

GRIFFINS IN POST-MINOAN CRETAN ART

(PLATES 82-84)

IT is clearly understood that the great Orientalizing period in the Aegean world evolved out of the Geometric period. It was the direct result of renewed contacts made among the Greek mainland, the islands, and the Near East during the 8th century B.C. In Greek art, and we can include Crete as well, one of the most obvious of Orientalizing influences was the appearance of fantastic animals in the artists' repertoire. The griffin was certainly among these fantastic animals.

On the island of Crete, the griffin was no stranger. It is a hybrid animal known to the Minoan-Mycenaean as well as to the contemporary Near Eastern world. During the Orientalizing period, it is again introduced into the art of the Aegean from the Near East, but in this later period there is more variety in its stylization and some alterations in its meaning. Basically, the griffin has a winged feline body, the head of a bird-of-prey, a long curving tail, and feet which resemble the talons of an eagle. There are, however, considerable variations in its representation which seem to reflect divergent Near Eastern sources. There are also lingering Minoan and/or Mycenaean characteristics to be considered. For example, closed-beak griffins are known in the Minoan world and are also found on some bronzes of the 9th to 8th century in Crete. This variety is also common in Urartu, while the open-beak griffin is known only in Assyria or areas under Assyrian artistic influence.

The several examples of griffins from Crete in the 8th and 7th centuries B.C. reflect, by their variety of styles, the sources of their diverse origin. As these variations are investigated, it will become obvious that Crete experienced Orientalizing effects not only from the Orient but also from Greece.¹

The representation of the griffin in post-Minoan Crete suggests that Near Eastern sources are to be held responsible in the 8th century, while during the 7th and into the 6th century the Greek mainland may well be the source of inspiration. As in all artistic activity, however, the skill and imagination of the local craftsmen must not be underestimated, and in Crete lingering Minoan traditions must not be ignored.

Representations of griffins are found in two main techniques in Crete during

¹ This study derives from my doctoral dissertation, presented at the University of Missouri, Columbia, in December 1973. I wish to express appreciation to my dissertation supervisor, Professor William R. Biers, for his encouragement and to Professor Saul S. Weinberg who extended timely aid and criticism.

the Orientalizing period. They appear engraved on bronzes or as relief work on amphoras or terracotta plaques. The plaques are nearly all from Praesos or its immediate vicinity and display such identical treatment that they are probably all from the same workshop; an exception is a fine plaque from Gortyna. The relief amphora examples vary more, not only in geographical distribution, but also in iconography. They, too, show strong affinities to each other but not to the plaques. Engraved examples occur on a shield, a small bronze panel, and a bronze corselet. The majority of the examples are datable to the 7th century and show definite changes from the examples of the 8th century.

GRIFFINS OF EIGHTH-CENTURY CRETE

The two earliest examples of griffins from post-Minoan Crete, belonging to the 8th century B.C., are a thin bronze relief from Kavousi and a bronze shield from Arkades.² Of the two, the bronze relief from Kavousi (1) shows the stronger Near Eastern influences. The relief was discovered in 1900 by Harriet Boyd, who quickly observed that although the motifs were Oriental, the style was Greek.³ The relief is composed of panels with different scenes of men and beasts. Two griffins are clearly preserved (while a second pair above is partially preserved), arranged heraldically, facing each other. They have no ears and no forehead knob; their wings are straight and pointed; their beaks are closed. They also lack any tendril or spiral curls. Their short, heavy necks are more like Oriental examples than are those griffins which are to be found on the Arkades shield. The plaque also shows a male figure of a Syrian type, which convinces the observer of its Oriental affinities. Within the series of Orientalizing objects in metal from Crete, John Boardman suggests that this may be the earliest, based on the quantity of its subsidiary geometric decoration. He goes on to say that "the motifs, helmet, dress and animals, especially in details like the straight-edged wings with cross-bars, clearly derive from Phoenicia or Syria, although there is much in their treatment which is already Greek."⁴

The shield from Arkades (2) shows a number of griffins proceeding in an orderly row as though grazing. Such a quiet attitude is not common for these animals.

² On shield no. 40 in E. Kunze's catalogue (*Kretische Bronzereliefs*, Stuttgart, 1931) there is a creature which some believe to be a griffin but others regard as a bird. The bad preservation of the surface renders a firm identification impossible. Kunze, following F. von Bissing, restored it as a bird while S. Benton, following R. C. Bosanquet, maintained it was a griffin. If it is a griffin, F. Canciani would place it in the Syrio-Palestine group, where he also places the relief from Kavousi and the shield from Arkades (*Bronzi orientali e orientalizzanti a Creta nell' VIII e VII sec. A.C.*, *Studia Archaeologica* XII, Roma, 1970, p. 108).

³ "Excavations at Kavousi, Crete, in 1900," *A.J.A.* 5, 1901, p. 147. The plate was found in nine pieces in a tholos tomb which had already been ransacked but not stripped. Miss Boyd felt that the owner of the tomb was also the owner of the Geometric house on the citadel.

⁴ *The Cretan Collection in Oxford*, Oxford, 1961, pp. 134-135.

The head belongs clearly to a bird-of-prey with a slightly parted, long curved beak; there is no forehead knob; the eye rendered in profile is prominent. From the top of the head a tendril runs down, engraved on the side of the neck. The wing is long with a slight curving at the end. It is neatly divided in half by a vertical strip of crosshatching separating the end of the wing with its feathered markings from the smooth half which comes from the body; the entire wing is bordered by a band filled with lines. The body of the creature is long and sleek; the tail curves downward. These griffins are clearly within a Late Bronze Age tradition and have parallels in Minoan art. Fulvio Canciani suggests that the Minoan tradition was preserved during the first millennium in the Syrio-Phoenician atmosphere.⁵ It is far more likely, however, that in this example the form of the griffin owes more to Minoan tradition and Cretan artists than to Near Eastern sources.

