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Kommos in Southern Crete: 
an Aegean Barometer for East-West Interconnections

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This Cretan harbour-town, like Ugarit or Enkomi, can serve as a focus for study of east-west connections.\(^1\) At Kommos, now familiar to many, its interconnections cover the chronological spectrum of the Conference. The two major periods are Minoan and Greek. For the Middle and Late Bronze Age, there are large civic buildings, at least partially designed for storage, bordered by a town. The first is a large MM civic building, much destroyed. The second is Late Minoan I Building T, palatial in character, with a large central court. The third, LM IIIA2/IIIB Building P, with broad galleries, may have been used to store ships.\(^2\) Our chief evidence for interconnections during MM and LM, aside from ingot fragments from Cyprus, is ceramic, in particular pottery from Cyprus, Egypt, Italy and/or Sardinia, and Syria/Palestine.\(^1\) For the period 1000-600 B.C., when a rural sanctuary was in use, our evidence is also mainly ceramic (Phoenician and East Greek), but an actual built structure, and graffiti on local pottery, witness foreign presence.\(^7\)

The site was first settled in MM IB. In the Southern Area, where civic buildings would be constructed in the future, a few smaller structures were built at various points. One of the most significant has tentatively been termed the "Northwest Building", discovered below later construction next to the shore (J. W. Shaw 1981, 220, pl. 55a. Trench 37A). In its fill, as early as MM IB but as late as MM JIB, were a number of eastern imports.\(^5\) In particular there were, as first identified by P. Betancourt, handles

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\(^1\) As in Knapp and Cherry 1994, 135-42. For the volumes already published in the Kommos series, see Shaw and Shaw (eds) 1995 and 1996 (Volume I, Parts 1 and 2), Betancourt 1990 (Volume II) and Watrous 1992 (Volume III). See also the following notes and attached bibliography. I am much indebted to M. Shaw and J. Rutter for the many helpful suggestions and remarks they made on a draft of this paper; they are in no way responsible for the mistakes that remain.

\(^2\) As first suggested by M. Shaw (1985); also Shaw and Shaw (forthcoming in Tropis).

\(^3\) Watrous 1992. J. Rutter is in the process of reexamining this material along with finds from more recent excavation. The exact numbers of imported items given in the text below, based on the work of Watrous and Rutter, are in the process of revision.

\(^4\) For the Greek period at the site see Shaw and Shaw 1993, with earlier references. A general study of the site during this period is scheduled to appear in Volume IV of the Kommos series.

\(^5\) Of some interest from the point of view of Kommos also serving as an indicator for later trade with Syria/Palestine is that the Canaanite jars found in LM IIIA/B contexts are among the last eastern imports known to have reached Crete (Cline 1994, 96). Throughout this presentation I am indebted to the many who have made the actual identifications and have published or are publishing the pottery in detail elsewhere, in particular P. Betancourt, J. Rutter and L.V. Watrous for the Bronze Age; P. Bikai, R. Koehl, and E. Oren for the Phoenician; and A. Johnston for the East Greek. In the summer of 1995 V. Karageorghis visited Kommos and helped to identify Cypriot material. Analytical work is presently being carried out by A. Hoffman (Cypriot) and M. Sugarman (Canaanite).
and body sherds of Cypriot monochrome ware (Fig. 1), including at least one jug fragment.\(^6\)

These are the earliest imports at the site. Unlike later, when foreign pottery was used in numerous households of the surrounding town, during the early MM period they occur only in the Northwest Building, near where ships would land and where a great east-west paved avenue leading inland was to be laid. It is not difficult to think that this building, contemporary with the first palace at Phaistos, was involved in trade, either by design or by circumstance, and had to do with ships landing and leaving the harbour area. As such, its orientation in relation to the cardinal points of the compass was to be followed by its successors, whether Minoan or Greek, for the next two thousand years. The landing spot for merchants and travellers had now been established, and was soon to be officially monumentalized by the decision to build a huge palatial structure, Building AA, during MM 11B.\(^7\) Of AA, little but foundations remain, although a large Cypriot flask (C 10661) was recovered from within it. From the period that it was in use (MM IIB-MM III), a Middle Cypriot jug of the White Painted IV ware in the Cross Line Style was also recovered in one of the MM houses on the Central Hillside.\(^8\)

For the LM I-II period, there is rich and varied ceramic evidence for international contact. This begins in LM IA, peaks in LM IIIA1 and continues, but at a reduced pace, into LM IIIB. Indeed, the total

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\(^6\) C 7237 (37A/68), C 7238 (37A/69), C 7239 (37A/66), C 10557 (37A/66). The earliest Cypriot vase reported from Crete is an EC IIIB Red Polished III amphora from Knossos (Calling and MacGillivray 1983). See also Russell 1985, 42 and n. 30. See also the Addendum at the end of this article.

\(^7\) Another interpretation of the architectural/stratigraphic context is possible, namely that the Northwest Building, of which little has been seen so far, is actually the northwestern part of MM IIB Building AA. This is based on the argument, suggested by M. Shaw, that since LM I Room 5 of Building T was built upon some of the Northwest Building's walls, they must have been visible when T was built, so should date to the immediately preceding period of construction. This is possible, but the building's walls are thinner than those known from AA; also the floor in the Northwest Building, although not found because of ground water that welled up during excavation, is most likely significantly below that of AA. Also, although the colonnade of the North Stoa may be as early as MM IIB, and therefore in origin belongs to AA, AA architectural remains are scanty here on the north. If future investigation shows that the Northwest Building is indeed part of AA, then the foreign pottery within AA, otherwise a much destroyed building almost without contents, would suggest that AA was founded in order to initiate and accommodate trade.

