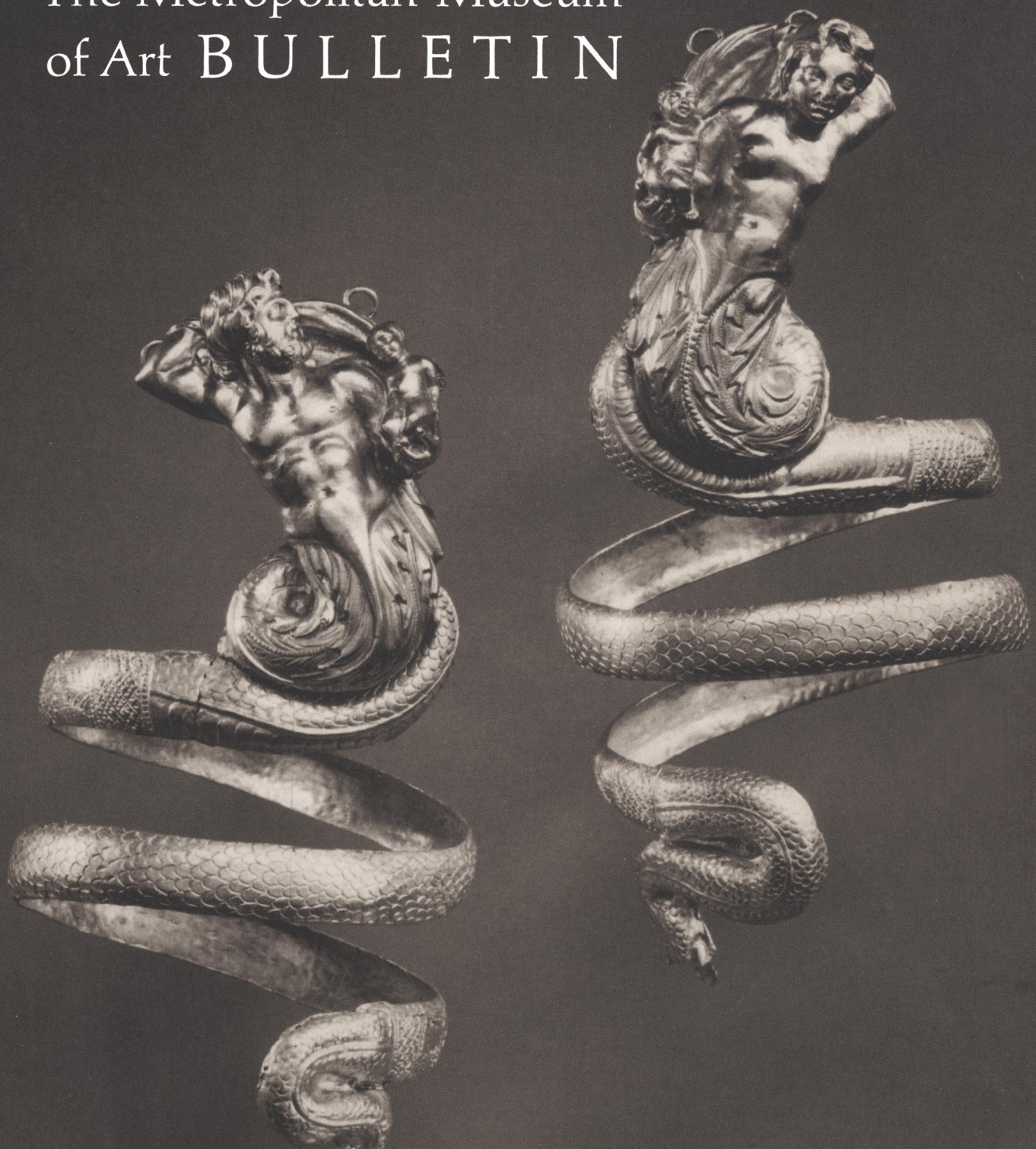
MAY 1966

The Metropolitan Museum of Art BULLETIN



An Etruscan Pectoral

DIETRICH VON BOTHMER *Curator of Greek and Roman Art*

A year ago the Museum acquired a gold pectoral, or breastplate, which has now joined a selection of other classical gold and silver objects in a provisional exhibition on the second floor. This pectoral was briefly mentioned in last year's *Annual Report* and the January issue of *Archaeology*, but since in both instances the illustrations were small, and since the object has never been properly published before, the following account presents it in somewhat greater detail.

The pectoral (Frontispiece) is of horseshoe or crescent shape. Made of a single sheet of very thin gold – not thicker than three tenths of a millimeter – it may have been fastened to a tunic. Green discolorations of cupric chloride across the short lapels suggest that it may have been held in place by bronze fibulas. Gold so thin could hardly have been worn like normal jewelry and must have been destined for the tomb. The entire surface is decorated with narrow rows of animals and ornaments in low relief; these were embossed with stamps into the gold sheet placed face down in pitch. Minor variations among the impressions can be explained by differences in the angle and pressure when the stamps struck the metal. In several instances the sheet was hit too hard, resulting in tiny perforations that become visible when the object is held against the light. The edges are slightly frayed and were somewhat crumpled.

The gold is very pure, between twenty and twenty-three carats, and is of the natural alloy in which it was mined. Spectrographic tests indicate that the only impurities are silver (between five and ten percent) and copper (less than one percent), the usual proportions found in ancient gold. Baser metals were slagged off in the melting process, but in antiquity natural silver admixtures were not removed by refining, as they are today. Over the centuries this silver produced a silver sulphide discoloration; when the pectoral first came to the Museum, there were streaks and spots of blackish deposits. These have since been removed in a bath of morpholine and benzol. The surface was also smoothed where it had been creased and wrinkled.

Amid the great wealth of ancient jewelry in the museums and private collections of the world, only one object provides any close parallel to the pectoral: a gold pectoral

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found in 1836 in a tomb near Cerveteri, the important Etruscan and Roman city some thirty miles northwest of Rome. The contents of the tomb are preserved in the Museo Gregoriano Etrusco of the Vatican, and have been named after their discoverers, the Archpriest of Cerveteri, Alessandro Regolini, and General Vincenzo Galassi. Though about four inches bigger in both width and height, the Regolini-Galassi pectoral (Figures 2 and 3) is of the same shape as the Museum's, decorated according to similar principles, and worked in the identical technique. The same tiny perforations, the same small irregularities, and identical blackish discolorations appear. No tests have been made in the Vatican to determine its composition or to analyze its accretions, but the two pectorals are evidently closely related, not only in shape, decoration, and scale, but also in material and technique.

The method of decoration for both is as follows: starting from the edge, the artist added narrow registers until he reached the center. On the Vatican pectoral the center is shaped like an escutcheon, and for this area the arrangement is abandoned for a horizontal pattern. Sixteen different stamps were employed, including winged horses, lions, chimeras, and human beings, and, in the center, stylized palmettes. These palmettes are of the so-called Phoenician type, and, like the fantastic animals and monsters, are associated with the Orientalizing period of Greek and Etruscan art. This period, which in Greece began in the last quarter of the eighth century and lasted until the thirties of the seventh, started in Etruria somewhat later (perhaps about 700 B.C.) and continued until the end of the seventh century. It was characterized both in Greece and in Etruria by the prevalence of Near Eastern ornament. It is worth remembering that Etruria was exposed to Eastern art not only through Greek imports, but also through Near Eastern objects that reached Etruria directly.

