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The Mycenaean golden kylix of the Benaki Museum: A dubitandum?

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The Mycenaean golden kylix of the Benaki Museum *A dubitandum?*

If I was handed a riddle,

I gave it back a riddle.
I was content not to know

The solution to a *yesterday*,

An *it depends*,
The mystery of the asymptotes.

Kiki Dimoula**

WHEN I WROTE THE ENTRY on the Benaki Museum golden kylix inv. no. 2108 (figs 1-11, 16) for the exhibition catalogue *Greek Treasures from the Benaki Museum in Athens*,¹ I never suspected the trials and tribulations I would undergo in order to complete the scholarly publication of this object. With only infrequent mentions to its credit in the literature and tending to have been forgotten for some time,² the gold kylix, which, according to such references as are associated with it to date, was a work of the Mycenaean period, needed more thorough study. However, as the research progressed, there were so many ways in which the vessel was seen to diverge from what is known about Mycenaean goldsmiths' work, as to change the detailed publication into a painstaking check on its authenticity.³ This was all the more necessary as the artefact had been bought on the art market.

The question of the authenticity of objects from antiquity, acquired by museums through purchases or gifts, was already well known from as early as the nineteenth century,

but remains a thorny issue.⁴ Even if state-of-the-art laboratory analyses, used in conjunction with iconographic and stylistic approaches, have to a large extent solved complex problems regarding certain types of materials, such as clay or bone, many technical questions remain unanswered as regards objects made of other materials, such as for example metals, wood or marble – above all the outstanding questions as to the date of their production.

The decisive significance of iconographic studies and stylistic analysis thus becomes evident. Nevertheless it is not unusual for reservations about the authenticity of an object, based on the uniqueness of certain iconographic elements or some incompatibility in the style, to be resolved by later finds from excavations, which provide the necessary comparative material.⁵

It goes without saying that expressing doubts about the authenticity of a work of art in an official way is no easy matter.⁶ This is all the more true, when it is a gold vessel, i.e. made of the most incorruptible metal, which is little affected by the amount of time or the conditions in which it has been buried.

The gold kylix inv. no. 2108 was bought on 12.1.1939 by the then newly established Benaki Museum for 153.000 drachmas, the same year as the gold Thebes 'Jewellery Ensemble' was purchased.⁷ These exceptionally important acquisitions formed the basis of the Mycenaean Collection, hitherto non-existent, something which to a large extent explains Antony Benaki's pride, expressed in the well-known photograph of 1950, which has since been reproduced so many times as to become the Museum's photographic logo (fig. 12).⁸ According to the cup's entry

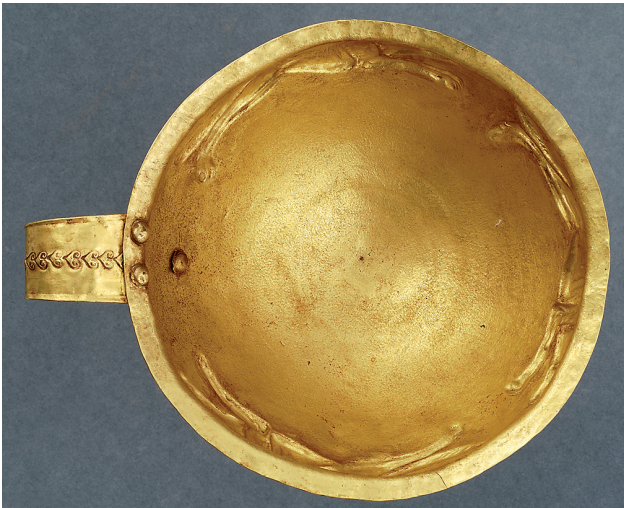


Figs 1-4. Golden kylix with repoussé running hounds. Athens, Benaki Museum, inv. no. 2108 (photos: M. Mathios).

in the Museum's register, it was bought from one "Mar. Vlachos" (the first name is not written out in full), whose identity I have been unable to establish.⁹ This official record is not accompanied by any reference to details relating to its provenance.¹⁰

The reason why this vase – despite its importance – has never been the subject of a detailed publication probably

lies above all in the private nature of the Benaki Museum and consequently the fact that most of its objects are of unknown provenance, given that they were acquired through gifts or purchases. It was perhaps reservations in this respect which prevented Ellen Davis from including the Benaki Museum kylix in the publication of her thesis,¹¹ though it does contain extensive references to



Figs 5-7. Golden kylix (details). Athens, Benaki Museum, inv. no. 2108 (photos: M. Mathios).

other precious vessels of unknown provenance.

The prolonged silence of scholars as regards such an important object, however, is perhaps also indicative of the unofficial doubts about its authenticity. Suspicions of this nature apparently troubled the former Director of the Benaki Museum, Manolis Chatzidakis, who must have mentioned it to the physicist Alex Hartmann, when he was carrying out spectroscopic analyses on some of the Museum's metal objects. In a letter dated 8.8.1972, kept in the museum's archives, Hartmann gives his opinion, noting that he is relatively certain that the composition of the metal used for the kylix was consistent with the evidence gathered from the area of the Eastern Mediterranean concerning the prehistoric period. A little further down, responding to what had probably been an anxiety Chatzidakis had expressed by word of mouth,¹² he concludes that it was possible that some modern forger could have used ancient material. At the same time he asked if there were any significant stylistic or other criteria which could substantiate such a hypothesis.¹³ In any event, the cup was not included in Hartmann's important monograph, published in 1982.¹⁴

A new study of the artefact could not be carried out without the contribution of modern laboratory analyses, and this time on selected Mycenaean gold vessels from sys-



Figs 8-10. Golden kylix (dogs A, B, C). Athens, Benaki Museum, inv. no. 2108 (photos: M. Mathios).

tematic excavations. Thus the gold goblets inv. nos 427 and 656 from Mycenae Grave Circle A, inv. nos 957 and 959 from the Mycenae Acropolis Treasure and the gold cup inv. no. 8743 from Chamber Tomb 10 at Midea in Argolis were collectively examined both macroscopically and microscopically, as well as using spectroscopic analysis in the laboratories of the Athens National Archaeological Museum.

The kylix in question has a hemispherical body with the lip everted to form a horizontal rim, a cylindrical, hollow interior, high stem which widens a little towards the top and a base with curved sides (figs 1-4, 16).¹⁵ It was made by hammering out four separate, quite thick sheets, one for the body, one for the stem, one for the base and one for the handle (thickness of sheet on the body and the lip: 0.5 mm, base: 0.3 mm, edge of handle: 1 mm). The body is decorated with three relief animals in single file, represented in the “flying gallop” pose. The slightly raised handle, with a width at its narrowest point of 1 cm and at its broadest of 1.8 cm, has a slight vertical rib hammered from below. The ends of the sheet are rolled up, thus reinforcing its edges (fig. 7). On its upper surface and on the central rib it is decorated with 21 continuously linked, heart-shaped leaves (figs 4-7, 16).

The three component parts of the vessel (body, stem and base) are joined together with solder, which was confirmed both by macroscopic and microscopic examination, and using X-radiography (see below, D. Kotzamani *et al.*, Technical report). There is also solder along the vertical axis of the stem at the attachment points of the sheet. In the areas of soldering a slight colour difference from the base material was observed. According to the results of the qualitative analysis it seems that a gold alloy with a small silver content and very little copper was used (see below, Kotzamani *et al.*, p. 47 table 1). The small hole in the joint between the foot and the base was possibly created during the soldering process (fig. 4). The handle is attached to the lip with two rivets and to the body by one. Around the edge of the three hemispherical rivet heads (0.5 cm wide) on the inside of the cup part of the original sheet from which they were made has been preserved (fig. 6). The rivets on the lip end on the outside in just two wires, bent outwards in diametrically opposed directions and then hammered down (fig. 7). The rivet holding the handle to the body has a small circular head on the outside (0.25 cm wide), which has been beaten flush with the surface of the handle (figs 4, 7).

At the centre of the bottom both inside and out, two circular impressions have been observed (fig. 5).

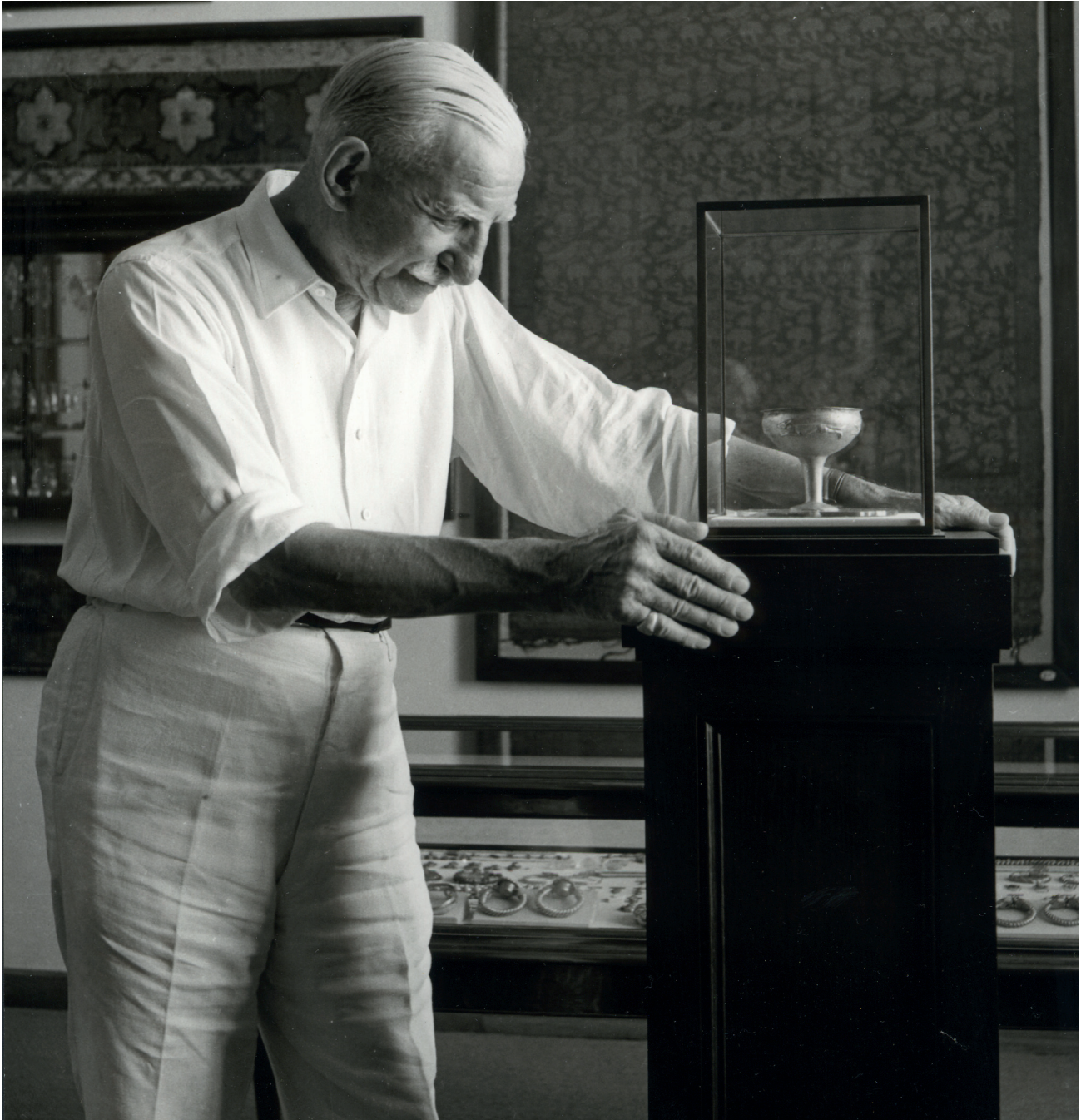
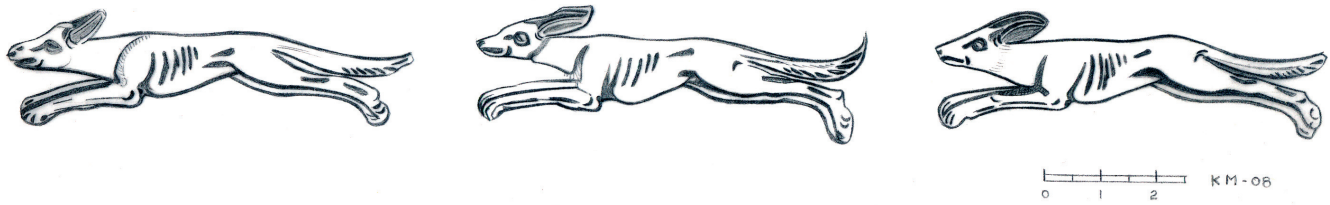


Fig. 11. Drawing of the hunting dogs on the golden kylix. Athens, Benaki Museum, inv. no. 2108 (drawing: K. Mavragani).

Fig. 12. Antony Benaki contemplating the golden kylix.



Fig. 13. Golden kylix with a hunting scene. Brussels, Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, inv. no. A2249 (photo: Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire).

Typological approach – Questions of dating

At first glance, the Benaki Museum gold kylix, with its by no means fluid contours and the separate volumes of the body and the foot, gives the impression of a work made in accordance with the Mycenaean style. Concerning the shape of the body and the formation of the stem with the slightly convex contour, it shows affinities with the Mycenaean gold kylix from the Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire in Brussels (fig. 13). With no evidence as to its provenance, the Brussels cup has been dated to the beginning of the LHI period, though the shape of its body and the tall stem would suggest that it might have been made in the LHII.¹⁶ The offset everted lip of the Benaki vase is found in Mycenaean vessels made from precious metals, as for example the four gold kylikes from the Mycenae Acropolis Treasure from the LHII B-III A1 period (figs 14-15)¹⁷ or the one-handled silver goblet from a Chamber Tomb in Midea of much the same chronological horizon.¹⁸ The form of its banded, slightly raised handle, which narrows towards the



Figs 14-15. Golden kylix from the Acropolis Treasure at Mycenae. Athens, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 960 (photo: NAM [14], I. Miari [15]).

base, with its rounded ends is not, on the other hand, at all unusual among Aegean gold- and silverware.¹⁹

If we try to find the ceramic equivalent of the Benaki Museum artefact, we shall run into difficulties, given that its almost absolutely hemispherical body is not found in any type of clay kylix, which do not appear with a high foot, before the LH/LMIIIA1. If we treat the body as an independent unit, we can agree that it undoubtedly points to the semi-globular cup FS 211 of the LHIIA period (fig. 17),²⁰ as well as the ephyraean goblet FS 254 of the LHIIIB period, which has a narrow stem but a broad, slightly concave base (fig. 18).²¹ The tall stem, accounting for about half of its height, which narrows towards the bottom, recalls the stem of the ceramic kylix of the LHIIIA1 period (fig. 19),²² but the base, slightly concave, does not become established in the typology of the kylix before the end of this period or the beginning of the next one (FS 256) (fig. 20).²³

The foregoing makes it evident that the Benaki Museum vessel has no precise parallels either in metal or indeed in ceramic cups. At this point it should in any case be emphasized that, although certain types of ceramic vases derive from metallic prototypes, which they obviously copy, one can nevertheless discern the peculiarities of each material, which to a large extent determine the typological characteristics of each category of wares.²⁴ In any event, the individual morphological characteristics of the Benaki Museum cup point to a dating range in the LHII and LHIIIA1 periods, a time when, as we know, the majority of Mycenaean gold wares were produced.

