

What did Amarna's Fresco add to Akhenaten's Era? Dr. Nour Galal

Few palaces from ancient Egypt have survived. The best preserved remains come from Amarna (Akhet-Aten), landscape filled with palaces, tombs, temples, worker's village and roads which connected them. The city was built on an organized plan allowed the Amarna inhabitants to live a peaceful and prosperous life¹.

The construction method consisted of mainly from sun-dried mud brick², little like columns, frame doors from stones. It was constructed quickly Akhenaten began building palaces around to act as, religious, cultural, administrative. The palaces advanced with columns had their own storage magazines. From such ruins of the structures wealth of art from Amarna Fresco era can be admired today in the different museums.³ Art reflecting a period of extraordinary development.

I will shed light on more theme relating to Amarna's Fresco such as: Description, Originality. I will try to determine how they prepared these walls and grounds and the relation of these paintings to Aten's religion since most of them are landscapes which reveal his beliefs, thus what was cosmos mean over the course of

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¹B. Kemp, Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of civilization, London, 1989, 261-317; id., World Archaeology 9(1917-1978), 132-139.

²O. Davies, Innovation in the Mud – Brick: Decorative and Structural Techniques in: Ancient Mesopotamia, world Archaeology 21(1990), 388; H. Fathy, Courna, A tale of two villages, Cairo, 1969, 63; Spencer, Brick Architecture in Ancient Egypt, Warminster, 1979, 140-41; Gurcke, Bricks and Brick making, A Handbook for Historical Archaeology, Moscow, 1989; Mcdwell, Village life in Ancient Egypt, Oxford, University Press, 1999; D. Arnold, Building in Egypt, Pharaonic stone Masonry, New York, and oxford, 1991; id., The Encyclopedia of Ancient Egyptian Architecture, The American University in Cairo Press 2003, p. 34.

³ A few Paintings remaining; F. Petrie, Tell El Amarna, London, 1894, 14-15.

H. Frankfort, (ed.), The Mural Painting of El- Amarna, London(1929), 67; F. Weatherhead, Recording and conservation of painted plaster from early excavation at Amarna in: Davies, W.(ed.), Color and Painting in Ancient Egypt, United Kingdom, 2001, 53-59.

Akhenaten's life. I will also try to examine the position of these paintings and whether it is suitable to walk above them.

Fresco is any of several related painting types done on plaster, there are two types:

1-Buon Fresco technique consists of painting in pigment mixed with water on a thin layer of wet, fresh, lime mortar or plaster. The earliest known examples frescoes done in the Buon Fresco method date at around 1500 BC.⁴

2- A Secco painting, in contrast, is done on dry plaster⁵, the most common form of fresco was Egyptian wall paintings in tombs usually using the Secco technique.

Here we want to know what kind of Amarna fresco, was it type one or two?

Specialists believe that type 2 but the difference where the paintings are directly on a paving layer consisted of mud mixture with Lime.⁶ Mud floor apparently laid in even rows over a series of brick foundation compartments inside a thick⁷. As a general rule the brick work is covered with a layer of mud plaster, over which there is usually a thinner wash of white gypsum⁸, such floor- paintings were found at Malkata on the west bank where Amenhotep III built alarge palace complex⁹ of which foundations and other fragmentary remains survive. Fragments of painted plaster from ceilings, walls

⁴ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fresco>

⁵ This pigments thus require a binding medium such as egg (tempera), glue or oil to attach the pigment to the wall; Tempera, painting has been found on early Egyptians sarcophagi decorations.

⁶ As for add a binding media to the colors: R. Newman, S. Halpine, The binding media of ancient Egyptian Painting in: W. Davies, (ed.), Color and Painting in Ancient Egypt, United Kingdom, 2001, 22-32; Lucas, AEMI, 76-79; C. Trounce, LÄ II 599-660; Arnold, Building 292-293.

⁷ Aikaterini Koltsida, Social Aspects of Ancient Egyptian Domestic Architecture BAR International Series 1608, 2007.

