

From Babylon to Crete, a Millennium of Influence:
The Creation of the Gortyn Law Code

Master's Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
Brandeis University
Graduate Program in Ancient Greek and Roman Studies
Andrew Koh, Advisor

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts
in
Ancient Greek and Roman Studies

by
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May 2014

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Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to my advisor, Professor Koh, who has aided me through all of my research and offered me endless support and opportunities during my time at Brandeis University. I would also like to thank my committee members, Professor Koloski-Ostrow and Professor Walker for all of their support and help in my thesis, as well as throughout my time in the program. In addition, thank you to Professor Muellner and Professor Johnston for helping me to grow in my understanding of the ancient languages. The Ancient Greek and Roman Studies department at Brandeis University gave me all the tools I needed for success, and I am eternally thankful for the wisdom, advice, and support offered by each and every faculty member.

Thank you to my fellow graduate students, I feel very fortunate to be surrounded by such intelligent and hardworking people, and I learned as much from all of you as I have from the faculty.

Lastly, thank you to my family and friends for your continuous love and support. I would not have been able to complete this program without you.

ABSTRACT

From Babylon to Crete, a Millennium of Influence: The Creation of the Gortyn Law Code

A thesis presented to the Graduate Program in Ancient Greek and Roman Studies

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My thesis examines the factors that led to the creation of the Gortyn Law Code on Crete in 450 BCE. Scholarship has up to this point referred to the eastern nature of Cretan law codes, at times comparing it to Hammurabi's Code from Babylon, written in the eighteenth century BCE. I justify this claim by providing specific examples and a discussion on the extent of that influence from the east, and how it came to Crete. I do this by first looking at the Bronze Age and the relationship between Crete and Mesopotamia at the time the Eastern law codes were written, before moving to the Iron Age and the time period leading up to the materialization of the Gortyn Law Code.

I found that although a connection existed between Crete and the East in the Bronze Age, literacy was not yet developed enough on Crete for the formation of public law codes to be of any use. The Iron Age marked a new time in Crete, and Phoenician immigrants served as the means of transmission of ideas from the East to Crete during this time. Earlier legal inscriptions demonstrate a growing tradition

of literacy and public codes throughout the island, and the rise of the aristocracy following the Bronze Age disruption aided in creating the authority needed to produce a law code of this magnitude. The Gortyn Law Code was created due to a variety of factors that are laid out in this thesis.

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Introduction

The Gortyn Law Code, formulated in 450 BCE, has long been regarded as the “Mother of all Law Codes,” one of the longest and earliest surviving of its kind in the Greek world. The law code, located in the Mesera region of Crete, echoes other law codes seen much earlier in both Crete and the East, in particular Babylon and the Law Code of Hammurabi. Additionally, it foreshadows the laws to come in the major cities during the Classical Age. How did the law code manifest itself in Gortyn, Crete? Why Crete, and not on the mainland of Greece, which was thriving during the fifth century while the importance of Crete wound down? Scholarship up to this point in time seems to treat the Gortyn Law Code as a predecessor to the later law codes of Athens, Sparta, even Rome, and while a few scholars mention its earlier roots in the East, few elaborate on it. The Law Code itself does not entirely fit in with fifth-century norms either; it is written on stone in boustrophedon and does not mention major societal issues such as what to do in the case of murder, for example. The Gortyn Law Code was formulated in the fifth century BCE as a result of a long-standing relationship with the East as far back as the Bronze Age, which led to Phoenician immigrants to Crete during the Iron Age who carried over the Eastern tradition of law codes, and is the result of a progressive tradition of law codes that began on Crete generations before the Gortyn Law Code.

My research began at the Gortyn Law Code itself. The Code was not only the longest and earliest surviving code of its kind in the Aegean, but it was also the best

preserved. Even the Romans must have believed it to be of some sort of significance, as seen by their deliberate preservation of the Code inscription during the Roman occupations of Crete. Gortyn itself had become an important site to the later Romans, and it was even made the capital of the Province of Crete and Cyrene after the Roman conquest in 67 BCE.¹ The size of the Code was worthy of note, but I wished to examine why exactly such an achievement would be found in Crete during the fifth century, when the “Golden Days” of Crete in comparison to the rest of the Greek world was long over. In the context of greater “Greek” history, Crete shines early, namely in the Bronze Age during the Minoan Golden Age of trade and commerce. By the fifth century, however, Crete is barely on the map, especially in comparison to the flourishing city-states on the mainland following the Persian Wars. The fifth century BCE was a time of great economic, cultural, and political growth in mainland city-states such as Athens and Sparta, but the largest and most impressive law code to survive in a Greek-speaking region emerged on Crete.²

Crete was not the only place in the Greek world developing laws in the fifth century. Both Solon and Draco instituted their own set of laws in the seventh and sixth centuries BCE. While these laws were certainly made public in Archaic Athens, little evidence remains of laws being codified or monumentalized in Athens before 410 BCE.³ Meanwhile the traditional lawgiver of Spartan laws, Lycurgus, has a degree of uncertainty around his historical existence, and in any case Spartan public

¹ Willetts, *The Law Code of Gortyn*, 3.

² Ian Morris and Barry B. Powell. *The Greeks: History, Culture, and Society*, Pearson Prentice Hall, University of Michigan: (2006), 273.

³ Whitley, James. “Cretan Laws and Cretan Literacy,” in *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 101, No. 4: (Oct., 1997), 645.

inscriptions of any kind do not appear until almost 400 BCE.⁴ While entirely possible that earlier codes and inscriptions from such places did not survive, the laws of Greek cities in general are not within the scope of my research. Rather, I have chosen to focus on the Great Code that still stands today in the Mesera region of Crete.

I began to look at various features of Crete before the Gortyn Law Code was written, to understand better the factors that led to its creation. What I found was a society able to rebuild itself after the Mediterranean-wide collapse following the Late Bronze Age, a society that would establish a regional identity with an emphasis on connecting to the past, aided by a strong trade network with the East. This relationship with the Eastern Mediterranean will be the focal point of my research, as I believe it to be the most important factor in bringing both literacy and the ideas reflected in the Gortyn Law Code to Crete in the centuries following the Bronze Age collapse.

The Gortyn Law Code parallels other law codes found much earlier in Mesopotamia, in particular with the Law Code of Hammurabi. How could the Law Code of Hammurabi, created in the eighteenth century BCE, influence and inspire a law code in Crete over a thousand years later? What was the relationship between Crete and Babylon at the time of Hammurabi, and was that enough to carry the concept of codified law across the Aegean? This brought my research back several centuries, not only to look at the context in which the law codes in Mesopotamia came about, but also to examine the relationship of Crete with the East during the

⁴ Gagarin, Michael. *Early Greek Law*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: (1986), 59, and Whitely, 648.

Bronze Age, and the effects that may have had on Minoan and Mycenaean society before the Bronze Age collapse, which would in turn impact the society that arose in the Iron Age. I found that the Gortyn Law Code was a product of Crete's long-standing relationship with the Eastern Mediterranean, from the reign of Hammurabi itself and throughout the Iron Age, and was likely a product of the ideas and concepts brought over by eastern immigrants settling in Crete in the centuries before its creation.

Other factors were at play in the creation of the Gortyn Law Code, for example the type of society forming on Crete in the Iron Age as well as these strong relations with the Eastern Mediterranean. My research has found a continuity of the people living on Crete following the Bronze Age collapse. This discussion will range from the "refugee" sites popping up all over the island, starting in the Late Minoan III period, right through the reuse of Minoan architecture and sites in the Proto-Geometric period, and what this means to the settlements reforming around Crete both socially and politically.

When I first began my research on the Gortyn Law Code, the most accessible and prevalent scholarship steered me in the direction of later antiquity, with very little emphasis on the events and conditions leading up to its creation. Mary Lefkowitz and Maureen Fant include the Gortyn Law Code in a chapter of their book, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome*, where in the introduction they compare the laws involving women and children in Gortyn to those in Athens.⁵ The most common use of the Gortyn Law code in the scholarship of antiquity seems to be as a tool to help

⁵ Mary R. Lefkowitz and Maureen B. Fant. *Women's Life in Greece and Rome*, Baltimore, Maryland, John Hopkins University Press: (2005), 55.

define Greek law and customs as a whole. Karl-Joachim Holkeskamp addresses the Gortyn Law Code in his discussion of what defines a “Code” for his paper on Solon’s laws, for example.⁶

Upon closer investigation, I found research does exist that relates the Gortyn Law Code back to its ancestral past in the Eastern Mediterranean, yet the connection is more often than not a passing point rather than the focus of the scholarly works done on the law code itself. Sarah Morris, for example, writes extensively on the influence of the Eastern Mediterranean world on the Aegean, often looking at Crete in particular, yet her focus is more artistically based and covers a wide range of topics. On the city of Gortyn, Morris writes, “The city’s archaic law code, itself a witness to the lasting effect of the orient on Greek culture.”⁷ This is a prime example of the type of scholarship that exists regarding the Gortyn Law Code. The significance of eastern influence is often acknowledged and referred to, but almost always in the context of a larger or different focus. In Morris’s case, for example, this quotation comes in the middle of a discussion of the orientalizing reliefs and temples found at Gortyn, the Code itself a passing thought. My research aims to take the scholarship done on eastern influences found in Crete in previous ages and connect it to a tradition of law codes on Crete.