Issues of technology and composition of the alloy

Nevertheless, as regards the technique of its production, the Benaki Museum's gold cup differs in certain points from those works of gold- and silverware of the second millennium BC known to date. As mentioned above, apart from the three rivets used to attach the handle to the body, the soldering technique, using a metal alloy, was employed to join body, stem and base.

Though this technique was known as early as the end of the fourth millennium BC in Mesopotamia²⁵ and was already in use in the Aegean by the Early Bronze Age,²⁶ the practice of soldering together individual parts of metal objects seems not to have been adopted on a large scale by Aegean craftsmen in the second millennium BC.²⁷ As tech-

nical analyses and macroscopic examination show it was used with great skill on small-scale objets d'art, such as the Minoan and Mycenaean gold signet rings.²⁸

The gold and silver vessels of the second millennium BC were usually beaten into shape from one sheet of metal.²⁹ If they were formed from separate pieces, they were generally attached using small rivets, whose heads were hammered flush with the sheet metal on the outside, so as to be indiscernible.³⁰ Solder was sometimes used to join parts of the handle, or to attach extra elements (cladding foils, a separately manufactured rim in some other material, decorative strips or rings) to the surface of the object.³¹ However, in at least three cases the use of solder has been identified in the attachment of individual parts of a vessel: the one-handled electrum cup, part of the grave goods of Mycenae Shaft Grave IV, on which the stem has been soldered to the body,³² the silver crater with a battle scene in repoussé from the same grave, on which the neck has been similarly attached to the shoulder (which is of a piece with the body)³³ and a one-handled silver goblet from Chamber Tomb 10 at Dendra, whose stem has been joined to the separately created body.³⁴ Indeed, according to Sakellariou, solder must have been used to join the neck and body of a silver ewer from Mycenae Shaft Grave IV, in which the marks of a 'seam' are covered by a torus moulding articulating the join between the neck and the body.³⁵

Though the alloy used to join the individual parts of the Benaki Museum's gold cup is consistent with what is already known about the soldering of sheet metal in the prehistoric era,³⁶ the fact that it was constructed not just of three but four separate parts (body, stem, base and handle) makes it unique, according to our current knowledge.

The banded handle was attached to the cup by mechanical means, i.e. using rivets. The attachment of two rivets in the area of the lip and one for the body aligns it with the technical characteristics of Mycenaean gold- and silverware (figs 5-6).³⁷ However, the presence of rivets on the lip, when the latter is everted, rather than below it, does deviate from normal practice. As has been noted, the Aegean craftsmen usually chose to attach the handle to an object with an offset lip in the area below it, so as to avoid any possible damage to the sheet metal, which was particularly susceptible to damage where it had been beaten into sharp angles.³⁸ The only exceptions, apart from the Benaki Museum cup, are a gold goblet from the Mycenae Acropolis Treasure³⁹ and the four gold cups from the same

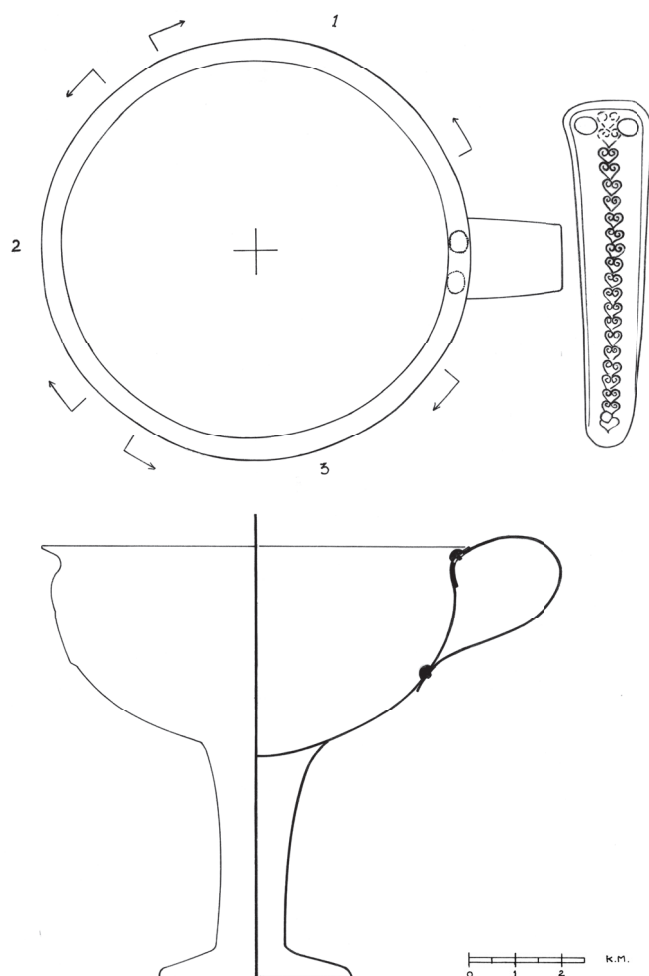


Fig. 16. Drawings of the golden kylix. Athens, Benaki Museum, inv. no. 2108 (drawings: K. Mavragani).

hoard with modelled dogs' heads at the upper ends of the handles.⁴⁰

The large, rounded rivet heads on the inside are entirely consistent with what is known of Aegean metallurgy. In fact, according to Davis, these types of heads suggest Minoan production or local imitation of Minoan work and they must have been formed using a punch or a mould.⁴¹ Traces of the sheet metal initially used to make them were not, however, found around the rivet heads of any of the Mycenaean gold and silver vessels in the National Archaeological Museum. The presence of such residues on the rivet heads on the Benaki Museum cup (fig. 6) could be attributable to careless workmanship.

The external end of the rivet used on the body has been



Fig. 17. Semi-globular cup FS 211 (after: Mountjoy 1986, fig. 31.4).

Fig. 18. Ephyraean goblet FS 254 (after: Mountjoy 1986, fig. 54.2).

Fig. 19. Kylix (after: Mountjoy 1986, fig. 76.1).

Fig. 20. Kylix FS 256 (after: Mountjoy 1986, fig. 106.1).



Fig. 21. Golden cup from the Shaft Grave IV at Mycenae (detail). Athens, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 313 (photo: I. Miari).



Fig. 22. Sealing from Room 105 at the Palace of Pylos (after: *CMS* I, 363).



Fig. 23. Seal from a building at Kynos, Lamia (after: *CMS* VS.1B, 3).

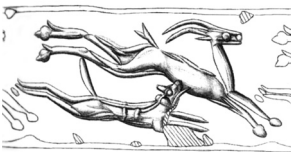


Fig. 24. Cylinder seal from the Tholos Tomb 3 at Koukounara, Pylos (after: *CMS* VS.1B, 190).



Fig. 25. Seal said to come from Knossos (after: *CMS* VI, 179).

beaten flush with the metal, thus fashioning a small, flat head, which is entirely consistent with the treatment seen on the body of metal vessels from the second millennium BC. By contrast the way in which the rivets have been attached to the lip shows some peculiarities. The rivets pass through the sheet gold of the vessel and the handle and end in single wires, which have been hammered down in opposite directions (fig. 7). It should, however, be noted that in at least one case a similar form of attachment, though not exactly the same, is seen on a one-handed gold cup from Shaft Grave IV of Grave Circle A, where the ends of the rivets at the rim were split into two, with each half hammered down separately (fig. 21).⁴²

The rolling upwards of the edges of the sheet used to form the handle is a common technical detail in Mycenaean gold- and silverware with hammered, banded handles.⁴³ As indeed was evident from a macroscopic examination, the edges of the handle on the Benaki Museum vase do not enclose strengthening wires, as happens only in Mycenaean wares made of precious metals. Yet some of them do not have the reinforcing wires, so the Benaki Museum kylix is not necessarily different in this respect.⁴⁴

The fashioning of the 21 repeated heart-shaped leaves, which run the length of the vertical axis of the handle (figs 4, 16), right on the central rib, was done using a punch from the outside before the handle was attached to the body, as is indicated by the fact that it is possible to touch the motifs on the lower surface of the handle. The last leaf at the bottom of the handle was depicted in a very schematic fashion. Though the decoration on gold- and silverware in the Late Bronze Age is mainly repoussé, chased or even moulded, the use of a punch has been confirmed both in this group of vessels and on copper and/or bronze wares of the same period.⁴⁵

The three animals which encircle the body are depicted in repoussé technique (figs 1-4, 8-10, 11). It is generally accepted that the craftsman first sketched the outline of the image on the outer surface and then, by striking the metal with the appropriate tools from the inside, he created the relief sculpture. Then, once the vessel had been filled with some soft material (e.g. sand, plaster or lead), it was beaten into shape from the outside, giving it its final form. The final details were put in last of all by chasing and/or engraving.⁴⁶ The absence of traces of toolmarks on the hollows created by the bodies of the three animals on the inside of the kylix – something also observed in the case of



Fig. 26. Silver goblet with a repoussé hunting scene from the King's Burial at Midea. Athens, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 7339 (photo: I. Miari).



Fig. 27. Drawing of the silver goblet. Athens, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 7339 (after: A.W. Persson, *The Royal Tombs at Dendra near Midea* [1931] pl. 17).

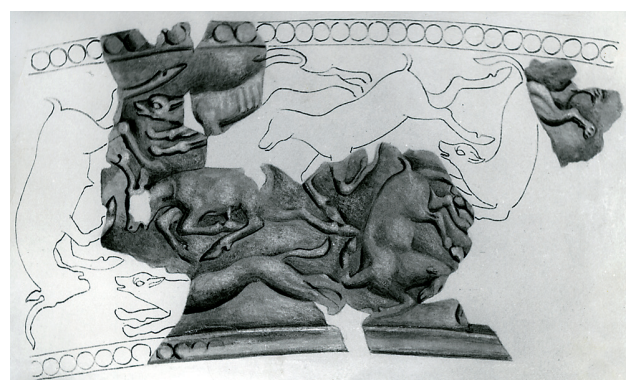


Fig. 28. Drawing of the hunting scene on the silver goblet. Athens, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 7339 (photo: NAM, photoarchive).

the National Archaeological Museum's gold goblet inv. no. 656 (fig. 32) – could either be due to careful grinding and polishing of the area, or to these particular vessels having been hammered on a carved stone mould.⁴⁷

The animals are each of slightly different lengths,⁴⁸ whereas the distances between them and between the handle and the animals on either side of it are identical.⁴⁹ It is not at all unusual in Mycenaean metalwork for the positioning of the handle to be precisely calculated in advance, so that the point of attachment would be in complete symmetry with the existing decoration.⁵⁰

The presence of incisions on the inner and outer surfaces, right at the centre of the bottom, should not raise any questions. Similar marks have been recorded in quite a few Minoan and Mycenaean gold and silver vessels on one side of the disk-shaped base or the bottom of the vase, and have been attributed to the use of compasses.⁵¹ The same phenomenon occurs in the only recorded instance of a double mark, on both the inside and outside surfaces of the base, in a silver cup from Mycenae Chamber Tomb 78, which is decorated with repoussé tricurved arches.⁵² It should be noted that a similar double mark was also observed on the gold cup



Fig. 29. Wall painting with a hunting scene from the Palace of Tiryns. Athens, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 5881 (photo: NAM).

(inv. no. 8743) with the repoussé ivy leaves from Chamber Tomb 10 at Midea, when it was examined in the laboratories of the National Archaeological Museum in Athens (see below, Kotzamani *et al.*, p. 52 figs 19-20).⁵³

The possibility of tracing the double mark back to the use of a lathe in the final processes of working and polishing the vessels, should not, of course, be excluded, though it would have been hard to fix objects which were hollow inside. Despite the fact that the use of the lathe on Greek soil is only officially recorded in the sources from the fifth century BC,⁵⁴ there is in any case no doubt that it was also

used in the archaic period,⁵⁵ while there has been speculation as to its presence in the workshops of furniture-makers and stone carvers from as early as the Minoan period.⁵⁶ It has also been considered likely that this rotary tool was used by Mycenaean metalworkers in the last stage of shaping gold vessels, although this judgement is based on the regular shape of certain vessels and not on the existence of a double mark on the inner and outer surfaces of their bases.⁵⁷ The earliest evidence of the use of a lathe in the Mediterranean comes, in any case, from the Egypt of the Second Transitional Period/early 18th Dynasty, where

it seems more or less certain that wooden furniture was turned on something of this nature.⁵⁸

Given that the Aegean vessels, on which the double mark has been identified to date, have elaborate repoussé decoration, it is very likely that both marks come from the impression left by the dividers used not only for the initial measurements taken in order to shape a circular sheet but also for the measurements relating to the arrangement of the decoration on the body.

However, as to the composition of the metal, the Benaki Museum cup presents significant differences in relation to the analyses carried out to date on gold vessels and ornaments of the second millennium BC from the Aegean and mainland Greece. According to the results of the qualitative and quantitative analysis, the kylix was made of a pure gold which has a very small amount of silver and a very low copper content. Its exceptionally high gold content, at 98.8%, has not up to now been identified in any example of Minoan or Mycenaean goldsmith's work discovered in systematic excavations.⁵⁹ The results of the analyses carried out on the occasion of this study on selected Mycenaean gold vessels from the Athens National Archaeological Museum and on the jewellery from the Thebes 'Jewellery Ensemble' from the Benaki Museum, in fact, support the opinion that the level of gold in the alloys used in Mycenaean times varied on average between 65% and 90% (see below, Kotzamani *et al.*, p. 53 table 2). Some Creto-Mycenaean rings constitute a possible exception, but their gold content does not exceed, but the order of 96.5%.⁶⁰ At this point it should be emphasized that the gold objects from the Benaki Museum published below, Kotzamani *et al.*, p. 53 table 2 (inv. nos 27515 and 27516) with a similar purity to that of the kylix inv. no. 2108 are acquisitions of dubious authenticity, which, though they look like Mycenaean works, have several stylistic and iconographic peculiarities compared with the genuine articles.

