

THE ABSOLUTE CHRONOLOGY OF THE EGYPTIAN S.I.P. NEW
KINGDOM TRANSITION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR LATE
MINOAN CRETE

TIZIANO FANTUZZI

ABSTRACT

The textual/archaeological based absolute chronology for the end of the Second Intermediate Period, and the first part of the Egyptian XVIII Dynasty, has been much refined in several studies over the last two decades, and offers a good chronological datum-line which reflects significantly on the absolute chronology of LM I - II Crete, through both direct and indirect archaeological arguments. This painstakingly built chronological framework has however been challenged by radiocarbon results collected in the last thirty years from a few key-sites in the Aegean. Thorough reanalysis of the archaeological contexts that have yielded reasonable proof to build a chronological framework for the Eastern Mediterranean Middle – to – Late Bronze Age shows that, if on the one hand this possibility is not definitely discardable, its acceptance is nonetheless questionable, since it can be based only on indirect archaeological evidence. On the other hand, the new radiocarbon chronology recently proposed for the Thera Eruption seems to rely on optimistic assumptions which lead to interpretative models that are not surely discardable in the absence of an unequivocal proof, but that are nonetheless not convincing enough to overcome the actual «traditional» interpretation of interrelated chronologies, at least until new unequivocal and widely attested archaeological elements could be found to support this completely different scenario also from an archaeological point of view.