R.F. Willetts comes close to accomplishing a narrative that shows us how and why the Gortyn Law Code came to be. Willetts has not only written extensively on Crete in his book *Ancient Crete*; he has also published a complete translation of the

⁶ Hölkeskamp, Karl-Joachim. “What’s in a Code? Solon’s Laws between Complexity, Compilation and Contingency”, in *Hermes*: (2005), pp. 280-293.

⁷ Morris, Sarah P. *Daidalos and the Origins of Greek Art: Daidalos in Crete*, Chapter 6, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ: (1992), 155.

Code along with commentary and in-depth looks into each of the laws addressed in the Code itself, from the Cretan social system to adoption.⁸ Willetts' work also attempts to paint a picture of the society that existed in Crete at the time of the Law Code's creation, using the laws themselves as his primary source. Of course, the relationship to the east is addressed, often in terms of coinage and art. Willetts writes on this trend, "During the seventh and sixth centuries BC, there was indeed something like a renaissance of Cretan art, especially in stone sculpture, clay-plastic and metalwork, stimulated by Oriental influences."⁹ While Willetts' work is of tremendous help to my own research interests, once again the focus is not necessarily on the factors that led to the law code, but the law code itself. Statements such as this are found in a brief outline of Cretan history, for example, but the details are not of importance to him. I sought to answer the following questions: What does this change in art in the Iron Age have to do with the Cretan law code? How strong was the connection to the East? Who were these easterners, and what exactly did they contribute to Cretan art, society, religion, and literacy?

In order to gain an answer to these questions, my research took me to a group of scholars focusing on the influx of eastern ideas, goods, and even immigrants in Crete during the Iron Age. My research relies heavily on the works of such scholars as Sarah Morris, Gail Hoffman, William Coulson, John Boardman, Ian Morris, Nota Kourou, James Whitley and Joseph Shaw. All of these scholars have done tremendous work in helping bridge the gap between the Near East and Crete

⁸ Willetts, Ronald F. *The Law Code of Gortyn*, Walter De Gruyter & Co., Berlin: (1967).
Willetts, Ronald F. *Ancient Crete: A Social History*, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, London: (1965).

⁹ Willetts, *Ancient Crete*, 4.

during the Iron Age, highlighting how influential this time was not only in the art of the island, but the religion, literacy, social structure, and laws of Crete. The presence of Phoenician immigrants living on Crete has become visible in the work of these scholars, something that proved to be essential in my own research. My goal is to take the research that has been done on the influence of the Near East in Crete during the Iron Age and combine it with the research on the Gortyn Law Code.

The concept of a codified law system is an example of this influence from the east, Babylon in particular, making its way to Crete. In addition a central authority had to exist in some form in Iron Age Crete that would call for these laws. The earlier inscriptions and fragments of law codes on Crete hint of a progression that would eventually set the stage for the Gortyn Law Code itself. More information is needed before comparison to Eastern law codes can be made, however. As John Boardman states in *The Greeks Overseas*, when discussing the eastern influence in Greece, "Comparisons can only profitably be drawn if a plausible relationship in time and means of transmission can be demonstrated."¹⁰ I am hoping to illustrate how and why a Law Code of this magnitude came to be in Crete in the fifth century. I am beginning my research with the Law Code of Hammurabi itself and tracing eastern influence throughout the Iron Age to show how this influence, combined with a variety of other factors in Crete, such as the ideas of identity that developed following the Bronze Age collapse, led to the creation of the Gortyn Law Code in the fifth century BCE.

¹⁰ Boardman, John. *The Greeks Overseas*, London, England, Thames and Hudson: (1980), 55.

As most of the scholarship involving the Gortyn Law Code deals with the laws themselves or its influence on later Greek life, I am aiming to contribute a cohesive discussion on the factors that led up to it. Certain factors, such as Dorian migration patterns and the influence this would have on the dialect of Crete and other parts of Greece, will not be included in this research. In order to do the topic justice, I believe a thorough investigation needs to be made into the art, linguistics, laws, and societies of the time, a task I would have been unable to accomplish alongside this research at the present moment. My research begins where the inspiration for the Gortyn Law Code began, in Babylon. After examining the context in which the Law Code of Hammurabi came to be, I show that a relationship already existed between Crete and Mesopotamia and the rest of the Near East as far back as the eighteenth century. Then, returning to Crete itself, I look at the effect this relationship had on Cretan society during the Bronze Age, and how that in turn plays a role in the events of the Iron Age. The Iron Age in Crete is the main focus of my research. In addition to demonstrating the profound influence of the East on Cretan art, weapons, and other material goods, the more lasting and, I believe, important influence on Cretan society, literacy, religion, and laws are examined. The earlier and significantly smaller law codes of Crete at places such as Dreros and Axos serve as the tie between this influence and the laws of Crete itself, as well as show that the development of the Gortyn Law Code was a product of a tradition that developed on Crete in the Iron Age, before we at last reach the Gortyn Law Code and how its creation was due to a complete culmination of all these factors from the preceding centuries.

Chapter I: Crete and Babylon in the Bronze Age

The Gortyn Law Code contains a variety of Eastern features, many of which are discussed in detail in later chapters. These include features such as a formulaic heading invoking the gods, writing right to left, and early traces of Phoenician letters. Law codes already had a long-standing tradition in the east, the most famous being Hammurabi's Code from Babylon, written in the eighteenth century BCE. The Gortyn Law Code is often compared to the Law Code of Hammurabi. Both codes deal with everyday issues of family and property every established city must address. For example, in both codes, should the husband be the cause for divorce, the woman is allowed to retrieve her dowry, and return to her father's house without any further repercussions.¹¹ In addition, both of the codes lay out rules for adoption, they discuss what is to be done in cases of rape or incest, address inheritance issues, and matters concerning slaves. These are issues seen in the laws of most cities in

¹¹ The laws state the following:

Hammurabi's Code, 18th century BCE, 142. "If a woman hate her husband, and says, 'Thou shall not possess me,' the reason for her dislike shall be inquired into. If she is careful, and has no fault, but her husband takes himself away and neglects her; then that woman is not to blame. She shall take her dowry and go back to her father's house." - -

- Edwards, Chilperic. *The Hammurabi Code*, Port Washington, NY/London, Kennikat Press: (1904).

Gortyn Law Code, 450 BCE, 4. "If a husband and wife be divorced, she shall have her own property that she came with to her husband, and the half of the income if it be from her own property, and whatever she has woven, the half, whatever it may be, and five staters, if her husband be the cause of her dismissal."

- Willetts, *Law Code of Gortyn*.

antiquity. The formulation of a large, publically displayed law code was a concept unseen in the Greek world until the late Iron Age; however, it was a practice in place in Babylon for a millennium before reaching the Greek-speaking world.

What was the relationship between Crete and Babylon at the time of Hammurabi, and was that enough to carry the concept of codified law across the Aegean? In order to make this comparison fully, a plausible relationship in time and means of transmission needs to be demonstrated, as stated by Boardman.¹² Babylon itself, the birthplace of the Code of Hammurabi, certainly had a strong influence on the rest of the eastern Mediterranean, which in turn maintained a strong relationship with Crete through trade and eastern immigrants settling in Crete during the Iron Age. First I believe it is important to take a brief look at Babylon and its own history of codified laws.

The Babylonian city-states already shared a long history of lawmaking before their unification under Hammurabi. Some examples include Sargon of Accad (2751-2696 BCE), Ur-Engur of Ur (2450-2400 BCE), and Urukagina of Lagas in 2800 BCE, who hints that he himself was borrowing from past examples of even older lawmakers by stating “he has established the ordinances of former times.”¹³ Lipit-Istar of Isin (2217-2207 BCE) uses almost the same words as Hammurabi in his prologue, while speaking of a time when he “established justice in the land of Sumer and Acad.”¹⁴ In the Code of Hammurabi, this line reads, “The sun of Babylon, beaming light over Sumer and Acad... When Merodach had instituted me governor

¹² Boardman, 55.

¹³ G.R. Driver and John C. Miles. *The Babylonian Laws*, London, Oxford University Press: (1952), 5.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

of men, to conduct and to direct, right and justice I established in the land..."¹⁵ The Law Codes of Hammurabi clearly stem from a very old tradition of lawmaking in Mesopotamia, as seen unmistakably in the Laws of Bilalama.

The Laws of Bilalama, king of Eshnunna, are some of the earliest collection of laws recovered, dating from around 2600 BCE; the exact dates are uncertain. Some of the issues these particular laws deal with are repayments of loans, rates of hire, taking a man's daughter in marriage, how a woman becomes a wife, faithless nurses, sale of property, fight and loss of slaves, and divorce, topics seen in both Hammurabi's Code and the Gortyn Law Code itself, 2000 years later.¹⁶ In fact, three-quarters of these laws are seen in Hammurabi's Code. When Bilalama's laws are taken with the Sumerian and Middle-Assyrian laws in place during this time, it is evident that there existed a set of customary laws in Mesopotamia, even before Hammurabi's reign.¹⁷ When Hammurabi united the city-states of Babylonia, this is the environment he inherited; city-states that already had long shared legal tradition. The Crete that existed just before the Gortyn Law Code came about is not entirely different, as we discuss later.

Hammurabi's reign had great repercussions for all of Mesopotamia and the Levant, a larger topic for another time. His law code certainly affected the societies surrounding his own and was adopted in one form or another throughout the eastern Mediterranean. It appears the societies of the Ancient Near East shared common legal customs to some extent, with a canon that originated in Mesopotamia

¹⁵ Edwards, 27.

