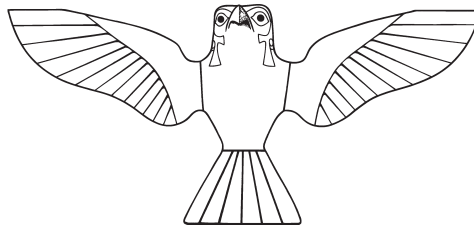


AMILLA

The Quest for Excellence

Studies Presented to Guenter Kopcke in
Celebration of His 75th Birthday





Guenter Kopcke in his office at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, June 2010.

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edited by

Robert B. Koehl



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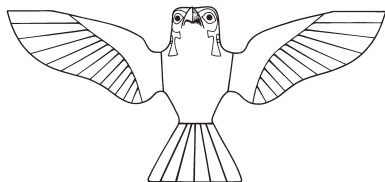
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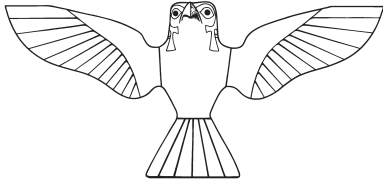
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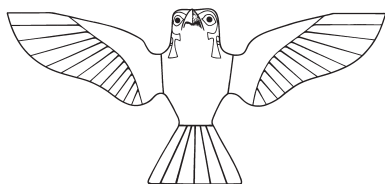
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Preface and Acknowledgments

I first encountered Guenter Kopcke when I was invited in 1978 to address the New York Aegean Bronze Age Colloquium, which he co-founded in 1974 with Ellen Davis and Malcolm Wiener (inspired by Edith Porada's Near Eastern Seminar at Columbia University), and which continues to thrive in no small measure due to Guenter's enthusiastic support and participation. But it was in the following years when, as a member of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens from 1979–1981, I became acquainted with his students that I began to gain a deeper understanding of the man whom they revered with an almost hushed awe: an awe of his brilliance and an awe of the extraordinary level of intellectual rigor that he brought to the field of ancient art and archaeology. It is this rigor and an especially probing desire to understand the ancient world—an *ἀμιλλὰ* ("a striving for superiority") of the mind and spirit—that informs the thoughts and words of our honoree.

Guenter Kopcke was born in Wiesbaden, Germany, in 1935 and grew up in Hamburg, handsome and athletic. Knowing that he was planning to enter the University of Tübingen, his teacher of ancient Greek at Gymnasium asked Guenter to send his regards to Bernhard Schweitzer, Professor of Classical Archaeology there, with whom he had studied. Schweitzer invited the newly arrived undergraduate to attend his lectures on the art and archaeology of Bronze Age Crete and Greece and to enroll in his seminar on Roman baths. Schweitzer's lectures and seminar kindled in Guenter a lifelong passion for ancient art, history, and archaeology, especially for the world of the Aegean Bronze Age.

Following the peripatetic system of a German university education, Guenter went on to the University of Basel to study with Karl Schefold, and then to the Ludwig-Maximilians University of Munich for additional study with Ernst Buschor and Ernst Homann-Wedeking. Under Homann-Wedeking's guidance, he wrote a dissertation on fourth-century B.C.E. Athenian gilded Black Glaze Ware (published as Kopcke 1964). After receiving his doctorate in 1962, Guenter served for three years as an assistant curator in the Glyptothek of the Staatliche Antikensammlungen in Munich under Dieter Ohly, supervising the workshop created for the installation of the new exhibition of the pedimental sculptures from the Temple of Athena Aphaia on Aegina. Working with the sculptors engaged in their restoration and display taught him volumes about the practical and theoretical issues that confront artists, and it provided him with unique insights into the processes of artistic creation. During those years, Guenter also participated in the excavations of the Heraion at Samos and, thanks to his intervention, saw to it that the extraordinary series of Iron Age and Early Archaic wooden votive objects discovered there were carefully conserved, inviting science into the world of archaeology at a time when, unimaginable today, they would have otherwise been left to decay.

Upon leaving the Staatliche Antikensammlungen, Guenter taught for two years as "wissenschaftlicher Assistant" in the Archaeological Institute of the University of Zurich under Professor Hansjörg Bloesch, the noted authority on Greek vases. When James McCredie left New York University's Institute of Fine Arts (IFA) for the directorship of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens in 1969, Guenter was offered a three-year stint as his replacement at the IFA, and he eventually accepted a permanent position there as the Avalon Foundation Professor.

Teaching at the IFA offered Guenter the freedom to explore a broad range of interests within the field of classical archaeology. Since his earliest years of study, he has been deeply interested in examining the Greeks in their varying artistic incarnations, in how they expressed themselves to one another and to the outside world. He has been concerned particularly with questions of cultural and artistic continuity, specifically how to bridge the "divide" from the Bronze to the Iron Ages. He has sought to trace the origins of the Classical Greeks back to the Bronze Age through seminars, at a major conference that he organized in 1990 at the IFA ("Greece between East and West: 10th–8th Centuries B.C."), and in many of his publications.

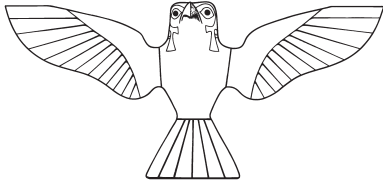
Indeed, Guenter has written masterfully and with credible insights on Aegean Bronze Age society, trade, and commerce; the art of the Shaft Graves; Mycenaean ivories and ceramics; Greek Geometric art and architecture; the wooden votives from Samos; Phoenician-Greek interactions; and Classical and Hellenistic ceramics and sculpture. Reading Guenter is an intellectual adventure: he constantly teases, provokes, and challenges assumptions (his own and those of his readers), not to play the role of provocateur, but to support—as he modestly likes to say—the case of the plausible. His writings are often peppered with personal reactions to the views of his colleagues and friends. And while he may describe his impressions and emotional responses to artifacts and cultural processes, these are based on a profound body of knowledge rooted in years of study and contemplation. Still, no one is quicker to express self-doubts, to admit the limitations of the available evidence, or, in its absence, to own up frankly to speculation. For Guenter, the questions are always at least as important as the answers, which, as he well knows, in the field of archaeology, can change instantly with the scraping of a trowel. The depth of his understanding of the possibilities and limitations that archaeology can bring to the study of cultural history, which I believe he regards as his overarching intellectual pursuit,

derives from extensive and broad field experience. Besides work on Samos (1961–1966), Guenter has participated in excavations in Greece at Olympia (1958–1959), on Aegina (1964), on Samothrace (1972–1987), in the Kerameikos (1993), and in Israel at Tel Hadar (1992).

When I began to consider how to organize this volume, it became clear that if it were to reflect the fields upon which Guenter has made an impact, it could not be organized around a single theme, region, or time period. Rather, I invited articles from scholars whose lives Guenter has touched along the various stages of his own, and I also received many requests to contribute as rumors of the preparation of this *Festschrift* began to spread. I know that I speak on behalf of everyone whose thoughts and words appear here—that we wish Guenter many more years of teaching, thinking, and writing, inspiring us, his students, colleagues, and friends, to follow his example in the pursuit of scholarly excellence.

I would like to thank the students in my seminar in Greek archaeology at Hunter College during the spring semester of 2008—Justine Ahlstrom, Dennis Ambrose, Danica Killalea, Kathleen Maloney, Michele Mitrovich, Harold Ohayon, and Elizabeth Shiverdecker—for the preliminary editing of many of the articles included in this volume and for the lively discussions stimulated by their presentations. I owe a special debt of thanks to Michele Mitrovich for her continued help in the preparation of this volume at many stages, and for the handsome photograph of Guenter Kopcke that serves as the frontispiece. I am also grateful to Irit Ziffer for invaluable advice and information, and to Irene and the late Ioannis Manolakakis (d. 2010) for their hospitality during the summer of 2009, when I was able to complete the editing of most of these articles at their home in Kalessa, Crete. Finally, I wish to thank my partner, Stylianos Manolakakis, for providing me with the Greek title of this volume.

