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From antiquity to postmodernity

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CHAPTER 6. RECLAMATIONS AND ITINERARIES OF ARCHAIC PITHOI FROM CRETE (1960s AND BEYOND)

A second set of Cretan pithoi dispersed in Cretan and international collections concerns Archaic pieces with figural representation. Their dissemination had already begun in the early 20th c. but it spiked from the 1960s onwards after extensive looting at Aphrati and elsewhere in Crete. In this Chapter, I explore the cultural biographies of looted Archaic pithoi and I focus on their post-excavation lives with the scope to examine a) the ways in which these pieces were dispersed in museums and private collections across Europe, north America and Asia, b) the reasons they were appreciated by international collectors, and c) in what way, if any, their appreciation by Cretan collectors differed from others abroad.

My approach draws from and combines two basic models for the study of cultural biographies of artefacts, explained in the following section: the reclamation and the itineraries of objects.

6.1. Reclamation and itineraries of objects

Reclamation of archaeological artefacts was first defined by Theodore Peña (2007) in his model for the life-cycle of Roman pottery. Peña built up on Michael Schiffer's (1972) proposed analysis for the biography of objects, according to which archaeological objects reach the end of their life-cycle with their discard, passing from their systemic context into the archaeological record. Whilst in Schiffer's model the archaeological context signifies the refuse or 'death' of artefacts, Peña's refined model extended to include the behavioural practice of post-discard reclamation, in which case the transition into the archaeological record can signify the 'rebirth' of objects. Reclamation, according to Peña, may occur when discarded pottery is accidentally discovered or systematically excavated whether to be recycled (i.e. turn into raw materials) or to undergo some sort of reuse. In the latter occasion, pottery re-enters a (new) systemic context (Peña 2007, 12-13; 317). The case of looted Archaic pithoi discussed below broadens Peña's model to include the process of reclamation through the looting of objects. Looting is here treated as a representative case-study for the forceful and violent transition of pottery from the archaeological to the systemic context.

The discussion on the subsequent travels of these illicitly unearthed pithoi encompasses and further strengthens Hahn and Weiss's (2013) proposal regarding the itineraries of objects. The term was first coined by Hahn and Weiss to rectify potential misreading of the theory on object biographies and travels. The authors elaborated on the foundational works of Appadurai (1986) and Kopytoff (1986) to suggest that itineraries of objects, both as a term and as a methodological approach, encapsulates the context-related meaning of objects. Itineraries and the shifting meaning of moved objects enables us to surpass conceptual pitfalls latent in object biographies: on the one hand, the metaphor used for biographies of objects might be interpreted to necessarily involve their birth and death, thereby leaving limited space for the so-called 'nonlinear aspects of things' which include their mobility and changes of related context (Hahn and Weiss 2013, 8). On the other hand, the term mobility may allow for an erroneous, assumed inherent moveability of objects during their life-span. Thus, an itinerary of an object leaves room for interpretations on the social, economic and cultural factors that make things move from one place to another and to the shifting meaning assumed in each specific context. In the words of the authors, itineraries 'describe pathways that do not lead directly to a given goal, but take an irregular and convoluted course with a multitude of meanderings' (ibid. 8). The value of this approach lies in the fact that it allows us to examine pithoi looted in Crete in the context of globalized art-market and trade of illicit antiquities (i.e. in a time where the market allowed for their itineraries) and within the particular social circumstances (i.e. shifts in social order) which initiated their travels and eventually gave to the pithoi a different, socially and politically context-related value.

6.2. Looting in Greece and beyond

To now, looted pottery has not been discussed from the theoretical viewpoints of the reclamation/itineraries or the agency of objects. However in general, the loot, the collection, the trade, the expatriation and repatriation of antiquities are fields which have been studied at length from various other viewpoints. These aspects range from the ethics of archaeological practice and ownership of cultural objects (e.g. Green 1984; Vitelli and Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2006; Hamilakis and Duke 2007) to the more specific field of the trade of illicit antiquities, colonial archaeology and cultural appropriation of the past (e.g. Tubb 1995; Messenger 1999; Renfrew 2000; Brodie et al. 2000; Brodie and Tubb 2002; Effros and Lai 2018).

Nowadays, research on trafficking networks of illicit antiquities has gained increasingly favourable academic grounds with peer reviewed journals dedicated to exposing the trade of archaeological artefacts (i.e. the *Journal of Art and Crime*, the *International Journal of Cultural Property*). Looting and matters of art-theft have also acquired institutionalized status in organizational forms of university projects, such as the 'Illicit Antiquities Research Centre' (IARC) of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research at the University of Cambridge[247] and the ongoing 'Trafficking Culture Project' based at the University of Glasgow[248]. Issues of looting and illicit appropriation of national treasures peaked in the academic and public discourse after the looting of the National Museum of Iraq in 2003 (Stone and Bajjaly 2008) and the plundering of archaeological sites by the Islamic State (ISIS) during the Syrian civil war of 2011. Symptomatic of such widespread attention is the publication on the reclamation of Iraq's plundered past (Bernhardsson 2010), the numerous international newspaper articles reporting on looting activities by ISIS, and the frequently updated internet blogs on the circulation and tracking of antiquities named '*Looting Matters'* and *'art-crime'*[249].

Beyond the strictly academic grounds, art trafficking has spread into more public spheres of debate. This is probably best exemplified in the long-held public, institutional and state-wide discussion for the expatriation and repatriation of the Parthenon (or the so-called 'Elgin') Marbles, an ongoing and heavily politicized issue[250]. Also suggestive of this interest is the prominent position the subject of looting and expatriation of antiquities has earned in the realm of investigative journalism. Most well-known examples is the Los Angeles Times best-seller entitled '*Chasing Aphrodite'* by the reporters Jason Felch and Ralph Frammolino (2011) and the 2010 best-seller '*Finders Keepers. A Tale of Archaeological Plunder and Obsession'* by Craig Childs (2010). Finally, the universal urgency to uncover and confront the complex issue of looting was widely acknowledged in 2015, when the 'space archaeologist' Sarah Parcak (2009) became the recipient of the $1000000 TED

[247] IARC (from 1996 to 2007); official webpage and literature at: http://www.etana.org/node/4744.
[248] Trafficking Culture Project: https://traffickingculture.org/.
[249] http://lootingmatters.blogspot.com and http://art-crime.blogspot.com, respectively.
[250] Literature on the history of the expatriation and reclamation of the Parthenon Marbles is vast, however the politicised aspect of the matter is best reflected in posts and publications of the so-called Bring Them Back! Movement (https://www.bringthemback.org/). See also Hamilakis 1999a, for the cultural biographies of the Parthenon Marbles and their entanglement in Greek and European politics.

prize, awarded for developing a citizen-science platform (called GlobalXplorer) which allows internet users to track and prevent the plundering of archaeological sites[251].

Regarding Greece in particular, the country is listed amongst the so-called source-countries and it has long suffered from the problem of looting (*archaiokapelia*), since the act of looting is as ancient as the first existence of portable – and often times non-portable – cultural treasures. In fact, particularly in times of warfare, sacking and theft can be the norm[252]. In the post-WW II period, looting of Greek antiquities begun to rise at an unforeseen pace due to the growth of international trade market and globalization. This global rise in the monetary value of cultural objects coincided with rising interest in the archaeology of Greece, inevitably leading to a clash of interests between archaeologists, art collectors and art traders. By the 1980s the problem of a*rchaiokapelia* had ascended to uncontrollable levels. As a response, in 1984, the Greek State established a special police department against the theft and trade of antiquities (*'Tmima Dioksis Archaiokapelias'*). Archaeologists, being the ones first called upon to rescue endangered sites, buttressed governmental initiatives against the illegal excavation and trade of cultural artefacts. The foundations for the investigation of lawlessly excavated Greek and more specifically Cretan objects were laid by Yannis Sakellarakis, an excavator who struggled first-hand with locals and middle men involved in the illegal trade of antiquities (Sakellarakis 1987b; 1998).

More than thirty years after Sakellarakis' first reports, the fight against the free-for-all looting and trafficking of antiquities continues. Today, the theft of antiquities and matters of cultural property have gained their own place in academia and numerous individual and collective publications are devoted to the trafficking and laundering of Greek antiquities (see for example Tsirogiannis 2013; 2015; 2016; Matthaiou and Chatzidimitriou 2012). Investigative journalism and Greek literature have also been concerned with the looting and the laundering of Greek antiquities and various stories revolving around *archaiokapelia* have become part of crime fiction novels, chronicles, TV series and documentaries. The most well-known examples include two publications by the crime novelist Yannis Maris, *'Ίλιγγος' ('Vertigo')*

[251] https://www.globalxplorer.org/
[252] For the history of looting and stolen art see Miles 2008, esp. 16- 43; Lindsay 2014, esp. 4-10.

(2013) and '*Το Χαμόγελο της Πυθίας' ('Pythia's Smile')* (1990), reports of the private investigator Giorgos Tsoukalis (2012) about his experiences in uncovering dealers involved in illicit trade of art, entitled *'Λαθρεμπόριο Ιστορίας' ('The Looting of History'*), and the 2006 documentary *'Το Κύκλωμα' ('the Network'*) directed by Andreas Apostolides. Apostolides is also the writer of the so-called 'Bible' for Greek archaeologists working on cases of illegal art trafficking, entitled '*Looting and Art Dealing: Museums, Art Dealers, Auction Houses, Private Collections*' ('*Αρχαιοκαπηλία και Εμπόριο Αρχαιοτήτων: Μουσεία, Έμποροι Τέχνης, Οίκοι Δημοπρασιών, Ιδιωτικές Συλλογές'*) (Apostolides 2006).

Despite the popular and academic attention on matters of looting in Greece, the looting, expatriation and laundering of Cretan artefacts from the historical period have received very little attention (except from Sporn 2012). In an attempt to bridge this gap, the following sections seek to untangle the knotty fabric of looting, art-trade and laundering of Cretan Archaic pithoi and to unravel the role of the individuals and institutions involved. By charting stories of looting which started in Crete of the 1960s and spread inexorably across Greece, Europe and beyond, I aim to highlight the different agencies of the pithoi as they came to be simultaneously but differently appreciated by looters, art-historians, Greek and foreign archaeologists, museums and collectors.

6.3. A prelude to the 1960s: the first 'migration wave' of Cretan Archaic pithoi (1900s - 1950s).

Archaeological interest in Archaic pithoi dates back to the first steps of Greek archaeology. Some impressively decorated pieces of pithoi attracted the attention of the first foreign excavation missions which arrived in Crete at the end of the 19th – turn of the 20th century. This attention was further intensified by the decorated fragments which came to light in other areas of the Greek world such as Rhodes and Boeotia (Salzmann 1861; 1897 and de Ridder 1898, respectively). Cretan relief pithoi of the Archaic period received small, albeit considerable attention by early archaeologists such as Fabricius (1886), Mariani (1896) and Savignoni (1901). And so, just as Minoan pithoi became some of the earliest objects to adorn the first Archaeological Museum of Heraklion and the personal collection of Minos Kalokairinos, the strong aesthetic appeal and the gradually recognized archaeological and historical value of Archaic pithoi brought a number of fragments to two

collections formed in the first half of the 20th century: the first private collection of a Cretan, Stylianos Giamalakes, and the collection of the Ashmolean Museum of Oxford, largely based on gifts by Arthur Evans.

The legal context in which the two collections developed is peculiar. Until 1913, Crete was not a part of the Greek State and the antiquities of the island were not protected by the initial Greek archaeological laws which were formed during the first years of the country's independence under the reign of King Otto. In Greece, the first law in action (10/22.5.1834) was drafted in 1834, one year after the establishment of the Greek Archaeological Service. The law declared that all antiquities within Greece, as cultural products of their forefathers, are the national ownership of all citizens of the State, thereby acknowledging a status of shared ownership between state and those who spotted and collected antiquities. It further permitted a) private excavations on the provision that authorities were informed in advance and b) the free sale of antiquities albeit only within the Greek territory (Petrakos 1982, 132-135). The law of 1834 was substituted by the second antiquities law of 1899 and the act of ΒΧΜΣΤ' (2646, 24/7/1899). The new law (which remained in force until 1932) annulled the shared ownership between state and citizens and, for the first time, privately initiated excavations and the illegal trafficking of antiquities were prohibited and declared a criminal offence. This act however permitted the exportation of antiquities on particular grounds, namely through acts aiming at promoting scholarly knowledge and communication between cultural institutions. It also included consideration for the expatriation of ancient objects after a ministerial order, provided these were considered as *'abundant'* or '*superfluous*', in which case they could be exchanged with other objects coming from foreign museums and institutions. Additionally, it anticipated the reward and compensation to owners and finders of antiquities (ibid. 141).

Cretan autonomy (1898-1913) resulted in a somewhat particular and parallel legal *status quo*. As described in the previous Chapter, the literary and scientific group of the '*Association of Friends of Education'* or '*Syllogos'* of Heraklion, which was established in 1875, acted as the first institutional body in charge of the preservation and safeguarding of antiquities. From its foundation, the *Syllogos* was constantly alert against any antiquities being transported to Constantinople and it

adopted the Greek law which stated that all ancient objects belonged, in this case, to the Cretan State[253]. When Crete was proclaimed as autonomous in 1898, the protection and exportation of antiquities and regulations on excavations acquired a strict legal character with the law of 1899 (N. 24/1899). An additional law, published in June 1903 (Law 481), granted the right to foreign archaeologists to export certain archaeological objects back to their home institutions, namely local museum universities, on the provision that these were identified as '*useless*' (άχρηστα), '*doubles*' or '*duplicates*' (Panagiotaki 2004, esp. 565- 566; fn. 2)[254]. Under such legal idiosyncrasies, the first pieces of Archaic pithoi left the island with the British archaeologist Arthur Evans. Some others were given shelter in Crete, in the private collection of the Cretan Stylianos Giamalakes.