OPPOSITE:
1. *Detail of the Museum's pectoral. Enlarged 1:1.64*

On the Museum's pectoral, which is smaller and less ambitious, the registers are carried all the way to the very core, leaving only a small segment decorated with palmette fronds. On both pectorals the width of the registers is remarkably uniform. Because of the difference in size, the Vatican pectoral has several more registers than the Museum's. The most significant difference between the two, however, lies in the

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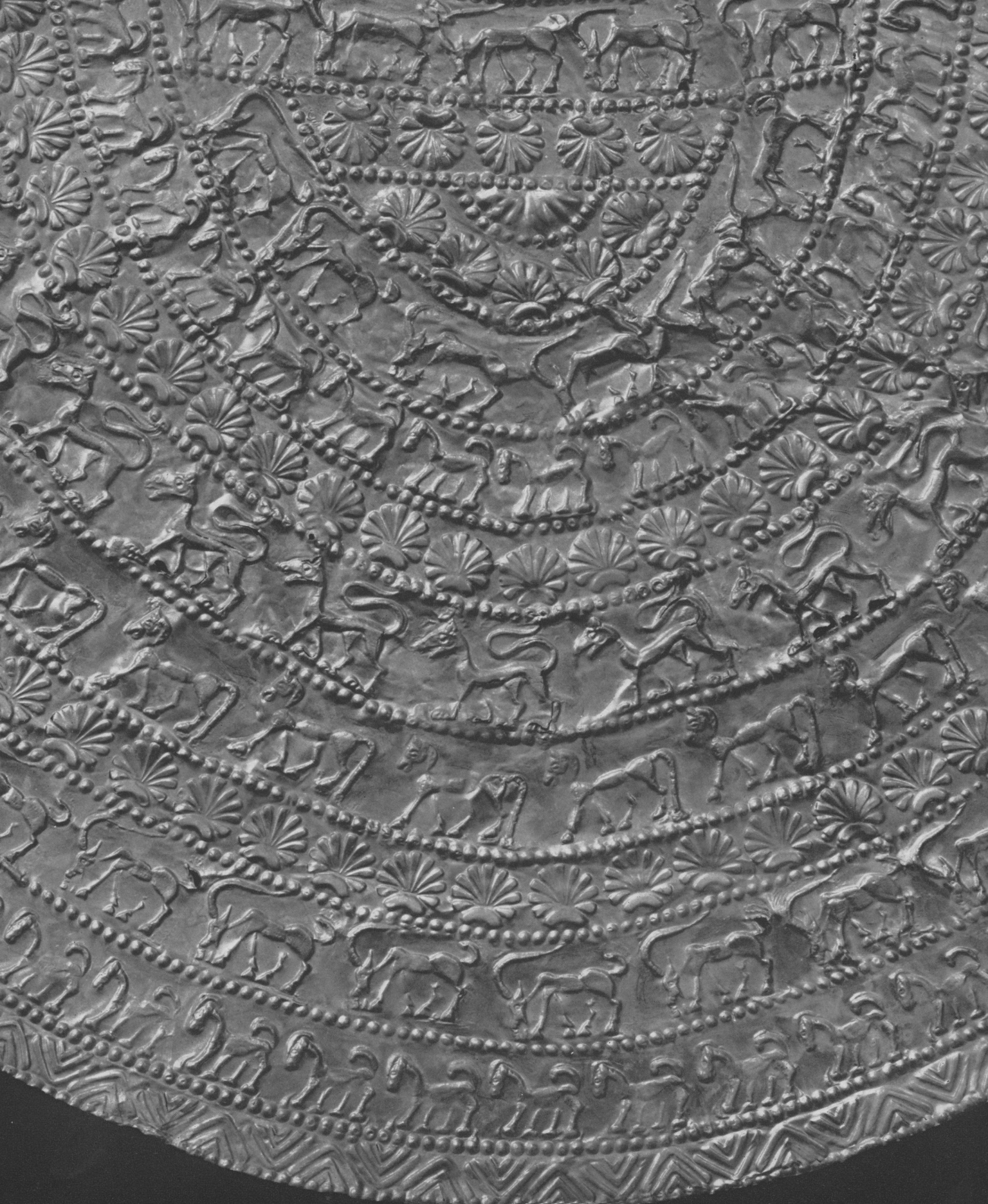
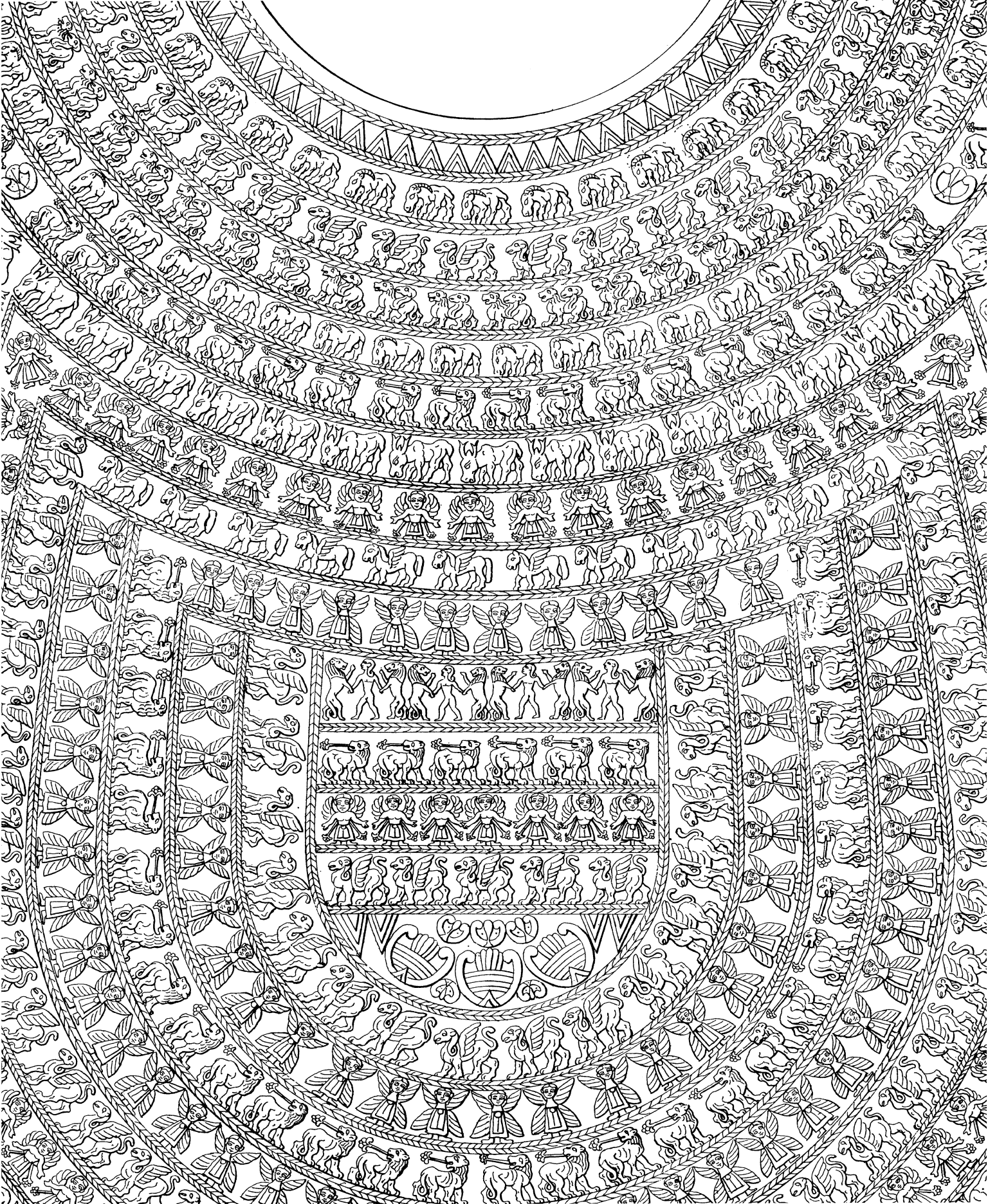




