated in two ways. First, there is the Aegean list which appears on a statue base from the mortuary temple of Amenhotep III at Kom el-Hetan (Cline 1998: 236-38, fig. 7.2). The place names seem to be associated with cities of the Keftiu and the Tanaja. The list includes a number of places that can be linked to Crete - Amnisos, Phais-tos, and Knossos - as well as the Peloponnese: there are mentions of Messene (probably not Methana as suggested by Cline: Cline 1998: 238. For *LBA Methana*: Mee and Forbes 1997), Nauplion and the island of Kythera. There even appears to be a mention of Ilios. Cline interpreted the double mention of Amnisos as indicating that this was a circular route, and he proposed the possibility that the list recorded the itinerary of a royal embassy (Cline 1987).

Second, several objects bearing the cartouche of Amenhotep III and Tiye have been found in the Aegean; these tend to occur in contexts of LM IIIA1 and LH IIIA/B (Cline 1990: 209). By far the largest concentration of objects come from Mycenae itself, dominated by the faience plaques, but including a faience vase of Amenhotep III in a funerary context (tomb 49) and two faience scarabs of Queen Tiye (cited in Cline 1990: 202 n. 11; see also Shelmerdine 2001: 354). One of the scarabs was found in a house to the south-west of the acropolis (Pendlebury 1939: 222 n. 4). These scarabs need not be seen as heir-looms even if they are found in later contexts (contra Shelmerdine 2001: 354).

Three scarabs are known from Crete. One from Kydonia bears the praenomen of Amenhotep III, and another of Amenhotep III was found in a LM IIIA1 tomb (4) at Sello-poulo just to the east of Knossos (Popham, Catling, and Catling 1974: 217; see also Cline 1998: 247). This is one of a series of graves that appears to be associated with the 'Mycenae communities' at Knossos (Rehak and Younger 2001: 444; see also La Rosa 2000: 86, the tomb 'belonged to a member of the Knossian elite', 90 'could be the burial place of the late members of the Achaean dynasty that occupied the Palace of Knossos'). This association would place the Sellopoulo tomb with the last phase of the New Palace at Knossos that was destroyed by fire at the end of LM IIIA1 (G. Cadogan in Myers, Myers, and Cadogan 1992: 138).

A third piece from Crete is the seal of Tiye from Ayia Triadha. The site was destroyed by fire at the end of LM IB (V. La Rosa in Myers, Myers, and Cadogan 1992: 76). The scarab was found in one of the rooms of the so-called tomb 5 ('Tomba degli Ori') along with gold pendants (V. La Rosa in Myers, Myers, and Cadogan 1992: 71. For a discussion of the tomb: Long 1959: 61-62). The scarab was found 1.00-1.20 m above the floor of the tomb. It is inscribed 'the King's wife Tiye'. The tomb was apparently built in LM IB and contained material dumped from elsewhere on the site after its destruction (Pendlebury mistakenly noted that the scarab was found 'with L.M.Ib pottery': Pendlebury 1939: 222). La Rosa places the second deposition to the beginning of LM IIIA2 (La Rosa 2000: 87). He raises the possibility that the dumped material may have included the original contents of the tomb of the Painted sarcophagus, south of Tholos Tomb 2, which has been dated to LM IIIA2 (Watrous 1991; La Rosa 2000: 90-91). As robbery does not appear to have been a motive, as jewellery was discarded, the deliberate destruction of the tomb may indicate

that there has been a change in authority in the city. This transition from LM IIIA1 to LM IIIA2 coincides with the destruction at Knossos. Ayia Triada and Phaistos should probably be linked as a single administrative centre in the LM III period (Bennet 1990: 208 fig. 5, 209; La Rosa 2000: 86). This phase would coincide with the apparent mention of Phaistos in the Kom el-Hetan list.

Other relevant material from the Aegean world include a faience scarab of Amenhotep III from Ialysos on Rhodes (Cline 1998: fig. 7.4), and a scarab of Amenhotep III from Panaztepe in western Anatolia from a LH IIIA funerary context (Cline 1998: 246, and n. 107. The scarab is mentioned by Mellink 1987: 13; Mitchell 1989: 95). A scarab of Amenhotep III was found in a LH IIIA chambered tomb from Ayios Elias in Epirus (Megaw 1963/4: 14; see also Cline 1998: 246).

Cline has observed that there is a correspondence between the places named in the Kom el-Hetan list and the distribution of objects linked to Amenhotep III and Tiye. The combined evidence of the plaques, the cartouches, and the Aegean list has been seen as Egypt 'acknowledging the increasing importance of the mainland centers' (Rehak and Younger 1998: 164). The possibility of formal diplomatic contact needs to be considered carefully.

