Dance in Bronze Age Greece

Senta German

Introduction

The identification of images of dance from antiquity is very difficult given the limitations of ancient forms of representation, the remoteness of the action itself, and the obscurity of its cultural contexts. These problems are magnified when one considers images of dance from preliterate cultures or those in which written language offers little insight. The following is an investigation into the representation of dance dating to the latter half of the Aegean Bronze Age, during the second millennium BC, as part of the visual culture of the Minoans and Mycenaeans from the island of Crete and the mainland of Greece respectively.

One of the reasons an exploration of dance in Bronze Age Greece is potentially important is the special situation of this activity not only in historical memory but also in terms of its material remains. Possibly the most vivid example of the historical memory of dance can be found in book 18 of Homer's *Iliad,* in which Achilles's shield is described:

> And upon the shield the illustrious smith, lame in both legs, hammered out a dance, similar to [what took place] on the dance floor Daidalos once made in broad Knossos for Ariadne with intricately plaited locks. There were youths dancing and maidens of the price of many cattle, holding their hands upon the wrists of one another. Of these the maidens were clad in fine linen, while the youths wore well-woven tunics faintly glistening with oil; and the maidens had fair chaplets, and the youths had daggers of gold hanging from silver baldrics. Now would they run round with cunning feet exceeding lightly, as when a potter sits by his wheel that is fitted between his hands and makes trial of it whether it will run; and now again would run in rows toward each other. And a great company stood around the lovely dance, taking joy therein; and two tumblers whirled up and down through the midst of them as leaders in the dance. (301)

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Indeed, the similarity between the images described by Homer and images of dance from the Aegean Bronze Age are many. Representations of dance in prestige media (engraved semiprecious stones, wall paintings, gold jewelry, and decorative pottery) abound and offer remarkable information about form, context, practice, and meaning. Despite this, however, no thorough examination of Minoan and Mycenaean dance has been made. Smaller studies (for example, Lawler 1951; Lonsdale 1995) have concentrated on individual images of dance from the period and overwhelmingly linked them with cults. Seeking a broader cultural context, the present study aims not only to account for all known images of dance throughout the period but also to examine these within their social contexts. The following, in this regard, is a part of the general trend in the past decades of approaching representational art of the Aegean Bronze Age from a social rather than a cultic or mythological perspective.

By social contexts I mean those that communicate information about the relative status of performers as well as viewers of dance. This status has multiple values, such as gender, age, and wealth. I derive significant information about status from the specific archaeological contexts from which images of dance were found and the sorts of objects on which images of dance were placed. This social contextual approach to ancient materials has its origins with the work of Ian Hodder (1986) and, more specifically, can be read together with other Aegean studies such as those of Younger on Bronze Age music (1998) or Alexandri on stamp seals (1994). My work on Bronze Age dance is part of a larger study of performance and performative action during the period (German 2005). Approximately half of the images in the study were examined firsthand, and the remaining were studies in reproduction.

Below I begin by reviewing the archaeological evidence for dance during the period. Then I turn to the images of dance and classify six different steps or poses that can be identified among the visual evidence for dance and its allied activity, procession, in the Aegean Bronze Age. Following this, I explore the social circumstance in which dance took place during the period, namely, within palatial and elite contexts. This is followed by a discussion of evidence for age-specific dance during the period, namely, late adolescent groupings. Finally, I argue for a political meaning for images of dance in the Aegean Bronze Age, functioning as reiterations of performances staged by palatial centers in order to control the social advancement of youth.

The Archaeological Evidence

Archaeologically, a variety of evidence can be associated with dance. Several structures on Crete have been identified (palaces, villas, and settlements), including courtyard areas, both paved and unpaved, where dancing and processions could have been performed and witnessed.[1] Although the very existence of these spaces does not necessarily indicate that dancing took place in them, they do match contexts for several notorious illustrations of dance, in particular a wall painting discovered in the early twentieth century by Sir Arthur Evans at the site of Knossos on Crete named "The Sacred Grove and Dance" (Figure 1), which is discussed below.

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There is also archaeological evidence for grandstands or viewing platforms, such as those on which people are pictured sitting in another fresco from Knossos entitled "The Grandstand Fresco." Such structures were found to the northwest of the palace, near the remains of an elaborate paved road, referred to as the Royal Road, which leads due east (Catling 1972–73).

The final bit of archaeological evidence for dancing comes again from the site of Knossos. In excavations at the stratigraphical museum site, three low circular structures were discovered (Warren 1984). It is clear from the excavation that these structures, between three and eight meters in diameter, were platforms with a smooth, paved surface. The excavator has identified these spaces as dancing platforms such as those described in the passage from Homer quoted above.

Identifying the Images

Having established the archaeological evidence for dance in the Aegean Bronze Age, let us now turn to the visual evidence for this activity. Most important, we must ask how images of dance can be identified if there is no other visual evidence for the activity. Indeed, the range of movements and activities that across the globe and throughout the history of human life have been called *dance* is immeasurably broad. Furthermore, dance has often been considered to have ethnic and ethical value. A perfectly performed quadrille was an essential and signatory activity among the eighteenth-century European aristocracy; the provocative Charleston dance of the flapper girls of the 1920s was regarded as a societal danger. What creates meaning among these examples is temporal, geographical, and physical specificity. Therefore, we must understand that the only way not only to identify images of Bronze Age dance but to also better understand the meaning of dance in that period is to understand it within its temporal and geographical context.