2. *Detail of the Vatican pectoral. Engraving from Cav. Luigi Grifi, Monumenti di Cere Antica (Rome, 1841), pl. 1*

3. *Gold pectoral. Etruscan, VII century B.C. From the Regolini-Galassi tomb, near Cerveteri. Height 16½ inches (42 cm). Vatican, Museo Gregoriano Etrusco*

4. Detail of the Museum's pectoral: goat, enlarged 1:3.43. Length of stamp 1.55 cm

5. Detail: horse, enlarged 1:3.43. Length of stamp 1.55 cm

6. Detail: lion, enlarged 1:3.43. Length of stamp 1.58 cm

7. Detail: quadruped, enlarged 1:3.3. Length of stamp 1.15 cm

ornament. On the Museum's pectoral only six stamps were used. Four of these are animals: an unidentifiable quadruped (possibly a dog) (Figure 7), a goat (Figure 4), a horse (Figure 5), and a lion (Figure 6). After each of these was used once in turn, the quadruped and goat stamps were repeated. Along the outer edge is a narrow band of chevrons, and after every two bands of animals is placed one of palmettes. On each lapel is an additional palmette and a horse.

The lines of dots between the rows, the palmettes in the lapels, and the fronds of the palmette in the central segment were worked freehand. There are a few mistakes. In the second register the spacing had not yet been perfected, so that the front part of an odd quadruped occupies the remaining empty space (Figure 7). A horse in another register shows a correction: first the artist used a lion stamp of the next register and then overstamped his error, with the result that the lion's legs and tail are still visible (Figure 8). The horse next to it has suffered from a double strike.

None of these stamps is the same as any used on the Vatican pectoral; there is, moreover, a subtle difference in their style. There are no fantastic creatures among the animals, and they are modeled with greater naturalism. The graceful, shell-like palmettes (Figure 10), which provide welcome variety between the bands of animals, are far advanced over the heavy ornaments in the center of the Vatican piece (Figure 9). The two pectorals suggest the transition from the Orientalizing to the Archaic period, a transition that had already taken place in Greece, but did not reach Etruria until the latter part of the seventh century. Thus the Vatican pectoral can be dated early in

8. Detail: double strike in one horse and correction through overstamping in the next, enlarged 1:3.43

9. *Enlarged detail of the Vatican pectoral: "Phoenician" palmettes in the segment of the central escutcheon*

the last third of the seventh century; the one at the Museum must be later, and may perhaps be dated in the early sixth century.

Placing the ornaments stylistically, however, does not furnish an answer to the central riddles posed by these two objects: where did they originate, and how did they come into use? Funerary pectorals of one shape or another are known from tombs in various parts of prehistoric northern Europe, all the way from Ireland to the Balkans, but are hardly known in the Mediterranean. We do not know enough about the transmittal of shapes, customs, and techniques to be sure how the custom of their use reached Etruria. The Vatican pectoral was found in an exceptional tomb, containing materials of various periods, in the heart of Etruria. An unconfirmed report indicates that ours was found far to the north, in the region of Novara. Neither of them need have been made where it was found, although the workmanship is indubitably Etruscan. The alleged provenance of our piece, from an outpost area close to the Alpine passes, perhaps gives a useful hint: pectorals were traditional in northern Europe, and the tradition may have filtered down from the north into Italy. If this were true, it would help throw further light on the complex and often mysterious composition of Etruscan culture.

NOTE

The Vatican pectoral is fully described by Luigi Pareti in *La Tomba Regolini-Galassi del Museo Gregoriano Etrusco e la Civiltà dell' Italia Centrale nel sec. VII A.C.* (Vatican, 1947), pp. 190ff., pl. 9. For the chronology consult also P. J. Riis in *Gnomon* XXIII (1951), 67-69.

10. *Detail of the Museum's pectoral: palmettes in the segment of the central escutcheon. Enlarged 1:2.6*

Greek, Roman, and Etruscan Jewelry

ANDREW OLIVER, JR. *Assistant Curator of Greek and Roman Art*

Modern jewelry is prized for its pearls and precious stones – for the fine cutting of the stones and for their elaborate setting. This was not the case in antiquity, when diamonds and rubies were virtually unknown, and when emeralds and sapphires were extremely rare. The pearls and the precious and semiprecious stones that were sparingly used in Hellenistic and Roman jewelry were usually left rough, or if cut, cut cabochon, that is, in a smooth rounded form.

Ancient jewelry was treasured for its gold, and, to a much lesser extent, its silver. Gold had been valued since remote antiquity on account of its rarity and incorruptibility. The survival of Greek and Roman gold coins and gold jewelry, as well as the reports of gold vessels and statues once deposited in ancient treasuries but now lost, reveal the value placed on this metal and the special uses to which it was put.

Silver, on the other hand, though far more common than gold, corrodes. The vast numbers of ancient silver coins and vessels that we have today owe their survival to their relatively substantial form. Delicate jewelry of that metal cannot be expected to have survived in quantity, and, indeed, little has. The real reason, however, may be that little was made. Tarnishing, it would soon become unsightly. And when in contact with skin for repeated periods, silver can cause infection. The ancients surely discovered, for instance, that silver earrings were not suitable for pierced ears.

The Metropolitan Museum possesses a rich collection of ancient jewelry. To illustrate the taste of various periods, a small selection will be discussed here. A few have been illustrated elsewhere, but are included because they represent periods not otherwise covered. This is not intended to be a survey of the history of ancient jewelry, but is meant rather to show, with some small trifling objects, and some true masterpieces, the range and varying aspects of Greek, Etruscan, and Roman jewelry.

The earliest object to be shown (Figure 1) is a Mycenaean gold pendant in the form of two rampant lions, pictured here twice actual size. It is made in two halves, stamped in the same mold, that form the front and back, so that the lions are fully modeled on both sides. The subject brings to mind the monumental sculpture of the two heraldic lions over the gate of the citadel at Mycenae, on which two lions place their forepaws

1. Gold pendant in the form of two rampant lions. Mycenaean, 1500-1200 B.C. Height 11/16 inch. Bequest of Richard B. Seager, 26.31.426