GRIFFINS OF SEVENTH-CENTURY CRETE

It is during the 7th century that the griffins appear frequently in Cretan art. Orientalizing art on Crete is characterized at this time by two features: the prevalence of the Daedalic style, and the appearance of molded figures in relief. Since molds were re-used over a long period of time, it is the Daedalic style which can provide a guideline for dating. Human heads or human-headed sphinxes in the Daedalic period may be arranged chronologically, based on a softening of the stark geometric features into the heavy, yet natural, features of the Archaic period. In this manner a framework is available into which the griffins can be fitted with some degree of accuracy, for the griffins seldom appear on relief amphoras without the company of sphinxes.

The griffins themselves are found in relief on large storage jars and on terracotta plaques. Those on relief amphoras all represent recent finds, for the motif was not known to Jörg Schäfer, who published an extensive catalogue of the motifs of figured reliefs on Cretan amphoras.⁶ The plaques were made in a mold and the details added by hand. Griffins in relief on amphoras were also mold made and then applied to the surface of the jar. Since re-use of the molds was a common practice, it is difficult to date the figures, but it is held that molds began to be used for terracottas about 700 B.C.⁷ At any rate, once in place, details of the figures

⁵ Canciani, *op. cit.* (note 2 above), p. 109. He stresses that on the early bronzes, as with this shield and the relief from Kavousi, we find a griffin of the Syrio-Phoenician type and not that of Mesopotamian or Late Hittite art which became common in Greek Orientalizing art.

⁶ *Studien zu den griechischen Relief-pithoi des 8.-6. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. aus Kreta, Rhodes, Tenos und Boiotien*, Kallmünz über Regensburg, 1957, pp. 26-36.

⁷ T. J. Dunbabin, "Cretan Relief Pithoi in Dr. Giamalakes' Collection," *B.S.A.* 47, 1952, p. 157. Neither have the molds for the figures been found nor the stamps and cylinders for the geometric designs. For this reason, it is assumed that the molds and stamps were made of wood. In the National Museum in Athens there is a bronze mold of a Late Daedalic-early Archaic female head from Olympia (inv. no. 6139) which suggests that some molds were of metal.

were added by hand. Amphoras frequently have geometric designs as well, which are stamped onto the surface or onto strips of clay which have been applied to the jar.⁸ Although griffins seem to appear more commonly in terracotta relief work, there is an example on a bronze corselet from Arkades. Taken as a group, the 7th century griffins are slender, winged animals with long ears and a forehead knob; they also have an open beak. This generation of griffins is clearly inspired by sources other than those found in the 8th century B.C.

The examples from the 7th century range throughout the period and the dates are not always well defined. A fragment (3) in the Museum of Art and Archaeology at the University of Missouri, Columbia shows four griffins, all from the same mold (Pl. 82). They are fairly slender and have an open beak, long ears, and a forehead knob. A tendril flows from their heads behind the neck to the back. Sickle-shaped wings swing counterclockwise toward the upper part of the long, slender neck. Incised details accentuate the musculature of the feline body and the wing feathers. The restored amphora in Basel (4) shows a row of griffins around the belly of the jar. Four panels are indicated but griffins are preserved in only three. The animals move to the left much as do those on 3. A tendril floats out from the head well above the back and meets the curved end of the wing; the tail curves up and forward, toward the wing. Inner body and wing markings resemble those found on 3.

An amphora in the Louvre (5) gives a slightly different arrangement of griffins, although the creatures themselves resemble the other amphora examples. In this case, the griffins are on the offset neck, one on each side of a central metope which contains the *ιερός γάμος* scene. Both griffins are facing left. In a manner similar to the other examples of griffins on relief amphoras, they have long, erect ears, a prominent eye, and open mouth with tongue protruding. The teeth are also indicated. Inner markings on the body and wings highlight muscle patterns and feathers. The tendril floats from the neck toward the sickle-shaped wings; the tail is held upright, looping away from the wing. It is likely that these two griffins are from the same mold because they occur on the same amphora, but they have not been finished in the same way. The tendril hangs farther down on the left-hand animal than on the right-hand; the neck is not arched back as far on the left as on the right; the left-hand creature has a smooth chin while the right-hand one has what looks like a goatee.⁹

⁸ A statement concerning griffins in relief work by P. Amandry should now be emended. He wrote: "Mais il n'est représenté ni sur les pithoi à reliefs ni sur les vases crétois, à l'exception de quelques dinoi à protomes plastiques imitant des vases de métal" ("Plaques d'or de Delphes," *Ath. Mitt.* 77, 1962, p. 57). Griffins are now known on relief amphoras: cf. a restored amphora in the Antikenmuseum in Basel, one in Paris, an amphora from Lyttos in Irakleion, and two fragments of amphoras now in Missouri and in Rethymno.