6.3.1. Arthur Evans and pithoi in the Ashmolean

The particularity in the legal system of the Cretan State together with the newly formed foreign missions which begun to pour into the island eager to initiate archaeological excavations, allowed for much leeway and a loose interpretation of the original archaeological legislation[255]. This was an opportunity that Evans would not miss. The British archaeologist started the first systematic excavations at Knossos in 1900 but prior to his most famous endeavour he had visited Crete twice: firstly in 1894 and one year later in 1895, when he conducted his archaeological

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[253] Iossif Chatzidakis (1931, 12) wrote on the role of the *Syllogos* in fighting against the exportation of antiquities: '*Αν δεν υπήρχεν ο Σύλλογος, σπουδαιόταται αρχαιολογικαί ανακαλύψεις ή δε θα εγίνοντο διόλου, ή τα αρχαιολογικά ευρήματα θα διεσκορπίζοντο εις τους τέσσαρας ανέμους. Έκαστον μουσείον της Ευρώπης και Αμερικής θα απέκτα τεμάχιά τινα, άτινα μεμονωμένα θα έχαναν το πλείστον της αξίας των ή το χειρότερον θα εθάπτοντο εις ιδιωτικάς συλλογάς των απανταχού αρχαιόφιλων …*' (*'Were it not for the Association, many important archaeological explorations would either not have been conducted or the findings would be lost in the wind. Every museum of Europe and the United States would purchase objects, some of which would lose most of their value, or even worse, they would be buried in private collections of various antiquarians').*

[254] As published in the Newspaper of the Cretan State, in June 28, 1903: *ἐπιτρέπεται ἡ ἐκ τῆς Νήσου ἐξαγωγὴ μόνον ἐὰν στερῶνται ταῦτα πάσης ἐπιστημονικῆς ἀξίας ἤ χρησιμότητος διά τα Κρητικά Μουσεῖα'*.

[255] An account of the strong limitations of Cretan laws against expatriation of antiquities, which however were somehow surpassed, is narrated in an article by the New York Times in September 25, 1904. The article was a tribute to Harriet Boyd's discoveries at Gournia which begun in 1901, under the auspices of the University of Pennsylvania. Under the subtitle 'Little Brought Away' the journalist noted: *'The reason why the university is not to have a more complete collection is that the Cretan government does not allow the best things to leave the island. In fact, Miss Boyd had enjoyed a triumph in bringing away any of her trophies at all. Those which she has brought to the University of Pennsylvania are the first antiquities that have ever left Crete for any foreign country with permission from the Cretan Government. The explorers at Knossos and Phaestos have been unable to break down this rigid rule*'.

reconnaissance. During his second visit, Evans was accompanied by John Myres, Professor of Archaeology at the University of Oxford, and together they journeyed across Lasithi and other areas of the island (Watrous and Blitzer 1982, 3)[256]. Evans' exploratory travels and later diggings at Knossos overlapped with the changes in the archaeological laws as described above. But he had openly expressed his defiance against the local antiquities law[257], and with the personal assurance of the secretary of the S*yllogos*, Stephanos Xanthoudides, that un-wanted items could be transferred, he managed to purchase, collect and send several objects to the Ashmolean Museum (MacGillivray 2000, 165), to which he had been appointed a keeper since 1884 (a title which he kept as an honorary position until his death in 1941). Other objects were given to the University of Oxford by his bequest after his death (Boardman 1961, v, 1).

A minimum of 19 fragments of pithoi dated between the late 8th to the 7th c. BC were among the first pieces to be exported to the Ashmolean between the years 1896 and 1908. Whilst it is not possible to verify whether Evans or Myers transferred the particular pieces on the pretext that these were *'duplicates'* or '*useless'* [as attested for the objects brought from Knossos (Panagiotaki 2006)], it seems probable that Evans was familiar with the legal loopholes of the antiquities law when he started his first exploratory travels. In fact, in his visit to the Lasithi area, he ignored the law altogether by joining the local looters who had dug at the Cave of Psychro the year before and together they conducted an unsystematic excavation (McGillivray 2000, 139). From his diggings at Psychro, five pithos fragments made it to the Ashmolean, one of which (n. AE. 273) is reported as given jointly by Evans and Myres, his co-traveller (Boardman 1961, 56- 63). After unearthing numerous other objects from the cave, the two Britons continued their explorations in the Lasithi area and elsewhere on Crete, picking up sherds of pottery that were later transferred to Oxford. The pottery finds included at least 11 Archaic pithos fragments which derived from Aghios Georgios Papoura, from (or near) Lyktos, from Kastri in Siteia, and from Lato. Five other pieces are of unknown provenance and were generally identified as deriving

[256] On John Myres' visits to Crete, see Brown 1886, 37, ft. 2.
[257] Evans (1892-1893, 195) explicitly stated that *'The laws by which not even a coin, or a jewel or a vase is allowed to find its way beyond a certain privileged zone, while frivolous in themselves and powerless to secure the object that they have in view, inflict a permanent injury on science'.*

'from Crete(?)'[258]. Lastly, three fragments from Hyrtakina in western Crete were given to the Ashmolean by Myres (ibid. 118, n. 519, 520, 521).

Amongst other pieces, this batch of 19 fragments of pithoi left Cretan soil and ended up in the British Museum, thus constituting part of the first 'migration wave' of Archaic pithos fragments in particular and of Cretan Archaic pottery in general[259].

6.3.2. The collection of Stylianos Giamalakes

Soon after the first discoveries at Crete, Minoan civilization made its presence rapidly felt throughout the academic and the local communities. This had an immediate impact which was not solely restricted to the appreciation of Minoan artefacts, but drifted towards objects from other periods too. During the 1920s and 1930s the new findings and the international attention they received encouraged the first wave of looters. Their activities were reported in the local and Athenian press and spawned the apprehension of the archaeological authorities, who decried the outflow of Greek antiquities in museums abroad (Vlachopoulos 2014, 341-344). This resulted in changes of the initial archaeological of law 1899 and in its amendment in 1932 (5351/1932). The new law was focused on forming a more rigid legal context for private collections and on rectifying foreign museums' loose interpretation as to what objects account as '*redundant', 'abundant'* or '*superfluous'*[260]. It further provisioned for the compensation to antiquities' finders and owners but only in cases in which objects had been first officially declared and registered by art dealers and private collectors, who were now obliged to keep detailed records of their

[258] Boardman 1961, 118, n. 513, 514, 517, 518, 522

[259] At least three more fragments of Cretan relief pithoi reached British grounds and the storerooms of the British Museum in London (see Appendix II). The pieces were found at the basement of the Museum and published by Alan Johnston but no references regarding their acquisition, date or exact origin are available. As stated in the introduction of the publication: 'Nothing is known of their origin; only the age of the glue that once held together the fragments of the major piece could have given a *terminus ante quem* for their excavation, and that would seem to be of intermediate age' (Johnston 1984, 39).

[260] On the history of archaeological laws in Greece and on the loose interpretation of the term 'abundant' archaeological objects, see Galanakis 2012a; 2012b, 2012c. For a review of the Greek legislation in relation to the international movement of antiquities, see Voudouri 2008; Merkouri 2012.

acquisitions[261]. The legal provision for the official registration of private collections, as well as the declaration of found antiquities and subsequent compensation to finders, led to a boost in private archaeological collections. This included the formation of the archaeological collection of Stylianos Giamalakes, who could now legally purchase objects otherwise unearthed in uninhibited ways, and whose assemblage included some very elaborate Archaic pithos fragments.

Giamalakes (1899-1962) was part of a tradition of Cretan medical doctors engaged with the collection and preservation of local antiquities, such as Ioannis Sphakianakis and Aristides Zaphirides, both founding members of the *Syllogos,* and Iossif Chatzidakis, who was appointed as the president of the *Syllogos* in 1883 (Detorakis 2003). Similarly to his compatriots, colleague doctors and antiquarians, Giamalakes was a doctor, a polymath and a collector of antiquities born in Heraklion into a highly-regarded family. He was a member of the Local Council (1951-1959) and a Member of Parliament for the Venizelos Party (1958-1960). His father, Charalambos Giamalakes, who was also a doctor, participated in the great revolt of 1878 and became member of the General Assembly of the Cretan State. Alongside his medical and military service, Stylianos' father was actively engaged in promoting the culture of the island and a significant benefactor for the less fortunate Cretans. He served as a president of the Eastern division of the *Syllogos* in Ierapetra (where the family originated from) and he was an honorary member of the *Syllogos* in Heraklion. During his service in Heraklion, Ch. Giamalakes developed close friendship with the *Syllogos'* president Iossif Chatzidakis (Detorakis 1996).

Stylianos Giamalakes experienced both the unification of Crete with Greece in 1913 and the population exchange between Greece and Turkey in 1923 after the Convention of Lausanne[262]. There is no evidence on whether his experiences of these historical watersheds or if his father's previous involvement with the *Syllogos* motivated his engagement with antiquities; however, publications on his collection

[261] The 1932 law was later amended twice: once in 1950 (1469/1950) and half a century later in 2002 (3028/2002) to include regulations as to the chronological classification of 'cultural property' (namely to include Byzantine artefacts and architectural remains), issues of systematic and rescue excavations and to incorporate regulations of international and European legislation. For a detailed account of current Greek legislation on private collections and other issues of cultural property, see the official webpage of the Greek Ministry of Culture: http://www.yppo.gr/5/g52.jsp.

[262] The history of the family and the political affairs in which Giamalakes was involved, are documented in the local newspaper of Heraklion '*Patris',* issue 24/08/2009: *'Έρευνες: Σπάνια ντοκουμέντα για την επανάσταση του 1878',* and issue 25/08/2009*: 'Έρευνες: Οι επιστολές των Τουρκοκρητικών συμμαθητών από τον Κοραή προς τον Στυλιανό Γιαμαλάκη'.*

and his family testify that he became one of the most influential personalities of the city of Heraklion, who, in parallel to his medical practising and political activities, built the first local archaeological collection (Xenaki 1947a). Giamalakes collected bronzes, gold objects, seals, weaponry and tools, coins, ivory figurines and pottery, including nine fragments of decorated pithoi in relief. His collection contained 4237 objects from Crete and other parts of Greece, such as Boeotia, and from the Near East (e.g. Mesopotamia and the Sassanid Dynasty of Iran). The objects date from prehistoric to the early modern times and they have been published, for the most part, in various places[263]. One year after Giamalakes' death, in 1963, his collection was purchased by the Greek State and subsequently bestowed to the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, where it is on display today (Alexiou 1963, 383).

Giamalakes built his collection by purchasing antiquities from finders who approached him themselves or by conducting personal antiquities-hunts in the various villages of Crete where he met with the locals and sought for items of interest (Xenaki 1949, 61). In all likelihood, the locals or the looters considered the well-respected doctor a trustworthy buyer: their anonymity was preserved and no questions were asked by the authorities. Thus, the collector, who made use of the archaeological law and his right to privately own artefacts, often acted as a mediator between the archaeological service and the locals. This relationship is suggested by the close collaborative ties Giamalakes maintained with the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion and its director, Spyridon Marinatos (1925-1937), as well as his successor, Nikolas Platon (1938-1962)[264]. Moreover, the collector and the directors of the Museum often exchanged information regarding illegal diggings and the ways in which some pieces reached the hands of the former (Sakellarakis 2005, 123).

Giamalakes managed to enrich his collection with nine pieces of relief pithoi, the study of which was entrusted to Thomas Dunbabin (1952a), the philhellene Australian archaeologist. A few years earlier, during WW II, Dunbabin had served on the island as an officer with the British Special Operations Executive and he had

[263] Publications of Giamalakes collection can be found in the following publications: Xenaki 1947b (Minoan tablets); Xenaki 1949; Xenaki-Sakellariou 1958 (Minoan seals); Xenaki 1950 (weaponry and tools); Alexiou 1950 (pottery); Branigan 1972 (Minoan figurines); Koutsoumpou 2012 (one inscribed loomweight). On the annual enrichment of the collection in the early 1950s, see Alexiou 1950; Platon 1951.

[264] We know, for example, that in 1938 Giamalakes assisted in rectifying the reputation of Marinatos after the so-called great theft of the Archaeological Museum (Marinatos 2014).

already established strong friendly relationships with the islanders and his colleagues[265]. The nine pithos fragments of the Giamalakes collection are of tentative provenance and Dunbabin could only make assumptions based on existing parallels. The only exception is a piece with decoration of pair of antithetic sphinxes and bands of spirals (inv. n. 68) that was identified as deriving from Kastamonitsa, near Lyktos. This information was provided by the local Manolis Akoumianakis, Evans' faithful assistant and guard at Knossos (MacGillivray 2000, 179,181) and by John Manuel Cook, who was at the time Director of the British School at Athens (Dunbabin 1952a, 153, fn. 2)[266].

Notwithstanding their uncertified provenance, the fragments drew scholarly attention, as representatives of *'the most characteristic products of Hellenic Crete'* (Dunbabin 1952a, 153) which offered a clearer understanding of a blurry Cretan Archaic period. Interestingly, Dunbabin compared the pithoi to other kinds of the Cretan plastic art, noting that: '*Some of the seventh-century examples are among the finest and most ambitious vases of their kind, and well deserve the place they have won, in the works of Jenkins and Mrs. Dohan*[267]*, alongside not only modelled or moulded terracottas but also works in finer materials in the history of Archaic Cretan sculpture'* (ibid. 156).

Dunbabin's statement is an early indication of a conceptual connection of Cretan Archaic pithoi with Daedalus, which pervades the treatment of the material looted in the 1960s. The so-called *'Daedalic art'*, a term first coined by Romilly Jenkins (1936) to describe the transitional artistic phase between the Geometric and the Archaic period, gradually came to represent the missing Cretan version of Greek Archaic art. Consequently, the mythological Daedalus came to personify Cretan craftsmanship and artistry of the Archaic period. Overall, the idea of a Cretan 'Daedalic art' of the 7th century was later severely challenged by archaeologists (particularly after the 1950s), including John Boardman (1961) who noted that the

[265] For a biography of Dunbabin, his philhellenism and his close friendship with the Cretans see Dunbabin 2015; Kotsonas 2020.

