THE GREEKS

AGAMEMNON TO ALEXANDER THE GREAT

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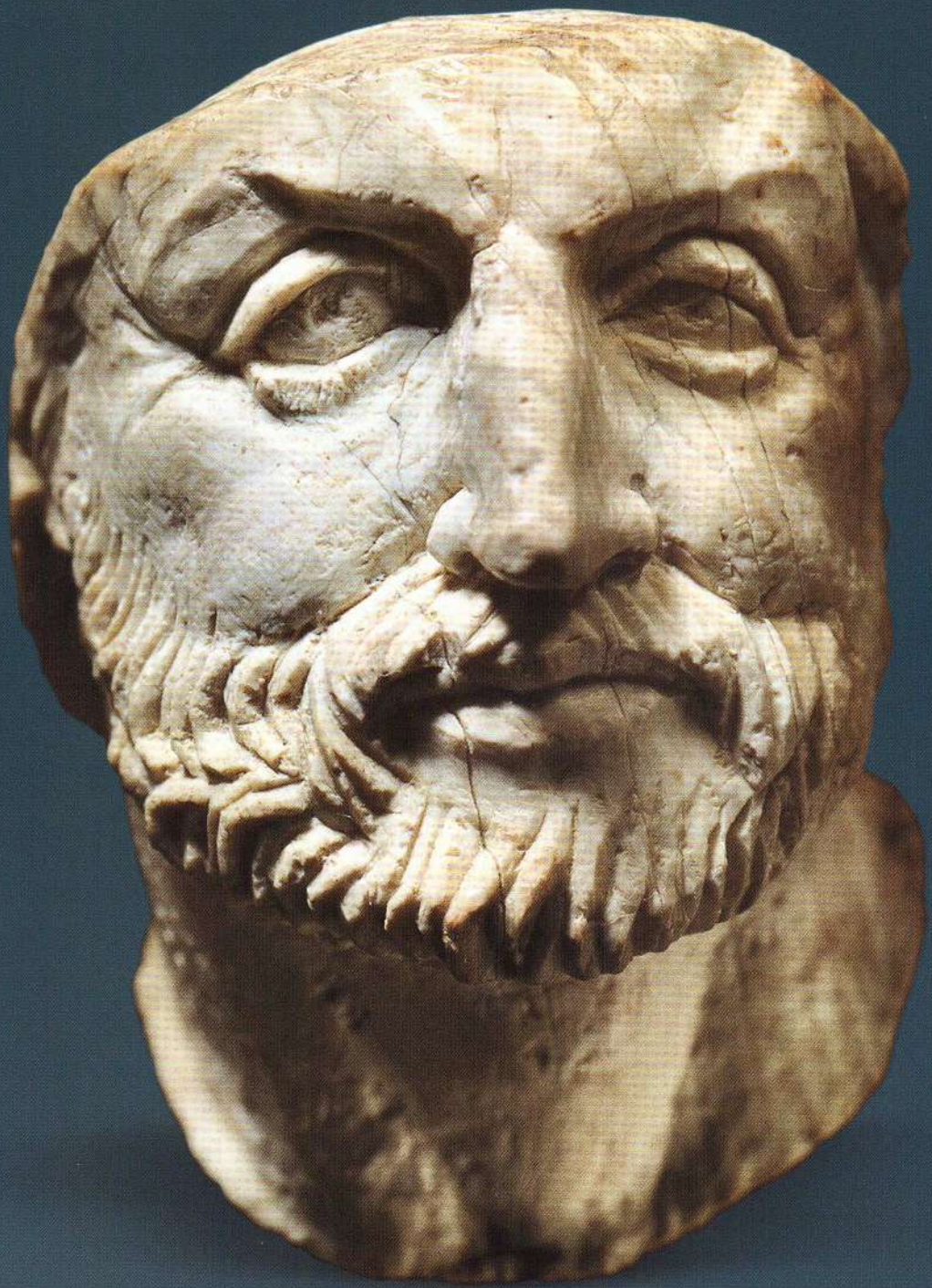


KING PHILIP II

The first half of the 4th century BC was a most difficult time for Greece: strife between cities continued after the Peloponnesian War, causing much suffering for their populations. Democracy proved unable to halt the demise. Things were even worse for the border kingdom of Macedon, which found itself crushed between the warring Greek cities and barbarian invasions. Despite his efforts, King Amyntas III (393–370 BC) failed to strengthen the position of his state; his son and heir Alexander II (370–368 BC) was forced to hand over his younger brother Philip as hostage to Thebes, the great power of that time. In Thebes, Philip became well acquainted with democracy, met important personalities, partook of Plato's ideas (Speusippus, *Socratic Letters*, 30.12; *Epistolographi*), and was initiated into Pythagorean philosophy (Diodorus, 2). In the meantime, Alexander II was murdered; his brother Perdikas III (368–359 BC) succeeded, in whom Plato hoped to see his ideal of the "enlightened ruler" realized and thus sent his pupil Euphraios to Macedonia to instruct the young king. Perdikas, however, was killed in a battle against the Illyrians, which proved disastrous for Macedonia. When Philip II ascended the throne (359–336 BC), he found a decimated army and a state on the verge of collapse.

Only 22 years old, the young king proved more than capable of dealing with the crisis. A man of genius, an excellent strategist and skilled diplomat, Philip II was surely one of the most capable statesmen of all times. He managed during his reign of 24 years to reform the Macedonian army, the economy and society as a whole. Thus he saw off the overwhelming pressure of enemy states and saved his faltering country from collapse. Further he actually increased, dramatically, his kingdom's territory and resources, making Macedonia the leading power of its time. He fundamentally changed the course of history.

In an effort to modernize his kingdom and create a state capable of meeting the demands of new times, including his goal of expansion, Philip organized his kingdom's cities in a more democratic manner. He bestowed powers on them, introducing institutions, structures and authorities that made them self-sufficient and functional. He also built new ones, establishing networks of trade and culture.

Philippi and Philippoupolis (modern Plovdiv) consolidated Philip's sovereignty in eastern Macedonia and the Balkan hinterland. It is probably he who began the ambitious plan to expand Pella, which would become the new resplendent Macedonian metropolis. First of all, however, he focused on Aigai, the kingdom's traditional capital, where a theatre and sanctuaries were erected next to the new palace, an innovative building designed to become the architectural manifesto of the concept of enlightened rulership. Philip's building program at Aigai was inspired by the ideological position that associates the centre of political and religious power with the centre of art and culture. Thus Philip II, the "enlightened ruler" according to the Platonic model, inaugurated at Aigai a tradition that would set the image and standards of the royal cities of the Hellenistic world to come.

In 346 BC, Isocrates saw in the Macedonian king the solution for the plight of Greece. He invited Philip, as a genuine descendant of Heracles, to bring both unity and peace to the Greeks, and Greek law and culture to the barbarians. The Athenian politician's call echoed the intentions of the Heraclid, who never missed an opportunity to promote his divine origin and nationwide appeal: he built a Pan-Hellenic sanctuary at Samothrace, consolidated his presence at Delphi, and,

Page 366: Ivory head from the decoration of the chryselephantine bier in the chamber of Philip II's tomb.