By way of introducing my method of identifying images of dance, I begin with a most important image, a fresco called "The Sacred Grove and Dance," from the site of Knossos (Figure 1) as it exists as a sort of touchstone and tool for the identification of this activity (Evans 1899–1900; 1930).[2] In the foreground of the image we see at least fourteen women are pictured; all wear an identical dress, a flounced skirt and short open jacket. They are set against a neutral blue background and separated from the rest of the action of the painting by a thick border broken into individual cells, likely depicting paving or a low wall. On the opposite side of this border, in the background of the painting, are two large groups of people, with men and women separated; in the middle of the field are three large trees, the "grove" from which the wall painting derives its name. The two discrete groups are differentiated by the predominant color of their skin—women are white, men are brown. The group of women, which is irregularly shaped, is pictured within the group of men, each seated and wearing identical clothes, similar again to the women before them. The group of men also consists of identically represented individuals, each wearing a white belt and loin cloth and bright necklace around his neck. At the very top of the field is the horizon of the scene, which is defined by the crowns of several men's

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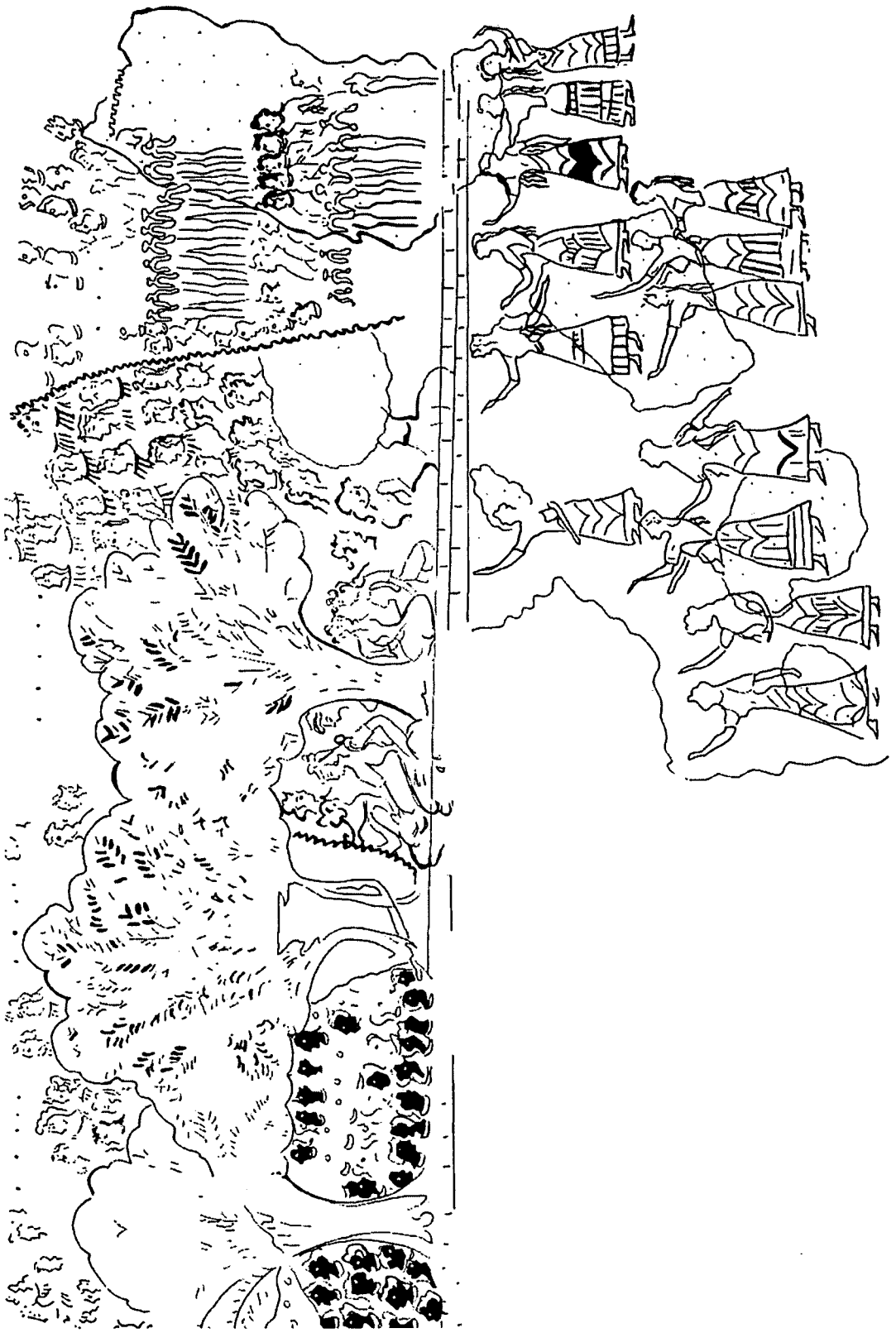


Figure 1. Sacred Grove and Dance fresco from Knossos (Evans 1930, pl. XVIII). Used with permission.

