

# THE RICH LADY OF THE AREIOPAGOS AND HER CONTEMPORARIES

## A TRIBUTE IN MEMORY OF EVELYN LORD SMITHSON

(PLATES 97–100)

AT THE KIND INVITATION of Professor William D. E. Coulson, Director of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, this paper was composed in memory of Professor Evelyn Lord Smithson and read in the Gennadeion Library in Athens on March 9, 1993, the first anniversary of her death.<sup>1</sup> I should like to put on record my gratitude to her for the constant help and encouragement she gave me in the early years of my interest in Geometric pottery.

Evelyn Smithson was an established member of the Agora team when I first came to Athens as a research student in 1957. As one of several regular visitors in that year to the Stoa of Attalos from the British School, I found in Evelyn a sympathetic mentor and a generous friend. She not only allowed me to work through the Early and Middle Geometric deposits in her care but also spared much time to discuss them with me, to compare notes, and to exchange ideas.

In those days the earlier phases of Attic Geometric had not attracted much attention, and even their definition was not universally agreed. General inquiry into the whole Attic sequence had been largely the preserve of German scholars, who, after the great pioneering paper by Peter Kahane,<sup>2</sup> still divided Attic Geometric into four art-historical phases: Early, Severe, Ripe, and Late. For different reasons, both Evelyn and I found this system difficult to apply to excavated deposits. She preferred, especially for the plainer domestic wares, a more strictly chronological subdivision, and to me, thinking of Geometric styles elsewhere, there were many places far from Athens where severity and ripeness could not be guaranteed. Thus, quite independently, we both chose to invoke the ubiquitous trinity of Early, Middle, and Late, which could be applied easily to almost every regional style in Greece. Even so, the Early and Middle phases were then little known and somewhat undervalued in a historical context. From the Agora area, the only full and analytical study of Geometric finds had been Rodney Young's volume on the Late Geometric plot of graves under the Classical Tholos.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, it was fashionable to think of the Late Geometric period

<sup>1</sup> For illustrations, and permission to include them here, I am grateful to the American School of Classical Studies (Pls. 97:b, 99:a, b), to the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (Pl. 98:c), and to Mr. Mervyn Popham (Pl. 100:a–c, e). All other illustrations are of vases from the North Cemetery at Knossos, of which Plates 98:a, b, d, 99:c, d, and 100:d have not previously been published; my thanks are due to the Managing Committee of the British School at Athens for permission to present them here, in advance of the final report (*Knossos, the North Cemetery: Early Greek Tombs* [BSA Suppl., forthcoming], H. W. Catling and J. N. Coldstream, eds.).

<sup>2</sup> Kahane 1940: on the date of delivery (1936), p. 464, note 1.

<sup>3</sup> Young 1939, pp. 229–230.

as a sudden and dramatic Dawn<sup>4</sup> after a truly miserable Dark Age, an age supposedly of backward peasants leaving hardly any trace behind. Evelyn never subscribed to that view, and, as we shall see, with good reason.

In the early 1960's we often corresponded, partly on serious Geometric matters<sup>5</sup> and partly on a lighter note: we exchanged gems from students' essays during early years of university teaching, she in Buffalo and I in London. One pearl that she shared with me runs as follows: "The sauceboat is an Egyptian religious symbol, in which the King was thought to journey with the Sun God." She commented, "Like a tea tray in the sky."

Central to Evelyn's research, and of abiding importance, are her three major articles in *Hesperia*. All three deal with important early burials in or near Athens, and all of them are researched so deeply and so carefully that many a catalogue entry of hers became a *locus classicus* to which one is continually turning for guidance. She was a perfectionist, never satisfied with easy, facile answers. Her brain was always on the move, and if new thoughts had come to her immediately after the publication of her work, she would write those thoughts out in long hand, in the margins of the offprints that she sent out.

The first of her major articles<sup>6</sup> dealt with the very late Protogeometric grave material excavated by Dr. Papadimitriou at Nea Ionia, which usefully complemented the finds from the Kerameikos,<sup>7</sup> and the thorough synthesis of Vincent Desborough.<sup>8</sup> But her most influential publication was of the astonishingly well-furnished cremation, "the tomb of a rich Athenian lady, ca. 850 B.C.":<sup>9</sup> influential because it decisively turned a hinge, to let in a shaft of light upon the later part of the Dark Age. The sheer quality and variety of the lady's eighty-one grave offerings led Evelyn to write of "an Athenian society with refined tastes and high artistic standards, developing along clear lines."<sup>10</sup> And, in a letter to me (December 10, 1968) she commented, "The gloomy Bauernvolk have been banished forever." She added, referring to a book on Greek Geometric pottery which appeared in the same year,<sup>11</sup> "The Dark Ages were, in fact, a hive of activity." In retrospect, how true; and to those of us who look into them, how reluctant we are to go along with a recent proposal to sweep them into a chasm of time, to pretend that they had never existed at all, arguing from a major readjustment of Egyptian chronology.<sup>12</sup> The Greek Dark Ages have proved far too eventful to suffer such a fate.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Starr 1961, p. 381: "During the century from 750 to 650—or, to hazard greater precision, principally in the brief decades from 720 to 680 [my italics]—the Greek world was galvanized into an interlocked revolution which affected every aspect of its structure."

<sup>5</sup> Chiefly on the concept of "workshops" in the Attic Geometric figured style, arising out of her review (Smithson 1962) of Davison 1961.

<sup>6</sup> Smithson 1961.

<sup>7</sup> *Kerameikos* I and IV.

<sup>8</sup> Desborough 1952, pp. 1–126.

<sup>9</sup> Smithson 1968.

<sup>10</sup> Smithson 1968, p. 83.

<sup>11</sup> Coldstream 1968.

<sup>12</sup> James *et al.* 1991. For an even more drastic shortening of absolute chronology see Rohl 1989/1990.