The base material of the kylix could come into the category of native gold, had trace elements, such as iron or tin, been identified in it;⁶¹ but it was not possible to detect them. So it is either a noteworthy exception among native golds⁶² or it should be categorized as refined gold, i.e. the result of removing the copper and silver in the cupellation process and by separation respectively (see below, Kotzamani *et al.*, pp. 46-48). Though a process most likely to have been understood from as early as the mid-second millennium BC, as written sources from Egypt and Mesopotamia

confirm, it is generally agreed that the refining of gold was not in widespread use for another thousand years, i.e. until after the introduction of coinage.⁶³ Despite all this, of those objects from the second millennium BC from the Eastern Mediterranean and Mesopotamia which have been analysed, three (which do not come from systematic excavations) have been identified, on the basis of the levels of the various constituent elements in the alloy of their base material, as having been made using refined gold.⁶⁴

All this demonstrates that "*the analysis is not some magical panacea for problems of authenticity or origin*", as others have rightly noted,⁶⁵ all the more so as the majority of Aegean gold objects of the second millennium BC have not been analysed, nor, of course, has the question of the provenance of Mycenaean gold been solved.⁶⁶

Iconographical Analysis

The kylix inv. no. 2108 is decorated on the body with three repoussé animals, which are depicted running one behind the other going from right to left. Their elongated bodies with the long necks, their equally long tails and legs, and the depiction of the ribs leave no doubt that the craftsman intended to depict hunting dogs. But it is a different matter when it comes to the heads. Though they are all slightly different, the heads of the three hounds could be those of a wolf or a deer, as the characteristic angularity rendering the projection of the eyebrow arches which, in complete accordance with the natural model, is found in most depictions of dogs in Creto-Mycenaean art, is missing (figs 8-10). The excessively long ears, especially in the middle dog and the one on the left of the handle (figs 8-9, 11), suggest alternatively the depiction of a hare. Consequently it is not surprising that in the early references to the kylix the animals were identified as hares,⁶⁷ despite the fact that this would be ruled out by the elongated, long-haired tail.

The depiction of animals and plants with hybrid characteristics is in any case not unknown in the Aegean art of the Late Bronze Age and undoubtedly has to do with what it sets out to achieve, which tends to be quite different from a realistic/photographic reproduction.⁶⁸ It should also be noted that it is not unusual for the depiction of a dog in Minoan or Mycenaean art to be confused with that of a wolf or a lion, though mainly in small-scale creations.⁶⁹ In any case, in none of the depictions of dogs known to date



Fig. 30. Sealing from the Room of the Warrior Seal at the Palace of Knossos (after: CMS II8, 287).



Fig. 31. Sealing from the Wooden Staircase and Secretaries' Bureau at the Palace of Knossos (after: CMS II8, 326).

from Minoan and Mycenaean art, is the animal represented with the sort of ears depicted on the middle dog on the kylix or the one to the left of its handle.

The hounds are depicted without collars in the flying gallop pose so beloved of Aegean art, an established iconographic convention for the depiction of continuous movement. Chasing has been used for the ribs, the hair on the tail, the toes on the paws, the mouths, the eyes and the insides of the ears. At the corner of the mouth a small indentation probably represents the fold in the skin when the animal is in the attack position and has its mouth half open with the lips rolled back. The realistic rendering of anatomical characteristics is certainly also enhanced by the use of perspective in the area of the ears and the front and hind legs.

Depictions of dogs at a flying gallop can be found in Minoan and Mycenaean art, for the most part in the context of hunting scenes. In Minoan and Mycenaean seals and sealings (figs 22-25),⁷⁰ in Mycenaean metalwork⁷¹ (figs 26-28) and ivories,⁷² in wall-paintings from Ayia Irini on Kea,⁷³ from ancient Avaris (Tell el-Dab'a) in Egypt,⁷⁴ from Tiryns⁷⁵ (fig. 29), from Orchomenos,⁷⁶ and on Mycenaean pictorial pottery⁷⁷ dogs, sometimes accompanying human figures and sometimes without them, are depicted in a flying gallop pose, hunting goats, wild boars or deer.

As regards the more general depiction of the body and the inclination of the legs the animals on the Benaki Museum kylix display the closest stylistic affinity with the hound depicted in a hunting scene on a LHIIA cylinder seal from the Tholos Tomb 3 at Koukounara (fig. 24)⁷⁸ or the one preserved on the upper part of a LHII-III A1 silver goblet from the King's Burial at Midea (figs 26-28).⁷⁹ If, indeed,

we take into account their almost triangular-shaped heads, the hounds on the Benaki stemmed cup are quite reminiscent of the dog wearing a collar, which races after a deer, evidently hunting it, on a LHIII seal from the Palace at Pylos (fig. 22).⁸⁰ The ears of the animal depicted to the right of the handle are not dissimilar in shape and form to those of the standing birch depicted in LMIII sealings from Knossos (fig. 30),⁸¹ while the long tail with the thick hair, represented with oblique chased lines, has strong similarities with the tails of the heraldically arranged hounds on either side of a biconcave altar on LMIIIA1 sealings from Knossos (fig. 31).⁸² The depiction of the animal's ribs is a commonplace in seal carving, especially during the Late Bronze Age,⁸³ while hounds without collars are as likely to take part in hunting scenes as those wearing them.⁸⁴

The iconographic motif on the Benaki kylix, nevertheless, directly suggests the galloping lions which decorate the LHI gold goblet from Shaft Grave V of Grave Circle A at Mycenae (fig. 32),⁸⁵ which accompanied one of the distinguished deceased males (apparently a member of the local military aristocracy) into the afterlife as an *insignium* of prestige or social status.⁸⁶ The comparison between the two gold vessels is in any case strengthened by the absence of any kind of landscape, representing the natural accompaniment to the action depicted. In turn the lions encircling the body of the goblet from Mycenae call to mind, though from a different point of view, those depicted galloping through a rocky landscape, which decorate in emblematic fashion the two sides of a bronze dagger from Shaft Grave IV of the same Grave Circle.⁸⁷

This particular motif, probably of Minoan origin,⁸⁸ but established in the Mycenaean iconographic cycle of authority/power, as it probably derives from the iconography of the hunt, has been interpreted as a symbol of aggression, militancy and speed, essential elements for a successful outcome in battle.⁸⁹ Following the same line of thought and in accordance with the principle of simulation these properties are transferred to the object bearing the scene and consequently to its owner, thus comparing him with the animal depicted. However, the appearance of the motif of lions at a flying gallop pose on a gold goblet, an undoubted status symbol and a vessel with obvious references to practices of a ceremonial nature,⁹⁰ reinforces, one could say, the value of this particular symbol as a "Repräsentationsmittel", in connection, of course, with the high social status of the deceased.



Fig. 32. Golden goblet with running lions from the Shaft Grave V in Mycenae. Athens, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 656 (photo: NAM).

Returning to the Benaki Museum kylix, we should consequently be asking if the depiction of hounds at a flying gallop pose is acceptable particularly from an iconographical point of view.

As mentioned above, the motif of hounds galloping is usually found incorporated in hunting scenes, in which for the most part there is a human presence depicted. In isolation, as *pars pro toto*, it is only found depicted on the bone plaque from the Tholos Tomb at Menidi, where, however, the identification of the animal remains uncertain (fig. 33),⁹¹ and on some LHIIIB and LHIIC sherds from Pictorial Style vases, which most probably preserve part of some larger composition.⁹²

In any case, the cast dogs' heads which act as terminals on the handles of four gold kylikes of the LHIIIB-III A1 period found deposited outside Grave Circle A on the Acropolis at Mycenae (figs 14-15) (plunder from grave robbing in ancient times)⁹³ give us a strong indication that it was possible to use the motif of the hound in isolation on a gold vessel. On all four, undoubtedly products of the same workshop if not of the same craftsman, the animal is depicted wearing a collar and with an open mouth with which it

bites the rim of the cup. Although the idea of depicting the head of an animal on the upper end of a handle was already well known in mainland Greece,⁹⁴ the choice of a dog's head in this motif (i.e. biting the rim) is perhaps insinuating some indirect reference to its aggression and consequently its hunting prowess.

No doubt the motif of the hound is deeply rooted in the Aegean iconographic repertoire of the second millennium BC. Standing, lying down or sitting, at rest, scratching an ear and barking, racing or arranged heraldically, dogs are represented in isolation in various media from as early as the Early Bronze Age (figs 30-31, 34): stone and clay vessels,⁹⁵ seals and sealings,⁹⁶ jewellery,⁹⁷ ivories⁹⁸ and wall-paintings.⁹⁹ In scenes relating to the hunt they appear from the Early Bronze Age onwards, but in the main from the early LMIA/LCI/LHI period and thereafter (figs 22-29, 35),¹⁰⁰ while they sometimes accompany male or female figures (figs 36-37)¹⁰¹ or even a Minoan *genius*.¹⁰² The subject enters the animal world of Minoan and Mycenaean figurines, if sporadically, from the Middle Bronze Age¹⁰³ and is found extremely rarely with a completely different symbolic value in Aegean rhyta in the form of animal heads.¹⁰⁴

Consequently, one could say that the position of the dog in the Creto-Mycenaean iconographic repertoire is far from marginal. In support of this opinion it is worth mentioning a few selected examples of Creto-Mycenaean seal carving in which this animal is depicted as the bearer of a particular meaning. In eighteen LMIIIA1 sealings from the Wooden Staircase and Secretaries' Bureau in Knossos heraldically placed hounds with collars turn their heads to look back, resting their front paws on a biconcave altar,¹⁰⁵ in a well-known iconographic motif,¹⁰⁶ in which lions are more usually depicted, but also sometimes griffins and apes¹⁰⁷ (fig. 31). Given the religious significance of the biconcave altar as a symbol of divine protection,¹⁰⁸ it would be reasonable to consider the presence of the hounds as reinforcing the talismanic power of the altar. With much the same significance the animal is depicted on a LHIIA seal stone from the Tholos Tomb at Vapheio above a frieze of schematized half rosettes,¹⁰⁹ a coded depiction, according to a recently argued opinion, of the concept "palace" (fig. 34).¹¹⁰ As accompanying animals, hounds appear on a small group of seals and sealings flanking a male figure of the Master of Animals type (fig. 37).¹¹¹

On the basis of the physical features of this particular animal too then we can maintain, in an initial approach to the

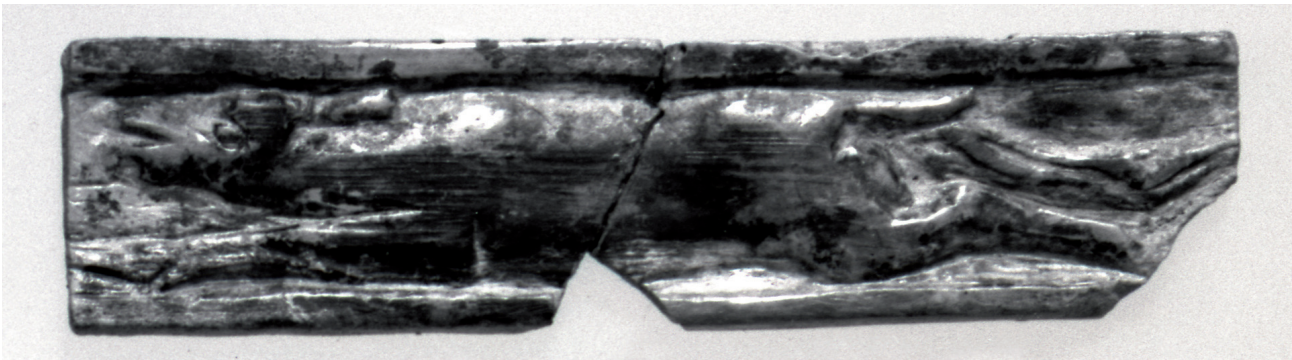


Fig. 33. Ivory plaque from the Tholos Tomb in Menidi. Athens, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 1991 (photo: NAM).



Fig. 34. Seal from the Tholos Tomb in Vapheio (after: *CMS* I, 255).



Fig. 35. Seal said to come from Archanes (after: *CMS* VI, 180).

subject, that the hound is found in the Aegean repertoire in two basic iconographic cycles: the one in which its status as a guardian/companion whether in the earthly or in the divine sphere is emphasized and that of the hunt, in which its supreme capability as a hunter-beast is stressed.

The signifying status of the hound in the iconography of the hunt was pointed out relatively recently because of the possible sacrifice of two hounds in the LHIIIB-early LHIIC Chamber Tomb at Galata in the Peloponnese,¹¹² which can be added to other, long familiar cases of placing dogs in tholos and chamber tombs of the Late Bronze Age on mainland Greece and Crete.¹¹³ As indeed has been asserted, the offering of dogs in Mycenaean tombs represents some sort of grave gift made to the deceased in an attempt to connect the elites of the period with the activity of hunting and its symbolic references.¹¹⁴ Nor, of course, should it be considered mere chance that this custom puts in a somewhat

emphatic appearance in the LHIIIA period, a time when the social hierarchy had been established, the central authority had been set up in the various regions and the local elites were proclaiming their existence in the life hereafter too. The hunt [κυνήγι], in the nomenclature of which – even in the Linear B texts –¹¹⁵ the dog stands out as the preeminent component (κύνα+ἄγω), is an activity which by definition takes place outside the limits of the city and as such is out of the ordinary and dangerous. Therefore it lends itself to the display of special skills, the possession of which constitutes an ideal means of replicating power and/or authority.¹¹⁶

If this is how things stand, then decorating a gold vessel with hounds at a flying gallop pose, where the scene directly refers to the idea of the hunt, seems entirely consistent with what we know of the period. This is all the more true given the fact, as has already been mentioned, that the dog is often chosen as the main and sole motif, in other words it has acquired a symbolic and/or emblematic character in the Minoan and Mycenaean iconographic repertoire.

Finally it is worth examining the decorative motif on the handle which is also of special interest. The length of the vertical axis of the handle on the Benaki Museum's gold kylix is decorated with a series of heart-shaped motifs in a chain arrangement, in such a way that the sharp pointed top of one fits into the 'body' of the next one (figs 4–6, 16). The decoration on the sheet forming the handle was completed before it was bent to attach it to the body of the cup, with the result that two leaves are now invisible (fig. 11). This particular motif, with its linear, heart-shaped outline has been thought to be a schematized depiction of an ivy leaf, a subject known to have an accepted Minoan provenance.¹¹⁷

Sharp-pointed ivy leaves are found in isolation from



Fig. 36. Sealing from the Eastern Temple Repository at the Palace of Knossos (after: *CMS* II8, 236).

Fig. 37. Sealing from the Archives Deposit at the Palace of Knossos (after: *CMS* II8, 248).



