

Minoan Realities.

Theory-based Approaches to Images and Built Spaces as Indicators of Minoan Social Structures

In an archaeological discipline, in which written sources are missing or restricted to non-narrative purposes, any knowledge about social concepts of environment and interaction must be inferred from the material record. Minoan archaeologists who deal with the magnificent but silent remains of Bronze Age Crete are, nonetheless, confronted with repetitive architectural and pictorial 'construction sets', by means of which Minoan culture once created its material world according to its concepts of reality.

The function of images and built spaces was to create a meaningful environment that set the required structures for social interaction and communicated the reified ideologies underlying the reproduction of social reality and order. Thus, they strongly affected the experience of the lived-in world and influenced every form of social interaction. Because of the repetitive character of images and architecture it may be argued that certain communication codes were observed to ensure the intersubjectively shared understanding of the images and built spaces.

Relying on this, the task of the Minoan archaeologist is to reverse the construction process and to re-construct – on the basis of an integrative approach – the social concepts of reality from Minoan architectural and pictorial artifacts.

The intention of this workshop is, therefore, to outline theory-based models of integrative approaches to images and built spaces and to verify their applicability in the reconstruction of social meanings using the example of Minoan art and architecture. Given the absence of written sources as a form of visual communication media, the aim is to make images and built spaces available for their interpretation as main representatives of Minoan concepts of reality.