<sup>13</sup> Against these proposed upheavals in absolute chronology I presented some counter-arguments (three architectural phases at Lefkandi in LH IIIC, four at Asine in PG, etc.) in a seminar paper, "The Eventful Dark Age of Greece"; this is summarized in Hankey 1992/1993, pp. 76–77.

We shall in due course take a retrospective look at the lady's grave goods, in the light of what has been unearthed more recently. But first, we ask ourselves, who was she? In her publication, Evelyn boldly suggested a name for her, or at least for her husband: *gyne Arriphronos*,<sup>14</sup> the wife of that Arriphron who, in the list of Athenian hereditary kings preserved by the Hellenistic historian Kastor of Rhodes, would have reigned in the mid-9th century. What she implied, although she never pressed the implication, is that the small exclusive cemetery on the North Slope of the Areiopagos would have been the burial ground for the royal Medontid *genos* and their retainers. This seems to me a perfectly reasonable surmise. Long before there was any urban nucleus, and still longer before the emergence of a civic center in the Agora that we know, Athens had been a loose network of discrete hamlets, each with its own burial plot nearby. During Geometric times, traces of the living are virtually confined to well deposits,<sup>15</sup> but the dead are dotted in groups all over the residential area of the later polis.<sup>16</sup> If we can press an analogy with later and smaller Geometric sites, which are much better preserved, like Zagora on Andros and Emporio on Chios, a regular pattern emerges: the ruler's dwelling is the nearest to the chief sanctuary, and in between there is an open space for public affairs. At Zagora there is an open space in front of the largest megaron house, facing out towards the sanctuary where, during the life of the 8th-century town, worship would still have been in the open air.<sup>17</sup> At Emporio, the Great Megaron Hall is the only domestic building on the acropolis and actually controls the approach up to the sanctuary from the houses below, with, once again, an open space in between.<sup>18</sup> Returning to Athens, let us recall the memory preserved by Apollodoros,<sup>19</sup> the memory of an earlier Agora, evidently without any architectural remains, on the saddle between the Akropolis and the Areiopagos,<sup>20</sup> where the Medontid king would have presided over public business; what better location for his residence could one possibly suggest than the hamlet that went with the cemetery containing the tomb of the Rich Lady? Likewise, if each noble *genos* had its family seat in one particular hamlet, one might find a suitable home for the Neleids at the outer periphery, far to the northwest, close to the very aristocratic cemetery by the later Dipylon Gate.<sup>21</sup> Such a location would be appropriate for a clan which, in the first instance, came as refugees from Pylos;<sup>22</sup> and one also recalls that three of their monumental Late Geometric grave kraters portray the confrontation with the Siamese Twins,<sup>23</sup> monstrous beings who would have formed a memorable part of Neleid family history.<sup>24</sup> But enough of speculation; let us acknowledge how little we really know of Geometric Athens. It is easy

<sup>14</sup> Smithson 1968, p. 83.

<sup>15</sup> *Agora VIII*, pp. 107–111, pl. 45.

<sup>16</sup> Coldstream 1977, pp. 136–137, fig. 44; Morris 1987, pl. 64, fig. 17.

<sup>17</sup> Morris 1987, pp. 304–308, fig. 97; Cambitoglou 1981, pp. 82–84.

<sup>18</sup> Boardman 1966, pp. 249–251; Coldstream 1977, pp. 314–315, fig. 99.

<sup>19</sup> Apollodoros: Jacoby, *FGH Hist* 244, F 113.

<sup>20</sup> *Agora XIV*, p. 19.

<sup>21</sup> For references see Coldstream 1968, p. 400.

<sup>22</sup> Herodotos 5.65.

<sup>23</sup> Louvre A 517, Louvre A 519, and New York, M.M.A. 14.130.15; Ahlberg 1971, pp. 246–251; Coldstream 1977, pp. 352–354; Ahlberg-Cornell 1992, pp. 32–35. For sceptical views concerning the Twins see, most recently, Boardman 1983, pp. 25–26.

<sup>24</sup> Webster 1955, p. 41.

to make a plan with up to two hundred spots where Geometric graves have been found and then start to make statistical deductions,<sup>25</sup> but these are but two hundred drops in a very large bucket, which also contains large empty areas of our ignorance, areas still firmly sealed under the buildings of modern Athens. In due course we shall see how some present gaps in the record of 9th-century Athens can be filled by fine Attic exports to Knossos and Lefkandi.

Evelyn was deeply concerned with retrieving a true record of the Areiopagos cemetery strung out along a contour of its north slope. She had good reason to think that this had also been the burial ground of the nobility in Mycenaean times. From Submycenaean until the end of Geometric, hardly more than thirty graves have survived, mainly of the 9th century. Most had been plundered, or much eroded, or cut into by solid buildings of later times. To one particular plot, slightly to the east of the Rich Lady's grave, Evelyn devoted her third major *Hesperia* article,<sup>26</sup> a veritable masterpiece of archaeological detection. Drawing on the notebooks of Doërfeld's unpublished excavation of the 1890's, as well as on Agora records of the 1930's and 1940's, she gently corrected various misattributions of the finds during the intervening years. These finds, as preserved, are not particularly rich, but Evelyn's research into the graves is a treasurehouse of enlightenment as to the various ways in which the 9th-century Athenians buried their dead.