¹⁶ Driver and Miles, pp. 6-7.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

and spread across the Near East and into the Mediterranean.¹⁸ I am comfortable in assuming that societies such as the Phoenicians almost certainly had their own set laws, and in any case were capable of reading the Semitic laws that we do know existed. The ties between Crete and other eastern civilizations outside of Babylon will prove to be the key in understanding how the concept of law codes could make its way to Crete, as examined in chapter II. An example of Hammurabi's Code impacting the societies around Babylon is seen by King Darius of Persia, who instituted an imperial law code that was little more than a rebranding of Hammurabi's Code, 1250 years old by that point in time.¹⁹ The laws of Darius highlight how influential Hammurabi's Code remained in the eastern world, and how it could have been carried over to Crete through relationships more contemporary with the Gortyn Law Code.

Evidence of contact between Crete and Babylon exists as far back as the eighteenth century BCE, a time when Minoan influence was quickly spreading throughout the Mediterranean world. Perhaps it is not surprising that contact with the Minoan civilization would reach as far east as Babylon. Documentary evidence survives from this time in Mari of trade with *kaptara*, which translates to the biblical 'Caphtor', which is widely accepted to be a reference to Crete. A collection of tablets from Mari, on the Euphrates, offers a look into Near Eastern trade and involvement with Crete. One of these tablets records over 500 kg of tin in the palace inventory, and shows that the tin came from the direction of Iran and went to places such as

¹⁸ Westbrook, Raymond. *The Trial Scene in the Iliad*, Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, Vol. 95, Cambridge: (1992), 55.

¹⁹ Cook, J.M. *The Greeks in Ionia and the East*, New York, New York, Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher: (1963), 125.

Aleppo, Hazor, and Ugarit. This tablet also includes a reference to Crete, in that the text mentions the tin was destined for a man from *kaptara* and an interpreter from Ugarit.²⁰ Sarah Morris discusses how these merchants from *kaptara* turned this tin into weapons, referred to as “Kaptarite work,” which would be inlaid with precious materials such as gold and lapis lazuli.²¹ The tablets themselves mention exotic imported objects such as a dagger and weapons made in this fashion that are described as “made in the Caphthorian manner.”²² In addition, the mention in the tablets of an interpreter involved in this sort of exchange suggests a tradition of contact between Crete and the Eastern Mediterranean from the Palatial period.²³

These tablets contain evidence of goods from Crete being traded through Mari during the reign of Hammurabi to the Babylonian king himself. The king of Mari, Zimrilim, sent Hammurabi himself an object from Crete.²⁴ This exchange is referred to in the aforementioned tablets from Mari, something M.H. Weiner refers to as an example of palatial gift exchange.²⁵ The tablet itself reveals the gift was a pair of Minoan shoes, stating, “One pair of leather shoes in the Caphthorian style, which to the palace of Hammurabi, King of Babylon, Bahdi-Lim carried, but which

²⁰ Weiner, M.H. *The Nature and Control in Minoan Foreign Trade*, in *Bronze Age Trade in the Mediterranean*, Vol. XC, ed. NH Gale, 328.

²¹ Morris, 94.

²² Cline, Eric H. *1177 B.C., The Year Civilization Collapsed*, Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford: (2014), 19.

²³ Recent scholarship challenges the idea of palaces or palatial structures in Crete during the Bronze Age. For the sake of consistency, I will continue to use the term “palaces” when referring to these centers on Crete, as it is not particularly vital to my discussion either way, and many of my sources do so.

²⁴ Yamauchi, Edwin. *Greece and Babylon*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Book House: (1967), 30.

²⁵ Weiner, 328.

were returned.”²⁶ This is verification that people in Mesopotamia had access to Cretan goods, and they were revered enough to be considered worthy to send to Hammurabi himself. Furthermore, a Babylonian cylinder seal has been found at Knossos on Crete, dating from the reign of Hammurabi, signifying some sort of trade relationship.²⁷

The art and commodities of Crete exhibited Eastern influence during the Bronze Age as a result of these relationships. One example can be found on a cylinder seal at Petras, depicting a forward-facing figure that has been suggested to be mimicking a demi-god of the Egyptian pantheon, Bes. Olga Krzyszkowska in her discussion of the seals found at Petras writes that, “A well-known phenomenon in the Protopalatial Period is the arrival of exotic imagery on the island.”²⁸ It is well attested that Crete and the Eastern Mediterranean world were hardly strangers during the Bronze Age.

Middle Minoan pottery can be traced along the islands of Kasos, Karpathos, Rhodes, Kos, to the coast of Anatolia at Miletus, Iasos, and Knidos.²⁹ Palaces in the Levant, such as at Tel Kabri, boast Minoan-style frescos and Aegean architectural styles, such as an orthostat building, during this time.³⁰ Cyprus and Egypt played critical roles in the traffic of metals and goods between East and West, and Cyprus in

²⁶ Cline, 19.

²⁷ Weiner, 328.

²⁸ Krzyszkowska, Olga. “Seals from the Petras Cemetery,” from *Petras, Siteia: 25 Years of Excavations and Studies*, ed. Metaxia Tsipopoulou, Danish Institute of Athens, Athens: (2012), 154.

²⁹ Weiner, p. 328.

³⁰ Assaf Yasur-Landau, Eric H. Cline, Nurith Goshen, Nimrod Marom, Inbal Samet. *An MB II Orthostat Building at Tel Kabri, Israel*, Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, No. 367: (August 2012), 24.

particular enjoyed a boom during this time that would not survive into the Iron Age.³¹ Evidence for trade of both goods and ideas is plentiful between Crete and the Near East, including Babylon during the Bronze Age. Whether that relationship was direct or carried out by other easterners is irrelevant: a line of communication and trade existed between Crete and Babylon as far back as the reign of Hammurabi.

The impact this early relationship with the Near East would have had on Crete is no small matter, and I believe it is essential to address when looking at why the Gortyn Law Code came to be on the island. Crete and the East would continue to have strong contact during the Iron Age, the most important outcome of that relationship being literacy on Crete. During the Iron Age, we begin to see a Mediterranean-wide trade network stemming from Phoenicia, so why is Crete often regarded as one of the first to adopt the Greek alphabet?³² I believe it is in due part to a tradition of literacy and exchange with the Near East that began in the Late Bronze Age.

The trade networks and exchange of ideas between Crete and the Eastern Mediterranean world during the Bronze Age were of an entirely different nature from the one that would carry on into the Iron Age. While these ties were clearly strong and do not diminish completely during the Mediterranean-wide Bronze Age disruption, something I discuss further in chapter II, they do take on a new shape that highlights the factors that will eventually lead to the Gortyn Law Code. Bronze Age trade was characterized by a strong palatial role in both Crete and the East. The centers of Crete such as at Knossos and Phaistos were heavily involved in the trade

³¹ Morris, 102.

³² Morris, 159.

of metals such as tin. Weiner writes on this subject, "It seems inconceivable that Minoan rulers would simply have waited passively, hoping for a Near Eastern merchantman to arrive with copper and tin. Rather, it seems likely that copper and tin would have been the object of intensive search, planning, and investment by the controlling elite."³³ The Bronze Age was a time of high regulation, especially approaching the troubled times of the Late Bronze Age, which saw an increase in fortifications of these palatial structures as well as a demand for metals.

The use of what literacy they had on Crete is indicative of a highly regulated system as well; the most common use of Linear B was for recordkeeping, and the vast multitude of seal deposits found around the island show a strong system of recordkeeping and administrative properties involved. Linear B tablets found in large quantities at Knossos and Pylos offer some insight into the use of literacy in the Bronze Age, which corresponds well with the type of centralized and regulated authority in place during that time.

The primary use of Linear B appears to be to keep accounts of commodities such as agricultural produce, textiles, and bronze weapons as well as records of the landholdings outside the palace walls. One typical example from Knossos lists the total number of sheep, goats, pigs, oxen and stags located at the palace. Another from Pylos offers insight into a detailed social hierarchy with the *wanax* at the top and positions such as fire-kindlers, riggers, armors and bakers beneath him.³⁴ It was most likely a script known to only a handful of specialists in every palace and was

³³ Weiner, 327.

³⁴ Morris and Powell, 64.

easily forgotten in the midst of the Bronze Age decline.³⁵ The complex administrative system at Phaistos in Middle Minoan II shares characteristics with the system at Karahoyuk in Anatolia in this regard. At both palaces, multiple seal deposits have been found and appear to serve the same administrative function.³⁶

Various sites on Crete, Petras is an example, offer an abundance of seals from the Middle Minoan I- Middle Minoan II period on Crete. The seals are made of semi-precious stones such as agate, carnelian, blue chalcedony, jasper, even ivory.³⁷ Some of these seals mark early literacy in the form of Cretan hieroglyphics. The presence of material such as ivory is significant as well, for ivory was a material scarcely found further east than the Mirabello area.³⁸

In addition to offering more insight as to the use of early literacy on Crete during the Bronze Age, seals such as the ones at Petras mirror the phenomenon later seen in the Iron Age, people on Crete borrowing ideas and techniques from the Near East. A Petschaft (a German classification of this particular kind of seal) of green jasper uncovered in House Tomb 4 bears hieroglyphic signs that are immediately legible from the seal itself without having to make an impression in order to read the inscription. The four signs depicted are so clear it could only be done on hard stone using rotary technology, meaning fast cutting wheels and drills

³⁵ Hurwit, Jeffrey M. *The Art and Culture of Early Greece, 1100-480 BCE*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York: (1992), 34.