⁹ There is another amphora on display in the Archaeological Museum in Irakleion, Crete, which has not been published yet (inv. no. 19280, Room XII). It is said to be from Lyttos. Four griffins appear in metopes around the belly of the jar, all moving left. They are quite

The examples found on these relief amphoras form a unit. It is unfortunate that none have secure proveniences so that it might have been possible to distinguish a workshop or, more broadly, a school of production. The similarities between the griffins from these amphoras is striking, but probably is merely a reflection of the mold process used in forming them. Saul Weinberg, in writing on **4**, comments that whereas the tail on the Basel griffin loops forward, rather than backwards as on **3**, the two griffins are nevertheless very similar. The griffins on **5** are, however, more like **3** and he feels that it is therefore possible only two molds are involved.¹⁰

From the city and environs of Praisos in eastern Crete comes the second series of 7th century griffins. These are on plaques and bear striking similarities to one another; they are all mold made and show no traces of paint. The similarities are, in fact, so marked that it is possible to speak of Praisos as the center of manufacture of the plaques and to group the examples together under a single heading. One plaque from Praisos (**6**), now in the Louvre, has been known for some time and to that can be added five more examples. Four (**7**, Pl. 82; **8-10**, Pl. 83) are in Agios Nikolaos and the fifth plaque (**11**) is in Irakleion (Pl. 83).¹¹ The Praisos griffins are all fairly slender in body and especially in the neck. They have curved wings, ears, a small forehead knob or topknot, and a tendril flowing out above their necks. Their beaks are open and the tongue is visible.¹²

In the Praisos tradition comes another plaque (**12**), said to come from A. Georgiou Papoura in east central Crete, near Karphi. Acquired by Sir Arthur Evans in 1899, the piece is now in the Ashmolean Museum. The griffin on this plaque is so similar to those from Praisos that it is not necessary to describe it in detail. It is the plaque itself which is of interest. Its flat back shows the marks of a string by which it was originally hung on a wall or an altar.¹³

similar to the other amphora examples, although the wing does not swing over far enough to touch the neck, head, or tendril. The tail curls up and away from the wing.

¹⁰ "Cretan Relief Amphora in Basel," *Antike Kunst* 16, 1973, p. 100. I wish to thank Professor Weinberg, who generously allowed me to read his article in advance of its publication.

¹¹ **7-9** are from the area of Praisos, now in the Archaeological Museum in Agios Nikolaos, Crete. I am indebted to Mr. Kostis Davaras, Director of the museum in 1972, for kindly allowing me to study them. **11** is in the Scientific Collection in Irakleion and I am grateful to Dr. Stylianos Alexiou, Director of the museum, for graciously permitting me to examine it, together with **18**.

¹² **10** may actually not be a griffin but rather a sphinx. Its lean and slender look suggests this interpretation, as does the tail which curves toward the wing rather than away from it, but this criterion is not a positive point from which to work in view of the similar griffin tail on **4**.

Although the provenience is given as "unknown" for this fragment in the Archaeological Museum in Agios Nikolaos, it is remarkably similar to a fragment published by P. Demargne in 1931, which he assigned to Anavlochos ("Recherches sur le site de l'Anavlochos [Province de Mirabello, Crète]," *B.C.H.* 55, 1931, pp. 365-407, fig. 33). If it is not, in fact, the same piece, then it is certainly from the same mold.

¹³ In writing about **12**, Boardman makes the following statement: "Plaques of the same size and type, but with a suspension hole behind the griffin's head, are Herakleion 1398, 1399 . . . ,

Griffins are found on still another plaque, but this one is no longer in the Praisos tradition. The plaque (13), from Gortyna, is of interest for its iconography, not to mention the excellence of its modeling. It shows two slender griffins flanking a winged *Πόσις θηρῶν*, who is holding them by their topknots. The animals are superb creatures, sleek and powerful, recalling to mind the majesty of a by-gone era. Tendrils flow down the back of their necks; their beaks are open. Unfortunately, neither the ears nor the tail are preserved to any degree.

Even though the terracotta examples are the more numerous, griffins do occur in metal. The corselet 14 is fascinating for the detail of design engraved on it, which only became fully visible during restoration. It is part of a collection from Arkades consisting of helmets, corselets, and mitra which form at least four complete panoplies of Cretan armor. 14 is engraved with several animals and humans: griffins are striding up along each of two profiled ridges that delineate the lower boundary of the thorax; lions are engraved over each breast as though they were climbing onto the shoulders of the corselet; the breast muscles are outlined by a pair of heraldic sea dragons; other hybrid animals are present but less easily identifiable; a kneeling hoplite was preserved on the left and restored on the right side to maintain the symmetry of the design. The griffins each have an open beak and long, pointed ears and apparently a small forehead knob. There are no details marked out on the body and no tendril. The piece is variously dated within the 7th century. A recent examination of this and other pieces of armor points toward a date in the last quarter of the century, around 620 B.C.¹⁴

Although the extant examples of griffins from 7th century Cretan art are quite meager, a definite pattern is evident. The creatures of the 7th century are unlike those of the 8th and are united by common, although not identical traits. At the end of the century, however, there begin to appear peculiarities and these carry over into the 6th century to illustrate still another shift in the sources of influence affecting Crete during the Orientalizing period.

GRIFFINS OF LATE SEVENTH- TO SIXTH-CENTURY CRETE

From western Crete come griffins on a pithos (15) dated late 7th–early 6th century B.C. The pithos is from the area around Rethymno and was not found intact

while Herakleion 1393 and two other fragments have slightly larger figures, no doubt the prototype series from which the Oxford plaque and its kin are derived" (*op. cit.* [note 4 above], p. 116). I regret to say that I could not locate nos. 1393, 1398 or 1399 in the Scientific Collection or in the North Magazine; I saw only no. 1395 (11).

¹⁴ H. Hoffman. "Panoplies from Afrati," in *Art and Technology: A Symposium on Classical Bronzes*, ed. by Suzanna Doeringer, Cambridge (Mass.), 1970, p. 138. The style of the bronzes is Daedalic and comparison of the armor with Corinthian and Attic vase painting narrows the period to the last quarter of the 7th century.