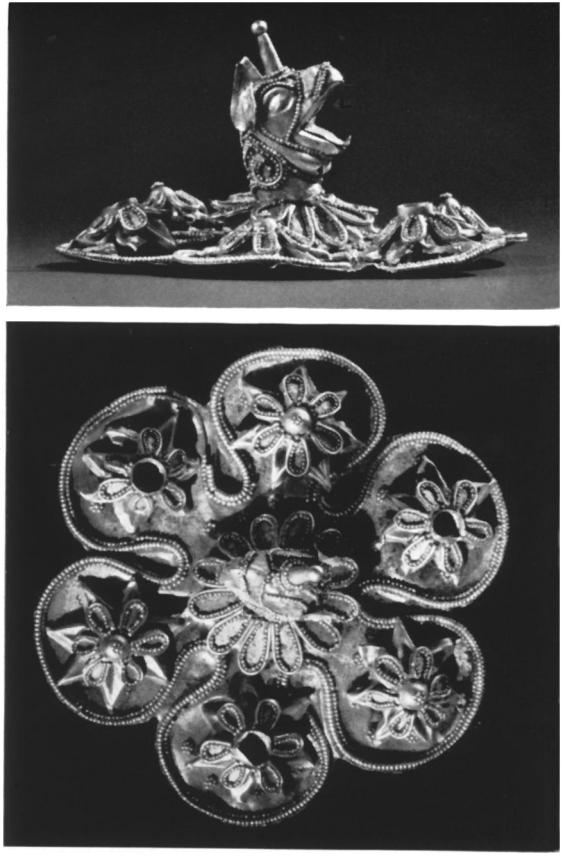
2. *Drawing showing how the pin in Figure 3 might have been used*

on the base of a column that stands between them. The date suggested for the construction of the lion gate is 1250 B.C., but the pendant cannot be dated so precisely because the motif of two heraldic animals occurs in ivories and on seals several centuries before the lion gate, and also because somewhat similar repoussé ornaments are known from earlier Mycenaean tombs. The best range of dates for this ornament is 1500 to 1200, the period when Mycenae flourished.

Contemporary with the pendant but from a different part of the Mediterranean world is the pin shown in Figure 3. Pins have always been standard items of dress, and it is not surprising to find some in this regal metal. Pins with a hole in the shaft like the one illustrated here have been found in quantity on Syrian, Palestinian, and Cypriot sites, and must have been in use throughout the second millennium B.C. Whether they were used in the hair or to fasten clothing cannot be ascertained, but how they might have secured two layers of a garment is illustrated in Figure 2. The pin was probably cast in a mold in one piece. This example can be dated by excavated parallels to about the fourteenth century B.C., but it is difficult to say whether it was made in Cyprus or on the Levantine mainland.

3. *Gold pin. Cypro-Mycenaean, 1400-1300 B.C. Length 2 5/16 inches. Rogers Fund, 54.11.4*

Jewelry was scarce though not entirely absent in Greece from about 1000 B.C., the time of the disintegration of the Mycenaean world, until about 800. Then, in the eighth and seventh centuries, with colonization and increasing contacts with foreigners accompanied by a rise in prosperity, jewelry again became plentiful in Greece. Figure 4 shows a mid-seventh-century ornament made on one of the Aegean islands. Melos has been suggested



4. *Gold ornament. Melian, VII century B.C. Height 1/8 inch, diameter 1 5/8 inches. Rogers Fund, 12.229.24*

as the site of manufacture because, out of some sixteen comparable examples, eight have been found there.

The ornament is of electrum, a natural alloy of gold and silver that was often used for archaic Greek jewelry. The function of this piece is not known for sure, but it probably served, together with four or five others, to adorn a gold headband or diadem. It consists of a flat sheet of gold, cut to resemble a six-petalled rosette. Each petal is edged with beaded wire and granulation, and is further ornamented with little rosettes elaborately fashioned with gold leaf, filigree, and granulation. The head of a griffin rises up through a collar in the center. Among the favorite imaginary beasts of the Greeks, griffins had the body of a lion, the head and wings of an eagle, and the ears of a horse. Three of the little rosettes have a hole in the center, where,

to judge from other surviving examples, tiny gold bees were once attached, to give an additional sense of realism.

In antiquity a wreath was presented to the winner of an athletic contest; it was also customary to place a wreath in a tomb to signify the victories of life. Sometimes the funerary wreaths were of gold. Gold wreaths were also placed in sanctuaries as dedications to the gods.

The leaves or sprays of certain trees and shrubs were favored for these wreaths because of their association with Greek deities: oak with Zeus, ivy with Dionysos, laurel with Apollo, and olive with Athena. Myrtle was associated with marriage and, in addition, had the special distinction of being worn by initiates at the mysteries of Eleusis. Gold wreaths in the form of oak, ivy, laurel, olive, and myrtle first appear in Greece in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., but few have survived. They rendered nature as accurately as the ivy wreath shown below. Two branches, each originally with twelve leaves and several clusters of berries, are bound together with gold wire. A wreath like this was obviously fragile, and it is likely that it served primarily as an ornament for the tomb. The style is similar to a gold myrtle spray found in a fifth-century tomb excavated by Lord Elgin near Athens in 1804. The fifth century is a probable date for the ivy wreath also.

Before the fourth century B.C., the beads and pendants of Greek necklaces were usually strung on perishable strings instead of being firmly attached to metal braids or chains. For this reason the proper arrangement of the different elements of sixth- and fifth-century necklaces is often uncertain, for even in scientific excavations, the exact location of the beads and pendants lying in a tomb, frequently the only evidence for their disposition, is difficult to note, and the order has to

5. Gold ivy wreath. Greek, V century B.C. Width 12 inches. Gift of C. Ruxton Love, Jr., 64.304.7

6. *Gold pendant in the form of a gorgoneion. Greek, V century B.C. From Cyprus. Height 1⅛ inches. The Cesnola Collection, purchased by subscription, 74.51.3397*

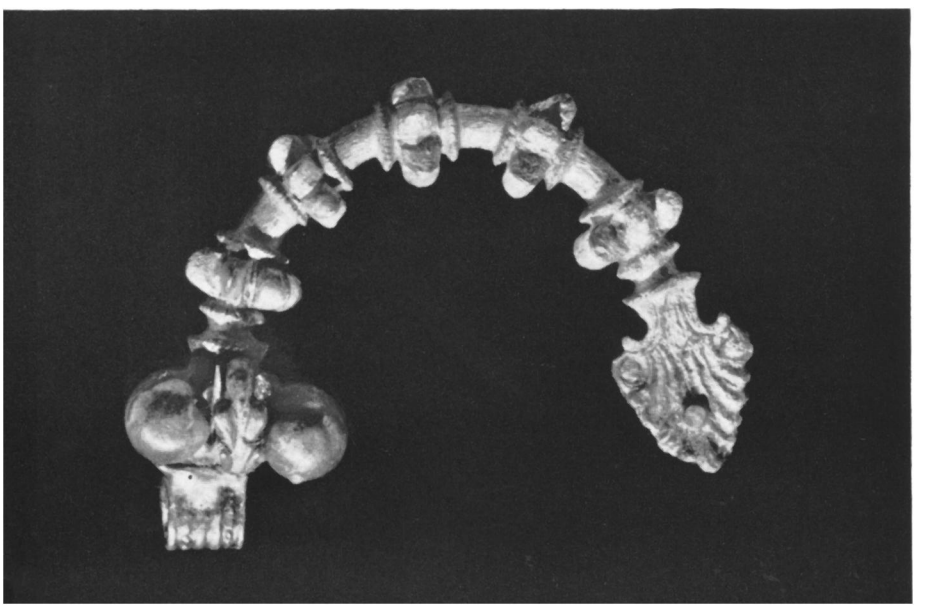
be restored by guesswork. Hundreds of gold beads and pendants, many strung together arbitrarily in modern times, came to the Museum in the 1870s as part of the collection of Cypriot antiquities formed by General Luigi Palma di Cesnola. Cesnola, who was Abraham Lincoln's appointee as consul to Cyprus, was the first Director of the Metropolitan Museum, from 1879 until his death in 1904.