\(^8\) C 6112: Russell 1985, who suggests that the jug may be from the Kalopsida area in eastern Cyprus. For its findspot, see also Wright 1996,173; also Betancourt 1990, 192 (1835).
number of foreign sherds or entire vessels (usually the former), some 170, surpasses that from any other Aegean site.\(^9\)

Of the Cypriot ware there are at least 47 pieces consisting mainly of bowls (37), at least 6 jugs and 4 pithoi. White Slip II bowls (29) predominate, but there are White Shaved, Base Ring I and II and monochrome wares, as well as a Red Lustrous Ware Spindle Bottle. The Cypriot pottery is distributed throughout the site, but with slightly more in the Southern Area than on the Central Hillside or the Hilltop Houses. The number of Cypriote ceramics (47) is surpassed only by the Canaanite (60).

The Egyptian pottery, numbering some 22 fragments (no vessel is complete), is also distributed throughout the site, but of the two shapes present, flasks and transport vessels, the flasks are found in connection with the residences while the transport vessels are restricted to the Civic Area on the south.

The Canaanite pottery (60 items), with a number of complete vessels, consists entirely of transport amphorae. They are at least five times as numerous in the Civic Area as in the town to the north. These and the Egyptian transport vessels functioned no doubt in the commercial exchange and storage that took place mainly in the civic buildings on the south.

The Italian/Sardinian wares (47 in number) began to arrive at Kommos later than the others, toward the end of LM IIIA1. At first there were only a few, but their number multiplies, much like the pottery at Kommos from Khania in Western Crete, until during later LM IIIB when they outnumber by far other foreign wares.\(^10\) Indeed, these imports from the western Mediterranean replace those from the east. Shape-wise, the Italian ware consists chiefly of jars and bowls, their numbers being about equal. Their site distribution is of some interest, being about the same in the Civic Area and on the Central Hillside, but rising steeply in the Hilltop Houses, quite the opposite of the Canaanite jars which are commonest in the Civic Area.

Some of the foreign pottery was probably brought for the sake of its contents, which usually requires a closed shape: a jar, an amphora, a pithos. Or, it was brought simply for its visual appeal and utilitarian use in the household, or both. Clearly, with the Egyptian and Canaanite containers being exclusively undecorated closed shapes, their contents were of primary importance. These vessels could also be re-used when empty. The Cypriot pottery has a different character, for some 70% consists of open cups and bowls, especially decorated White Slip ware, table wares that Could be brought from Cyprus, stacked up within pithoi, ready to be exchanged, as found in the Ulu Burun wreck (Pulak 1988, 11). There are also Cypriot jugs and jars, however, and even four pithoi that, aside from any intrinsic appeal, may have contained something special (Fig. 2, an example mended by K. Hall). The Italian wares, on the other hand, are quite different from the other categories, with a higher percentage of closed (60%) to open (40%). Watrous has suggested that scrap metal was brought from Sardinia in the closed vessels, at a time when copper and tin were harder to come by (Watrous 1992, 182-3; also Watrous 1959). The open shapes, chiefly bowls, appear to be for ordinary household use.

Aside from the pottery, two stone anchors are of particular interest (J. W. Shaw 1995). They were found re-used as building material in an LM IIIA2 context in the Civic Area. Their significance is twofold. First, since they each weigh 75 kilos, they show that the harbour was visited by at least medium-sized ships. Secondly, they are of a type unknown so far in Aegean archaeological contexts, a composite anchor with three holes, that occurs chiefly in Cyprus and along the Syrian littoral near Ugarit. At this point, Ugarit seems the most likely source, since some of the anchors there are as early as, or earlier than, the two from Kommos. That the anchors are actually from the east can be shown through geological analysis of their stone, which contains microfossils of a type that occur in that area and not in Crete. Thus they were brought by ship and either exchanged or abandoned somewhere near the harbourside –

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\(^9\) Excluding shipwrecks. This total does not include pottery from other Cretan sites (Khania, Knossos), from the Cyclades, or Mycenaean wares. The total of LBA Orientalia and Occidentalia given by Cline from Kommos (181) includes other material as well as that cited in our text. That total can be compared with Knossos (48), Khania (10), with a total of 325 from Crete (Cline 1994, Table 9).

\(^10\) Of some interest is the fact that no Italian ware has been found in connection with Building P which, however, contains fragments of Canaanite jars.
originally objects, at least at Kommos, of apparently exclusively marine use. As such, they are quite unlike the pottery, for instance the Canaanite amphorae or the Egyptian jars valued for their contents, or the decorated Cypriot White Slip bowls that had aesthetic appeal and utilitarian value.

To consider things generally for a moment, in his important study of pottery as an indicator of interconnections, Watrous has made the point (1992, 169) that pottery can be of secondary importance, and that the "absence or relative scarcity of pottery exchanged between two areas may be completely unrelated to the degree of contact between the areas." For an example, he cites the Old Assyrian colony of Kültepe in Anatolia where Assyrian pottery is lacking but where written documents attest to lively trade carried out in the foreign enclaves or karums. In the case of Kommos, therefore, foreign groups may have come there but have left no trace. I see a possible problem in such an interpretation as applied to Kommos. The Assyrian trade was carried out by animal caravan bringing goods from Assur in exchange for local material. For reasons of economy, such caravans most likely did not carry bulk pottery over a long overland route. A ship, however, run by a few people, is relatively capacious and while containing major cargoes of raw materials (copper, tin, glass etc.) and ceramic containers used to transport resin and other goods, there was still room for tableware traded for its own sake, as shown by the Ulu Burun wreck. It follows that, although we may not know the identity of the owners or crews of a ship - Ugaritic, Cypriot, or Minoan - trade by ship is more likely to leave material evidence for interchange, especially pottery. As a result, we can still trace most if not all of the points of contact by means of the ship's cargoes of ceramics as found distributed on any one site.