[266] One more large pithos fragment from Prinias was reported as part of the annual acquisitions of the collection in 1950. Other than a brief description of the decoration (opposed sphinxes and impressed spirals) no inventory number is provided (Alexiou 1950, 535).

[267] Dunbabin here referred to the two earliest publications on the *'Daedalic Art'* and terracotta (a class of objects closely related to Archaic pithoi in relief) by Dohan (1931) and Jenkins (1936). Similar to many pithos fragments, Cretan terracottas found their way into a private collection in New York, becoming victims of the upheavals of 1896 and the subsequent looting of the village of Vaveloi in Praisos (Dohan 1931, 209).

term is charged with a unsubstantiated bias of a 'pan-cretism'[268]. Nonetheless, Cretan pithoi in relief continued to maintain their connection with Daedalus long after the 1950s. This applied to the pithoi which came from the brutal looting at Aphrati during the autumn of 1964. This looting exposed an astonishing amount of well preserved Archaic relief pithoi, enough to secure the interest of art-historians in this special artistic tradition of Daedalus. Parallel to their treatment by academics and their connection with the master craftsman, these pithoi became part of a newly established system of trafficking and laundering of antiquities which eventually enabled their trans-European and trans-Atlantic itineraries.

6.4. The plundering of Aphrati

The looting of Crete in the first half of the 20th century and the subsequent dispersal of antiquities abroad was as nothing compared to what followed in the second half of the century. During the 1960s and 1970s the island became an *Eldorado* for those in search of antiquities and a rich source for collectors and museums. With the blessings of the Archaeological Law that encouraged private collecting, *archaiokapelia* turned into a scourge which, in spite of the efforts of archaeologists and other authorities, continues to afflict Crete to this day. In the mid 1960s one of the most severe such cases of looting took place at the hill of Aphrati, the modern name of the small village of central Crete, close to the plain of Emparos in Pediada (fig. 125).

The ancient site of Aphrati lies on the 689m+ high hilltop of Aghios Elias, the acropolis of the modern village. It was first discovered in 1893-1894 by Frederico Halbherr (1901b), who uncovered part of a Subminoan-Protogeometric cemetery at the western side of the hill and mentioned a few pithos sherds and terracottas as part of promising surface finds[269]. Thirty years later, in 1924, Doro Levi conducted the first systematic excavations at the upper western part of the slope and he uncovered a larger cemetery of the Protogeometric-Orientalising period and part of an EIA settlement on the eastern slope of the hill, which he identified with ancient Arkades

[268] On the history of the term 'Daedalic', see Aurigny 2012, esp. 28-31. For pan-cretism see Kotsonas 2008, 40; 2017, 15-17.

[269] Halbherr made a brief reference to the pithos fragments from Aghios Elias, in his forward to Savignoni's then forthcoming publication (Savignoni 1901) regarding 27 pithos fragments recovered by himself: '*Amongst the unpainted objects we find several very remarkable pieces of Archaic pithoi, with figures in relief…'* (Halbherr 1901b, 395).

mentioned in the ancient texts of Polybius, Seneca and Pliny (Levi 1927-1929)[270]. The great number of decorated pithoi resulted in one of the earliest papers dedicated to the Cretan relief pithoi (Levi 1927). For decades after the Italian excavations, archaeological research at Aphrati was confined to some sporadic maintenance missions by the Greek archaeological service. But in the 1960s, Aphrati and its pithoi became again the centre of attention. In October 1964, looters pillaged and destroyed a significant part of the ancient settlement, close to where Levi had excavated. Clandestine diggings, accounts of which were briefly reported in the *Archaiologikon Deltion* (Lebessi 1969a, 415; 1970, 455), produced several finds including inscribed bronzes, terracottas and relief pithoi. Almost immediately after their violent reclamation by the looters, the pieces entered the local and international art market.

Initially, it was the group of relief bronzes of armour and weaponry from Aphrati, known as *'the find of the Cretan armor'*, which attracted global interest. Within months after their extraction from the Cretan soil, the bronzes ended up in the hands of Norbert Schimmel, a famous collector in New York, discussed in detail further below (fig. 126). Some of these bronzes were included in the catalogue of an exhibition from the Schimmel collection (Mitten and Doeringer 1967), and so the looters of Aphrati recognized them as items they had themselves unearthed. This prompted the alarmed Greek archaeological services to initiate rescue excavations under the direction of Angeliki Lebessi (1969a, 1970; 1971b) on the southeast slope of Aghios Elias, at the spot where the looters had intervened. Lebessi uncovered an EIA-Archaic complex set of buildings and part of the putative *andreion* of Aphrati, as well as some remaining pithoi and pithos fragments. However, important contextual evidence is forever lost and to this day it has not been possible to reach a clear understanding of the site[271]. After the joint actions of Lebessi, the Ephor of Antiquities Stylianos Alexiou, and the local police department, a breastplate and an inscribed mitra from Aphrati were rescued and they were brought to the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion (Alexiou 1965, 554, pl. 697a-b). Despite the painstaking efforts of Greek archaeologists and because of their inadequate resources

[270] Polybius 4.53, 6; Seneca, *Quaestiones Naturales* 3.11.54; Pliny, *Nat*. 31.53. The identification of the site with ancient Arkades remains tentative (Palermo 1994). The alternative toponym 'Datalla' has been proposed by Viviers (1994).

[271] For a succinct summary of the site, excavations and finds, see Prent 2005, 278-280. For a summary of the ancient town of Arkades and some brief notes on the plundering of the site, see also Vasilakis 1984.

to compete with the local looters, numerous Cretan pithoi and other objects were irreversibly removed out of context.

Changes in the global and the Greek *Zeitgeist* of the 1960s and the collectors' renewed general interest in Greek art, coalesced in (and probably encouraged) the sacking of Aphrati, thereby creating a profitable but mostly illegal art-market. This spawned an extremely convoluted network across the globe run by various agents through whom the pieces could be transferred, laundered and purchased by collectors and museums across the world. Right after the looting at Aphrati, at least 124 complete or fragmentary pithoi started their itineraries to museums and private collections; of these, 51 pieces ended up in Greek collections and 73 entered the international art market[272]. Some of these pieces were reclaimed by the Greek police, en route to be illegally channelled to the art market; others made it to museums and private collections within Greece; and others travelled even longer distances before reaching the private and museum collections of Europe, Israel, the United States and Japan.

6.5. Domestic itineraries and reclamation by looters and collectors

Within Greece, the looting of Aphrati and the subsequent wide dispersal of its pithoi coincided with certain political and economic conditions. The archaeological law still in action was that of 1932 (5351/1932) which, in anticipation of the continuously rising problem of looting, declared all antiquities and archaeological heritage as an absolute state property but allowed the formation of private collections on the condition that items were regularly recorded and registered. In the second half of the 20st c., this law enabled private collections to expand, since the availability of and accessibility to looted items became wider.

These developments were shaped by the socio-economic and political conditions in Greece of the time. The 1960s signified Greece's entry into a period of substantial change in the political scenery and in the urban landscape. Post-war Greece experienced the rapid growth of public and private constructions and so rescue excavations intensified as archaeological finds kept surfacing (Mouliou 2008; Sakellariadi 2008, esp. 138). As the need to store artefacts grew ever more desperate,

[272] More pieces, probably from Lyktos and Phaistos were also looted and exported; therefore, the number of looted fragments of Archaic Cretan pithoi rises to a total of at least 145 (Appendix II).

many newly established private museums and private collections turned into galleries of antiquities by state permission. In combination with the ever-present drive of individuals to collect art (discussed below), the decades of 1960s-1970s were characterized by the prevalence of a strong nationalistic sentiment which reached its most authoritative expression in the Greek Military Junta between 1967 to 1974. The political role of museums and archaeology became emphasised inasmuch as Hellenism and the ancientness of the Greek *ethnos* were being promoted (Nikolaidou and Kokkinidou 2004; Sakellariadi 2008, 138; Kotsonas 2016b, esp. 253-256).

Likewise, Greece's archaeological heritage became emphasized in the promotion of the tourist industry which experienced its golden age in the 1960s and 1970s (Mouliou 2008, esp. 85; Alifragkis and Athanassiou 2013). Antiquities became the country's most valuable assets and international museum loans were encouraged in the context of the general tourist development scheme and political agendas. Especially in the years between 1952-1964, Greek tourism turned into an experimental project towards the development and modernisation of the country, as the Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO or EOT in Greek) 'planned and executed the most comprehensive and ambitious leisure-infrastructure programme ever to take place in Greece' (Alifragkis and Athanassiou 2013, 708). This programme was a conscious political choice aimed at constructing the image of Greece as a modern, West-oriented and progressive country mixed with local cultures, and it included the construction of *Xenia* (a state-run chain of hotels, motels, organized beaches and holiday camps), and the advertisement of Greek tourism though a series of posters and postcards which frequently featured Greek and Cretan antiquities in a modernized context[273].

One such promotional postcard, which is the cover of my thesis and to which I return in the concluding chapter of this study, was issued by the GNTO in 1964 – the same year the Archaic pithoi were looted from Aphrati (fig. 127): in the photograph taken at the palace of Malia, a Minoan pithos figures in foreground while at the background a couple poses close to another large pithos. The caption of the postcard invites travellers to '*Visit Crete. Her Minoan past is your memorable future'*. This photograph and its title exemplify the unique way in which past, present and future

[273] For the development of Post-war tourism and the Xenia Project towards the modernization of Greece, see Alifragkis and Athanassiou 2013; Moussa 2017.

intertwine through ancient Cretan pithoi, particularly with regards to national narratives: in constructing the image of Greece as a modern yet ancient nation mixed with deeply rooted local cultures, the imaging of the pithos emphasizes an unbreakable bond with the past, symbolizing Cretanness and embodying the quintessence of indigeneity. Such recognisability was fundamental to the usability of these Minoan pithoi from Malia for commercial and touristic purposes, as it was for itineraries of the looted Archaic pithoi from Aphrati discussed here.

Whereas the Greek and Cretan past became part of a modern national narrative, the illegal outflow of antiquities became uncontrollable. In response to this problem, the Greek government encouraged Greek private collectors to purchase antiquities so as to prevent their exportation abroad. This policy, which was extensively practised in the case of the Cycladic figurines (Gill and Chippindale 1993, 606), had the reverse results, for it ultimately lead to more clandestine excavations by those who quickly became aware of the new and lucrative market which opened up. In addition to changes in the political, the urban and the tourist scenes, Greek collectors witnessed the massive outflow of antiquities abroad as pieces of their cultural identity at stake. As stated in interviews in the Greek press of the time (parts of which I provide below), Greek collectors took themselves as the protectors of Greek antiquities on behalf of the State. Through various episodes of what Dimitris Plantzos (2014) has called a 'self-colonization exercise' of Greece's historical past, Greek antiquities and their custodians were 'elevated to the status of national heroes' (ibid. 162). Cretan pithoi in relief, which were now available in the market, became a class of objects 'at stake', and they were purchased by Cretan and Athenian collectors.

6.5.1 Cretan private collections

The main purchasers of Archaic pithoi were two Cretan private collectors, Nikolaos Metaxas and Kostantinos Mitsotakis, and two couples of Athenian collectors, Peggy and Theodoros Zoumboulakis, and Pavlos and Alexandra Kanellopoulos.

Collection of Nikolaos Metaxas

Alongside Schimmel, N. Metaxas was the first to obtain pieces of pithoi and bronzes from Aphrati. Metaxas (1915-2009) was a Cretan businessman, active in the

two most rising fields of entrepreneurship during the 1950s-1970s: construction materials and tourism. He had studied civil engineering at the University of Athens and worked as a contractor in the city of Heraklion. In the 1950s, he took over his father-in-law's industry of building materials, becoming later the president of the upcoming brick-manufacturing company called AKEK. From the 1970s onward he became an entrepreneur in the touristic industry of Crete, ultimately building one of the most profitable touristic companies (*Maris Hotel Chain*) with numerous hotels spread across the island.

Metaxas was a fervent collector from a young age, a passion he initially expressed in the form of philately. In time, he developed a strong interest for Cretan antiquities and with the help of his wife, Theano Metaxa, he started to build his personal collection of antiquities. The collection acquired an official institutional status by state permission in 1959 (Platon and Davaras 1960, 505) and it was housed in the Metaxas family mansion which also included a special working place in the basement, reserved for the conservation and restoration of antiquities. In 1997, the collection was donated to the Greek state, ultimately consisting of 2229 objects. Today, the collection is split between the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion and the Malevizi Archaeological Collection in Gazi, Heraklion. With some exceptions concerning Minoan artefacts (Sakellarakis-Kenna 1969; Pilali-Papasteriou 1992) the complete collection is published only partly and preliminarily.

Metaxas had a particular interest in Minoan seals, but ancient Cretan pithoi – several modern versions of which now guard the entrance of the main and largest family's hotel – entered the collection as well. In the same year of the plundering at Aphrati, the first pithos was added to the Metaxas collection. It was a 7th c. BC jar with relief decoration of sphinxes on the neck and a rearing winged horse over a man in supine position, taken to depict the myth of Bellerophon, which is today on display at the Archaeological Museum in Heraklion (fig 62a). Its purchase was reported in the annual updates of the collection in the *Archaiologikon Deltion* (Alexiou 1964, 437). The following year, in 1965, the next complete 7th c. small pithos and a fragment of another one from Aphrati entered the collection. They were described in the *Archaiologikon Deltion* as acquisitions of 'exceptional importance and splendid decoration' (Alexiou 1965, 550-551, pl. 694b, 694c; 1966). The second complete pithos, today on display at the Malevizi Archaeological Collection, held a prominent place in the Metaxas collection, adorning the living room of the family mansion (fig.

128). Eventually, Metaxas acquired at least 11 pieces: three complete pithoi and eight fragments with relief decoration (Appendix II, n. 130-140). The complete pithoi, which were too bulky, reached the third floor of the family house via a crane that was specially brought in Heraklion for the occasion (*pers. comm. Theano Metaxa*)[274].