⁸ Spencer, op.cit,p.119.

⁹ G. Robins, The art of ancient Egypt, p. 136; O' Connor, Beloved of Maat, the Horizon of Re: The Royal palace in New Kingdom Egypt, in: Ancient Egyptian Kingship, 263-300.

and floors show that the buildings were lavishly decorated¹⁰ in particular the small audience chamber and in the columned hall of harem¹¹, but the best preserved remains come from Amarna¹².

Unlike temples, palaces were built of mud brick and have not survived well. The scholars differed on the identification of the original target of a number of architectural buildings at Amarna, but it is clear that the palaces had more features from temple design¹³. Amarna's palaces and temples were lavishly decorated¹⁴. A temple, with the columned hall, throne room and dais being equivalent to the hypostyle hall, the sanctuary and the shrine for the cult statue. Temple pylon and elevated palace facade represent the horizon from which the sun-god rises and into which he sets, from which the king emerges and into which he returns; in both cases the renewal, and then the temporary cessation of cosmos is represented.

The painted surfaces at Amarna that had survived best were floors¹⁵. *Nfrw* is an Egyptian word means ground level¹⁶. At Amarna, painted plaster was occasionally found in situ on walls or floors, or as smaller, fallen fragments amongst building debris. The earlier excavators actually found only three groups of floors in situ¹⁷. Two were in the eastern wing of the Great Palace, the throne room complex of the North Harim, and rooms to the south of it. And in the south Harim, the third was in one of the buildings in Maru- Aten enclosure. The research can not review all of them, but only introduced the most important from different sites, then discuss some important related topics.

¹⁰ Sakuji Yoshimura Tokyo (editor), Painted plaster from Kom el – Samak at Malqata south(I), The Egyptian culture center of Waseda University, 1995.; also JE 3408.

¹¹ S. Smith, W. K. Simpson, The art and architecture of ancient Egypt, Penguin Books 1982, 279, 286.

¹² D. Arnold, Palast, LÄ IV, 644-646.

¹³ J. Assman, Palast oder Tempel, JNES 31(1972), 143-155.

¹⁴ Pigment colors, chosen for their beauty, Lime- fastness, and Longevity.

¹⁵ F. Weatherhead, Painted Pavments in the Great palace at Amarna, JEA 78(1992), 179-94.

¹⁶ Wb. II, 260.18.

¹⁷ UC 2275, 2245b-e, 2277, 2278, 2265, 2262, 2272, 2280, 2288, 2294, 2289.

Starting from the North palace, it was complex palace may be served as a retreat for the kings as a sort of actual zoological garden. Located near north of the royal apartment is a sunken garden surrounded by cells that were presumably for birds, the walls of the surrounding chambers still bore areas of painted plaster, originally from the Women's Quarters of the North Palace at el- Amarna excavated in 1926-27¹⁸. We call the central room on the north side, "Green Room" Paintings depicting Lotus buds and Flowers¹⁹. David O'Connor say that: it seems that this palace lacks the necessary residential features and is more ceremonial in type; its east-west orientation is also unusual for a palace²⁰. The Great Palace is Located in the central city²¹, Petrie found the great pavement(10.40× 4.68) -Cairo museum 11163(Atrium R.28) in room E of the so – called north harim of the Great Palace, together with fragments from floors in adjacent rooms; these show the floor decoration was laid out around depictions of rectangular pools, containing blue water lily plants, tilapia and mullet, papaver rhoeas²² which were surrounded by rectilinear bands enclosing stands of papyrus, reeds, poppies and cornflowers, ducks fly over the plants and bull calves leap through them²³. These figures were all painted directly on mud plaster²⁴. The traditional scene which the King defeated his enemies was disappeared²⁵.

King's House is part of a complex of ritual and administrative buildings located in the centre of the ancient city of Akhetaten. It lies to the north of the Small Aten Temple and close to the Great

¹⁸ Now in the Brooklyn Museum, Catalog number 27.35.