Fig. 38. Golden strip with ivy leaves from the Chamber Tomb 515 on the Kalkani hill, Mycenae. Athens, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 2797 (photo: NAM).

as early as the MMII in seal carving and as the central motif on LMI talismanic seals and sealings.¹¹⁸ In chain form it appears as a main ornament or as filling motif on Minoan pottery from the LMI period onwards¹¹⁹ and on Mycenaean pottery from the LHIIA period,¹²⁰ on LCI wall-paintings,¹²¹ while it is not unknown in Mycenaean minor arts (figs 38-39).¹²²

The presence of this motif on the handle of the Benaki Museum's gold vase would perhaps surprise us, if a gold kantharos had not been discovered in 1976 in a MH/LHI Tomb at Peristeria with exactly the same motif, in repoussé this time, decorating both its handles (fig. 40).¹²³ On one of them there are seven leaves, while the other has six, with the extra leaf on one handle not conspicuous, as it is situated at the point where the sheet is bent back next to the lip. This little-known precious artefact undoubtedly offers an important parallel as regards the decoration of the handle, though it must be stressed that the decorative motif on the Benaki Museum vessel only occupies the space of the cen-

tral rib of the handle, while on the kantharos from Peristeria it spreads all around it. This idea, that is to cover the whole of the handle with a decorative motif, is found moreover in all the gold and silver Aegean vessels with decorated handles of the Late Bronze Age known to date.¹²⁴

The co-existence of heart-shaped ivy leaves with a scene from the world of hunting on the Benaki Museum kylix may conceal yet another, deeper connection between the two iconographic motifs, as at least is indicated by the poros-stone stele once erected on Tomb Gamma of Grave Circle B at Mycenae:¹²⁵ here, used as fillers in the main battle scene between animals and between people and animals, a motif reminiscent of a biconcave altar is depicted at the upper left while at the lower left there is a sharp-pointed ivy leaf.

With all the above in mind we inevitably arrive at a series of questions, which may do more to obscure the issue of the authenticity of the Benaki Museum's gold kylix than to shed light on it. Before posing these questions, let us sum-

marize all the evidence as to its identity: apparently unique from a typological point of view, yet it presents several similarities in its individual morphological elements and style with ceramic and metallic examples of the LHII-III A1 period. The technique of its manufacture is consistent in many respects with the data which has been collected on metalwork of the Late Bronze Age. On the other hand it has some technical peculiarities, which certainly are only found as exceptions in precious metal objects, but which are not otherwise unheard of. Of course, the fact that it was made up of four parts, and the way in which the rivets on the rim are attached distinguish it somewhat from other objects in this category. Nevertheless where it differs significantly from the Aegean gold objects of the second millennium BC is in the analysis of the metal of its base material. Made from pure gold, of an unprecedented purity of 98.8% with tiny levels of silver and copper, at first glance it would seem to be a fake. Such a decision would, needless to say, be based on the present state of our knowledge; because there is neither a large database with analyses of all the Aegean gold, nor is it altogether improbable that such a high gold content could be found in native gold. From an iconographic point of view, its decoration with the three hunting dogs running one behind the other, automatically bringing to mind the idea of the hunt, is by no means inappropriate, at least according to the data collected about representations of dogs, though it should be noted that this data has not been thoroughly studied. As regards the decoration on the handle it certainly finds an important parallel in an MH/LHI gold vessel from the Tomb at Peristeria. From a stylistic point of view it deviates from the usual manner of depicting the ears in two of the three hounds, and as regards the fact that the motif on the handle does not cover the whole surface as was the norm, but just the central part. Assumptions about its authenticity therefore come up against some technical and stylistic peculiarities, but mainly the results of the qualitative and quantitative analyses of the base material, according once again to the current state of our knowledge.

On the other hand, if we suppose that it is a fake, we must then ask why a counterfeiter, who must have been operating up to the end of the 1930s (given the date of its acquisition) would have depicted hunting hounds on a gold vessel – in other words would have depicted a decorative motif, which at that time was of minor importance and in any case unsuitable to embellish a gold cup, an object of prestige and social status. He would, of course, have known the



Fig. 39. Glass beads in the form of ivy leaves from the 8th Chamber Tomb in the Asprochoma-Agriossykia cemetery, Mycenae. Athens, National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 2395 (photo: NAM).

goblet from Mycenae with the lions at a flying gallop pose, and those from the Mycenae Acropolis Treasure with the handles ending in dogs' heads cast in the round, which were on display at the National Technical University from 1880 and from 1892 at the National Archaeological Museum in Athens.¹²⁶ And naturally he would have been aware of the silver kylix from Midea with the scene of hounds hunting goats or the relevant wall-paintings from Tiryns. However, there was nothing that would have alerted him to the important position of the dog in the iconography of the hunt and the possibility of its emblematic use. Thus it is only reasonable to ask why he did not depict lions or griffins, creatures with a pre-eminent position in the Cretan-Mycenaean iconographic repertoire and moreover known to have been depicted alone in a flying gallop pose on other objects. According to the rules of common sense the object would then have been more saleable. Should we assume that the maker of the gold cup brilliantly combined iconographic evidence with an intuitive understanding of it and

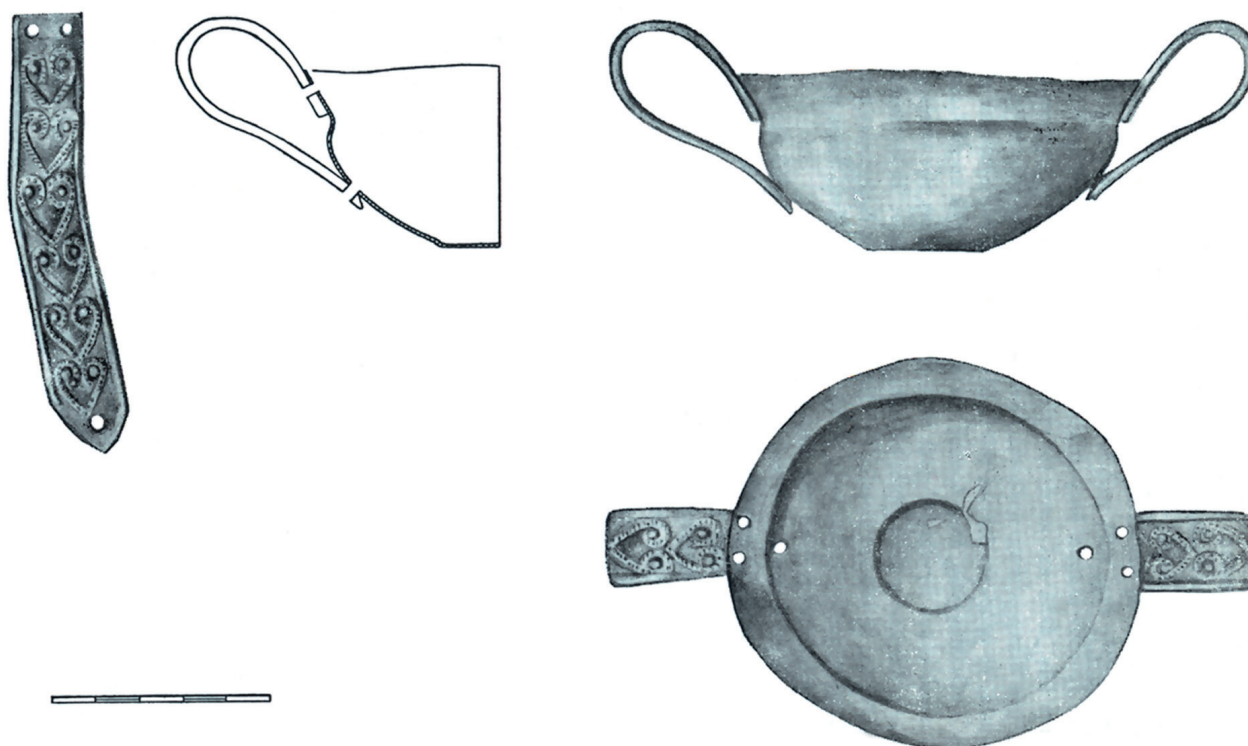


Fig. 40. Drawings of a golden kantharos from a tomb in Peristeria (after: G.S. Korres, *ΠΑΕ* 1976B, 498 fig. 8).

foreknowledge of the results of research from just under half a century later? Or that the choice of motifs was purely fortuitous? Because, of course, he would not have been in a position to know that the motif he chose to depict on the handle, would appear many years later decorating the handles of a gold vessel coming from an official excavation. If the Benaki Museum gold kylix really is a fake, could it have been copying some genuine Mycenaean work which has never been made known?

There is no doubt that we are left with an enigma, which

must perhaps remain a question for the future. But, as is often the case with mysteries, they are not just something to be solved, but stimulate thought, spark the imagination and exalt the powers of reasoning.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- Aruz 2008: J. Aruz, *Marks of Distinction. Seals and Cultural Exchange between the Aegean and the Orient (ca. 2600-1360 BC)*, CMS Bb. 7 (Mainz a. R. 2008).
- Buchholz–Karageorghis 1971: H.-G. Buchholz–V. Karageorghis, *Altägäis und Altkypros* (Tübingen 1971).
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NOTES

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However, all errors and omissions are entirely my own.

**K. Dimoula, I was content not to know, *The Little of the World*.

1. E. Georgoula (ed.), *Greek Treasures from the Benaki Museum in Athens* (exhibition catalogue, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney 2005) 33 no. 15 (I. Papageorgiou); E. Georgoula (ed.), *The Greeks. Art Treasures from the Benaki Museum Athens* (exhibition catalogue, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon 2007) 50 no. 17 (I. Papageorgiou).

2. P. Lemerle, *Chronique des fouilles et découvertes archéologiques en Grèce*, *BCH* 62 (1938) 448 pl. XLVII, B; F. Brommer, *Archäologische Funde vom Herbst 1938 bis Frühjahr 1939*, *AA* 1939, 225, 231 fig. 4; H.-G. Buchholz – G. Jöhrens – I. Maull, *Jagd und Fischfang*, *Arch. Hom.* 1973, J67 no. A3; Laffineur 1977, 24, 27, 63, 69, 122 no. 114, fig. 44, where it is referred to by the wrong accession number (1160); A. Delivorrias, *Οδηγός του Μουσείου Μπενάκη* (Athens 1980) 20, 23 fig. 7; A. Delivorrias – D. Fotopoulos, *Greece at the Benaki Museum* (Athens 1997) 62-63 fig. 74.

3. On the difficulties of ascertaining the authenticity of gold artefacts, see also J. Muhly, *Gold Analysis and Sources of Gold in the Bronze Age*, *TUAS* 8 (1983) 1; O. Eugster – J. Kramers – U. Krähenbühl, *Detecting Forgeries among Ancient Gold Objects using the U, Th-⁴He Dating Method*, *Archaeometry* 51.4 (2009) 672.

4. On this subject see A. Vrayson de Pradenne, *Les fraudes en archéologie préhistorique* (Paris 1932) esp. 1-10; A. Rieth, *Archaeological Fakes* (London 1970) esp. 9-27; E. Paul, *Gefälschte Antike von der Renaissance bis zur Gegenwart* (Leipzig 1981); M. Jones – P. Craddock – N. Barker (eds), *Fake? The art of deception* (exhibition catalogue, British Museum, London 1990); M.-C. Hellmann, *Vrai ou faux? Copier, imiter, falsifier* (exhibition catalogue, Cabinet des médailles et antiques, Paris 1991) 11-16; M. Jones (ed.), *Why fakes matter? Essays on problems of authenticity* (London 1992); T. Hoving, *The Hunt for Big-Time Art Fakes* (New York 1996) esp. 24-100.

5. See, for example, the case of the Minoan seal stone from Kydonia district, now in the Benaki Museum: E. Georgoula (ed.), *Greek Jewellery from the Benaki Museum Collections* (Athens 1999) 73-75 no. 14 (Chr. Boulotis); the ring of Minos: see recently N. Dimopoulou – G. Rethemiotakis, *Το δαχτυλίδι του Μίνωα και τα μινωικά χρυσά δαχτυλίδια. Ο κύκλος της θεοφάνειας* (Athens 2004) with collected bibliography; the so-called ring of Nestor: J.A. Sakellarakis, *Über die Echtheit des sogenannten Nestorringes*, *Πρακτικά του Γ' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου, Ρέθυμνον, 18-23 Σεπτεμβρίου 1971* (Athens 1973) I: 303-18.

6. See also Sakellarakis (n. 5) 303-06; I. Pini, *Zum "Ring des Minos"*, in: *Ειλαπίνη. Τόμος Τιμητικός για τον Καθηγητή Νικόλαο Πλάτωνα* (Herakleion 1987) 441: "Einmal geäusserte Zweifel, ob begründet oder unbegründet, bedeuten einen Makel, der sich kaum jemals wieder ganz beseitigen lässt".

7. On the Thebes 'Jewellery Ensemble' of the LHIIIB-III A1 period, see: Georgoula (n. 5) 36-69 nos 1-12 (Chr. Boulotis); Georgoula 2007 (n. 1) 46-49 nos 15-16 (I. Papageorgiou).

8. See T. Moutsopoulos (ed.), *Ομοιότητα περίπου. Εκδοχές ενός πορτρέτου του Αντώνη Μπενάκη* (Athens 2004) figs on 10-12, 166-67, 183, 214-16. See also Eu. Soulogiannis, *Αντώνης Εμμ. Μπενάκης, 1873-1954. Ο ευπατρίδης, ο διανοούμενος, ο ανθρωπιστής* (Athens 2004) 137 fig.

9. No documents were found in the Benaki Museum's

archives of purchases relating to the acquisition of this object. Moreover the name of the seller is not registered in the records of the Hellenic Association of Antiquarians and Art Dealers.

10. Nevertheless in bibliographical references there is nearly always some indication of provenance: The fact that it was acquired in the same year as the Thebes 'Jewellery Ensemble' and the continuous recording of newly acquired objects by Lemerle (n. 2) probably led Brommer (n. 2) to illustrate it a year later, noting it as coming from a tomb in Thebes. Based on existing information Buchholz – Jöhrens – Maull (n. 2) refer briefly to it as having been found in a Mycenaean tomb in Thebes. Laffineur 1977, 171 n. 12, too, though he lists it among the vessels of unknown origin, accepts Thebes as a possible provenance. Delivorrias (n. 2) makes no mention of the work's provenance, while in Delivorrias – Fotopoulos (n. 2) Dendra in the Argolid is as a likely provenance, a suggestion which moreover has accompanied it in the show-case in which it has been displayed. See also Papageorgiou 2005 (n. 1) and Papageorgiou 2007 (n. 1) for a reference to Dendra in the Argolid as the provenance of this object.

11. Davis 1977.

12. Unfortunately a search in the Museum's archives did not yield any results. No document written by Chatzidakis to Hartmann was found.

13. "Die Objekte Au 3965 [...] haben eine Zusammensetzung, wie sie im östlichen Mittelmeerraum sehr häufig ist. [...] Ich würde ihr Material mit einiger Sicherheit für antik halten. Denkbar wäre allerdings, dass ein Fälscher hier antikes Material verarbeitet hat. Gibt es schwerwiegende stilistische oder andere Gründe, die für Fälschung sprechen?"

14. Hartmann 1982. For a critical review of Hartman's analyses see J. Muhly, Gold Analysis and Sources of Gold in the Bronze Age, *TUAS* 8 (1983) 1-14; G. Weisgerber – E. Pernicka, Ore mining in prehistoric Europe: an overview, in: J. Morteaux – J.P. Northover (eds), *Prehistoric Gold in Europe. Mines, Metallurgy and Manufacture* (Dordrecht, Boston, London 1995) 159-82 esp. 177-78.