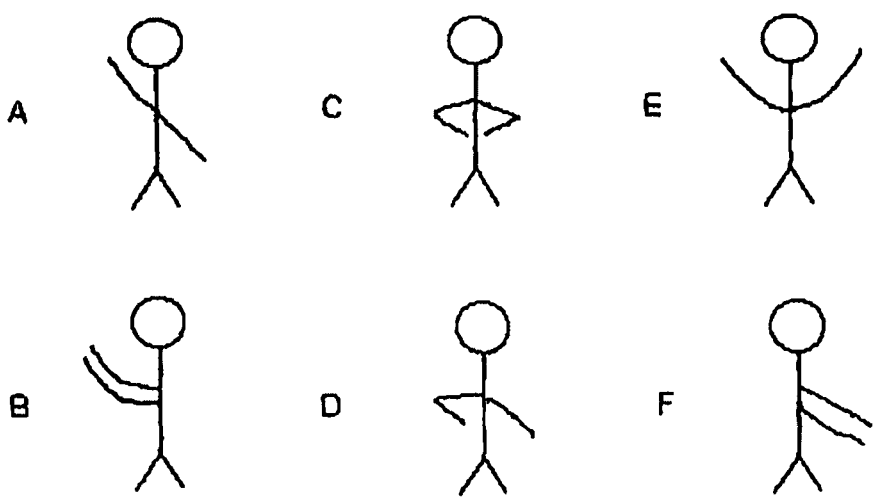
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heads and thrust above them, every so often, a brown arm and open hand with a bright bracelet around the wrist.

How does "The Sacred Grove and Dance" wall painting function as a tool for the identification of dance? In general, it offers an example of the static representation of dance in the form of a corporal pose. Specifically, it offers examples of two specific dance poses or gestures. The first, which I refer to as pose A, is constituted by one arm up and in front of the body and one arm behind. This and the five other dance gestures are shown in Figure 2. Five of the women in "The Sacred Grove and Dance" fresco hold this pose. The pose B figures, at least four of whom are women, hold both hands in front of the body. Images in other media reiterate these poses, which adds confidence to their identification. For instance, on an engraved gold ring excavated in the Aidonia cemetery on the mainland of Greece (Figure 3), the first and second figures from the left hold poses B and A, respectively.

If we can, then, with some confidence identify images of dance using "The Sacred Grove and Dance," let us move on to account for other images of the activity found in various media on Crete and the mainland, within their historical context. There are in total forty-five images of dance dating to the middle to late Aegean Bronze Age that come from good archaeological proveniences; I discuss some of these below, and all are listed in detail in the appendix.[3] The first images of dance emerge in the era of the Aegean Bronze Age, named

Figure 2. Diagram of dance steps.



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Figure 3. A photograph of an impression of a gold ring from Aidonia (Corpus der Minoischen und Mykenischen Siegel, *Vol. V. Sup. IB. 115*). *Used with permission.*

after the construction of the first palaces on the island of Crete, the most important one being Knossos, during the second quarter of the second millennium BC. These palaces appear to have functioned as social and religious focal points within a larger society based on kinship units (Branigan 1988, 68). The earliest representation of dance is painted within a bowl found in a room opening out onto the West Court of the old, or first, palace at Phaistos (Levi 1976, 256ff). The rather abstract scene shows a figure at the bottom center of the field wearing a long dress that covers all of the body. Two more figures surround this first one, each wearing a petal-shaped tunic and holding one arm up and one down, pose A. Visual clues that identify these figures as dancers can be found in another vase, a "fruit stand," from the same room at Phaistos (Levi 1976, 270). The scene painted on the plate consists of a central character with both hands raised, pose E, holding flowers and flanked by two other characters, both with one hand raised up and the other down, pose A. On the foot of the stand four more characters are painted, all of whom wear a petal-shaped tunic and holds their hands down at the waist, pose C.

After a destruction of unknown source necessitated the reconstruction of the palaces across Crete, the era of the second palaces began. The first half of this second palace period on Crete is clearly one of greater social stratification, evidenced at least by the rapid reconstruction of the first palaces and the ability to organize and maintain centralized control of materials and labor resources (Dabney 1985, 47; Cherry 1978). Whereas kinship relations were what unified people in the first palace period, now extra-familial social authority had unifying control. During this second palace period, with the exception of one image, all illustrations of dancing come from Crete. None of these images, however, are on pottery; rather, they are carved on stamp seals and painted on plaster walls. Some of the most elegant and evocative images of dance date to this period on Crete. For an example of this, I point to a seal impression found at the site of Aghia Triada (Figure 4), which shows two women holding pose A—the most popular pose of the period—which in its repetitive form not only suggests rhythmic but tandem moment.

Figure 4. Seal impression from Aghia Triada (Corpus der Minoischen und Mykenischen Siegel, *Vol. II.6.13*). *Used with permission.*



Of dance's allied movements, procession,

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its most famous representation of the era, "The Procession Fresco," comes from Knossos and dates to this period (Figure 5). Originally lining both sides of the walls of the west entrance passage (Evans 1928, 679–84), the fresco illustrates several figures, both men and women, moving toward each other. Sadly, the vast majority of the fresco is gone, with the exception of many of the figures' feet and a few characters in the scene. The remaining characters share poses and gestures that suggest measured, purposeful movement.

While evidence for dance and social stratification are common on Crete during this time, neither is common on the Greek mainland. This is the period referred to as the era of the Shaft Grave, named after the group of nearly a dozen very rich burials found at the site of Mycenae that typify the conspicuous consumption of a few individual families. Among the rich grave remains at Mycenae, at the Treasure Acropolis, one image of dance was discovered; it represents two women in procession, striking pose D—one arm up at the waist, the other out—on a gold ring. The quality of the workmanship as well as the style of the intaglio indicates a Cretan origin of manufacture.