(Pl. 84, a, b, c).¹⁵ The griffins are quite unlike any which have come before. Their style is heavy and rectilinear. The 7th century characteristics are clear, however, such as long ears, a forehead knob, and open beak with extended tongue. **15** is within the 7th century tradition but its style seems to mark it as a local variety.

Three examples remain (**16-18**), from the 6th or possibly the 5th century in the case of the last. There is a breakdown in any dominant characteristics and a tendency toward more freedom in style. For example, a fragment in Hamburg (**16**) is especially noteworthy for the crest down the animal's neck. The beak is closed but ears and topknot are still present.¹⁶ A second example (**17**), also in Hamburg, does not have its head preserved but wing and hind quarters are clear. What is striking is the tight spiral at the end of the tail. **18** (Pl. 84) is a small plaque with the griffin outlined in black paint. The griffin is typical, with an open mouth, ears, and tendril, but a carelessness in execution seems evident from the placement of the wings near the base of the tail.

SOURCES OF INFLUENCE

The changes in style shown by the griffins from the 8th to the 6th century serve to illustrate clearly certain problems in Cretan art history. These concern the Minoan heritage, immigrant craftsmen, and the influence of Assyrian art.

The bronze plaque from Kavousi and the bronze shield from Arkades are considered to be among the earliest of Orientalizing bronzes known on the island, dating to the 8th century. The thin bronze plaque from Kavousi shows obvious Syrian affinities in the motifs of the men as well as the beasts. In spite of these features, the plaque is held to be Greek, and, since it was found in Crete, quite possibly made in the island. On the other hand, the Oriental qualities are strong enough to suggest that the piece is a Syrian import or else made in a Cretan workshop employing foreign craftsmen.

The bronze shield from Arkades illustrates griffins in the old Minoan style. It has been suggested by Canciani that the Minoan features were preserved in the Syrio-Phoenician world and reintroduced to Crete during the Orientalizing period.¹⁷ The griffins certainly are not of a type familiar in Mesopotamian or Late Hittite art. The question of lingering Minoan tradition in Cretan art seems to rest ultimately on individual scholarly opinion. In the case of this particular shield, the arrangement of the concentric bands and figures within illustrates an Urartian artistic

¹⁵ It was discovered in 1954 by Dr. N. Platon, who has extended his kind permission to me to study it. It is on a relief pithos together with sphinxes from whose style I would suggest a date of late 7th to early 6th century. The fragments have been published in a preliminary form: N. Platon, «'Ανασκαφή Ὁνοῦτὲ Γουλεδιανῶν Ρεθύμνης,» *Πρακτικά*, 1954, pp. 377-382, figs. 3 and 4.

¹⁶ Crested manes become especially popular on griffins of the 4th century.

¹⁷ Canciani, *loc. cit.* (note 5, above).

scheme; the griffins, however, have nothing whatever in common with Urartian griffins. The mixing of features suggests Phoenician eclecticism but the nature of the griffin itself, its style and attitude, bespeaks a Cretan artist working in the Minoan tradition.

Various ideas concerning immigrant craftsmen have always been circulating, but now it seems that some concrete evidence is appearing to support the idea of foreign artisans. The material from the Khaniale Tekke tombs near Knossos is providing evidence which Boardman thinks illustrates that a colony of foreign goldsmiths were working and living there.¹⁸ He also suggested that he has identified a group of foreigners at Arkades, who may be responsible for the Orientalizing bronzes known from that site.¹⁹ The bronzeworkers, Boardman states, can be thought of as a small community whose work gradually loses its Oriental flavor although such a loss or, rather, increased Hellenization, was a slow process.²⁰ The Kavousi plaque illustrates this point even though it is not considered a product of the Arkades workshop.

The stylistic changes in the motif of the griffin which occur in the 7th century are indicative of a change in artistic influence. No longer is the island receiving influence or artisans from the Near East but rather from Greece itself. Even though most 7th century examples of griffins are in two-dimensional relief work, the form of the creatures strongly parallels the sleek creatures known from the cauldron protomes. This form is inspired and heavily influenced by Assyrian art, although the Assyrians cannot be held responsible for the griffin-protome conception itself. While the origin of the griffin protome is still debated, it is generally agreed that the later, more slender models are Greek. Since it is the later type which is reflected on the plaques and relief amphoras (showing the long neck, erect ears, and particularly the wide-open beak), it has become possible to maintain that in the 7th century Crete was being influenced in the Orientalizing manner not by the Orient but by Greece.

Even though the bronze protome griffins offer stylistic similarities, no examples have yet been found in Crete. The Cretans, on the other hand, produced terracotta imitations of the great bronze vessels. Since the terracotta examples cannot be classified as "local imitations," there apparently being nothing in the region to imitate, it is not possible to determine on what basis they were produced, whether by Greek inspiration or by North Syrian influence.²¹

¹⁸ "The Khaniale Tekke Tombs, II," *B.S.A.* 62, 1967, p. 63. They were possibly from the region of Tel Halaf.

¹⁹ "Orientalen auf Kreta," in *Dädalische Kunst auf Kreta im 7. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, ed. by Pierre Demargne, Hamburg, 1970, p. 19. Boardman goes on to identify tentatively these foreigners as coming from Carchemish on the basis of resemblance of urn burials (p. 23).

²⁰ Boardman, *B.S.A.* 62, 1967, p. 63.

²¹ North Syria is usually credited with manufacture of the bronze vessels. There is debate on whether the attaching of protomes to the rim was a North Syrian idea or not.

The bronze protomes so well known from Mainland sites have come primarily from the major pan-Hellenic sanctuaries of Olympia and Delphi. Sites of this magnitude have not been found in Crete, which might provide quite a simple explanation of why no protome cauldrons are yet known from Crete. The cauldrons in the sanctuaries were expensive dedications; their terracotta counterparts may have served in a funerary capacity.²² In Etruria, notable bronze protome cauldrons were found in tombs but these may represent prizes won by the deceased.