15. H. 9.2 cm (9.5 cm with the handle), diam. of lip 9.2 cm, diam. of base 4.4 cm, Weight: 111.5 gr.

16. Inv. no. A 2249: C. Delvoye, La coupe en or préhellénique des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, *BMusBrux* 1941, 85-92. Also see Laffineur 1977, 122-23 no. 115 figs 45-46, who avoids putting it in any specific chronological framework.

17. H. Thomas, The Acropolis Treasure from Mycenae, *BSA* 39 (1938-39) 65-70 pls 26a, 27b; Marinatos – Hirmer 1959, fig. 189; Davis 1977, 291-94 nos 123-26 figs 235-236; Laffineur 1977, 109-10 nos 70-73 figs 30-32; K. Demakopoulou (ed.), *Das mykenische Hellas, Heimat der Helden Homers* (Athen 1988) 68 no. 1 (K. Demakopoulou).

18. Davis 1977, 273 no. 113 figs 222-223.

19. See, for example, Davis 1977, 165-68 no. 52 fig. 132 (the shape of the handle is clear in Karo 1930, pl. CXXVI), 173-74 no. 57 fig. 142; 199-200 no. 76 fig. 163; 204-08 no. 82 fig.

169-71 (the shape of the handle is clear in Karo 1930, pl. CXI), 267-69 no. 110 figs 214-216, 288-91 no. 122 fig. 234.

20. Furumark 1972, 620 no. 211 pl. 122; Mountjoy 1986, 32 fig 31.4; P.A. Mountjoy, *Regional Mycenaean Decorated Pottery* (Rahden/Westfalen 1999) 1: 256-58 no. 29 fig. 84.20.

21. Furumark 1972, 627-28 no. 254; Mountjoy 1986, 48-49 fig. 54.2.

22. Mountjoy 1986, 65-66 fig. 76.1.

23. Mountjoy 1986, 88 fig. 106; Mountjoy (n. 20) 271-72 no. 114 fig. 90.114. See for example: S.A. Immerwahr, The Neolithic and Bronze Ages, *The Athenian Agora* XIII (1971) 250 no. 426 pls 60, 67.

24. For the strong relations between metal and clay vases see A.W. Persson, *New Tombs at Dendra near Midea* (Lund, Leipzig, London, Oxford 1942) 135-37; P.A. Mountjoy, *Mycenaean Pottery. An Introduction* (Oxford 1993) 38-42; M. Zavadil, Diademe und Siegel, Tassen und Perlen: Gold in der mykenischen Welt, in: S. Deger-Jalkotzy – N. Schindel (eds), *Gold. Tagung anlässlich der Gründung des Zentrums Archäologie und Altertumswissenschaften an der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 19.-20. April 2007* (Wien 2009) 108-09.

25. H. Maryon, Metal Working in the Ancient World, *AJA* 53 (1949) 107-15; Davis 1977, 53-57.

26. Maryon (n. 25); K. Branigan, *Aegean Metalwork of the Early and Middle Bronze Age* (Oxford 1974) 91-92; Davis 1977, 57-58; A.S. Vassilakis, *Ο χρυσός και ο άργυρος στην Κρήτη κατά την Πρώιμη Εποχή του Χαλκού* (Herakleion 1996) 64; R.D.G. Evely, *Minoan Crafts: Tools and Techniques. An Introduction* (Jonsered 2000) 2: 410-11.

27. Also see D.E. Strong, *Greek and Roman Gold and Silver Plate* (London 1966) 9, 25-26, 42; Davis 1977, 223 n. 522, 344-45; Matthäus 1980, 328, 329, 332.

28. See J.G. Younger, Seven Types of Ring Construction in the Greek Late Bronze Age, in: C. Nicolet (ed.), *Aux origines de l'Hellénisme. La Crète de la Grèce. Hommage à Henri van Effenterre* (Paris 1984) 84 no. III; 85-86 no. IV; A. Xenaki-Sakellariou, Techniques et évolution de la bague-cachet dans l'art créto-mycénien, in: I. Pini (ed.), *Fragen und Probleme der bronzzeitlichen ägäischen Glyptik. Beiträge zum 3. Internationalen Marburger Siegel-Symposium, 5.-7. September 1985, CMS Bh 3* (Berlin 1989) 324-26; N. Dimopoulou – G. Rethemiotakis, The 'Sacred Conversation' Ring from Poros, in: W. Müller (ed.), *Minoisch-Mykenische Glyptik. Stil, Ikonographie, Funktion. V. Internationales Siegel-Symposium, Marburg, 23.-25. September 1999, CMS Bh. 6* (Berlin 2000) 42; E.M. Konstantinidi, *Jewellery Revealed in the Burial Contexts of the Greek Bronze Age* (Oxford 2001) 13; W. Müller, Gold Rings on Minoan Fingers, in: I. Bradfer-Burdet – B. Detournay – R. Laffineur (eds), *Κρησ τεχνίτης. L'artisan crétois. Recueil d'articles en l'honneur de Jean-Claude Poursat, publié à l'occasion des 40 ans de la découverte*

du Quartier Mu, Aegaeum 26 (2005) 174; G. Papasavvas, A Closer Look at the Technology of some Minoan Gold Rings, in: I. Tzachili (ed.), *Aegean Metallurgy in the Bronze Age. Proceedings of an International Symposium held at the University of Crete, Rethymnon, Greece, on November 19-21, 2004* (Athens 2008) 174-75.

29. Strong (n. 27) 42; Davis 1977, 329-30; Laffineur 1977, 73-75.

30. Davis 1977, 330-31; Laffineur 1977, 75.

31. See Davis 1977, 344-45; Laffineur 1977, 75.

32. A. Sakellariou, Un cratère d'argent avec scène de bataille provenant de la IV^e tombe de l'Acropole de Mycènes, *AntK* 17 (1974) 11; Davis 1977, 208-20 no. 83 figs 165-166, esp. 208-09.

33. See A. Sakellariou, Un cratère d'argent avec scène de bataille provenant de la IV^eme tombe de Mycènes, *Atti e memorie del 1° Congresso Internazionale di Micenologia, Roma 27 settembre - 3 ottobre 1967* (Roma 1968) 1, 263; Sakellariou (n. 32) 10-11. By contrast Davis 1977, 222-27 no. 86 figs 176-178, esp. 223 n. 522, disagrees with her, as she does not detect traces of solder. But Sakellariou herself (n. 32) notes that the traces of solder had become almost invisible both as a result of polishing and because the surface of the vessel had been covered with a layer of niello, the residue of which no doubt accounts for the absence of colour difference in the area where the two pieces are joined.

34. Davis 1977, 269-71 no. 111 figs 217-220.

35. Sakellariou (n. 32). According, however, to Davis 1977, 190-91 no. 65 fig. 153, this vessel was made from one sheet.

36. Maryon (n. 25) 114-15; R.F. Tylecote, *The Early History of Metallurgy in Europe* (New York 1987) 80-82 figs 3.4, 3.5; V. Pingel, Technical Aspects of Prehistoric Gold Objects on the Basis of Material Analyses, in: Morteau – Northover (n. 14) 385-98, 394-97.

37. See Davis 1977, 146. According to Davis, in artefacts of Minoan manufacture three rivets are usually used to attach the handle to the lip.

38. Davis 1977, 295.

39. Davis 1977, 294-95 no. 127 figs 237-238.

40. See above, n. 17.

41. Davis 1977, 339-40; also 116-17 no. 22; 117 no. 23; 288-89 no. 122; 291-94 nos 123-26; 294-95 no. 127.

42. Davis 1977, 173-74 no. 57 fig. 142.

43. Davis 1977, 126-27, 328.

44. A silver cup from Tomb Iota in Grave Circle B (Davis 1977, 133-34 no. 28 fig. 104), a gold, banded handle from Tomb V of Grave Circle A (*ibid.*, 168 no. 53 fig. 133) and a gold kantharos from Kalamata (*ibid.*, 305-07 no. 134 figs 248-249).

45. For the precious metal objects see Davis 1977, 235-37 no. 89 fig. 185; Laffineur 1996, 99. On the bronze vessels see Matthäus 1980, 333-34.

46. For details of the repoussé technique see D. Vassilikou, *Ο μυκηναϊκός πολιτισμός* (Athens 1995) 43.

47. According to Laffineur 1996, 96-99, all the Mycenaean metalwork objects in repoussé were made using a carved stone mould.

48. L. animal A (from left to right): 6.4 cm; L. animal B: 6.3 cm; L. animal C: 6.3 cm.

49. Distance between A and B: 1.2 cm; B and C: 1.2 cm; distance of A and C from handle: 1.4 cm.

50. See, for example, the gold goblets from Tomb Gamma of Grave Circle B (Davis 1977, 130-33 no. 27 figs 102-103) and from Tomb IV of Grave Circle A, *ibid.*, no. 50.

51. Davis 1977, 350-51. She notes that traces of compasses are found mainly on vessels of Minoan manufacture. On the likely use of compasses by Minoan potters and stone carvers from as early as the EMI period, see: J.L. Crowley, Geometry in Minoan Design, in: R. Laffineur – P.P. Betancourt (eds), *TEXNH. Craftsmen, Craftswomen and Craftsmanship in the Aegean Bronze Age. Proceedings of the 6th International Aegean Conference/6e Rencontre égéenne internationale Philadelphia, Temple University, 18-21 April 1996, Aegaeum* 16 (1997) 81-92. On the presence of compasses in Mycenaean goldsmiths' workshops, see below, D. Kotzamani *et al.*, Technical report, 55-56 n. 5.

52. Davis 1977, 295-96 no. 128 figs 239-240; Laffineur 1977, 111 no. 76.

53. Persson (n. 24) 74-75 no. 19 fig. 88 pl. IV.1-2; Davis 1977, 267-69 no. 110 figs 214-216; Laffineur 1977, 114 no. 87 fig. 39. It is only Davis who mentions the one incision on the inside of the vessel.

54. Simpson 1999, 781-82.

55. G. Kopcke, Neue Holzfunde aus dem Heraion von Samos, *AM* 82 (1967) 102, 119-20 no. 9 fig. 6 pl. 61.1-2; 120-22 nos 10-13 pls 61.3-4, 62, 63.4-6; 130-31 no. 22 pls 70.2, 71; 138-39 no. 29 fig. 19 pl. 77.3-6; 143 no. 36 pl. 81.4; H. Kyrieleis, Archaische Holzfunde aus Samos, *AM* 95 (1980) 106-07 cat. no. 18 pl. 27.2; *idem.*, The Relations between Samos and the Eastern Mediterranean. Some Aspects, in: V. Karageorghis (ed.), *The Civilizations of the Aegean and their Diffusion in Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean, 2000-600 B.C. Proceedings of an International Symposium, 18-24 September 1989* (Larnaca 1991) 131 pl. 30.2; Simpson 1999, 781-82.

56. G.M.A. Richter, *The Furniture of the Greeks, Etruscans and Romans* (London 1966) 19; Evelyn (n. 26) 188-90 fig. 76; See, by contrast, Simpson 1999, 781 n. 6.

57. See A. Sherratt, Warriors and Traders: Bronze Age Chiefdoms in Central Europe, in: B. Cunliffe (ed.), *Origins. The Roots of European Civilization* (Chicago 1987) 65 fig.

5.9; B. Cunliffe, The Emergence of Élites: Earlier Bronze Age Europe, 2500-1300 BC, in: B. Cunliffe (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated Prehistory of Europe* (Oxford, New York 1994) 267, 272; also Davis 1977, 144-47 no. 38 fig. 115. By contrast, see O. Dickinson, Arts and Artefacts in the Shaft Graves: Some Observations, in: Laffineur – Betancourt (n. 51) 47.

58. Simpson 1999, 781-86. The relatively recent confirmation of the presence of an early form of lathe in jewellers' workshops on the Iberian peninsula in the Late Bronze Age (end of the second millennium BC) is important in this respect: B.R. Armbruster, Rotary-motion Lathe and Drill. Some new technological aspects concerning Late Bronze Age goldwork from southwestern Europe, in: H. Schmidbaur (ed.), *Gold. Progress in Chemistry, Biochemistry and Technology* (New York 1999) 399-423.

59. Hartmann 1982, 144-49. Also see A.G. Karydas – C. Zarkadas, Report on the XRF measurements at Piraeus Archaeological Museum, addendum to: C. Reinholdt, *Der frühbronzezeitliche Schmuckhortfund von Kap Kolonna. Ägina und die Ägäis im Goldzeitalter des 3. Jahrtausends v. Chr., Ägina-Kolonna. Forschungen und Ergebnisse 2* (Wien 2008) 102, plot 1, where the diagram clearly shows the higher level of gold in the gold objects from the Minoan and Mycenaean periods analysed to date.

60. On this see W. Müller, Measurements of Gold Rings with Ultrasound, in: K.P. Foster – R. Laffineur (eds), *METRON. Measuring the Aegean Bronze Age. Proceedings of the 9th International Aegean Conference, New Haven, Yale University, 18-21 April 2002, Aegaeum 24* (2003) 475-82, esp. 482; Karydas – Zarkadas (n. 59).

61. And see Karydas – Zarkadas (n. 59) 101.

62. Much the same percentage levels as those in the alloy of the kylix are seen in some analyses of native gold (mostly placer) cited by H.G. Bachmann, On the Early Metallurgy of Gold. Some Answers and more Questions, in: A. Hauptmann – E. Pernicka – Th. Rehren – Ü. Yalçın (eds), *The Beginnings of Metallurgy. Proceedings of the International Conference "The Beginnings of Metallurgy", Bochum 1995* (Bochum 1999) 269-70 pl. 1 (nos 36, 144).

63. See A. Hartmann, *Prähistorische Goldfunde aus Europa. Spektralanalytische Untersuchungen und deren Auswertung* (Berlin 1970) 13-14; J. Ogden, *Interpreting the Past. Ancient Jewellery* (London 1992) 30; P. Craddock *et al.*, The Refining of Gold in the Classical World, in: D. Williams (ed.), *The Art of the Greek Goldsmith* (London 1998) 111-12.

64. There are two rings from Sousa and part of the decoration from a Mycenaean sword from the Argolid: Hartmann 1982, 35, 150-51 pl. 36.

