

Abstract:

Minoan and Mycenaean iconography uses several symbols with religious meaning. One of them is the well-known sacred knot. This sign occurs on seals and sealings as well as on frescoes and pottery, and there are also a few three-dimensional examples.

This thesis discusses at first the look and the shape of the sacred knot, in order to rule out confusion with similar symbols. Next, it is followed by the study of its use on various kinds of materials. Finally, there is the question of its origin, whether it is possible that the sign could have been derived from an Egyptian or Near Eastern symbol. Based on this research, we should be able to interpret the meaning of the sacred knot, although this explanation cannot be exact as we are still missing the decipherment of the Cretan hieroglyphic and Linear A scripts.

Key words:

sacred knot, seals, sealings, frescoes, pottery, ivory, faience, *ankh*, Isis knot *tiet*, sign of protection *sa*, symbol of Inanna, Knossos, Hagia Triada, Mycenae