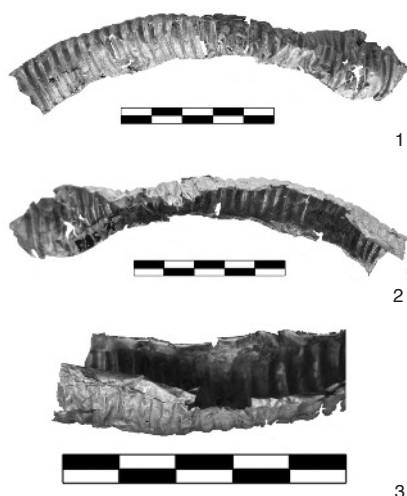


AN ENIGMATIC PIECE OF GOLD-WORK FROM THE JUKTAS PEAK SANCTUARY*



FIGG. 1-3 (SEE ALSO COLOR PLATE 1).

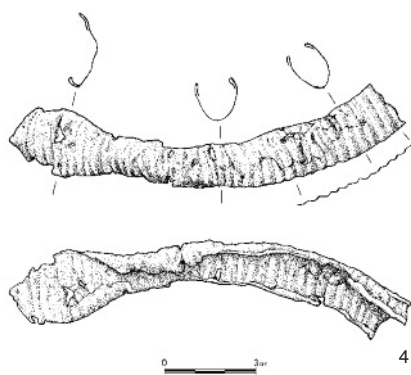


FIG. 1-4 - GOLD SHEET HM 1717.
1-2 - EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR VIEW.
3 - DETAIL OF FOLDED EDGES. 4 - DRAWING.

It is a great honor to present to our esteemed colleague and long-time friend, Professor V. La Rosa, the publication of a finely wrought piece of sheet gold from the peak sanctuary on Mount Juktas, excavated under the direction of A. Karetsou on behalf of the Greek Archaeological Society (Herakleion Museum inventory number 1717; *figures 1-4*). The artifact was discovered in 1985, during the clearing of the area NW of and against the north wall in Room V, the northernmost room of the wing of rooms along Terrace III, at the conjunction of trenches Θ1-X1¹.

Description

The artifact consists of a section of gold sheet mended from three fragments with neither end preserved (*figs. 1, 2, 4*). It has a maximum length of 12.8 cm, a maximum height of 5.7 cm, a minimum height of 4.6 cm, and a maximum width of 4.5 cm. The gold sheet weighs 4.59 gr. The addition of twelve non-joining tiny fragments and specks of gold brings the total weight up to 4.74 gr. Although the fragment may originally have been cylindrical, its ovoid profile as now preserved may have been intentional, formed by bending the sheet along its longitudinal axis (*fig. 4*); one end is now flattened (*figs. 2, 4*). Originally too, the edges may have been folded underneath, as is preserved along portions of its length (*fig. 3*). According to H. Tzedakis, a master goldsmith from Herakleion,

* The authors would like to thank the Directors and staff of Herakleion Archaeological Museum and the 23rd Ephorate of Antiquities, particularly Vasso Marselou, for their assistance. Special mention must be made of the valuable information provided by our good friend and colleague Ch. Kritzas, former Director of the Epigraphical Museum at Athens. Warmest thanks are also due to Tom Brogan, Director of INSTAP, for his

willing aid, and to Douglas Faulmann, who is responsible for the drawings and photographs published here. We are also much indebted to master goldsmith Haris Tzedakis for placing his great experience and much useful technical information at our disposal, and to Rosemary Tzanaki for her valuable secretarial support.

¹ ΚΑΡΕΤΣΟΥ 1980b, pp. 137-153; ΚΑΡΕΤΣΟΥ 1985, p. 292, fig. 5, pl. 141b.

another piece of metal may have dovetailed into the folded edges, a putative complementary half. The exterior surface is decorated with a series of rather evenly spaced pointed parallel ridges that traverse the width of the gold sheet, i.e. perpendicular to its length. These were formed by a series of grooves chased on the interior, in a rather distinctive repoussé technique. When oriented horizontally, the artifact curves upward towards the middle and slopes down towards the flattened end.

Archaeological Context

As mentioned above, the gold fragment was found, at the conjunction of trenches $\Phi 1$ -X1, during the clearing of the NW corner of Room 5². The relatively small Room V, measuring 3.40 × 3.20 m, is of particular architectural and stratigraphical interest, in spite of the fact that it is next to the area in which the first foundations of the Greek Telecommunications substation were laid. It is the northernmost of the rooms of the wing along Terrace III, founded at the end of the Proto-palatial period. It continued in use throughout the Neo-palatial period, mainly during MMIII - LM IA-B, as indicated by the rich deposits – in successive layers – of LM IA conical cups and juglets. There is also a concentration of important LM IB pottery, including a Marine Style stirrup jar with a representation of an octopus, and tall «chalices» with Floral Style motifs³.