Of our Rich Lady's immediate forebears in the early 9th century, there are two EG I cremations at the western end of the cemetery, both of them of modest affluence and considerable interest. There is the first post-Mycenaean warrior buried with his full kit:<sup>27</sup> his sword curled around his neck-handled ash amphora, his two spearheads, two knives, axhead, javelin point, snaffle bits for his horses, and the whetstone to sharpen his cutting edges in the next world. Very close by was the cremation of a young woman with a full set of pots smashed on her pyre,<sup>28</sup> pins, fibulas, and other dress ornaments, and two pairs of miniature clay boots, astonishingly naturalistic in their design. If they were meant to ease her journey into the next world, one might wonder why such objects appear only in the graves of young women. Her shoulder-handled ash amphora is of a relatively new type which, on the basis of existing finds in Athens, was thought to have superseded the older belly-handled version<sup>29</sup> between the late 10th century and the mid-9th, when the belly-handled amphora made a glorious comeback from the time of the Rich Lady's burial onwards. Evelyn was sceptical of this easy explanation, and her scepticism can now be shown to have been fully justified.

During the late 10th century and through the 9th, we know of approximately a hundred Attic pots exported to Knossos. These include, much to our surprise, thirteen large belly-handled amphoras suitable for Attic female cremations, all of them comparable in size with the Rich Lady's urn, that is, around 70 cm. high, and yet never used as such in Knossian tombs, where other, local shapes were made for this purpose. More surprising still, no less than six belong to this shape's EG I phase, virtually missing from the sequence in Athens. Some are represented by only a few sherds, since the same chamber tombs in the North

<sup>25</sup> E.g. Morris 1987, pp. 99–104, fig. 31.

<sup>26</sup> Smithson 1974.

<sup>27</sup> Blegen 1952.

<sup>28</sup> Young 1949.

<sup>29</sup> Desborough 1952, p. 36.

Cemetery were used over many successive generations, but one of them, with a typically EG I dogtooth zone around the neck (Pl. 97:a), is relatively well preserved.<sup>30</sup>

Here, then, is but one example to show how patchy the record of Athens must be at this period. As for the shoulder-handled amphoras, they are never much more than half the height of the more monumental belly-handled type, and they seem to be intended for the more modest female cremations.<sup>31</sup> The highest aristocracy, meanwhile, will have continued to use the big belly-handled amphora; but during the apparent gap in the Athenian sequence, their female burials still elude the excavator. In this context, the discovery of the Rich Lady's cremation *intact*, in an aristocratic grave plot much plundered, battered, and denuded, was a supremely lucky chance, allowing us for the very first time the vision of an Athenian Dark Age burial belonging to the highest, possibly royal, elite.

And so we come to the Lady's own major vases, made to order for an aristocratic clientele, fastidious work by an exceptionally talented and adventurous school of painters at the turn from Early to Middle Geometric: her cremation amphora (Pl. 97:b) and her chest with five model granaries on the lid (Pl. 97:c), in which Evelyn's sharp eye detected the same hand at work. In her words, this is pottery decorated with "skill, taste and imagination . . . painted with an inventiveness that will not be seen in such force again until Late Geometric."<sup>32</sup> Of the granary chest she remarked, "This is one of the most elaborate Geometric pieces known. . . . The draughtsmanship is exquisite. . . . There are no mistakes."<sup>33</sup> She referred to three earlier chests with plain lids belonging to Late PG, all of them, like this lid, found in the graves of women.<sup>34</sup> To these we can add another exported to Lefkandi,<sup>35</sup> found in a grave with strong Athenian associations, to which we shall presently turn.

The chest must surely count as the most fantastic pyxis ever devised. From this time onwards, the pyxis lid clearly offered great opportunities to the potters for modeling symbols appropriate to their clients' status. From this extraordinary vessel we learn that a century before the Dipylon grave markers, potters and painters could already be commissioned to make very special efforts for the leading Athenian families. Here, as Evelyn pointed out, the family's wealth would have been in arable land and grain; for her, the five model granaries presaged the *pentakosiomedimnoi*,<sup>36</sup> the highest social class of Archaic Athens, whose members could produce five hundred measures of grain each year from their country estates. And, as if the message were not clear enough from the granary lid, the point is driven home by the independent granary model, nearly 30 cm. high, in the same grave and perhaps by the same hand.<sup>37</sup>

Following Evelyn's lead, one might apply the same logic to other symbols displayed on the lid of the flat pyxis, which became the standard form at the turn to Middle Geometric. Very soon after the Rich Lady, an expressive bull's head was modeled on a small pyxis lid

<sup>30</sup> Preliminary report: Coldstream *apud* Catling 1982/1983, p. 52, fig. 90.

<sup>31</sup> E.g., in *Kerameikos* V, i, graves 7 (EG I); 14, 19, 39 (EG II); 44, 76 (MG I); 29, 40, 75, 86, 89 (MG II).

<sup>32</sup> Smithson 1968, p. 82.

<sup>33</sup> Smithson 1968, p. 95.

<sup>34</sup> Smithson 1968, p. 96, note 45.

<sup>35</sup> *Lefkandi* I, p. 150, P 22.4; pls. 137:4, 271:d.

<sup>36</sup> Smithson 1968, pp. 83, 96–97.

<sup>37</sup> Smithson 1968, no. 22, pp. 93–94, pl. 23.

now in the National Museum,<sup>38</sup> with a miniature pyxis for its handle; does this protome advertise a family's abundance in cattle? Later, from MG II onwards, the horse takes over as the most frequent aristocratic symbol modeled on the lids. Graves containing these horse pyxides are never poor, and as Barbara Bohen has pointed out,<sup>39</sup> they almost always occur in the graves of women. It is interesting to note a similar change, from bull to horse, in the animals soldered onto the handles of the most prestigious vessels of all, the huge bronze tripod cauldrons dedicated at Olympia and other major sanctuaries.<sup>40</sup> Do these, too, reflect a corresponding change of interests, in their dedicants, from cattle herding to the taming and pasturing of horses? It has been argued by Thalia Howe<sup>41</sup> and Anthony Snodgrass<sup>42</sup> that during the Dark Age livestock had formed the staple diet and that arable farming was only haphazard and sporadic, until a rapidly rising population in the 8th century called for a more systematic and intensive effort to cultivate the land. If that were so, then the ostentatious concern with grain displayed by our Rich Lady's family would have been very much ahead of its time.