The latter part of the second palace period on Crete was a time of great turmoil, likely triggered by the eruption of a volcano on the Cycladic island of Santorini in the mid-seventeenth century BC. There is some evidence that the elite during this period invested in new religious propaganda to maintain the status quo (Driessen and MacDonald 1995, 117–18). These efforts, however, were not successful, as the archaeological record reflects massive fire destructions at all palaces at the end of the period. The Mycenaeans from the mainland of Greece arrived on Crete at this time, and the new ruling class at Knossos exhibited a preference for Mycenaean pottery styles, methods of burial, and the proto-Greek Linear B language. This new, Mycenaean-dominated period is called the third palace period.

During the third palace period, representations of dancing and processions continue to be popular, with some notable changes. First, the last type discussed above, empty-handed men and women in procession, is not found. Second, representations of both processions and dancing abound on the mainland, a great change from the previous second palace period, which featured only one example. Third, there are notably more examples of these representations in wall paintings. Pose A is again the most popular, but poses E and F—pairs of dancers with hands held out and together—are frequently found as well.

One notable representation of dancing dating to the third palace period on Crete is a small terra-cotta sculpture found at the site of Palaikastro, block Delta (Figure 6). This

Figure 5. Knossos Procession Fresco, reconstruction (Immerwahr 1990, plate 40). Used with permission.



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Figure 6. Figurines of dancing women from Palaikastro (Warren 1984, plate 35). Used with permission.

scene shows three women, each with her arms out to hold the hand of another, forming a ring. In the middle of the scene is a lyre or kithara player. The scene is no doubt a ring dance, complete with musician. More important, it is an unusual three-dimensional illustration of the ring dancing referred to in Homer.

Turning to the mainland during the third palace period, as mentioned above, representations of dance and procession are many. As a group, these images are rather homogeneous; all the women strike exactly the same swaying pose, and each holds her arms identically, either one hand before the face and one down, pose A, or both hands raised up, pose B. Pose D is also popular, and, interestingly, pose C is not represented. The largest group of images of dancing and procession from the mainland dating to the third palace period depicts men and women in procession carrying objects; some of the most vivid representations in this group are wall paintings. One of the better known and often reproduced is the frieze from the Kadmeia at Thebes (Figure 7). Restored by Reusch (Reusch 1948–49), the procession includes somewhere between nine and twelve life-sized women facing left and right, with both frontal and profile bodies. Although apparently there is a variety of poses, almost all the women hold objects ranging from flowers to vessels to pyxides, and they all strike variations of poses B and D.

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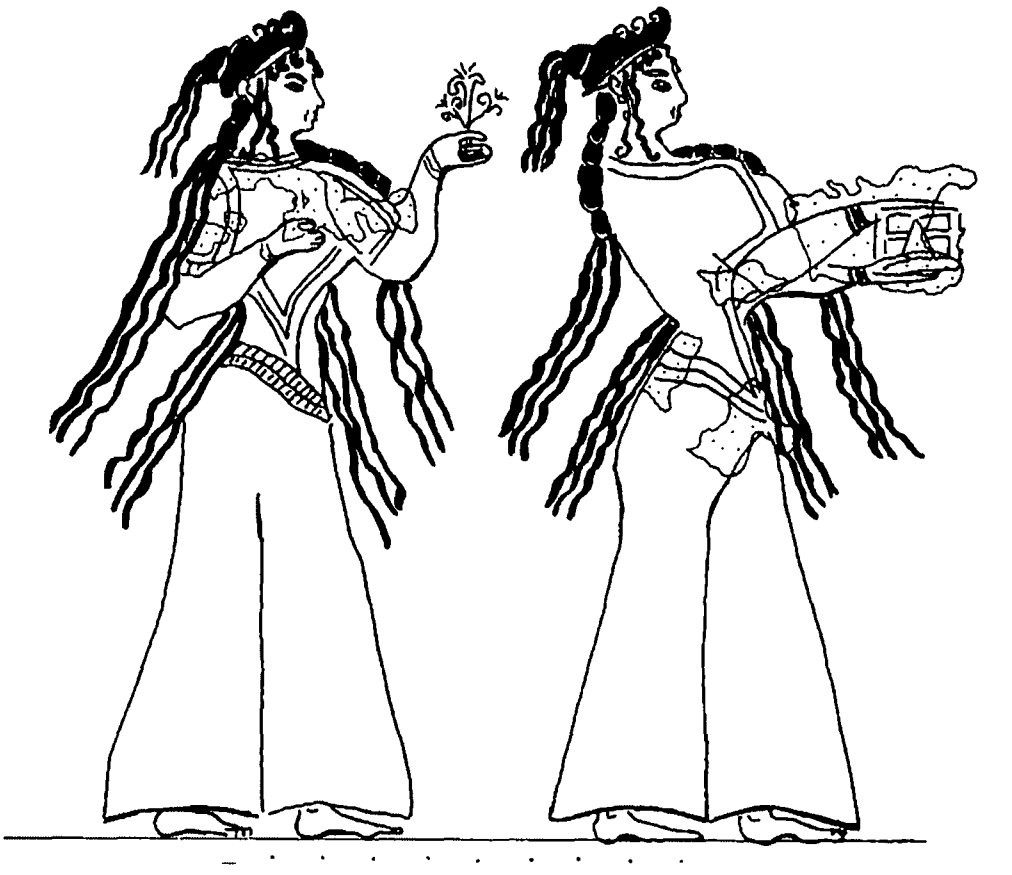


Figure 7. Procession fresco from Thebes (Reusch 1948–1949, fig. 11). Used with permission.