It has generally been stated that griffin protomes were exports of Urartu or inspired by contacts with North Syria. Since no griffin protomes have been found in Urartu, and since the known examples of Urartian griffins are unlike the protome examples, this theory can be dismissed until supporting evidence appears. North Syria remains, as O. W. Muscarella says, the area where Greeks learned of the griffin motif, which was then adapted by them to the rims of cauldrons.²³ Assyrian influence is, however, ultimately responsible for the style of the griffin found as protomes.²⁴

All indications during the 8th and 7th centuries are beginning to point to North Syria. Boardman has shown that bronzeworkers and goldsmiths coming to the island during the late 9th and early 8th centuries may have come from Carchemish and Tell Halaf. Inspiration for griffin protomes also is seen as coming from North Syria.

It is reasonable to postulate that Cretan artists may have been influenced in the 7th century by something other than the bronze protomes. Textiles or similar perishable goods come to mind, of course, but the lack of material evidence precludes any meaningful discussion about their influence. There remains the possibility of vase painting.

From the island itself, a Rhodian amphora from Arkades stands out because there is a griffin on the shoulder zone. There is much in its treatment which is similar to Attic and Corinthian examples. The stocky quality of the griffin's neck is the key feature which would seem to eliminate vase painting as an influence on the style of the griffin in 7th century Crete. Although the short neck might be

²² The famous Arkades dinos with three bird-griffin protomes was found in Tomb L. These particular griffin protomes are a little different from those we have been discussing. The head and neck are like a griffin's but on the surface of the vessel is painted the body of a large, plump bird with its wings spreading out to each side, its tail flaring behind its neck, and a pear-shaped body below the neck supported on two short legs. They are considered "bird-griffins" because their heads and necks are like the griffin protomes although their bodies are those of birds. Normally, a true griffin has a feline body.

²³ "The Oriental Origin of Siren Cauldron Attachments," *Hesperia* 31, 1962, p. 320.

²⁴ B. Goldman, "The Development of the Lion-Griffin," *A.J.A.* 64, 1960, pp. 321-323. In this article, Goldman convincingly discusses two basic representations of griffins, one with a closed beak, the other with an open beak. He illustrates that the open-beak head derives from the roaring lion and terms this variety the "lion-headed griffin." It originated with the Assyrian roaring lion and is the griffin which appears in the West on the cauldrons.

necessary due to the restricting zone into which the griffins have been arranged on vases, such limiting features did not hinder the artists of relief amphoras from using a serpentine neck, even when it meant cutting away part of the metope border to accommodate it (Pl. 82). In fact, all griffins of this period in Cretan exhibit long necks as opposed to painted griffins from the Greek mainland and the islands. It seems that as far as the evidence available for study at this time is concerned, there can be no doubt but that the griffin motif in 7th century Crete was influenced by bronze protomes.

Whereas Boardman considers the foreign craftsmen in bronze and gold to have become Hellenized gradually over the years, the motif of the griffin seems to show something else: in the 8th century such foreigners as Boardman cites may be held responsible, while in the 7th century there is a dramatic shift of influence, not one for which a gradual Hellenization could account. And yet, in a way, the advent of the griffin inspired by protomes is itself perhaps an even greater Hellenization than Boardman imagines. Since the griffin motif may have been learned in North Syria, a new wave of immigrants may have reached the island in the 7th century, but if the elegance of the protomes can be credited only to Greek craftsmen, then perhaps Greek craftsmen were actually moving to Crete but working in terracotta, not in bronze.

The 6th century, or perhaps late 7th century, witnesses the emergence of a local Cretan style with considerable variety in the griffins. Unfortunately, only one of the later examples has a known provenience, that on the Rethymno pithos. Western Crete has always been noted for its eccentric styles, but it seems safe to assume that by the 6th century the motif of the griffin had come under the control of local craftsmen and was being treated in various ways throughout the island.

CONCLUSION

The motif of the griffin in post-Minoan Cretan art has served to illustrate that not all features in the Orientalizing period necessarily reached the island from the Orient. Even though the part played by Greek artists has been emphasized in the 7th century, in no way should this be taken to indicate an artistic dominance of Crete by the Greek mainland. There is still the question of Daedalic art, which is as much an aspect of the Orientalizing period as are the hybrid animals. The griffin symbolizes, rather, an exchange of artistic ideas prevailing in the 7th century.

What is apparently happening in Crete, however, from the 8th to 7th centuries, cannot be given universal application for the Greek world in the Orientalizing period. Greek mainland artists were certainly getting Oriental motifs and ideas directly from the East, which they altered and adapted to suit their own temperament. There was no intermediary stage between Near Eastern ideas and Greek artists such as we have found existing between Cretan artists and Eastern influences, at

least as far as the griffin motif is concerned. Further iconographical studies of motifs in the Cretan Orientalizing period may offer additional information leading to a more definite understanding of the forces at work during this time.

CATALOGUE

1. Bronze Plaque.

Irakleion, Archaeological Museum; from Kavousi. 8th century B.C.

Seven fragments of a thin bronze plate engraved with a well-executed design of Oriental motifs. Original publication (Boyd) shows no joins; Kunze shows two pieces joining. Fragments indicate horizontal registers of men and animals, but along left edge (apparently finished) are two small, vertical panels with one scene in each, separated from horizontal zones by vertical zigzag.