It was during her generation that some Knossian potters, during their Protogeometric B phase, also tried out various three-dimensional symbols on their lids, such as a bird in flight<sup>43</sup> and a helmeted warrior's head,<sup>44</sup> on globular pyxis lids from the North Cemetery (Pl. 98:a, b, d). The warrior's face, enlivened by dots and dabs of paint on his features, displays a typically Cretan delight in miniature modeling at this time. This particular lid comes from one of the richest family chamber tombs, no. 219, which also contained a wide variety of weapons;<sup>45</sup> but the tomb is too disturbed for us to tell whether any of their owners could also lay claim to the lid, which in any case has lost its pyxis. Returning to Athens, we find the same idea enlarged to a monumental scale on a gigantic but fragmentary ovoid pyxis on a tall pedestal, 65 cm. high, of MG II date. It is a stray find from the Kerameikos cemetery (Pl. 98:c) but large enough, in the opinion of Barbara Bohen, who published it,<sup>46</sup> to have served as a grave monument for a warrior whose status symbol appears in the tall *Bügelhelm* on the lid: an ostentatious symbol of military display that we encounter much more often in the Early Iron Age of Italy<sup>47</sup> than in Geometric Greece.

<sup>38</sup> Athens 15318, *CVA*, Athens 1 [Greece 1], p. 3, pl. 1:9; *Smithson* 1974, p. 381, pl. 79:b, c.

<sup>39</sup> *Kerameikos* XIII, pp. 7–8, 126–127.

<sup>40</sup> E.g. *Olympische Forschungen* X, nos. 59, 60, pl. 19.

<sup>41</sup> Howe 1958, pp. 54–56.

<sup>42</sup> Snodgrass 1971, pp. 378–380.

<sup>43</sup> Small lid, KMF tomb 285.1: P.H. 4.2 cm., D. 6.8 cm. Nearly complete. Knob in the form of a bird with wings outstretched, the head broken off; bars across wings and tail and between lines on back. Two suspension holes, opposed. Fits the pyxis 285.2: H. 7.6 cm., D. of rim 6.5 cm.

<sup>44</sup> Small lid, KMF tomb 219.72: H. 7 cm., D. ca. 10 cm. Half preserved. Conical, with two suspension holes near rim. Knob in the form of a warrior's head, his features in relief: prominent chin, nose, and ears; eyes as pellets; short, straight mouth; helmet perched on the head with steep ridge for crest, continuing down back of neck. Crest marked with two rows of solid triangles each side. Blobs on ears, eyes, and mouth; curved line for eyebrows. Band around neck, whence solid pendent triangles; pendent latticed triangles; cable in double outline.

<sup>45</sup> Preliminary report: *Catling* 1978/1979, pp. 48–49.

<sup>46</sup> Bohen 1976, pp. 21–22.

<sup>47</sup> Compare the bronze helmets closing the urns of the Villanovan Facies I, as *Close-Brooks* 1979, pp. 101–103, fig. 5, I:9.

If the Rich Lady's granary chest hints at her high status and the source of her family's wealth, it is the small finds in her grave which reveal some of the fruits of their wealth and their wide connections outside the Aegean. Before this discovery, finds of *orientalia* in 9th-century Athens had been virtually limited to the Syrian bronze bowl with figured decoration embossed inside, found with a man's cremation amphora in Geometric grave 42 of the Kerameikos cemetery.<sup>48</sup> Next to him, another rich lady in grave 41 received a curious ivory ornament, perhaps a seal, locally made, with a triangular base and two ducks' heads;<sup>49</sup> the material, at least, must have come from the east. Above grave 42, and above another man's grave nearby, no. 43, there stood huge monumental kraters as grave markers. Of the krater for no. 42, only the foot survives;<sup>50</sup> but the one above no. 43 is preserved up to its handle, near which one sees the first human figure in Attic vase painting: the figure of a mourning woman; below, one can make out the hind part of a horse.<sup>51</sup> Because of its size and complexity, this krater in the *Kerameikos* publication was dated much too late, well into the 8th century; but the accompanying vases should certainly put it at the very beginning of Middle Geometric, and Evelyn spotted in its linear decoration the same hand that also painted a pyxis among the goods of her Areiopagos lady.<sup>52</sup> This corner of the Kerameikos cemetery was evidently reserved for an aristocratic family whose affluence can be traced back for at least two generations: first, no. 2, the grave of a warrior marked with a fine though fragmentary krater of EG II,<sup>53</sup> and then, perhaps the grandmother of them all, in the very late PG grave 48, which was exceptionally well provided with fine pottery.<sup>54</sup>

This family plot in the Kerameikos, then, provided Evelyn with the only possible peers for comparison with her Rich Lady; and yet their finds could not prepare us for the much more varied and spectacular offerings in the Areiopagos grave. In addition to the usual bronze pins and fibulas, there are copious imports from the eastern Mediterranean: a necklace of over a thousand disk beads in pale green faïence, with a large Phoenician bead<sup>55</sup> of variegated glass as its centerpiece, and the raw material for the ivory and gold ornaments worked by Athenian craftsmen. Of ivory, there is part of a disk engraved with a curious human face, and the battered remains of two pyramidal seals, the first seals known to have been made in Greece since Mycenaean times.<sup>56</sup> Of the seven gold ornaments, all but one are the simple finger rings of the Dark Age, some plain, others with repoussé or chased decoration.<sup>57</sup> After these primitive pieces, nothing could prepare us for the sudden leap forward in the goldsmith's art indicated by the majestic and masterly pair of gold earrings,<sup>58</sup> elaborated with the most sophisticated techniques of granulation and filigree (Pl. 99:a, b): nothing, that is, if one wishes to see in them the unaided efforts of those Attic Dark Age goldsmiths who

<sup>48</sup> *Kerameikos* V, i, pp. 237–238, pl. 162.