¹⁹ Frankfort, mural painting, pl.2.

²⁰ O'Connor, Beloved of Maat, The horizon of Re in Ancient Egyptian Kungship, edited by David O'Connor and David Silverman, 1995, p. 286.

²¹ Pendlebury, The City of Akhenaten, vol III, 34, 43,76 ,78 , pl 14.

²² R. Germer, Flora des Pharaonischen Agypten, Deutsches Archäologische Institut Abteilung Kairo, Sonderschrift(14), 1985, p. 44; Petrie, Amarra, pl. III.

²³ F. Weatherhead, op.cit, 186, Fig.2.

²⁴ Petrie, Tell El Amarna, London, 1894, 15-14.

²⁵ E.Hornung, Akhenaten and the Religion of Light, Cornell University Press, London, 1999, p.30.

Palace, to which it is connected by the bridge and it has a Large, columned audience –hall and a broad courtyard. Functionally, both palaces were used for appointing and rewarding officials with great ceremony. In few places did wall scenes survive to a significant extent, and then only along the lower part of the composition, such as in the case of the famous 'princesses' scene from the King's House (Ashmolean museum)²⁶ a fragment of brightly colored Fresco. It was to be the first example of a large section of painting removed from the site²⁷, which appears to show a scene from the private life of the royal family²⁸. It was in relatively good condition²⁹. The scene was on the middle section of the wall, The upper part having been destroyed, it shows two of the six royal princesses sitting on cushions while the legs of the three others appear above, the princesses sat at the feet of much larger scale figures of Akhenaten and Nefertiti which had mostly perished.

A little higher were the paintings in the north-east court of the North Palace, which reached a height of 1.5 m. Since only the bases of walls were normally preserved, an important consideration in judging how extensively the palaces were painted is to know how far down the walls the decoration stretched. There are still incongruous survivals from older tradition such, for instance, as the disproportion on the smallness of the servant on the left in comparison with the royal family, misdrawing of the right hand of the little princess³⁰.

Petrie lists other Subjects he saw depicted on the walls of the King's House, but without giving precise locations. There were Legs of two kneeling captives (Asiatic and Negro) with a bowl on a

²⁶Petrie, Tell El-Amarna, 15, 23, pl. I.12.

²⁷ Ibid, 15, 23, pl. I, 12.

²⁸ A. Dodson, The Complete Royal Families of Ancient Egypt, Thames & Hudson(2004)

²⁹ Petrie, op.cit, 15, 23, pl. I.12.

³⁰ Frankfort, The mural paintings, fig.12.

stand between them, and a legs of some figures and a flight of stairs³¹.

There is another important place which we call Maru- Aten³², Located 3km to the south of the central city area The name Maru is an ancient one and probably designated an area of sacred parkland; as an institution the site was called a 'Sunshade', a term for a solar shrine, Maru-Aten, short for "Pa-maru-en-pa aten" The viewing place of the Aten³³, it was one of several built at Amarna for the benefit of one of Akhenaten's women, in this case for queen Kiya in the first instance, whose ownership was later to be replaced by that of Princess Meretaten, as at the North Palace Panels from this floor were cut up and dispatched to various museums.

When heading south (Kom el Nana) we found set of garden plots in sunken garden in the north- east corner of the south enclosure³⁴ plots still filled with dark alluvial soil, fragments of painted gypsum pavement from South pavilion, found loose in the fill of that sunken gardens.

After learning of the significant number of models, we can generally divide the paintings at Amarnah to three Kinds:

- Natural designs.

-Decoration designs, purely Egyptian character is there brought out and their new features are analyzed, common border design of areas of floor paintings.

³¹ Ibid. p.15.

³² (The viewing palace of the Aten); Peet and wooley, The City of Akhenaten I, London, Egypt Exploration Society, 1932, Chepter 5, pl. 29; D.P. Silverman, J. H. Wegner, Akhenaten and Tutankhamun, Revolution and Restoration, Univ. of Pennsylvannia Museum 2006, p. 87..