Most pendants of this period are simply in the form of little buds, nuts, or jars. Few are as elaborate as the example shown in Figure 6. Suspended from a hollow nut-shaped bead by a short collar is a gorgoneion, the head of Medusa. Medusa, one of the Gorgons, was beheaded by Perseus, and her horrible visage became one of the classic apotropaic, or evil-averting, images in ancient times. Here it served as the ornament of the central pendant of a necklace. Her features are rendered in repoussé with certain details in other techniques. The eyebrows are chased; the second row of curls is indicated by filigree circles, each containing a granule; the teeth are a row of granulations; the one remaining earring is a little disk with a raised filigree border.

The style of the face suggests a fifth-century date. Very like this pendant is another in Berlin, also showing a gorgoneion. It was found in a fifth-century grave in Cyprus, a circumstance that confirms the date of the Museum's pendant.

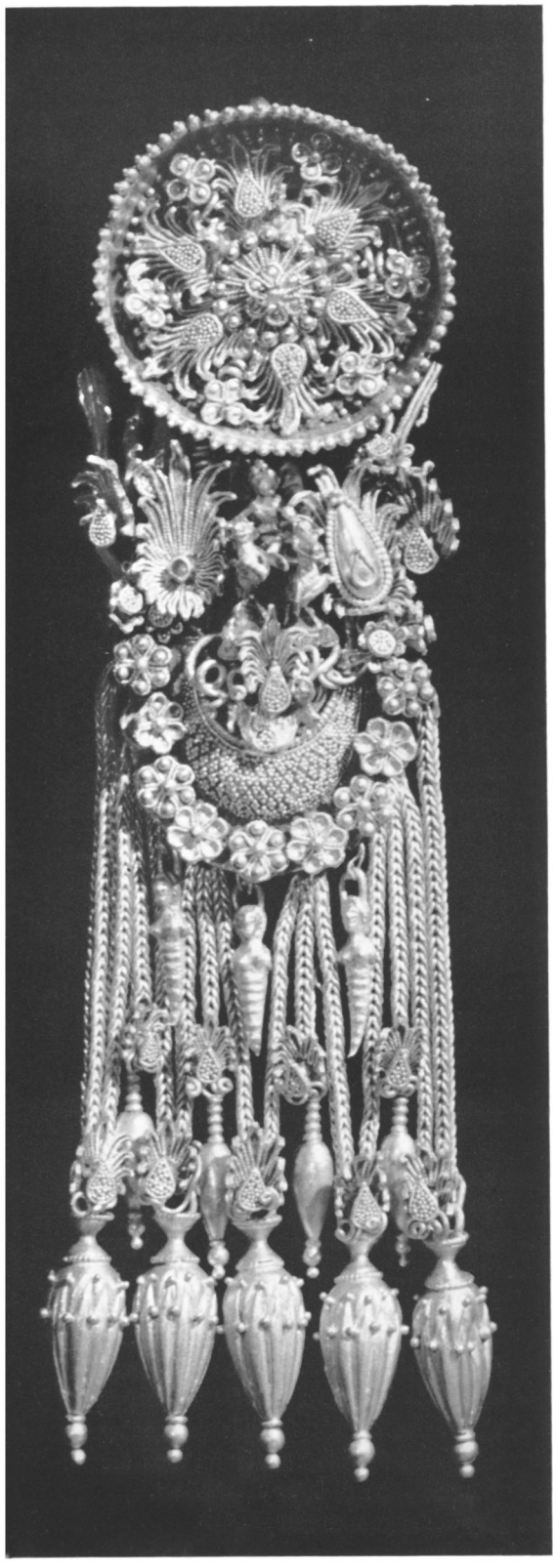
The silver fibula, or safety pin, shown in Figure 7 is a handsome example of a semi-barbaric type that has been found at many sites in the Balkans and in northern, but not southern, Greece. These fibulas spread into Greece from the north, but evidently never became generally accepted. Most of them are silver. Archaeological evidence indicates that they were made from the late sixth to the late fourth centuries B.C., and this one may be dated by comparison to the mid-fourth century. The pin that extended from the palmette ornament at one end of the bow to the catch near the hollow balls at the opposite end is missing. The bow itself is ornamented with five "mill-wheels," which have given the name "mill-wheel fibula" to this class.

7. *Silver fibula (safety pin). Greek, IV century B.C. Width 1 9/16 inches. Gift of James J. Rorimer, 52.36*



The fourth and third centuries were perhaps the most illustrious in the history of Greek gold work. Alexander the Great's conquests toward the end of the fourth century exposed an already flourishing art to fresh ideas and new markets.

The pair of earrings shown in Figures 8 and 9 provides good evidence of the technical skill and patience of Greek goldsmiths in this period. The disks at the top are covered in front with a floral rosette and have a hooked pin on the back that enabled the earrings to be worn. The main pendant is crescent-shaped and covered with granules arranged in lozenge patterns. Just above it is a representation of



Nike driving a two-horse chariot, a masterpiece in miniature. All about are palmettes and rosettes that mask the joins of the various parts. Hanging from the crescent on fine chains are three rows of pendants: three female creatures, their lower parts wrapped in swaddling; four spindle-shaped beads; and five fluted beads perhaps meant to represent nuts or little jars.

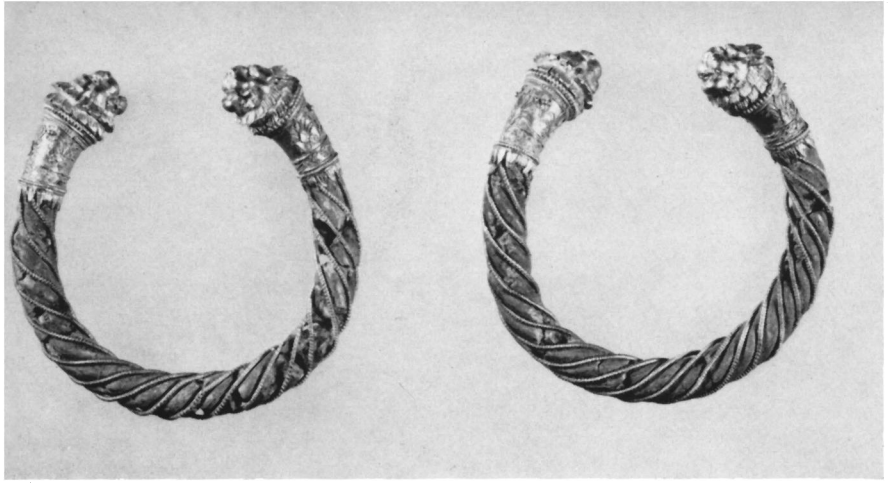
The earrings were found in Asia Minor together with two pairs of bracelets, several necklaces, and a seal ring, all dating from the late fourth century. Other examples of this

8. Enlargement of one of the earrings in Figure 9

9. Pair of gold earrings. Greek, IV century B.C. From Asia Minor. Length 2⅝ inches. Rogers Fund, 48.11.2,3

type of earring are known: another pair in this Museum was found at Madytos on the Gallipoli peninsula; a pair in London came from Crete; a fragmentary pair in Istanbul was found at Rize on the southeastern shore of the Black Sea; and several other pairs, now in the Hermitage, were discovered in the Scythian tombs of South Russia. It is evident that, wherever these earrings were made, most were exported to customers living on the northwestern fringe of the Greek world.