The collector's adventures in tracking Cretan antiquities and his motives for purchasing them have been chronicled in an interview given by his wife, Theano Metaxa, to a local electronic newspaper in April, 2014[275]. This and other information, which I provide translated in English below, has been confirmed in an interview Ms. Metaxa generously granted me in July 2016.

The ways in which pithoi and other looted objects reached the hands of the collector had not significantly changed since the days of doctor Giamalakes. Metaxas had very close relationships with locals, looters and museum directors, particularly with Nikolaos Platon. The very idea for the establishment of a local private collection, as Ms. Metaxa said, was encouraged by the then director of the museum, Nikolas Platon. The main purpose was to safely keep Cretan antiquities on 'mother grounds' and to prevent their exportation abroad:

'In his opinion [N. Platon], *there was a need for a local archaeological collection in Heraklion, in order to prevent the flight of antiquities abroad by the looters. Back then, in Crete, there was no other similar initiative, since the Giamalakes Collection had already been sold to the Museum'.*

The couple gradually developed a love for the objects and a devout relationship with Cretan antiquities, all the while treasuring them against the danger of exportation:

'The collection was a life-time commitment for us. We have the satisfaction that we accomplished an important achievement by preserving these rare objects of our ancient civilization and ensuring their staying in Greece'.

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[274] Metaxas also acquired a 7th c. BC potter's wheel from Aphrati published by Hampe (1967-1968, see relevant discussion in Chapter 2). Hampe wrote on the pithoi in Metaxas collection: *"This owner of a large brick factory is not only concerned with the history of his own craft, the products made of fired clay; in addition, he has amassed a valuable collection of Cretan antiquities in his house. A number of large pithoi decorated with relief are particularly impressive. The largest of them was so big that, as the owner told me, he could not get into the house through the normal doors, but only through the double-leaf door of the balcony"* (Hampe 1967-1968, 178; translated by the author).

[275] Electronic Cretan newspaper ekriti.gr: http://www.ekriti.gr/article/445/syllogi-metaxa-ena-kynigi-thisayroy-poy-kratise-miso-aiona#sthash.xoLIzskJ.dpbs

In the same interview on the local press, Theano Metaxa gave an account of how the network between the looters and collectors operated. Just as in the case of Giamalakes, Metaxas would either embark on antiquities-hunts in the villages of Crete at night, including visits to Aphrati, or he would be the confidential receiver of objects found at Aphrati and elsewhere. Locals considered the well-respected eupatrid a trustworthy buyer, who would generously compensate them for the valuables they had at hand, and who would preserve their anonymity:

'Many villagers would come to us to bring something they found in their fields [...] Sometimes, Nikos would buy objects by going to the villages but only at night. During the day people did not want to hand over an object they found, out of fear that some eyes will see them and betray them. In reality, they were hesitant to deliver it to the Authorities because they were subjected to exhaustive questioning about how and when they acquired it. It was not just because of the legal strictness of the Museum, but also, the petty and unsatisfying reward they received. And so they approached the collector with trust, not merely because of the greater financial interest involved, but also because they knew that the collector had the right by law to maintain the anonymity of the man who found and delivered the antiquities'[276].

The activities of the Metaxas couple officially ceased after the donation of the collection to the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion in 1997.

Collection of Konstantinos Mitsotakis

Pithoi from Aphrati continued to travel westward and became part of the collection of Konstantinos Mitsotakis (1918-2017), the latest – known – private collector on the grand-scale in Crete. Born in 1918 in Chania, Mitsotakis was Prime Minister of Greece in 1990-1993 and the father of the current Prime Minister of Greece, Kyriakos Mitsotakis. He was the honorary president of the New Democracy Party and member of a highly influential political family, the roots of which date back to mid 19th century Crete. His archaeological collection was first assembled in 1978 and it includes 1062 Cretan artefacts dating from the Early Minoan until the Roman

[276] This peculiar and confidential mediatory role of the collector is most fully revealed in the narration of Theano Metaxa, who recounted the story behind the acquisition of a Hellenistic golden necklace: '*it was found by some who had agreed to sell it and share the money. [...]The Museum and the police begun searching around the villages to find the rare jewellery. People who had it in their homes were concerned. One morning, one of these men came to our home. The whole city of Heraklion was alarmed. [...] After we paid him, my husband called Mr. Alexiou* [the then director of the Archaeological Museum] *and said: Search no more. The necklace is in our hands'.*

period. Two complete pithoi and a fragment of one, all from Aphrati, comprise part of this collection (Appendix II, n. 141-143) (fig. 129).

After a series of allegations against illegally acquired holdings which attracted significant public attention in the 1990s, the collection of Mitsotakis was donated to the Archaeological Museum of Chania in 2000. Prior to this donation, part of the collection (408 objects) was exhibited in 1992 at the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens with the title *'Minoan and Greek Civilization from the Mitsotakis Collection*' *('Μινωικός και ελληνικός πολιτισμός από τη Συλλογή Μητσοτάκη')*. The catalogue of the exhibition, compiled by Lila Marangou (1992), had a forward written by the collector himself, as well as by Dolly Goulandris, a major Greek private collector and founder of the homonymous foundation at Athens and the Museum of Cycladic Art, which also houses one pithos fragment of Aphrati to be mentioned below[277].

As observed, Archaic pithoi of Aphrati also became part of this private collection. Officially, the three items, dated to the second half of the 7th c. BC, entered the Mitsotakis collection in 1979. They were published two years later, with the family's permission, by Metaxia Tsipopoulou (1981) under the title '*Δαιδαλικά της*

[277] Many objects of the collection exhibited at the Museum of Cycladic Art are thought to derive from the extensive and most brutal looting that took place in 1979-1980 at the prehistoric cemetery of Moni Odigitria, close to the homonymous modern Monastery. Widely spread rumours amongst archaeologists that a wave of Early Minoan finds from south-central Crete had suspiciously entered the newly established collection of Mitsotakis at his villa in Chania, were never officially denied. Under severe pressure to salvage any remaining objects, the alarmed archaeological authorities of Heraklion initiated excavations at Odigitria in the same year. Antonis Vasilakis, the excavator and archaeologist in charge, openly wrote about the *archaiokapelia* there and explicitly mentioned that the final destination of the looted objects was the Mitsotakis collection (Vasilakis and Branigan 2010, 52, 69). Vasilakis' report is a rare case of disclosure about the actions of Mitsotakis, a man of great political power, as the purchaser or illicitly excavated antiquities. The exhibition at the Museum of Cycladic Art in 1992 further heightened the tension between the Goulandris foundation and archaeological authorities of Heraklion, especially with Antonis Vasilakis and the director of antiquities at Heraklion, Charalambos Kritzas. These concerns escalated when Dolly Goulandris asked for the permission of the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion to include the rest of the finds from the cemetery at Odigitria in the exhibition at Athens. Correspondence between Dolly Goulandris and Antonis Vasilakis was published in the Greek newspaper *Ethnos*: 'Φάκελος: Τα αρχαία Μητσοτάκη' (6.10.1993). Vasilakis responded to Goulandris' requests with patent vexation:
'I am still wondering if the Ephorate of Antiquities, instead of replying directly, should refer the matter to the Central Authorities [...] because the objects of the Collection are products of illicit excavation and looting from the cemetery, which took place during November 1979-May 1980, and maybe earlier' (translated by the author).
Thereafter, numerous other newspaper articles were concerned with Mitsotakis collection, and particularly with his connections and transactions with his personal security guard and subsequently high-ranking officer in the Greek police department, Michalis Nistikakis. The latter was accused of being involved in networks of illicit Greek antiquities trade and for his relationships with members of the Turkish mafia which run similar 'businesses' in Germany.

συλλογής Κ. και Μ. Μητσοτάκη' ('Daedalica from the collection of K. and M. Mitsotaki'). This publication is amongst the rarest examples in archaeological literature wherein the archaeologist formally acknowledges the items as purchases of looted material, apparently to the collector's knowledge. Tsipopoulou gave further account of the massive looting at Aphrati and the subsequent route of pithoi to the Metaxa and the Mitsotakis collections, but also to museums abroad including the Louvre in Paris, the Antikenmuseum in Basel, the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, and the Archaeological Museum in Thessaloniki (see below): '*From the clandestine excavation in Aphrati in 1964, derived many pithoi or fragments thereof. Among them, the pieces mentioned above'* (ibid. 289; translated by the author).

As is generally the case, the undisclosed and illegal nature of antiquities trade has left no traces or information about how these pithoi travelled to west Crete. The only testimony available comes from the collector himself and it regards the general motives for collecting antiquities. In his foreword to the catalogue of his collection, Mitsotakis tactfully deflected the matter of provenance and adhered to the prototype of 'collectors - guardians' who protected objects from fleeing abroad:

'We knew, of course that we, as collectors, are only responsible of the care for the collection and preservation and that no ancient object is our property, since Greek collectors of antiquities protect valuable artefacts from their expatriation …' (Mitsotakis in Marangou 1992, 2; translated by the author).

As far as we know, the travels of Archaic pithoi within Crete were geographically confined to the two collections of Metaxas and Mitsotakis described. But as the international network of looted antiquities extended beyond the island, some new routes had already opened up for the itineraries and the reclamation of pithoi in mainland Greece. This included stops at Athens.

6.5.2. Private collections at Athens

As the web of illicit trading in antiquities became more complex, a considerable number of pithos fragments found their way to the Greek capital. In total 37 known and (preliminary or fully) published pieces are today dispersed between the Benaki Museum (24 fragments), the Museum of Pavlos and Alexandra Kanellopoulou (12 fragments), and the Museum of Cycladic Art (one fragment).

Benaki museum (Zoumboulaki collection)

In 1986, at least 24 pithos fragments were donated to the Benaki Museum at Athens by Peggy Zoumboulaki, in memory of her husband, Tasos Zoumboulakis. The fragments were part of a significantly larger collection of figurines, Geometric black- and red-figured pots, and a few white lekythoi and Cycladic vases. The collection was passed on to Peggy Zoumboulaki (now the owner of the homonymous modern art gallery) by her father-in-law, Theodoros Zoumboulakis, the founder of one of the first antique shops in Athens established in the early 1920s. Theodoros Zoumboulakis gradually built his name as an art dealer and a collector, and by the mid 1960s the shop had evolved into an art gallery which is now dedicated to hosting contemporary art exhibitions.

Very little is known about the antiquities collection of the Zoumboulaki family for not all of it was gifted to the Benaki Museum[278]; much less is known about how and when these Cretan pithos fragments reached their collection. That said, Brisart (2007), who has intensively studied relief pithoi of Aphrati, has published most of the pithos fragments of Benaki Museum thereby providing a thorough account of their decoration, technique and fabric characteristics. Today, the largest piece in pithos collection[279] holds pride of place at the permanent exhibition of the museum, in the room with Ancient Greek artefacts (fig. 130).

Museum of Pavlos and Alexandra Kanellopoulos

The second largest batch of looted Cretan pithoi that found τheir way to Athens is today housed at the Museum of Pavlos and Alexandra Kanellopoulos. The complete collection is comprised of approximately 6500 objects, dated from 3000 BC to the 19th century AD. The pithos fragments, all of which are most probably from Aphrati, compose only a small part of this collection amounting to 12 pieces.

Pavlos (1906-2003) and his wife Alexandra (1921-2008) Kanellopoulou originated from well-off aristocratic families of Greece: Alexandra was the daughter of the politician and former minister, Dimitris Londos, and Pavlos Kanellopoulos was the heir and owner of one of the largest cement industries of Greece called ‘Titan’. Apart from their common background, the couple appears to have also bonded

[278] For a history about the private collections gifted to the Benaki Museum, see Sabetai 2006, 9-12.
[279] Inv. n. 30945

through their common love for Greek antiquities, as the wife, Alexandra Kanellopoulou, stated in one of her interviews: '*most of all [what united us] was our great love for our country and our history, because he [Pavlos] was above all, Greek'* (translated by the author)[280]. The collection acquired an official status at the end of the 1940s, when Pavlos Kanellopoulos, after spending some years in Germany studying law and chemistry, officially registered himself as a private collector. In 1972, he donated the collection to the Greek state and a few years later the homonymous museum was established to include the items in the neoclassical building at Plaka, on the north slope of the Acropolis hill. Almost nothing is known (or published) about how the antiquities ended up in the house of the family, where the collection was originally kept. However, some scarce information is available in a series of interviews the couple gave to the Athenian press of the time[281]. From this, it appears that P. Kanellopoulos was guided by a passion – if not an obsession – for collecting, a pervasive characteristic of most collectors:

'*He [Pavlos] was born a collector; whatever he loved he purchased'* (Al. Kanellopoulou, interviewed by Takis Maurotas; translated by the author)[282].

It also appears that the years Pavlos spent in Germany were particularly influential for his love for Greek antiquities. In a rather lyrical letter written during his stay in Germany, Kanellopoulos was very nostalgic about the homeland he left behind: *'And once again, in foreign countries, I reminisce faith, homeland, language, all lost...'* (translated by the author). In the same spirit, his patriotism and his role as the custodian of ancient Greek artefacts is mentioned in another interview to the Athenian press. When asked for the reasons the couple chose to spend significant part of their fortune to form their collection, Alexandra Kanellopoulou said:

'Because I am Greek. As was my husband and all my family, I love my country and its history [...] Everything for my country. And I promise you, if I had twice as much, I would give it all to this country'[283].

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[280] The original interview in Greek is available at the official website of the museum: www.pacanellopoulosfoundation.org/userfiles/Reports/magazine_5_1.pdf.

[281] Publications of the Athenian press, including tributes to the legacy of the Kanellopoulos family: interviews of Al. and P. Kanellopoulou are available at the official website of the Museum: http://www.pacanellopoulosfoundation.org/paul-alexandra-canellopoulos/press-clippings/.

[282] Interview available at: www.pacanellopoulosfoundation.org/userfiles/Reports/magazine_1_1.pdf.

