

**3145**

*Minoan Decorated Jug*

**Edward Bleiberg:** This jug, made in Crete, was found in Egypt in the 1830s. It's one of the most famous parts of the Egyptian collection, yet it came from Minoan Greece. The ancient Minoans lived at the same time as the Egyptian Middle Kingdom, Second Intermediate Period, and New Kingdom. And Egyptians traded with the Minoans during this entire period. Now, even though we don't have the exact find spot for this object, we do know for sure that it was found in Egypt rather than in Crete. The reason for that is because it's whole. You have almost no whole pots from Crete. And that's because this object was found in an Egyptian tomb and was probably kept in a box.

The shape of it, with this long spout, is very un-Egyptian, and of course the decoration is completely un-Egyptian. The decoration shows five shells that are called nautilus shells and the bottom of the sea floor, and all sorts of sea plants all around the pot in very undulating lines. And also in a composition that is completely different from Egyptian art. The Egyptians almost never show you landscape or seascape, especially the bottom of the sea.

This jug would have been used to transport some kind of vegetable oil. The best candidate for the original contents is sesame oil, which we think the Egyptians imported from Crete.