▶ The iron and gold embellished cuirass from the chamber of Philip II's tomb.

ultimately, left his permanent stamp on Olympia with the Philippeion.

As part of his incessant military and political struggle for dominance, Philip enlisted the elite of Greek intellectuals, philosophers, poets, actors, sculptors, painters, and architects to give shape to his vision. The exquisite paintings of the royal tombs at Vergina are unique—original and ambitious works of art, whose importance for the history of painting is comparable to that of the Parthenon's reliefs for sculpture. In the embellishments on the couches, masterpieces of carved ivory and gold and works of the greatest artists of the time, one recognizes not only the authentic portraits of Philip and Alexander, but also the birth of realism in Greek art. Thus the Macedonian king's court became for art and culture what Athens under Perikles had been, a century earlier. The new trends and currents born in Philip's court were transmitted by Alexander throughout the known world. They became the foundation of a brilliant new vision, the Hellenistic way of life.

In 338 BC, after the battle of Chaeronea, the Pan-Hellenic Congress at Corinth elected Philip II ruler of all Greeks and commander-in-chief in their fight against the Persians. After the mythical Agamemnon, Philip II became the first Greek leader to achieve what had seemed impossible for centuries: to unite under his power the quarrelsome Greeks and so prepare for a victorious campaign in the East. Thus, through the enlightened guidance of Philip II and the electric brilliance of Alexander the Great, the Macedonians—a conservative and recently even backward people—developed into the radical lever that changed the ancient world. By bringing Greek culture to the depths of Asia, they created the great Hellenistic Ecumene.

Angeliki Kottaridi

The royal burials at Aigai and the tomb of Philip II

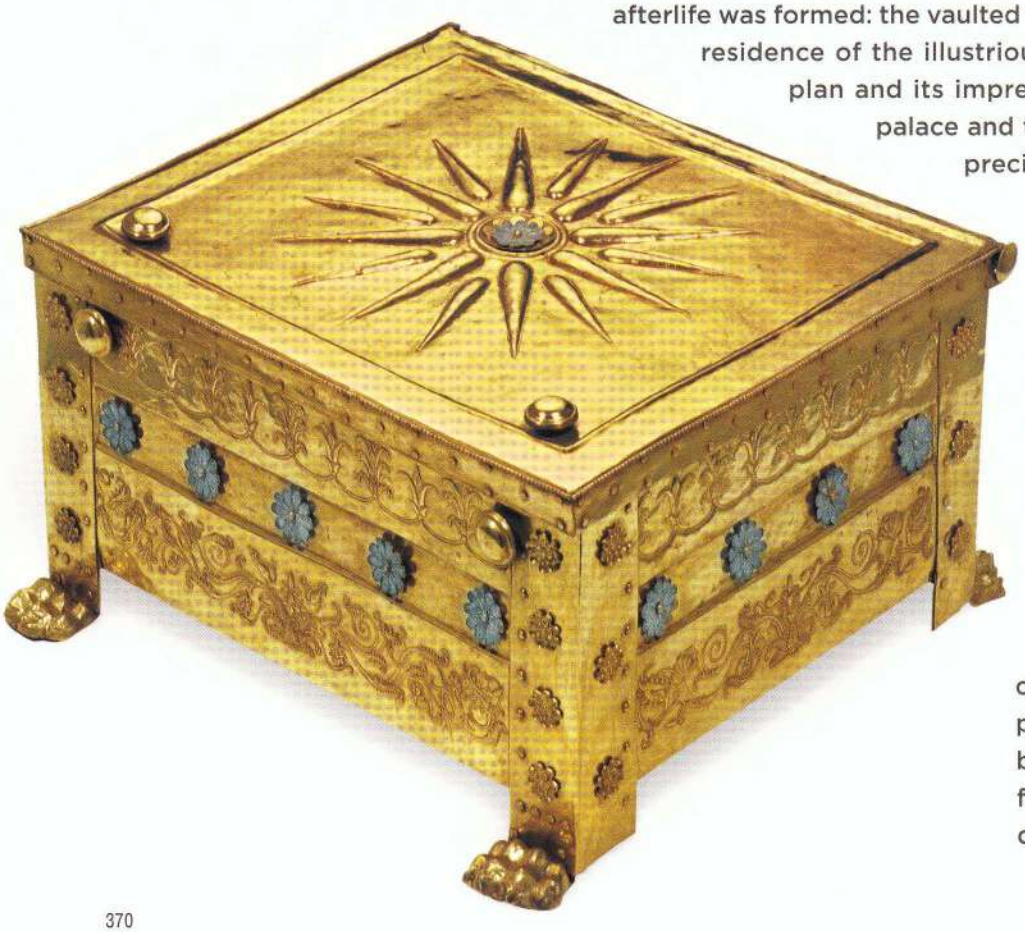
Archaeological research at the Aigai necropolis over the past 20 years has provided a standard of comparison and safe criteria for identifying royal burial clusters. Such differ from the general run in: a) the persistent and enduring use of the same site for up to three centuries, during the course of the Temenid dynasty, b) the size and luxury of the funerary monuments and grave goods, c) the presence of special utensils and symbols of power, and d) the recourse to the custom of cremation.

The ruler's funeral—a public ceremony—was an act with a pronounced political value that affirmed emotionally the ideological structure of power. During the reign of Philip II, the traditional burial rites, nourished by ambition, power, and wealth, acquired new splendor and an ideological background founded on the teachings of Plato and the beliefs of the Pythagoreans and the Orphics. In the royal burial clusters at Aigai—namely the "Temenid cluster" with 20 tombs, the "Queens cluster" with nine tombs, and Philip II's cluster with four tombs—the archaeologist's spade meets Homer. The deceased Temenids were cremated in majestic pyres with opulent grave gifts and the queens of Aigai descended into Hades clad in gold and purple like the queens of Mycenae. Indeed, funerary games were still held up to the late 4th century BC and inspired the chariot race of the painted frieze in the vestibule of Alexander IV's tomb (310 BC).