The export of Greek jewelry often influ-



10. Pair of gold and glass bracelets. Greek, IV or early III century B.C. Diameter 2⅝ inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 57.11.8,9

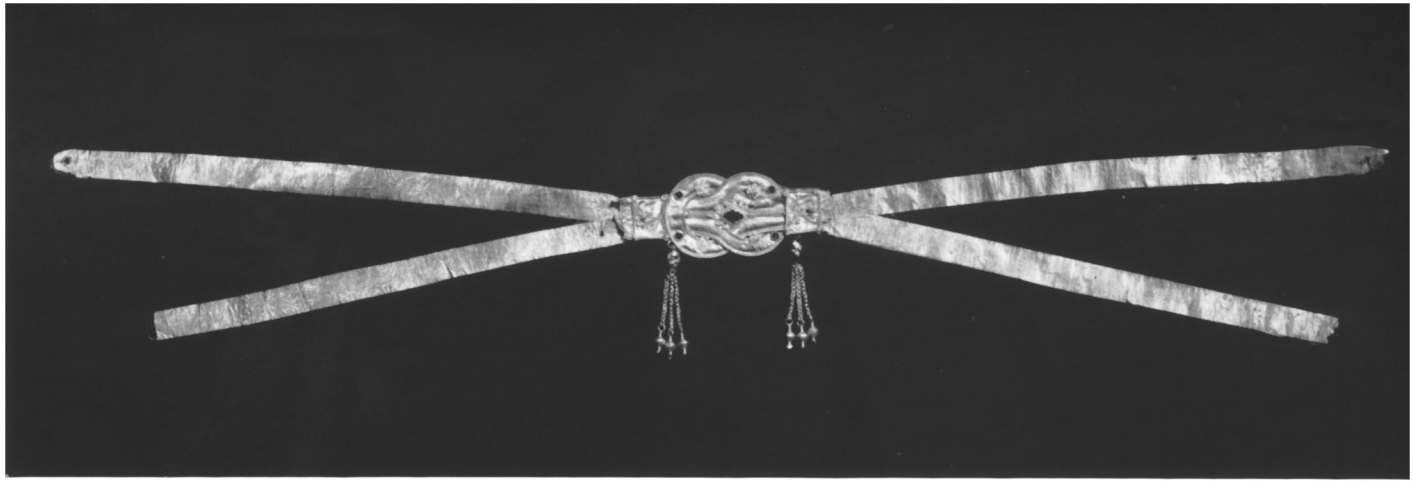
enced foreign taste. In the fourth century, for instance, nearly circular bracelets with animal-head finials were popular with the Achaemenians. They were derived from Greek bracelets of this shape that had been made since the Archaic period. A fourth- or third-century Greek pair is shown in Figure 10. In the East such bracelets were worn by both men and women, but in Greece they were ornaments solely for women. Whereas most of the Achaemenian examples have plain round hoops, the majority of the surviving Greek examples have spirally fluted hoops or hoops of thick twisted wire. This pair is unique in one respect: the bodies of the bracelets are composed of blue glass. The glass is spirally grooved, and is bound with twisted gold wire. The ends are capped with finials in the form of lions' heads, and the collars behind the heads are decorated with filigree palmettes and laurel wreaths. Through time the glass has acquired a gray surface, but when fresh the effect of the blue against the gold must have been stunning.

A different type of bracelet is represented by the example shown in Figure 11. Instead of being made in one piece, and therefore rigid, it is composed of three sections: a rectangular centerpiece, the setting for a garnet, and two arms that form the curve of the bracelet. The frame for the garnet consists of thin strips and beaded wire. The two arms are hinged to the oblong mount, and are movable. The knobbed portions of each arm, done in repoussé, and framed above and below by thin strips, are curiously zoömorphic and appear to represent caterpillars – perhaps an amusing touch on the part of the goldsmith. Wire loops at the two extremities enabled the bracelet to be secured. A third-century date is likely.

The piece came to the Museum together with other bracelets and earrings that are said to have been part of a hoard of jewelry discovered in Thessaly in the late 1920s. The major part of this hoard, famous because it is one of the largest treasures of classical jewelry ever found, is in Athens, in the Stathatos collection in the National Museum and in the Benaki Museum. The evidence by which this bracelet is associated with that hoard is circumstantial, but the style is comparable, and the story may well be true.

The knot of Herakles – two interlocking loops – was a popular motif in ancient jewelry from the time of Alexander the Great to the Roman Imperial period and beyond. It was called by that name because no ends were visible, making it exceedingly difficult to untie. In the diadem shown on the opposite page, a knot of Herakles forms the central ornament. The loops are edged with twisted wire, and their ends are concealed by rectangular plaques. In the center of the knot is a faceted garnet, framed by a palmette. Arranged symmetrically about the loops are four little garnets and four gold rosettes. The side plaques are bordered with twisted wire and little disks, and are fringed with filigree zigzags. Attached to the lower corners near the loops are two sets of pendants, each with three pomegranates suspended by fine chains from a satyr's mask. The narrow bands of gold leaf extending diagonally on each side were found with the central ornament and belong to the diadem, but they were not necessarily arranged in this fashion.

11. Gold bracelet. Greek, III century B.C. Width 3⅛ inches. Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 45.11.9



12, 13. Gold diadem. Greek, late IV or III century B.C. From the island of Ithaca. Width of central piece 2 5/16 inches. Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 58.11.5

This is a relatively simple diadem compared to some of the richly decorated examples known, but none has so curious a history. In the early nineteenth century, the Ionian islands, situated off the west coast of Greece, had come under British protection, and because of their location they became a favorite stopping place for English travelers. An ancient cemetery had been discovered on one of the islands, Ithaca, and its casual exploration was found by many to be an agreeable pastime. In December 1812, an amateur expedition was arranged by John Lee, a traveling fellow of Cambridge University, to dig on Ithaca. Four friends joined Lee, one of whom was Otto Magnus Baron von Stackelberg. Stackelberg was engaged with Cockerell and others in transporting the sculpture of the temples at Aegina and Bassae to Zakynthos, another of the Ionian islands, where they were subsequently bought by the Glyptothek in Munich and the British Museum, respectively.

Lee and Stackelberg and the rest of the party had excellent luck in their treasure hunt, being rewarded with several superb silver vessels and a quantity of fine gold jewelry among which was the diadem now in the Metropolitan. They were evidently in high spirits as a result of their success, and someone inscribed, as a joke, the names of Sappho and Laodamia in Greek capitals on the back of the diadem. Although Laodamia was a common name in antiquity, no girl of that name is associated with Sappho in ancient sources. The association of the two names is actually to be found only in Renaissance literature. Laodamia Forteguerri-Petrucci, a sixteenth-century Italian poet of Pistoia, and Sappho, the ancient poet of Lesbos, were contrasted by Agnolo Firenzuola in his *Dialogo delle bellezze delle Donne*, one having the virtue of pure love, the other the vice of unwholesome love. This work first appeared in 1548 but was reprinted many times through the nineteenth century. It was probably the juxtaposition of these two names in Firenzuola's *Dialogo* that inspired the inscription on the diadem.

The spoils of the Ithaca dig were divided among the finders. Lee's share, which did not include the diadem, passed to the Society of Antiquaries, and in 1920 to the British Museum. Who first obtained the diadem as part of his share is uncertain; we do know, however, that General Sir James Campbell, British Governor of the Ionian islands from 1814 to 1816, was in possession of the diadem three years after its discovery, for H. E. Bunbury received the piece from Campbell in 1815. The diadem remained in the Bunbury family until the 1930s. Then, in 1958, after having changed hands several times in the intervening twenty-odd years, it was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum.