Social Contexts of Images

Having now reviewed the development of images of dance and performance on Crete and the mainland during the Late Bronze Age, we may now turn to issues of interpretation. The approach I take in interpreting images of dance is a contextual one, and by *context* I mean both archaeological and social. Indeed, issues of context are important to the study of dance in antiquity because, like much behavior in the past, most of what is left *is* its context. If any knowledge about dancing in the remote past is to be gained, it must come in large part from its sets, props, accoutrements, and imprints. These materials survive in the archaeological record, which I have discussed above, and, once recognized as data groups related to such activity, they can be correlated across sites. Evidence that is equally important to the ultimate understanding of the signification of these events is their illustration or representation. Therefore, by association, the interpretation of the context for images of dance reflects the contexts and ultimate meanings of the performances themselves.

Indeed, images of dance from the Aegean Bronze Age have been found in hundreds

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of individual archaeological contexts. Because of this I have found it useful to organize these images into four groupings of general archaeological provenience: palatial, burial, storage/administration, and settlement.[4] These general provenience categories are largely self-explanatory, with the possible exception of storage/administration. The designation storage/administration refers to spaces that are designed for storage and areas in which large numbers of sealings (the accidentally baked clay impressions of stamp seals) have been found together and are believed to have an archive or administrative function. The reason I have lumped these two seemingly different kinds of provenience together is because of the way seals are thought to have been used in the storage, collection, and redistribution of materials during the Bronze Age. Based on the translation of Linear B texts and archaeological finds, it is understood that goods were brought from outlying areas into collection and redistribution centers where they were handled, stored, and eventually sent out again. In the interest of efficiency, I have organized the distribution of the general provenience information in Table 1—again, according to historical period.

Table 1: General Proveniences of Images of Dance and Procession

Crete	Mainland
1st Palace Period – total 2	1st Palace Period – total 0
2 – Palace context	
2nd Palace Period – total 18	2nd Palace Period – total 1
1 – Palace context	1 – Burial context
7 – Storage/Admin context	
10 – Settlement context	
3rd Palace Period – total 6	3rd Palace Period – total 18
2 – Burial context	10 – Burial context
3 - Palace context	7 – Palace context
1 – Settlement context	1 – Storage/Admin context

As Table 1 reflects, representations of dance are first found on Crete during the first palace period and, based on context, are associated with palatial centers; no images of dance are found on the mainland at that time. In the second palace period, the number of these images greatly increases on Crete and are found heavily in settlement (10) and storage (7) contexts. Only one image of dance has been found on the mainland during this period, from a burial context. During the third palace period, we witness a reversal of this situation; the majority of examples come from the mainland (18) and fewer from Crete (6). Of the images from Crete, two came from burial, three from palatial contexts, and one from a settlement context. From the mainland, the majority of representations of dance came from burial contexts (10) and most of the remaining (7) were from palatial contexts. There is only one example from a storage/administration context: a seal impression.

What deductions can we begin to make about these contextual distributions? The first and potentially most important observation is that the most images of dance and procession are produced on Crete during the second palace period and on the mainland during the third palace period. On Crete in the second palace period, the majority come from settlement contexts, and therefore we must assume that there was a high level of functionality for these images at those types of sites. On the mainland during the third palace period, the majority of images of dance and procession come from burial contexts, and we must similarly assume that there was a high level of functionality for these images there as well.

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During the third palace period, we find on Crete that the situation has changed. There are fewer examples of representations of dance, and they are found in different places. These images are divided almost equally between burial and palatial sites. However, the number of images in burial contexts on Crete is less than those on the mainland. This rise in the number of images of performance in burial contexts at this time also is due in part to the rise in burial practice during this period.

Certain circumstances make sense of the information above. That the larger number of images coming from burial contexts is due to the fact that the majority of stamp seals come from burial contexts, especially from the mainland and especially in the third palace period. That no illustrations of dance come from tomb contexts in the second palace period on Crete stems from the fact that burial deposits during that period are largely unknown. But why do we have only one representation of dance from the mainland until the third palace period when this was such a popular theme on Crete, a place with which there was much contact? Given that dance and procession, or certainly their representation, appear to have had their origin on that island, one must conclude that in the third palace period they are borrowed from there. Here I am not interested in the idea that the formal compositions of representations of dance migrated north but rather that what these images might have symbolized socially was suddenly useful outside of Crete.

Identifying the Participants

Who is doing the dancing and participating in procession? We observe that it is mostly young women who dance and process, and sometimes young men participate in procession as well. Across the genders, youth seems to be consistent. Furthermore, the women appear to be of a high class status, as they are elaborately dressed. Let us look more carefully at these two social circumstances to better understand them.

Two Aegean Bronze Age scholars have studied the manifestation of age in the representations of Minoan men and women; both use hairstyles as primary indicators. The consistency of these age distinctions leads us to believe that the representation of specific age classes was an important detail in the human depiction. Let us start with women's hairstyles. Ellen Davis, in an article on the representation of age in the contemporary frescoes found at the site of Akrotiri on the island of Santorini, identifies six distinct stages of female maturity ranging from early youth to late middle age (1986). In an article of the same year, Robert Koehl identifies age classes of males also based on hairstyles of roughly the same range (1986). These analyses of hairstyles and age are an important tool in the present analysis. How, then, are ages distributed throughout the images of performance we are concerned with here? Women of Davis's third stage and men of Koehl's fourth stage, each representing ripe adolescence, are the most common. In fact, details of hairstyle that indicate membership in age groups seem to be a consistent element in the representation of men and women who are engaged in dance and procession, and therefore one can conclude that these details are important to the representation of these activities.