<sup>49</sup> *Kerameikos* V, i, p. 236, pl. 161.

<sup>50</sup> *Kerameikos* V, i, no. 1187, p. 237, pl. 18.

<sup>51</sup> *Kerameikos* V, i, no. 1254, p. 238, pl. 22; Benson 1970, pp. 92–93, pl. 32:4.

<sup>52</sup> Smithson 1968, under no. 12, p. 90.

<sup>53</sup> *Kerameikos* V, i, no. 935, p. 211, pl. 17.

<sup>54</sup> *Kerameikos* IV, pp. 44–46.

<sup>55</sup> Smithson 1968, no. 78e, p. 115, pl. 33; Higgins 1969, p. 145, note 14.

<sup>56</sup> Smithson 1968, nos. 79–81, pp. 115–116, pls. 32, 33.

<sup>57</sup> Smithson 1968, nos. 71–76, pp. 112–113, pl. 32.

<sup>58</sup> Smithson 1968, no. 77, pp. 113–114, pls. 30, 32.

produced the simple repoussé finger rings. Evelyn at once saw that this was, to say the least, unlikely. She surmised that “the technique or the technician was imported,”<sup>59</sup> but not the earrings themselves. Near Eastern inspiration is certainly present in the pendent pomegranates, with their calyx leaves rendered in neat triangles of granules; but the massive trapezoidal plates, with their zoned decoration, were more in the Greek Geometric tradition, made to suit local taste. In the year after Evelyn’s publication, Reynold Higgins attached great importance to the earrings.<sup>60</sup> In his view, the technique could not have come without the technician: only through a resident Phoenician goldsmith setting up in Athens could the skilled techniques of granulation and filigree, apparently forgotten since the age of the Mycenaean palaces, have been so suddenly recovered in such an accomplished piece of work. His view coincided with that of John Boardman, who, in his reexamination<sup>61</sup> of the reused Minoan tholos tomb at Tekke near Knossos with its treasure of gold jewelry, identified as its first incumbent a resident eastern goldsmith, on quite independent grounds. This goldsmith, buried with Cretan PGB pottery, would almost have been a contemporary of the Athenian Rich Lady and would have helped to spark off the proto-orientalizing movement in Cretan metalwork. But it was Evelyn’s publication that, in the first instance, focused our attention on an awakening of Greece towards the east in the mid-9th century: as she put it, “a far more intimate association of Greeks with Orientals than has hitherto been supposed.”<sup>62</sup>

Since then, a whole generation has passed. Fresh knowledge of this period has come, not so much from Athens but rather from Euboia, which, in this context, has certainly been more in the news. The cemeteries at Lefkandi, in particular, have opened our eyes to a constant flow of artifacts and raw materials from the Near East, from the late 10th century until the latest burials in the Lefkandi cemeteries in the third quarter of the 9th.<sup>63</sup> And, from the locally produced jewelry, we now learn that in the Areiopagos Lady’s earrings, Greek mastery of granules was already in its second generation. A crescent pendant, from a grave of around 900, has some rough triangles of granulation on the plate.<sup>64</sup> A little earlier is a necklace of gold spiral beads of northern character,<sup>65</sup> paralleled in an LH IIIC tomb in Kephallenia. The goldsmiths of Lefkandi soon combined the north Aegean spirals and the granulated crescent plates<sup>66</sup> with a typically Euboian eclecticism which is also seen in Euboian pottery; but the goldsmiths seem to have been much more inventive than the potters, who persisted tenaciously with delayed Protogeometric formulas, especially the pendent concentric circles, even into the early 8th century. The Lefkandi jewelry does not in any way contradict Evelyn’s thoughts about the eastern techniques or technician, but we can now be sure that the techniques must have arrived in Greece at least a generation earlier than she supposed. Nevertheless, we are still faced with the great “leap forward” in jewelry from

<sup>59</sup> Smithson 1968, p. 83.

<sup>60</sup> Higgins 1969, pp. 144–145.

<sup>61</sup> Boardman 1967, p. 63.

<sup>62</sup> Smithson 1968, p. 83.

<sup>63</sup> *Lefkandi I*, pp. 101–464.

<sup>64</sup> Popham, Calligas, and Sackett 1989, p. 120, fig. 25.

<sup>65</sup> Popham, Calligas, and Sackett 1989, p. 120, fig. 23; cf. Marinatos 1932, pp. 24–25, fig. 30, from Lakkithra on Kephallenia. For the spirals see northern spectacle fibulas, e.g. *Vergina I*, pp. 227–230.

<sup>66</sup> Popham, Touloupa, and Sackett 1982, p. 217, T 38, no. 39, pl. 30:a.



the simple ornaments of the earlier Dark Age: a “leap forward” all the more remarkable in the early 9th century, which, for the other arts, is not a period of any great advance in style or sophistication.

The rich graves in the Toumba cemetery of Lefkandi offer us in quantity an even wider range of luxuries than those in the Areiopagos Lady’s grave.<sup>67</sup> Almost all have gold ornaments, locally worked. Many have faïence seals, or vessels, or necklaces of disk beads, Egyptianizing imports from the Levant.<sup>68</sup> Others have eastern bronze jugs or bowls embossed with figured scenes,<sup>69</sup> like that from Kerameikos grave 42. But none of this is at all surprising if we follow the excavators’ reasonable deduction<sup>70</sup> that the Toumba cemetery belonged to the local royal *genos* and grew up outside the front of the huge apsidal building within which the royal couple of the mid-10th century had been buried.<sup>71</sup> And so the Toumba cemetery, virtually unplundered and never encroached upon by later building, allows us a unique glimpse of the sort of affluence with which the royal Athenian *genos*, in a much larger community, would have been buried. Their cemetery, along the north slope of the Areiopagos, has been much ravaged by time, but the Rich Lady’s grave survived intact, as a sample of the splendor which would have been shared by the *genos* at large.