³³ D. Silverman, J. Wegner, Akhenaten and Tutankhamun; Revolution and Restoration, Univ. of Pennsylvannia Museum 2006, p. 87.

³⁴B. Kemp, The Kom el Nana enclosure at Amarna, Egyptian Archaeology 6, 1995, 8-9; id., Amarna Reports VI, London, Egypt Exploration Society, 1995, 433-8,453.

-Human representations Paintings, Like Paintings of servants watering and sweeping a court which Sir Flinders Petrie discovered.

Let us try to answer why much more natural Themes were be there?

If we want to discuss this issue let us start from further periods; beginning in the Fourth Dynasty and continuing in the fifth, the kings styled themselves "son of Re" and many, such as khafre, included Re in their own names. Fifth Dynasty kings erected solar temples at Abu Ghurab, to enable the king to accompany Re on his voyage through the sky and the underworld³⁵.

Purely decorative use of naturalistically represented plant and animal life in ceiling and floor- paintings, as well as on minor wall-spaces must have occurred earlier in sun temples a relief with scenes of sealing vessels containing hony, mating sheep and catching birds. From the Chamber of Seasons Niuserre's sun temple at Abu Ghurab³⁶, pyramids complexes and tombs.

Assman described New Kingdom Egypt as the "the exact imitation of cosmic government on earth"³⁷. We can apply this concept to royal cities such as el- Amarna and Thebes, suggesting that these cities were laid out to replicate and function as the cosmos. At Amarna the pharaoh and the disc join in sacred union in the city center. Akhenaten totally conceived that the universe was governed by the force of maat, he referred to the fixed, eternal order of the Universe, both in nature and in human Society³⁸.

³⁵J. Bains, L. Lesko, D. Silverman. Religion in Ancient Egypt: gods, myths, and personal practice, edited by Shafer, B., Fig. 53.

³⁶ M. Verner, Abusir , The American University press, Cairo, New York, 2002, p. 82; Borchardt, Re- Heiligtum 49-50; W.Smith, Interconnections in the Ancient Near East (New Haven-London(1965),Figs 178-179; Edel, E., and Steffen, Weng, Die Jahreszeiten reliefs aus dem Sonnenheiligtum des Ne-User-re, Vol.I(Berlin 1974); P. Bochi, Images of time in Ancient Egyptian Art, JARCE 31(1994), fig.4,p. 59.

³⁷ J. Assman, " State and Religion in the New Kingdom" in J. Allen, J. Assman, A. Liloyd, Ritner, and D. Silverman, (eds.) Religion and Philosophy in Ancient Egypt. New Haven: Yale Egyptological Studies 3 (1989), 65.

³⁸ Egyptians viewed Kingship itself as a force of nature.

Akhenaten In his natural surroundings he saw his gods, the trees and springs, the stones and hill-tops, the birds and beasts, were creature like himself, or possessed of strange and uncanny powers of which he was not master. Nature makes the earliest impression upon the religious faculty. While traditional Egyptian art tends to emphasise the eternal. Amarna's art focuses on the minutiae of life which only occur because of the light - and life-giving power of the sun³⁹. We can relate that with the oldest relieves which occurred in the sun temples where the scenes from nature became key decorative elements even in funerary temples. These images showed nature and the king's position in it as divine rulers well as importance of the son god, Re, who was responsible for the continuation of the natural world⁴⁰. The Major theme in palaces art in Amarna was the portrayal of nature. Generally we can again divide the nature scenes into three Types:

- a) Nilotic scenes, such as appear on walls on the walls in the North and South Harim of Great palace.
- b) Water-bank designs depictions of water and swamp plants which were widely used throughout the North palace.
- c) Duck and marsh designs which occur in the Great palace and at Maru-Aten.