³⁶ Weingarten, Judith. "Three upheavals in Minoan sealing administration: Evidence for radical change." *Aegean Seals, Sealings and Administration, Aegaeum 5*: (1990), pp. 105-106. Weingarten also notes that the seals themselves are very similar, and believes in time it will be found that the Minoan system was imported from abroad, which coincides with the foundation of the first palaces on Crete.

³⁷ Krzyzskowska, 145.

³⁸ Krzyzskowska, 148.

attached to a lapidary lathe. This technique was invented in the Near East during the Old Babylonian Period and was adopted by Crete in Middle Minoan II.³⁹

If Crete and the Near East had such high levels of contact and examples of trade and influence during the Bronze Age, why was the concept of codified law not transmitted during this time? Why would it take several more centuries before public inscriptions and law codes are seen on Crete? While Bronze Age Crete had some form of literacy in the shape of hieroglyphics on seals and both Linear A and Linear B, as discussed earlier the primary use of this literacy was for administrative purposes and was likely only known to a select few. Posting the laws of a society to an illiterate public would serve no purpose. The time following the Bronze Age disruption would yield a different world. The highly regulated trade system would come to a grinding halt, and the system that would emerge from its ashes would mark the beginning of free market based trade network with a high influx of ideas, goods, literacy, and relationships between Crete and the Eastern world. The following chapters discuss the effect this new market had on Crete, as it is the world in which the Gortyn Law Code would be created.

³⁹ Krzyzskowska, pp. 149-150.

Chapter II: Immigration and Influence in the Iron Age

It may be time to alter the language surrounding the end of the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age in the Mediterranean. The Iron Age recovery following a period of destruction and decline looks dramatically different from anything seen before in history. I believe the aspects of the Bronze Age discussed in the previous chapter, with a strong regulated trade network and interconnections among the Eastern half of the Mediterranean help account for this resurgence. A decline in this regulated system lead to a new social and economic order in the Mediterranean. Cyprian Broodbank in his discussion on changing the rhetoric surrounding the Bronze Age collapse remarks;

Specifically, it suggests that the crisis marked the tipping point in a long-term shift from the institutionalized, centrally organized command economies of Bronze Age palatial states and proto-empires ... to more flexible, un-centralized and freelance trading practices, largely in the hands of private individuals or consortia, decoupled from the political sphere and explicitly motivated by profit.⁴⁰

This new world allowed merchants of the sea freedom to trade more liberally and independently, and also brought luxury items and techniques away from the few elite and into the hands of more everyday people. Rather than the power and profits of trade being poured into palaces, an aristocracy would rise in Crete, a phenomenon examined in chapter IV. These new networks allowed different types

⁴⁰ Broodbank, Cyprian. *The Making of the Middle Sea*, Oxford University Press, Oxford: (2013), 468.

of people outside of palace walls to flourish and move freely. The Bronze Age collapse caused civilizations and cities to fall across the Mediterranean, but the Iron Age resurgence created the world in which the Gortyn Law Code developed.

The material goods from the Iron Age offer insight to the extent of the newly rebuilt and reworked trade networks of the time, as well as lead into my discussion of immigrants from the East living on Crete. These Iron Age goods emerged from a new trade system, one of free enterprise and individualism, where craftsmen worked one on one with one another and created a variety of hybrid commodities unseen before in the Mediterranean.

While the Bronze Age disruption may have caused a temporary lull in the trade networks that existed for some time, these networks revived and eastern influence continued to be present on the island of Crete. Crete may have never truly broken its strong relationship with the East; rather it retracted during the collapse but revived quickly.⁴¹ During the Assyrian conquests of the Iron Age in particular, there was a migration of refugees and craftsman to places such as Crete, carrying ideas from the east with them. There are dozens of examples of how this affected Crete in general, from the Assyrian iconography on bronze shields in the Idaean cave, to Syrian-style tombs comparable to ones found at Carchemish at Afrati, to the unfinished goods at the Tomb of the Goldsmiths at Knossos.⁴² These migrations appear to have occurred just before 800 BCE and again around 700 BCE, which

⁴¹ Morris, 151.

⁴² Burkert, Walter. *The Orientalizing Revolution*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press: (1992), 22.

correspond with the Assyrian campaigns in the East, driving craftsmen and seafarers west.⁴³

The Early Iron Age cemetery of Eleftherna is a good place to begin. Hidden in an inland gorge, the cemetery of Eleftherna holds a variety of imports consisting of ivories, pottery vases, bronzes, glass, faience, and ornaments in gold that parallel closely those in the Levant and Cyprus.⁴⁴ A bronze bowl of Phoenician character was among these finds, identical to another one from the Idaean cave. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, a Phoenician cippus has been found, unfortunately not *in situ* but nearby the cemetery.⁴⁵ The cippus therefore cannot be attributed to any specific grave, but because of its Phoenician characteristics it can be asserted it belonged to the tomb of an individual either coming from Phoenicia or in some way closely related.

A similar cippus has been discovered at the northern part of the cemetery near the palace of Knossos, at the entrance of an Early Iron Age tomb. While the cippus was discovered as part of a rescue excavation with very few oriental findings surrounding it, the cippus itself does have a close parallel to a cippus found in mainland Phoenicia at Tyre. The resemblance leaves little doubt of their common origin.⁴⁶ The round cavity on its front side can be compared to the rectangular depression on the central pillar on a tri-pillar shrine at Kommos as well.⁴⁷

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Kourou, Nota, "Phoenician Presence in Early Iron Age Crete Reconsidered", *Actas Del Congreso Internacional de Estudios Fenicios y Púnicos*, Vol. III, Universidad de Cádiz: (2000), 1069.

⁴⁵ Kourou, 1070.

⁴⁶ Kourou, 1071.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Joseph Shaw's excavations of a tri-pillar shrine in Temple B at Kommos highlights an example of Phoenician influence on religion and cult practices during the Iron Age. Kommos is a harbor town in the south of Crete that became a religious center in the Iron Age, as evidenced by a small rural sanctuary.⁴⁸ The tri-pillar shrine's first period of use was around 800 BCE. Shaw argues the shrine was directly influenced by pillar worship in the East, a connection he describes as "clearly traceable." The shrine is comparable to other pillar shrines found in Phoenicia, such as at Byblos. Shaw has uncovered a considerable amount of Eastern-style pottery as well, and is of the opinion that Phoenician traders themselves may have erected the shrine while trading and staying at the harbor town.⁴⁹

Gail Hoffman is not entirely convinced by Shaw's assessment, arguing for caution due to our lack of knowledge on Iron Age ritual in both Crete and Phoenicia.⁵⁰ While Hoffman is correct in that there is still much to learn on cult practices both on Crete and in the East, the similarity of this shrine to other pillar shrines in the East, along with other Phoenician materials Shaw excavated at Kommos, suggest a strong Phoenician presence in Kommos in the Iron Age. Morris believes that Near Eastern cult forms such as this are present as far back as in the Minoan Period, and the tri-pillar shrine may represent continuous contact from the Minoan Period into the Iron Age.⁵¹ I tend to side with Morris on this issue, especially due to the presence of other shrines of this nature on the island. The emergence of

⁴⁸ Shaw, Joseph W. "Phoenicians in Southern Crete", *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 93: (1989), 165.

⁴⁹ Shaw, 182.

⁵⁰ Hoffman, Gail. *Imports and Immigrants: Near Eastern Contacts With Iron Age Crete*. University of Michigan Press, Michigan, USA: (1997), 175.

⁵¹ Morris, 155.

another tri-pillar shrine on Crete, this time farther east at Petras, suggests a long standing history of influence in regard to these shrines. While the shrine at Kommos is from the Iron Age, the one at Petras is from much earlier in the Middle Minoan period. The reports of this shrine have not yet been published, so I am unable to offer further information on this shrine in particular.

While little information is available on the tri-pillar shrine at Petras, Knossos offers a link between this type of Near Eastern influence on cult practices from the Bronze Age. A tripartite shrine at Knossos is dated to roughly Late Minoan IA, around the seventeenth century BCE, and is located in the monumental western façade of the palace.⁵² The shrine is located in close relationship to the storerooms of the palace, and is in alignment with the pillar crypts often associated with storage and exchange of commodities.⁵³ A large seal deposit has been found there and associated with the shrine itself, most of which depict the 'Mother of the Mountains', a goddess standing on a scale mountain, a feature typically associated with the Near East. To add to the oriental nature of the seals, two antithetic lions flank her.⁵⁴ These tripartite shrines appear to have once held an association with trade, commerce, and a link to the Near East in the Bronze Age. The discovery of an Iron Age shrine of a similar character in a town such as Kommos, which is typically linked to trade with Phoenicians and boasts of a strong Phoenician presence there to begin with, may not be a coincidence.

⁵² Donald Preziosi and Louise A. Hitchcock. *Aegean Art and Architecture*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, England: (1999), 92.

⁵³ Preziosi and Hitchcock, pp. 96-97.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

What does the presence of Phoenician tombs and shrines on Crete tell us about the relationship between Crete and the East during this time? Crete before 800 BCE saw an influx of Phoenician immigrants on Crete, which correspond to the Assyrian campaigning in the East, as mentioned above. That fleeing Easterners might well lead to the presence of these Phoenician craftsmen on Crete has come to light in recent scholarship. T.J. Dunbabin was one of the first to suggest this theory during his study of bronze shields found in the Idaean Cave in central Crete. The shields, when first discovered, were mistaken for entirely Phoenician or Cypriote based on Assyrian prototypes. Over time, however, the possibility of native Greek craftsmen was introduced into the discussion, and eventually became officially accepted in scholarship.⁵⁵ Dunbabin determined through his research that the immense Near Eastern influence on Cretan bronzes could not be obtained through imports and trade alone, but rather required an extended relationship between a Phoenician master and Cretan pupil.⁵⁶ In addition, research on the ivories found in the Idaean Cave suggests they may be the work of Syro-Phoenician craftsmen in Crete.⁵⁷ A similar situation is found in Rhodes, from around 800 BCE Phoenicians are believed to have established a small factory due to a demand created through imports. The function of this factory was to bottle unguents in vessels that had been made by local Cretan potters.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Morris, 152.