The frequency of oriental luxuries in the Lefkandi graves must surely be linked to Euboian maritime activity in the eastern Mediterranean. From the 10th century onwards, Euboian pottery is now recorded at Tyre,<sup>72</sup> the main center of power in the Phoenician homeland. In the 9th and early 8th centuries, eastward export of Euboian pendent-semicircle pottery is much more frequent than that of Attic Geometric,<sup>73</sup> giving us the impression that both Greek wares may have been carried in Euboian ships. Amid all the wide publicity that this Euboian enterprise has received, one should also reflect on the exclusively Attic contributions to this awakening of the mid-9th century, to the recovery of communications with the Near East, and to the eventual lightening of the Dark Ages. Tentatively, on what evidence we have, I can suggest two major contributions: the production of silver and of fine pots, both of which attracted notice from Near Eastern customers.

Silver, prized in Egypt above gold and much sought after by Phoenician merchants,<sup>74</sup> cannot be obtained in the eastern Mediterranean but is abundant in the mines of Lavrion. At Thorikos nearby, our Belgian colleagues have excavated a large rectangular room with several basins cut into the floor, two of which were found to contain litharge, the residue of lead left behind after the silver had been extracted from the original ore by cupellation.<sup>75</sup> The room is well preserved because its occupation was very brief, most of the pottery belonging to the mid-9th century; soon afterwards it was overwhelmed by a stone avalanche from the

<sup>67</sup> For a selection see *Lefkandi* I, pls. 230–235.

<sup>68</sup> Popham, Touloupa, and Sackett 1982, pls. 31, 32.

<sup>69</sup> Popham, Calligas, and Sackett 1989, p. 118, fig. 5, from a context *ca.* 900.

<sup>70</sup> Popham, Touloupa, and Sackett 1982, p. 247.

<sup>71</sup> *Lefkandi* II, ii.

<sup>72</sup> Coldstream and Bikai 1988.

<sup>73</sup> Coldstream 1989, pp. 91–94.

<sup>74</sup> Especially in the West: Markoe 1992.

<sup>75</sup> *Thorikos* II, pp. 29–30; *Thorikos* III, p. 34.

Velatouri hill.<sup>76</sup> Here we have no more than a small vignette of the industrial life of a very large site, but it may be no accident that the brief phase of silver production in this room happens to coincide with the period of the Rich Athenian Lady, the corresponding rich graves in the Kerameikos, and the even more plentiful ornaments of gold and faïence in the latest graves of Lefkandi. These burials imply a sudden increase in eastward communications; could it be that silver was one of the chief sources of newly won wealth and one of the chief attractions for visiting Phoenician traders? If so, and without getting involved in the question of Attic political unity at this time,<sup>77</sup> one would guess that the nobility of Athens would have been among the first to profit from the silver trade.

Even so, when Evelyn envisaged Athenian nobility as “perhaps . . . the directors of an expanding overseas trade,”<sup>78</sup> she was presumably thinking more of the excellence of Attic MG pottery from the mid-9th century onwards: admired, imported, and imitated in many Aegean regions, carried to the Near East, perhaps in Euboian boats, but especially admired and copiously exported as luxury ware to Euboea itself and, more surprisingly, to Crete. On both islands one suspects something more than the general run of trade. At Knossos, in the chamber tombs of the North Cemetery, between the late 10th and 8th centuries there are about a hundred Attic imports, forming about three percent of the total ceramic corpus. In the unlooted Tekke tomb J, which also contained the bronze bowl inscribed in the Phoenician alphabet,<sup>79</sup> we found a large Attic PG “dinner set” of twenty-six vases.<sup>80</sup> Other Attic imports include shapes not often exported elsewhere, such as PG kalathoi (Pl. 99:c),<sup>81</sup> MG flat and pointed pyxides (Pl. 99:d),<sup>82</sup> and especially large belly-handled amphoras like the Rich Lady’s urn, which in Athens served rich female cremations. We have already noted one of the six EG I pieces (Pl. 97:a) sent to Knossos, which fill a gap in the series from Athens as we now have it. Another, well into MG I (Pl. 100:d),<sup>83</sup> comes from the extremely rich Tekke tomb G, dug in 1943 by the late Professor Nicolas Platon. A wonderful array from this tomb is displayed downstairs in the Herakleion Museum. This vase, like all other imported Attic amphoras and their many Cretan imitations, was not used as a cremation urn; in the tomb from which it was recovered, that purpose was served by locally made urns of a different shape, with lids made to fit. What, then, was the function of the amphoras in this foreign context? I suggest that they contained the wine for the funerary symposium since, in the more intact tombs, whole sets of drinking crockery have been found, the skyphoi and the oinochoai neatly stacked inside the large krater.<sup>84</sup> The amphoras, reserved in Athens

<sup>76</sup> *Thorikos* III, pp. 38–42, figs. 44–48.

<sup>77</sup> See, most recently, Van Gelder 1991.

<sup>78</sup> Smithson 1968, p. 83.

<sup>79</sup> Catling 1976/1977, p. 12, fig. 27; on the text, Szynger 1979.

<sup>80</sup> Some illustrated in Catling 1976/1977, p. 12, figs. 29, 30.

<sup>81</sup> The two Attic LPG handleless kalathoi from Knossos KMF tomb 207 are larger than any other known examples: 207.41 (Pl. 99:c), H. 18.2 cm., D. 27 cm.; 207.42, with similar decoration, H. 21.2 cm., D. 34 cm.