As Ortner and Whitehead have pointed out, gender systems and prestige or class

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systems go hand in hand (1981, 16–17). In other words, in a society where there is gender differentiation or hierarchy, so there is status differentiation or hierarchy. Among the representations of men and women in the Late Bronze Age glyptic, I have determined that social differentiation or a class system is in part illustrated through the representation of costumes and other accoutrements.[5] Specifically, in Late Bronze Age art, men and women are found wearing highly elaborate costumes that are in stark contrast to the entirely unclothed, stick-like representations of humans found in art at the end of the first palace period. The assumption I am making here is that the sorts of elaborate costumes that men and women are represented as wearing are luxury items that would be reserved for wealthier individuals. There seems to be less differentiation in women's garments as represented in Late Bronze Age art in general, and in representations of dance almost none at all. That is, women are almost always represented wearing an elaborate flounced skirt and short jacket. Similarly, men always are represented wearing one of two costumes: a short skirt with a codpiece, or armor.

Last, the obvious impracticality of both men's and women's garments could be another piece of evidence that may indicate differentiation in social status. Although practicality is also a historically specific idea and thus difficult to apply to the past, the discomfort and likely partial immobility experienced when wearing such garments seems obvious. This could not have been clothing for people who were, for instance, manual laborers. Admittedly, the representations of these garments are just that—representations—and not photographically accurate visual facts. At the same time, it is difficult to believe that these representations are totally fictional; it is likely they are based on some reality. I would argue that the reality is one of elite dress.

Meanings of Dance

Therefore, we find that on Crete and the mainland representations of dance and procession are not uncommon and can be associated with settlement and burial contexts during the second and third palace periods, respectively. As described above, both these contextual values are associated with palatial elite centers. Furthermore, we have seen how relative values of age and social status are expressed in representations of dance, namely, youth and wealth status. In attempting to regard this evidence as a whole with which to understand the representation of dance in the Aegean Bronze Age more completely, it is worth recalling that the great majority of the surviving representations of dance are glyptic representations of dance and procession. Is there a special relationship between the representation of dance and stamp seals?

Precisely this sort of question has been asked in the examination of presentation scenes on cylinder seals from ancient Ur in Mesopotamia. During the Ur III period, dating to the last two centuries of the third millennium BC, political organization (under a central kingly rule), economy, literature, and the visual arts flourished as never before. The glyptic arts in this period (cylinder seals in the Near East as opposed to stamp seals in the Mediterranean) were highly regularized in decoration, primarily consisting of presentation scenes. These scenes consisted of a man—the owner of the seal (known by

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his identification inscribed on the seal)—often escorted by an intercessor and standing before a king. In two influential articles, Irene Winter has argued that this standardized scene legitimated not only the power of the king but also the relationship of the owner of the seal pictured therein to that authority (1986, 1987). Crucial to the strength of Winter's argument is the knowledge of the ways in which these cylinder seals were used during the period—namely, to seal or witness economic, legal, and social transactions—and how the images on them reiterated royal sponsored art. Could illustration of dance and procession found in the glyptic arts and in wall paintings from the Aegean also be a means of association with the ruling authority?

I believe that the Ur III model opens an interesting avenue of thought. If seals that featured dance associated their user with the ruling authority and legitimized transactions used with them, then wouldn't these objects only be present in the archaeological record when such legitimization was required? In other words, certain circumstances would have been necessary to support, or lead to, the sort of conscious creation of visual ideology such as the Ur III model describes. What sort of circumstances might these be, and why choose to reference in this visual ideology dance performances that feature high-status youth?

As noted above, the latter half of Aegean prehistory was a time of increasing political upheaval, possibly due to the uncertainty caused by the volcanic eruption on the island of Santorini. I think it is possible that the development of a visual ideology of the ruling elite, one that reiterates their power, at this particular time is probable, and images of dance might very well be a part of this. But the question remains, why dance? What was the political import of public performances of dance associated with the palaces?

It has often been suggested that representations of groups of youths reference rights-of-passage ceremonies that took place at the palaces. If this is the case, one is compelled to ask, what exactly took place at such ceremonies? This is, of course, difficult to know. We can safely conclude that dancing and procession were part of the show. But what was the specific meaning of these activities? There is evidence that a part of the rite of passage, or perhaps its purpose, was a group marriage. This idea, proposed separately by Davis (1987) and Koehl (2000), finds some support in the myth of Theseus and Ariadne and the Athenian youths who accompanied Theseus to Crete (Davis 1987, 157–61). Willetts has suggested that the myth can be seen as a metaphor for an ancient right of passage that results in marriage. As he points out, when Theseus sails away from Crete he lands on Delos and dances a dance with the other young men who had survived the labyrinth. After this dance, after the ordeal of surviving the Minotaur, he marries Ariadne (1962, 124). Koehl (1986) and others have offered strong evidence for male rites-of-passage ceremonies, the Algeda, which may have included dance.

If this is the case, we can see images of dance as something that would refer to, and remind a viewer of, palatial-sponsored and -controlled youth-centered activities. Images of dance would then symbolize the power of the palatial centers. Furthermore, if these dances are marriages, we can see these activities as a kind of sanctioning or control of the social advancement of youth into adulthood and, we might surmise, into the service of the state.