During the 1979 and 1985 season, excavation work continued north and west of Room V, in trenches X1 and Φ ⁴, areas which, despite extensive disturbance and heaping of stones, have provided some of the sanctuary's most important finds. These include fragments of alabaster vases, fragments of rectangular and round stone tables of offering, medium-sized bovid figurines, a clay votive hammer (perhaps an emblem) and approximately half of a «ladle» or escutcheon-shaped vessel of Egyptian alabaster⁵.

The gold artifact under discussion was discovered in the same room, very close to a fragment of a stone bull's head, perhaps from a bull's head rhyton⁶. In the same layer was found part of a stone table of offering with five inscribed symbols in Linear A⁷. There were also 10 fragments of fine and thin gold leaf which had been used to cover objects, 8 of which joined votive bronze tools in the form of cut-out plaques, similar to those discovered on Terrace III, as well as an interesting bronze tool, 0.05 cm long, used perhaps for engraving or chasing metal⁸.

Identification

In a preliminary report it was suggested that the gold artefact HM 1717 may originally have covered the rounded neck ring commonly found on stone Neo-palatial ovoid rhyta⁹. However, the gold which is still preserved on all stone rhyta, including the neck rings, is very thin leaf or foil and was attached using adhesives¹⁰. The artefact under dis-

² KAPETSOY 1985.

³ KAPETSOY 1979, p. 281, pl. 163 a-b.

⁴ KAPETSOY 1980, pp. 347-348.

⁵ KAPETSOY 1980, p. 348, fig. 6 a-d; 1985, see n. 1 above.

⁶ KARETSOU-KOEHL forth.

⁷ HM 4747; KAPETSOY 1987 (IO Za 14).

⁸ KAPETSOY 1985, pp. 292-293, figs. 4-6

⁹ KAPETSOY 1985, p. 292; KOEHL 2006, p. 29.

¹⁰ KOEHL 2006, p. 103, pl. 16.204 (detail).

cussion, however, is made from a fairly heavy sheet gold and was probably a complete cylinder, not a $\frac{3}{4}$ curve, like a neck ring. Furthermore, the shape of the artefact is not circular, but rather, fairly straight. Hence, the originally suggested identification of the gold piece is withdrawn. Nor is it likely, despite its significant weight and thickness, that our gold artefact was originally hollow, as in its present state, since regardless of its original function gold sheet is relatively soft and pliable. Thus it is likely that the gold was originally fitted around a solid core which has, however, left no traces. Presumably the core would have been made from an ephemeral, probably organic substance such as wood or, even better, wax. Indeed, a wax core could have been moulded precisely to completely fill the grooved interior (see *fig. 3*), providing solid reinforcement and stability, but adding very little weight.

Based on its material, scale, overall shape, technique of manufacture, and ornamentation, there are several possible explanations for this artefact. In its scale, thickness, and hollow shape, which presumably was fitted around a solid core, the artefact seems closest in conception to the gold horns on the silver bull's head rhyton from Shaft Grave IV at Mycenae¹¹. However, on all representations of Aegean bulls, the horns are smooth whereas this artefact is covered with parallel transverse ridges.

It is difficult to find precise parallels for this particular kind of repoussé technique in Minoan gold work. Perhaps the earliest example appears on the hilt of the magnificent Middle Minoan II ceremonial «acrobat sword» from the palace at Malia, whose outer edge is skillfully encircled by a ring of parallel ridges¹². Again, however, the shape of our object precludes its identification as the sheathing for a circular object, such as a sword pommel.

Another gold object which displays this distinctive kind of decoration is the so-called Master of Animals pendant from the «Aegina Treasure». The front face of the pairs of upward curving hollow convex bands which emerge from both sides of the «Master's» kilt and terminate in smooth pointed «heads» are decorated with repoussé transverse parallel ridges; the pendant's back side is flat and unadorned¹³. While there is still debate regarding its place of manufacture – with Crete, Aegina, or the Levant being the favoured candidates, as well as its date of manufacture – with most suggestions ranging from c. 1800-1500 B.C.E. – its authenticity and generally Middle-Late Bronze Age eastern Mediterranean pedigree is no longer seriously doubted¹⁴. Some scholars have identified the pairs of ridged bands as a variant of the Minoan «snake frame», the enigmatic object comprised of parallel pairs of upward curving «branches» which are most familiar from Minoan glyptic depictions, where they appear held or worn over the heads of prominent females¹⁵. Recently identified as a divine emblem, and perhaps originally derived from joined pairs of bull's horns¹⁶, only a few of the glyptic representations are decorated with transverse ridges, and these occur only in small groups near the bottom. Others have suggested that the ridged bands on the Aegina pendant are stylized stems which terminate in lotus buds¹⁷. The buds are nibbled at by the water fowl held in each of the «Master's» hands. Since the gold artefact from Mount Juktas is three-dimensional whereas all extant snake frames are two-dimensional depictions, and none are covered fully with parallel ridges, it is unlikely that it once belonged to a «snake frame».