Dunbabin, T.J. *Greeks and Their Eastern Neighbors*, University of Michigan, (1957).

⁵⁶ Morris, 155.

⁵⁷ Lipinski, Edward. *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta*, Belgium, Peeters Publishers, (2004), 185.

⁵⁸ Hoffman, 177.

Although Dunbabin's research on the Idaean Cave began the discussion of Phoenician craftsmen living and working on Crete, Boardman's work at the cemetery near Knossos cemented the theory in scholarship. When R.W. Hutchinson first excavated the Tekke tomb near the palace of Knossos, the large quantities of gold jewelry found at the site were believed to belong to a woman and were attributed to Cretan workmanship dated to the seventh century BCE. In 1967, however, Boardman reconsidered the evidence and re-dated the jewelry to the ninth century BCE, as well as suggested that the tomb's first Iron Age occupant was a Near Eastern jeweler living in Crete. Boardman looked at the contents of the pots, the pots themselves, and the unusual deposit of the pots on either side of the doorway, which compared to Near Eastern foundation deposits. Even though some of the materials and forms were from Crete, the jewelry displayed oriental characteristics.⁵⁹ As a result of his new research, Boardman determined, "at the end of the ninth century and during the eighth there arrived in Greece from the Near East metalworkers that settled, practiced, and taught their craft."⁶⁰ This phenomenon accounts for the Eastern characteristics on material goods found in Crete from the Iron Age, many of which are made of local Cretan materials yet look Phoenician in nature.

Thus far this chapter has looked at the presence of Phoenician influence on Crete, but what does this have to do with Mesopotamia? Without diving too far into the history of Levantine people, I wish to point out that the very term "Phoenician"

⁵⁹ Hoffman ,pp. 191, 195.

⁶⁰ Boardman, John. "The Khaniale Tekke Tombs, II," *The Annual of the British School at Athens* , Vol. 62: (1967), 63.

is a Greek idea formed after the Iron Age, referring to a collective of people from the Levant and cities such as Sidon, Tyre, and Byblos who were skilled navigators of the sea, merchants, and traders.⁶¹ Due to their high level of trade, Phoenicians may have been the “in-between” culture between the Aegean and Eastern world. In this way Phoenicians are the means of transmission from the Eastern world to the Aegean. They themselves certainly must have been heavily influenced by the powers surrounding them in the East, and as previously stated, it is likely had their own form of laws or codes that did not survive. Some suggest that many of the letters in the Phoenician alphabet are in fact Babylonian in origin.⁶² This demonstrates a view of the Phoenicians as responsible for widely spreading Eastern ideas and practices.

The city of Gortyn itself demonstrates this influence from eastern immigrants in Crete and how that influence has Mesopotamian origins. In *The Orientalizing Revolution*, Walter Burkert writes, “Even the simple yet extremely productive technique of making clay figures in molds came from Mesopotamia and Syria; it appears at Gortyn and Corinth shortly after 700.”⁶³ Burkert goes on to explore the spread of the Mesopotamian practice of producing small valuables, in particular metal, and how this practice made a “decisive leap across the Aegean.”⁶⁴ The emigration of craftsmen to Crete after the earlier Assyrian campaign around 800 BCE is credited with this “leap”. Some of the small valuables Burkert is referring to specifically are foundation offerings discovered at the temple on the acropolis in

⁶¹ Broodbank, 449.

⁶² Luckenbill, D.D. “Possible Babylonian Contributions to the So-Called Phoenician Alphabet,” *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*, Vol. 36, No. 1: (Oct., 1919), 27.

⁶³ Burkert, 55.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

Gortyn. Archaeologists excavating the site found the architecture of this temple similar to Late Hittite techniques, dated to around 800 BCE, and the foundation offerings they found there have similar provenience. Offerings such as animal sacrifices and libations used as construction offerings are found in Mesopotamia as well.⁶⁵ Both the architecture and religious practices in Gortyn demonstrate eastern influence. Even if the sacrificial rituals at the temple itself remain Greek in practice, the types of foundation offerings left behind reflect an eastern practice which made its way to Gortyn, perhaps through immigrants present during the temple's construction.⁶⁶ The city of Gortyn experienced a high level of influence from the east, including Mesopotamia, in the time before the Gortyn Law Code came to be.

Gortyn was not the only city in Crete to demonstrate Mesopotamian influence during this time period. In a small temple at Dreros, hammered bronze statuettes of deities have been found, which seems to be the work of immigrant metal smiths. Their work is characteristically related to the gold work from Tell Halaf in Mesopotamia, although the style may in fact be Phoenician.⁶⁷ Gold work characteristically Mesopotamian yet stylistically Phoenician, appearing to be done by immigrant metal smiths, is indicative of the ways in which Mesopotamian ideas may have come to Crete. Phoenician craftsmen may well have carried over these Mesopotamian features, influenced themselves by Babylonian custom that are reflected in their work. Morris places these statues with the monumental limestone reliefs from Gortyn, in that they are "formulaic in early Cretan religious images yet

⁶⁵ Burkert, 55.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Boardman, 57.

not part of the typical Greek pantheon.”⁶⁸ In addition, much like at Gortyn, the acropolis at Dreros held early archaic buildings that are Levantine in their form.⁶⁹

The point of this discussion on Phoenician craftsmen and their influence on the material culture of Crete during this time is to show the extent of the relationship between Crete and the Near East, in particular Phoenicia, which prevailed in the Iron Age. This relationship had a significant effect on the material goods of the time, which in turn allows for the possibility of ideas and traditions such as literacy, customs, and laws to be transmitted from one part of the Mediterranean to another. Law codes were present in Mesopotamia as far back as the eighteenth century BCE, yet did not begin to show up on Crete, much less the rest of the Greek world, until the seventh century BCE. The Phoenician presence in the Iron Age can help account for how this influence eventually made its way over to Crete.

Material culture shows evidence of these exchange of ideas as well, for example in the form of a bronze bowl discovered in a reused Minoan tomb in the Tekke cemetery of Knossos, which holds a Phoenician inscription. This may be the earliest Phoenician inscription in the Aegean outside of Sardinia, suggesting the Phoenician alphabet was in the Aegean as early as 1000 BCE.⁷⁰ Considerable evidence for Phoenician presence on Crete during the Iron Age exists, and these Easterners had more to teach those living on Crete than their skills in craftsmanship. The next chapter will explore the impact these Phoenicians might well have had on

⁶⁸ Morris, pp. 163-164.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Morris, 159.

Cretan literacy, customs, and laws. This tradition is even represented in the language surrounding Crete, first in the mythology and eventually in the laws, a tradition that would establish itself in the Iron Age before being carved into stone in the form of the Gortyn Law Code.

Chapter III: A Growing Tradition of Law Codes

This research has up until now sought to prove that a relationship existed between Crete and the eastern Mediterranean from the time of Hammurabi through the Iron Age. The presence of Phoenician immigrant craftsmen during the generations leading up to the Gortyn Law Code has been demonstrated. The influence of this relationship is clearly apparent in the art and commodities of Crete. Was it enough, however, to influence the very laws of Cretan society? What evidence is there to prove that these Phoenicians brought the concept of codified law with them across the Mediterranean? This chapter seeks to prove that not only was this influence strong enough to bring literacy, but also that influence and literacy in turn led to the creation of codified law.

The Eastern features of the Gortyn Law Code, which are examined in this chapter, point to the possibility of Near Eastern traders acting as the “middle-men” of history. Speiser believes the trade relationship between Crete and the Phoenicians heightens the possibility that this was the means of law codes making their way to Crete, as trade and laws often go hand in hand.⁷¹ Earlier this research looked at the tablets from places such as Mari and Ugarit, which recorded trade

⁷¹ Speiser, E.A. “Cuneiform Law and the History of Civilization,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 107, No. 6: (1963), 541.

Speiser also writes, “Trade was the one occupation above all others in which the written document was a necessity in all areas within the reach of cuneiform law.” While cuneiform law preceded the Phoenician alphabet, the importance of the connection between law and trade is illustrated.

transactions in great detail. The Linear B tablets from Crete have been shown to keep inventories as well. Perhaps it is not surprising that Phoenicians would be the ones to carry features of Mesopotamian law codes to Crete for this reason. Gagarin finds fault with this argument, however, pointing to the fact that aside from a few of Solon's laws there are almost no laws concerning trade in the earlier codes, including at Gortyn.⁷² I have to agree with Gagarin on this matter, it seems a stretch to link trade directly with law codes without concrete examples; rather, these trade networks seem to lead to formalized writing among these communities.

I discuss earlier inscriptions and law codes on Crete in this chapter in order to show the progression of eastern influence, as well as a growing tradition of law codes that was building up on the island. The language of the codes and inscriptions preceding the Gortyn Law Code will be examined as well, in essence mapping out the progression of the language used in the Gortyn Law Code and in some cases the laws themselves. Knowledge in later generations of the extent of Crete's relationship with the East is apparent and I discuss it before considering the earlier legal inscriptions on Crete. This aims to prove not only that the Gortyn Law Code was a work in progress for generations before the fifth century, but that later Greeks associated Crete with a history of laws as well.