Watrous also makes the point that pottery distribution at a single site is not a reliable indicator of local commerce. He points, as one should, to the contrast between Kommos and its two neighbouring sites of Phaistos and Aghia Triada, where very little imported pottery has been found. At Kommos, on the one hand, from the beginning we looked for imported wares, even placing obviously non-local pottery in a box called "The Strange and Wonderful" until archaeologists with more experience in non-Cretan contexts could help us identify them. One can argue that the early excavators at those inland sites did not recognize such wares, often plain and usually otherwise unexceptional in appearance. But recently our Italian colleagues have been looking very carefully for such wares (La Rosa 1985, 53). Moreover, we have been finding entire vessels which could not have been missed even in the early days of excavation at those sites. How to explain this anomaly? One way is to focus on the main cargo, copper or tin and other raw material, some of which might stay in the harbour, such as fragments of copper ingots found at Kommos (Blitzer 1995, 500-1), while the remainder would be shipped inland, such as the ingots found at Aghia Triada. Another is to suggest that the contents of the closed containers, such as the aromatic resins contained in the Canaanite jars from Ulu Burun (Putak 1988, 11), might have been decanted and sent on separately, with most of the jars being retained at harbourside for re-use.

Another consideration is trade routes. Lambrou-Phillipson (1991) has made the point that the Egyptian pottery at Kommos actually arrived there not by ship but by means of trans-shipment from the north. Her argument is that while travel from Kommos to Egypt was possible, the prevailing winds would have prevented sailing in the reverse direction. Watrous has argued convincingly, however, for a southern trade route from Libya to Crete, citing evidence for southern winds available to mariners wishing to sail north from Egypt as well as an established landing at Marsa Matruh, with its Aegean and Cypriot pottery, some distance west of the Nile Delta (1992, 176-8). Moreover, if Kommos was receiving Egyptian pottery from the north, rather than directly, where is that pottery at Amnisos or Katsamba or, in particular, at Phaistos or Aghia Triada? Also concerning trade routes, the presence of Italian, most probably Sardinian, pottery at Kommos, along with Peloponnesian and Khaniote wares, during LM IIIA2/B, is strong reinforcement for arguing for a western trade route opening up then, at the same time that the imports from the east were declining, probably because of unstable conditions (see also Watrous 1993, 182-3).

We should also consider the pattern of foreign pottery at the site during the Late Minoan period. As noted above, Palatial Building T, with spacious room for storage in its eastern wing, was used only in the LM I period. Building P, with its six galleries that may have functioned to protect ships during the
winter, non-sailing months, was constructed during LM IIIA2, and used until some point in LM IIIB. Imports are known from each period. On the other hand, the peak time for imported material (except for Italian, which comes later) is during LM IIIA1 when, although the town itself continued, much of Building T had been deserted although there was reuse of at least one of its long rooms. At least two explanations can be entertained: 1) although the civic buildings in the western Mesara (Phaistos, Aghia Triada, Kommos) had gone out of use, ships could still be manned and commerce in Minoan "bottoms" continued, or 2) commerce arriving at Kommos then was largely in the hands of non-Cretans from Ugarit, Cyprus, the Greek Mainland, and perhaps elsewhere. This would presuppose that although the social infrastructure of the palatial era had been affected by the events of late LM I, there was still enough local demand for foreign materials and, at the same time, that there was enough local material for exchange to make it worthwhile for traders to stop.

Fig. 3a-b. Locally made LM IIIA2/B short-necked amphora (C 285) from Kommos (Photo. T. Dabney).

There are still a number of "unknowns" in the material record. One is a number of still unprovenanced pottery groups, most of them from the Civic Area, presently being investigated by J. Rutter. Rutter is also examining the possible use for trade of an amphora typical of LM IIIA2/B contexts at Kommos (Figs 3a and 3b) and, so far, unique to the Kommos site (Rutter forthcoming). This container type was particularly common within the galleries of Building P where it typifies material on floor levels. Watrous (1992, 135) first termed it a "Short-necked amphora," or, abbreviated, "SNA". Since this transport vessel is so common, it probably contained a local product(s): oil and wine are only two possibilities. Also, since there are clear indications for foreign connections during the period, and we know that ships came and departed from the harbour area, then the amphorae were probably intended for export. One would assume that they will show up in a foreign port or ports, in the same way that Canaanite and Egyptian jars accumulated at the harbour of Kommos. Up to this point, however, no examples are known outside Kommos.

After c. 1250 B.C. there is a hiatus at the site. The town and civic buildings remain deserted, with only a few local visitors during the 12th century. Toward the end of the 11th century, during the Subminoan period, a small rectangular building, open to the east, is constructed upon the ruins of the Minoan civic buildings. From what we can tell, it was a small temple or shrine within which meals were

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11 This is the so-called "compartment" period referred to in Shaw and Shaw 1993, 171, now definitely dated to LM IIIA1.
eaten by people sitting on a bench, and terracotta figurines and bronze arrowheads were among the offerings dedicated to a still unknown divinity. In turn, toward the end of the 9th century B.C., this building, which we have called "Temple A", was replaced by another, larger structure (Temple B), set at a higher level which lasted until the end of the 7th century B.C. It has three successive architectural/stratigraphic phases which are referred to below.