65. Ogden (n. 63) 22.

66. On this issue see recently Zavadil (n. 24) 112-13 nn. 95-98 with collected bibliography.

67. Lemerle (n. 2); Brommer (n. 2); Bucholz – Jöhrens – Maull (n. 2).

68. On this see: M. Ballintijn, Lions depicted on Aegean Seals: how realistic are they?, in: I. Pini – J.-C. Poursat, *Sceaux minoens et mycéniens. IVe Symposium international, 10-12 septembre 1992, Clermont-Ferrand, CMS Bh. 5* (Berlin 1995) 23-37; Georgoula (n. 5) 36-39 no. 1 (Chr. Boulotis); P. Warren, From Naturalism to Essentialism in Thera and Minoan Art, in: S. Sherratt (ed.), *The Wall Paintings of Thera. Proceedings of the First International Symposium, Petros M. Nomikos Conference Centre, Thera, 30 August - 4 September 1997* (Athens 2000) 364-80; I. Papageorgiou – K. Birtacha, Ο πίθηκος στην εικονογραφία της Εποχής του Χαλκού. Η περίπτωση των τοιχογραφιών από το Ακρωτήρι Θήρας, in: C.G. Doumas (ed.), *Ακρωτήρι Θήρας. Τριάντα χρόνια έρευνας 1967-1997. Επιστημονική Συνάντηση 19-20 Δεκεμβρίου 1997* (Athens 2008) 297, 305-06.

69. See for example Yule 1980, 129-30, who examines the motifs of the dog and the wolf together because, as he observes: "criteria are lacking which permit me to distinguish representations of dogs from those of wolves [...]". See also examples in CMS II, 5, 284 (dog or wolf); IX, 114, 135, 194 (dog or lion); XII, 135a (dog or lion); VS. 1A, 56c (dog or lion); II. 6, 265; II. 8, 86, 239, 251, 335, 337, 338, 339, 341, 366 (dog or lion). See also the dog-like animals represented with some lion features on a gold amulet found in Avaris, Egypt (Tell el Dab'a): below n. 97.

70. CMS I, 308, 335 (= Younger 1988, 112), 363 (= I. Pini [ed.], *Die Tonplomben aus dem Nestorpalast von Pylos* [Mainz a. R. 1997] 17 no. 31A pl. 11 [A. Sakellariou]), 412; I Suppl., 96 (= Younger 1988, 115); VS. IB, 3 (= L. Morgan, Power of the Beast: Human-Animal Symbolism in Egyptian and Aegean Art, *Ä&L* 7 [1998] 29 fig. 8), 190; II.6, 265; VI, 179, 340.

71. The silver goblet of the LHII-III A1 period from the King's burial at Midea, probably the work of some Cretan craftsman settled in mainland Greece: A.W. Persson, *The Royal Tombs at Dendra near Midea* (Lund 1931) 16, 33, 52-54 fig. 30 pl. XVII.1; W.S. Smith, *Interconnections in the Ancient Near East. A Study of the Relationships between the Art of Egypt, the Aegean, and Western Asia* (New Haven, London 1965) 72 fig. 98; E. Vermeule, *Greece in the Bronze Age* (Chicago 1972) 104 fig. 21b; Davis 1977, 282-83 no. 118 fig. 229; Laffineur 1977, 113 no. 84; According to Aruz 2008, 208 and n. 97, as regards its shape, its technique and its style the cup could belong to the LHII period.

72. On the ivory tablets of the LHIIIB period from the Tholos Tomb at Menidi (H.G. Lolling, *Das Kuppelgrab bei Menidi* (Athens 1880) pl. VI.7; Poursat 1977a, 148 no. 429/1991, pl. XLVI; Poursat 1977b, 87 no. 1) and the "armoury" of the palace at Thebes (V. Aravantinos, Βοιωτία. Ιστορικό και αρχαιολογικό περίγραμμα, in: A. Vlachopoulos [ed.], *Αρχαιολογία. Εύβοια και Στερεά Ελλάδα* [Athens 2008] 218 fig. 342).

73. In a miniature wall-painting of the LCII/LMIB period from the north-east bastion of the town at Ayia Irini, Kea: L. Morgan, The Wall Paintings of the North-East Bastion at Ayia Irini, Kea, in: L.G. Mendoni – A.J. Mazarakis Ainian

(eds), *Kea-Kythnos: History and Archaeology. Proceedings of an International Symposium. Kea-Kythnos, 22-25 June 1994* (Athens 1998) 201-10 esp. 204-05 fig. 7; *eadem*, Feline Hunters in the Tell el-Dab'a Paintings: Iconography and Dating, *Ä&L* 14 (2004) 291-92; N. Marinatos – L. Morgan, The dog pursuit scenes from Tell el-Dab'a and Kea, in: L. Morgan (ed.), *Aegean Wall Painting: A Tribute to Mark Cameron, BSA Studies* 13 (2005) 120-22 pl. 15.2; I. Pini, Are there any representations of Feasting in the Aegean Bronze Age?, in: L.A. Hitchcock – R. Laffineur – J. Crowley (eds), *DAIS. The Aegean Feast. Proceedings of the 12th International Aegean Conference, University of Melbourne, Centre for Classics and Archaeology, 25-29 March 2008, Aegaeum* 29 (2008) 252-53 pl. LIc, with reservations as to the suggested reconstruction of the composition.

74. In the fragments of a wall-painting from the LMIB period, undoubtedly an Aegean work, which once decorated the palace F; M. Bietak – N. Marinatos, The Minoan Wall Paintings from Avaris, in: M. Bietak (ed.), *Trade, Power and Cultural Exchange: Hyksos Egypt and the Eastern Mediterranean World 1800-1500 BC, International Symposium at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, November 3, 1993, Ä&L* 5 (1995) 55, 60 fig. 6; M. Bietak, Connections between Egypt and the Minoan World. New Results from Tell el-Dab'a/Avaris, in: W.V. Davies – L. Schofield (eds), *Egypt, the Aegean and the Levant. Interconnections in the 2nd Millennium BC* (London 1995) 24 pl. 4.1; Morgan (n. 70) 29; Morgan 2004 (n. 73) 290-95; Marinatos – Morgan (n. 73) 119-22 pl. 15.1.

75. In the wall-painting from the LHIIIB period with the wild boar hunt from the palace building; G. Rodenwaldt, *Tiryns II. Die Fresken des Palastes* (Athen 1912) 127-31 nos 177-83 fig. 55 pls XI.3, XIII; Buchholz – Karageorghis 1971, 81 no. 1060; Morris 1990, 150 fig. 2a; Chr. Boulotis, Αἰγιατάκης τοιχογραφίες. Ένας πολύχρωμος αφηγηματικός λόγος, *Αρχαίολογία & Τέχνες* 55 (June 1995) fig. 29.

76. In the scene with the same subject matter and dating range as the Tiryns wall-painting; Th. Spyropoulos, Το ανάκτορον του Μινύου εις τον βοιωτικόν Ορχομενόν, *ΑΑΑ* 1974, 320-21 fig. 8; Morris 1990, 151 fig. 4; Boulotis (n. 75) 20.

77. On sherds of the LHIIIB and LHIIC periods: Vermeule – Karageorghis 1982, 101, 214 no. IX. 79; 139, 223 nos XI.71-72; 139, 224 nos XI.73-74; 140, 224 no. XI.78; Sakellarakis 1992, 45 no. 53, 46-47 nos 55-58; W. Güntner, *Figürlich bemalte mykenische Keramik aus Tiryns, Tiryns XII* (2000) 38 pl. 14.4.

78. CMSVS.1B, 190.

79. See above. n. 71. The drawing in fig. 27 is the one which is regularly reproduced, whereas the one in fig. 28 (which comes from the photo-archives of the Athens National Archaeological Museum), has not been published before. The reason why I have chosen to illustrate both reconstructions is that comparing the two drawings with the original scene showed that the drawing in fig. 27 faithfully represents the body, but not the head of the dog, which is correctly depicted in the drawing in fig. 28.

80. CMSI, 363: see above n. 70.

81. CMSII.8, 287.

82. CMS II.8, 326 with bibliography. For the dating of them to the LMIIIA1 period, see: M. Popham, The Final Destruction of the Palace at Knossos. Seals, Sealings and Pottery: A Reconsideration, in: J. Driessen – A. Farnoux, *La Crète mycénienne. Actes de la Table Ronde Internationale organisée par l'École Française d'Athènes 26-28 mars 1991, BCH Suppl.* 30 (1997) 379-81 fig. 2.

83. CMS VII, 126; II.7, 65; II.6, 75; II.8, 287, 326; VI, 396.

84. See, for example, CMSI, 412; VII, 160; II.5, 284; IX, 195; I Suppl., 96, 109; XI, 33; VS. 1B, 3, 276a, 352; III, 415.

85. Karo 1930, 125-26 no. 656 pl. CXXV; Marinatos – Hirmer 1959, fig. 192 above; Davis 1977, 165-68 no. 52 fig. 132; Laffineur 1977, 105 no. 54, fig. 25; Hood 1978, 159 fig. 152; K. Demakopoulou (ed.), *Troy, Mycenae, Tiryns, Orchomenos. Heinrich Schliemann: the 100th anniversary of his death* (Athens 1990) 307 no. 258 (K. Demakopoulou); Thomas 2004, 196 no. 17 fig. 9.33.

86. On the social and political system in mainland Greece in the age of Shaft Graves and the polemic surrounding the subject, see: S. Deger-Jalkotzy, On the Negative Aspects of the Mycenaean Palace System, in: E. de Miro – L. Godart – A. Sacconi (eds), *Atti e memorie del Secondo Congresso Internazionale di Micenologia, Roma-Napoli 14-20 ottobre 1991* (Rome 1996) 2: 718-23, 720-21 nn. 21-22 with earlier bibliography. See also R. Laffineur, Iconography as Evidence of Social and Political Status in Mycenaean Greece, in: R. Laffineur – J. Crowley (eds), *EIKΩN. Aegean Bronze Age Iconography: Shaping a Methodology. Proceedings of the 4th International Aegean Conference, University of Tasmania, Hobart, Australia, 6-9 April 1992, Aegaeum* 8-9 (1992-1993) 105-12.

87. Karo 1930, 97 no. 395 pl. XCIII-XCIV; Marinatos – Hirmer 1959, pls XXXV (lower), XXXVII (lower); Hood 1978, 179 fig. 177; G.E. Mylonas, *Πολύχρυσοι Μυκίναι* (Athens 1983) 32-34 fig. 18 (lower); R. Laffineur, Iconographie minoenne et iconographie mycénienne à l'époque des tombes à fosse, in: P. Darcque – J.-C. Poursat, *L'iconographie minoenne. Actes de la Table Ronde d'Athènes (21-22 avril 1983), BCH Suppl.* 11 (1985) 247-48 n. 13; N. Thomas, The War Animal: Three Days in the Life of the Mycenaean Lion, in: R. Laffineur (ed.), *Polemos. Le contexte guerrier en Égée à l'âge du Bronze. Actes de la 7e Rencontre égéenne internationale, Université de Liège, 14-17 avril 1998, Aegaeum* 19 (1999) 300-02 pl. LXII.1-3; Thomas 2004, 178-79, 183-84 figs 9.21, 9.22 (lower); 195 no. 12 with assembled bibliography. Lions at a flying gallop suggestively similar in style to the felines on the Mycenae dagger also decorate the hull of the "flagship" of the fleet in the Miniature Frieze from the West House of the LCI period settlement at Akrotiri in Thera: R. Laffineur, Mycenaeans at Thera: Further Evidence?, in: R. Hägg – N. Marinatos (eds), *The Minoan Thalassocracy. Myth and Reality, Proceedings of*

the Third International Symposium at the Swedish Institute in Athens, 31 May - 5 June 1982 (Stockholm 1984) 134-36 figs 3-4; L. Morgan, *The Miniature Wall Paintings of Thera: A Study in Aegean Culture and Iconography* (Cambridge 1988) 44-49; W.-D. Niemeier, Mycenaean Elements in the Miniature Fresco from Thera, in: D.A. Hardy – C.G. Doulas – J.A. Sakellarakis – P.M. Warren (eds), *Thera and the Aegean World III. Proceedings of the Third International Congress, Santorini, Greece, 3-9 September 1989* (London 1990) 1: 268 fig. 3; C. Doulas, *The Wall-Paintings of Thera* (Athens 1992) pls 36-37; C.A. Televantou, *Ακρωτήρι Θήρας. Οι τοιχογραφίες της Δυτικής Οικίας* (Athens 1994) 226-31 fig. 50 Z49drawing, Z50drawing col. pls 60-61 pl. 40α-β; N. Marinatos, Nature as Ideology: Landscapes on the Thera Ships, in: Sherratt (n. 68) 908 fig. 4; Thomas 2004, 169-71 fig. 9.5.

88. Niemeier (n. 87) 267-84 esp. 268; Marinatos (n. 87) 911.

89. It is Laffineur above all who defends this view: Laffineur 1984 (n. 87); Laffineur 1985 (n. 87) 247-50; Laffineur 1996, 103; R. Laffineur, De Mycènes à Homère. Réflexions sur l'iconographie guerrière mycénienne, in: Laffineur 1999 (n. 87) 313-17 and n. 1 with collected bibliography.

90. R. Hägg, The Role of Libations in Mycenaean Ceremony and Cult, in: Hägg – Nordquist 1990, 183-84, identifies the kylikes with the vessels used above all for libations in Mycenaean public and private libation ceremonies. On their relationship with libation rituals and/or the ceremonial consumption of wine in symposia and consequently with the governing elite, see G. Sjöflund, Sacrificial Banquets in the "Palace of Nestor", *OpAth* 3 (1980) 237-46; J. Wright, The spatial configuration of belief: the archaeology of Mycenaean religion, in: S. Alcock – R. Osborne (eds), *Placing the Gods: Sanctuaries and Sacred Space in Ancient Greece* (Oxford 1994) 65; *idem*, Empty cups and empty jugs: the social role of wine in Minoan and Mycenaean societies, in: P. McGovern – S. Fleming – S. Katz (eds), *The Origin and Ancient History of Wine* (Philadelphia 1995) 289-302; M. L. Galaty, *Nestor's Wine Cups. Investigating Ceramic Manufacture and Exchange in a Late Bronze Age "Mycenaean" State* [= *BAR Intern. Series* 766, Oxford 1999] 8, 31; H. Whittaker, Religious Symbolism and the Use of Gold in Burial Contexts in the Late Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean Periods, *SMEA* 48 (2006) 286-87; *eadem*, The Role of Drinking in Religious Ritual in the Mycenaean Period, in: Hitchcock – Laffineur – Crowley (n. 73) 90-91.

91. See above n. 72.

92. A sherd of the LHIIIB1 period from the Acropolis at Mycenae, on which a dog is depicted running with its head turned to look back: Vermeule – Karageorghis 1982, 101, 214 no. IX.79; Sakellarakis 1992, 45 no. 53, and a sherd of the LHIIIC period also from the Mycenae Acropolis: Vermeule – Karageorghis 1982, 139, 224 no. XI.73; Sakellarakis 1992, 47 no. 58. Sakellarakis 1992, 45 stresses, however, just how rarely the dog is found as a main motif on figurative pottery.

93. See above n. 17.

94. See Laffineur 1977, 63 n. 137 with collected examples.

95. In relief on the lid of an EMII stone pyxis from tomb I at Mochlos: R.B. Seager, *Explorations in the Island of Mochlos* (Boston, New York 1912) 20-21 figs 4-5; Marinatos – Hirmer 1959, fig. 6; P. Warren, *Minoan Stone Vases* (Cambridge 1969) 82 figs P457, D250; Buchholz – Karageorghis 1971, no. 1119; Hood 1978, 139 fig. 131; and on the lid of a stone pyxis apparently made by the same craftsman, found in an EMII burial in the Gorge of the Dead, Zakros: N. Platon, *Zakros. The Discovery of a Lost Palace of Ancient Crete* (New York 1971) 68-69.