[283] Interviewed by K. Panayiotopoulos for the *Life and Style Magazine*; available at: www.pacanellopoulosfoundation.org/userfiles/Reports/acropoli.pdf

The pithoi from the Kanellopoulos collection were published by Maria Brouskari (1975) under the title '*Daedalic Fragments' ('Δαιδάλεια Όστρακα')*. Like the publication of the pieces in the collection of Mitsotakis, this title is suggestive of the well-established art-historical approach and the terminology employed for pithoi as representative specimens of Daedalic art. Likewise, the introduction to this catalogue is indicative of the general appreciation to Cretan pithoi, which were described as products of a humble craft made for everyday activities, yet charged with emotionally powerful symbolism. The continuity of Cretan pithos making and their art, is thought to add a cumulative value to these vessels, connecting many generations of islanders and turning the pithoi into true works of Art:

'Souvent, le produit du plus humble artisanat est chargé d'un intense pouvoir d'émotion : témoignage de la vie quotidienne d'une époque, il est aussi le reflet de la sensibilité populaire, créatrice, parfois, de formes nouvelles qui lui sont propres, et qui suivront leur chemin, au cours des générations' (ibid. 385).

Befittingly, Brouskari also addressed the issue of looting and the fact that numerous pithos fragments from Aphrati entered private collections across the world via 'hand to hand transactions' *('main en main')* (ibid. 386)[284]. It is peculiar, she wrote, that Cretan pithoi only started to travel today, two and a half millennia after their production, whilst at the time of their primary use they hardly ever left Crete (ibid. 386)[285]. This contradiction between the geographically confined primary use of Cretan Archaic pithoi and their wide dispersal during their modern life-cycle is further discussed in the concluding section of this Chapter.

Museum of Cycladic Art

One fragment of a Cretan relief pithos is now at the Museum of Cycladic Art. It is a shoulder fragment decorated with a zone of sphinxes wearing *polos* and plume on their heads, and zones with impressed rosettes and high relief bosses (Appendix II, n. 129). The sherd is registered as Cretan of 'unknown provenance', although it is most certainly a product of Aphrati. The story behind its acquisition is hardly traceable. Brisart (2007, 108, 113) has identified it with a piece previously in

[284] A brief note on the wide circulation of Cretan pithoi was also made in the catalogue of the Museum, also compiled by Brouskari (2002, 42).
[285] '*Malgré l'importance de la production, ce n'est qu'à l'heure actuelle, après deux millénaires et demi, que les pithoi crétois commencent à voyager'* (Brouskari 1975, 386).

the collection of Petros Protonotarios, a doctor and collector specializing in numismatics and president of the Hellenic Numismatic Society[286]. The piece was first recognized by Lebessi in 1983, right at the time it was officially registered in the Protonotarios collection at the *Archaiologikon Deltion*, in the according section compiled on behalf of the *Ephorate of Antique Dealers and Private Collectors* (*Εφορεία Αρχαιοπωλειών και Ιδιωτικών Συλλογών)* (Lebessi and Etzeoglou 1983, 411). Having led the rescue excavations at Aphrati, Lebessi was well aware of the many fragments of pithoi that were being fed into the art market: *'[interesting] regarding the dispersal of relief Cretan pithoi which were channelled into the art market by looters, is one fragment mentioned with applied sphinxes in relief, dated to the middle Daedalic period'* (ibid. 411; translated by the author). As Lebessi reports, Cretan Archaic pithoi were indeed widely and in fact illegally being circulated across the globe.

6.6. International itineraries of Cretan pithoi

Whilst most of the Greek collectors aspired to serve as the custodians of national antiquities, the international art market blossomed. Foreign collectors and art dealers competed against each other in various antiquities hunts. After the looting of Aphrati in 1964, Cretan pithoi became not only widely available but also much desired objects, thus travelling distances which transcended the Greek borders. In this section I explore their dispersal abroad and I focus on specific cases and individuals involved in the trafficking, laundering and purchasing of antiquities in general. Furthermore, I discuss aspects of the global socio-political conditions which shaped the worldwide appreciation of Cretan Archaic pithoi, the secretive or illegal mechanisms with made their itineraries possible, as well as the ways in which archaeological research agendas affected both their appreciation and their dispersal in specific places.

6.6.1. The boom in the international art market: collectors, museums and archaeologists

The heavy plundering of Aphrati coincided with a global boom in the collection of Greek and Italian antiquities by universities, public museums and private

[286] For P. Protonotarios, see Oikonomides 2013.

collectors, as much within as outside Europe. Particularly in the United States, post-war economic prosperity enabled a surfacing social elite of art lovers to pursue prestige, to self-identify, and to become socially established via the boastful display of their finely cultivated taste. With the beginnings of globalization, the newly established class of art aficionados would soon be enabled to follow the expensive hobby of collecting ancient cultural objects. This hobby, which has even been labelled as an addiction associated with a need for self-identity or social acknowledgment, remains to this day a continuous motivation and the energy source for collectors. The proclivity of certain members of wealthy elite to possess and to collect items of historic and aesthetic value has been subject of extensive behavioural psychology research[287], and it appears to have often been tailored to the trends of artistic movements of the time, as well as to adjust to the availability of sources. Having been described by many of the collectors themselves as an instinct urged by '*zeal'*, '*lust*', '*passion'* or simply by the '*fun and joy'* of collecting, the excitement and the addiction of collecting art is well-reflected in the biographies of famous collectors or in the publications of their collections catalogues (Muscarella 2000, 12-13)[288]. We get a glimpse of the peculiarities of this venture in the written words of John Cooney, curator for the Brooklyn Museum and the Cleveland Museum of Art, who seems to have played his own part in the purchasing of some Cretan pithoi (see below). Cooney wrote in the forward to Herbert Hoffmann's book dedicated to the collection of antiquities the following lines:

'Forming a collection makes formidable demands on the individual, financially, intellectually, and emotionally, but I have known very few individuals to abandon it voluntarily once embarked on the venture. It has a curious fascination that defies analysis. [...]But let the psychiatrists ponder that problem' (Cooney 1971, xi).

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[287] Formanek 1991; Rudmin 1991; Pearce 1992; 1994; Muensterberger 1994; McIntosh and Schmeichel 2004.

[288] The 'lust' or 'passion' for antiquities is testified as early as the 1st c. BC by Cicero, who is considered as the earliest most avid devotee of private collecting. The letters to his friend Atticus (Cic. *Att.* 1.8.2) portray an almost romantic relationship with Greek antiquities: '*As to your Hermae of Pentelic marble with bronze heads, about which you wrote to me—I have fallen in love with them on the spot. So pray send both them and the statues, and anything else that may appear to you to suit the place you know of, my passion, and your taste—as large a supply and as early as possible. Above all, anything you think appropriate to a gymnasium and terrace. I have such a passion for things of this sort that while I expect assistance from you, I must expect something like rebuke from others. If Lentulus has no vessel there, put them on board anyone you please'.*

Concurrently with new rising social classes in the United States, another phenomenon took place in the 1960s, when many central and regional public and university museums were established. As newly formed institutions, they were in constant search for ancient artefacts to enrich their collections (Dyson 1998, 152; Nørskov 2000). This turned museum curators into popular figures and global treasure-hunters. Echoing the current artistic trend of modernism in sculpture expressed by artists such as Picasso, Braque, Brancusi and Giacometti, the prime focus of art dealers and collectors of Greek art was targeted on Cycladic figurines (Gill and Chippindale 1993; Nørskov 2000; Marthari 2001; Renfrew et al. 2016, esp. 129-130). However this trend soon widened to include many more classes of finds, amongst which were the Cretan pithoi under discussion.

Two of the world's most renowned curators and acquisitors begun their careers at the end of the 1950s: Dietrich von Bothmer, an Oxford-graduate art-historian and curator of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Cornelius Vermeule III, a Harvard-graduate and curator of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston[289]. Another curator who started his career in the 1960s is Herbert Hoffmann. He was an assistant curator of the Boston Museum and later a director of the Museum fur Künst und Gewerbe in Hamburg (hereafter MKG). His posts and education enabled him to play a major role in the purchase, publication and itineraries of the Cretan Archaic pithoi. In his handbook entitled '*Collecting Greek Antiquities*' (1971), Hoffmann gives us a glimpse of the ways the antiquities trade was affected and dictated by current artistic trends: Greek art and especially relief art expressed a reaction against abstraction and uncertainty (ibid. 84).

Reactions to postmodernism were increasingly promoted by the artistic movements of *Op Art* and *Pop Art*, which became especially popular in the United States after the second half of the 1960s. The first, *Op Art*, was concerned with the creation of optical effects by use of geometrical forms to produce optical illusions, thus typically favouring abstraction over representation, albeit by the use of strict geometrical forms and it was – to some extent – 'a respite from the undisciplined spirit and techniques of abstract expressionism' (Oster 1965, 1360). The second movement, *Pop Art*, which also reached its impetus in the 1960s, was too a reaction

[289] For their purchase policies and curatorial activities, see Felch and Frammolino 2011, 28, 73-74, 84-85.

and a challenge against the calcified tradition of abstract expressionism and accompanying ideologies (Harrison 2001, esp. 23). Evidently, these movements rendered Greek vases and terracotta in relief with an aesthetic value which led to an unprecedented rise of their price. According to Hoffman, a man who as we shall see below walked a tightrope between the art trade world and archaeology, these art objects were seen as a 'reaction to the abstract and nonrepresentational' (Hoffmann 1971, 84). Greek vases were part of the same reaction-movements for they were understood as the materialization of a clear symmetry which was achieved via forms as much as decoration. This led to their re-evaluation by art dealers and made them 'once more a treasured and even fashionable possession' (ibid. 84). The increased appreciation and demand on behalf of collectors and museums encouraged looting in the Mediterranean as never before, ensnaring Cretan pithoi along the way as these were excessively available after the plundering of Aphrati.

As university museums strove for the augmentation of their archaeological collections with relief art from the Archaic period, the archaeologists who collaborated with these institutions turned their attention to the pithoi in the collections. For example, Nancy Reed-Eals (1971; 1976; 1981) produced a series of papers on Daedalic art and on Cretan relief pithoi, based on fragments housed at the Museum of the University of Missouri in Columbia; these fragments were on loan from the private collector Cedric Marks (Appendix II, n. 2-6, 15; see discussion below). Some of these fragments were first published in 'Muse', the annual journal of the university museum (Reed-Eals 1971; 1981). In her latest article, Reed-Eals described the appreciation relief pithoi earned up until the 1980s as items of universal aesthetic value, typical of a transitional art movement in antiquity. With new fragments available for study, the evidence had now increased to support Jenkins's proposal that *Daedalic Art* started in Crete, and that her products, relief pithoi, were the most representative expression of the movement:

'Crete was one of the leading centres and our examples of relief-amphora fragments, the lekanis, and the stele from Prinias illustrate this admirably [...] Daedalic art will never capture the western imagination as have other periods of Greek art because it is neither fully Geometric nor truly in a naturalistic stage. Aesthetically, it does not promote the realism we have come to expect from things Greek. A study of the Daedalic style nonetheless, enables us to examine the artist in tradition.' (Reed-Eals 1981, 64).

Whilst art-historians became increasingly interested in Cretan Archaic art and the pithoi, museums and collectors had set their sights on the new batch of Archaic jars that were available in the art market. The farrago of personal motives and addictions, current art movements and certain socio-economical conditions discussed above became closely entwined with Cretan Archaic pithoi, and the international art trade system of the 1960s-1970s adjusted to satisfy the collectors' ever growing needs. This system evolved in ways so as to bypass existing national and international laws from the archaeologically rich countries. Eventually fragments or complete pithoi from Aphrati ended up to American and European museums and to private collections across the world. Occasionally, institutions and collectors were inter-linked via museum curators and so some pieces kept changing hands in the form of donations usually from private collections to museums. Table 10 shows the number of Cretan pithoi and pithos fragments which ended up in private and museum collections, and notes on how some of these fragments travelled between museums and private collections can be found in Appendix II.

6.6.2. Fabrication of another worldwide web: expatriation and laundering of Cretan pithoi

The ways in which Cretan pithoi ended up in museum and private collections abroad can be inferred by the prevailing exportation practices of the time. The common procedure, which was practiced almost uncontrollably before – and in many occasions after – the UNESCO Convention of 1970[290], meant that clandestinely excavated objects often went through the hands of many mediators, in a virtually free-fall in the black market, before ending up in the displays of private collectors or museums. Ultimately, objects were sold without original or verified information on their source. Even more so, in the cases in which their true origin was known, it was

[290] The UNESCO 1970 'Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property' is an international treaty signed to prevent the illegal trade of cultural items (available at http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13039&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html). The drafting of the treaty begun a few months before the looting at Aphrati (on April 1964), but it came into effect on 24 April 1972. The date marked a watershed against the theft, looting and the illicit trafficking of cultural property, as the UNESCO Convention encouraged the regular establishment of inventories and export certificates, regular controls and approval of traders and the application of criminal or administrative sanctions.

purposefully omitted or hidden to facilitate their laundering through exhibitions and subsequent catalogues.

The exhibition or the publication of antiquities in the guise of a catalogue was a twofold expedient: firstly, it legitimized illicitly acquired objects, most often with the deliberate or inadvertent assistance of archaeologists who examined artefacts and compiled corresponding entries. Secondly, it added to the scientific, aesthetic and therefore to the monetary value of each object, thereby rendering it a high-esteemed purchase within the art market community. The same agenda was facilitated on an intra-institutional level, namely between museums, where loan exhibitions served the legitimization of unprovenanced and looted antiquities (Voudouri 2008, 130-131). This practice was extensively put into action in the case of the Cycladic figurines, which conquered the global art market in the 1960s (Gill and Chippindale 1993)[291].