During the lifetime of Temple A, which had two major phases, there is little sign of non-Cretan material, with one exception. That exception consists of three sherds of Phoenician ware, two from storage jars and one from a jug. One of the two jar fragments is from on or within the earliest floor of Temple A, the other two sherds are from its highest floors. How should we view this pottery? Consistent with our conclusions about the Bronze Age wares, where the Canaanite and Cypriot did not necessarily imply the ownership or the origin of the crew that brought them, we can conclude in this case that a few Phoenician storage jars and flasks were brought as exchange items from Cyprus or Phoenicia proper. We can note at the same time that the vessels were closed shapes, so may have had special contents. Also, that the transport amphorae, save for an arbitrary change in the modern label of "Canaanite" to "Phoenician," really carry on the earlier tradition. They are exceptional examples of very early, late eleventh through 9th century B.C., interconnections during the very beginnings of the Aegean Iron Age.

As mentioned earlier, Temple B was built upon A. It also was open to the east, but with a pillar there at its centre, on axis. B was larger, and had a hearth west of the pillar. West of the hearth was found a most unusual structure made up of three tapering pillars socketed into rectangular mortices cut in a row, north-south, into the top of a large triangular block (Fig. 4). Between the two southern pillars was wedged a bronze horse, facing east. Above the horse, also wedged in, was a faience figurine of Sekhmet, the Egyptian goddess of war. Between the two northern pillars was a faience figurine of a male, possibly of Nefertum, son of Sekhmet, both members of the Theban triad along with Ptah. East of and behind the pillars, were the remains of a bronze shield that had been held in position by slabs set on edge, and in front of the pillars were numerous offerings, including a bronze bull and much decorated pottery.

Although there was a tradition of tripartite shrines in Late Minoan Crete, and possibly one of free-standing sacred pillars (see J. W. Shaw 1978a), the closest parallels to the arrangement in Temple B are shrines with multiple free-standing pillars shown in later Greek relief (J. W. Shaw 1989, fig. 15 (Nora) or fig. 16 (Sousse)). That actual pillars were known in the eastern Mediterranean, where the tradition first developed, is shown by a tapering 7th century B.C. pillar inscribed with Phoenician letters and now in the Louvre (Hermay 1984). The "Tripillar" Shrine at Kommos, therefore, is clearly part of the Phoenician tradition. The pillars themselves probably represented a triad of deities, perhaps a trinity such as Baal, Ashera, and Astarte, or Tanit, Ashera and Astarte who, while being worshipped individually, were also worshipped in combination as one (J. W. Shaw 1989, 183).

The identification of the shrine as Phoenician-inspired is reinforced by Phoenician pottery found scattered within the Temple and in its stratified dumps to the south. Most of the some 300 sherds (no entire pots were recovered), according to Patricia Bikai who is preparing their publication, are from storage jars/transport vessels like those in Temple A, but a number of them (17) are from jugs. She remarks in her manuscript for that future publication that the discovery of this early 9th century B.C.

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12 Due to superimposed permanent architectural features of successive Greek construction here, especially hearths and column bases, only a small portion of the walls and floor levels of the Subminoan building could be exposed. For that see J.W. Shaw 1981, 236-9; 1982, 185-9. For the re-dating of A from Early Protogeometric to the Subminoan period, see Shaw and Shaw 1993, 175 n. 117.

13 Temple B was succeeded, after a hiatus, by Temple C, for which see J.W. Shaw 1980, 219-29.

14 C 3270 from Trench 33C/83, a storage jar fragment with white inclusions.

15 C 3294, a jug fragment from Trench 33C/85, and C 6451, a storage jar fragment from the same trench and pail. P. Bikai will be publishing the pottery in Volume IV of the Kommos series.

16 The block is probably reused from a Minoan ashlar wall. For details concerning the shrine and its surroundings see J.W. Shaw 1989.
pottery raises the known date of Phoenician expansion toward the western Mediterranean by perhaps a full century.\textsuperscript{17}

We propose that, while intermediaries remain possible, Phoenicians set up the shrine according to their own customs. Of particular importance for understanding the context is that the shrine is actually a \textit{built structure}, and to that extent unique, as contrasted with the portable artifacts, such as pottery, usually reported as being made or brought by Easterners to the Aegean. Its very permanence is surprising - a strong religious and cultural statement- but at the same time, for us, unclear, for there can be numerous explanations for its presence. One of the most persuasive is that Phoenicians, as shown by sherds in Temple A (above), knew of Kommos and stopped there during some of their earliest voyages to the western Mediterranean. In such cases, as interpreted at the Conference by N. Coldstream, they would have been following the "direct route" to the western Mediterranean. There was water and a fair harbour, also access to inland areas and to the people living there. Then, probably in collaboration with local Cretans, whose pottery and artifacts suggest that the major use of both Temples A and B was by the indigenous population, they decided to participate in the building of a new temple. Perhaps the inspiration

\textsuperscript{17} As shown at the conference by the paper of H. Matthäus and in the various discussions, Cyprus, Crete, Sardinia and other areas shared a tradition in metalworkina, especially in rod tripods, which must also be considered when assessing interconnections.
for Temple B was Phoenician\textsuperscript{18} - we may never know - but certainly the scheme for the Tripillar Shrine seems to have been theirs.