Silver in the Tombs of the Nobles at Thebes

It seems that during the D18 there were growing diplomatic exchanges between the Keftiu and officials in Egypt. This is reflected in the iconography of the tombs of nobles from the reign of Hatshepsut to that of Amenhotep II (Wachsmann 1987). As this covers the period LM II to LM IIIA1, the Cretan palaces had been destroyed and occupied by Mycenaeans from the mainland; it must therefore be Mycenaeans, or Cretans under Mycenaean control, who are represented by the Keftiu at this point in time.

It is perhaps significant that the Keftiu depicted in the tombs of the Nobles at Thebes fall into a period when the mainland seems to have been dominating Crete. The earliest representation of Keftiu appears in the tomb of Senenmut (T.71) that can be dated to the reign of Hatshepsut, and therefore should be in the LH II horizon (Wachsmann 1987: 27-28; Laffineur 1998: 63; Rehak 1998: 40). For example the tomb of the vizier Rekhmire (T.100), who was active during the reigns of Thutmose III to Amenhotep II, coincides with the period LM II to LM IIIA1 (Wachsmann 1987: 35-37. For a convenient table of correspondences: Rehak and Younger 2001: 391. The painting would date to LH IIIA1. For the implications of the higher chronology: Rehak 1998: 41). The representation in these paintings of oxhide ingots and a tray of (silver?) ingots carried by one of the Keftiu points to the importance of the trade in metals (Leonard Jr. 1998: 103. For the image: Davies 1942 See also Wachsmann 1987: 50-51, pl. lii, b, where representations of lead ingots are also noted in the tomb of Amenemopet). Elsewhere in the display of offerings brought by the Keftiu there are two baskets of silver ingots (identified by an inscription) as well as a stack of silver rings (Davies 1942: 21 nos. 1, 3-4, pl. xviii; Wachsmann 1987: 53, pl. xli).

A bound Keftiu figure appears in the tomb of Anen (T.120), brother of Tiye (Wachsmann 1987: 40; Cline 1998: 239). As the Keftiu were not formally subject to Egypt, does this suggest some sort of more formal relationship?

The nature of the exchange

During the reign of Amenhotep II, which corresponds to LH IIIA1, Egyptian finds start to appear in mainland Greece, but it is during the reign of Amenhotep III that the greatest activity seems to have taken place with the appearance of the plaques, and the distribution of scarabs and seals at key administrative centres around the Aegean but especially on Crete. During this same period there are an increasing number of pieces of Aegean pots found in Egypt (Cline 1987: 13-17). This includes more than 100 pieces of LH IIIA2-B1 material from Deir el-Medina (Bell 1981; Bell 1982).

Does the movement of Aegean pottery reflect the transport of metals? It is clear that Laurion was being exploited at a time contemporary with the D18, and that silver ingots are represented in the tombs of the Theban Nobles alongside the Keftiu. It is worth noting that Egypt had its own significant supplies of galena, from which lead could be extracted, at Gebel Rosas on the Red Sea coast, as well as in the Eastern Desert near the Wadi Hammamat (Ogden 2000: 168).

If the studies by the Gales are correct, there was increasing use of Laurion lead and silver from the end of the Middle Bronze Age. This may be to do with the amount of silver and lead that was in demand. Certainly during the Late Bronze Age it is clear that there was long-distance trade in metals, notably copper. This is reflected by the discovery and publication of wrecks at Cape Gelidonya (Bass 1961; Muhly, Wheeler, and Maddin 1977), Ulu Burun and Point Iria in the Argolic Gulf (Lolos 2003).

The Amenhotep III plaques (or their final context at Mycenae) may hint at the developing demand by Egypt for silver. Silver was a highly valued metal in Egypt (Gale and Stos-Gale 1981a: 103). If during the D18 and LH IIIA1 periods silver was being exchanged, did Amenhotep III send an embassy to the Keftiu, in practice to Mycenae, which would cement the relationship between Egypt and the Aegean thereby securing a supply of silver? Part of this process included a gift of faience plaques which could be displayed at Mycenae, and some of which ended their days in the Cult Centre. Officials in other administrative centres, such as at Phaistos (Ayia Triadha) and Knossos, also received official tokens reflecting Amenhotep III's esteem.

If this was the case, what was being given in exchange? The amount of ivory, not least the examples from the LH IIIB cult centre at Mycenae, may hint at luxury gifts. But Gale and Stos-Gale have suggested that silver from the Laurion was exchanged for Egyptian gold (Gale and Stos-Gale 1981a; Stos-Gale and Gale 1982: 476). Further analyses are needed but metals were clearly an important component of inter-regional trade during the Late Bronze Age in the eastern Mediterranean.

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