Usually, the typical laundering process took objects through Switzerland, particularly the '*free port'* or '*free zone'* area of Geneva airport, which is to this day reserved for items before their passing through the Swiss customs and has long served as a major worldwide hub for the trafficking of cultural property and antiquities (Tucker 2011, 622-623, fn. 102). Historically, the Swiss law has facilitated this trafficking on the basis of the *bona fide criterion* of purchasers which ultimately encourages and legitimizes the purchase of illegally acquired objects. The concept of *bone fide*, as interpreted by the Swiss, German and French Civil Code Law, entails that a purchaser can gain property title from anyone in good faith provided that the

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[291] Cycladic figurines, their collection by private collectors and museums, and their publication by archaeologists who were often faced with the ethical dilemma of publishing looted material are chronicled in two papers at the *Archaeology* journal in the early 1990s. The condemnatory review by Ricardo Elia (1993) on Renfrew's catalogue for '*The Cycladic Spirit: Masterpieces from the Nicolas Goulandris Collection'* (Renfrew and Taylor 1991), fingered the role of the Goulandris foundation and the Museum of Cycladic Art in the collection of looted material, viz. Cycladic figurines. More importantly, Elia chastised the archaeologists' role in perpetuating the misconduct of museums to the face of one of the most prominent scholars, Sir Colin Renfrew:
'Colin Renfrew has missed an excellent opportunity to educate collectors and art historians about the barbarity of collecting. How effective it would have been to include in the book photographs of plundered sites and despoiled graves. The Cycladic Spirit is a disturbing book because the author, a prominent archaeologist, perpetuates an attitude that is sadly all too typical of the way art historians treat collections of looted material' (Elia 1993, 69). In the following issue, Renfrew welcomed and replied to the criticism by his then junior colleague and revised his position: *'The time is clearly ripe for a re-examination of the ethics of collecting, and I feel that in the last analysis Elia's position is probably the right one. Collectors do real harm when they buy and exhibit pieces, even when they do so in good faith and with the best of motives*' (Renfrew 1993, 16).
This marked a turning point in Renfrew's career. Three years later, in 1996, he founded the Illicit Antiquities Research Centre at the University of Cambridge against the theft and traffic of archaeological items.

item – even if stolen from the original owner – has subsequently been bought by a *bona fide* purchaser ('BFP'). Particularly under the Swiss law, the original owner is granted five years to claim a stolen object without however taking into consideration that the owner might not be even aware he/she is the victim of theft. In this way, stolen and looted objects passed through Switzerland where they remained hidden for five years, after which period collectors acquired the title of a true owner. Combined with the strict banking secrecy laws, this loophole in the Swiss Civil Code Law provided a safe haven for art dealers and collectors to obtain ownership titles of illegally exported works of art and antiquities (Kunitz 2001).

From their side, reputable auction houses such as Sotheby's, Christie's and Bonham's further encouraged and participated in the process of illegal trade, occasionally in the laundering of items too. In a practice which remains problematic even today, auction houses often fail to carry out due diligence or they purposely hide the true origin of antiquities. In doing so, they serve as the prestigious and authorized suppliers of antiquities to all individuals involved in the purchase of antiquities: curators, private collectors and art dealers (Brodie 2014; Tsirogiannis 2013; 2015; 2016). Until today, many are the cases in which auction houses participate in selling stolen or illicitly acquired objects, with archaeologists trying to keep up with upcoming sales in order to prove that artefacts are products of theft and to ultimately achieve their withdrawal from the market[292].

Cretan Archaic pithoi looted in the 1960s underwent all the above procedures and steps toward their trafficking and their laundering: from looting to art-galleries in Switzerland, from private collectors to museum curators, from exhibitions to publications in catalogues and from auction houses to museums, spreading as whole

[292] Christos Tsirogiannis, recently appointed Associate Professor and forensic archaeologist at the Institute of Advanced Studies at the University of Aarhus, in Denmark, has identified over 1100 due-to-be auctioned plundered antiquities and obliged auction houses to pull the sales. In the early 2000s Greek and Italian authorities gave Tsirogiannis official access to tens of thousands of images and other archival material seized in police raids from disgraced art dealers such as Gianfranco Becchina, who was convicted in Greece for illegally dealing in antiquities. Over the years, Tsirogiannis has identified looted artefacts within auction houses, commercial galleries, private collections and museums; in alerting Interpol and other police authorities he has played a significant role in the repatriation of many antiquities. Well-known cases of repatriated objects include: an Attic black-figured neck amphora which Christie's withdrew from their sales (see the report of July 14th 2016, on the official blog-post of the Association for Research into Crimes against Art: http://art-crime.blogspot.gr/2016/07/christies-withdraws-lot-52-attic-black_4.html), and a 4th c. BC stele fragment due to be auctioned at Sotheby's in 2017, which returned to Greece and will be displayed in the Epigraphic Museum in Athens (the case is reported in the online journal 'Looting Matters', available at: https://lootingmatters.blogspot.com/2018/09/stele-returns-to-greece.html).

vessels or in pieces across the globe (table 11-12). Given the large number of Cretan pithoi exported abroad, the sections below focus on some select cases as examples of how this network operated.

6.6.2.1. Exhibitions

As mentioned, it was first the bronzes from Aphrati which attracted the national and international interest of collectors. Thus, parts of the *'find of the Cretan armor'* were added to the private collections of Metaxas in Crete and of Schimmel in New York. I have discussed the bronzes and the relief pithoi in the former's collection and here I explore the role of private collectors such as Norbert Schimmel in the dispersal of relief pithoi abroad through museum exhibitions. I also examine collectors' connections with curators and art-dealers and their role in encouraging the network of illicit trade of antiquities.

Schimmel (1904-1990) was a famous Berlin-born collector and a wealthy manufacturer of engraving machines, who settled in New York in 1938 and founded 'the New Hermes' company of engraving (fig. 131). He first introduced his collection of antiquities to the public in an exhibition called '*Ancient Art from New York Private Collections'* at the Metropolitan Museum (Von Bothmer 1961), of which he later became a member of the board of trustees and acquisitions committee[293]. He was also a founder and honorary fellow of the Israel Museum and a president of the American Friends of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. By the winter of 1964-1965, right after the looting of Aphrati, his collection of antiquities from across the ancient world 'grew so rapidly in number and so stupendously in quality' (Marsh et al. 1992, 3) that a new special exhibition of his collection was held at the Fogg Museum of Harvard University entitled '*The Beauty of Ancient Art'* (Hoffmann 1964). The catalogue of the exhibition at Harvard was edited by Schimmel's close friend and curator, H. Hoffmann, who eventually became one of the key contributors to publications of his collection (Marsh et al. 1992, 3). By the early I970s, Schimmel's collection was again substantially enriched and it developed into another exhibition at the Cleveland Museum called *'Ancient Art: The Norbert Schimmel Collection'* (Muscarella 1974)[294].

[293] One year before his death, in 1989, he donated a large number of his collection to the MET.
[294] Through the usual practice of legitimizing illicitly acquired antiquities via numerous exhibitions, the exhibition opened in 1974 at the Cleveland Museum but later travelled many times, first to the Dallas Museum of Fine Arts and then to the Metropolitan Museum in New York. The final venue was the

Driven by the same obsession most collectors share and challenged by the hunt of ancient art, Schimmel was a wealthy and well-connected man, able to locate and to buy numerous antiquities[295]. Most of these antiquities were acquired despite the export sanctions of source-countries which sought to preserve their ancient heritage, and they became legitimized through multiple art exhibitions held at museums. Three years after the plundering of Aphrati, the first in a series of exhibitions with looted artefacts from Crete appeared. The first was the exhibition entitled '*Master Bronzes from the Classical World'*, and was held in November 1967 at the Fogg Art Museum of the Harvard University. The exhibition included a selection of the Schimmel collection (amounting to 316 pieces of Greek, Etruscan and Roman bronzes) and it was followed by the publication of the homonymous catalogue (Mitten and Doeringer 1967)[296]. It was in this exhibition at Harvard that parts of the so-called *'find of the Cretan Armor'* first made their appearance and it was in the subsequent homonymous catalogue that they were identified by the looters of Aphrati. The robbers verified that the exhibited bronzes were extracted from the private property of Emmanuel Kantzilakes, on the southeasten slope of Prophetis Elias (Lebessi 1969a, 415).

Two years later, in 1970, the items were re-exhibited at the MKG in Hamburg, Germany, at the exhibition *Dädalische Kunst auf Kreta* (hereafter DKK), this time, together with the rest of finds from Aphrati and the relief pithoi (Matz 1970). The exhibition in Hamburg and the catalogue which followed included 44 pithoi and pithos fragments, brought from numerous private and universities collections from across the world: Switzerland, Germany, France, USA, Israel and Japan. Pithoi constituted the second largest group and a little over a third of the total

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Israel Museum in Jerusalem (Marsh et al. 1992, 4). The catalogue of the exhibition was edited by O. Muscarella (1974), the former curator of the Metropolitan Museum of New York and later a fervent critic of the role of Museums as promoters of the illicit trade of antiquities. The updated version of the Schimmel collection by Muscarella proved that Schimmel was the recipient and purchaser of a number of forgeries and stolen items.

[295] In Schimmel's words, as documented in his obituary at the New York Times (Feb. 22, 1990): '*Collectors are born, not made, possessed of an enthusiasm that borders on madness. But you also have to have luck. The fun of this field is that you pursue an object for quite some time before you're able to get it'*.

[296] In 1970, the same catalogue was supplemented and edited into a monograph entitled '*A Symposium on Classical Bronzes'* (Doeringer et. al. 1970). It was an updated version of the collection prompted by the symposium which took place in Cambridge of December the same year. The forgeries which were part of the collection were brought to the attention of the participants of the symposium, but were notably omitted in the discussion of the volume (see review in Noble 1971, 629).

items published: from a total of 135 objects, 48 were relief plaques and protomes and 44 were pithoi. The catalogue is dominated by entries of complete pithoi and fragments with no specific details regarding their acquisition or their source. Instead, the source of origin is substituted by the source of purchase, namely unknown or occasionally named private collections, university institutions and unknown art shops, most often with no acquisition numbers (table 14). In fact, out of the 44 entries, acquisition numbers were provided for only ten.

The catalogue of the exhibition included a section on '*Orientalen auf Kreta'* which was compiled by the already well-established archaeologist John Boardman (Boardman 1970, 14-25). The section devoted to the 44 pieces of relief pithoi exhibited in Hamburg was written by the German classicist Wilhelm Hornbostel (1970, 56-73); he only briefly commended on the extensive art trade of relief pithoi:

'Es scheint sich um einen geschlossenen, bereits einige Jahre zurückliegenden Fund zu handeln, der grösstenteils in den Kunsthandel und von dort in zahlreiche Museen und Privatsammlungen zerstreut worden ist' (ibid. 57).

Given the role of Switzerland in facilitating the trafficking of art, twenty of the pieces brought to the exhibition in Hamburg unsurprisingly came from Swiss private collections and art galleries based in Geneva, Basel and Bern. Three of these pieces, which were part of the Hamburg Museum collection, were actually bought by or gifted to the MKG by Nikola Koutoulakis, the infamous antiquities dealer from Archanes, Crete, and a resident of Geneva[297]. He was the heir of his uncle and compatriot from Archanes, Manolis Segredakes, who owned one of the most popular antiquities shops in Paris (fig. 132). From the 1920s, Koutoulakis was constant supplier to private and museum collections[298]. In 1984, he was arrested by the Greek government and sentenced for illicit trade of antiquities (Apostolides 2006, 78-79).

All in all, the exhibition in Hamburg and its catalogue represents a most blatant example for the process of antiquities-laundering: it included the participation of archaeologists, art dealers, museum curators and private collectors. From then on, the biggest batch of looted pithoi had been 'cleaned'. The publication further

[297] Hornbostel 1970, C4 (inv. n. 1970. 117), C27 (inv. n. 1970. 115) and C36 (inv. n. 1970. 118). Frank Hildebrandt, curator of the Ancient Art and Antiquities Department of MSG, has kindly provided me with this information, available on the acquisition archives of the museum.

[298] In 1982, Koutoulakis donated one of the pithos fragments exhibited in Hamburg (Hornbostel, C3) to the J. Paul Getty Museum (82.AE.55.17) (fig. 53). The fragment was previously part of the private collection of Dr. G. Marshall, in Hamburg.

stimulated academics' interest on Daedalic art and especially in pithoi of the 7th - 6th c. BC. This is mirrored in the words of the American archaeologist Saul Weinberg, another archaeologist with curatorial experience and a taste for the art of Cretan pithoi discussed further below. Weinberg introduced his article devoted to the complete pithos from Aphrati, now in Antikenmuseum of Basel, as follows:

'The exhibition of Dädalische Kunst in Hamburg in late 1970 gave dramatic emphasis to the sudden appearance during the last decade of large numbers of whole or fragmentary Cretan relief amphoras, which have found their way to museums and private collections or are still in the hands of dealers' (Weinberg 1973, 98).

The exhibition at Hamburg was followed by a series of loans and purchases of objects it had showcased. Some of the items exhibited in Germany continued to float in the art market and kept changing owners. For example, Schimmel, as the founder of the Israel Museum and a president of the American Friends of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, gifted the complete pithos from Aphrati with the representation of winged *Potnia Theron* (which first appeared in 1970 in the catalogue of the DKK) to the Israel Museum in Jerusalem (fig. 49)[299]. Moreover, as the common laundering process included numerous museum exhibitions and intra-museum loans, another Cretan pithos from Aphrati appeared many years later at the exhibition in the Metropolitan Museum of New York entitled '*Greek Art of the Aegean Islands: An Exhibition'* and in the homonymous catalogue published by the Metropolitan Museum (1979). Ironically, the exhibition (held from November 1, 1979 to February 10, 1980) was sponsored by the Greek government[300]. The exhibition was supplemented by a loan from the Museum of Louvre, namely the pithos from Aphrati with representation of '*Hieros Gamos'* on the neck and three panels on the shoulder representations of a man in supine position below a winged horse (Bellerophon?) (fig. 62b, 132). The catalogue was written by Dietrich von Bothmer (1979), at the time Chairman of the Department of Greek and Roman Art at the MET and coordinator of the exhibition, and was introduced by the director of the MET, Philippe de Montebello (1979), a man

[299] Inv. n. 71.19.112.; Hornbostel 1970, 85, C30, pl. 32-33.