Fragment with two small, vertical panels: upper panel, two heraldic sphinxes; lower panel, two heraldic griffins. Griffins face each other with beaks pointed up, closed beak and prominent profile eye, no ears, no tendril, and no topknot. Straight-edged wings patterned to indicate feathers. Tail hangs down.

H. A. Boyd, "Excavations at Kavousi, Crete, in 1900," *A.J.A.* 5, 1901, pp. 125-157, esp. pp. 143, 147, 148 and figs. 10 and 11; E. Kunze, *Kretische Bronzereliefs*, Stuttgart, 1931, no. 92, p. 218, fig. 31, pl. 56, e.

2. Bronze Shield.

Irakleion, Archaeological Museum, inv. no. 2107; from Arkades. 750-650 B.C. Actual diam. 0.52 m.

Numerous fragments of bronze shield suffering from heavy oxidation. Major portion of central boss now lost. Decoration in repoussé.

Griffins: closed-beak, without ears or topknot. Eye clearly rendered; from it runs a tendril ending in spiral on neck. Body without inner markings. Wings distinguished by narrow border with diagonal lines; flight feathers shown in back portion. Body portion of wings free of decoration. Feet more like bird-of-prey talons than feline paws. Tail hangs down but makes a loop at bottom.

D. Levi, "Arkades," *Annuario* 10-12, 1927-1929, pp. 15-710, esp. pp. 372-374, fig. 489, a-d; E. Kunze, *Kretische Bronzereliefs*, no. 56, pl. 43.

3. Griffin-Sphinx Relief Amphora Fragment.
Pl. 82

Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Missouri-Columbia, acc. no. 67-49; provenience unknown. Early to mid-7th century. Max. pres. L. 1.15 m.; max. pres. W. 0.46 m.

Fragment of shoulder of an offset-neck relief amphora, composed of several joined and mended pieces. Rather coarse clay containing much grog; fabric light orange.

Decorative scheme: impressed spirals, crouching sphinxes, triglyph-metope zone with griffins, zone of knobs and rosettes. Four preserved metopes each filled with griffin walking left; griffins interrupt upper border.

Griffins mold made; body delineated by incised lines showing muscle patterns, wing feathers and mane elaborately detailed. Open beak with prominent tongue; ears and topknot. Long tendril hangs behind neck, reaching toward top of back. Sickie-shaped wings curve up to top of head and touch slightly. Tail loops clockwise toward wing, then curves away, ending near base of tail with tuft of hair.

N. R. Eals, "Relief Amphoras of Archaic Crete," *Muse* 5, 1971, pp. 26-34, esp. pp. 28-29.

4. Relief Amphora.

Basel, Antiken Museum no. 66 (BS 607); from Crete. Ca. 650 B.C. Restored H. 1.485 m.; greatest diam. 0.93 m.

The amphora has been restored from numerous fragments with a generous use of plaster. All the elements and the entire scheme of decoration are preserved for the front; much

less is extant of the back, which did not bear figured designs. Clay coarse, orange beige, with some grog.

Decorative scheme, from bottom: series of horizontal zones with bosses, rosettes, wavy band and zone with empty rectangular panels. High cylindrical neck contains main figured zone with central panel displaying two standing figures, male and female, representing *ἱερός γάμος*. Side panels: identical molded and applied groups of antithetical sphinxes; some of group on left side lost.

Griffins on shoulder, walking left: ears and small topknot; beak seems wide open but not clearly preserved. Tendril floats out over back rather than hanging down back of neck; it meets tip of sickle-shaped wing. Feathers well defined. Tail loops forward, curving counterclockwise toward wing.

S. S. Weinberg, "Cretan Relief Amphora in Basel," *Antike Kunst* 16, 1973, pp. 98-101, esp. pp. 98-99.

5. Relief Amphora.

Paris, Louvre CA 4523; from Arkades (?). 7th century B.C. H. 1.56 m.

Relief amphora restored from several fragments. Offset neck accented by two vertical band handles and roundels at their tops. Clay reddish with some grog. Surface smooth but not polished. No paint; some black areas on neck from burning.

Decorated in zones of impressed and applied designs: row of impressed knobs, zone of square panels formed by added vertical strips of clay, wavy band in applied clay, lozenges, and spirals. Figured zone with three metopes, one the scene of a winged horse trampling a fallen man. Main decoration on neck: three metopes, central one filled by wedding couple (*ἱερός γάμος*) mold made, then applied to vessel. Either side of central scene: mold-made griffins.

The griffins on the neck are a little big for the space allotted them in the metopes. Therefore, the double torus has been cut away to make room for their heads and wings. Inner markings

clearly preserved; body musculature can be seen, with feather patterns on wings and lines for neck muscles. Ears, eyes, and open beak with tongue also visible. Although the two animals are quite similar, and probably came from the same mold, there are some differences in detail which might have been made after they were on the vessel: griffin on left has goatee and tendril does not hang down as far as that of griffin on right. Both tails upright, looping clockwise away from the wings.

Dated provisionally to the 7th century but can probably be placed in the late 7th to early 6th century, based on the style of the couple as late Daedalic or early Archaic.

P. Demargne, "Un pithos archaïque crétois au Musée du Louvre," *Rev. Arch.*, ser. 8, 1, 1972, pp. 35-46.

6. Terracotta Plaque.

Paris, Louvre AM 839; from Praisos. Second half of the 7th century B.C. H. 0.11 m.

Fragment of mold-made plaque showing griffin walking right. Hole for hanging between wing and head. Plaque broken away near chest; front legs, feet and right back foot not preserved.