The idea of natural designs of the interiors of buildings reflect the main aim regeneration and rebirth), and the natural of solar cult which grow increasingly from the time of Hatshepsout and

³⁹K. Spence, Akhenaten and the Amarna Period:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/egyptians/akhenaten_01.shtml

⁴⁰There was a small, independent structure we call "chamber of the seasons" it was decorated with numerous relief depicting scenes related to nature, which of course was the realm of the sun god. Compare the panel carved in bas relief comes from the mortuary complex of Userkaf; it shows a flock of birds and a butterfly in a papyrus thicket. A pied Kingfisher hovers above, wating to attack some fish (JE 56001); H. Ricke, Das Sonnenheiligtum des Königs Userkaf, 2 vols, Beiträge Bf, no.7, Cairo, 1965.

Thumosis III in Deir el Bahari⁴¹ and Karnak⁴². When we see Amarna's Fresco. We can make a connection between floor decoration and contemporary sun hymns such as: *The birds have flown from their nests, their wings praise your Ka* .

*All the game animals frisk on their hooves, all that fly and flutter live*⁴³ .

The greatest natural resource in Ancient Egypt was the Nile River⁴⁴ , Thematically it includes not only fauna and flora but the land scope, the agricultural cycle, and, above all, the human view. In general Egyptians loved nature since ancient times where they interested in decoration of their houses with coordinated gardens (*KAmw*)⁴⁵ , flowers were planted around little artificial ponds where Green color is so agreeable to the eyes, the power of new life contained in the word *WAD* would be present in freshly mixed ink, which would help to animate anything drawn with it⁴⁶ .

We turn to discuss another important subject; the fresco's origins is subject to speculation, some art historian believe that fresco artists from Crete may have been sent to various locations as part of a trade exchange.

Cumulative evidence has been given by Sir Arther Evans about the relations between Crete and the Nile Valley going back to a time earlier than the conquest of Mena and continuously operative during the Early Dynastic period of Egypt, and more direct

⁴¹ R. Stadelman, *Swf-Raw* als Kultstätte Sonnengottes, MDAIK 25(1969), 166-67.

⁴² H. Kees, *Orientalia* 18(1949), 427-442; H. Stewart, Some pre-Amarna Sun Hymns, *JEA* 46(1960), 83.

⁴³ E. Hornung, *Akhenaten and the Religion of Light*, translated by D. Lorton, USA, 2001, p. 80; M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, University of California Press - California, 1976, vol.II, pp.96-100.

⁴⁴ P. Mienkowski, *Gifts of the Nile*, London, 1995, p.7; Butzer, *Hydraulic civilization*, 18-19, 21, 50; Bonneau, *La crue du Nil*, Paris, 1964, 51.

⁴⁵ P. Grandet, P. Harris I, n. 100; H. Wild, *Hommages Sauneron* I, p. 312; LÄ, II, 376-878; M Abd el Raziq, *MDAIK* 35, 1979, p. 227-247; C. Eyre, *JEA* 80, 1994, p. 57-80.

⁴⁶ S. Quirke, *Colour vocabularies in Ancient Egyptian*, in: W. V. Davies (ed.), *Colour and Paintings in Ancient Egypt*, United Kingdom, 2001, p. 189.

connections between Knossos and Egypt in the succeeding Age⁴⁷ by the transit road from Knossos across central Crete to port on Libyan sea.

There was commercial contacts between Egypt and the Aegean world⁴⁸ during the M.K⁴⁹ and N.K, this contact is well attested where Egyptian artifacts has been unearthed in Greece⁵⁰. We must also spot the light on the island of Cyprus, situated some 400km to the northeast of the Nile Delta, which has served as a link between Egypt and the Mediterranean. A majority of scholars agree that the kingdom of "Alashiya" referred to in Egyptian, Hittite, Ugaritic, and Mesopotamian texts of the eighteenth to twelfth centuries BC more likely was Cyprus⁵¹. At the start of the New Kingdom an alliance between the Hyksos Dynasty and Minoans existed, in return for protecting the sea approaches to Egypt, the Minoans might have secured harbor facilities and access to those precious commodities(especially gold)for which Egypt was famous in the outside world⁵², and if the association of Cyprus and Alashiya is correct, then the evidence for trade between Cyprus and 18th Dynasty Egypt that survives in the material record can, in part, be attributed to the system of royal gift exchange documented in the Amarna Letters.