[300] As noted in the preface of the catalogue, written by Douglas Dillon (1979), chairman of the board of trustees of the MET: ' "Greek art of the Aegean Islands" holds the singular distinction of being the first loan exhibition sent by the Republic of Greece to the United States [...] It was in February 1950 that representatives of the Greek embassy in Washington and of The Metropolitan Museum of Art first discussed the possibility of a loan exhibition from Greece [...] Nothing could be done, however, until 1976, when the Greek government legalized the temporary exportation of antiquities for exhibition purposes'.

renowned for his resistance to complying with the 1970 UNESCO Convention and infamous for his involvement in the so-called 'Euphronios krater scandal'[301]. The catalogue is dominated by entries without specific provenance details, with objects labelled as *'said to be', 'found in',* or *'from Crete'*. Entry number 79 is the well-known relief pithos from Aphrati, today at the Louvre. The pithos is described as follows:

'Terracotta relief pithos. Said to be from Archanes, Cretan, about 675 B.C. [...] Musee de Louvre. Inv. CA 4523 (purchase, 1968)' (ibid. 133).

The entry directs the reader to the publication by Demargne (1972), which was dedicated to the specific pithos housed at the Louvre. Demargne, however, had already identified the pithos as deriving from the clandestine excavations at Aphrati:

'Il est évidemment crétois, d'époque archaïque, et il n'est pas impossible qu'il provienne d' Aphrati, l'ancienne Arkadès, où depuis 1964 au moins se sont multipliées les fouilles clandestines' (ibid. 35).

By no means, therefore, was the specific piece found at Archanes, as the MET exhibition catalogue mentioned. One wonders whether the authors of the catalogue simply misspelled the ancient name attributed to Aphrati, 'Arkades' and turned it into 'Archanes', or, if they accidentally (?) provided information regarding the source of acquisition of the Louvre pithos, which was perhaps Nikola Koutoulakis, who came from the village of Archanes. Of course, this is only a hypothesis, but Koutoulakis was well-connected to the Louvre and in the 1950s he sold 16 ancient objects and donated another 19 to the museum (Apostolides 2006, 78-79).

6.6.2.2. Auctions

As is usually the case, auction houses also played a small part in the European travels of looted pithoi. Before the exhibition in Hamburg and within three years after the plundering at Aphrati, a complete pithos and a large fragment of

[301] Felch and Frammolino 2011, 190: 'Nothing galled de Montebello as much as the changing tide in the cultural patrimony debate, which cut to the core of his institution's identity. De Montebello was a hawk on the antiquities issue, a firm believer in museums' right to acquire what they wanted from the art market. He viewed demands by Italy, Greece, Turkey, and other source countries as naked nationalism, exercised in hypocrisy'. On de Montebello and his actions against UNESCO Convention, see ibid. 153, 191, 247-248, 301-303. For the case of the Euphronios krater, also known as 'hot pot', see Brodie 2012.

another one entered the European art market via sales in auction houses. A pithos with relief and stamped decoration of sphinxes, grazing bulls, snakes and stamped rosettes[302] was bought by the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford through an auction held by Sotheby's in 1967[303]. The Archaic pithos now adorns the permanent exhibition of the museum in 'The Aegean World' gallery room, resting close to its 'ancestors', namely the Minoan storage jars brought by Evans from Knossos (fig. 133).

Two years after the looting at Aphrati, three very large fragments of relief Cretan pithoi reached the collection of the New Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, Denmark (Flemming 1994, 122-125)[304]. The largest fragment[305] derives from Aphrati and it was purchased in 1966 (ibid. 122-123). The other two fragments, a shoulder and belly fragment with decoration of *kete* (sea-monsters) (fig. 134) and a neck fragment with decoration of a winged *Potnia Theron* (fig. 61), ended up in Copenhagen the same year the Aphrati looting took place[306]; yet, these two fragments have been identified as products of the Phaistos pithos workshop (Flemming 1994, 124-125; n. 66-67). The first fragment, the one with decoration of sea-monsters, was brought to Denmark from an auction held in Lucerne, Switzerland in November 1964[307]. That year, the auction at Lucerne supplied many private collectors with numerous Greek, Roman and Byzantine antiquities, including a pelike of the Kleophrades Painter[308]. The pelike was acquired on behalf of the private collector Walter Kempner, who was also the purchaser of the two Cretan pithos fragments that now form part of the Nasher Collection of the Museum of Art at Duke University (Appendix II, entries 8-9).

Two of the most recent auctions of Cretan pithoi were held by Christie's in New York. Specifically, in 2002 a complete Archaic pithos with provenance stated as '*Swiss Private Collection 1985'* was sold at the Rockefeller Plaza in New York (lot 9, 12 June 2002) for $38240 (fig. 135a). Most recently, in 28 October, 2019, one Cretan pithos fragment was sold for $1625 (lot 319) (fig. 135b). Provenance of the fragment is reported as unclear as follows: '*with Simone de Monbrison, Paris. Dr. Anton*

[302] Inv. n.: AN1969-251.
[303] Acquisition dates 23/10/1967 and 24/07/1967, lot: 179-181, 252-253.
[304] On the Glyptotek pithos fragments, see also Gjødesen 1970, 151, fig. 7; Hoffmann 1972, 39, pl. 50, 51.2.
[305] Inv. n. 3380.
[306] Inv. n. 3374 and 3375, respectively.
[307] Ars Antiqua Auktion V, 7.11.1964, n. 105, pl. 24.
[308] Inv. n. 2006.1.1.

Pestalozzi (1915-2007), Zurich, acquired from the above, 1979; thence by descent to the current owner'.

6.6.2.3. The archaeologist-curator and the circulation of pithoi

Particularly after the exhibition in Hamburg, relief pithoi from Crete claimed the appreciation of archaeologists who held a dual role if appointed as museum curators: their official posts as curators required that they pursued the acquisition of Cretan pithoi to enrich collections of the museums, while their training in archaeology and classics provided academic authenticity, granted through publications of the various antiquities that constituted part of museum collections. In particular, Saul Weinberg and Herbert Hoffman had a keen eye for Cretan storage jars. They both showed a strong interest in the art of the relief pithoi from Aphrati, promoting the academic interest as much as the itineraries of pithoi abroad.

The case of Saul Weinberg

The stories behind Cretan pithoi which ended up in the Israel Museum of Jerusalem reveal aspects of the special attention paid to these artefacts as well as to the important role of the curator-archaeologist. Today, the museum in Jerusalem holds three pieces of Archaic storage jars from Aphrati, one complete pithos and two fragments[309]. As mentioned, the restored pithos was gifted by Schimmel, the founder and honorary member of the Israeli museum (fig. 49). The two other pieces ended up in the same museum through an extraordinarily adventurous travel.

The first case regards a pithos rim and neck fragment with a decoration of opposed standing sphinxes with elaborate voluted *polos* (Reed-Eals 1971, 31; fig. 8) (fig. 136)[310]. Originally, the fragment was in the ownership of Cedric and Daisy Marks, a collecting couple based in New York who also had six more Cretan pithos

[309] Inv. n. 71.3.5;71.19.112; 71.19; Appendix II, entries 15-17.
[310] Inv. n. 71.19.

fragments in their collection[311]. The pithos fragment under discussion was transferred to the Museum of Art and Archaeology of the University of Missouri as a loan together with other items; while some of the loaned items remained in the museum, others, including pithos fragment n. 71.19, were later taken back by the owner. The fragment was eventually donated to the Israel Museum via 'the American Friends of the Israel Museum' to which C. Marks was affiliated. In other words, a single pithos fragment travelled from Aphrati to New York, from New York to Missouri, from Missouri back to New York and, finally, from New York to Jerusalem. The second piece regards another donation made by Schimmel to the Israel Museum. Like the complete pithos from Aphrati mentioned previously (which was first exhibited in Hamburg), a pithos fragment decorated with sphinxes[312] was sent to the Israel Museum by Schimmel via the association of 'The American Friends of the Israel Museum'. Interestingly, this particular pithos fragment in Jerusalem was published by Saul Weinberg (1975) in his report on the news of the Israel Museum, where he had briefly served as a head archaeologist and chief curator.

In short, the pithoi given by Schimmel and Marks to the Israel Museum in Jerusalem took roughly the same route: Aphrati-New York-Israel. All three pieces, the two fragments and the complete pithos, are now exhibited in the rich archaeological collection of Samuel and Saidy Bronfman, at the homonymous Archaeology Wing of the museum, in the special room devoted to the Greek World. The room is part of the seven thematic galleries revolving around the 'Ancient Land of Israel and neighbouring cultures' which include Egypt, the Ancient Near East, Greece, Italy and the Islamic Near East.

The itineraries of the pithos fragments in Jerusalem and the one exhibited in Missouri reveal their common denominator: Saul Weinberg. Weinberg (1911-1992) had served as Assistant to the Director of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens in the mid 1950s; he was Professor of Classics and Archaeology in the

[311] C. Marks (1905-1999) was a former alumnus of the School of Art at the University of Oklahoma and the owner of an impressively rich collection of primitive and ancient Near Eastern, South American, African and contemporary European art. He made a series of donations to many Northern American Museum, including the National Museum of the American Indian, the Brooklyn Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of New York, the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art of the University of Oklahoma and the North Carolina Museum of Art. A significant part of his donations to museums is reported in the Bulletin of North Carolina Museum (1972, 7, 22, 40, 41, 65, 71, 73) and in the list of Milwaukee Museum donors (available at: https://www.mpm.edu/research-collections/artifacts/iranian-ceramics/donors).

[312] Inv. n 71.3.5.

University of Missouri, Columbia, Chairman of the Department of Classical Languages and Archaeology (1955-1960), and from 1960 to 1967, he led the department of Art History and Archaeology of Missouri. An ardent supporter of what are known as *educational museums*, Weinberg and his wife Gladys founded the Museum of Art and Archaeology in Missouri in 1957 (Herbert 1993, 568). During his directorship, the museum acquired several antiquities from various cultures and Weinberg made a name as a dedicated director-curator and archaeologist. His obituary portrayed him accordingly, as a 'virtual wizard in obtaining donations for the museum and convincing university administrators to support the expansion of the building and collections' and as a man capable of 'hypnotizing donors and seducing dealers as he built the museum' (ibid. 568).

As editor of the museum catalogues, acquisitions and activities, Weinberg made a note of the increasing fame the Cretan pithoi of the collection enjoyed, especially after the successive exhibitions of items from Aphrati, in the context of the exhibition *'Master Bronzes from the Classical World'* (Mitten and Doeringer 1967) held at Harvard:

'Increased awareness of the Museum in Columbia and mid-Missouri was marked by a growing appreciation of the quality of the collections throughout the United States, as was indicated by the demand for loans of object to special exhibitions. Five pieces were included in an exhibit of 'Master Bronzes from the Classical World' which opened at the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University in December, and went on to the City Art Museum of St. Louis and then to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, where it was scheduled to remain until the end of June 1968' (Weinberg 1968, 1).

Weinberg remained focused on Cretan pithoi and devoted an article to the study of the complete pithos which is now in Antikenmuseum of Basel, Switzerland (Weinberg 1973). However, this was not the first time the pithos had been published. The jar, together with three more pithos neck fragments in Basel were published some six years earlier, as newly acquired items in the Swiss journal *Antike Kunst* of 'The Association of Friends of Classical Art'. The entries were compiled by the Swiss

Ernst Berger, the former curator of the Antikenmuseum Museum in Basel during 1960-1961 (Berger 1967, 68, n. 16; 137, n. 10-12, figs. 39.1-9)[313].

The case of Herbert Hoffman

In 1972, two years after the exhibition in MKG, H. Hoffman in collaboration with the art historian and epigrapher Antony Raubitschek published the first complete catalogue of the bronzes from Aphrati which belonged to the Schimmel family (Hoffmann 1972). The monograph, entitled '*Early Cretan Armorers',* was meant to provide 'a more extended scholarly treatment' of the exhibition catalogue for 'The Master Bronzes from the Classical World' (ibid. ix). It included the Schimmel Collection, the pieces kept at the Museum of Heraklion and in the Metaxas Collection, and those displayed at the MKG. Ironically, the publication was dedicated to the early excavator of the site, Doro Levi.

A connoisseur of Greek art with curatorial experience in Europe and the USA, Hoffmann maintained transatlantic connections with most of the well-known art dealers. We get a glimpse of these connections and the mechanisms oiling the cogs of the art market by consulting a less known publication by Hoffmann, compiled in 1971 (Hoffmann 1971). It is a handbook for the collection of Greek antiquities meant as a Baedeker to collectors which covered the complete spectrum of archaeological objects (marble, bronzes, vases, terracotta, jewellery and coins), followed by advice on how to detect forgeries and instructions on the conservation of antiquities. The last chapter was appropriately entitled *'A Collectors' Guide to the Antiquities Market*'. Indicative of the then prevailing trend of the art market is the statement in his foreword to the book:

'*Whereas some areas of ancient art, notably Egypt and Mesopotamia, are now virtually closed to the collector of average means, the market in Greek art flourishes unabated. Bargains are still available – but only to the knowledgeable collector'* (ibid. front-page).

In the same section, Hoffmann acknowledged some of the most famous art dealers and private collectors of the time, most notably Elie Borowski, George Ortiz, and of course, Schimmel. He also paid his special thanks and gratitude to John Boardman, who assisted him in the compilation of the MKG of the DKK exhibition:

[313] Inv. n. BS612; BS613; BS614.

'I am extremely grateful to my colleague John Boardman for reading my manuscript and saving me from a number of errors' (ibid. vi). Contrary to his colleague, Colin Renfrew, John Boardman defended his scientific contribution to catalogues and his overall position on the role of archaeologists in the trading of antiquities. In his 2006 article called '*Archaeologists, collectors and museums'* he openly attacked archaeologists who oppose this practice, portraying them as expressers of an unrealistic and restrictive political correctness, which ultimately leads to a form of censorship. He further claimed that 'most new antiquities on any market are come by through accident, not design, and a great many are virtually heirlooms' and that, although the illicit trade is unfortunate, its control is an 'impossibility' (Boardman 2006, 37; 44). Boardman's paper was followed by a fiercely damning review by Neil Brodie of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research in Cambridge. The latter accused Boardman of using false evidence to support his views, as well as aligning with the practices of the major art collectors (Brodie 2007, esp. 7-8).