¹¹ KOEHL 2006, pp. 33-34, 115 (cat. no. 294), pl. 22.294.

¹² DEMARGNE 1964, fig. 152.

¹³ FITTON-MEEKS-JOYNER 2009, p. 18.

¹⁴ See papers in FITTON 2009.

¹⁵ HÄGG-LINDAU 1984.

¹⁶ HÄGG-LINDAU 1984.

¹⁷ For recent discussion on their identity, see ARUZ 2009, p. 48.

While its identification as a bull's horn may be eliminated on account of its transverse ridges, its ovoid or tear-shaped profile and arching contour does however suggest an animal's horn. Rather than a bull's horn, we suggest that the gold artefact is a three-dimensional representation of the horn of the *Capra aegagrus cretica*, familiarly known as the agrimi or kri-kri, the wild goat of Crete (fig. 5). Furthermore, based on its repoussé decoration of evenly spaced parallel ridges we suggest that the object to which it was originally attached depicted a young mature female agrimi, aged 2- to 3 years. Unlike the mature male agrimi, whose horns have a distinct row of humps along the keel which continue onto the sides as wide rounded ridges, and thus appear to divide the continuous transverse growth ridges into groups, the horns of the young mature female lack a keel and thus are covered from base to tip with evenly spaced transverse ridges¹⁸. We suggest that it is this pattern of growth ridges that the Minoan gold worker successfully imitated on the artifact from Mount Juktas.

Of course, with only a single horn surviving, it is impossible to know with any certainty what the remainder of the agrimi-shaped object to which the horn was attached originally comprised. Perhaps, as in the Classical period, this gold object was originally fitted around the horn of an actual agrimi, which was brought to the sanctuary on Juktas for sacrifice¹⁹.

However, based on its scale, which is perhaps life-sized, and similarity in technical conception to the silver bull's head-shaped rhyton from Shaft Grave IV, it may be more likely that the horn was attached to a vessel, such as an agrimi head-shaped rhyton, of which only this fragment survives. Indeed, considering the Aegean – specifically Minoan – metalworkers' penchant for polychromatic effects, perhaps the agrimi's head was made of silver, like the bull's head from Shaft Grave IV²⁰. Silver was more commonly and lavishly used in Minoan metalwork than gold, but unlike gold, it easily deteriorates in the soil and rarely survives in the Aegean outside of funerary contexts.

The identification of the gold artifact from Mount Juktas as an agrimi horn also opens the possibility of identifying three enigmatic fragments of gold leaf from the Temple Repositories at Knossos as agrimi horns (figs. 6, 7)²¹. Panagiotaki, on the basis of Mackenzie's



FIG. 5 – LAPPLAENDER PHOTO OF KRI-KRI.



FIG. 6-7 – GOLD SHEET FROM KNOSSOS, TEMPLE REPOSITORIES. EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR VIEW (SEE ALSO COLOR PLATE 2).



¹⁸ Cf. fig. 5; PORTER 1996, p. 300, figs. 25.10; also discussed further below.

¹⁹ Cf. the white tipped horns of the bull on a wall painting from the Ammorite palace of Zimri-Lim at Mari, surely meant to indicate silver; ARUZ-BENZEL-EVANS 2008, p. 33. See, too, the Appendix for a list

of literary references to sacrificial animals with gilded or golden horns in antiquity.

²⁰ DAVIS 1977, pp. 331-332.

²¹ HM 139; EVANS 1902-1903, pp. 45-47, fig. 24 («ribbed gold foil»); PM I, pp. 469-470, fig. 337D; PANAGIOTAKI 1999, pp. 125-127, fig. 30.2-3, pls. 22, 23a.

and Evans's notes, remarks that *gold foil was found in both Temple Repositories but probably most of it came from the West Temple Repository*²². Mackenzie noted that, *of gold leaf there was found a larger quantity than in any other single spot on the sites*²³. Evans provisionally suggested that the fragments were the remains of decorative appliqués from wooden chests (*Evans believed that the gold leaf was connected with 'carbonized remains of ... a chest together with smaller caskets. From the fluting and traces of ornamental designs on some of this gold foil, it was evident that it had been used as a coating of decorative reliefs'*)²⁴. It must be stressed that, despite their fragmentary condition, both the Juktas and the Temple Repository examples have preserved the general form of the object that they once covered.

The gold fragments from the Temple Repository are decorated with continuous lines of parallel transverse ridges, made in the same chasing or repoussé technique as the gold artefact from Mount Juktas. One of the fragments also clearly preserves an arched contour and, even more telling, a row of humps along its keel, which closely imitate the appearance of these annually-formed growth markers characteristic of the male agrimi²⁵. Of course it is impossible to determine the object to which these fragments belonged; if it were a *rhyton*, it would have been well under life sized.