Like similar examples from Praisos, griffin has an open beak, forehead knob, tendril, ears, long neck and slim but not slender body. Lower jaw of beak shorter than upper, giving impression of being recessed. No internal body markings to emphasize muscle patterns; undulations in surface suggest underlying bone and muscle tension. Flight feathers delineated with grooved lines; body feathers not indicated. Tip of second wing just visible in front of first, main wing. Tendril floats out from head and rests lightly on wing, just below moment of its curve. Tail upright, looping counterclockwise away from wing.

E. H. Dohan, "Archaic Cretan Terracottas in America," *Metropolitan Museum Studies* III, New York, 1931, pp. 209-228, fig. 38.

7. Terracotta Griffin-Sphinx Plaque. Pl. 82

Agios Nikolaos, Archaeological Museum no. 1668; from the province of Sitia, near the village of Sklavi, in the vicinity of ancient Praisos. Second half of the 7th century B.C. H. 0.09 m.; W. 0.095 m.; overall L. 0.19 m.; Th. *ca.* 0.01 m.

Two mold-made plaques glued together. Right: griffin; left: sphinx. Hole for hanging in top center, on joining line between the two halves. Clay pale red, well levigated. Plaque thin, light in weight.

The two creatures face each other with the griffin walking toward his left and the sphinx toward her right. The surface of the plaque is worn so it is not easy to make out details but in general it is very similar to **6**.

Griffin: topknot, ears, open beak with lower jaw recessed, tendril floating out toward wing. Neck long and serpentine. No body markings visible; some modeling of surface to show muscle tension. Flight feathers on wings indicated by grooves. Tail upright, making counterclockwise turn away from wing. Second wing tip seems visible just in front of curving end of main wing.

8. Terracotta Plaque. Pl. 83

Agios Nikolaos, Archaeological Museum no. 19; from the province of Sitia, near ancient Praisos. Second half of the 7th century B.C. Max. pres. H. 0.09 m.; W. 0.08 m.

Mold-made plaque preserved in triangular shape without back or lower half of griffin. Surface considerably worn, obliterating most inner details; outline of animal remarkably precise. Small hole above beak. Clay pale red and fine; plaque thin and light weight.

Head of griffin clear in details: open beak with short lower jaw, tongue, forehead knob, ears, tendril. Neck long. Very little remains of inner markings on wing; second wing tip visible.

9. Terracotta Plaque. Pl. 83

Agios Nikolaos, Archaeological Museum

[no number]; from the province of Sitia. Second half of the 7th century B.C. Max. pres. dim. 0.05×0.085 m.

Fragmentary piece: neck, tendril, and forequarters of winged animal moving right. By analogy to the other Praisos plaques, it must be a griffin.

Neck serpentine; tendril floats out from neck to touch wing. Surface pitted, leaving very little indication of inner body markings. There seem to be two lines on upper part of right leg to suggest tendons.

10. Terracotta Plaque. Pl. 83

Agios Nikolaos, Archaeological Museum no. 1227. Provenience unknown. 7th century B.C. (?). Max. pres. dim. 0.045×0.05 m.

Molded plaque fragment: back, wing, hindquarters, and tail of animal moving right. Surface well preserved, showing body markings clearly. Clay pale red, well levigated.

Flight feathers shown with long grooves. Hindquarters modeled to indicate muscles. Tail curves up and toward wing, ending near back without making full circle.

The design of the tail suggests that this animal may be a sphinx because the tail on griffins usually turns away from the wing (but see **11**). At any rate, if it is a griffin, it is not in the Praisos tradition.

11. Terracotta Plaque. Pl. 83

Irakleion, Archaeological Museum (Scientific Collection) no. 1395; from Praisos. Second half of the 7th century B.C. Max. pres. H. 0.075 m.; W. 0.11 m.

Fragment of mold-made plaque: griffin striding right. Large hole drilled between wing and head. Clay reddish and fine. Lower body and legs missing.

Long serpentine neck. Head well defined showing topknot, ears, open beak, and tongue. Tendril floats out from head to touch wing lightly as it begins to curve. Flight feathers marked by grooves; no body feathers indicated.

Tip of second wing visible just in front of first wing. Tail makes wide loop behind wing and touches it at one point.

12. Oxford Griffin Plaque.

Oxford, Ashmolean Museum AE 404; from A. Georgiou Papoura (acquired by Evans in 1899). Last third of the 7th century B.C.. H. 0.15 m.; W. 0.092 m.

This molded plaque fragment is so similar to the Praisos examples that it can safely be assumed to illustrate a winged griffin even though the head of the creature is missing. Missing also are front legs and foot of back right leg. Clay well levigated and pinkish red. Flat back of plaque bears string marks.

From serpentine neck tendril floats toward wing. Flight feathers indicated by grooves. Second wing tip just visible. Body shows modeling around back hip and on joint of back right leg. Tail held upright, making counter-clockwise loop.

J. Boardman, *The Cretan Collection in Oxford*, Oxford, 1961, no. 503.

13. Gortyna Plaque.

From Gortyna. Second half of the 7th century B.C. Max. dim. 0.12×0.113 m.

Fragment, nearly complete: two griffins held by topknots by winged male figure. Very low relief. Plaque slightly concave on outer face and strongly convex on back. Clay pale red. Missing: head of male figure and good part of griffin on his right.

The griffins are firmly held by the Master of Animals. Heads clearly detailed with ears, topknot, eye, wide-open beak, and tongue. Tendril hangs down back of neck. Wings fairly short; both flight and body feathers shown. One front foot rests on waist of male figure while the other three feet are on vine growing from ground line under feet of winged deity.

G. Rizza and V. S. M. Scrinari, *II Santuario sull'acropoli di Gortina*, Roma, Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1968, pl. XXI, no. 127.