⁴⁷ A.Evans, The Palace of Minos at Knossos, vol. II (Part I) Macmillan and co., Limited, 1928, p.60.

⁴⁸ The Term Aegean is used to imply the Greek islands, and the coasts of Peloponnessos and Asia Minor, without the Limitations of place and age implied in the name Greek.

⁴⁹ From archaeological artifacts we had Tod treasure, several of the pieces contained were of Minoan or Syrian creation, they may be representing foreign tribute; F. Bisson CG N 70501-70754, Tresor de Tod, Le caire, 1950; F. Chapouthier, Le Tresor de Tod, Le caire, 1953, dated by Middle Minoan Ages; *ibid*, p. 22; L. Fitton, M. Hughes, Northerners at Lahun in Stephen Quirke(ed.), Lahun Studies, Reigate 1998, 112-140; B. Kemp, R. Merrillees, Minoan Pottery in second Millennium Egypt, Mainz am Rhein, 1980.

⁵⁰ R. Matthews, & C. Roemer, Ancient Perspectives on Egypt, UCL Press- London, 2003, p.158.

⁵¹ Some scholars have suggested sits and areas of Syria or Turkey, but it is now generally agreed that Alashiya refers to at least part of Cyprus; S. Wachsmann, Is Cyprus Ancient Alashiya? New Evidence from an Egyptian Tablet, The Biblical Archaeologist 49(I), 37-40; K. Armstrong, Settlement Hierarchy and The Location of Alashiya on Cyprus, MA dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 2003.

⁵² M. Bietak, Avaris: The Capital of the Hyksos: Recent Excavations at Tell el – Dab'a, British Museum Press – London, 1996, p. 81.

Technical similarities do exist with broad range of Bronze Age Aegean art, which includes the palace at Knossos. We are concern with two features:

1-The relaxed brush strokes building.

2-The evolution in painting towards a greater liberty of expression, the treatment of plants and Animals⁵³.

We can confirm that there were political and commercial contacts between Egypt and the Aegan world during Amarna period where we found Aegean Artifacts such as jars in different places⁵⁴. Copy of Syrian wine Jar occurring in Egypt in the late 18th dynasty for contemporary miniature bottles at El-Amarna⁵⁵.

Art exist where the man exist, but we would like to answer a question whether any sort of effect was there appear on Fresco? And if this effect was exist what direction was it?

Let us see the following points:

1- The values which the two societies placed on art were distinctively different⁵⁶. In Akhetaten's Fresco there are no Minaon themes like: the famous "Bull-Leaping"⁵⁷, head of the sacrificed bull⁵⁸, dolphins⁵⁹, stars, Octopus⁶⁰, which occur frankly from the Hyksos period at Tell el- Daba and Ezbet Helmi⁶¹. Special attention

⁵³ E. Vermeule, Mycenaean Drawing, Amarna, and Egyptian Ostraka, Studies in Ancient Egypt, The Aegean, And the Sudan, Essays in honor of Dows Dunham, edited by Simpson, K., Museum of fin Arts, Boston, 1981, p. 193.

⁵⁴ H. Vronwy, Stirrup Jars at El-Amarna in Egypt, the Aegean and Levant, 1995, 116-124.

⁵⁵ Frankfort and Pendlebury, The City of Akhenaten, London, 1933, pl. 53 : XVIII:5

⁵⁶ P. Kemp, F. Weatherhead, The wall Paintings of Thera: Proceedings of the first International Symposium, Vol. I pp. 491-523.