The goldsmith whom we consulted, Tzedakis, believes that the gold artefacts from Mount Juktas and the Temple Repositories discussed here derive from the same workshop tradition and covered similar objects. However, the technique of the Temple Repository gold strips is slightly different, due to the different thickness of the gold, which is about half that of the gold horn from Mount Juktas. Although the horns from the Temple Repositories have been flattened and are very crumpled, it is clear that they were originally flatter, lacking the ovoid or tear-drop shaped profile of the gold from Mount Juktas (*fig. 4*). However, the transverse ridges are of similar width, depth and spacing on all these gold pieces. The grooves on the horn from Mount Juktas were chased from the interior with a pointed tool in one, two or three small, roughly parallel, pointed strokes. If these gold objects do indeed represent the products of the same gold workshop, the implications, which cannot be fully explored here, are significant, suggesting that there existed a long-lived gold workshop most likely associated with, or located at Knossos, spanning at least two generations.

Images of the agrimi

If the identification of the species, gender and age of the animal to which our gold horn belonged is correct, it would be one of the few extant depictions from the Aegean of the young mature female agrimi. Although the agrimi is the second most frequently depicted animal in Minoan imagery after the bull, nearly all of these representations depict the mature male or, less frequently, the mature female who is often seen nursing her young²⁶. To this corpus of representations of the mature agrimi might now be added the mould-made appliquéd image on a Middle Minoan III jug from Alonaki, Juktas²⁷, which Karetsou

²² PANAGIOTAKI 1993, n. 432.

²³ D.M./D.B. 1903, vol. II, 90, 30 May.

²⁴ PANAGIOTAKI 1999, pp. 127, 174 (cat. nos. 309. 2, 3).

²⁵ PORTER 1996, p. 300, figs. 25.6, 25.9.

²⁶ BLOEDOW 2003 is the most comprehensive survey

to date; see also PORTER 1996 and VANSCHOONWINKEL 1996, pp. 355-357, 389-392 (a useful catalog of representations).

²⁷ KARETSOU 2010 forth. See also SIMANDIRAKI 2006.

believes was made from the exact same mould that was used for the appliquéd image of an agrimi on the famous Kamares jug from Phaistos²⁸. Recently, a LM I vessel for everyday use with an agrimi head in appliqué relief was found in the new excavations at Papadiokambos, Sitia, directed by T. Brogan and INSTAP in collaboration with the Ephorate of Antiquities of East Crete²⁹.

Besides the gold object under discussion, the only other positively identifiable depiction of the young mature female agrimi in Minoan art occurs on the circular gold ring in the British Museum, known as the Burgon ring, purchased in Herakleion in the early 19th century; its authenticity is thus not in doubt³⁰. On the bezel, a mature buck, whose long horns have the distinctive keel humps clearly indicated, mounts a female, whose smaller horns are decorated with a continuous row of evenly spaced, transverse ridges, as on our gold object.

Although no Minoan rhyta in the form of an agrimi's head have thus far been identified, there is positive albeit sporadic evidence to associate agrimia with rhyta during the Neopalatial era, beginning with the Middle Minoan III Type III Convex-Conical rhyton from Phaistos decorated with an appliquéd image of an agrimi³¹. Agrimia next occur as protomai attached to the shoulders of two rhyta from Palaikastro: a Late Minoan IA and a Late Minoan IB Type III Rim Handled Piriform³². On both of these, the majestic horns of the agrimi reach back to join the rims. Although the horns on the earlier one are now mostly missing, enough is preserved of the later one to show that they were decorated with bumps along the keel and groups of incised parallel transverse grooves, denoting their male gender.

Agrimia also appear on two Neopalatial stone rhyta decorated with relief. On the «Sanctuary Rhyton» from the palace of Zakros, a cohort rests grandly on the roof of the shrine while others leap among the crocus flowers³³. On a fragment of a Type II Handleless Piriform chlorite rhyton from Knossos, a male drags an agrimi by its horns³⁴.

Meanings of the agrimi

The possibility that there was a life-sized gold or perhaps silver and gold head-shaped agrimi rhyton in the peak sanctuary on Mount Juktas would enlarge the corpus of known zoomorphic rhyta to include an animal whose significance in Minoan culture was clearly of paramount significance³⁵. Indeed, based on its «narrative» contexts in Minoan imagery, various scholars have suggested that the agrimi was regarded by the Minoans as a sacred animal. Among the most suggestive images are those on clay sealings from Chania and Agia Triada where the agrimi appears to feed or drink from the hand of a seated female³⁶. These images may belong to a wider thematic cycle of a woman facing an animal who, in

²⁸ LEVI, *Festós*, pl. LXXVIII, LXXXI; Carinci and La Rosa concur with Karetsou; personal communication.

²⁹ Personal communication by the excavators.

³⁰ KRZYSZKOWSKA 2005, pp. 127-128, 313-314.