Part 1:

Greek mythology involving Crete reflects a society built around Phoenician immigrants and ties with the East. This implies an impressive sense of history on the part of the later inhabitants of the Greek world, as the mythology of the Greeks

⁷² Gagarin, *Early Greek Law*, 126.

typically had some standing in reality. In terms of Crete, much of its mythology includes a connection to the Near East. Europa, mother of the legendary Cretan king Minos, was a princess from Phoenicia, for example. It has been suggested that the myth of Zeus disguised as a bull and abducting her from a flowery meadow and bringing her to Crete plays into Minoan imagery combined with Iron Age elements.⁷³ Her brother's name, Cadmus, has been found in the Linear A texts themselves, reflecting a long tradition of the mythology involving the island.⁷⁴ The city of Gortyn is associated with the Phoenician Europa, where a Hellotia festival with wreath and tree is celebrated. One version of the genealogy of Minos and Daidalos has the inventor marry a woman from Gortyn.⁷⁵

Crete is traditionally the birthplace of Zeus in Greek mythology, which in turn gives Mount Ida important cult significance. One cult figure in particular, Herakles Daktylos, is associated with Tyre and led to the creation of monumental limestone figures that mirror their oriental counterparts.⁷⁶ Nearby Axos may have contributed to the laws surrounding the site, as it was a city whose several early law codes this chapter discusses in the next section. One example of Crete's connection with laws in mythology comes from nearby Mount Ida, which is famously the place where king Minos acquired laws from Zeus.⁷⁷

⁷³ Broodbank, 503.

⁷⁴ Yamauchi, pp. 33 -34. The translation of Linear A here is referring to Cyrus Gordon's decipherment after suggesting Linear A may be Semitic, the name appearing as *ka-du-ma-ne*.

⁷⁵ Morris, 156.

⁷⁶ Morris, 154.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

The Cretan inventor Daidalos is often placed beside Hephaistos in mythology, and both have a counterpart in the Near Eastern pantheon in the form of Kothar. Since the names Daidalos and Hephaistos do not appear as the name of a deity in Mycenaean literature, looking at Near Eastern connections becomes increasingly useful when associating their early names with the divine beings. Morris writes, “comparing Daidalos and Hephaistos with Near Eastern counterparts demonstrate how early, prolonged, and thorough was the impact of Oriental literature on Greek tradition.”⁷⁸ The comparison with other, similar, deities in the East help paint a clearer picture of both Daidalos and Hephaistos in the Bronze Age, when the tablets from that time cannot offer much themselves.

The passage from the *Iliad* in which Thetis ask Hephaistos to craft new armor for Achilles is strikingly similar to a passage of the Near Eastern craftsman god Kothar forging metals at the request of a sea goddess. As pointed out by Walcot, poems like Hesiod’s *Theogony* presume “some set of Oriental poems as yet undiscovered, combining Babylonian, Anatolian, and Phoenician elements together.”⁷⁹ Even in Homeric epics such as the *Odyssey*, the weight of the Orient is reflected as Odysseus sets his tales in places such as Crete, Phoenicia, and Egypt.⁸⁰ This implies Eastern influence not only on the language of Greece itself, but its very pantheon and epic traditions.

Later Greek tradition credits Crete as being a place of laws, demonstrating a tradition of viewing Crete not only as having a strong connection with the Orient but

⁷⁸ Morris, 79.

⁷⁹ Walcot, Peter. *Hesiod and the Near East*, Wales U.P., The University of Michigan: (1966), 78.

⁸⁰ Morris, 84.

also as having a reputation of lawmaking. In Plato's *Crito*, the title character and Socrates are debating the laws of Athens when Socrates credits Crete as being a lawful place. Socrates argues, "You had your choice, and might have gone either to Lacedaemon or Crete, which you often praise for their good laws..."⁸¹ Plato also stated that the Cretans called Zeus their lawgiver and that the legendary king Minos was inspired by Zeus, a tradition later solidified by Aristotle who stated that the laws of Minos were still observed on Crete.⁸² The association of Crete with laws appears to have lived on into the very philosophy of the Classical Age.

The impact of Crete's association with the Near East is reflected in the mythology surrounding the island, something that exhibits an understanding of the importance of this connection even by later Greek speakers. The mythology and pantheon of Crete was not the only aspect of language that was influenced, as the next section seeks to prove.

Part 2:

The purpose of this section is not to prove definitively that the Greek alphabet was adopted from the Phoenicians, since that has been long accepted in scholarship and outside the scope of my research. It also does not delve into the various Cretan dialects, as the formation of language is not the focus of my research. Rather, it examines the language and relevance of earlier inscriptions and law codes found on Crete in order to show what aspects were learned from Phoenician interactions, as well as pave the way for the Gortyn Law Code. This section discusses only those

⁸¹ Plato. "Crito," *Six Great Dialogues*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, Dover Publications Inc. Mineola, New York: (2007), 32.

⁸² Willetts, *Law Code of Gortyn*, 8.

Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. Carnes Lord, The University of Chicago, Chicago: (2013).

inscriptions found on Crete that help bridge the gap between Phoenician immigrants arriving on Crete in the Early Iron Age and the Gortyn Law Code itself. I do not examine smaller inscriptions from places such as ancient Arkades, which has no secure provenance.⁸³ I discuss each in relative chronological order, as the dates of many of these inscriptions simply label them as “Archaic,” and consist of a discussion of any relevant information rather than a detailed outline of the inscriptions themselves. Every one of the following laws and inscriptions is worthy of its own detailed scholarship; however, for the purpose of this work I review them only in a way that helps paint a clearer picture of how the Gortyn Law Code came to be manifested on Crete and the ways in which early Cretan law reflected eastern influence.

i. Dreros

The law codes at Dreros are among the earliest found on Crete, dated to around the latter half of the seventh century.⁸⁴ The Dreros codes aid Crete in laying claim to being one of the earliest homes to the Greek alphabet adopted from the Phoenicians, a fact that sheds more light on the reasons for Crete being home to the largest surviving law code in the Greek world. The closest equivalent to the Phoenician *yod* appears in the Dreros codes, and the right to left direction of writing persists both in Dreros and other inscriptions we will touch upon in this section.⁸⁵ Eight inscriptions were found built into the Temple of Apollo Delphinios, one of which is considered a

⁸³ This does not include the Spenthios Decree, which may be from Arkades, and will be discussed. Rather, I am referring to the smaller inscriptions found at the site.

⁸⁴ Whitley, James. “Cretan Laws and Cretan Literacy,” *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 101, No. 4 (Oct., 1997), 653.

⁸⁵ Morris, 160.

“bilingual” inscription.⁸⁶ The law codes of Dreros are most famous for insight into the office of the *kosmos* in Cretan society, something touched upon in contemporary inscriptions from Gortyn as well. These early inscriptions from both Dreros and Gortyn give strict rules on the office itself, such as the law from Dreros that forbids the same man to hold the office within a period of ten years.⁸⁷ A growing legal tradition was becoming established among the cities and towns of Crete in the Archaic Period.

The formulaic heading *θεοί*, which is common in later Greek law and first appears in Crete, has been traced to Near Eastern curse formulas found on Babylonian boundary stones and funerary markers.⁸⁸ This expression was first rendered in its full form in the early law code from Dreros and is seen at the beginning of the Gortyn Law Code itself. The Dreros law code reads, “*θείος ὀλοίου*” (“may the god destroy”), a Greek equivalent of the Semitic imprecation common on boundary stones since the Kassite period.⁸⁹ Morris has argued that the transmission of such a formula from Mesopotamia to Crete was most likely through the Aramaeans or Phoenicians, as similar versions of this have been found on North Syrian temples and Cypriote tombs.⁹⁰ This highlights how Mesopotamian features may have come to Crete; they were brought over by the ‘in between’ cultures such as the Phoenicians with whom the people on Crete had continuous, strong contact.

⁸⁶ Whitley, 653. Whitley writes that for more information on the bilingual inscription, see H. Van Effenterre, “Une bilingue étéocrétoise?” 1946.

⁸⁷ Willetts, *Ancient Crete*, pp. 65-67.

⁸⁸ Morris, 165.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Morris, 166.

ii. Praisos

Praisos is the home to two legal inscriptions from the Archaic Age, roughly seventh or sixth century BCE, and both were found close to the Third Acropolis in the city. The language of these texts is written in boustrophedon and looks similar to the script from the Dreros inscriptions, both are written in a Greek script but apparently not in "Greek".⁹¹ The inscriptions from Praisos are used nearly exclusively in scholarship revolving around Eteocretans, yet the similar script to that of Dreros further points to a tradition of codifying laws growing on Crete.

iii. Knossos

A few fragmented lines of a legal code dating to the late seventh and early sixth centuries have been found in the vineyard areas surrounding the palace of Knossos. The alphabet is the same strange, early form seen elsewhere; for example the *lambda* is not the typical type but one seen only at Eltynia and Dreros.⁹² This connection to the Dreros code I believe helps to highlight the tradition and shared knowledge developing in the seventh and sixth centuries on Crete.

iv. Gortyn

A tradition of lawmaking and codification was growing in Gortyn in the centuries leading up to the Gortyn Law Code. A series of earlier inscriptions dating from 650 to 500 BCE have been found, outlining the responsibilities of state officials and state actions. These earlier inscriptions deal with inheritance as well as procedural concern. Some of the substantive laws from the Gortyn Law Code may even date

⁹¹ Whitely, 635.