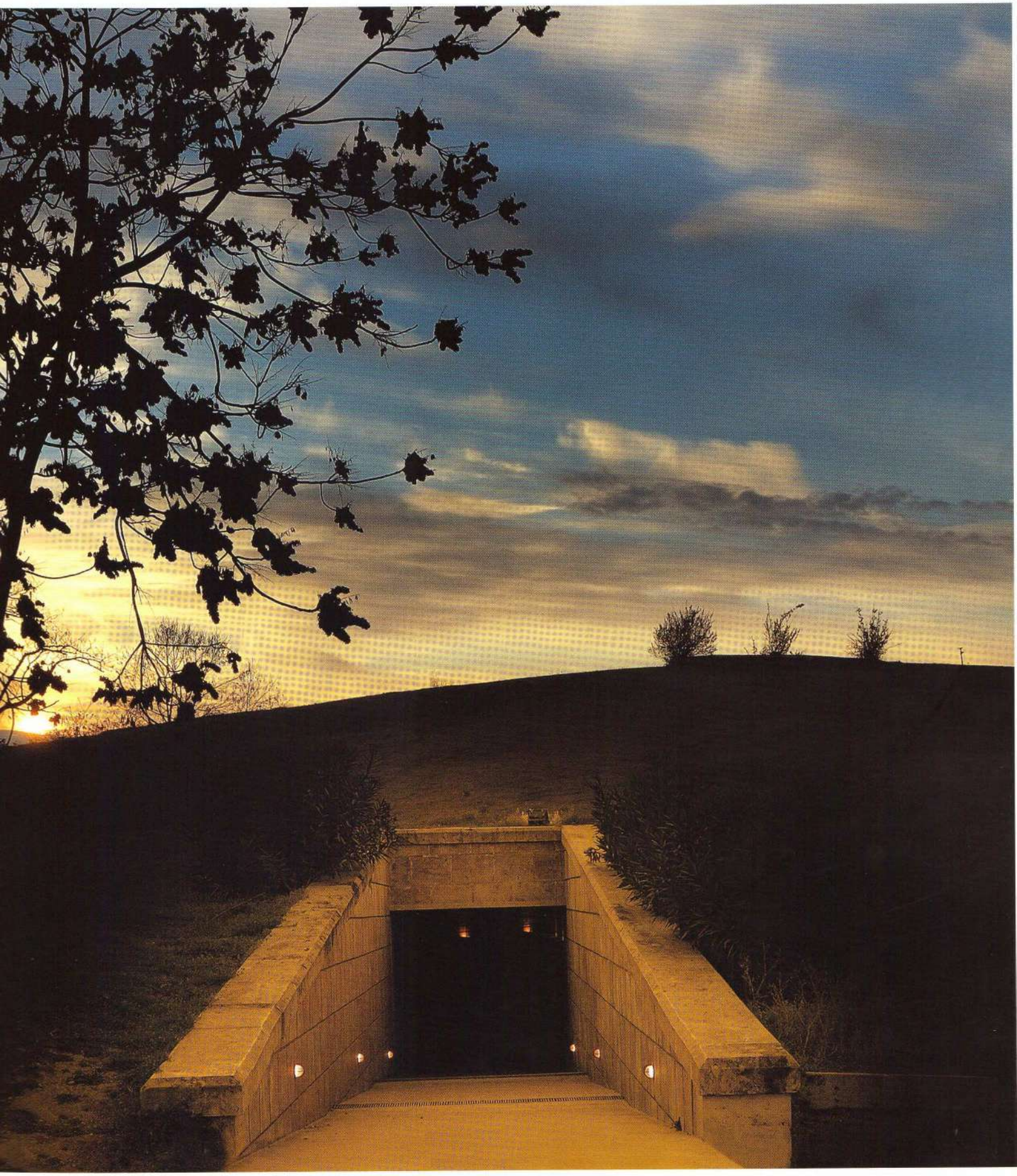
From the late Archaic period, Macedonian funerary architecture was dominated by the construction of increasingly large subterranean chambers, a tendency that in the 5th century BC led to monumental hypostyle tombs with a stone staircase, similar to slightly earlier tombs at Taranto. In the 4th century BC, under the influence of the Platonic exhortation (Plato, *Laws* 947 d-e), the most characteristic architectural expression of the Macedonian court's perceptions of the afterlife was formed: the vaulted "Macedonian" tomb,the subterranean residence of the illustrious deceased, with its temple-shaped plan and its impressive façade, recalling visually both palace and temple. The tomb of Queen Eurydice, precisely dated to 344/343 BC by the Panathenaic amphorae and abundant red-figure pottery that it contained, is the oldest known monument of its kind.

▼ The large gold larnax found inside the marble sarcophagus in the chamber of Philip II's tomb.

▶ The outside view of the shelter over the tombs. The entrance.



Next in sequence comes the tomb of King Philip II, identified beyond doubt for the following reasons. The tomb's unparalleled wealth and the presence of objects with symbolic value suggest that this was a royal burial; moreover the construction of the huge burial mound almost half a century later indicates the deceased's continued importance and prestige. The study of the deceased's bones showed that he was a man in the fifth decade of his life, and the pottery dates the sealed burial context to the



third quarter of the 4th century BC: both limit the possible candidates to Philip II (murdered in 336 BC) and—given the greatest possible chronological latitude—his son Philip III Aridaeus (executed in 317 BC). According to Diodorus, Philip III's remains at Aigai underwent a secondary burial, having been transferred by Cassander from his primary internment. Tomb II, however, was covered with a thick layer of the remains of the funerary pyre, which undoubtedly belonged to the deceased's funeral pyre since it contained half-molten fragments of the gold oak wreath that was found inside the funerary urn. This argues that the tomb was not the site of a secondary burial, but rather that of the primary cremation: with Philip II as the only plausible candidate.

Angeliki Kottaridi

365. DIADEM

350–336 BC
Silver and gold
D. 0.25 m
Aigai, Tomb of Philip II, burial chamber
Aigai, Archaeological Museum, BM 2632

Diadem consisting of a silver cylinder with incised lozenges bent to form a circle, its ends inserted into a silver cylindrical element decorated with a relief "Heracles knot". The diadem was entirely gilded except for the central row of lozenges thus producing a bi-chrome effect. The relief knot, the lozenges, and the colour contrast, all produce the effect of a diadem of tightly woven textile cords. This unique object obviously imitated in a more precious and imperishable material, the famous *strophion* of Heracles, thus becoming a tangible symbol of the Macedonian Heracleid king's divine origin and high priestly status.
As suggested by its size, this diadem, a more imposing version of the priestly diadem known from the iconography of priests and kings, was intended to be worn over a headdress, either a military helmet or the characteristic Macedonian cap, the *kausia*, which resembled a leather beret and was often worn in association with a diadem (the *kausia diadimatophoros* of written sources).

Selected Bibliography

Andronikos 1984, 171, 175; Kottaridi – Walker 2011, 43, fig. 33, cat. no. 87 (A. Kottaridi); Kottaridi 2013, 214.

Angeliki Kottaridi

THE WEAPONS OF PHILIP II

Philip II was the greatest warlord of his time, a reformer of the Macedonian army, and elected commander-in-chief of the Greeks in the fight against the Persians. The weapons from his tomb are without parallel in the Greek world in both quantity and quality. At least four complete armours, twelve spears and javelins, and one *sarissa*, the particularly long (*c.* 6.5 m) Macedonian spear, were offered at the Macedonian king's tomb and funerary pyre. These objects, representative examples of all of the types of offensive and defensive weapons used by the Macedonian army, the most efficient war machine of its day, were crafted by gifted metal-smiths who incorporated in their construction the most recent metallurgical innovations. Even to this day they impress by their quality, effectiveness, ergonomic design, understated luxury, and elegance.

One of the armours very valuable decorated with gold, stood on the threshold of the chamber's door together with a *gorytos*, the characteristic Scythian quiver, arrows, and a bow, a reminder of the Macedonian king's massive and victorious Balkan campaign. At least one armour had been offered at the funeral pyre, whereas two more—one iron clad and decorated with gold, the other simpler with a linen breastplate, which did not leave many traces—were found inside the burial chamber. On the couch were two swords, while two shields—one chryselephantine, the other reinforced with iron plates—were leant against the wall in the chamber's southwest corner, where most of the spears, javelins, and the *sarissa* were found.