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Against this background, recalling again the history of the period, we can see that the shift of frequency of images of dance from Crete in the second palace period to the mainland in the third palace period makes sense. Could it not be the case that the Mycenaeans continued the control of social advancement of youth practiced by the Minoans from the previous period? If this is the case, representations of dance would also continue. Recalling that the popularity of pose A remains strong across these periods, we might conclude that not only is the continuation of dance in general but perhaps specific forms of dance were supported by the Mycenaeans in the third palace period.

Finally, it is worth thinking about what the above analysis has been unable to reveal about Bronze Age dance. As the images used to get at dance practice and form are nearly all high status and most likely directly, or indirectly, commissioned by the palatial authority, we can safely assume that this examination of Bronze Age dance does not include informal or vernacular forms. This is, of course, a great pity, as informal dance was no doubt that in which the majority of Minoans and Mycenaeans most frequently participated. It is hoped that with continued primary investigations evidence of vernacular dance will be revealed and we will be able to understand it together with the better-preserved, elite-sponsored forms.

Appendix

See pages 37–40.

Notes

1. Buildings with courts or courtyards on Crete are Ayia Triada, Gournia, Knossos, Kommos, Mallia, Zakros, Phaistos, Tylissos, Vasiliki, Archanes-Tourkoyeitonia, Chamaizi, Makryyialos, Myrtos-Pyrgos, Odigitria, Platanos, Pseira, Syme, Vathypetro. For plans and photos, see Meyers et al. 1992.

2. This wall painting and the Grandstand fresco, which I discuss next, were heavily restored after their discovery. My descriptions and analysis of these wall paintings take into account these restorations as little as possible, as they are little more than the educated guess of Evans and deJong, his primary artist/restorer.

3. For the purposes of this study I have only included objects that were discovered in secure archaeological proveniences. The reason for this is twofold. First, I wish specifically to not use objects that have been bought on the antiquities market, as this encourages the plundering of archaeological sites and the creation of forged pieces. Second, pieces without archaeological provenience lack the social contextual data that is important to my study.

4. I have set these general provenience categories because of the nature of these find-spots. For instance, several sealings discovered in storage/administration contexts are from a context clearly disturbed by a disaster in antiquity, such as a fire. This example illustrates how a general context of storage/administration, defined by architectural and other remains, is a meaningful one to the interpretation of the sealings associated with it. Conversely, a more specific context—for instance, storage in a basket or box—is less so. Similarly, a general burial context for an object is important, as well as the other contents of the interment; however, the specific location of the seal in relation to other objects is often irrelevant because the original deposition was disturbed in antiquity. In using the idea of general context when considering Bronze Age seals as opposed

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Catalog of Representations of Dance and Procession

	Geography	Provenience	Locus	Prove type	Date	Period	Object	Material	Shape	Performance	Steps
1	Minoan	Phaistos	room opening onto the West Court of the Old Palace	palace	Old Palace	1st palace period	bowl with goddess and dancers	ceramic	open bowl	dancing	AA
2	Minoan	Phaistos	room opening onto the West Court of the Old Palace	palace	Old Palace	1st palace period	fruitstand with goddess and votaries	ceramic	fruit stand	dancing	AEA; CCC
3	Helladic	Mycenae	Treasury Acropolis, south of the Grave Circles, within the ruins of the Rampen Houses	burial	Early LHII?	2nd palace period	ring	gold	ring	procession	DD
4	Minoan	Knossos	east wall of Corridor of Procession, fallen backwards from west wall of South Propylaeum	palace	LMII/IIIA	2nd palace period	wall painting with cupbearer and procession	wall painting	n/a	procession	B
5	Minoan	Knossos	fallen on late basement floor of small room at north end of central court	palace	MMIIIB/ LMIA	2nd palace period	wall painting, "Sacred Grove and Dance"	wall painting	n/a	dancing	
6	Minoan	Aghia Triada	Room 14 of east wing of villa	settlement	LMIB	2nd palace period	wall painting, nature fresco with goddess	wall painting	n/a	dancing	?
7	Minoan	Chania, Kastelli	Katre st. 10	settlement	MMIII-LMI	2nd palace period	impression	clay	oval	dancing	FF
8	Minoan	Aghia Triada	NW upper floor, "stanza dei sigilli"	settlement	LMIb	2nd palace period	impression	clay	oval, ring?	dancing	CCC
9	Minoan	Knossos	settlement, House of the Frescoes	settlement	LMIa-b	2nd palace period	seal	serpentine	cushion	dancing	AA
10	Minoan	Nerokourou	northern portion of Minoan Villa	settlement	MMIII-LMI	2nd palace period	seal	serpentine	lentoid	procession	C
11	Minoan	Aghia Triada	NW upper floor, "stanza dei sigilli"	settlement	LMIb	2nd palace period	impression	clay	oval?	dancing	AA

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Catalog of Representations of Dance and Procession (cont.)

