



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Minoan Crete and the East: Jewelry Imports in the Early to Middle Bronze Age Elite Necropolis at Petras, Siteia

FERRENCE S.^{1*}, *BETANCOURT P.*², *GIUMLIA-MAIR A.*³, *TSIPOPOULOU M.*⁴

¹ INSTAP Academic Press, Philadelphia, United States

² Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Philadelphia, United States

³ AGM-Archaeoanalisi, Merano, Italy

⁴ National Archive of Monuments, Hellenic Ministry of Culture, Athens, Greece

*Corresponding author

Abstract

The Minoan settlement of Petras in Crete is important for the history of jewelry in the Aegean. In Early Minoan II (ca. 2650–2400 BCE), Petras received imports manufactured with complex methodology, as the unplundered elite necropolis attests. A golden pendant from the area of Uruk was manufactured during the Jemdet-Nasr period. It depicts men wearing the distinctive net skirt of this period. A young woman was buried with it and also local jewelry and two other imported beads from Mesopotamia. Her personal adornment suggests a special status relating to her social persona. Numerous other jewelry items come from other burials. By the Middle Bronze Age (2000–1800 BCE), the local tradition had assimilated Eastern practices as demonstrated by a ring made of a silvery polymetallic alloy with motifs from the Near East and Crete. Special alloys identified by XRF analyses had metallurgically advantageous properties. They were employed for jewelry worn by socially distinguished people. Technological innovations and the actual objects testify to foreign inspiration in Minoan manufacturing practices. Petras was located on a protected anchorage where ships bringing foreign goods and ideas arrived—since the Final Neolithic (3500 BC)—at an important gateway to Minoan Crete.

Keywords

Minoan Crete, Bronze Age, gold and silver jewelry, Mesopotamia, international trade

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