⁹² Jeffery, L. H. "Comments on Some Archaic Greek Inscriptions," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 69: (1949), 37.

from the same period as these earlier inscriptions.⁹³ A portion of these inscriptions deal specifically with the office of the *kosmos*, the office laid out in detail in the Dreros codes.⁹⁴ This points to a system of common offices that made up the local states in Crete in the later portion of the Iron Age.

v. Axos

In the late nineteenth century CE, a series of inscriptions were discovered in Axos, many within the walls or homes of the modern village. Of the twenty-two discovered, however, we only know the location of two. What we do know from the scholarship at the time of their discovery, as well as more recent work done on the remaining inscriptions, helps draw the connection between these earlier law codes and the Gortyn Law Code.⁹⁵

The Axos inscriptions are written on stone in boustrophedon and date to the sixth century BCE. The inscriptions labeled as Axos 5 and Axos 6 contain parallels with the Gortyn Law Code. Both use the term *πόλεμος*, a term attested in just one other local inscription, the Gortyn Law Code, when discussing the seizure of equipment used in war.⁹⁶ From what can be deciphered from the Axos inscriptions, we can catch a glimpse of a set of laws that are seen in the Great Code. The surviving part of the “main” code, for example, discusses privileges awarded to technicians

⁹³ Gagarin, *Early Greek Law*, 93.

⁹⁴ Willetts, *Ancient Crete*, pp. 65-66.

⁹⁵ Perlman, Paula. “A ‘New’ Inscription from Archaic Axos, Crete,” *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, vol. 79, No.1. (January – March 2010), pp. 84-86.

⁹⁶ Pearlman, pp. 84-86.

working for the city, along with references to *Γέργον*, similar to a fragment from Gortyn.⁹⁷

vi. Spensithios Decree (possibly from Arkades)

An important link between Cretan law and the East is seen in the Spensithios Decree, a bronze mitra written in boustrophedon and dated to around 500 BCE. The inscription establishes one Spensithios as *ποινικαστάς* of the city.⁹⁸ The term *ποινικασταί* refers to those who remembered and recorded civic decisions and is seen predominantly, if not exclusively, in Crete. The office is hereditary and is made up of families on par with those who made up the *kosmoi*, the office described in detail in the laws from Dreros and early inscriptions from Gortyn.⁹⁹ The phrase itself translates to “phoenicianizers,” a nod to the practitioners of early writing and their association with Phoenician origins.¹⁰⁰

This role most commonly existed in Near Eastern judicial contexts, in the form of scribes who inherited their office. Biblical examples of such scribes are present as having served under David, Solomon, and Josiah.¹⁰¹ Under Hammurabi, professional scribes were in charge of legal documents, thousands of which still survive today in the form of clay tablet “cakes” in envelopes also made of clay.¹⁰² The Spensithios Decree adapts the idea of an office closely involved with public policy in the community through the office of *ποινικασταί*. Nowhere else in Greece did scribes

⁹⁷ Jeffery, 36.

⁹⁸ Morris, 160.

⁹⁹ Whitely, 657.

¹⁰⁰ Morris, 160.

¹⁰¹ Morris, 166.

¹⁰² McNeil, Donald G. “The Code of Hammurabi,” *American Bar Association Journal*, Vol. 53, No. 5: (1967), 446.

receive such a public and political role, something which is typically associated with Near Eastern scribes rather than their fifth-century Greek counterparts.

vii. The Gortyn Law Code

The Gortyn Law Code is widely accepted as being formulated by 450 BCE. The Great Code consists of roughly 600 lines, with an archaic alphabet of eighteen letters.¹⁰³ The law code is a testament to the legal inscriptions found on Crete from earlier generations, as well as the overwhelming influence of the East on Crete during this time. The code contains many of the features we have just discussed in the earlier inscriptions, from the formulaic heading *Θιοι*, to the boustrophedon style of writing, a common feature in the sixth century BCE, not widely used by the fifth. Perhaps the boustrophedon style of writing is a nod to the older laws and inscriptions it drew from, as much of the code itself is derived from older traditions established in Crete during the Iron Age. This points to a progressive tradition of lawmaking and law codes among the cities of Crete during this time. The fact that the Gortyn Law Code dates so much later while still drawing connections with sixth and even seventh century codes I believe points to an older tradition of these laws that were formulated into a great code after having been in effect for a long time.

The Gortyn Law Code contains evidence of progression. In *The Organization of the Gortyn Law Code*, Michael Gagarin views the use of asyndeton and gaps as indicators of different sections of the Code being written at different times. The structure of using such gaps is a fifth-century development, seen more extensively in Gortyn than anywhere else, including in a few cases in the earlier inscriptions

¹⁰³ Willetts, *The Law Code of Gortyn*, 5.

from Gortyn.¹⁰⁴ Gagarin argues that these gaps, for example in the first section of the Code dealing with the illegal seizure of another person, point to a historical progression of provisions. The section begins with the most general provisions by stating the basic rule, the penalty for its violation, and then the method for determining the fine, followed by a gap (lines 1.2-12). The next section deals with more specific provisions regulating situations that might arise in the general law, for example the seizure is denied and there are no witnesses (lines 1.12-49). Three separate provisions follow, each preceded by a gap, each dealing with various other problems that may arise from the general law (lines 1.49-51, 1.51-55, 1.56-2.2).¹⁰⁵

A similar pattern is also seen in the subsequent sections, such as those concerning divorce, the death of a spouse, adultery, children of divorced women, distribution of property among children, inheritance, selling or mortgaging property, the marriage of a slave and a free woman, regulations concerning heiress, gifts, and adoption. It seems unlikely that each of these provisions were decreed at the same time; rather the order indicates a progression in which the basic provisions are given and then added onto as various situations and problems arose. The entire set could then have been inscribed together on the Gortyn Law Code, in a sense creating a concrete historical account of the ways in which these laws progressed and grew. Gagarin argues that the first provision indicates an early stage of written law, a time when the city had become strong enough to ask its citizens to

¹⁰⁴ Gagarin, Michael. *Organization of the Gortyn Law Code*, Duke University Libraries, North Carolina: (1982), 129.

¹⁰⁵ Gagarin, *Organization of the Gortyn Law Code*, pp. 138-139.

settle disputes through a legal process rather than using self-help, and as time went on situations not specifically covered by the general law arose.¹⁰⁶

The earlier law inscriptions from Crete not only reflect the tradition of law codes in Crete; they highlight how considerable the influence from the East was in the Iron Age. The office of scribes, public law inscriptions, formulaic headings that invoke the gods, writing right to left, and the alphabet itself are all Near Eastern features reflected in Cretan inscriptions and laws. The organization of the Gortyn Law Code suggests a historical progression within the laws, demonstrating general laws with provisions added and divided by gaps. While clearly the Cretans did not borrow directly from Hammurabi's Code 1200 years later, it is possible to see how a long-standing line of contact with the East and immigrant presence on Crete with a tradition of lawmaking helped bring the concept to Crete before the fifth century BCE.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

Chapter IV: Forging a “New” Identity in the Iron Age

I have now examined the theory that the concept of codified law was brought to Crete through the presence of Near Eastern immigrants and a strong trade relationship in both the Bronze Age and Iron Age, and that the Gortyn Law Code was a product of a culminating tradition on Crete. We need to examine one final factor, however, in order to gain a complete picture of how the Gortyn Law Code came to be formulated in Crete. The arrival of Phoenician immigrants began before 800 BCE, but the earliest law inscriptions would not appear for at least another century. Crete needed to recover from the Bronze Age disruption and demonstrate strong authority before law systems could come into effect. This chapter looks at the ways in which Crete revived from the Bronze Age collapse. A regional identity with a connection to their ancestors developed on Crete during the Iron Age, and may help explain why the Gortyn Law Code is reflective of earlier traditions.

The end of the Bronze Age brought unrest and destruction. While civilizations on Crete were not necessarily destroyed entirely and rebounded relatively quickly, the island felt the effects of the collapse as well. Around this time we begin to see hilltop “refugee” sites emerging after the larger Bronze Age towns were abandoned, a response not seen anywhere on the mainland.¹⁰⁷ There is

¹⁰⁷ Wallace, Saro. “The Perpetuated Past: Re-Use or Continuity in Material Culture and the Structuring of Identity in Early Iron Age Crete,” *The Annual of the British School at Athens*, Vol. 98: (2003), 256.

evidence of a shift from coastal and flat fertile areas on Crete to elevated and dispersed locations following 1200 BCE.¹⁰⁸ Krystof Nowicki calls the abandonment of low-lying settlements on Crete in the Bronze Age to defensible summits in the Iron Age the “most characteristic feature” of this time. Nowicki shows evidence of this at Arvi Fortetsa, a refugee settlement located on a citadel with the remnants of walls that suggest a fortification.¹⁰⁹ Walls such as found at Arvi are not uncommon at these hilltop sites; in fact the primary function of these new settlements appears to be defense, as evidenced by their fortified walls, inaccessibility, and rocky terrain.¹¹⁰

Major Proto-Geometric settlements began to appear on Crete quickly following the decline of these refugee settlements. Whitely tells us that Kipia was abandoned around 900 BCE, with the nearby settlement of Praisos, within two kilometers of one another, just on the verge of its major occupation. Praisos is hardly an unusual Archaic city, located significantly below one of these chosen refugee settlements.¹¹¹ Other sites would follow this example, including the rise of Lato near the Late Minoan sites of Kristia and Tapes, Anavlochos near the abandoned settlement at Neapoli Kastri, Ayios Giorgios Papoura alongside the abandonment of the occupation at Karfi, and Rotasi Kefala near the abandoned site

¹⁰⁸ Wallace, 257.