³¹ KOEHL 2006, p. 137 (cat. no. 415).

³² KOEHL 2006, p. 132 (cat. nos. 374, dated to LMI IA and 379, dated to LM IB), fig. 14.379, pl. 30.374, 379; see also ΧΡΥΣΙΚΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ 1999, pp. 129-141.

³³ KOEHL 2006, pp. 103-104 (cat. no. 204), pl.

16.204.

³⁴ KOEHL 2006, p. 91 (cat. no. 112), pl. 12.112; discussed further below.

³⁵ On the significance of the agrimi in Minoan culture, see BLOEDOW 1990; 1996; 2000; 2003; also HILLER 2001, who includes the domestic goat.

³⁶ Chania: ΠΑΠΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΥ 1977, pp. 85-87, no. 32; Agia Triada: CMS II.6, no. 30; also CMS II.6, no. 31.

the view of most scholars, is identifiable as a goddess conventionally called the «Potnia Theron», or «Mistress/Protector of Animals»³⁷. If the female depicted with the agrimi is identified not simply as a generic «Potnia Theron», or «Mistress/Protector of Animals», but specifically a «Goddess of the Goats», her natural habitat would surely be the mountains, like that of her animal attribute, and thus her worship at the peak sanctuary on Mount Juktas would not at all be surprising. Perhaps, the presumptive precious metal rhyton from Mount Juktas was part of her cult equipment. If so, is it not also possible that this vessel, in the form or her animal attribute, was a kind of emblem for the goddess, in the same way that *BIBRI*, the Hittite animal-shaped vessels, were recognized as emblems of their appropriate divinities³⁸?

More supporting evidence for the sanctity of the goat in southern Aegean Bronze Age culture comes from the recently discovered gold statuette of a long-horned goat from Akrotiri. Originally stored in a wooden box in a room of the House of the Benches, south of Xeste 3, it was found next to a deposit consisting of hundreds of pairs of animal horns, primarily of goats, with relatively few bovines, which had been placed on a rearranged layer of rubble from a previous earthquake, under a layer of pumice³⁹. As Boulotis rightly notes, the «antique» appearance of the gold «agrimi» statuette contributed to its having probably been kept in the room as a *sacrum*⁴⁰. Furthermore, its lack of a beard may indicate that the statuette depicts specifically a young female, like the vessel reconstructed from our gold horn. The deposit of actual horns must surely represent the remains of sacrifices, adding to the body of visual and physical evidence from Crete which suggests that this sacred animal was deemed worthy of sacrifice⁴¹.

Surely the best known image which alludes to goat sacrifice appears on the Agia Triada sarcophagus where two goats lie awaiting their turn beneath the table supporting a freshly sacrificed bull⁴². The physical evidence which suggests that agrimi and/or domestic goats were sacrificed in Bronze Age Crete derives from the numerous remains of agrimi bones and horns from various Minoan contexts, both funerary and domestic. While they are usually not the only animal represented in these deposits, they predominate. Among these contexts are the MM ossuary at Palaikastro⁴³; the MM burial building B of Archanes⁴⁴; and the dromos of the MM III-LM A cave tomb at Poros, Herakleion, the coastal cemetery of the harbour of Knossos⁴⁵. A large number also comes from the Zakros area⁴⁶. Recently, agrimi horns were discovered at the MM site of Pera Galini⁴⁷ and in a workshop at Poros, Herakleion, excavated by N. Dimopoulou⁴⁸.

While the agrimi horns discovered in the workshop at Poros suggest that the animal was hunted specifically for use here in a manufactured object, the other contexts imply a different set of circumstances. In these, the agrimi would have been captured alive and carried to the place of sacrifice, as may be inferred from their appearance, *apud alia*, on the Agia Triada sarcophagus sitting alertly under the sacrificial table. Perhaps this activity is

³⁷ ΧΡΗΣΤΟΥ 1968; ΣΑΚΕΛΛΑΡΑΚΗΣ 1972; ΤΑΜΒΑΚΙ 1974, p. 287; BLOEDOW 2000; 2003, pp. 41-42.

³⁸ CARRUBBA 1967; GÜTERBOCK 1970; 1983; YENER 2007.

³⁹ ΤΡΑΝΤΑΛΙΔΟΥ 2008, esp. pp. 33-40.

⁴⁰ ΜΠΟΥΛΩΤΗΣ 2005, pp. 43-46.

⁴¹ ΜΑΡΙΝΑΤΟΣ 1986 p. 12.

⁴² LONG 1974, pp. 63-64; ΜΑΡΙΝΑΤΟΣ 1986, p. 12, fig. 15.

⁴³ DAWKINS 1903-1904, p. 202 (Sta Ellenika site).

⁴⁴ ΣΑΚΕΛΛΑΡΑΚΗΣ-ΣΑΚΕΛΛΑΡΑΚΗ 1966, p. 181.

⁴⁵ ΛΕΜΠΕΣΙ 1967, p. 200.