Angeliki Kottaridi

◀ Part of the interior of the Philip II's tomb, after it was opened.

366. GORGONEION

340–336 BC
Gold
H. 0.036 m, w. 0.035 m
Aigai, Tomb of Philip II, vestibule
Aigai, Archaeological Museum, BM 2630

The breastplate placed in the doorway of the tomb's vestibule resembled the one found inside the chamber. Because, however, it was made of textile and leather without any iron reinforcement, it had disintegrated, leaving few traces. Surviving parts include the heavy solid gold clasps that resemble flowers and two precious cast *gorgoneia*: these last decorated the epaulettes but also had a functional character, since the cords that secured the epaulettes to the breastplate were threaded through the hole under Medusa's head.

According to myth, whoever looked at the gorgons was petrified from fear. With the help of the goddess Athena, the hero Perseus severed the head of the gorgon Medusa, whose name signified both "she who rules" and "she who protects", and offered it to the goddess, who hung it at her chest in order to spread terror among her enemies.

Medusa's origins hale from the East. In Greece, she acquired a myth and by 600 BC she had found her place in iconography as the image of horror par excellence. With snakes tangled around her furrowed face and a grotesque pug nose, Medusa looks straight into the viewer's face with bulging eyes and exposed sharp teeth. An archetypal mask of fear, the *gorgoneion* generates terror, causes the enemy to flee, and prevents evil. In accordance with the ancient concept that eyes see "actively", i.e., emit light in their own right, Medusas' wide-open eyes are a source of "black light" that turns to stone and kills. Thus, the monster's gaze becomes the ultimate "evil eye"; the *gorgoneion* itself constitutes both the ultimate weapon against the opponent and a most powerful talisman for anyone wearing it.

In addition, however, to any magical property, what is truly fascinating—and absolutely revealing of the Greeks' worldview—is how this symbol of horror and power itself mutated. In the period of Phidias (450–425 BC), the ancient beast was tamed and turned into a caricature. Then gradually after 400 BC, it became a completely humanized face with closed mouth and the normal features of a woman, often very beautiful, with only the snakes in her hair recalling her apotropaic nature.

What lies behind this transformation? In the 5th century BC, Plato (*Phaedrus* 246) classified beauty as the first of a series of features that characterize divinity. By serving the ideal of beauty, art can and should teach the soul and guide virtue. For the philosopher, beauty is the infallible criterion of art (*Republic* b-d). Just as in tragedy the most violent pain becomes "sweetened speech" (*hedysmenos logos*) and obeys measure, in Classical art fear is subordinated to beauty. Beauty liberates the monster, man is freed from fear.

Ambitious works despite their small size, true masterpieces of miniature sculpture, the gold *gorgoneia* of the royal armour enchant the viewer with their eerie beauty. They are also two of the earliest and probably the most important surviving examples of *gorgoneia* of the "beautiful type". The way that the snakes twist over the now beautiful Medusa's forehead to form a Hercules knot is particularly characteristic, emphasizing the Temenid king's relation to his divine ancestor.

Selected Bibliography

Andronikos 1984, 189–191; Kottaridi 2007, 74; Kottaridi – Walker 2011, 54, fig. 38, cat. no. 91 (A. Kottaridi).

Angeliki Kottaridi

367. PAIR OF GREAVES

350–336 BC
Bronze
H. 0.42 m (left), 0.418 m (right)
Aigai, Tomb of Philip II, burial chamber
Aigai, Archaeological Museum, BM 2589

Simple and sturdy, made of strong bronze plate, these greaves render schematically the anatomy of the lower leg and were originally lined on the interior with leather. They completed one of the two armours that had been placed inside the king's burial chamber. It is possible, however, that when on horseback on the battlefield, the king preferred the more comfortable and equally effective tall Macedonian boots.

Selected Bibliography

Andronikos 1984, 145; Kottaridi – Walker. 2011, 91, fig. 78, cat. no. 93 (A. Kottaridi).

Angeliki Kottaridi

368. SWORD

340–336 BC
Iron and gold
L. 0.60 m, l. pres. 0.544 m, w. max. of handle guard 0.109 m
Aigai, Tomb of Philip II, burial chamber
Aigai, Archaeological Museum, BM 1713 (sword), BM 950 (ring), BM 1715 (gold ornament), BM 2618 (gold acanthus leaf)

This sword was found in the remains of Philip II's funerary pyre, which, according to custom, were carried to and spread over the tomb's vault. One of the most common sword types of the Classical period, this is both an offensive and defensive weapon, used, as its short length suggests, in close combat. Similar swords are often depicted in battle scenes and are more rarely found in the tombs of army officers.
The wooden scabbard and handle revetment were lost in the pyre. The iron blade, however, was hardened by the fire and is now in very good condition. The blade is thicker at its mid-rib so as not to bend, and the handle guards are reinforced with strong metal plaques, which guaranteed the object's flawless operation.
The sword originally featured a now lost cylindrical or slightly conical pommel with wooden revetment like the rest of the handle: its circumference was reinforced by the ovoid iron ring, found with the sword. The simple yet rich decoration of the handle is highly unusual: a heavy, solid cast, gold ornament in the shape of acanthus leaves, with particularly delicate and vivid details: this was originally secured onto the wooden revetment with two gold nails.

Selected Bibliography

Kottaridi – Walker 2011, 91, fig. 79, cat. no. 97 (A. Kottaridi); Kottaridi 2013, 271.

Angeliki Kottaridi

369. JAVELIN HEAD

340–336 BC
Iron
L. total 0.455 m, l. of shaft 0.12 m, w. max. 0.0331 m, d. max. ext. of shaft 0.017 m, th. of ridge at blade's w. max. 0.008 m, wt. 250.6 g
Aigai, Tomb of Philip II, burial chamber
Aigai, Archaeological Museum, BM 2620

Lanceolate javelin head of iron. This was found together with others in the chamber's southwest corner. It is particularly elongated and narrow with a long, slightly conical socket, in which traces of the wooden shaft are still preserved. The latter was secured inside the socket with a cross-nail, as suggested by two small holes near the base. A strong mid-rib reinforces the narrow blade.
High quality yet simple decoration emphasizes the weapon's ergonomics and makes it a true work of art. A little above the socket's base, a fine relief ring marks the beginning of two equally fine relief ridges, which articulate the socket's outer surface into four sections. These sections converge in pairs and reinforce the edges of the mid-rib, whereas a fine undercut of the same width outlines the edges, so emphasizing the dynamic geometry of the object's shape. The attention to detail and precision (of the order of a tenth of a mm) invested into implementing a design on an object cast in such a hard metal shows both great craftsmanship and the extremely high technological level of Macedonian metallurgy under Philip II.
All of the technical characteristics—length, small width, relatively low weight, narrow shaft—suggest that this head belonged to a javelin that was paired with a cavalry spear, the tip of which is similar to one found with the spearhead examined here. The horse trappings found in the remains of the funerary pyre demonstrate the king's special relation to horses, also illustrated by his name *Philippos* (Philip), or "he who loves horses". King of a people with a centuries-old equestrian warrior tradition, Philip could not have been buried without cavalry weapons.