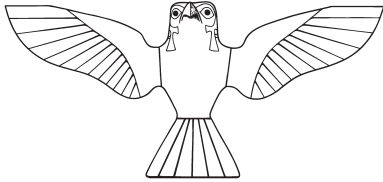
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October 2010



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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations for periodicals in the bibliographies of individual articles follow the conventions of the *American Journal of Archaeology* 111.1 (2007), pp. 14–34.

aux.	auxiliary	LH	Late Helladic
BB	Burned Building	LM	Late Minoan
BR	Base Ring	m	meter
ca.	about	max.	maximum
cm	centimeter	MBA	Middle Bronze Age
dia.	diameter	MC	Middle Cycladic
EBA	Early Bronze Age	MH	Middle Helladic
EC	Early Cycladic	mm	millimeter
EM	Early Minoan	MM	Middle Minoan
FN	Final Neolithic	pers. comm.	personal communication
g	gram	pers. obv.	personal observation
h.	height	RLWM	Red Lustrous Wheelmade Ware
in.	inches	th.	thickness
L.	length	w.	width
LBA	Late Bronze Age	wt.	weight
LC	Late Cycladic		



From Vase Painting to Wall Painting: The Lilies Jug from Akrotiri, Thera

Andreas G. Vlachopoulos

During the 2001–2002 academic year, while I was a research fellow at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University studying the Theran wall paintings, Guenter Kopcke was teaching a seminar on the Late Bronze Age and asked me to present some classes on Aegean iconography. One of the issues raised was the emergent relationship between Middle Cycladic (MC) iconography and the Late Cycladic (LC) wall paintings at Akrotiri. This conversation was stimulated by recent discoveries at Thera of figural MC pottery from deeper levels of the prehistoric settlement reached during

the excavations in preparation for the new roof, and the new horizons these discoveries opened in the study of monumental painting. I remember Guenter's reaction when discussion turned to the recently discovered polychrome Lilies Jug. He had been impressed by the MC "Ganymede Jug," which was already known (Doulas 2005, 315, fig. 478), and he agreed that these vases invited new questions regarding various issues of Theran mural painting. I dedicate this article to my respected friend as both a postscript to that iconography seminar and a token of my profound esteem.

Archaeological Context of the Lilies Jug

The Lilies Jug (Figs. 6.1, 6.2; Akrotiri, Thera Excavation inv. no. 8578) was discovered at

Akrotiri in 2000, in the excavation of the shaft for pillar 43, located in the middle of Room 14



Figure 6.1. The Lilies Jug: (a) left side; (b) right side; (c) back view, facing handle; (d) front view, facing spout; (e) top view. Pottery Conservation Laboratory of the Akrotiri Excavation. Photos Ch. Papanikolopoulos.

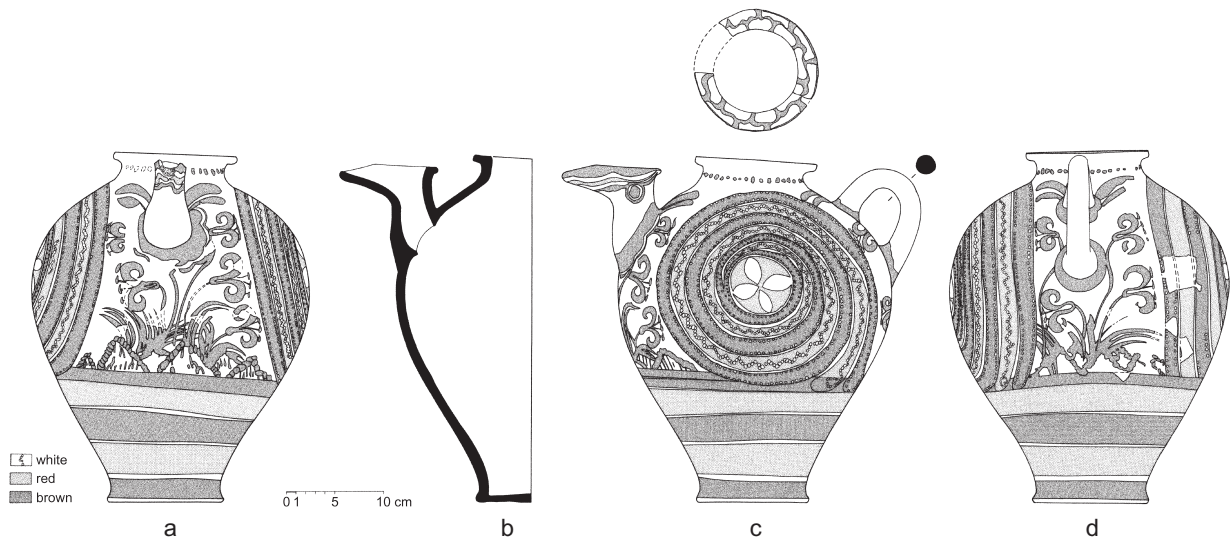


Figure 6.2. Drawing of the Lilies Jug: (a) front view, facing spout; (b) cross section of profile; (c) side view and rim; (d) back view, facing handle. Drawings A. Kontonis.

of Building Xeste 4, in a LC I context. The space originally had a central wooden column, the imprint of which was found in situ (see Akrivaki, forthcoming). The ground floor, the first story, and the second story of the room were investigated, yielding 51 intact vases, of which nine were Late Minoan (LM) IA imports. The majority are domestic vessels, mainly cups; three pithoi were found full of barley. The Lilies Jug comes from the fill of the first story, which contained an additional

13 complete vases. On the ground floor, a basket contained a pair of wooden hand-shaped “clappers/castanets” and a third “clapper/castanet” with a representation of a bird in a rocky landscape filled with crocuses (Papadima 2005; Akrivaki, forthcoming). Xeste 4 was founded in the final phase of life at the settlement. No level earlier than early LC I was identified; the several MC sherds were not associated with the period of the building’s use.

Shape

The Lilies Jug is of the tubular-spouted type, a characteristic shape of the MC period that continued to be produced locally until mature LC I (Marthari 1993, 148; 2000, 878, figs. 8–10; Doulas, Marthari, and Televantou 2000, 60, fig. 64; Vlachopoulos 2000, 649, figs. 15, 16; Doulas 2001, pls. 79:γ, 81:α). Recovered as sherds, the jug mended into a nearly complete vase, with minor restorations on the rim and body. Its measurements are: height 37.2; max. diam. (at belly) 28; diam. of mouth 12.7 cm. The inverted piriform body ends in a flat, disk-shaped base (diam. 11.5 cm). Its rim

is flat. Attached to the shoulder is a vertical handle, round in section; diametrically opposite the handle is a lipless, tubular beaked spout. The low, inward-curving neck flares to a flat rim.

The jug is made of Theran clay and has no slip, as is usual in the local MC pottery tradition. This is in contrast to LC jugs with tubular spouts, which have more careful surface treatment. It is painted in a red and brown bichrome style with added white dots that create complementary motifs on the brown and red; thus, the jug should be regarded as trichrome.

Painted Decoration

The Lilies Jug is one of the most original and densely decorated of the thousands of painted vases from Akrotiri. The large bichrome symmetrical spirals on the sides, a unique subject to date in Thera pottery, are complemented by pictorial representations of lilies and rocks in the narrower oblong zones on its front and back.

The base and lower part of the jug are covered with two equidistant pairs of wide bands, alternately red and brown. A narrower brown band above these forms the ground line for the remaining painted decoration. The decoration on the main body divides the vase into four fields (Fig. 6.1:a–d). The two sides are filled by a large double spiral composed of a pair of bands (brown outside, red inside) that spring from the base on the back, below the handle, and spiral and taper in four convolutions, terminating in a solid red circle at the center of which is a reserved quatrefoil rosette with elliptical petals (Figs. 6.1:a, b, 6.2:c, 6.3). The distance between the two strands of the spiral is approximately the same as that between the bichrome bands encircling the lower part of the vase. Indeed, the observation that the two spirals were drawn with the paintbrush starting from inside the upper of these bands indicates that the correspondence in color and drawing between these two decorated areas was intentional.

The spiral on the right side (for the viewer), coiling counterclockwise in the direction of the spout

(Figs. 6.1:b, 6.2:c), is more neatly painted than that on the left side (Figs. 6.1:a, 6.3), which is rather slipshod. On the last inner circumvolution of the latter, the smoothly tapering brushstroke of the spiral disappears and the central circle of the resultant rosette is larger. In order to restore the spiral, a few hasty corrective brushstrokes were made, but these did not succeed in improving the result. The ineptitude in drawing the clockwise spiral, which logically would have been executed more easily by a right-handed painter, and the better drawing of the counterclockwise spiral, is possibly due to the fact that the vase painter was left-handed. While full discussion is outside the scope of this paper, it is worth noting that, in general, it is difficult to decipher the particular hand with which a vase painter worked. It has been observed, however, that the development of narrative representations from left to right in Mycenaean pictorial pottery may be due to right-handed vase painters (Pliatsika 2004, 31; on the development of dextrograde representations, see Doumas 1999, 61).