The apparent acceptance if not adoption by the locals of a Phoenician shrine, which formed the central object of attention within the new building, should provoke speculation. At the beginning the pillars seem to have stood alone, without the later additions of the bronze and faience figurines or the bronze shield. The abundance of local pottery from this early period, as well as the various figurines, certainly suggest that locals participated in the meals that took place within the Temple. Local acceptance may have been adaptive; for instance the three pillars may have come to represent a local triad such as that of Apollo, Leto and Artemis. The appeal of novelty to curious Cretans may also have played a role. As in the Bronze Age, trade may have taken place, and the shrine, acceptable to both Phoenicians and locals for their own reasons, could have functioned as a guarantee of vows of agreement. M. Kochavi recently suggested in connection with certain Late Bronze Age shrines in the Aegean, that the "function, besides the cultic one, may also have been utilitarian - bestowing divine protection for fair reciprocity in trade relations" (1992, 13).

The Phoenician element in Temple B began to wane during the building's second phase, after the floor had risen through accumulation and the figurines and shield were added. Phoenician ceramic imports become scarcer, evidence that the traders were stopping less often, until during the final stage of the building there is no evidence of them at all. Moreover, the floor level had built up even higher and the pillars were only partly visible. Eventually they were obscured completely when their tops become incorporated into a small hearth during a third, final phase. Thus by the early to mid-7th century B.C. the central shrine lost its purpose and meaning, although the temple continued in use.

Probably before the Phoenicians ceased to visit, other traders arrived. Again, the evidence has to do with ceramics and this time is most concentrated in Phase 3 of Temple B of the mid to late 7th century. Perhaps the most indicative is a group of 10 graffiti published by Csapo (1991, 1993). Many of these come from a single lens of earth containing ash and the remnants of meals in the Temple B dump, with a few from the upper floor of a late 7th century B.C. storage depot, Building Q (see below). These particular Archaic graffiti, among the some forty recovered from the general period,\textsuperscript{20} are all on cups of a southern Cretan fabric and therefore were probably acquired and inscribed at Kommos. The cups themselves are ordinary table ware, most decorated only with black glaze. The inscriptions are neither long nor complete, but enough remains to recover a few proper names of which the individual letter forms point to merchants or sailors (or both) from Northern Boiotia, Locris, or Phocis - perhaps to a mercantile

\textsuperscript{18} For comparisons with Syria-Palestinian temples/shrines, see J.W. Shaw 1959, 175, 182-3. While a Near Eastern origin for the plan remains possible, it is probably better to reserve judgement until Cretan sacred structures from this period are better known.

\textsuperscript{19} During the conference, stelae (\textit{cippi}) were discussed from a number of points of view. One was to what extent the Phoenician funerary stelae were present in the eastern Mediterranean. D. Christou, for instance, noted that at the possibly Phoenician cemetery near the shore at Amathus in Cyprus, no stelae were recovered. L. Badre discussed with the author the recently published stelae, possibly from the cemetery at Tyre (Sader 1991), and noted that their authenticity will remain in question until the area from which they came has been excavated. The presence of funerary \textit{cippi} in Cyprus and the Phoenician homeland remains to be proven, therefore. A related theme of the Conference concerned \textit{cippi} on Crete, in particular that from the cemetery area at Eleutherna, mentioned during his presentation by N. Stampolidis (see also Stampolidis 1990), as well as the two possible \textit{cippi} from Knossos brought forward by N. Kourou and A. Karatsou.

As far as the Tripillar Shrine Lit Kommos is concerned, it appears to be a centre for worship rather than a grave marker. It was actually set within a building rather than being part of a burial or \textit{tophet} - the area around it, both inside and outside the building was excavated without finding burials, although tire Tripillar Shrine could still have been built over a single burial (the shrine itself has not been removed from its ancient position). Possibly, since the Punic stelae represent pillared shrines in their reliefs (J.W. Shaw 1959, 176-S, with further references), while at the same time such shrines are not found at the \textit{tophets} themselves, the depictions on the stelae are of shrines built separately from the \textit{tophets}; and that found at Kommos is only one of the many that once existed (see also ibid., figs 13, 15-22, for possible examples).

\textsuperscript{20} The entire group is being published by Csapo in Volume IV of the Kommos series.
association involving various members from those areas. One of the individuals may be named Admainon or Admato. Csapo comments:

The [graffiti] allow us a glimpse at the international character of this ... port of call, where Cretans, Central Greeks, probably other Greeks, perhaps even Phoenicians lied to each other over wine and limpets at the seaside Shrine and left their cups, possibly for reuse on the return journey (Csapo 1991, 215).

A somewhat different view is provided by the contents of a late 7th century building, called "Q", which lies south of Temple B. Q was over forty metres in length and only five metres or so wide, thus long and thin, oriented east-west. Its single entrance, facing the shore, provided controlled access to five rooms which appear to have stored goods, especially pottery, local as well as other wares imported from a number of places. Q no doubt serviced the nearby cult, being its "china cupboard" as Johnston, who published the pottery (in 1993), observes, but the number of fragments of imported transport amphorae give him the impression of a trading post that serviced local need and then some. Johnston thinks that Kommos "does begin to look like something special" when he notes that there are few sites on Archaic Crete with even a sprinkling of such imports (1993, 376).