Selected Bibliography

Andronikos 1984, 144; Kottaridi 2013, 270.

Angeliki Kottaridi

BANQUET OBJECTS AND VESSELS

The banquet, an essential manifestation of earthly life, was for the Macedonian nobility the ultimate promise of pleasure in the afterlife. The hero-king was no exception; like another Heracles, he would continue to enjoy eternal life and take part in the symposia of the Blessed in the glorious light of the Elysian Fields. Thus, in addition to the chryselephantine couches his tomb contained an entire banquet service comprising 20 silver vases, the opulence and quality of which are thus far unparalleled. These objects give a surprisingly complete and vivid picture of the royal environment, where luxury coexisted harmoniously with elegance, opulence with the aesthetics of austerity and morphological purity, and where everything was subordinated to the charm of measure.

Angeliki Kottaridi

370. WILD BOAR

340–336 BC
Ivory
L. 0.08 m
Aigai, Tomb of Philip II, burial chamber
Aigai, Archaeological Museum, BO 1696

Inlay of ivory depicting a running boar. High couches for one or two persons were an indispensable element of the ancient banquet. They were placed one next to the other along the walls of the banqueting hall (*andron*), the size of which depended on the number of couches it was to accommodate. The finds from the royal cemetery show that by the 5th century BC the palaces at Aigai were outfitted with furniture decorated with ivory, gold, and amber. Philip II's burial contained four chryselephantine couches. Two had been burned in the funerary pyre, one was placed in the burial chamber, and the other in the tomb's vestibule. With a double cushion and footrest, richly decorated with gold, ivory, and glass—the great technological achievement of the day, these couches, which like the other grave gifts were utilitarian objects and not funerary constructions, give us a glimpse of the splendour and luxury of the furniture of the royal banqueting halls (*andrones*). Like the wall paintings of the Macedonian tombs, these beds speak eloquently of the artistic floruit existing in the Macedonian court of the 4th century BC; they provide an invaluable picture of the legendary masterpieces of the ivory craftsmen, the finest of all sculptors.

This miniature wild boar originally decorated the footrest of the couch that had been placed on the king's marble sarcophagus. The bed and footstool were made of wood and covered on the front with plaques and reliefs of gilded ivory. The low reliefs that decorate the bed's upper-side rail are of the finest quality. They depict a gathering of gods, whose idealized figures and tranquility contrast sharply with the passion and unprecedented realism of the human figures in the wide hunting frieze directly below. Philip, Alexander, and several of the king's relatives and *hetairoi* are depicted here in a series of portraits of exquisite vitality and strength, entirely monumental despite their tiny size: some of the most fascinating studies of the human figure known to us from ancient art.

This miniature boar, which together with a number of felines decorated the footrest's gilded frieze, displays the same realism, care, and attention to detail: it betrays the hand of a great artist. The boar, whose hunting marked the coming of age for every Macedonian male, raises its muzzle, full of tension, smelling the danger, and charges away like an arrow cutting through the air.

Selected Bibliography

Kottaridi – Walker 2011, 78, fig. 61, cat. no. 485 (A. Kottaridi).

Angeliki Kottaridi

371. JUG

350–336 BC
Silver
H. max. 0.244 m, d. max. body 0.154 m, d. base 0.092 m, wt. 1196.94 g
Aigai, Tomb of Philip II, burial chamber
Aigai, Archaeological Museum, BM 2442

An exquisite silver jug. This and a second identical one found with it are the most valued and elegant examples of a type well known from its clay equivalents, which were fairly common in the Classical period.
The jug's body and neck are made of a single thick sheet of hammered and lathe-turned silver. The cast handle, the spool-shaped ornament crowning the handle, and the relief head of Silenos were made separately and soldered onto the body. The pronounced curvature between the globular body and slender neck, which dates the jug to the mid-4th century BC, is offset by the wide horizontal rim with its elegant relief Ionic *kymation* (egg-and-dart) on the lip, a detail that is both decorative and functional, since it continues the line of the handle giving an impression of stability and a sense of symmetry.
The decorative and functional elements combine equally effectively on the precious handle, which in order to embrace the rim divides into a double pair of volutes and ends below in a bouquet of leaves and tendrils that arches around the head of Silenos. The spool on the handle's shoulder is a purely decorative element, a reminder of earlier models where similar knobs served to hold the jug's lid.
The handle's rich decoration is rendered with precision, delicacy and dexterity—adapted to the vessel's shape and function. Rows of minute "beads" and an astragal, rendered in perspective, appear to "tie" the bouquet to its base. Thin relief bands, volutes, stylized palmettes, and a highly naturalistic lily bud on the shoulder complete the handle's decoration.
However, the ornament that most fully illustrates the craftsman's skill is the charming head of Silenus, which has something of the nobility of Socrates' face as described by Plato in his famous *Symposium*. Manolis Andronikos wrote of the two identical figures of Silenoi that decorated the two silver jugs (Andronikos 1984, 153): "I do not know of other Silenoi with such a dense and indissoluble mixture of the animal and human elements. The Socratic introspection and beastly sensuality, the contemplative man and the barely contained desire for carnal debauchery, rarely speak so clearly as with the eyes and lips of these two Silenoi-philosophers. It is evident that these forms have their roots deep in the Classical tradition and were not upset by the violent currents of the new world that will create the new art, the one that will be called Hellenistic."
The jug's exceptional quality and a series of singular stylistic and technical details suggest that it and its twin, as well as a few other of the silver vessels from the tomb of Philip II, are the work of a great artist-silversmith—the same person who created the impressive bronze Derveni krater with its rich sculptural decoration of the Dionysian *thiasos*.

Selected Bibliography

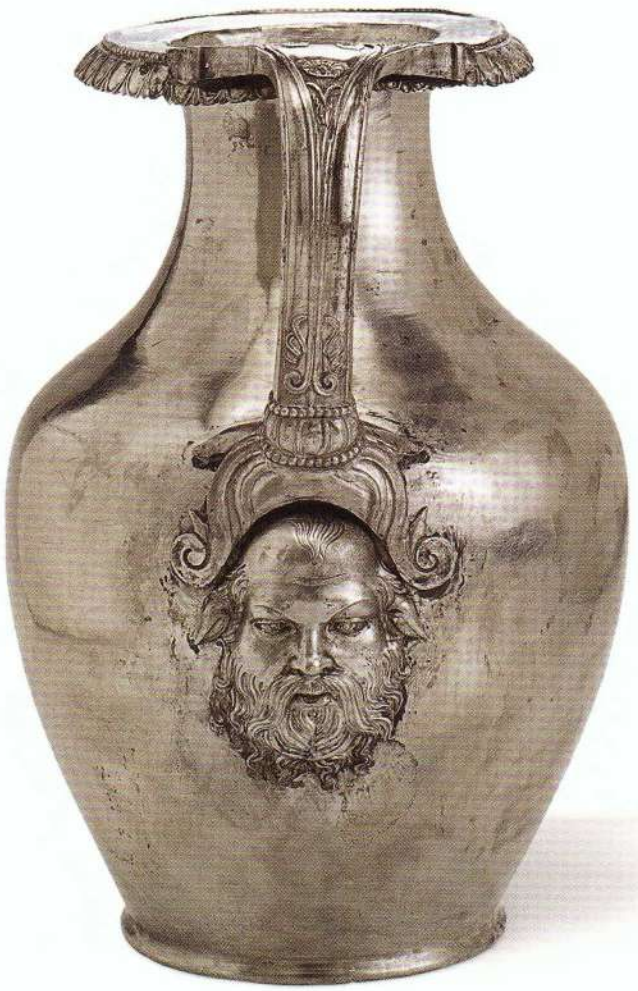
Andronikos 1984, 152-153; Kottaridi – Walker 2011, 190, fig. 219, cat. no. 475 (A. Kottaridi); Kottaridi 2013, 248.