The spiral-form bands cover the greatest part of the surface, from upper shoulder to lower belly, forming a system of an opposing bichrome coiling-tentacle motif. The added white dots painted in two rows along the outer edge of the brown spirals suggest that they are suckers on the tentacles of highly schematic polypods. Indeed, added white dots to render suckers occur on more naturalistic depictions of polypods (for LM IB, see Müller 1997, pls. 19–29; for Late Helladic [LH] IIIA:2, see Mountjoy 1999, 756, fig. 293:52). On the red spiral-form “tentacles,” added white dots are grouped in threes to form the oblique protuberances of a zigzag, resembling corals or rocks on a seabed. The thin-lined triple arcade motif, or scale pattern, painted on the rim’s upper surface is frequently used to render schematic waves in Aegean iconography, and thus also alludes to a marine subject.

Painted outlined eyes on the sides of the spout are an anthropomorphic feature, as may also be the alternating bichrome wavy bands on its rim, perhaps to indicate hair. The dotted band around the base of the neck, which resembles a beaded necklace, underscores the vase’s anthropomorphic

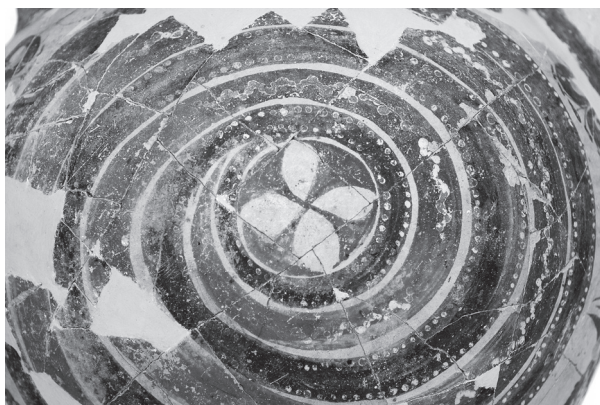


Figure 6.3. The Lilies Jug, detail of rosette spirals from left side. Pottery Conservation Laboratory of the Akrotiri Excavation. Photo Ch. Papanikolopoulos.

qualities. Indeed, the shape of the vase itself, with its harmonious curves and elegant beak-shaped spout, intensifies the vase's resemblance to a female figure.

Encircling the base of the spout is a wavy monochrome band, the upper edge of which ends in two symmetrical pairs of lanceolate leaves. The elongated band could be meant to render the trunk of a palm tree and the two symmetrical leaves on either side its branches. There is an analogous schematic "palm tree" around the upper root of the handle, but even if this particular pictorial motif was far from the intentions of the vase painter, the way in which he makes use of every structural surface of the jug should be pointed out.

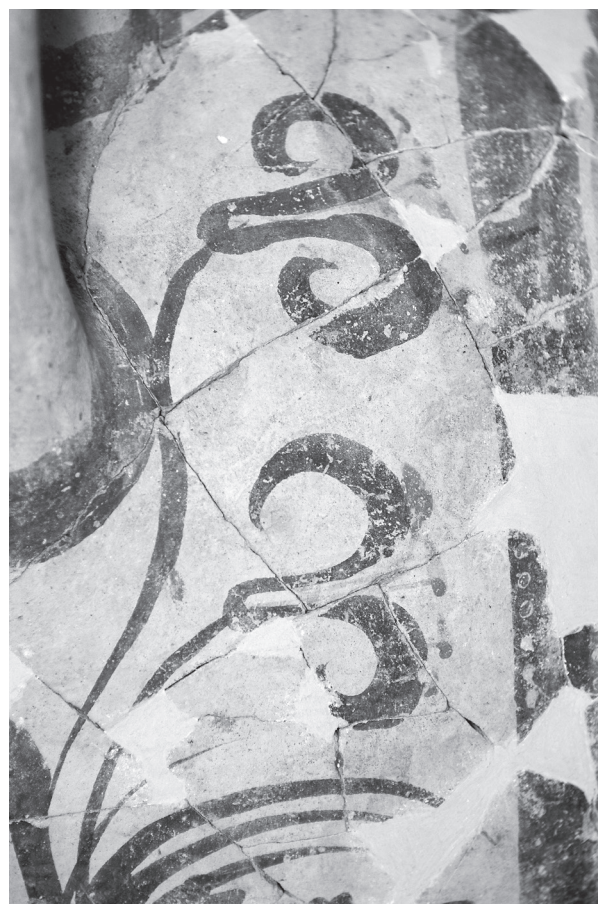
On the front, below the spout, six triangular rocks of unequal size, painted in brown, with

an almost zigzag outline and filled with vertical streaks on the topmost of the bands around the belly, stand on the ground band (Figs. 6.1:d, 6.2:a). A sense of landscape perspective is suggested by the depiction of two small rocks behind the larger ones. From the three middle rocks sprout small clusters of lanceolate leaves and five stems of differing height, also in brown paint, which undulate on either side of the spout—three left and two right—and terminate in a lily flower. The lilies are shown in full bloom, painted dark brown on the petals and red on the filamentous (three to five) stamens and anthers (Fig. 6.4:a).

The same landscape is repeated, with minor variations, on the back (Figs. 6.1:c, 6.2:d). Here the six triangular rocks have reserved interiors, although again, perspective is suggested by the



a



b

Figure 6.4. The Lilies Jug, detail of rocky landscape: (a) below spout; (b) below handle. Pottery Conservation Laboratory of the Akrotiri Excavation. Photos Ch. Papanikolopoulos and A. Vlachopoulos.

overlapping of the smaller ones. From the rocks sprout two pairs of lilies, one on either side of the handle, with their flowers turned toward the spirals, like those on the front (Fig. 6.4:b).

The vertical serpentine arrangement of the blossoming lilies and the cyclical coiling nature of the spiral tentacles are in complementary movement, balancing two unconnected elements in the painting, one geometric and the other pictorial. The rhythm of the representation is completed by the bichrome bands at the base of the vase, the upper ones of which seem to curve symmetrically, giving rise to the two-stem spirals of the sides.

The combination of the elegant shape and the calculated polychrome imagery make the Lilies

Jug particularly important. The anthropomorphic elements, previously known primarily from the slender Theran beak-spouted jugs, and especially the nipples ewers (Marthari 1992, 102, pls. 39, 43:δ; Papagiannopoulou 1992, 178, pl. 67:γ; Doumas, Marthari, and Televantou 2000, figs. 3, 10, 12, 59; Boulotis 2005, 59, 63, figs. 43, 47, 48, 51), are here even more pronounced: the soft curvature of the profile alludes to the female body; the modeling of the spout schematically renders the neck and head; and the large eyes, under a bichrome coiffure just hinted at on the rim of the spout, enliven the vase with the functional possibility of “seeing.”

Date of Manufacture

The rendering of the Theran landscape with rocks and lilies, while familiar from the Theran Spring Fresco (Fig. 6.5), is otherwise unattested in Aegean ceramics. Although the jug comes from the LC I level of the settlement, it clearly does not date to this period. It belongs to the final examples of the MC Theran bichrome-polychrome style and has a few but significant parallels at Akrotiri. The shape belongs to the fully formed type of tubular-spouted jug, but its slenderness in relation to LC I examples assigns it to the years of transition

between the late MC and the early LC period (for further discussion of dating, see below).

The major problems of dating the vase focus on its painted decoration. The trichrome spiral tentacle motif, unique at Akrotiri, derives directly from the mature Middle Minoan (MM) IIB Kamares Ware tradition of Phaistos and is not encountered later in Minoan or Theran pottery. On the other hand, the bichrome naturalistic representation of a rocky landscape filled with lilies does not occur on pottery that is earlier than or contemporary with the Spring Fresco of Building Complex Delta, which is dated to the advanced LC I period. The dating of the wall painting is most reliably secured by tracing the production of its painter, whose main body of work is located in Xeste 3 (Televantou 1994, 381; Vlachopoulos 2008a, 275–276; 2008b, 454). The excavations of 1999–2002 into the MC levels of the settlement confirm that the art of wall painting did not appear at Akrotiri during the MC period (see Vlachopoulos 2007a, 132; 2007b, 117 n. 88; forthcoming).