Many different types of earrings were made in the Hellenistic period, and those having the form of birds seem to have been especially popular. A pair in the form of doves is shown at the left. Separate gold sheets were used for the two halves of each bird, while a third, fan-shaped, sheet served as the tail. The wings, tail feathers, and collar with rosette pendant are marked with twisted gold wire. A cylindrical base under each dove, as well as a rosette above, are likewise ornamented with gold wire. The looped pin is tightly bound with gold wire where it is soldered along the seam on top of the dove.

Made in the same manner as the dove earrings is a single earring in the form of a dolphin (Figure 16), formerly in the collection of

14. Pair of gold earrings in the form of doves. Greek, III century B.C. Height 1 1/16 inches. Fletcher Fund, 25.78.39,40

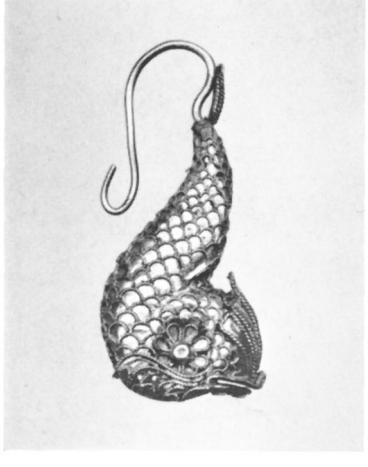
Richard Norton, Director of the American School of Classical Studies in Rome from 1899 to 1907. The body of the dolphin was made in two halves from gold sheets; the fins at the side, the rosettes surrounding the eyes, and the palmettes in front and at the tail are of separate gold sheets. The scales are indicated with twisted wire, and the eyes themselves are rendered by little hollow balls. Several close parallels are known, one pair said to be from Taranto in southern Italy. A South Italian provenance is suggested for this earring also.

Dolphins with tails in the air, like this one, occur as supports for statues of Poseidon and Aphrodite. The connection with Poseidon is obvious; the association with Aphrodite is not accidental but is an allusion to her birth from the sea. In this earring the dolphin should be considered as a symbol of Aphrodite and, as such, an appropriate ornament for a lady.

Dolphins appear also as the clasps of the gold necklace illustrated at the right. They are fashioned of thin gold sheets, not solid nuggets, and are shown in the familiar attitude of leaping through the waves. Strung between the clasps and the simple gold chain of the necklace are several white and purple glass beads framed with gold collars. Colored glass and semiprecious stones are used increasingly after the fourth century, and the practice continued through Roman Imperial times.

The pair of earrings with pendants in the

15. Gold necklace with glass beads. Greek, III or II century B.C. Length 14⅞ inches. Rogers Fund, 17.230.127

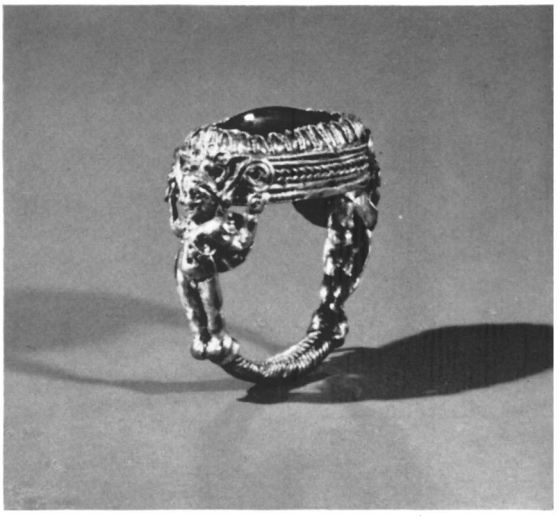


16. Gold earring in the form of a dolphin. Greek, III or II century B.C. Length 1⅞ inches. Rogers Fund, 43.11.9

17. Pair of gold earrings in the form of Erotes. Greek, III century B.C. From Crete. Height 2¼ inches. Gift of Mrs. Albert M. Lythgoe, 30.116.1,2

form of hovering Erotes (Figure 17) were said to have been found about 1900 near Rhodovani on Crete at the site of ancient Elyros. They were the gift in 1930 of Mrs. Albert M. Lythgoe, wife of the Curator of Egyptian Art who retired in 1929. The winged figure of Eros is one of the commonest pendants in Greek and Roman earrings, but the quality of modeling in this pair is far better than in most others. Each Eros wears a billowing cape, and carries an oinochoe and a torch, the end of which is missing. The figures are cast solid in one piece except for the arms, which are added separately. The wings and capes are hammered sheets, attached at the shoulder blades. The disks that hid the attachment pins and from which the Erotes are suspended are bordered with twisted wire, and have a central rosette made of overlapping tongues of gold.

Erotes also occur on a magnificent gold ring of the third or second century from Cyprus (Figure 18); like the gorgoneion pendant mentioned above, it is part of the collection of antiquities formed by General Cesnola. A



18. Gold ring with an amethyst. Greek, III or II century B.C. From Cyprus. Height 15/16 inch. The Cesnola Collection, purchased by subscription, 74.51.4074

large amethyst is contained in a box setting richly ornamented with beaded and twisted wire. The Erotes, arching backward, form two sides of the hoop. With arms and wings upraised, and feet planted squarely on the spirally bound wire that completes the hoop below, the Erotes act as supports for the setting. Over his right shoulder each Eros wears a bandolier hung with little pendant balls. The details of the figures and the ornament are considerably blurred through constant wearing, as one would expect, and it is because of the effects of wear that most rings, unlike this elaborate example, are of simple design.

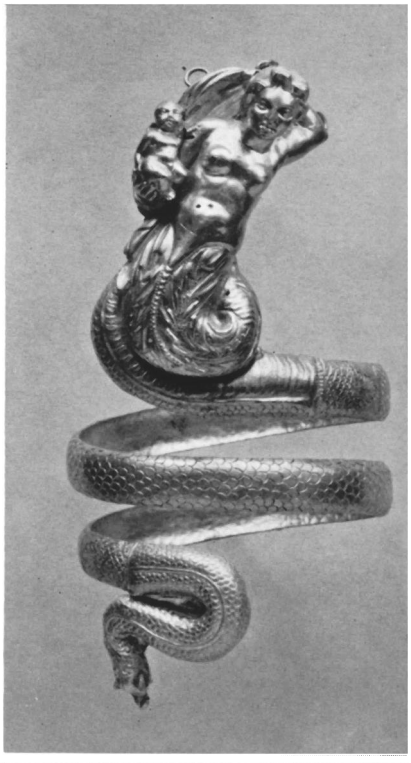
A ring of very simple design and set with a large polished garnet (Figure 19) was recently given to the Museum. The oval setting is in several degrees, and is plain except for one step, near the widest spread of the bezel, that is hatched all around. The ring is reported to have been found in a tomb on Melos in July of 1825 by a native of the island. The finder sold it a year later in Smyrna to an American, Griffin Smith, who was acting in behalf of Isaac McKim of Baltimore. The ring remained in the McKim family until 1962 when it was presented to the Museum by a descendant, Mrs. Harriet W. McKim Field. Rings of this shape have been found in Greece and at eastern Mediterranean sites, and can be dated to the third or second century B.C.