Angeliki Kottaridi

372. KYLIX

350–336 BC
Silver
H. without handles 0.036 m, d. rim 0.134 m, d. base 0.057 m, wt. 265.71 g
Aigai, Tomb of Philip II, burial chamber
Aigai, Archaeological Museum, BM 2540

Kylix of silver. Clay kylikes, wine cups with a tall or low foot, were one of the most characteristic products of the Attic pottery workshops. They were particularly popular at Aigai, the capital of the Macedonian kingdom, from the 6th century BC. This silver kylix, a more precious version of this traditional shape, was offered at the tomb of Philip II along with three other similar kylikes from the royal household effects of the Aigai palace. Its weight, precious material, elegance, and exceptional finish are impressive.
The kylix is made of a thick sheet of silver, carefully hammered and lathe-turned to form a shallow bowl. Bands of concentric



circles made with a compass decorate the bottom on the interior and exterior and mark the rim. This simple cup's true ornament, however, is the pair of exquisitely graceful handles, which underline and prolong the tension of the body's curvature as they splay and twist in the space, and, of course, the low but equally elegant base with its relief alternating concave and convex profile.

The exterior surface of the cup's bottom is inscribed ΞΒ=-, or 62 drachmas and 3 obols. This small cup was clearly very valuable if we compare its price to that of a life-size marble statue, which cost a mere 200 drachmas. The weight and value of the kylix were calculated here using Attic drachmas, but this is not surprising since Attic weights and measures were employed in the Macedonian kingdom. In fact, it is possible that these objects of characteristic Attic shape were made in an Attic workshop and bought, like so many imported goods, by the Macedonian court. Alternatively, they could have been made by a subsidiary establishment of an Attic workshop in Macedonia, which catered to wealthy clients.

Selected Bibliography
Andronikos 1984, 147-148; Kottaridi – Walker 2011, 35, fig. 28, cat. no. 476 (A. Kottaridi); Kottaridi 2013, 261.

Angeliki Kottaridi

373. CALYX CUP

350–336 BC
Silver
H. 0.061 m, d. rim 0.097 m
Aigai, Tomb of Philip II, burial chamber
Aigai, Archaeological Museum, BM 2542

Calyx cup of silver. Originating in the opulent East, these tiny, elegant cups recall the pod (*calyx*) of a flower bud and were extremely popular in the Kingdom of Macedon under Philip II and Alexander the Great. Although the shape was intended primarily for precious metals, more humble clay imitations also exist.

The two silver calyx cups from the tomb of Philip II are among the most expensive and elegant surviving examples. With particularly thick walls, created with a mould and incised, they are decorated with great care, precision, and skill in a way that highlights their perfect shape. A relief double flower adorns the cup's concave bottom, where the fluting that covers the body and creates the impression of a flower bud begins. A double braid motif and a Lesbian *kymation* with tiny lilies, both created with great finesse, separate the fluted body from the smooth, shiny rim that splays outward balancing the body's curvature. The gilding on parts of the bottom's flower, the braid, and the kymation create an understated colour contrast, so

reinforcing the interplay of light and shadow by which the relief fluting enlivens the silver surface. The cup's interior was probably decorated with a relief mask, originally soldered on the bottom but lost before the cup was placed inside the tomb.
A dotted inscription on the rim (qB-) specifies the price, 92 drachmas and one obol, calculated this time not in Attic but in "Persian" drachmas. This indicates that the tomb's silverware came from various workshops.
Demosthenes accused Philip of being a heavy drinker. The royal symposium's vessels, however, and particularly the cups are much smaller than those used in Athenian symposia. The taste for smaller vessels and new extravagant shapes, first witnessed here in the royal silverware before it became the broader fashion, may indicate changes taking place in the procedure of symposia and the wine-drinking "ritual", which became more complex and sophisticated, with a pronounced tendency towards refinement.

Selected Bibliography

Andronikos 1984, 150; Kottaridi – Walker 2011, 188, fig. 217, cat. no. 479 (A. Kottaridi); Kottaridi 2013, 347.

Angeliki Kottaridi

374. LANTERN

350–336 BC
Bronze
H. without handles 0.305 m, d. base 0.105 m
Aigai, Tomb of Philip II, burial chamber
Aigai, Archaeological Museum, BM 2578

This ornate openwork bronze lantern, housing a black-glazed terracotta lamp lit the tomb's darkness. A particularly elegant and unusual object, it illustrates the originality and sophistication of the metal workshops that produced for the Macedonian court.
The ovoid body is made of a single thick bronze sheet, hammered and lathe-turned. The heavy discoid base has an alternating concave and convex profile and three small feet in the form of Ionic columns resting on lion paws; it is cast. So are the large arched handles with their hook-shaped ends and lotus bud finials, which are fixed onto the lantern's shoulder by openwork spiral-shaped suspension lugs. The lantern's body is open at the top and closes with a convex lid that hangs from the handle's base and fits over the narrow, vertical rim. The terracotta lamp sits snugly onto the iron base that is attached to the lantern's bottom.
The decoration consists of a band of silver-plated triangles directly below the rim and a second wider band below the first with an openwork, originally silver-plated garland of ivy leaves. Of the relief masks that were originally attached below the handles only one, representing Pan, was preserved. With a flower between his horns and a wreath of ivy leaves, the goat-legged god, more of a mask than a face, retains all of the wildness of his beastly nature. This iconographic type contrasts sharply with the idealized Silenoi of the silver jugs, but proved particularly popular across time and space. The motifs of Pan and the ivy leaf suggest that this lantern was used during royal symposia.

Selected Bibliography

Andronikos 1984, 162-163; Kottaridi – Walker 2011, 138, fig. 155 (A. Kottaridi); Kottaridi 2013, 238.