Knowing for certain that the earlier examples of mural painting at Akrotiri (Doumas 1992, 185, figs. 149, 150; Doumas, Marthari, and Televantou 2000, figs. 35, 36) are all aniconic and date to the transitional phase of the late MC/early LC I period (Televantou 1994, 129, 358–360, pl. 2:α, β, color pl. 22; Kariotis 2003, 437–438, fig. 25; Vlachopoulos 2007b, 116–117; forthcoming), the



Figure 6.5. The Spring Fresco from Building Complex Delta. Athens, National Archaeological Museum. Photo courtesy of Akrotiri, Thera, Excavation Archive.

appearance of the Lilies Jug—with its unique pictorial thematic repertoire that dates to precisely this period—begs us to reconsider the question of the relationship between pottery and Aegean wall painting. Particular iconographic and syntactic elements will be discussed below—the aim being

to shed light on the obscure relationship between polychrome pottery and monumental painting through an analysis of antecedent and contemporary motifs in vase painting and their subsequent occurrence in wall painting.

The Lilies Jug and Middle Minoan Pottery

The decoration on the Theran jug shows clearly that behind its original iconography and syntax lie the polychrome light-on-dark pottery of the first Cretan palaces, and particularly that of the mature Kamares Ware of MM IIB.

At Phaistos, amid the riotous polychromy of the MM IIA period (Levi's phase Ia), the use of white and red is triumphant in geometric and spiraling curvilinear motifs, as well as in attempts at pictorial subjects (Levi 1976, pls. 8–19). In phase Ib of the palace (MM IIB), the ceramic art becomes “monumental” and more polychromatic and geometric, with the parts of the vase composed of specific painting fields (Betancourt 1985, 97). A few recognizable plant motifs such as palm trees, ivy leaves, and rosette daisies coexist with geometric ones (e.g., circles, spirals, serrated stems) and are transformed into filling motifs with limited pictorial impact. Of the shapes of this phase, the elegant jug with cut-away spout comes close to the Cycladic shape of the jug with tubular spout.

The spiral, the basic pictorial unit of Kamares Ware, is frequently painted with barbed edges and acquires large dimensions (Levi 1976, pl. 27:c), thus contributing to the development of the running spiral motif found commonly on vase bodies (Levi 1976, pl. 27, 30:a–c). Sometimes the spiral takes on the form of a tentacle (Levi 1976, pl. 36:a, b). Spiral-form whorl motifs, around which pictorial subjects move, become *de rigueur*. The tentacle spiral; the double spiral; the pictorial subject of the fish, which is combined with the spiral; and the octopus, the spiral-form motif par excellence on account of its symmetrical tentacles, all are the starting points of these permutations (Betancourt 1985, 98, fig. 70:G, U, AP, AQ–AS, AU, pl. 11). The rosette, reserved or monochrome, also appears in the thematic repertoire (Betancourt 1985, 98, fig. 70:O–T). The rotating spiral, sometimes

enclosing a rosette (Betancourt 1985, 98, fig. 70:U) or in its whirling quadruple version with vegetal motifs and inscribed within a large circle (Betancourt 1985, 101, fig. 74), appears in the same period. In the same phase (Ib), the inscribing of spiral-form tentacles (Levi 1976, pl. 29:b; Walberg 1976, fig. 4:b) and rosettes (Levi 1976, pl. 30:b) in a spiral are common.

Phaistos has yielded the best parallels for a convoluting double spiral in the pottery of phase Ib. In fact, some pieces display such close affinity to the Theran Lilies Jug that there is no doubt that the Theran motif is a survival of a style linked with products of the famed Protopalatial Phaistian pottery workshops. An exact parallel for the spiral tentacle on the Theran jug is encountered on an amphora with bichrome (white and black) double spirals painted on the dark ground of both faces of the vase (Fig. 6.6). The narrow sides of the handles are covered with spiral-form motifs (Levi 1976, no. 3496, pl. 74:b, c), an arrangement repeated on the Lilies Jug. Furthermore, on the black part of the spiral there are dense dots of added white. Walberg classifies the decoration as Classical Kamares



Figure 6.6. Kamares Ware amphora from Phaistos. Herakleion Archaeological Museum 3496. After Levi 1976, pl. 74:b, c.

Ware (1976, 50–51, fig. 37:5.ii.5). Nevertheless, white dots on concentric circles already exist in Early Kamares Ware (MM IB–IIA: Walberg 1976, 48, fig. 35:1.9) and remain a popular manner of decoration (Levi 1976, pl. 26:a).

The syntactic model that may have inspired the Lilies Jug appears on the Kamares piriform rhyton, no. 5938 from Phaistos (Fig. 6.7), also of phase Ib and unique in the placement and combination of its motifs (Levi 1976, pl. 45:a). Symmetrically painted on its maximum diameter are bichrome concentric circles; the parallel white streaks on the black



Figure 6.7. Kamares Ware rhyton from Phaistos. Herakleion Archaeological Museum 5938. After Levi 1976, pl. 45:a.

parts of the spiral heighten the motif's radiate visual impact. On the sides of the rhyton are a convoluting red tentacle with added white dots denoting the suckers (cf. the added white dots for suckers on the red tentacles of the polypod on Phaistos jug no. 2410: Levi 1976, pl. 36:b). At the center of the spiral denoted by the tentacle is a reserved vegetal motif. The polychrome marine environment of corals and rocks, which dominate the lower part of the vase, in combination with the syntax and decoration, leaves no doubt as to the pictorial prototype for the Lilies Jug.

The repetition of a sparser spiral on the shoulder of a bird-shaped askos from the same phase at Phaistos (Levi 1976, pl. 46:a), and of white dots on a motif of concentric circles on another askos (Levi 1976, pl. 46:b), points to the isolated use of these decorative motifs (see Levi 1976, pl. 55:d).

The reserved quatrefoil rosette at the center of the monochrome circles on the Lilies Jug can be "read" alternatively as two painted double axes intersecting crosswise (Figs. 6.1, 6.2:c, 6.3), since it is only the attention of the beholder to either the painted or the reserved part that differentiates the subject's identity. This visual game is not new. Reserved double axes occur at the center of circles in Classical Kamares Ware (Walberg 1976, 48, fig. 35:1.18), as does the reserved quatrefoil rosette (Walberg 1976, fig. 40:10.3). This indicates that both motifs had been included concurrently in the vase painters' repertoire, and that in their painted execution they could be treated as filling ornaments (for a variation of the double axe on a MM III pithos from Knossos, see Evans 1921–1935, I, 583, fig. 427a; for its occurrence on LM IB pottery, see Müller 1997, 253–257, figs. 147, 148).

The appearance in this phase of composite polychromy, of the reserved rosette (Levi 1976, pl. 51:d), the white lily flower growing from a running spiral (Levi 1976, pl. 53:b), the palm tree, and the curved arcade pattern (Levi 1976, pl. 63:k, 1) like the one painted on the rim of the Lilies Jug complete the quest to find the decorative elements on the Theran jug among the Kamares Ware repertoire from Phaistos (for the introduction of the palm tree in MM IIB Kamares Ware, see Papagiannopoulou 2008a, 438; on bichrome MC pottery at Akrotiri, see Doumas 1999, 55, pl. 5:c).

In phases II (Levi 1976, pls. 70–75) and III at Phaistos (Levi 1976, pls. 76–84) the spiral, the dots, and the kindred subjects so far referred to no longer occur. In phase III (MM IIIA–B), which includes the end of Classical Kamares Ware and the so-called Post-Kamares Ware (Walberg 1976), aniconic geometric motifs give way to a variety of pictorial subjects. In the period when the new palaces were founded (MM IIIA), the combination of a basic geometric motif with intrusive pictorial units was widely disseminated in light-on-dark decoration. In the MM III pottery of Central and South Crete there is a dynamic development in the pictorial elements of the MM II period (e.g., fish caught in net: Walberg 1986, 85, fig. 103; cf. MacGillivray 1998, 132, pl. 7:198). Many are executed in relief (ibex in rocky landscape: Levi 1976, pl. 78; bull in flower-filled landscape: Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997, 555, figs. 553–559; lion attacking a bull: Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2008, 19, 27–29, 34, fig. 17; dolphins: Levi 1976, pl. 79), and these landscape compositions present overt elements of mural painting. Concurrently, there are the first realistic depictions of plants in their natural environment: palm trees with lilies(?) and other flowers (Evans 1921–1935, I, 594, fig. 436:C; Betancourt 1985, 111, fig. 84:G, J, K; 1990, 109, 111–112, figs. 29, 31, pls. 33, 38); reeds growing out of the water (Levi 1976, pls. 71, 77); and lilies sprouting from the earth (Levi 1976, pl. 83:a; Walberg 1986, 874, figs. 91, 92).