For the first appearance of dogs in EHII pottery see J.L. Caskey, Chalandriani in Syros, in: L.F. Sandler (ed.), *Essays in memory of Karl Lehmann* (New York 1964) 65 n. 13. For their depiction as a main motif on LHIIIB-C Pictorial Style vases, see n. 92. See also Vermeule – Karageorghis 1982, 214 no. IX.82; Sakellarakis 1992, 45 no. 54.

96. On Early Minoan and Early Cycladic seals, whether chased or modelled: *CMS* I, 415c, 417c, 419c, 420a; VIII, 3b, 5c, 9, 19a, 20b, 31a-b; VII, 5b, 6, 17c, 206, 207; II.1, 77, 209, 213, 418, 422, 427c; IX, 1a, 3b, 5c, 14c; II.2, 78c; XII, 14c, 28c, 31a, 41a, 42c, 44b, 45b, 48c; XIII, 79b, 140a; VS. 1A, 225; VS. 2, 487; VI, 45c, 49c, 54b, 61b. See also Yule 1980, 129-30.

On Middle Minoan seals and sealings: *CMS* VII, 216b; II.5, 299, 300; IX, 16a, 26a; XII, 61a, 62b, 64b, 65a, 66b; II.2, 113c, 139a, 173; II.8, 37 (Hieroglyphic Sign), 38 (Hieroglyphic Sign), 75 (Hieroglyphic Sign); VS. 3, 16b; III, 152c, 157b, 162b, 163b, 166b, 174a, 175c, 177b, 179a, 180a, 184a, 197a, 199a, 207a, 211a; VI, 25c, 42a, 91a (Hieroglyphic Sign), 97b, 127 (Hieroglyphic Sign), 104a (Hieroglyphic Sign).

On Late Minoan and Late Helladic seals and sealings: *CMS* I, 255, 256 (= Younger 1988, 48); VIII, 115 (= Younger 1988, 192); VII, 64 (= Younger 1988, 5); IV, 185 (= Younger 1988, 48), 286, 289; XII, 135a (= Younger 1988, 48); V, 677a (= Younger 1988, 48 fig. 12); VS. 1A, 77, 160; VS. 1B, 452; VS. 2, 99; II.7 64, 65; II.6, 75-80, 92; II.8, 287, 326; VS. 3, 21, 155, 393, 396; III, 506, 507c; VI, 357, 396, 397, 398. See also the gold seal from the Tomb in Poros, Herakleion, with a depiction of a dog in front of a private house: N. Dimopoulou, A gold signet disc from Poros, Herakleion: the guard dog and the garden, in: *Essays in honor of Peter Warren* (under press). I am most grateful to Dr Angeliki Lembessi, who brought this very recent find to my attention.

97. They appear arranged heraldically for the first time on an ECII silver diadem from Kastri settlement at Chalandriani, Syros: Caskey (n. 95) 65 fig. 5; L. Goodison, Horizon and Body: Some Aspects of Cycladic Symbolism, in: N. Brodie – J. Doole – G. Gavalas – C. Renfrew (eds), *Horizon: A Colloquium on the prehistory of the Cyclades* (Cambridge 2008) 425 fig. 39a; and on an EMII golden diadem from the Tomb II at Mochlos: Seager (n. 95) 26-27 figs 8-9 no. II.4.

They appear arranged heraldically on two pairs of gold earrings of the Middle Bronze Age from the Aegina Treasure: R.

Higgins, *The Aegina Treasure. An Archaeological Mystery* (London 1979) 26 fig. 17; 63 no. 2 figs 64, 65; *idem*, *Greek and Roman Jewellery* (London 1980) 65 fig. 4b; R. Laffineur, The "Aegina Treasure" revisited, in: E. Konsolaki-Giannopoulou (ed.), *Αργοσαρωνικός. Πρακτικά Ιον Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Ιστορίας και Αρχαιολογίας του Αργοσαρωνικού, Πόρος, 26-29 Ιουνίου 1998* (Athens 2003) 43-45; also in Fitton 2009 see: J.L. Fitton – N. Meeks – L. Joyner, The Aegina Treasure: Catalogue and Technical Report, 18-19 nos 2-3, figs 18-19; R. Laffineur, The Aegina Treasure: the Mycenaean Connection, 41; and D. Collon, The Aegina Treasure: Near Eastern Connections, 44.

They are depicted in the same way on a gold pendant from a plundered tomb of the early 13th Dynasty (ca. 1780-1740 BC) in Avaris, Egypt (Tell el-Dab'a): G. Walberg, A Gold Pendant from Tell el-Dab'a, *ÄöL* 2 (1991) 111-14; Bietak in Davies – Schofield (n. 74) 19-20 pl. 14.1; J. Aruz, Appendix: the Gold Pendant from Tell el-Dab'a, in: Bietak (n. 74), 44-46 fig. 39; H. Siebenmorgen (ed.), *Im Labyrinth des Minos: Kreta - die erste europäische Hochkultur* (exhibition catalogue, Karlsruhe, Badisches Landesmuseum, München 2000) 319 no. 307 (M. Bietak); Aruz 2008, 109-10 fig. 246; R. Schiestl, Three pendants: Tell el-Dab'a, Aegina and a new silver pendant from the Petrie Museum, in: Fitton 2009, 53-56 figs 190-191.

Seated on a stepped base it crowns a Minoan bronze pin from Palaikastro: M. Effinger, *Minoischer Schmuck* (Oxford 1996) 57, 274 Pa 4a, pl. 13p (chance find).

Depicted in semi-recumbent pose they decorate seven cut-out gold sheets from Tomb III in Grave Circle A: Karo 1930, 50 nos 41-42 pl. XXVI.

98. In addition to the object mentioned in n. 72 (the Menidi plaque), the subject also appears on a small LHI period wooden pyxis from Tomb V of Grave Circle A, on both sides of which are depicted two pairs of carved dogs on stepped, ivory bases which are perhaps meant to suggest the roofs of houses: B. Schweitzer, Hunde auf dem Dach, *AM* 55 (1930) 107-18; Poursat 1977a, 62 no. 215/812 pl. 18 (with collected bibliography); Aruz 2008, 146. In any case the work is thought to be Minoan, influenced by Egyptian models.

99. In a frieze from Hall 64 of the palace at Pylos about twenty hunting hounds are depicted sitting one next to the other. The frieze runs parallel with a second frieze with battle scenes: M. Lang, *The Palace of Nestor at Pylos in Western Messenia. II, The Frescoes* (Princeton 1969) 119-22 nos 38-41 pls 62-67; 137 col. pls G, P.

100. For the possible presence of a dog in a hunting scene on a marble plaque of the ECII-III period, found at Korfi t'Aroniou, Naxos, see Chr. Doumas, Κορφή τ' Αρώνιου. Μικρά ανασκαφική έρευνα εν Νάξω, *ΑΔ* 20 (1965), Μελέται 50-52 no. III drawing 5 pl. 36β. In the EMII-III period scenes reminiscent of the hunt and including hounds are depicted on two seals: *CMS* VIII, 12; II.1, 469.

On Middle Minoan seals and sealings, see *CMS* II.2, 87a; II.8, 353. On the appearance of hunting scenes with hounds in

MMII seal carving, see Pini 1985, 154.

In the seal carving of the Late Bronze Age the subject is certainly found more often: see above n. 70. And see also *CMS* I, 81 (= Younger 1988, 116 fig. 84), 165 (= Younger 1988, 159-60); VII, 96 (= Younger 1988, 111-12 fig. 76), 160 (= Younger 1988, 105), 175 (= Younger 1988, 115); II.5, 284; IX, 145 (= Pini 1985, 162; Younger 1988, 117 fig. 85), 195 (= Pini 1985, 161; Younger 1988, 105 fig. 67); XIII, 71; V, 656 (= Younger 1988, 162 fig. 116); X, 130 (= Younger 1988, 115); I Suppl., 109; II.3, 33; XI, 33; VS. 1A, 174; II.7, 99, 168; VS. 1B, 74, 276a, 341, 352, 356; II.6, 96; II.8, 353, 354, 366 (= Pini 1985, 160 fig. 17, 162); VS. 3, 153 (= L. Marangou [ed.], *Μινωικός και ελληνικός πολιτισμός από την συλλογή Μπυσσάκη* [Athens 1992] 219 no. 293 [I. Pini]), 400; III, 414, 415; VI, 180, 375, 377, 378, 384, 399-402.

For the presence of hounds in hunting scenes on pottery see above nn. 77, 92. Cf. also Vermeule – Karageorghis 1982, 138, 223 no. XI.70; Sakellarakis 1992, 24-25 no. 10. See also the depicted scene on a LHIIC jug's fragment from Phylakopi, Melos: C. Renfrew (ed.), *The Archaeology of Cult: The Sanctuary at Phylakopi* (London 1985) 205 no. 508; Goodison (n. 97) 425 fig. 39b.

For the depiction of hunting dogs on Mycenaean metalwork see above n. 71.

In ivories scenes of dogs hunting wild animals appear on a LHIIIB-period plaque from the palace at Thebes: see above n. 72 and on a LHIIIB plaque from a tomb in Spata: Poursat 1977a, 160 no. 463/2048 pl. XLIX; Poursat 1977b, 87-88 no. 2. And see the LCII plate from Kition: V. Karageorghis, *Excavations at Kition, I. The Tombs* (Nicosia 1974) 61 fig. 1; Poursat 1977b, 87-88 no. 3 pl. XV.3-4.

On the appearance of the subject in wall-paintings see above notes 73-76. See also the hunting scene which once decorated a room above Hall 46 in the Palace of Pylos with men accompanied by dogs: Lang (n. 99) 40, 107-08 nos 12-14; 205-07 pls 50, 51, 133 col. pl. M.

101. This motif is found exclusively on seals: *CMS* II.3, 52 (= Younger 1988, 149); VS. 1A, 119; VS. 1B, 58; X, 161 (= Younger 1988, 150); II.8, 236, 248, 251. In an attempt to analyse the iconographic code used in Aegean seal carving to depict divinities, Crowley connects some of the above-mentioned scenes with the existence of a Hound Lord and a Hound Lady in the Creto-Mycenaean pantheon, in other words with the depiction of a Hunter-Warrior God hunting with his hound: J.L. Crowley, In honour of the Gods – but which Gods? Identifying deities in Aegean Glyptik, in: Hitchcock – Laffineur – Crowley (n. 73) 75-87 pls XII.27, 32, XIV.57, 58. However, it is very likely that this subject could be depicted as *pars pro toto* of a larger hunting scene, not necessarily connected with a divinity.

102. *CMS* I, 161 (= Younger 1988, 93); VII, 126 (= Younger 1988, 89).

103. A few figurines of dogs appear among the Middle Minoan zoomorphic offerings at the peak sanctuary in

Petsophas: R. Rutkowski, *Petsophas. A Cretan Peak Sanctuary*, SIMA, ser. I, 1 (Warsaw 1991) 108-09 pls XLVIII.2, 11-12, XLIX.2; N. Leipen, Finds in the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Canada, Appendix in *ibid.*, 126 nos 21-23 pls LIV.1-2, 4, 127; nos 27-29 pls LIV.3, 5-6. For an alternative interpretation of the figurines from the peak sanctuaries at Petsophas and Traostalos, see: P.E. Blomberg, A New Interpretation of the Figurines from Petsophas and Traostalos, *Πεπραγμένα Θ' Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*, A4 (Herakleion 2004) 333-48, according to which all these types of figurines represent depictions of constellations or parts thereof. Thus the figurines of dogs are interpreted as depictions of Sirius (the Dog Star): Blomberg, *op. cit.*, 343 pl. G. See also two figurines of dogs or lion cubs, one in gold and the other in steatite, from the peak sanctuary at Juktas: A. Karetsou, *IIAE* (1974) 237 pl. 179β; A. Karetsou, *IIAE* (1975) B, 337 pl. 264ζ.

For Late Minoan clay figurines of dogs see R.A. Higgins, Terracotta Figurines, in: M.R. Popham *et al.*, *The Minoan Unexplored Mansion at Knossos*, *BSA Suppl.* 17 (1984) 199, 202 no. 17 pl. 194.2; no. 19 pl. 194.7. See also Guggisberg 1996, 164-65 no. 576 pl. 42.6.

On the presence of the dog in Minoan bronzes, see: A. Pilali-Papasteriou, *Die bronzenen Tierfiguren aus Kreta*, *PBFI* 3 (1985) 92-93 no. 231.

On Mycenaean clay figurines of dogs, see: E. French, The Development of Mycenaean Terracotta Figurines, *BSA* 66 (1971) 160-61 figs 12-13 pl. 24b (no. 39.349), pl. 26b (no. 55.26), pl. 27b; A. Tamvaki, Some Unusual Mycenaean Terracottas from the Citadel House Area, 1954-69, *BSA* 68 (1973) 224-25 nos 60-62 figs 11-12.

104. There are three rhytons in all: one which may have come from Tiryns, now in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford: M.I. Maximova, *Les vases plastiques dans l'Antiquité* (Paris 1927) 76-77 fig. 7; C. Doumas, A Mycenaean Rhyton from Naxos, *AA* 83 (1968) 384-85 fig. 19; Buchholz – Karageorghis 1971, 102-03 no. 1240; Guggisberg 1996, 234 n. 1053 with collected bibliography.

Another in the Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire in Brussels: Maximova (*op. cit.*) 75 fig. 6; R. Laffineur, Le rhyton égéen en forme de tête de chien des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, *BullMusArt* 45 (1973) 291-300; Guggisberg 1996, 234 n. 1053 with collected bibliography.

And a third one in the Pierides Collection in Larnaca: V. Karageorghis, *Ancient Cypriote Art in the Pierides Foundation* (Larnaca 1985) 132-33 fig. 117; Guggisberg 1996, 234 n. 1053 with collected bibliography.

105. *CMS* II.8, 326.

106. Niemeier 1986, 84-88; Younger 1995, 188 nos 242, 245, 246.

107. For lions see *CMS* I, 46; XI, 47, 176; II.7, 73. This subject finds monumental expression in the sculpture which crowns the Lion Gate at Mycenae, this time with the addition of a column, as *pars pro toto* of the royal house, between the

two lions: G.E. Mylonas, *Ancient Mycenae. The Capital City of Agamemnon* (London 1957) 25-26; *idem*, *Mycenae and the Mycenaean Age* (Princeton 1966) 174-75; C. Boulotis, Villes et palais dans l'art égéen du IIe millénaire av. J.-C., in: P. Darcque – R. Treuil (eds), *L'habitat égéen préhistorique. Actes de la Table Ronde Internationale organisée par le Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, L'Université de Paris I et l'École Française d'Athènes (Athènes, 23-25 juin 1987)* *BCH Suppl.* XIX (1990) 454-57 fig. 18. For griffins see *CMS* I, 73, 98. For apes: *CMS* II.6, 74. See also Papageorgiou – Birtacha (n. 68) 295-97 fig. 8y; 297 n. 45 with further bibliography.