⁴⁶ ΠΛΑΤΩΝ 1962, pp. 165-166; 1973, pp. 142, 144; 1979, p. 310; 1981, p. 348, pl. 246b.

⁴⁷ Personal communication, E. Banou.

⁴⁸ For a preliminary report on the excavation of the Psychogioudakis plot, see ΔΗΜΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ 1993, p. 451.

alluded to on the fragmentary Type II Handleless Piriform chlorite rhyton from Knossos, which depicts a young man dragging an agrimi by its horns⁴⁹. While it is certainly too fragmentary to confidently interpret the theme of this vessel, some suggestions may be offered. The image of a helmet preserved below the youth and agrimi may suggest that the vessel depicted a scene of warfare. If so, the agrimi might be regarded as plunder. However, it is difficult to imagine why someone would bother to plunder in the mountains for a heavy, wild beast, and drag it to the plunderer's destination.

A line of inquiry favoured by Koehl, which may provide a connective tissue for several of the strains of meaning discussed above, specifically the hunting and sacrificing of agrimi, are rites of passage. Previously, Koehl suggested that the male and female depicted holding hands on an EM III-MM I ivory hemi-cylinder from Knossos alluded to a marriage scene in which the female, who stands on higher ground and appears to grasp the male's hand, might have been the elder of the two⁵⁰. On its reverse, a male holding a bow and arrow, accompanied by a dog, hunts an agrimi in an abbreviated landscape setting. If the two scenes on the seal are related, perhaps the hunting scene, like marriage, was a rite of passage for the young male.

Closer in time to the gold horn from Mount Juktas is a gold ring from Tholos Tomb IV at Pylos, possibly of Minoan manufacture, on which two male figures appear with an agrimi and an altar in a rustic setting⁵¹. On account of the abbreviated rendering of his torso, the gesture of the smaller but higher positioned figure is ambiguous and leaves open several possible avenues of interpretation. If he has both arms raised, as it appears in de Jong's drawing, and as several scholars maintain, he could be identified as a divinity since, as Alexiou has argued, this gesture is specific to deities from the early LM period, although it is most often associated with female divinities⁵². Nonetheless, if the figure is divine, the scene could be characterized as an epiphany, experienced by an agrimi hunter in the mountains, as Karetsou says, in a visionary climate of secret communication.

However, Koehl thinks that this figure holds his arms in the same «saluting» gesture as does the larger, facing figure, i.e., with one arm bent at the elbow and the hand raised to the head, and the other arm bent at the elbow, with the hand facing downwards. If so, both figures may be identified as mortals. Their difference in size might indicate a difference in their ages and the saluting gesture of the smaller male, facing the larger male, might refer to his subdominant role. In this interpretive context, it is worth noting too that de Jong's drawing also appears to omit a significant anatomical detail which appears on the larger figure, his erect phallus, as well as a line of engraved dots which appear to emerge from its tip. In an earlier study, Koehl suggested that the imagery on this ring referred to male initiation rites like those described by Ephoros, a Classical historian, specific to Crete involving homosexual abductions and a period of seclusion in the countryside⁵³. Perhaps the fragmentary chlorite rhyton from Knossos, discussed above, reiterates this same theme. The helmet might have belonged to an adult male (the young initiate/hunter's presumptive lover), or it may refer to the military equipment which Ephoros states that an elder male was required to give his younger lover at the conclusion of their two month period of seclusion in the woods⁵⁴.

⁴⁹ KOEHL 2006, p. 91 (cat. no. 112), pl. 12.112.

⁵⁰ KOEHL 2001, p. 239.

⁵¹ BLEGEN *et al.* 1973, p. 113, fig. 192.9a,b; CMS I, no. 292.

⁵² BLEGEN *et al.* 1973, p. 113; CMS I, p. 329 (with

bibliography); ΑΛΕΞΙΟΥ 1958, pp. 228 ff., p. 243; ΧΡΗΣΤΟΥ 1968; HILLER 2001, p. 297.

⁵³ KOEHL 1986.

⁵⁴ KOEHL 1986, pp. 105-106.

This ring thus may reveal that hunting an agrimi was part of male initiation rituals on Crete during the Bronze Age. Their continuation on Crete into the historical period seems attested by the series of 7th-5th century B.C.E. bronze cut-out plaques from the sanctuary of Hermes and Aphrodite at Kato Syme Viannou, which depict youths carrying agrimia and hunting equipment, in some cases in the company of older males⁵⁵.

Did the agrimi continue to hold its sacred status in the changed world of the post-Neopalatial era? It is indeed impressive and surely meaningful that the richness and frequency of agrimi iconography continues into Post-palatial times, notably on a series of painted Late Minoan IIIB larnakes where we see the agrimi primarily as an object of the hunt and as a nurturer⁵⁶. We recall that on the Agia Triada sarcophagus, now dated LM IIIA:2 (?), the agrimi was a sacrificial animal, alongside the bull. The occurrence of sacred symbols, like double axes and horns of consecration, on these larnakes, may allude to the sanctity of the images and activities they depict. But their occurrence on larnakes also suggests another shade of meaning to the agrimi: its role in funerary rites, the ultimate rite of passage.