The introduction to Hoffman's publication complied by Cooney helps explain the routes of Cretan pithoi after the looting at Aphrati, the role of the exhibitions at USA and Germany, as well as of the two museums of Europe and the USA (MKG and Museum of Boston):

'...the two principal collections of Greek antiquities in the United States, those of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and of the Metropolitan Museum, New York, are heavily represented in the illustrations for obvious reason: the two museums must of necessity serve as points of departure for any serious American collecting effort in the field. Hamburg's Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe – the author's institution – has also provided many illustrations.' (Cooney 1971, v).

Not coincidentally, Hoffman, as well as being the curator for the MKG, had also served as an Assistant Curator of Art at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Apparently, the practical advice given by Cooney is one which he followed, especially in the case of the looted pithoi from Aphrati:

'*...the most practical advice that can extended to a beginning collector is to make friends with a dealer or, better with several of them, all of them preferably knowledgeable and important.'* (ibid. x).

True to fact, Hoffmann was well-connected with all members of the trafficking chain, including art dealers such as Nikola Koutoulakis, the donor of the three pieces of pithoi to Hamburg mentioned earlier.

6.7. Pithos itineraries interrupted: police chases, confiscations and the reclamation of pithoi by the Greek State

Some of the looted pieces never reached their final destination as they were reclaimed by the Greek authorities and the Greek State. Both the police department responsible for tracking looters and archaeologists struggled to minimise the damaging effects of *archaiokapelia* by conducting cross-country investigations and proceeding with confiscations of identified items. This included some Cretan pithoi which became enmeshed in police chases before they were reclaimed by authorities. In total, at least one fragment and four complete looted pithoi have been located and reclaimed by the Greek police and by the appropriate department against the illegal trade of antiquities. The pieces are now housed at the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, in the depots of the Archaeological Museum in Heraklion and in the Archaeological Museum of Aghios Nikolaos.

In the spring of 1965, one Archaic pithos found at Praisos became the protagonist of reclaimed antiquities and a witness to the complicated relationships between collectors, looters and museum authorities. The incident of its itinerary and reclamation revolves around the hunt, the acquisition, and the confiscation of two fragments from a single pithos, eventually divided between the collection of Metaxas and the Archaeological Museum of Aghios Nikolaos. The story can be reconstructed by the joint reading of Y. Sakellarakis' revealing accounts on looters and traders of antiquities on Crete during the 1960s (Sakellarakis 2005) and by his brief report at the *Archaiologikon Deltion* in 1966 (Sakellarakis 1966). Accordingly, Metaxas availed himself of his collaboration with Stylianos Alexiou and he often sought the advice of the director on matters of objects authenticity. This came to include a large fragment of an Archaic pithos from east Crete:

'*I [i.e. Sakellarakis] was preparing for a trip to Siteia, in pursuit of looters – police had some inside information – when, a day before our departure, the only Cretan collector of antiquities, Nikos Metaxas, came by the Museum to show to Alexiou, as he used to do, something he wanted to purchase, inquiring whether it was an original piece or a false duplicate'* (Sakellarakis 2005, 109; translated by the author).

The fragment preserved a very characteristic decoration of centaurs and men with raised arms holding double axe (fig. 137)[314]. In Alexiou's absence, the private collector turned to the then newly appointed Sakellarakis, who gave his opinion on the jar. By mere chance, and as Sakellarakis was sent to Siteia to investigate reported looting, he recognized a missing part of the pithos he had seen in the hands of a formerly notorious local looter named Manolis Fygetakis[315]:

'On our way back from Siteia, we had to go through Vaveloi, what is now called New Praisos, Fygetakis' village[316] [...] I distinctly remember Fygetakis' porch: no tree, no green leaves, arid, concrete. As soon as we passed the little door, we saw washed fragments from a pithos, left there to dry. 'They brought it to me yesterday, I was going to bring it to the Museum tomorrow' mumbled the poor man. He would be believable if ... But I recognized the pithos, a part of which was already in the hands of Metaxas. I cold-heartedly told him, in presence of the authorities, and Fygetakis collapsed.' (Sakellarakis 2005, 113; translated by the author).

For Fygetakis and Metaxas, the pithos fragments were an opportunity for a lucrative transaction and for a new acquisition respectively. However, for the archaeologist Y. Sakellarakis, the specific decoration on the pithos was evidence of a diachronic, Cretan identity which was preserved from the Minoan into the Archaic period. The double axe – a characteristic symbol of the Minoan culture – was suggestive of the myths accompanying Praisos, the Eteocretans and the autochthonous population of Crete[317]:

'In May 1965 numerous antiquities, mostly vases, found in N. Praisos (Vaveloi) and in Siteia, in the ownership of looter Emm. Fygetakis were confiscated. [...] Of exceptional importance is the discovery of one Archaic pithos in fragments, decorated with guilloche on the shoulder and impressed bands of representation of

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[314] The decorative theme of centaurs with axes or palmettes finds parallels only in the eastern part of Crete, namely in Kastri Siteia, in Vrokastro, and in Azoria (Boardman 1961, 117, n. 512, pl. XLII; Hayden 2005, n. 2139, pl. 21e,f; and Haggis et al. 2011a, 55, fig. 38 respectively)

[315] Fygetakis was a very active *archaiokapelos* of the 1950s-1960s, with a 'specialty' in the area of Praisos and its antiquities. His activities drew the attention of the Greek archaeological services and prompted an intensified research on the site. His 'career' took an unexpected turn toward the end of his life, as he begun to assist the research of the Archaeological Services in the east. He passed on his restored reputation to his son, Phaidon Fygetakis, who is now a member of the local antiquarian society of Praisos (Whitley 2015, 37).

[316] On the extensive looting at the village of Vaveloi before the 1960s, see Dohan 1931, 209.

[317] For a thorough discussion on Praisos, the connection with Eteocretans from various archaeological schools of thoughts, and matters of continuity from Minoan periods, see Whitley 1998b; 2015, esp. 34.

centaurs and men, holding double axes. One piece of this particular pithos was acquired shortly before the confiscation by the collector N. Metaxas. [...] Certainly, it is of great significance that in the land of Eteocretans one finds the Minoan worshipping symbol of the double axe well in the Archaic period' (Sakellarakis 1966, 418-419; translated by the author).

Police department and archaeologists kept up the chase against looters and traders on the prowl for antiquities. The same year that the adventurous confiscation of the pithos fragments in Praisos took place, a large batch of looted items was delivered to the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, impounded from the other well-known *archaeokapelos* based in Crete, Kostas Gaitanos. Artefacts confiscated included a bronze mitra, 12 bronze coins, a stone vessel, several fragments of figurines and other smaller objects, as well as two pithos fragments from Aphrati (Sakellarakis 1966, 414) (fig. 138). These two pithos fragments turned out to be only a fraction of what the robber had in his possession: two complete and almost perfectly preserved pithoi from Aphrati were later confiscated from Gaitanos and delivered to the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion (fig. 139)[318]. Both Fygetakis and Gaitanos were very well-known suppliers of antiquities to different collectors, including the Metaxas couple *(pers. comm. Theano Metaxa)*.

Impounding operations continued beyond the island's borders. In the summer of 1968, two complete Cretan Archaic pithoi reached the then Greek-Yugoslav borders, becoming entangled in a dramatic police operation which resulted in one of the largest confiscations of antiquities by the Greek authorities. The two pithoi from Aphrati were found in the hands of Stefan Martin Gericke, a German archaeologist and one of the most-wanted dealers of illicit antiquities. Information on the biography and illegal activities of the German archaeologist is scarce but it has been partly chronicled in the Greek press and the *Archaiologikon Deltion* of the time (Petsas 1969, 293-294), as well as in the testimonies of the Greek private investigator Giorgos Tsoukalis (2012, 89-97), who narrated his cooperation with the Greek police for the arrest of Gericke and his accomplishers. From these sources, we know that the 'Gericke gang' was arrested for the first time in 1968 on the northern Greek borders

[318] Inv. n. Π18716 and Π18714. The pithoi were brought to my attention whilst I was studying other pieces from Aphrati in the storeroom of the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion. I owe much to the generous help of Ms. Maria Kyrimi, the archaeologist of the museum, for providing further information and for allowing me to take photographs.

during a major operation to export several antiquities abroad (Petsas 1969, 293-294). The finds confiscated date from the Early Bronze Age to the Hellenistic period, and they derived from sites across Greece[319], including the two pithoi from Aphrati: one large mended pithos (fig. 140) and a smaller one in fragments (ibid. 293; n. 9-10)[320]. All items confiscated were delivered by the Sub-directorate of General Security of Thessaloniki to the Archaeological Museum of the city, where they are still housed.

Following Gericke's first arrest in 1968 and before his death in 1997, the dealer was arrested and escaped prison three more times: once for his involvement in looting at Amphipolis, close to Kastas Hill, in 1979[321], then for looting at Orchomenos in Boeotia in 1995, and again for the theft of the famous Byzantine icon of the Crucifixion from the church of Elkomenos Christos in Monemvasia in 1979-1980[322]. His last escape was in 1994 from the prison of Alikarnassos in Iraklion.

Conclusion

Although storage jars are not the only Cretan objects from the historical period exported abroad, their modern distribution pattern is quite unique in several ways. Sporn's (2012) discussion on the history and dispersal of Cretan antiquities from the post-Minoan to the Hellenistic period showed that numerous other objects have also been exported to various collections and museums. These mainly include sculptures and sarcophagi (from the late Classical to the Roman period), bronzes in relief (mostly from the Archaic period – including part of the Schimmel collection), jewellery (mostly from the Hellenistic to the Roman period) and ceramics (ibid. 200-204). The latter category consists of Archaic figurines and terracotta, whilst there are only 16 complete or partly pots dispersed in museums and in private collections (ibid. 205, fn. 32). Evidently then, in the art trade world, sculptures and bronzes in relief were much more popular than ceramics. As Sporn noted, this is explained by the poor

[319] Amongst items found in Gericke's possession were one larnax, 51 bronze, bone and ivory Minoan seals (later identified as forgeries), a stone chisel, several bronze and golden jeweller items, Cycladic and Hellenistic marble figurines, glass and ceramic vessels (kantharoi, alabasters, oinochoai), ceramic protomes, bronze and ceramic lamps and one granite sphinx (Petsas 1974). The cultural biography of five Cycladic figurines from this confiscation was published by Liana Stefani (2010); the rest of the items of the confiscation remain largely unpublished.

[320] Inv. n. Π10545 and Π10546.

[321] Newspaper *To Vima*, 07/09/2014: 'Οι τυμβωρύχοι της Αμφίπολης'.

[322] Gericke's activities and the theft of the church in Monemvasia inspired the screenplay for one of the most popular Greek TV crime series entitled '*Oi Ierosiloi'* ('*The Sacrilegious Ones'*). The series was aired during 1983-1984 by the Greek public service broadcaster *ERT*.

aesthetic value attributed to Archaic pottery from Crete (ibid. 205). However, as the catalogue in Appendix II and table 15 show, Cretan Archaic pithoi were an exception to this general disregard for Cretan pottery of the historical period. In fact, their modern biographies reveal that they constitute the only type of Cretan Archaic vases exported and one of the most numerous and most widely dispersed objects of the Archaic period overall. The wide dissemination of the 18 complete or mended pithoi[323] is quite peculiar, considering their low transportability and the unwritten rules of the international art market which favoured the purchase of smaller items[324]. As noted by Brouskari (1975, 386), the particularity of their modern dispersal is that it dramatically contradicts the distribution of the pithoi during the time of their primary production and use, which during the Archaic period seems to have been mainly restricted in the area surrounding the massif of Lasithi (Brisart 2009, 149, fig. 6; see also map 1 in this thesis).

Such antitheses bring to the surface the shifting contexts and meanings of pithoi through time and space and reveal the importance of discussions concerning the agency and the cultural transformations of objects. For example, whilst robbers and art dealers viewed decorated Cretan pithoi as an opportunity for a profitable bargain, the Greek and especially Cretan collectors appreciated them as objects at risk, bound otherwise to end up on foreign lands unless they were protected by their native custodians. Like the rest of the ancient objects of their collections, these pithoi were reclaimed as part of their cultural patrimony and as items connecting Greeks and Cretans to their ancestral past. At the same time, the pithoi which ended up in foreign collections became part of entirely different social embeddings. The pieces were reclaimed by institutions, museum curators and private collectors, as part of an ancient and foreign material culture which boosted individual and institutional

[323] Complete mended pithoi include: ten in the private and museum collections abroad, four in the private collections in Greece and the four pieces that were confiscated by the authorities; see Appendix II n. 10, 16, 24, 27,31, 41-42, 65- 67, 130-131, 141-142, 144-145.

[324] The practice of dealers and middle men who deliberately broke objects into fragments has been exposed through the investigation of the so-called 'Medici conspiracy' (Watson and Todeschini 2006). The breaking of a complete object into pieces facilitated multiple purposes: a) it made the illicit exportation abroad easier, b) fragments were used as a bait to attract the dealers, c) it increased profit because 'as the collector came closer to completing the object, the price of the fragments would increase accordingly' (Rush and Millington 2015, 133), d) by donating small fragments dealers connected themselves with museums – thereby maintaining good relationships with curators. Lastly, by publishing the acquisition of a fragment rather than of, say, a complete pot, museums and directors canvassed the strictness of control from the source countries, to see if the authorities would in fact spot the items.

esteem, prestige and fame. Subsequently, in publications of the same objects by archaeologists who were granted access to these collections, pithoi in relief were taken to represent Daedalic art, and thus become interwoven in research agendas of the time. Be it through legal, semi-legal or unlawful itineraries, the reclamation of Cretan pithoi enable us to conceptualize the essence of Hahn and Weiss' observation of how things 'appear, then they disappear or are forgotten – sometimes for centuries – and then, in new horizons of time, or in different environments, they reappear to play an entirely new and different role (Hahn and Weiss 2013, 3).