⁵⁷ Like the famous Bull-Leaping" Fresco, East wing of the palace of Knossos which dated by 15th Century BCE.

⁵⁸ Nilsson, Minnoan – Mycenaean Religion and its survival In Greek Religion, Lund, 1950, p. 232, Fig.114(63).

⁵⁹ Like Vase decoration: Janine Bouuiau, The Dolphin Vase from Lisht, Studies in honor of W. K. Simpson, I (1996), p.101.

⁶⁰ A. Persson, The Royal Tombs at Dendra Near Midea, Lund, 1931, p. 38, p. 43ff.

⁶¹ M. Bietak, Connections between Egypt and Minoan world: New Result from Tell el-Dabaa/Avaris: Egypt, the Aegean and the Levant 19-28.

is paid to the result from the excavations at Tell el- Dab,a⁶². (We can divide Fresco Paintings from Tell el-Dab'a (Avaris), which belong to several groups and date to two periods: The late Hyksos Period and the early XVIII the Dynasty. The representations described are: the toreador Scenes: bulls and a human limb in relief: acrobats and hunters; Large scale male figures plants, Land scapes, and animals. It is concluded that Minoan artists, trained in the Knossian tradition, were at work in Avaris. Avaris paintings are close in date and Style to the Thera frescoes⁶³.)

2- This evolution in painting towards a greater liberty of expression and inspiration in Akhenaten period did not come as a sudden break with the past. On the contrary the new methods were mastered gradually, foreshadowed in the composition in the tomb of Rekhmire, they appear in the reign of Amenhetep II in the paintings of Kenamon, they become more apparent in the paintings of Horemheb, and finally triumph in the productions in the epoch of Tutmosis IV and Amenhotep III, in particular in tombs of Menna, Nakht and Nebamon.⁶⁴

3- The Links between Greece and Egypt still at the 18 dynasty as with many other nations, were probably foremost economical beside Some of these letters (EA 33-40) record large quantities of copper being shipped by the king of Alashiya(EA 35) in exchange for ebony, gold, linen and other items from the Pharaoh. In this periods do not evidence the systematic immigration of Greeks⁶⁵.

4-We show foreign effects in period of weakness and that was never Akhenaten era. By a serious consideration to Amarna letters do not show a decline of the Egyptian empire in the Levant⁶⁶.

⁶² N. Grimal, L' Egypte et la monde égéen préhellénique : entre commerce et histoire in: Entre Égypte et Grèce, 9-28.

⁶³ M. Bitak, and Nanno Marinatos, The Minoan wall Paintings from Avaris, Agypten und Levante 5(1995), 49-62.

⁶⁴ R. Boulanger, Egyptian Painting and the Ancient East, New York, 1965, p. 58.

⁶⁵ Pasmatik I 664-610 allowed Milesians to Settle in Upper Egypt (not far from Sais) This was the first time Greeks were allowed to stay in Egypt.

⁶⁶ J. Galan, The Heritage of Thutmosis III's Campaigns in the Amarna Age, Essays in Egyptology in honor of Hans Godicke edited by M. Betsy M. Bryan and D. Lorton, Van Siclen Books, 1994, p. 102.

5-In return we must speak about Intensive Egyptian artistic Style influence on Crete throughout the Middle Minoan Age and the early part of the Late Minoan.

5- The Minoan Creten Palace Period (Middle Minoan IB-Late Minoan IB) contemporaneous with Egyptian M.K and early N.K. down to Tuthmosis III(prior to the reign of Akhenaton) and after that the Mycenaean Period, beginning with Mycenaean Knossos, the contemporary Aegean and Amenhotep III, and continuing with Mycenaean mainland contacts with the later N.K in the 14th and 13th centuries⁶⁷. The art of the draughtsman is no less inspired than that of the colorist. The compositions are better ordered, more ingenious, often based on a synthetic vision of the Scene, rather than on an accumulation of objects considered in isolation, and inserted simply for their evocative value.