<sup>82</sup> Knossos KMF tomb 283.46 (H. 13.5 cm.), here Plate 99:d, with lid 283.9. Flat pyxides are represented by the gigantic piece in the Attic MG II set from KMF tomb 219: Coldstream 1983, p. 204, figs. 1, 2.

<sup>83</sup> Knossos, Tekke G 3, H. 79 cm., D. of rim 23 cm.

<sup>84</sup> Brock 1957, p. 161: large accumulations of bell-skyphoi were found in the Fortetsa cemetery with the bell-kraters nos. 221 and 428. A large MPG krater in the North Cemetery, KMF tomb 285.82, contained nineteen vessels neatly stacked inside it: thirteen bell-skyphoi and six oinochoai of various sizes.

for rich female cremations, are not likely to have been hawked overseas by casual traders; they make more sense as gifts between guest friends in Athens and Knossos, being among the finest ceramic gifts that Athens could provide.<sup>85</sup>

Connections with Athens are even closer at Lefkandi, where several of the graves in the royal Toumba cemetery seem to be those of Athenian residents. The local custom was to gather a token amount of the cremated ashes and scatter them over the open grave, but in the LPG grave 14,<sup>86</sup> for example, we have two urn cremations in the Attic manner, a man and a woman: around the man's urn, his sword had been wrapped, "killed", as in the Areiopagos warrior's grave; and the woman's urn looks like an Attic import.<sup>87</sup> Another contemporary female grave, Palia Perivolia no. 22, is very rich in pottery.<sup>88</sup> The cremation rite there is local, but I would guess the incumbent to have had at least one Athenian parent: ten out of her thirty pots are Attic late PG, including a small prototype of the Rich Lady's chest, without the granaries; she also has a handmade doll with incised detail, of a kind otherwise confined to female burials in Attica.<sup>89</sup>

This grave also contained some simple gold ornaments and, representing the eastern contacts, a Cypriot Bichrome II flask, the earliest known Iron Age import from that island. Returning to the royal Toumba cemetery, we find the same general pattern repeating itself again and again in the richest graves. With the gold, and with the eastern exotica, there goes a third item of luxury: imported Attic pottery of very high quality and often of unusual interest, in that it may add something to our knowledge of the Athenian repertoire at home. Take, for example, grave 55 of ca. 900: along with the North Syrian bronze bowl showing sphinxes flanking sacred trees,<sup>90</sup> the pottery includes a rare Attic shape, a dual-purpose amphora-cum-trefoil-oinochoe with a third handle behind, attached to the neck.<sup>91</sup> And in graves 31 and 33, among the latest on the site, there are sets of Attic imports dating to early MG I, including fine little feeders for infants (Pl. 100:a-c), such as have never yet been found in Athens but painted with the same fastidious care as the Rich Lady's own offerings.<sup>92</sup> (These miniatures make me somewhat sceptical of any theory based on negative evidence that Athenians of the 9th century rarely troubled to give their little children proper burial.<sup>93</sup>) Finally, returning to the grand scale, there are two Attic masterpieces of this generation, both retrieved in fragments from the pyre debris near the Toumba graves and as yet unparalleled in Athens: a huge globular pyxis (Pl. 100:e),<sup>94</sup> decorated with the same precocious complexity as the Rich Lady's granary chest, and

<sup>85</sup> E.g. Coldstream 1983, pp. 204–205, figs. 1–5.

<sup>86</sup> *Lefkandi I*, pp. 210, 214–215.

<sup>87</sup> *Lefkandi I*, pp. 175–176, Toumba grave 14, pls. 159, 174, 175. The imported belly-handled amphora 14.1 (pl. 175, p. 105, note 355), if not Attic, closely imitates an Attic prototype.

<sup>88</sup> *Lefkandi I*, pp. 149–151, pls. 119, 137–139.

<sup>89</sup> *Lefkandi I*, P 22.30, pl. 137. On the incised Attic PG dolls see, most recently, Reber 1991, pp. 128–131 (typology), pp. 152–155 (context in female graves).

<sup>90</sup> Popham, Calligas, and Sackett 1989, p. 118, fig. 5, from Toumba grave 55.

<sup>91</sup> Popham, Calligas, and Sackett 1989, p. 118, fig. 6:a.

<sup>92</sup> *Lefkandi I*, pl. 185, Toumba grave 31.2; pl. 188, grave 33.2–3; discussion, p. 352.

<sup>93</sup> Morris 1987, pp. 60–62. For Evelyn's robust scepticism see Smithson 1974, p. 373.

<sup>94</sup> Popham, Calligas, and Sackett 1989, p. 120, fig. 22, from Toumba grave 61.

a pedestaled krater, the earliest known of its type,<sup>95</sup> ancestral to the many later MG II kraters found in the princely tombs of Salamis and Amathous in Cyprus and, further east, in the royal contexts of Hama, Tyre, and Samaria.<sup>96</sup>

It is a great privilege to pay tribute to the memory of Evelyn Lord Smithson and to express my deep appreciation of her work. She helped us to understand and enjoy an early flowering of Greek art, which was fostered by the values and the taste of a rising Athenian aristocracy. So sensitive, so profound was her research that her work will endure, from whatever angle later readers may wish to consult it.

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<sup>95</sup> Fragmentary, from Pyre 23 (Popham, pers. comm.); evidently a MG I prototype of the Attic pedestaled kraters, Type II (Coldstream 1968, pp. 17–18). See now Popham 1994, p. 29, fig. 2:13b.

<sup>96</sup> Coldstream 1983, pp. 201–205.

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a. Knossos T. 207.52. H. 70 cm.



b. Agora P 27629. H. 71.5 cm.



c. Agora P 27646 a, b. Max. L. 44.5 cm.