Earlier combinations of figural and abstract motifs continue with a bichrome crocus at the center of a running spiral (Levi 1976, pl. 84:c), or sprouting crocuses amid a zone of eyed running spirals, which function as a kind of landscape on a MM III hydria from Kommos (Betancourt 1985, 109, figs. 82, 83; 1990, 110, fig. 30, pl. 34). On one crocus, however, two lily petals spring symmetrically between the stalk and the flower, a pictorial innovation that predicts the kind of floral hybridization that henceforth characterizes Minoan mural painting.

A MM III oval-mouthed amphora from Knossos (Evans 1921–1935, I, 605, fig. 446), a characteristic example of Post-Kamares Ware (Walberg 1986, 76, fig. 93), is even closer to the Thera Lilies Jug;



Figure 6.8. Middle Minoan III amphora from Knossos. After Evans 1921–1935, I, fig. 446.

the similarities between the two vases go beyond the pictorial elements and extend to the syntax of the representation (Fig. 6.8). On the side below the lower handle attachments, slender three-stemmed tulips sprout from the two oblique ground-line bands, while, on the front side, double concentric circles enclose a plant motif. Syntactically similar is a MM III amphora from Akrotiri (Building Beta), decorated with a triple spiral on the front and a rudimentary plant motif on the sides (Marinatos 1970, 35, 60, pl. 56:b–c).

Naturalistic lilies also occur on MM IIIA–B light-on-dark Post-Kamares Ware (Walberg 1976, 66, fig. 25:2–3; 1986, 72–73, fig. 90). Their best-known depictions are on the Knossian “lilies vases” (Evans 1921–1935, I, 576–579, 603, fig. 443; Petrakis 1980, 15; Walberg 1986, 62, fig. 78; Blakolmer 1999, 48), although Betancourt dates them to LM IA (Betancourt 1985, 123, fig. 92). These vases, on which long-stemmed white lilies grow from the straight edge of the base, are clearly related in subject, scale, and rendering to the contemporary (MM IIIB) or slightly later (LM I) wall paintings of lilies at Amnisos, as will be examined below.

The Lilies Jug and Middle Cycladic Pottery

The limited picture of the MC period at Akrotiri, mainly formed from meager pottery finds (Papagiannopoulou 1991, 1992), has now been spectacularly widened by the recent excavations of the MC levels in the settlement and their systematic study (Nikolakopoulou et al. 2008; Papagiannopoulou 2008a, 2008b). Four MC stratigraphical levels have been recognized (phases A–D). Pictorial subjects begin to appear on the black-and-red pottery of phase B, and they increase dramatically in phase C (Nikolakopoulou et al. 2008). Phase D, however, did not yield satisfactory quantities of pictorial material, and this phase seems chronologically attached to Phase C, being its last stage in the final MC years (Nikolakopoulou 2009, 34). The next identified ceramic phase at Akrotiri is well into LC I (Nikolakopoulou et al. 2008, 319), connected with the Seismic Destruction Level, as defined by Marthari (1984).

Phase C is contemporary with MM IIB–MM IIIA, according to the imported ceramics (Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2005, 176; 2008, 7–9, fig. 3; Nikolakopoulou 2009, 33–34; for earlier discussions of MC pottery and its synchronisms with Minoan pottery, see Papagiannopoulou 1991, 254, 263, 265; 1992, 181–182). Nonetheless, imported Minoan light-on-dark pottery and local imitations of Kamares Ware are not common at Akrotiri in this phase (Nikolakopoulou et al. 2008, 317–319; Nikolakopoulou 2009, 35). During this period the Bichrome Ware becomes essentially polychrome, mostly from the use of added white (Papagiannopoulou 1991, 39). Large vases, pithoi, and bathtubs feature pictorial scenes, some of which are narrative in character and include griffins, hunting scenes, and ritual acts.

From undisturbed MC excavation strata that are clearly assigned to Nikolakopoulou's phase C come two important pictorial vases: (1) a pithos with griffins in a landscape of palm trees (Akrotiri Excavation inv. no. 8885; see Kariotis 2003, 428, fig. 14; Boulotis 2005, 58, figs. 37, 38; Papagiannopoulou 2008a, 436–438, fig. 40:5–8); and (2) a tubular-spouted jug, the so-called Ganymede Jug (Fig. 6.9), with its representation on one side of two male figures performing a libation and an eagle with its eaglet on the

other (Akrotiri Excavation inv. no. 8960; see Boulotis 2005, 59, figs. 42, 49; Doumas 2005, 315, fig. 478; Vlachopoulos 2007b, 116, pl. 32:a, b; Papagiannopoulou 2008a, 441–444, fig. 40:14–20; 2008b, 257; forthcoming). Discussion of its iconography has also touched on the possible thematic links of this vase with later Thera wall paintings (Vlachopoulos 2007b, 117).

Many vases stylistically assigned to Phase C were, however, found in LC I levels in the settlement, like the Lilies Jug. These include:

- (1) a bathtub with a male figure, whose presence seems to frighten quadrupeds and birds that run to escape, and figure-eight shields on the other side (Akrotiri Excavation inv. no. 8886; see Krige 2003, fig. 16; Boulotis 2005, 50, fig. 31; Papagiannopoulou 2008a, 433–436, fig. 40:1–4);
- (2) a pithos from the West House with dolphins, seagulls, and a bull (Fig. 6.10; Akrotiri Excavation inv. no. 4854; see Marthari 1993, 257–258; 2000, 880, figs. 11–15; Doumas 1999);
- (3) a small pithos with a griffin and lion in flying gallop (Akrotiri Excavation inv. no. 9323; see Papagiannopoulou 2008a, 438–440, fig. 40:9–12; Knappett and Nikolakopoulou 2008, 7–9, fig. 3); and
- (4) a pithos sherd with a griffin (Akrotiri Excavation inv. no. 7256; see Papagiannopoulou 2008a, 440–441, fig. 40:13; 2008b, 258, fig. 7).

Also belonging to this group is the imported Thera pithos with a griffin from Hagia Irini on Kea (Marthari 1998).

Tubular-spouted jugs proved to be a popular shape in phase C, mainly bearing representations of birds of “Cycladic type,” familiar from Melos and Thera, but also foliate bands (Doumas 2001, figs. 79:γ, 81:α; Papagiannopoulou 2008a, 444–446, fig. 40:24–26), palm trees, and perhaps pomegranates (I. Nikolakopoulou, pers. comm.)—drawing from the rich thematic repertoire of pictorial subjects of this period (e.g., swallows, ibex,



Figure 6.9. The Ganymede Jug: (a) left side; (b) right side. Pottery Conservation Laboratory of the Akrotiri Excavation. Photo courtesy of Akrotiri, Thera, Excavation Archive.



Figure 6.10. Pithos no. 4854 from the West House at Akrotiri (a); detail of lily on side of same vessel (b). Museum of Prehistoric Thera. Photo courtesy of Akrotiri, Thera, Excavation Archive.

clusters of grapes, leafy stems)—some of them rendered in Bichrome Ware (Papagiannopoulou 1991, 38 pls. 6, 7:a; 2008b, 245–257, figs. 5, 7; forthcoming, tables I–III; Doulas 1999, 55, pl. 5:c; 2004, pl. 63:α; 2006, fig. 3).