The interpretations given to the rich repertoire of hunting scenes in Aegean imagery, involving primarily bulls, deer, and agrimia have been divided by scholars into three groups: a. funereal⁵⁷; b. symbolic⁵⁸; c. sacrificial⁵⁹. N. Marinatos' view, that hunting preceded sacrifice, convincingly links the two activities. A very good example which supports this view is found on a painted sarcophagus from Kalochorafitis⁶⁰. Here the agrimi is depicted on two sides. On the long side, it is found in conjunction with a running dog in a natural landscape indicated by a palm tree and other details. However, on the same side, on the upper left, the main theme is bull-leaping; next to it is a scene with two figures – a male worshipper and a dancing figure – probably a cult scene. The juxtaposition of bull-leaping with a cult scene on a funerary monument is particularly noteworthy. These depictions, on both the Kalochorafitis larnax and those of Tanagra⁶¹, surely linked the deceased and funerary cult.

On the other long side of the same sarcophagus from Kalochorafitis are depictions of a chariot, hunting, and a ship in a marine landscape, while on one narrow side, visually the most coherent of the four sides, an agrimi is depicted standing under or next to a palm tree which covers most of the area. This panel also includes a fish, wheel, rayed motifs and other themes, as well as a bird sitting on the palm tree on the same side as the agrimi. The combination of tree and caprid is of course a familiar iconographic motif, commonly found on seals⁶². For Marinatos, this combination of themes refers to animal sacrifice, although the palm tree may also symbolize fertility and rebirth, the quintessential tree of life⁶³.

The layers of meaning and resonance attached to the agrimi in Minoan culture may well have derived from both its practical uses in the Minoan economy as well as its role in the overall cycle of nature, as observed by the Minoans. Paleozoological evidence suggests that the feral agrimi arrived on Crete no later than the Middle Neolithic, and likely earlier, perhaps from the southern Levant⁶⁴. While during the Neolithic, the agrimi may have been hunted primarily for its meat and partially domesticated for its milk, by the end of the Neolithic its exploitation may have broadened. During this era, which in the broader

⁵⁵ ΛΕΜΠΕΣΗ 1985.

⁵⁶ ΜΕΡΟΥΣΗΣ 2000, pp. 295-302.

⁵⁷ ΤΑΜΒΑΚΙ 1974, pp. 281-282.

⁵⁸ LONG 1974, pp. 56-57.

⁵⁹ ΜΑΡΙΝΑΤΟΣ 1986, *passim*.

⁶⁰ ΚΑΡΕΤΣΟΥ *forth*.

⁶¹ ΣΠΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ 1970, pp. 190 ff., fig. 16.

⁶² ΜΑΡΙΝΑΤΟΣ 1984, pp. 116 ff.

⁶³ ΜΑΡΙΝΑΤΟΣ 1984 p. 121; ΜΟΡΓΑΝ 1987, p. 198.

⁶⁴ ΚΑΧΙΛΑ ΒΑΡ-ΓΑΛ *et al.* 2002; ΡΙΠΟΛΙ *forth*.

Mediterranean context is regarded as the Chalcolithic, the «secondary products revolution» changed the relationship between humans and animals⁶⁵. With regard to the agrimi and domesticated goats, its milk was now probably churned into butter and yogurt, hides were tanned into leather, while their sinews were probably used to sew leather⁶⁶. By LM I, and perhaps earlier, their horns were used for composite bows, as Evans first suggested⁶⁷.

On a wider, macrocosmic level, it is not at all too far-fetched to imagine that the reproductive cycle of the agrimi, which coincided with important seasonal transitions, may have influenced a Minoan seasonally based calendar. Their life-like naturalistic renderings in Minoan art surely attest to their close observation. Thus, the agrimi's rutting season, which occurs with the coming of the first rains in late fall, and also coincides with the first blooming of the crocus, may have marked the beginning of the Minoan New Year, as previously suggested by Koehl⁶⁸. Indeed, it would appear that it is precisely this season which is alluded to on the Sanctuary rhyton from Zakros, as Porter has perceptively observed⁶⁹. The birthing season, on the other hand, occurs in the spring, perhaps the time of a secondary New Year's festival, as was celebrated in parts of the ancient Near East⁷⁰. However, these remarks surely deserve deeper scrutiny than the present paper allows and suggest avenues for continued study and research.

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⁶⁵ For its effects on the southern Levant, see e.g. GRIGSON 1998, esp. pp. 256-258, 265-266; LEVY 1998, p. 232.