	Geography	Provenience	Locus	Prove type	Date	Period	Object	Material	Shape	Performance	Steps
12	Minoan	Gournia	Old Town	settlement	Early MMI	2nd palace period	seal	serpentine	lentoid	dancing	AA
13	Minoan	Aghia Triada	NW upper floor, "stanza dei sigilli"	settlement	LMIb	2nd palace period	impression	clay	round?	procession	EB
14	Minoan	Aghia Triada	NW upper floor, "stanza dei sigilli"	settlement	LMIb	2nd palace period	impression	clay	oval, ring?	procession	BC?
15	Minoan	Aghia Triada	NW upper floor, "stanza dei sigilli"	settlement	LMIb	2nd palace period	impression	clay	oval, ring?	procession	C?
16	Minoan	Zakros	House A, room 8	storage/admin.	LMIb	2nd palace period	impression	clay	oval	procession	CB
17	Minoan	Zakros	House A, room 8	storage/admin.	LMIb	2nd palace period	impression	clay	unclear	procession	CB
18	Minoan	Zakros	House A, room 8	storage/admin.	LMIb	2nd palace period	impression	clay	unclear	procession	CC
19	Minoan	Zakros	House A, room 8	storage/admin.	LMIb	2nd palace period	impression	clay	unclear	procession	CC
20	Minoan	Zakros	House A, room 8	storage/admin.	LMIb	2nd palace period	impression	clay	unclear	procession	DD
21	Minoan	Zakros	House A, room 8	storage/admin.	LMIb	2nd palace period	impression	clay	oval?	procession	?B
22	Minoan	Zakros	House A, room 8	storage/admin.	LMIb	2nd palace period	impression	clay	oval?	procession	CCC
23	Helladic	Eleusis, Necropolis NW of Classical site	Family Grave Hpie3	burial	LHII-III	3rd palace period	seal	steatite	round	dancing	BA
24	Helladic	Dendra (Midea)	Chamber Tomb, Grave 10	burial	LHIIb-LHIII	3rd palace period	ring	gold	ring	dancing	AA
25	Helladic	Mycenae	Lower Town, Unknown Necropolis, Chamber Tomb #55	burial	LHII-III	3rd palace period	ring	gold	ring	dancing	AAA
26	Helladic	Aidonia, Field of Gournospilia	Small shaft parallel to south wall of Chamber Tomb 7	burial	LHII-IIIa-b	3rd palace period	ring	gold	ring	dancing	AA

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Catalog of Representations of Dance and Procession (cont.)

	Geography	Provenience	Locus	Prove type	Date	Period	Object	Material	Shape	Performance	Steps
27	Helladic	Aidonia, Field of Gournospilia	Small shaft parallel to south wall of Chamber Tomb 7	burial	LHII-IIIa-b	3rd palace period	ring	gold	ring	dancing	AED
28	Helladic	Aidonia, Field of Gournospilia	Small shaft parallel to south wall of Chamber Tomb 7	burial	LHII-IIIa-b	3rd palace period	ring	gold	ring	dancing	BAD
29	Helladic	Mycenae	Lower Town (Panajia), Chamber Tomb #103	burial	LHII-III	3rd palace period	seal	quartz	lentoid	dancing	DDG
30	Helladic	Vaphio	Beehive Tomb	burial	LHIIa	3rd palace period	seal	chalcedony	lentoid	dancing	AAA
31	Helladic	Mega Monastiri	Grave gamma	burial	LHIIIa2-b	3rd palace period	ring	gold	ring	dancing	AA
32	Helladic	Mycenae	Lower Town, Unknown Necropolis, Chamber Tomb #71	burial	LHII-III	3rd palace period	ring	gold/silver	ring	dancing	CAG
33	Helladic	Pylos	plaster dump on northwest slop	palace	LHIII	3rd palace period	wall painting, female procession	wall painting	n/a	procession	A/G
34	Helladic	Pylos	plaster dump on northwest slop	palace	LHIIIb	3rd palace period	wall painting, male procession	wall painting	n/a	procession	B
35	Helladic	Mycenae	beneath floor of main corridor of House of the Oil Merchant	palace	LHIIIA?	3rd palace period	wall painting, man carrying a palanquin	wall painting	n/a	procession	B
36	Helladic	Tiryns	west slope rubbish deposit	palace	LHIIIB	3rd palace period	wall painting, life-sized women	wall painting	n/a	procession	B
37	Helladic	Thebes	Room N of Kadmeia	palace	LHII	3rd palace period	wall painting, women's frieze	wall painting	n/a	procession	B

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Catalog of Representations of Dance and Procession (cont.)

	Geography	Provenience	Locus	Prove type	Date	Period	Object	Material	Shape	Performance	Steps
38	Helladic	Pylos	Palace, Room 98	palace	LHIIIb2-c1	3rd palace period	impression	clay	elliptical	dancing	AAA
39	Helladic	Pylos	Palace, Room 105	palace	LHIIIb2-c1	3rd palace period	impression	clay	unclear	procession	B?
40	Helladic	Mycenae	Lower Town, House of the Oil Handlers	storage/admin.	LHIIIb	3rd palace period	impression	clay	ring?	dancing	EEE
41	Minoan	Knossos	Isopata, grave 6	burial	LMIIIa1	3rd palace period	ring	electrum	ring	dancing	FF
42	Minoan	Knossos	Isopata, grave I	burial	LMIIIa1	3rd palace period	ring	gold	ring	dancing	EABB
43	Minoan	Knossos	Queen's Megaron	palace	LMII	3rd palace period	wall painting, dancing lady	wall painting	n/a	dancing	D
44	Minoan	Knossos	East Wing	palace	LMII-IIIa	3rd palace period	impression	clay	square, cushion?	dancing	AA
45	Minoan	Palaikastro	Block Delta	settlement	LMIII	3rd palace period	sculpture of dancing women	clay sculpture	n/a	dancing	

to specific, exact context or no context at all, important contextual information is highlighted and the unique depositional circumstances of the objects are taken into consideration.

5. Scholars have used different kinds of evidence to determine social differentiation. For instance, see Laffineur (1992) and Kilian-Kirlmeier (1986).

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