Although a reliable sequence has recently been established for the development of MC pottery, many of the aforementioned bichrome pictorial vases cannot be dated securely to a specific phase of the MC period because of their later find contexts (e.g., the West House pithos, the bathtub with hunting scene, the Lilies Jug, and the Kea pithos). Stylistic comparisons of their decoration reveal that they were not made in the same period. Some vases—like the Ganymede Jug, the pithos with griffins and palm trees, and several jugs with plants and birds—are outstanding for their quality of manufacture, notably the red burnished decoration of the motif's monochrome surfaces. The black outlines, on the contrary, are matt.

By contrast, MC vases such as the small pithos with lion and griffin, the West House pithos, and two other pithoi that Doulas discusses (Doulas 1999, 55, 62, pls. 1–4, 5:a–c), as well as the Lilies Jug, are not burnished. Their painted surfaces are dull and the pithoi are badly fired, although none of this adversely affected the quality of their design.

Furthermore, the Lilies Jug is less slender than the Ganymede Jug and the other hydriai with burnished pictorial subjects. Its body is piriform tending toward globular, but it is not yet ellipsoidal-globular, like the LC IA jugs with representations of reeds and palm trees (Doulas, Marthari, and Televantou 2000, fig. 64; Marthari 2000, 878, figs. 8–10; Vlachopoulos 2000, 649, figs. 15, 16). Thus its shape and technique of decoration suggest that the Lilies Jug was made late in MC phase C or in the early LC I (Seismic Destruction Level) phase of Akrotiri.

The Iconography of the Lilies Jug

We begin by looking for iconographic parallels to the Lilies Jug among Thera vases. While the use of “white dots on zones of black or red paint, in imitation of the MM III pottery of Crete” is a common decorative device on MC Bichrome Ware at Akrotiri (Papagiannopoulou 1992, 179), the spiral tentacles and their symmetrical placement on the Lilies Jug are without parallel there. Perhaps the closest parallel, in motif choice and syntax, if not style, is the column of running double spirals on the lateral sides, below the handles, of the pithos from the West House (Doulas 1999, figs. 3, 5). There are also isolated bichrome spirals on the lower body of the pithos with the griffins (Boulotis 2005, figs. 37, 38). Double spirals, usually running, are common on the LC I pottery of Akrotiri.

The triangular rocks depicted on the sides of the Lilies Jug do not appear in LC I pictorial vases with representations of animals in rocky lily-filled landscapes (Doulas 1999, 61–62, pls. 9:b, 10:b; Marthari 2000, 876, figs. 2, 4, 5). As we shall see below, the rocks on the jug—though rendered in a miniaturist vein—directly refer only to the rocky landscape of the Thera wall paintings.

The dissemination of the lily flower is limited on MC pottery at Akrotiri, appearing on three very fragmentary vases of phases B and C at Akrotiri. (These will be published by I. Nikolakopoulou, who kindly drew them to my attention.) On the shoulder of one jug (perhaps with a tubular spout) is a large monochrome lily, strikingly similar to those on the Lilies Jug, depicted in front of a bird's (or perhaps a griffin's) head. The best example—a bichrome schematic lily with horizontal fusiform anther—occurs in the rich terrestrial environment represented on one face of the ovoid pithos with the dolphins and bull from the West House (Fig. 6.10; Doulas 1999, 57, figs. 4, 5, 6:d, pls. 1, 4, 6; Doulas, Marthari, and Televantou 2000, fig. 66; Marthari 2000, 880, 883, fig. 15; Papagiannopoulou 2008b, 251, fig. 2:α). On this same vase, the bichrome wavy lines on the body of the dolphins and their monochrome eyes (Doulas, Marthari, and Televantou 2000, fig. 68) bear a striking resemblance to the wavy outline on the rim of the spout of the Lilies Jug. Doulas dates the pithos to MC (Doulas 1999), while Marthari thinks it is slightly later, and dates it to the transition to LC I

(Marthari 2000, 883, 886, table 1). Indeed, there are close stylistic similarities between the pithos and the West House Miniature Fresco (e.g., the rendering of the dolphins and land animals), which provide a crucial chronological link between the polychrome pithos and the miniature frieze, which is considered one of the earliest Theran wall paintings (Marthari 2000, 880).

The third example is a sherd with the representation of a male figure bending toward a lily flower (Fig. 6.11; Marinatos 1971, 39, pl. 96:c, color pl. G:a; Marthari 2000, 883, 885, fig. 16). Because this sherd is painted in the same bichrome manner as the lily on the pithos, Marthari holds the view that it is a product of the same workshop as the pithos, if not of the same vase painter. This sherd comes from the first Seismic Destruction Level at Akrotiri. Its secure dating, with a terminus ante quem of early LC I, shows that both vases can be dated confidently to the final MC or, at the latest, to early LC I.

The bichrome rendering of the lily, with brown petals and red stamens, is also encountered on a sherd from a MC bathtub from Phylakopi (Atkinson et al. 1904, 141, fig. 114; Vlachopoulos 2000, 651). The Fishermen Vase from Phylakopi (Atkinson et al. 1904, 123–125, 263–264, fig. 95, pl. 22), also in a bichrome style, can now be linked not only with this sherd but also with the Ganymede Jug from Akrotiri based on their similarly rendered human figures. Unfortunately, it is not possible to classify the male figure on the polychrome bathtub with the hunting scene, also from an LC I context, since his upper body is not preserved (Papagiannopoulou 2008a, 435, fig. 40:1).

The lily is a very common subject on the LC I pottery of Thera, although it was never as popular as the crocus (Marthari 1992, 105–106, pl. 40). Both flowers, executed in red and brown paint, sprout together on a paneled cup, which is most probably of mainland provenance, perhaps dating to the late Middle Helladic (MH) period; to date, this cup is the only MH pictorial example found at Akrotiri (Marinatos 1972, 31, pl. 62:c; Dimakopoulou, ed., 1988, 155, no. 107). On Theran pottery the lily occurs mainly on shapes for special uses (i.e., kymbai, flower vases, pyxides with strainers), and they are usually painted in the light-on-dark style, presumably



Figure 6.11. Sherd with representation of a male figure and a lily flower. Fira, Museum of Prehistoric Thera. Photo courtesy of Akrotiri, Thera, Excavation Archive.

a conservative attachment to the earlier principles of Kamares Ware (Marinatos 1970, pl. 48:2, color pl. A:1; 1971, pls. 63, 64; Marthari 1992, 105–106, pl. 46:e; 1993, 257; Angelopoulou 1995, 33–35; Negbi and Negbi 2000, 597, fig. 2; Kriga 2003, 463, fig. 2). This principle is even observed when the vase otherwise belongs to the dark-on-light style, as in the case of the pyxis strainer with the swallows (Marthari 1992, 105–106, pl. 45:γ; 2000, 874–875, fig. 1). A Theran pithos with multiple-stemmed white lily plants growing from the flat base and projected against its dark ground clearly copies Knossian MM III pithoi, but these lilies appear to be later in style than those of the Lilies Jug (Marinatos 1971, 34, pls. 24:b, 64:a, b; Doulas, Marthari, and Televantou 2000, 52, fig. 50).

The manner in which the quatrefoil rosette on the Lilies Jug is reserved at the center of the spiral resembles the biconcave motifs reserved on the monochrome outlined disks on the upper part of the small Griffin Pithos (Papagiannopoulou 2008a, 438, fig. 40:9–12). The attachment of the handle and the spout are comparable on the Lilies Jug and the Ganymede Jug, while on the latter a vegetal motif corresponding to the palm tree sprouts from the outline of the spout. Also, in the vertical zones of the corresponding sides, the Ganymede Jug has a foliate band in the same position as the rocky landscape on the Lilies Jug (Papagiannopoulou

2008a, fig. 40:14–20). Although these similarities are perhaps of secondary importance, they nevertheless underline the Theran elements of the Lilies Jug and bring it into a better relationship with well-known examples of MC pottery from Akrotiri.

The combination of stratigraphical and stylistic data provides a reliable and flexible scheme for Theran polychrome pottery of the Middle Bronze Age, the main corpus of which is dated to the mature MC period (phase C), with the bichrome Ganymede Jug dating to an earlier phase and the polychrome Griffin Pithos to a later one. To the final MC period (late phase C)—or less probably to the early LC I (Seismic Destruction Level)

period—belong the pithos with dolphins and bull, the sherd with male figure, and the Lilies Jug, with the first and the last vase passing as conspicuous heirlooms to the residents of the West House and Xeste 4, respectively. After this period the polychrome style is no longer encountered on large vases at Akrotiri (Doumas 1999, 62), and the pictorial scenes of narrative character from the world of nature and of men cease. The parallel appearance of polychrome plaster in the houses in the settlement (Vlachopoulos, forthcoming) and the burgeoning of mural painting that followed provide a logical explanation for this abrupt change in the direction of pottery production.