The transport amphorae are various: Attic SOS type, possibly Laconian, a few Corinthian, but also groups from East Greece (Lesbian, Chian, Samian, Milesian), as well as Cypriot and a variety of Phoenician style manufactured outside the Levant, perhaps in North Africa. As we found in the case of the Late Bronze Age pottery, there is also unprovenanced pottery, in this case a "Purple Ware" that must be pinned down further. Presumably these transport amphorae carried wine and/or oil - other contents are possible as well, however. Q was built and used during the last decade of the 7th century, before Temple B was abandoned and the sanctuary went largely out of use. Who was in charge of Q? Locals should probably be assumed, but some of Csapo's Northern Greek traders may have played a role. Johnston himself suspects that the East Greek pottery was carried in East Greek ships (1993, 377). He is also tempted to connect the exchanges with North Africa, especially with the settling of Cyrenaica, and the founding of Cyrene and Tocra, which had to be provisioned from outside until their vines and olives were established.

Conclusion

Over the period surveyed here, during the Bronze Age Kommos reflects contact primarily with the Levant, especially with Cyprus from early in Middle Minoan, although the real peak in interchange comes later during LM IIIA1. We should not forget, however, late connections with Italy and/or Sardinia during L,M IIIA2/B. Afterwards there is the early Phoenician presence, intense enough during the late 9th and early 8th centuries to occasion the building of a unique "foreign shrine" on Cretan soil. Later, during the 7th century, the sanctuary grows physically to become an unusual centre for interchange during which East Greece plays a significant role for the first time - the Levant seems to fade from the picture.

The identities of the merchants and travellers have been discussed here at various points, which brings up the topical question of foreign enclaves or communities. Our possibilities at Kommos, usually suggested in terms of the pottery recovered, are various: "Canaanites," Cypriots, Egyptians, Italians/Sardinians for the Bronze Age, Boiotians and their neighbours, East Greeks, and Phoenicians, among others for the later period. As Cline has commented, at harbour sites such as Kommos "one should look carefully, and with the greatest hope of success, for evidence of resident foreigners ...."21 For the Bronze Age at Kommos, however, there is nothing unusual architecturally or artifactually, aside from imported pottery and Cypriot copper, hinting at foreign influence.22 Moreover, the Egyptian and

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21 Cline 1994, SJ. He refers in particular to the Late Bronze Age, but the thought can be generalized to later periods as well.
22 Excavation of tombs in the future might provide further information, however.
Canaanite wares are confined largely to closed vessels, which could simply be imported for their contents. Cypriot wares are more varied, but one can explain the decorated, open table-ware shapes simply as trade items. Perhaps the strongest possibility may be suggested by the Italian/Sicilian wares, which are not only varied but in the Hilltop Houses appear in unusual numbers, as when compared, for instance, with the normal distribution of Cypriot wares. Still, the lack of non-Cretan objects, aside from pottery, from the Hilltop prevents us from concluding that people from the west had moved into the houses there.

For the Iron Age, the graffiti are perhaps the best guide to placing Northern Greeks at the site, although it still seems that there was never a substantial settled community that one might refer to as a town.23 Better to think, instead, of the site as one where people of numerous nationalities would come, only to leave not long afterwards. Perhaps the closest one can come to identifying a foreign "community", actually, is during the 9th and 8th centuries when the Phoenicians came and built their shrine. Some of them could have stayed in Building Z, reusing Gallery 3 of LM III Building P, and which contained fragments of Phoenician ware.24 Still, the relatively limited amount of Phoenician pottery and lack of more elaborate accommodation speaks more of temporary than permanent residence,25 which seems to characterize all foreign presence - as surely there was - during much of the site's history.

Questions still remain, and we would appreciate suggestions. One is the curious lack of foreign pottery at inland sites during periods when the harbour town is a bustling centre: are our explanations satisfactory? We welcome visitors who may further reduce the number of unprovenanced imported wares. Or, someone who has seen our SNA's abroad.

A final note. At this point during the late 20th century A.D., it does seem odd that in order to travel to many of the areas mentioned outside Crete, especially in the Levant, that one must return to Athens. The apparent freedom of passage to and from east and south that we see in Antiquity no longer exists - even the roving fleets of sponge divers, who used to pass by Crete on their way to North Africa, no longer call. In this respect an initiative was announced in the Kritiki Phoni (October-December 1995):

It appears, finally, that a 1-1-cat single cooperative effort between the Minoan Lines and ANEK will be carried out during the coming days with an aim to connect Crete with the lands of North Africa and the Near East, as well as the solution to the problem of the transport of Cretan products to new markets which are opening up in the Eastern Mediterranean.

Crete may, in other words, rightfully reclaim part of its earlier history.

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23 The closest one can come to identifying a "residence" during the periods of Temples A and B is a rectangular, Middle Geometric room (Z) set within Building P's Gallery 3, and possibly another building, F, of which only a portion could be exposed (Shaw and Shaw 1993, 184). During the period of Temple C, not covered in this presentation, one building (E) may have been a residence (J.W. Shaw 1986, 233-5), and another (B) may have housed the guardian of the Temple (J.W. Shaw 1978b, 136-40). For the entire Greek period there is no evidence for building north of the sanctuary proper, thus no adjacent town. We do not know, however, what lies beneath the very deep sand accumulation east of the sanctuary and the modern road.

24 For Z, see Shaw and Shaw 1993, 175-7. A special report on its pottery is being prepared by A. Johnston.

25 Morris (199?, xviii) overstates the situation when she refers to Piraeus as a "latter-day version of a community like Kommos." Resident Cypro-Phoenician craftsmen have been suggested for Knossos, however, for which see Coldstream and Catline (eds) 1996. 721, with earlier references.
Addendum and Update

Concerning the imported pottery found in fill associated with MM Building AA, further study by A. Van de Moortel has isolated many more fragments of Cypriot pottery from various soundings in the general AA area. Also, as this article goes to press, J. Rutter has delivered a talk on the subject of LB imported pottery, "Cretan External Relations during LM III/A2/B (ca. 1370-1200 B.C.): A View from the Mesara," at the Spetses Conference connected with the Point Iria Shipwreck.