¹⁰⁹ Nowicki, Krzysztof. “Arvi Fortetsa and Loutraki Kandilioro: Two Refugee Settlements in Crete,” *The Annual of the British School at Athens*, Vol. 91: (1996), pp. 257, 264.

¹¹⁰ Wallace, 257.

¹¹¹ Whitley, James. “From Minoans to Eteocretans,” *Post-Minoan Crete: Proceedings of the First Colloquium*, W.G. Cavanagh and M. Curtis. ed. London, England: The British School at Athens: (1998), pp. 33 - 38.

at Korifi.¹¹² Praisos was evidently not a unique settlement; Proto-Geometric cities were being formed in close proximity to these Late Minoan refugee sites, and the manner in which they were rebuilt is important to examine as well.

This pattern suggests a sense of conservatism and consistency, which leads to early urbanization and a creation of regional identity. Donald Haggis argues that this is obtained through an awareness of Crete's Minoan and Bronze Age past.¹¹³ While his own research at Azoria demonstrates a break from this pattern, Haggis makes apparent a characteristic of Early Iron Age Crete is the deliberate reuse of Bronze Age settlements, cemeteries, and cult centers in order to emphasize a link to their past and create a community identity, as well as legitimize the central political power that was forming.¹¹⁴ That centralized power took on a different form from those of the palatial structures of the Bronze Age, however.

The Early Iron Age in Crete saw the rise of the power of the aristocracy, who maintained control of trade networks during the commercial expansion of this time.¹¹⁵ Relatively stable institutions seem to have emerged following the collapse, which may be thanks to the reuse and continuity of settlements in the Proto-Geometric era from Late Minoan sites such as the ones discussed. The reusing of previous settlements held more significance than convenience. This continuity allowed for members of various clans/family memberships to become members of a

¹¹² Whitely, *From Minoans to Eteocretans*, 258.

¹¹³ Donald C. Haggis, Margaret S. Mook, Tristan Carter and Lynn M. Snyder Hesperia. "Excavations at Azoria, 2003-2004, Part 2: The Final Neolithic, Late Prepalatial, and Early Iron Age Occupation," *The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, Vol. 76: (2007), 666.

¹¹⁴ Haggis, 707.

¹¹⁵ Willetts, *The Law Code of Gortyn*, 9.

more central government connected by this sense of regional identity.¹¹⁶ In this way, the forming of small-scale, controllable regional identities with a strong connection to the past may have helped eliminate strife amongst these settlements, which in turn could help avoid fragmentation. Wallace suggests that visible ‘citadel’ sites, many of which may well be the hilltop sites discussed earlier, served as a historical reminder to the people of the close-knit community they were now a part of.¹¹⁷

This connection to the older ways of life can be seen in the Gortyn Law Code, which contains traces of older laws, as we have seen, and also at times appears to contain amendments to older sanctions. Willetts views this as evidence of the Code being written at a time when these older sanctions were undergoing pressures from expanding institutions of the fifth century.¹¹⁸ This new government was one in which the aristocracy was able to take these ancient institutions and use them in a their own system, exemplified by inequality.

The Gortyn Law Code is reflective of this and gives us some insight into these “new” classes based on older traditions, in particular by looking at the scale of fines for certain offenses.¹¹⁹ In the instance of rape, for example, should it be committed against a free person the fine is one hundred “staters,” while against an *apetairos* (free persons excluded from political rights) it drops to ten. If a slave commits adultery against a free man or woman he must pay double, yet if the situation were

¹¹⁶ Wallace, 260.

¹¹⁷ Wallace, 259.

¹¹⁸ Willetts, *The Law Code of Gortyn*, 9.

¹¹⁹ Willetts, *The Law Code of Gortyn*, 8.

reversed the fine drops to five drachmas, and so forth.¹²⁰ Similar scales are seen in cases involving adultery and seizure of property. The new government and class system, controlled by the aristocracy that drew from older traditions, is reflected in the Gortyn Law Code.

For the purposes of my own research, the most important aspect of society on Crete following the Bronze Age collapse was the return to older trade networks with the East, in addition to the connection forged to the past that may have helped establish regional identities and maintain order. This provides some insight into various aspects of the Gortyn Law Code, for example why it was written in boustrophedon form as late as the fifth century. Could this have been a deliberate call to the past? Gortyn Law Code is unique even for its time. The boustrophedon style of the code and its rebranding of older laws suggests to me that the Gortyn Law Code is a collection made up of laws and procedures that had been in effect for some time in order to tie into this idea of connecting to one's own ancestral history.¹²¹ Perhaps the connection made the Law Code appear more legitimate in the eyes of the public. The Gortyn Law Code can be viewed in this way as symbolic in nature, a call to local Cretan social customs, a history of lawmaking, and connecting to the past.

¹²⁰ *The Gortyn Law Code*, Col. II lines 5-10, trans. R.F Willets.

¹²¹ The Gortyn Law Code contains no mention of homicide or other crimes of that nature; rather, it appears more of a set of procedures dealing with disputes concerning family, inheritance, and property. Such matters were possibly still being settled outside of the legal system; however, that seems unlikely to me in the 5th century. This is a topic I would like to investigate further at another time.

Conclusion

The point of this research was to demonstrate the ways in which the Gortyn Law Code came to be formulated in Crete during the fifth century. I have shown that a relationship existed between Crete and the Orient as far back as the Bronze Age and the reign of Hammurabi, whose code is comparable to the Gortyn Law Code itself. This relationship proves to be essential in understanding law codes on Crete, for they recall the East in form, language, and style. As Boardman has pointed out, in order to make such a comparison, “a plausible relationship in time and means of transmission must be demonstrated.”¹²² While there is evidence of influence and trade in the Bronze Age between Crete and Mesopotamia, law codes or legal inscriptions do not appear on Crete for another millennium.

I looked at the continuous relationship between Crete and the Eastern Mediterranean into the Iron Age, primarily with Phoenician craftsmen who settled on the island, in order to suggest this connection would bring the language and concept of codifying laws to Crete in the Iron Age and help explain the similarities with the East. The Iron Age mirrors the Bronze Age in its relationship with the East, yet the presence of legal inscriptions in public areas of city centers suggests literacy had taken off in a different way than in the Bronze Age.

¹²² Boardman, 55.

The Gortyn Law Code was not a product of one generation. Rather, later Greek tradition shows an understanding of Crete's long-term connection with the Eastern Mediterranean, as well as highlights it as a land associated with laws. The preceding law codes and inscriptions on Crete show a process of development and lawmaking that would eventually lead to the Gortyn Law Code, I believe to be a result of the aforementioned relationship with Easterners. This fact combined with the new regional identities that formed on Crete following the Bronze Age collapse gives possible insight as to why the Code seems a little out of place in both style and language for the fifth century, as it recalls much of the past. The new identities forming on Crete in the Iron Age can be seen through the reuse of Bronze Age sites after the abandonment of the hill top refugee sites around the island, as well as the class system reflected in the Gortyn Law Code itself. The rise of the aristocracy in a free trade market would oversee this new order. Law codes now began to appear on the island, in the world shaped by the Iron Age.

Every one of the factors examined helps us better understand the Gortyn Law Code. Crete's relationship with the East and the presence of Eastern immigrants on the island in the Iron Age helps explain the Eastern features of the Law Code itself such as the formulaic heading and boustrophedon style. In addition, the earlier codes on Crete help in seeing the Gortyn Law Code as a result of a longer tradition rather than a new invention in the fifth century, and the new society with ties to ancestral history helps account for the rebranding and peculiar features of the Gortyn Law Code. The Gortyn Law Code may be viewed as more symbolic in nature, an attempt to conserve the traditions and customs of Crete in the Iron Age as the

world was changing in the Classical period. While Athens and Sparta were rising and looking to the future, Crete clung to the past.

This research could lead to various different avenues in the future. In an attempt to keep my research cohesive, I steered away from various topics such as the Dorian migration and the effect this may have had. The idea of migration movements' effect on society and language is something that I hope to address at some point in my career, as I believe it has a lot to contribute to this discussion. I believe the migration patterns effect on Cretan society deserves its own body of research, and it is a future goal of mine to investigate this topic further. In addition, I believe this topic could lead me to research on various other outlets, such as the effect of the Code on the society of Crete at the time, and its influence on the mainland of Greece. Looking back, I only was able to touch upon the importance of seal deposits on Crete briefly in my discussion of Eastern influence on the island, but I hope to take a closer look at the deposits themselves as well as any trends involved in the future.

When I began my research, I believed my only focus would be on the Eastern influence on Crete during the Iron Age. As I progressed, however, I realized this was one piece of the puzzle that called for other factors in order to be relevant. The importance of this work is to see the progression and process that lead to the Gortyn Law Code, not to examine the code itself or laws of Greece in general. My discussion on the new identities of the Iron Age forged on Crete provides insight into the reasons for the Gortyn Law Code's formulation, and the Eastern ties continue into the discussion of the earlier codes and inscriptions, highlighting the significance of

both. The Gortyn Law Code is a symbol of a long-standing, older tradition of lawmaking on Crete, brought on by a connection with the Eastern world from the time of Hammurabi himself.

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