Wall Painting and Pottery

Our understanding that the profusely decorative Kamares Ware was in dialogue with the art of wall painting is owed mainly to the polychrome pottery from Phaistos (Levi 1976, pls. C, D; see Blakolmer 2000, 230, fig. 84). The prevailing style in mural painting of the first Cretan palaces (MM IB, IIA, and IIB) and during the founding of the new palaces (MM III) is orientated toward contemporary Kamares Ware (Evans 1921–1935, I, 265; Niemeier 1985, 58; Walberg 1986, 58; Boulotis 1995; Blakolmer 1999, 43), which seems to have inspired rather than copied the thematic repertoire of wall painting (Walberg 1986, 62, 70–72). The triad of colors—red, black, and white—was used concurrently at phase III Phaistos in mural painting and Post-Kamares pottery for spiral, curvilinear, and denticulate motifs (wall painting: Blakolmer 1999, 44–45, pl. 9:c–e; pottery: Blakolmer 1999, 43, pl. 9:a, d, e; on pictorial Kamares Ware and its relation to monumental painting, see Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997, 555, 559, figs. 553–559, in their discussion of the MM II–IIIA bucket from Anemospilia, with a bull in polychrome relief in a flower-filled landscape).

Indeed, it cannot be ruled out that craftsmen who specialized in polychrome pottery moved over to the art of mural painting (Boulotis 1995, 14–16; 2000, 853), something that most probably happened later at Akrotiri as well. It should be borne in mind, however, that MM Kamares Ware was an essentially aniconic art form that did not itself

produce pictorial iconography (Walberg 1986, 70–72; Blakolmer 1999, 47).

The Middle Bronze Age Cyclades did not participate in the dialectical fermentation taking place in the Minoan palaces between pottery and wall painting; they merely capitalized on its outcome through some imported vases. The first wall paintings at Akrotiri appear later, at the turn of the LC period, obviously under Cretan influence but not necessarily imitating Knossian models. In the same period, however, in the MC pottery at Akrotiri, the development of a polychrome vocabulary that boldly articulates a narrative iconography was taking place (Papagiannopoulou 2008a, 2008b).

Marthari has proposed that the influence of monumental painting on pottery was one direction and suggested that the MC bichrome vases were influenced by pictorial wall paintings adorning the houses at Akrotiri prior to the seismic destruction (Marthari 2000, 884, 885, 887). This hypothesis, however, is not supported by evidence from the recent excavations, since wall-painting fragments have not been revealed anywhere in the MC settlement (Vlachopoulos, forthcoming). What remains, then, is to explore a different paradigm, one in which the iconography of the MC vases of the Theran pictorial “school” prepared the thematic vocabulary for the wall paintings when these monumental pictures appeared at Akrotiri, as a fashion and an expressive need of an emergent “bourgeois” mentality. The experienced and audacious

pottery will have moved easily from vase painting to the more demanding wall painting using their

tried and tested drafting skills, artistic vocabulary, and syntax.

The Lilies Jug and the Art of Wall Painting

The white lily (*Lilium candidum*/Madonna lily) is native to Crete and the Greek mainland (for ancient references and discussion of its properties, see Negbi and Negbi 2000, 596–599). Its flower has white petals that curve slightly at the tips, yellow stamens and anthers, a long stalk, and characteristic triangular leaves that taper upward (Evely 1999, 100; Warren 2000, 373).

The lily is a very frequent subject in Aegean iconography (Televantou 1994, 161; Angelopoulou 1995, 27–36). It occurs on MM IB–II seals (Yule 1980, 142–143) and, as we have seen, on MM IIA–IIIA Kamares Ware. At the end of MM III the lily appears in various minor arts (Evans 1921–1935, I, 499, figs. 356, 498; Hood 1987, 161), and later it becomes a very common decorative motif.

The earliest fragments of wall paintings with lilies come from the Southeast House at Knossos (Evans 1921–1935, I, 537, color pl. 6; Petrakis 1980, 15, fig. 3:a). According to Evans, they date from the MM III period; that is, they are contemporary with the MM IIIA–B pithoi with lilies from Knossos, as discussed above. The wall painting of blossoming white lilies sprouting against a red ground on the northern wall of Room 7 in the villa at Amnisos is dated to the MM IIIB/LM IA period, possibly later than the Knossian vases with lilies (Marinatos 1932, 87; Walberg 1986, 62, 72–73, fig. 78; Angelopoulou 1995, 18; Evely 1999, 182–184; Warren 2000, 373, fig. 10). The other walls of the same room were decorated with irises, crocuses, spearmint plants, and biconcave altars.

Representations with lilies from the House of the Frescoes at Knossos and from Room 14 of the villa at Hagia Triada are dated to early LM IA (Knossos: Cameron 1968, 19, 26; Petrakis 1980, 15, fig. 1:a; Evely 1999, 246–247; Hagia Triada: Evans 1921–1935, I, 605, fig. 444; Evely 1999, 241–243; Militello and La Rosa 2000, fig. 4; Warren 2000, 373, fig. 8). In Minoan wall paintings with the polychrome backgrounds, the lilies are always white, with the exception of the red lilies at Hagia Triada (Petrakis 1980, 15, fig. 2:a; Davis 1990,

220). From LM IA onward, the lily is depicted on pottery either with three stamens and flat anthers, corresponding to the pictorial type of the wall paintings, or with more stamens and circular anthers, which derives from the Kamares Ware tradition (Marthari 1993, 253–261; Angelopoulou 1995, 30). In the Cyclades, white lilies against a red ground occur on a fragment of a LC I wall painting from Phylakopi (Atkinson et al. 1904, 75–76, fig. 64; Petrakis 1980, 16), and red lilies are depicted on two fragments recovered in the old excavations at Akrotiri (Perrot and Chipiez 1894, 537–539, figs. 211, 212; Petrakis 1980, 16).

From the major campaign of excavations at Akrotiri (1967–1974), it is apparent that the lily was one of the most popular subjects of the Thera wall-painting workshop, culminating in the Spring Fresco, which covered three walls of the small Room 2 in Building Complex Delta (Fig. 6.5; Marinatos 1971, 20–25, 49–51, pls. 33–41, 121–126, color pls. A–F; Doumas 1992, 100–107, figs. 66–76; Angelopoulou 1995; Televantou 2001). Red lilies with blue stems are depicted in flower vases in Room 4 of the West House (Marinatos 1973, color pls. 2, 3, 5:left; Doumas 1992, 49, 96–97, figs. 63, 64). Lilies with the same coloring are also depicted on the door frame of the shrine (“altar”) from the eastern wall of the lustral basin in Xeste 3 (Boulotis 2005, 29, fig. 6; Vlachopoulos 2007b, 109, pl. 27:a) and on wall-painting fragments from the fill (i.e., the upper floor) of Corridor 15 of Xeste 4 (Vlachopoulos, forthcoming), while similar lilies are mentioned being found in the unexplored “kitchen,” a building south of the so-called Porter’s Lodge (Doumas 1992, 185; Vlachopoulos 2007a, 128; forthcoming).

Red lilies embellish the bodice of one of the ladies represented in the procession extending along the length of the corridor leading from the service staircase to Room 3 in the upper story of Xeste 3, presumably imitating an actual embroidered garment (Doumas 1992, 170, figs. 133, 134; Vlachopoulos 2003, fig. 23; 2007b, 114, pl. 30:a).

White lilies are depicted on the headdress and in the bouquet held by one of the ladies in the same procession (the so-called Lady with Lilies) on the opposite wall of the corridor (Vlachopoulos 2003, 521, figs. 20, 22; 2007b, 114, pl. 30:b), projected against the red “silent wave” in the field of the representation, as at Amnissos.