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DISCUSSION

Karageorghis: I have always wondered why Cypriot pottery occurs in the Aegean. I can understand the presence of closed vessels such as storage jars from Canaan and other places, but why White Shaved juglets from Cyprus or even White Slip bowls from Cyprus at a time when much finer pottery could be bought locally? I can also understand the presence of Base Ring juglets which may have contained particular products from the Orient: perhaps the White Shaved juglets, which are also very common in the central Mediterranean, also contained some liquid the identity of which escapes us today.

Shaw: You have answered part of the question yourself. The closed vessels theoretically contained something; the real question concerns the open shapes.

Karageorghis: Yes, why White Slip?

Shaw: I think they just liked them. If you look at the Ulu Burun wreck you find it is full of White Slip bowls stacked together inside a pithos. They are exotica, exported from Cyprus because they were considered desirable elsewhere. Simply for ornamental use. I cannot think of any other explanation.

Karageorghis: For the later periods I would suggest that we may be dealing with trade missions, to use a modern term, which were responsible for the trade with the East; I can see the presence in the 5th century B.C. of a trade mission of Phoenicians on Paros exporting Parian marble and Parian anthropoid sarcophagi, of which several have been found on the island of Paros unfinished, and sending them for final carving to the East.

Shaw: I can imagine something like that, but I think we should also consider the complications and the variations; I suspect that there were considerable differences, specific kinds of traders for a particular governmental centre, or perhaps a free enterprise system of someone doing it on his own with underwriters or a group of traders who get together and underwrite these various vessels in case there is a major loss - and the wreck at Ulu Burun was certainly a major loss.

M. Shaw: I would like to come back for a minute to the question that Prof. Karageorghis asked and reciprocate with a question to him. I myself have been surprised at times to find among our pottery imports horrible looking fragments of cooking pots that were brought from somewhere; the ceramic experts at our site explained that quite often you get a horrible looking thing that aesthetically is not pleasing, at least to our eyes today, because it does the job well. I wonder if some of those vessels that we think may have been brought because they were aesthetically attractive, had ceramic qualities that might make them suitable for certain uses. This could be answered by analysis of the clay and its appearance. Are there any such studies or are there any indications in the Cypriot ware (open shapes) of some quality that makes them different ceramically from other ordinary pots?

Karageorghis: Cypriot Base Ring and White Slip wares are "strong" pottery; they are not the soft, biscuit ware which you can find in the Near East or even in the Aegean, but I do not think these were used as cooking pots. For cooking pots there may be qualities which justified their export, and perhaps their export by people who knew these qualities beforehand, that is by foreigners who were used to using them. The same question applies to what is called "Barbarian Ware" introduced to the Near East, in Cyprus at least, by newcomers who knew the qualities of the ware. Such vessels were not imported for their own sake as beautiful pottery.

Christou: In addition to the pottery you mentioned, you also said that some ingots were found on the site. Are these ingots similar in shape, decoration and weight to others found elsewhere in the Aegean, or are they different?

Shaw: I mentioned that there are pieces of ingots; these are pieces of copper which are essentially very small, usually (I think there are six of them) found in late contexts. They cannot be compared in shape because they are not full-sized ingots. On the other hand, the analyses, as made by Manly and Maddin, show that the copper itself is probably from Cyprus.

Coldstream: Looking at Kommos from across the island, from the direction of Knossos, one is impressed by the totally different record there in the Early Iron Age. When one searches for links, even the most tenuous links, one that occurs to me is in the figure of Nefertum. We have Nefertum also in the pithos burial of a very small child: it is a large figurine about 32 cm. high, and it is one of two in that pithos, but
our Nefertums seem to be Levantine imitations rather than Egyptian originals. I would like to ask Prof. Shaw whether he considers the Nefertum from Kommos to be genuine Egyptian. If it is not, it might be one small item that comes across via Kommos to Knossos.

Shaw: It is nice to think we might be shipping things north. Concerning, its origin, I think we are more inclined towards Sekhmet than to Nefertum. It could be an imitation, but the people to whom it has been shown think that it was made in Egypt. I don't know: an analysis of a representative group of these figures could be informative. I think, probably, that some of the things comim-1 into our little harbour town were sent on to Mt. Ida, or they went with pilgrims further north to Knossos. I like the suggestion.

Markoe: Having just organized a major exhibition of Egyptian goddesses. I discovered that there are literally dozens of feline-headed Egyptian deities, and I wonder whether what you have there is actually Sekhmet or Bastet. Bastet also appears us a standing feline-headed goddess. very typically holding a papyrus shaft, and Bastet, of course, had her major cult centre at Bubastis in the Nile Delta, which flourished in this period (8th - 7th centuries B.C.). The cult of Bastet was much more widely exported than that of Sekhmet because of her connotations as a mother goddess; this raises the possibility that whoever dedicated that particular figurine had a very specific knowledge of a mother goddess and fertility cult derived either from the Levant or from the Nile Delta.

Shaw: When we published the description of the figurine in the first preliminary report, we said it might be a Bastet. It is difficult to untangle them because of their related history; we thought it was probably Sekhmet, but you certainly could be right.

Markoe: One brief question: did you say that the figure was actually found wedged between two of the pillars?

Shaw: That's right. It was lying down actually with the head, as I recall, to the east and very difficult to remove.