Conclusions:

This study has attempted to focus on:

- Most of the palaces at Akhetaten are decorated with marsh and wildlife Scenes (A huge Scene of bird –life). The purpose of these paintings is not aesthetical but also has a religious purpose. Flowers were transformed into picturesque offerings to god in the form of floor paintings. Common motifs are Lotus, fish, birds, which create a feeling of well-being and provide to Akhenaten services that facilitate living in harmony with nature.
- The depictions of the walls are totally different from ground depictions They depicted servants duties, stores, and of course the Royal family.

⁶⁷ Summarizing Greek Egypt chronology (dates BCE):

2600: Neolithic Crete: first sporadic contacts with Old Kingdom Egypt (Dynasty IV)

1700: neopalatial Minoan Crete: Mediterranean network of artistic and iconographic exchange, communication between Minoan high culture and Egypt (XIIIth Dynasty);

1530: Hyksos ruins in Minoan style (Avaris) are used by Pharaoh Ahmose.

670: Pharaoh Psammetichus I, initiated the study of Greek, employed Greek mercenaries against the Assyrians, set up a camp that stayed in the western Delta and allowed the Milesians to found Neukratis.

P. Warren , Minoan Crete and Pharaonic Egypt, in : Egypt , the Aegean and the Levant , 1995 , 1-18.

-Large- scale paintings were the result of team work, and this attitude was clear at Akhenaten period.

-The depictions of Landscape on walls and grounds which are widely spread in Amarna reflect Akhenaten message: life is stronger than death. And his hymns to the Aten, focused on the daily recreation of life rather than on a mythical past and single moment of creation.

-The paintings show the importance of one of the Maat's definitions as a universal system.

-In fact Egyptians and Minoans had a lot in common in their attitudes toward art but similarities are not always unintended depending on the automatical reaction of the artists with the slightly same vision, and it will be better if our differentiation depend on topics. My research strongly rejects Minoan influence on the Egyptian art during Amarna period. Relations were sure but the foreign artifacts were totally foreign (imported) , while we certainly accept this influence at Avaris from the archaeological evidence⁶⁸ , and later at the late period.

-As for Fresco Pavements it was not suitable to walk on; but around it. It looked like a decorative themes but of course had a special meaning to Akhenaten and Amarna,s Art as a whole.

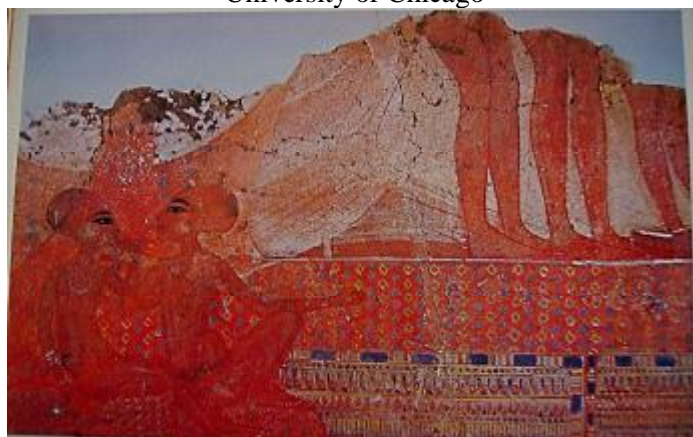
- The method of Fresco drawing was suitable for the rapid construction process of Akhet- Aten.

- Finally the natural scenes came as a compensation for nature as the city was built outside the agricultural zone and they made room for gardens with circular wells.

⁶⁸ Special attention is paid to the results from the excavations at Tell el-Dab'a.



Fragment of a painted Floor
OIM (Oriental Institute Virtual Museum) 120
University of Chicago



Princess's panel, - Ashmolean museum
Petrie, Tell El-Amarna, 15, 23, pl. i.12.



Painted stucco- marsh's design

JE 13343



Painted stucco

JE 13390