

	Object:	Chest sarcophagus with roof-shaped lid (Larnax)
	Museum:	Museum August Kestner Trammplatz 3 30159 Hannover (0511) 168-42730 museen- kulturgeschichte@hannover- stadt.de
	Collection:	Ancient Cultures, Highlights of the August Kestner Museum
	Inventory number:	1989.30

Description

Significant evidence of Minoan culture, showing both the high quality pottery art of the Aegean Bronze Age and religious ideas.

In the period when the sarcophagus was made, Crete succumbed more and more to the cultural influence of the immigrating Greeks after the final destruction of the palace of Knossos around 1400 BC. However, old Minoan (Cretan) ideas of religion and art can still be traced. The dead were buried in clay larnakes, so-called chest sarcophagi, or in clay bathtubs. In addition to strong Mycenaean motifs, the painting of the sarcophagi clearly shows Minoan forms.

The tree on the main side of the sarcophagus can be interpreted as a sacred tree, which could be connected to the Minoan tree cult or the cult of the tree goddess. The two wild goats may allude to the goats of a mountain goddess, just as the pedigree dogs may have belonged to a "lord of the dogs". The representations on the front are certainly formulaic images of Minoan religious ideas, still effective in the 14th century BC. They are likely to be interpreted in connection with death and the afterlife. The well-founded dating of the painted clay tubs and chest sarcophagi from various sites on Crete (e.g. Palaikstron, Pentamodi, Pachyammos) allow the dating of our sarcophagus to the beginning of the Late Minoan III phase (14th century BC) to be regarded as certain on the basis of stylistic comparisons. (AVS)

Detailed description

Hauptseite: Hauptfeld an beiden Seiten eingerahmt von zwei Streifen mit dunklen und hellen Feldern; Baum mit Wurzelwerk; zwei Wildziegen; zwei Jagdhunde. -- Rückseite: Senkrechtes Spiralband in Mitte des Bildfeldes. -- Schmalseite A: Zwei Wildziegen. --

Schmalseite B: Vier vierblättrige Blüten. -- Deckel: in Form eines Daches mit Mittelfirst. - Vier große Tonösen.

Basic data

Material/Technique:

Clay / painted

Measurements:

Length: 111 cm, Height: 70 cm, Width: 49 cm

Events

Created	When	1400-1350 BC
	Who	
	Where	Crete
	When	
[Relationship to location]	Who	
	Where	Knossos
	When	

Keywords

- Larnax
- Sarcophagus
- painting

Literature

- Dettmer, Hans-Georg (1998): " ... den Sinn für das Schöne wecken... " Führer durch das Kestner-Museum Hannover. Hannover, 76-77