14. Bronze Corselet.

Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, inv. no. 1970, 26a; from Arkades. Third quarter of the 7th century B.C. Thorax H. (max. pres.) 0.43 m.; restored H. 0.455 m. Th. of metal 0.8-0.9 mm.

Missing: neck guard and some adjacent fragments of upper pectoral area, considerable portions of right side, entire rim. Surface pitted. Missing portions restored in plastic. Decorated with figures in relief supplemented by fine traced lines. All contours and many details are executed with double outline, the two lines enclosing a dot band. The latter is so delicately executed as to be discernible only with the aid of a hand lens.

Front ribcage area: two slender griffins with pointed diverging ears and two drop-shaped forehead knobs, striding stiff-legged up each side of arch forming division between thorax and rectus abdominus. Latter is bordered by thick ridge, head framed by two thinner ridges in low relief, outer serving as ground line for griffins.

H. Hoffman, with collaboration of A. E. Raubitschek, *Early Cretan Armorers*, Mainz on Rhine, 1972, pp. 7-8.

15. Relief Pithos Fragments. Pl. 84, a-c

Rethymno, Archaeological Museum [no number]; village of Onythe. Late 7th-early 6th century B.C.

Several fragments belonging to one pithos, but not the entire vessel. Two fragments have griffins in relief with geometric patterns. Other fragments show sphinxes and a waving band ending in panther heads. Clay coarse, full of grog, and reddish.

Fragment in Plate 84, a (detail, Pl. 84, c) 0.24×0.34 m.: head and chest of griffin right with vertical row of knobs separating griffin from another animal. Second creature: straight-edged wing and part of tail; probably another griffin. Above: triple torus band above which are lower sectors of loops. Griffin: scale pattern

on body, faintly marked with dilute paint, goes up to neck. Neck spotted with black paint. Interior of mouth accentuated with red paint. Triple torus bears traces of black paint.

Second fragment, Plate 84, b, 0.135×0.23 m.: head, neck, forward part of body, and forefeet of another griffin. Griffin kneeling on forelegs which accounts for apparent sharp angle of body. Inner details similar to those on larger fragment; no paint remains. Griffin rests on horizontal, triple torus.

Griffins themselves clearly display teeth, open beak with protruding tongue, ears, topknot, and eye in profile position but with frontal type of view. Heavy jowl indicated. Head not streamlined like some other examples. Topknot quite rectilinear; beak, although pointed on the upper part, looks more like animal mouth than bird's beak. Protruding tongue so exaggerated as to seem like caricature.

N. Platon, «'Ανασκαφή 'Ολυθὲ Γουλεδιανῶν Πεθύμνης,» *Πρακτικά*, 1954, pp. 377-382, figs. 3 and 4.

16. Relief Pithos Fragment.

Paris, Art dealer; provenience unknown. 6th century B.C. Max. pres. H. 0.255 m; W. 0.28 m.

Molded fragment showing winged griffin striding left. Missing: front legs and left back foot. Surface details clearly visible.

Ears partially preserved, small topknot, eye accentuated, beak closed. No tendril; crested mane down back of neck. Vertical line along inside of neck suggests variation in modeling.

Body feathers shown as short marks; long incised lines represent flight feathers. Some modeling on back hip. Tail not preserved.

P. Demargne, *et al.*, *Dädalische Kunst auf Kreta im 7. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, Hamburg, 1970, C39, pl. 39.

17. Relief Pithos Fragment.

Paris, Art dealer; provenience unknown. 6th century B.C. Max. pres. H. 0.22m.; W. 0.21 m.

Fragment showing winged animal moving right. It has no head but it is likely to be a griffin. Wing feathers clearly marked with short and long incised lines. Tail hangs down, ending in tight curl.

P. Demargne, *et al.*, *Dädalische Kunst auf Kreta im 7. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, C39b, pl. 38, c.

18. Painted Terracotta Plaque. Pl. 84

Irakleion, Archaeological Museum (Scientific Collection) no. 6313; provenience unknown. 6th-5th century B.C. Max. dim. 0.06×0.06 m.

Molded plaque showing griffin walking left. Modeled animal outlined in black paint with tendril and tail added in paint.

Griffin: open mouth, ears, eye, and tendril. Wings seem to grow from near base of tail, curving quite sharply; they do not appear very functional. Painted tail held upright, then dropped back down, no longer held in proud loop of its predecessors. Above griffin: petal pattern, painted, bordered by horizontal black lines on top and bottom.

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3, detail



7, detail



3



7



9



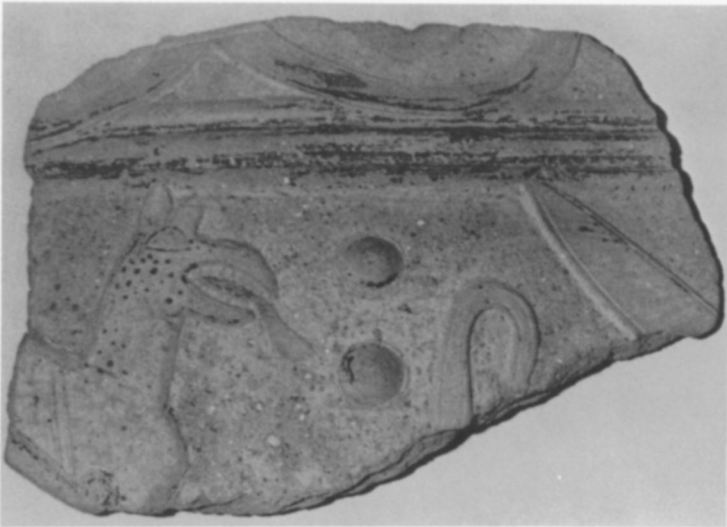
11



8



10



a



b



c



18

15