Stampolidis: An answer to Prof. Coldstream's question is probably provided by the finding, of a small Sekhmet faience amulet at Eleutherna in a MG-LG canery urn; on it, behind the pillar of Sekhmet, there is an inscription which is not hieroglyphic; if it is not a nonsense inscription, it is most probably Aramaic or Phoenician. I would also like to ask you about the shield. When you say "shield" do you mean it in quotation marks? Is it of file Idaean type? Why do you say it is a shield?

Shaw: It is round, about 60 cm. diameter, and we found it in pieces. It was a light, rather thin piece of bronze with a series of circles that gradually became smaller until they reached the centre which contained a rosette. There were no figures on it. I'm sorry, but it was set behind these three pillars, and there's no doubt in our minds that it's a shield: it is simply not like the ones from Ida or, I think, like the examples from your site.

Stampolidis: We can discuss it later, but I would like to ask you whether you have any finds of bronze cauldrons or pieces of bronze vessels of the same date and in the same area?

Shaw: We have some handles, but we do not have any complete cauldrons; we also have some fairly well preserved, but not complete, bowls, without decoration on them, but nothing, massive and I don't think we have any tripod bases.

Hermant: Concerning the three pillars of the Geometric temple, I would suggest comparisons not only with Phoenico-Punic civilizations, but in Crete also with triple anthropomorphic representations at Gortyn or Dreros with one male and two female figures. Perhaps there is some relationship between them.

Shaw: I think I mentioned the triads. We've seen them in reliefs and we have seen the Dreros sphyreleta figurines which are identified as Apollo, Leto and Artemis. We know it is inherent in the tradition whether that tradition itself beginning in Crete, or whether it coincides with the beginning of the tradition in the East. My thought was that, if we have the Phoenicians coming and they have something which represents three deities, then the Cretans might say that they had the same kind of thing themselves. Thus, when they were perhaps swearing a bond of some kind for future trade, this would be a common ground for agreement.

Δεμπλη: Ηθέλα να εποιήσω, έτσι, αφι μπορεί καθεστο να δώσει απάντηση σχετικά με τον βομά εντό, τον οποίο, φυσικά, τα παράλληλα είναι φαινικά κατα ντι αντιπροσωπεύει; δηλαδή, αντιπροσωπεύει κάποια ξένη κοινότητα και πώς αυτή η κοινότητα, ασπούμε, Φοινικών ἐβαλε μέσα σε ἑνα ναό, επέβαλε φόρμα
βεμοίο φοινικικό ή οι πολύ πυκνές επαφές και η τυχόν εγκαταστάση εκεί πέρα ενος αριθμού, λοιπόν, μιας κοινοποιημένης ανατολικής επηρέασης της φόρμας που θα αντιπροσώπευε το μόνιμο στρώμα, ας πούμε το κρητικό, που ζούσε γιατί είναι περιγραφή, δηλαδή δεν το βλέπεις στα αναθήματα, αλλά είναι εισηγμένα, η είναι αυτή που λέμε κρητικά. Δηλαδή πώς η ιδεολογία επηρεάζει πια φόρμες και τροπούς εκφράσης κι αν ο βεμοίο κτίζεται από κρητικούς, συμπίπτει και ιδεολογικά; γιατί καποία ιδεολογία έχει αυτός ο τόπος.

Shaw: Ναι, είναι πολύ οραία ερώτηση.

Λεμπέση: Δεν ξέρω.

... και δεν μπορούν να απαντήσουν σετά. Κάποιος που έχει ασχολήθει, ισως, πιο πολύ από µένα μπορεί να καθήσει, ισως να ελέγξει τις να ελέγξει τις δυνατότητες, ας πούμε. Αλλά, μπορούσε να πει κανένας, ο Αγ. Παύλος έρχεται, όπως ήρθε στην Κρήτη, μετά, έρχεται ένας φοινικικός Αγ. Παύλος ας πούμε, στον Κομιμο και λέει: "εδώ πέρα, θα βάλουμε ένα τριμερές ερώ, εκεί μέσα στο κτίριο, και αυτό είναι οραιο". Αλλά θα μπορούσες να πει κανένας ότι ένας κατεύθυνση Φοινικικός έρχεται και οι ντόπιοι θέλουν να χτίσουν ένα ναο και ο κατεύθυνση, που είναι πολύ γνωστός λέει, "έχει κάτι πολύ οραίο να βαλετε μέσα δεν το χρεώνει μαζί, μου, αλλά θα το χτίσουμε επί τόπου, έχουμε πέτρες εδώ πέρα, θα το φτιάξουμε."

Λεμπέση: Δεν ξέρω αν βγαίνει από τον κομπό νόμο, με καταλάβατε, Δηλαδή, μια ερμηνεία δεν μπορεί να τη δώσουμε μόνο από τον ιδιο τον βομή και ένα και σε σχέση με το αλλά τα αναθήματα και..., δεν ξέρω ...

Shaw: Οχι, είναι πάρα πολύ οραίο ...

Λεμπέση: Στο βιβλίο, στη δημοσιεύσεις θα περιμένουμε.

Shaw: Θα έχουμε άλλα τις εξήγησις. Ευχαριστώ.

Jalkotzy: Είμαι τον χαρούντας και επισημαίνεις πως λέμε από την αρχαία έπος πολύ ωραίος. Στο βιβλίο, στη δημοσιεύσεις θα περιμένουμε. Ευχαριστώ. Στο βιβλίο, στη δημοσιεύσεις θα περιμένουμε.