The color of the lilies in the wall paintings has figured prominently in debates over their identification. Marinatos thought the ones in the Lily or Spring Fresco were the scarlet martagon (*Lilium chalcedonicum*), which is native to mainland Greece (Marinatos 1971, 50; see also Evelyn 1999, 100; Warren 2000, 373, fig. 11), but its flowers are pendent shaped, its petals curve backward, and its stamens are red. Davis and other scholars identified them as the white Madonna lily (*Lilium candidum*; Davis 1990, 218, 219, figs. 9, 10; Negbi and Negbi 2000, 598), which is painted red at Thera because of the use of white ground in the wall paintings. Indeed, the red lilies in the Spring Fresco are identical to the white ones in the bouquet of the Lady with Lilies, indicating that the painters represented the flower according to their artistic needs and not as a slavish rendering of the actual species (Warren 2000, 373). Also dating to the same period as the Thera wall paintings (LM IA) are the wall-painting fragments with white lilies from Miletos (Evelyn 1999, 47) and red lilies from Ialysos (Petrakis 1980, 17, fig. 1:b; Davis 1990, 225; Immerwahr 1990, 47; Marketou and Papachristodoulou 2005, 362, fig. 554), which also differ only in their color.

All the plants on the Lilies Jug are depicted in full bloom, whereas in Thera wall painting they are rendered as buds, open and closed, and half-opened flowers (Angelopoulou 1995, 10). The lilies on the pithoi from Knossos and Akrotiri are similarly rendered, apparently because the surface available for decoration allowed for the depiction of these successive stages of growth.

The lilies on the jug are comprised of two petals that form a deep fold in the middle, like the lily on the MC pithos from the West House (Fig. 6.10:b). On both vases the stamens and anthers are a different color than the petals, in contrast to the monochrome red lilies of the Spring Fresco. Distinguishing the three to five stamens of the lilies on the jug in lighter color (Fig. 6.4) permits their identification as the Madonna lily, a

convention not followed by the life-sized lilies of the Spring Fresco. The earlier lilies in the flower vases of the West House nonetheless make this distinction (Televantou 1994, 46–48, 160–164, fig. 38, color pls. 15, 16, 18).

As mentioned already, the triangular rocks shown in perspective on the Lilies Jug are not encountered elsewhere in MC and later pottery at Akrotiri, but parallels are found in the wall paintings of the LC I settlement. The rocks in the Spring Fresco and the Thera landscapes from Xeste 3 (Doulas 1992, figs. 95–100, 116–120, 129; Vlachopoulos 2008b, figs. 41.12–15, 41.17–20) are rendered in imperfect perspective but with convincing overlapping of colors, and they are triangular, pyramidal, or markedly curvilinear, with perpendicular zigzag or wavy hatchings describing the folds of the formations. Although the scale of the rocks on the Lilies Jug is miniature, space was reserved for similar vertical zigzag lines, which obviously render their relief volume. Indeed, it is notable that the rocks on the jug resemble most closely the flower-filled rocks of the painter who decorated Xeste 3 and created the Spring Fresco (Vlachopoulos 2008a, 275–276), as opposed to resembling the bare rocks of the Porter’s Lodge for example (Vlachopoulos 2007a, pl. 15:1, 4), which, being in a miniaturist vein, ought to resemble those of the jug more closely. The apparent thematic and syntactic similarity between the Spring Fresco and the Lilies Jug testify that the iconography of rocky landscapes where lilies blossom had been a subject of experimentation in the earlier Thera pottery production.

The Spring Fresco and the Lilies Jug refer to an immediately recognizable natural world (Doulas 1992, 24; Angelopoulou 1995, 14–15)—to a specific place, as defined by the rocky landscape (although Negbi and Negbi [2000, 599] believe lilies were cultivated, and thus the wall paintings may depict gardens rather than rural landscapes; see also Evelyn 1999, 100), and to a specific time, as determined by the spring to early summer blossoming period of the lilies (Petrakis 1980, 15; Negbi and Negbi 2000, 598), a season also suggested by the courting swallows on the Spring Fresco.

The most important difference between the vase and the wall painting lies in the scale of the pictorial elements. The relation between rocks and lilies in the Spring Fresco convincingly serves the

rendering of the real, with the height of the lilies growing from the rocks in acceptable proportion to them. This proportion is inverted on the jug, where the rocks are in miniature in relation to the flowers. The supple stems of the lilies stand slender, but sprout from rocks of rudimentary size, as if the representation was intended to be seen from above. The artist presumably chose the “decorative” effect of the blossoming lilies, whose depiction dwarfed their natural setting. The volcanic rocks have been downgraded to miniature pyramids, but in design they have retained all the elements of the subject in large scale: zigzag or dotted outline conveying the relief; oblique lines inside denoting the formations; and, most significantly, rendering of perspective by the superimposition of the rocks, which is curiously not as clear in the large-scale landscape of the wall painting.

Discussion of the lily’s symbolic significance, a subject with undisputed iconographic gravitas in the symbol-rich world of the Creto-Mycenaean Aegean, is beyond the scope of this paper, although the flower is frequently associated with the feminine, masculine (cf. the Lily Prince Fresco), divine, or mortal (Angelopoulou 1995, 43–46; 2000, 547–549, table 2a), or with the expression of human sentiments (Sarpaki 2000, 659–660, fig. 5:IV; cf. Sakellarakis and Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1997, 325). As with the Spring Fresco, there is no consensus among the scholarly community with regard to decoding the symbolism of its imagery (Marinatos 1984, 89–92, 93–96; Immerwahr 1990, 47; Doumas 1992, 100; Angelopoulou 1995, 2–4, 43–46; Televantou 2001, 157). It is sufficient here to praise the artistic originality of a Cycladic vase painter who decorated a jug with a universe that combined natural/figural and abstract/geometric elements, which he composed and imprinted with his own aesthetic criteria.

The Lilies Jug is an important vase of late MC Thera pottery. It impressively balances the freedom that the treatment of a polychrome pictorial vase of the MC “school” at Akrotiri allowed with the symmetry that utilization of a spiral-form subject of Cretan inspiration in the highly Minoanizing southern Aegean imposed. The Thera vase painter was active in the final stage of the MC, a period in which the local potters had completed their inquiries in color, techniques, and thematic repertoire and had developed artistic

idioms of complex representations in innovative combinations.

On the Lilies Jug, the motif of the convoluted spiral is not treated as a fossil of polychrome MM pottery taken from the pattern book of some itinerant vase painter. The Kamares influences on the vase are direct and reflect more developmental stages of the long-lived polychrome pottery of MM II and MM III times. Obviously, they are due to the wide range of Cretan ceramics that reached Thera and to the deep impression that these luxury vases made on the local potters, as shown by their echo in the MM III amphora from Building Beta at Akrotiri (Marinatos 1970, 35, 60, pl. 56:b, c).

Kamares Ware created the ground from which the Thera lilies “blossomed” and sprouted elegantly between the spirals of the Minoan hybrid seabed. The vase maker at Akrotiri, aware of the decorative potential of the piriform jug, successfully transplanted and combined a Cretan light-on-dark ware embellished double spiral with a flower-filled landscape and rendered an “impressionistic” landscape in which bichrome lilies grow on the rocks of the light-colored horizon of the Thera ceramic art.

On the Lilies Jug, the Minoan tradition of polychrome pottery revolves alongside the pictorial explorations of mature and final MC Thera art. This exploration found its full narrative development in mural painting, a monumental art that began to take root concurrently in the cosmopolitan settlement and expressed the urban mentality of its inhabitants. The fact that the swallow, the third pictorial subject in the Spring Fresco, occurs on MC Thera pottery (Papagiannopoulou 1992, 180, pl. 68:β; Angelopoulou 1995, 4, 36–43; Boulotis 2005, 50, 63, 72, figs. 31, 47, 62), drafted and painted like the swallows on the later-dating monumental painting (Immerwahr 1990, 241; Marthari 1993, 228; 2000, 874, 887; Vlachopoulos 2000, 652), completes and reinforces the argument that certain figural motifs began on MC pottery and were later adopted in wall painting (for corresponding conclusions regarding the reed motif on MC pottery and monumental painting at Thera, see Vlachopoulos 2000, 652–653).

Barely narrative but superbly decorative, the polychrome Lilies Jug is like a fleeting miniature preliminary design for the monumental Spring Fresco that talented painters created in Building

Complex Delta at Akrotiri. We do not know exactly how many years after the lilies on the jug the lilies of the wall painting were made. What the jug from Xeste 4 shows, however, is that themes or

concepts such as “spring” germinated earlier from the brushes of the painters of polychrome pottery, in the first true springtime of Thera art.

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