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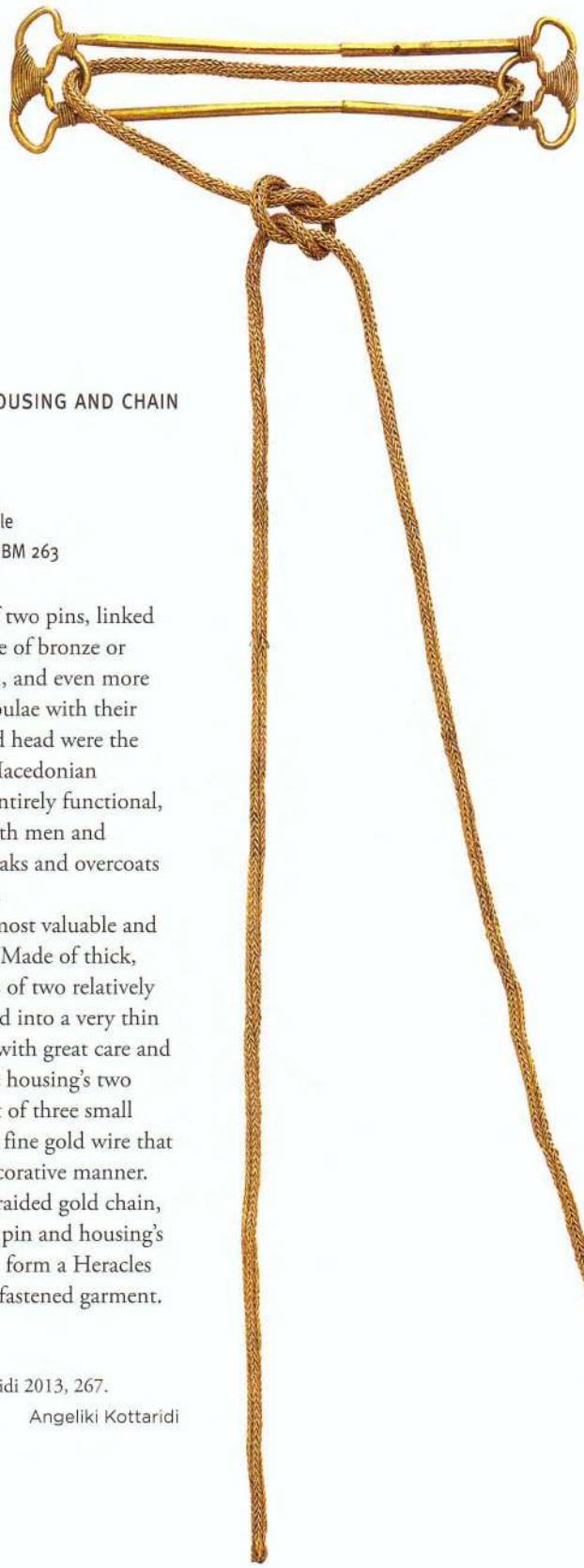
375. MYRTLE WREATH
340–336 BC
Gold
D. 0.26 m
Aigai, Tomb of Philip II, vestibule
Aigai, Archaeological Museum, BM 2633

Gold wreath depicting the myrtle plant. A woman who died during the third decade of her life, obviously one of Philip's seven wives, was buried in the tomb's vestibule. The study of the tomb's construction and backfilling of the dromos showed that the vestibule was completed at the same time as the burial chamber and that, once shut, the monument was never reopened. The two deceased were therefore buried at the same time. This excludes Cleopatra, niece of Attalos, who was probably killed later, after the execution of her powerful relative. The only possible candidate is Meda, daughter of King Cothelas of the Getae, whom Philip married at the end of his Scythian campaign in 339 BC. Obeying her tribe's custom, according to which, as Herodotus records, the wives of important men followed their husbands to their death, she appears to have committed suicide after the king was murdered. By following her husband and master to the tomb as his eternal companion in Hades, she became a model of marital virtue and faithfulness to the Macedonians. Probably for this reason, Alexander honoured her with

gifts of mythical value, including this precious myrtle wreath, a small masterpiece of Macedonian metalwork, which captures among its branches and flowers the glow of an eternal spring.
This impressive and charming object, which renders in a most naturalistic manner a wreath of myrtle, one of Aphrodite's sacred plants, is a complex structure. It is a characteristic product of a goldsmith working for the Macedonian court in the second half of the 4th century BC. The two gold branches are tied together—as they would be in wreaths of the real plant, so forming the base, from which sprout groups of three twigs. All the branches and twigs are tubes, reinforced with thick gold wire on the interior. Numerous leaves and flowers are secured onto the branches with fine wire stalks. The flowers, whose size varies in order to appear natural, are double with a hemispherical calyx and five circular petals on the exterior and a smaller circle of 24 fine drop-shaped petals at the interior. Several preserve a seperate row of fine stamens that surrounds the protruding pistil, which is formed by the end of the gold wire-stalk. Characteristic for this period is the addition on some of the central flowers of a circle of lance-shaped leaves made of a different gold alloy, which is a paler yellow and shinier: so as to create an impression of understated polychromy.
A sign of victory, honour, joy, and generally of something outside the ordinary everyday life, wreaths of flowers or branches of shrubs and trees were indispensible in games, but also in all ceremonies, celebrations, festivals, and, of course, banquets. Gold jewellery wreaths were primarily destined for the gods, but in the 4th century BC became fashionable too for kings and the wealthy.

Selected Bibliography
Andronikos 1984), 191, 193; Kottaridi – Walker 2011, 121, fig. 129, cat. no. 263 (A. Kottaridi).

Angeliki Kottaridi



376. PIN FIBULA WITH HOUSING AND CHAIN

350–336 BC
Gold
L. 0.074 m, l. total 0.215 m
Aigai, Tomb of Philip II, vestibule
Aigai, Archaeological Museum, BM 263

Cloak-fastener in form of two pins, linked with chains. Usually made of bronze or silver, occasionally of iron, and even more rarely of gold, two-pin fibulae with their characteristic two-knotted head were the most common piece of Macedonian jewellery. Quite simple, entirely functional, they had been used by both men and women to fasten their cloaks and overcoats since the 6th century BC.
This fibula is one of the most valuable and elegant examples known. Made of thick, solid gold wire, it consists of two relatively small pins that are inserted into a very thin tubular housing. Shaped with great care and precision, the pin and the housing's two symmetrical heads consist of three small loops secured together by fine gold wire that is wrapped in a highly decorative manner.
A fairly long and heavy braided gold chain, which passes through the pin and housing's central loop and is tied to form a Heracles knot, further secured the fastened garment.

Selected Bibliography
Andronikos 1984, 179; Kottaridi 2013, 267.

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377. MEDALLION

c. AD 225–250
Gold
D. 0.058 m, th. 0.008 m, wt. 120.06 g
Egypt, Aboukir. Purchased at auction
Thessaloniki, Archaeological Museum, MΘ 4304

Medallion, portraying Olympias. This was issued to commemorate the games held in honour of Alexander the Great at Veroia in AD 225–250. It was part of the Abukir Hoard, which included medallions with portraits of members of King Philip II's family. Medallions with the portraits of Philip and Alexander the Great are now in the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris. The issue of commemorative medallions is an aspect of the cult of Alexander, which was instigated by Alexander himself and revived in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. The deification of Alexander the Great and his family in memory of Macedonia's glorious and heroic past occurred at a period when Macedonia was under Roman domination. The imitation of Alexander's conquests and the creation of a state comparable to that founded by him in the 4th century BC began in the 1st century BC under Julius Caesar. Alexander was also a model for subsequent rulers including Augustus, founder of the Roman Empire, and Severus Alexander, who was named in his honour. The cult of Alexander in Macedonia during the 2nd and especially the 3rd century AD developed into a veritable "Alexandromania". Alexander the Great's legend, which had spread throughout the Roman Empire and into the depths of Asia, inspired the decoration of numerous artifacts.