108. Niemeier 1986, 84-88; Boulotis (*op. cit.*) 456-57.

109. *CMS* I, 255; Younger 1988, 48.

110. See M. Bietak, Discussion of the Taureador Scenes from Avaris (Tell el Dab'a/‘Ezbet Helmi), in: M. Bietak – N. Marinatos – Cl. Palyvou with a contribution by A. Brysbaert, *Taureador Scenes in Tell el Dab'a (Avaris) and Knossos* (Vienna 2007) 70-71. According to N. Marinatos, Rosette and Palm on the Bull Frieze from Tell el Dab'a and the Minoan Solar Goddess of Kingship, in *ibid.*, 145-50, this iconographic subject is related to a female solar deity of kingship. See also Niemeier 1986, 84-85. For its presence in Minoan and Mycenaean art see J.L. Crowley, *The Aegean and the East. An Investigation into the Transference of Artistic Motifs between the Aegean, Egypt and the Near East in the Bronze Age* (Jonsered 1989) 87-88.

111. On a cylinder seal of the LM/LHII period from the Erlenmeyer Collection (Younger 1995, 185-86 no. 222), on a seal of the LMIIIA1 period from Poros (*CMS* II.3, 193; Younger 1995, 186 no. 228 pl. LXXg) and on an undated seal from Knossos (*CMS* II.8, 248; Younger 1995, 186 no. 229 pl. LXXh).

112. Hamilakis 1996, 163.

113. L.P. Day, Dog Burials in the Greek World, *AJA* 88 (1984) 21-32; K. Trantalidou, Companions from the Oldest Times: Dogs in Ancient Greek Literature, Iconography and Osteological Testimony, in: L.M. Snyder – E.A. Moore (eds), *Dogs and People in Social, Working, Economic or Symbolic Interaction. Proceedings of the 9th Conference of the International Council of Archaeozoology, Durham, August 2002* (Oxford 2006) 100 pl. 3; 101 pl. 4.

114. Hamilakis 1996, 161-66.

115. On the presence of the word ku-na-ke-ta-i (κυναγέται) on the tablet PY Na 248 see: M. Ventris – J. Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek* (ed. J. Chadwick) (Cambridge 1973²) 132, 299 no. 91; F. Aura Jorro, *Diccionario griego-español, I. Diccionario micénico I* (Madrid 1999) 402 s.v. ku-na-ke-ta-i. For other derivatives from the root *kuv* on Linear B tablets from Knossos and Thebes see *ibid.* 402 s.v. ku-ne, ku-ne-u, and 402-03 s.v. ku-ni-ta; V.L. Aravantinos – M. Del Foro – L. Godart – A. Sacconi, *Thèbes. Fouilles de la Cadmée IV. Les textes de Thèbes (1-433)* (Rome 2005) 5 (ku-na-ki-si), 20 (ku-na-ki-si, ku-no), 24-25 (ku-ne, ku-no), 37 (ku-ne), 72 (ku-no), 78 (ku-no).

116. On this subject, see Morris 1990, 155; Hamilakis 1996, 163-64.
117. On depictions of ivy leaves in Minoan and Mycenaean art and their symbolism, see Otto 1996, 815-31.
118. For a comprehensive discussion of the subject on talismanic seals, see: A. Onassoglou, *Die 'talismanischen' Siegel*, *CMS Bb.* 2 (1985) 44-48.
119. See W.-D. Niemeier, *Die Palaststilkeramik von Knossos. Stil, Chronologie und historischer Kontext* (Berlin 1985) 66-72 figs 22.16-18, 22.23, 22.39-41, 22.43-44, 22.52-54; L.V. Watrous, *Kommos III. The Late Bronze Age Pottery* (Princeton 1992) 87 no. 1512 fig. 56; 89 no. 1562 fig. 57.
120. See Furumark 1972, 268-274 fig. 36.30-37; Niemeier, (n. 119) 72-73 fig. 23.7.
121. On the LCI wall-paintings which decorated the second floor of the Xeste 3 at Akrotiri: A. Vlachopoulos, *The Wall Paintings from the Xeste 3 Building at Akrotiri: Towards an Interpretation of the Iconographic Programme*, in: Brodie – Doole – Gavalas – Renfrew (n. 97) 454 figs 41.47-49.
122. See some examples from the chamber tombs at Mycenae of the LHIIIA-B period: A. Xenaki-Sakellariou, *Οι θαλαμωτοί τάφοι των Μυκηνών ανασκαφής Χρ. Τσούντα (1887-1898)* (Paris 1985) 215 no. X 2933 (1) pl. 98,II (gold strip); 277 no. Γ 5413 (4-5) pl. 136; 198 no. Γ 2929 (4) pl. 88 (glass plaques); 305 no. 100. See also A.J.B. Wace, *Chamber Tombs at Mycenae* (Oxford 1932) 62-63 no. 80a pl. 32. The same motif is found moreover on some glass or gold beads: Persson (n. 71) pl. 18; Wace, *op. cit.*, 26-27 fig. 12.42, 221; Xenaki-Sakellariou, *op. cit.*, 64 no. Γ 2395 (11) pls 5-6; 246 no. X 3153 (7) pl. 117; 257 no. X 3186 pl. 125; 288 no. X 4932 (6) pl. 143; 305 no. 100.
123. See G.S. Korres, *Ανασκαφαί εν Περιστεριά Πύλου, ΠΑΕ* (1976) B, 495-97 fig. 8 pl. 263α-β.
124. See Davis 1977, 157-59 no. 46 fig. 124; 260-63 no. 107 figs 206-207; 271-73 no. 112 fig. 221; 296-97 no. 129 figs 241-242; 300-02 no. 131 fig. 244; 311-12 no. 137 fig. 252; 324-25 no. 147 figs 263-264; 325-26 no. 148 fig. 265. Exactly the same thing is found on bronze vessels: Matthäus 1980, pls 17.153, 18.154, 21.188, 33.281-82, 34.285-87, 39.324-26, 40.327-29, 331, 42.351.
125. S. Marinatos, *Περί τους νέους βασιλικούς τάφους των Μυκηνών*, in: *Γέρας Αντωνίου Κεραμοπούλλου* (Athens 1953) 72-75 fig. 2; Mylonas 1957 (n. 107) 135-37 fig. 45; Hood 1978, 98; N. Marinatos, *Celebrations of Death and the Symbolism of the Lion Hunt*, in: Hägg – Nordquist 1990, 144-45 fig. 3; Otto 1996, 816-17 fig. 3. See also the depiction of an ivy leaf on a fragment of another stele from Grave Circle A, on which no other decoration survives – though in accordance with the iconography on the others, it is thought this stele too would have had a scene related to war or hunting: E. Protonotariou-Deilaki, *Burial Customs and Funerary Rites in the Prehistoric Argolid*, in: Hägg – Nordquist 1990, 81 fig. 27; Otto 1996, 816-17 fig. 2.
126. A. Milchhöfer, *Die Museen Athens* (Athen 1881) 98 no. 13a; 100 no. 14b; P. Cavvadias, *Les Musées d'Athènes. Musée National: Antiquités mycéniennes et égyptiennes, sculptures, vases, terre-cuites, bronzes. Musée de l'Acropole* (Athènes 1894) 18-19, 20; V. Staïs, *Collection mycénienne du Musée National* (Athènes 1915) 2: 64 no. 656, 75-76 nos 957-960.

ΕΙΡΗΝΗ ΠΑΠΑΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΥ

Η χρυσή μυκηναϊκή κύλικα του Μουσείου Μπενάκη. Ένα κίβδηλο τέχνημα;

Η χρυσή κύλικα με αρ. ευρ. 2108 αποκτήθηκε από το Μουσείο Μπενάκη το 1939 και, χρονολογούμενη στους μυκηναϊκούς χρόνους, αποτέλεσε μαζί με τα κοσμήματα του «Θησαυρού της Θήβας» τον πυρήνα της προϊστορικής συλλογής του Μουσείου. Προερχόμενη από αγορά, άρα εξ ορισμού ύποπτη, δεν κίνησε παρά ελάχιστα το ενδιαφέρον του επιστημονικού κοινού σε τέτοιο μάλιστα σημείο ώστε να λησμονηθεί, αν και ιδιότυπη, ή μάλλον εξαιτίας αυτού. Υποψίες για την αυθεντικότητά της έχουν πάντως διατυπωθεί, αλλά μόνον ανεπισημώς. Η κύλικα έχει κατασκευαστεί από τέσσερα φύλλα χρυσού ενωμένα μεταξύ τους με κόλληση, εκτός από το έλασμα της λα-

βής, το οποίο έχει στερεωθεί με καρφιά. Από τυπολογική άποψη, παρουσιάζει στα επιμέρους μορφολογικά της στοιχεία αρκετές συνάφειες με χρυσά μυκηναϊκά αγγεία, καθώς και με κεραμικά δείγματα της ΥΕΙΙ-ΙΙΑ1 περιόδου. Ως προς την τεχνική της κατασκευής της, είναι συμβατή σε πολλά με όσα δεδομένα έχουν συλλεγεί για τη μεταλλοτεχνία της Ύστερης Εποχής του Χαλκού. Τη χαρακτηρίζουν, ωστόσο, κάποιες τεχνικές ιδιαιτερότητες που σπανίζουν ανάμεσα στα αγγεία από πολύτιμα μέταλλα· δεν είναι όμως ανύπαρκτες. Εξαίρεση συνιστούν τόσο ο τρόπος με τον οποίο έχει προσηλωθεί η λαβή στο χερίλος, όσο και η κατασκευή της από τέσσερα ελάσματα. Επιπλέον, σε

σημαντικό βαθμό από τα χρυσά αιγαιακά σκεύη της 2ης χιλιετίας π.Χ. αποκλίνει ως προς την ανάλυση του μετάλλου κατασκευής της. Πρόκειται για καθαρό χρυσό, στην πρωτοφανή αναλογία του 98,8% με ελάχιστα ποσοστά αργύρου και χαλκού, ο οποίος είτε συνιστά μια σπάνια εξαίρεση αυτοφυσούς χρυσού, είτε ανήκει στην κατηγορία του εξευγενισμένου. Εάν ισχύει η δεύτερη υπόθεση, η κύλικά συγκαταλέγεται μάλλον στα κίβδηλα, δεδομένου ότι ο εξευγενισμός του χρυσού φαίνεται πως λαμβάνει χώρα μετά την εμφάνιση της νομισματοκοπίας. Σε κάθε περίπτωση θα πρέπει, πάντως, να υπογραμμιστεί ότι δεν διαθέτουμε πλούσια βάση δεδομένων με αναλύσεις επί του συνόλου των αιγαιακών χρυσών.

Η κύλικά κοσμεύεται στο σώμα με έκτυπη παράσταση τριών κυνηγετικών σκυλιών που αποδίδονται σε ιπτάμενο καλπασμό το ένα πίσω από το άλλο. Από άποψη ύφους, ασύμβατη με τη μυκηναϊκή εικονογραφία είναι η απόδοση της κεφαλής και ιδιαίτερα των αυτιών. Από εικονογραφική άποψη, το διακοσμητικό της θέμα, αν και άπαξ εμφανιζόμενο, συνάδει με όσα στοιχεία συνελέγησαν γύρω από την εικονογραφία του σκύλου στο Αιγαίο της 2ης χιλιετίας π.Χ., που, ας σημειωθεί, δεν έχει ενδελεχώς μελετηθεί. Η απεικόνιση του ζώου μόνου του σε ποικίλες μορφές τέχνης ήδη από την προανακτορική περίοδο, η εμφάνισή του, δηλαδή, με υπόσταση συμβολική, καθιστά εξαιρετικά πιθανή την κόσμηση μιας χρυσής κύλικας, αγγείου πρόδηλα εντασσόμενου στα σύμβολα κύρους, με τη συγκεκριμένη σκηνή, η οποία υποβάλλει αυτόματα την ιδέα του κυνηγιού. Με τη συγκεκριμένη δράση που αποτελούσε ένα ιδεώδες μέσο προβολής δύναμης και ειδικών δεξιοτήτων φαίνεται πως είχε συνδεθεί η μυκη-

ναϊκή άρχουσα τάξη. Ως προς την κόσμηση της λαβής της με σχηματοποιημένα φύλλα κισσού σε αλυσιδωτή διάταξη, βρίσκει μάλιστα ένα σημαντικό παράλληλο σε χρυσό ΜΕ/ΥΕΙ αγγείο από τάφο της Περιστεριάς, ενώ το συγκεκριμένο μοτίβο δεν είναι άγνωστο στη μινωική και τη μυκηναϊκή κεραμική, τη μυκηναϊκή μικροτεχνία, αλλά και την αιγαιακή τέχνη των τοιχογραφιών.

Η υπόθεση της αυθεντικότητας της κύλικας προσκρούει, συνεπώς, περισσότερο σε ζητήματα που αφορούν την τεχνική της κατασκευής της και την ανάλυση του μετάλλου και πολύ λιγότερο, αν όχι καθόλου, στην ιδιότητα του διακόσμου της. Η υπόθεση της μη αυθεντικότητάς της εγείρει, βεβαίως, μια αλληλουχία ερωτημάτων με σημαντικότερο ανάμεσά τους το πώς ένας κίβδηλοποιός, που θα πρέπει να είχε δράσει έως τα τέλη της δεκαετίας του 1930, θα γνώριζε τη συμβολική αξία που ενίοτε αποκτά ο σκύλος στο αιγαιακό θεματολόγιο της Ύστερης Εποχής του Χαλκού, όταν εκείνη την εποχή αλλά και για πολλές δεκαετίες αργότερα στο συγκεκριμένο ζώο αποδιδόταν μια περιθωριακή και μόνο θέση. Γιατί, με άλλα λόγια, θα αναπαριστούσε ένα διακοσμητικό θέμα που τότε θα έμοιαζε ακατάλληλο για να ποικίλει μια χρυσή κύλικά, ένα αντικείμενο γοήτρου και κοινωνικού status; Μήπως θα μπορούσαμε να υποθέσουμε ότι το συγκεκριμένο αγγείο αποτελεί αντίγραφο μιας άγνωστης ή χαμένης για μας πρωτότυπης δημιουργίας των μυκηναϊκών χρόνων;

Εφόσον τα ερωτήματα αυτά παραμένουν μετέωρα, η χρυσή κύλικά του Μουσείου Μπενάκη εντάσσεται αναμφίβολα στα αινιγματικά εκείνα αντικείμενα, η αποσαφήνιση της ταυτότητας των οποίων είναι μάλλον υπόθεση του μέλλοντος.