⁶⁶ The Linear B evidence for the industrial use of the goat in the Mycenaean economy is discussed by

MELENA 1988; see also ΜΙΧΑΗΛΙΔΟΥ 1990, p. 75.

⁶⁷ *PM* IV, pp. 832-836.

⁶⁸ KOEHL 2001, p. 241.

⁶⁹ PORTER 1996, p. 297.

⁷⁰ FRANKFORT 1948, pp. 313-333.

APPENDIX

While there is no evidence from the Aegean Bronze Age for the gilding of the horns of sacrificial animals, there is abundant textual evidence from the Classical period which suggests that during the Classical period, the horns of animals meant for sacrifices could be gilded. See, e.g., Plutarch, *Parallel Lives*, Aemilius Paulus 33.2 χρυσόκερω τροφίαι βους εκατόν είκοσι, *one hundred and twenty stalled oxen with gilded horns*; Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists* 5, 33 ταύροι δισχίλιοι ομοιοχρώματοι χρυσόκερω, *two thousand bulls all of the same colour, with gilded horns*; Libanius, 23,1,10; *Comments on Aeschines*, Oration 3, Comment 164: βους χρυσόκερων, *ox with gilded horns*; *Epigram of Philip*, *Greek Anthology* VI, 231: θόσει χρυσόκερων κευάδα, *sacrificed a deer with gilded horns*; Plutarch, *Sayings of Kings and Emperors*, *Stephanes Dictionary*, 184, E: [Ο Αντιοχος] ταύρους χρυσόκερος παρασκευασάμενος [προς θυσίαν], [*Antiochus*] *having prepared bulls with gilded horns [for sacrifice]*; Theophrastus, *On Piety*, frag. 7: τους χρυσόκερος βους και τας εκατόμβας τω Πυθίω προσάγοντος, *bringing the oxen with gilded horns...*; *On Inscriptions: Inscriptiones Graeca* IG I³, 78a l.37; IG I³, 78a l. 40; M. SEGRE, *Iscrizioni di Cos*, ED 25B l. 6; HERZOG, *Heilige Gsetze von Kos*, 25, l. 7]; W. DITTENBERGER (ed.), *Sylloge Inscriptionum. Graecarum*] Syll 3. 398, 67-26; F. SOKOLOWSKI, *Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure* 81, l. 10 & 159, l. 7. Furthermore, Classical Greek myths have numerous references to animals with gilded horns, normally associated with the gods Artemis and Apollos. See, e.g., references to the Cerynitian Hind or Elaphos Kerynitis, the «Hind with Golden Horns» (*elaphos chrysokeros*) of Artemis, hunted by Herakles: Pindar, *Olympian Ode* 3, 67.29: χρυσόκερος έλαφον, *chrysokeron elaphon*; Euripides, *Heracles* 378: χρυσοκάρανον δορκάν; Callimachus, *Hymn 3 to Artemis* 98 ff; Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 4. 12. 13: την χρυσόκερος έλαφον, *the hart with golden horns*; Quintus Smyrnaeus, *Fall of Troy* 6. 223 ff; Aelian, *De Natura Animalium* 7. 38.27 & 34: χρυσόκερος έλαφον, *the hind with the golden horns*; Pseudo-Hyginus, *Fabulae* 30; Seneca, *Hercules Furens* 222 ff; Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* 2, 81: ην δε η έλαφον εν Οινοη, χρυσόκερος, Αρτεμιδος ιερά, *now the hind was at Oenoe; it had golden horns and was sacred to Artemis*; Euripides, *Helen* 382: Άρτεμις εξεχορεύσατο χρυσοκέρατ' έλαφον, *whom Artemis drove from her choir, changed to a hind with horns of gold*; Euripides, *Frag.* 740: χρυσόκερων έλαφον, *Apollo's cattle with golden horns, stolen by Hermes*; Philostratus, *Imagines*, 1. 26, 3; common epithet of Pan. There is also a reference in the *Iliad* 19.294, on gilding the horns of animals intended for sacrifice; see H. BLÜMNER, *Technologie und Terminologie der Gewerbe und Künste bei Griechen und Römern*, 4 vols., Leipzig 1874-88, p. 304.

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ABSTRACT

AN ENIGMATIC PIECE OF GOLD-WORK FROM THE JUKTAS PEAK SANCTUARY

In this paper we discuss an enigmatic piece of sheet gold from the peak sanctuary on Mount Juktas. The fragment was found in Room V and is dated to the Late Minoan IA-B period. We provisionally suggest here that the gold comes from the horn of a precious metal agrimi head-shaped vessel, perhaps a silver and gold rhyton, of which no other fragments remain. Its identification may also shed light on similar pieces of gold from the Temple Repositories of Knossos, which may derive from the same workshop tradition, although these belong to much smaller-scale agrimia. After a survey of other Aegean Bronze Age agrimi images, we conclude with an extensive discussion of the meaning and significance of the agrimi as a sacred animal in Minoan culture.