Obverse: Head of Olympias, wife of Philip II and mother of Alexander the Great, in profile to the right. Her hair is gathered at the nape and adorned with a band diadem and veil, which she lifts gently with her right hand in a gesture of revelation. Well-known from its association with Hera, this gesture suggests that the young woman with the idealized features represents the queen on her wedding day.

Reverse: Young naked female figure sitting on a sea monster to the left. Her garment covers the beast's back, her hair is gathered at the back, and her arms are adorned with bracelets. The monster has the head and front legs of a bull and the body and tail of a fish. The scene probably depicts the Nereid Thetis, mother of Achilles, bringing him his armour.

The Homeric hero Achilles was an exemplar for Alexander the Great. It is therefore reasonable that his mother Olympias, the Epirote princess who became the first wife of King Philip II and gave birth to the first heir to the Macedonian throne, should be associated with Thetis. This depiction of Olympias on the Aboukir medallion is the only known portrait of Alexander's mother.

Selected Bibliography

Abbondanza *et al.* 2014, 334, no. 14 (P. Adam-Veleni).

Polyxeni Adam-Veleni

378. GOLD LEAF-SHAPED FOIL

Late 4th century BC
Gold
L. 0,42 m, w. 0.01 m
Pella, Archaeological Museum, 1992.365

Good state of preservation
This gold foil in the shape of a stylized myrtle leaf features a hastily engraved inscription: *Hegesiska*, the deceased's name, probably a diminutive of the well-attested name *Hegeso*. Inscribed gold foils or tablets are known from many parts of the Greek world, including Pella and Aigai. They are usually inscribed with the name of the deceased and occasionally a salutation to Persephone, queen of Hades. The key for their interpretation comes from a gold leaf of the same period from a tomb of Pella, which features the carefully executed, dotted inscription: *ΦΕΡΣΕΦΟΝΗΙ/ΠΟΣΕΙΔΙΠΠΟΣ/ ΜΥΣΤΗΣ/ΕΥΣΕΒΗΣ* (*Phersephonei Poseidippos mystes eusebes*, or "The initiate Poseidippos dedicates this to Persephone"). The inscription identifies the deceased as an initiate in the Orphic-Bacchic mysteries, who addresses the Lady of the dead asking her for the fate reserved to the selected few.

Selected Bibliography
Lilibaki-Akamati *et al.* 2011, 185.

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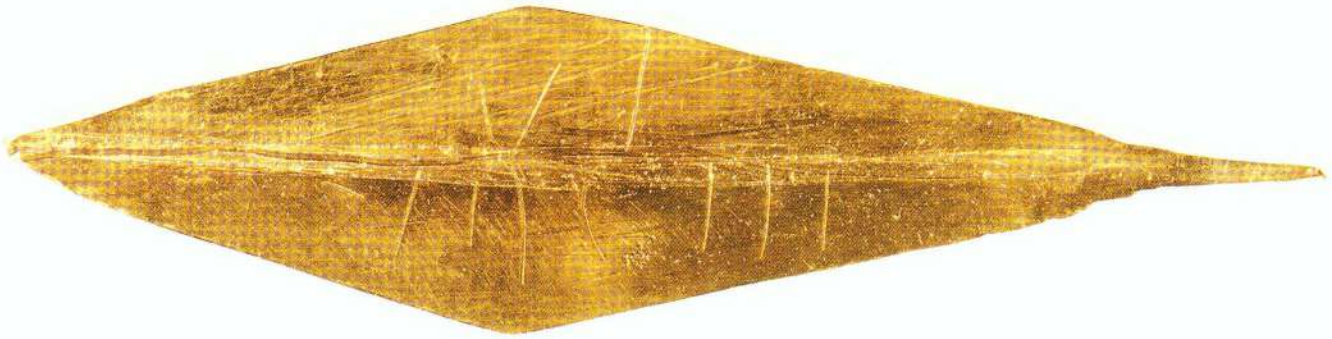
379. INSCRIBED FUNERARY STELE

350–300 BC
Marble
H. 0.94 m, w. 0.034 m
Aigai, Archaeological Museum, ΒΛ 29

Marble funerary stele with a palmette crowning piece. This is inscribed "Xenokrates | son of Pierion | Drykalos | son of Pierion". The simple painted decoration in blue, red, and dark brown is limited to the floral ornament and bands on the pediment, the Ionic *kymation* that defines the transition from the stele to the crown piece, and the wide red ribbon tied around the stele in a knot. Representations on vases suggest that tying ribbons around funerary stelai was a common funerary ritual, which is echoed in the decoration of this stele that marked the grave of two brothers, Xenokrates and Drykalos, sons of Pierion. The names Drykalos and Pierion are particularly interesting as they relate to elements of the Macedonian landscape, namely Mount Pieria and the oak tree (*drys*), the sacred tree of Zeus, which covered the region of Aigai.
This stele, which was broken and thrown into the fill of the Great Tumulus, is the tangible evidence of a historical event known from ancient sources. After King Pyrrhus of Epiros defeated the Macedonians in 276/5 BC, he captured Aigai and garrisoned it with a guard of mercenaries from Gaul, who pillaged the royal cemetery (Plutarch, *Pyrrhus* 26.11). The archaeological finds suggest that the looting and the sacrilege, acts unheard of amongst the ancient Greeks, did not stop with the kings, but extended to almost all of the tombs that promised loot and whose position was indicated by a grave marker. Antigonos Gonatas quickly recovered his cities and helped the citizens of Aigai appease their dead. To protect the graves of Alexander the Great's father and son, which had not been found by the desecrators, he built a huge mound of soil that contained many of the broken grave markers over them. 67 such grave markers, many of them inscribed, have been found. 75 names of people who lived and died in Aigai from the 5th to the early 3rd centuries BC have been read, a find both touching and unexpected. They contribute decisively to providing a definitive answer to the question of the origin of the Macedonians. Names like Adymos, Pephkolaos, Kleonymos, Pierion, Drykalos, Antigonos, Alketas, Erebaios, Philotas, Heraklides, Philon, Menandros, Demainetos, Demetrios, Kleitos, Pagkasta, Krino, Vereno, Phila, Dimeno, Clio, are all undoubtedly both Greek and characteristically Macedonian. They confirm what Hesiod and Herodotus state: that the Macedonians were closely related to the Magnetes of Thessaly and the Dorians of southern Greece. They document in the most tangible and irrefutable manner the relation of this borderland people with the Greek core to their south.

Selected Bibliography
Andronikos 1984, 84.

Angeliki Kottaridi

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