PLATE 98



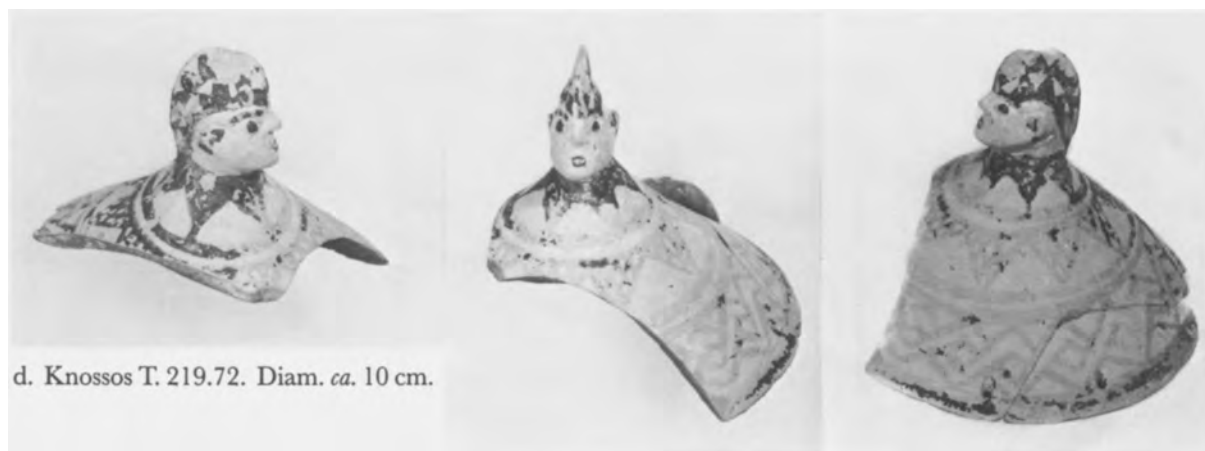
a. Knossos T. 285.1. Diam. of lid 7.6 cm.



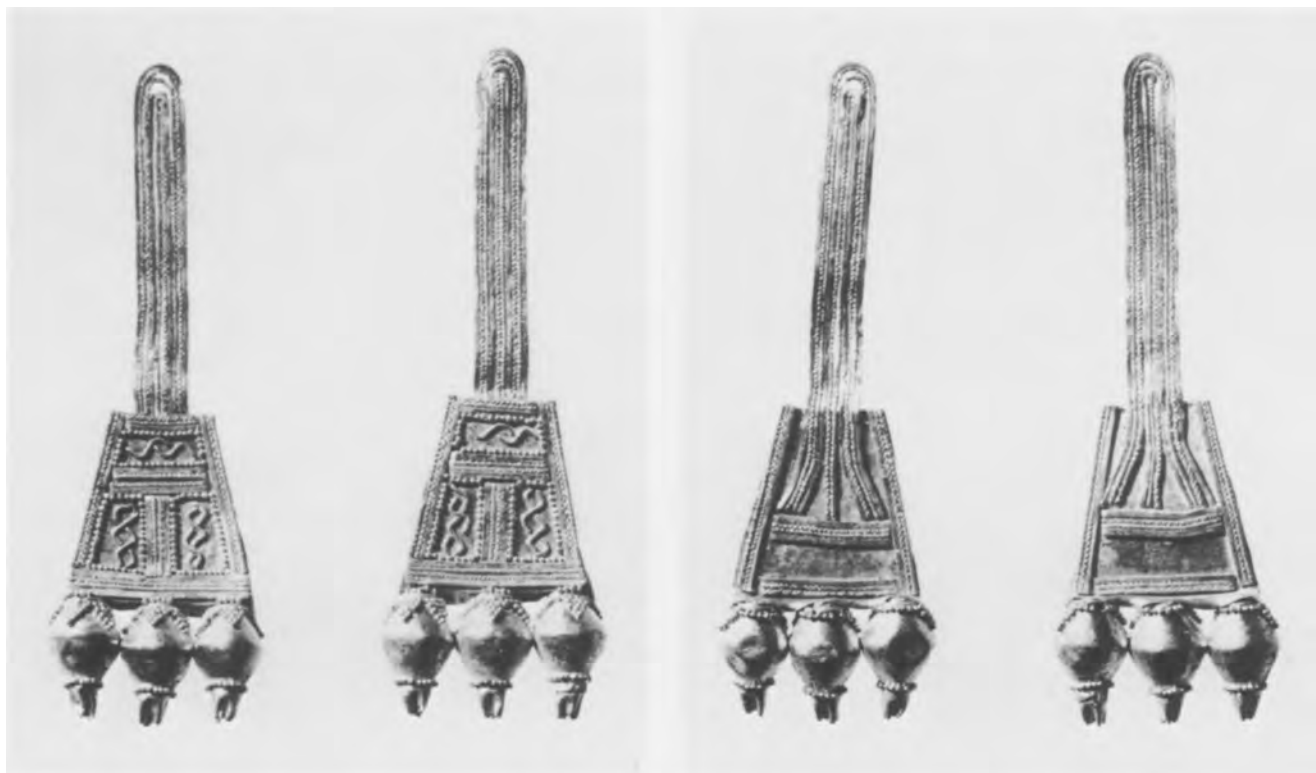
b. Knossos T. 285.1-2



c. Kerameikos 2855. Pres. H. with lid 65 cm. Photo DAI Athens, Ker. 10142



d. Knossos T. 219.72. Diam. ca. 10 cm.



a, b. Agora J 148. L. 6.4 cm.



c. Knossos T. 207.41. H. 18.2 cm.



d. Knossos T. 283.46.  
H. 13.5 cm.





a. Lefkandi T. 31.2. H. 7.7 cm.



b. Lefkandi T. 33.3.  
H. 7.7 cm.



c. Lefkandi T. 33.2. H. 8.5 cm.



d. Knossos, Teke G 3. H. 79 cm.



e. Lefkandi T. 61. H. of pyxis ca. 34 cm.