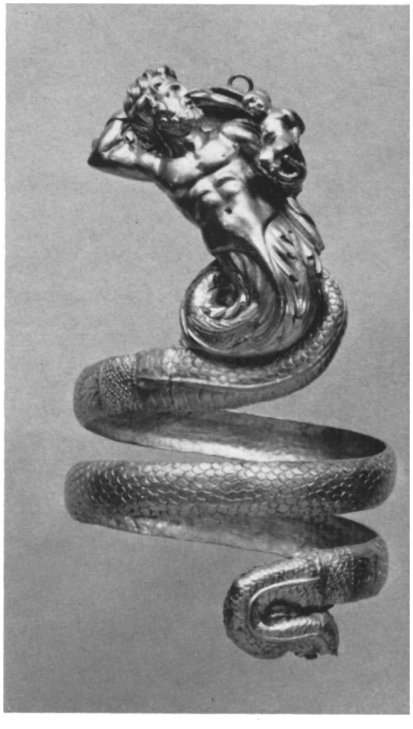
Among the masterpieces of Greek jewelry in the Metropolitan Museum is a pair of gold armbands acquired ten years ago (Figure 20). Out of more than fifteen pairs and single spiral bracelets and armbands of Greek workmanship known, this pair is unquestionably the finest. They are in the form of a triton and a tritoness, well-known sea monsters of Greek imagery, whose bodies are a combination of a human torso and a fish tail. The triton and tritoness both carry an Eros in the crook of an arm, while with the free hand they arrange some drapery over their shoulders. An ancient gemstone in Florence shows a triton with his mate and two offspring as well as an attendant Eros, in other words, a triton's family. In the armbands the children are lacking, but the two Erotes are symbolic of the union of the triton and tritoness.

The concept of a family of an imaginary creature was first given representational form by Zeuxis, a painter of the late fifth century B.C., who, according to the ancient writer Lucian, painted a family of centaurs. Lucian also tells us that Zeuxis painted a triton, but we do not know whether he painted a family of tritons. In any event, it was in the fourth century that tritons and tritonesses first occur together as decorative elements in Greek art.

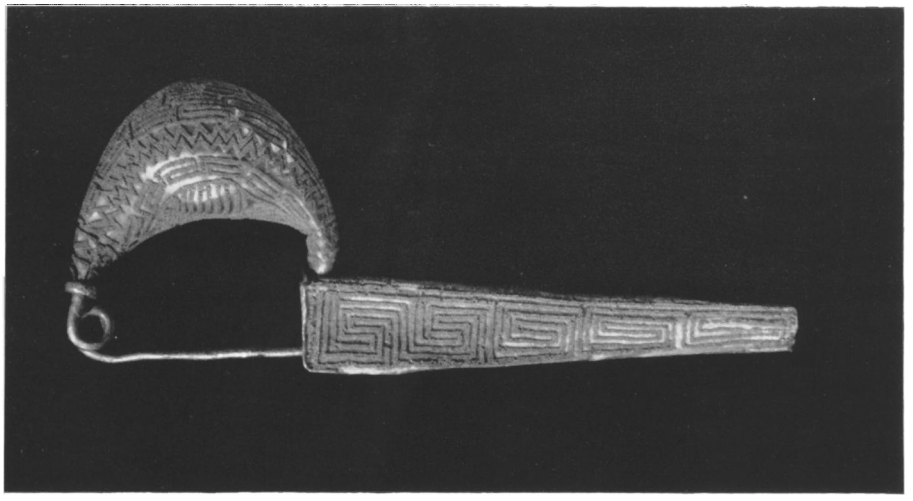
Spiral armbands were worn as early as the fifth century B.C., but they were evidently fashionable for many centuries. This pair can best be dated in the third century. They must have been worn on the upper arm, for only there would the figures be upright and make

19. Gold ring with a garnet. Greek, III or II century B.C. From Melos. Height 1½ inches. Gift of Mrs. Harriet W. McKim Field, 62.42





20. Pair of gold armbands with a triton and a tritoness. Greek, III century B.C. Height of the triton armband 5¾ inches, height of the tritoness armband 6¼ inches. Rogers Fund, 56.11.5,6



21. *Gold fibula (safety pin). Etruscan, VII century B.C. Length 2¼ inches. Fletcher Fund, 31.11.1*

22. *Pair of gold earrings. Etruscan, VI or early V century B.C. Height 1¼ inches. Rogers Fund, 59.11.21,22*

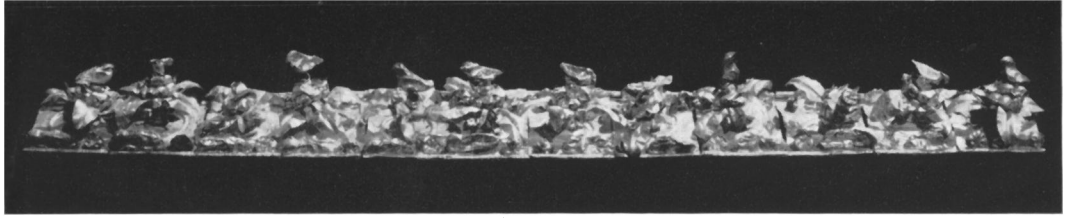
sense. Little staples (just visible over the elbow of the tritoness and above the drapery of both figures), were attached to the wearer's dress at the shoulder to prevent the armbands from slipping down to the elbow.

What we call Etruscan culture first appeared in Central Italy about 700 B.C., and it is in the seventh century that the earliest Etruscan jewelry can be dated. Goldsmiths of Etruria were by no means less accomplished than their Greek contemporaries, but their early jewelry, although employing essentially the same techniques, has a particular, and sometimes barbaric, flavor.

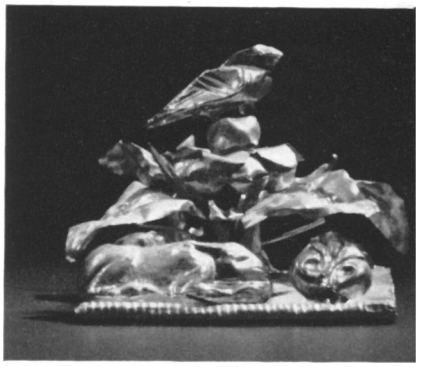
The gold fibula shown at the left is among the earliest pieces of Etruscan jewelry. It is actually a translation into gold of a fibula common in bronze in Etruria. The gold sheets of the bow and the long catch for the pin are covered with hundreds of granules arranged in zigzags and complicated meanders. In style, the fibula closely matches the goldwork that has been found in the rich tombs of Praeneste and Cerveteri, and may be dated to the seventh century B.C.

Later, in the sixth and fifth centuries, Etruscan jewelry became increasingly influenced by Greek motifs, as the pair of earrings in Figure 22 illustrates. The rosettes and flowers, symmetrically arranged in a square, and the palmette on top in which two hares are crouching are borrowed from the extensive repertory of Greek ornament. The earrings themselves are composed of a gold strip, folded so as nearly to make a cylinder. The pin is attached to one end of the strip, and is masked by the openwork palmette. Earrings of this design were common in Etruria in the sixth and early fifth centuries. No two pairs have quite the same patterns. Italian archaeologists call them *orecchini a baule* because of their resemblance to a valise.

Hares, similar to those on the earrings, can be seen on an Etruscan diadem composed of twelve rectangular plaques (Figure 23). They are joined to each other by means of two strings that pass through tubes on opposite sides of each plaque. The hares, twenty-four in all, crouch beside blossoms emerging through



23, 24. Gold diadem and detail of one plaque. Etruscan, early V century B.C. Length 10¾ inches, length of plaque 15/16 inch. Rogers Fund, 47.11.10



tubular collars. Birds perch on top of the flowers. The individual pieces have been crushed in many places, giving the diadem a disarrayed look today, but in antiquity the birds and hares must have been more clearly distinguishable against the blossoms. Similar diadems exist in the Fogg Museum at Harvard University, in the Vatican Museum, and in a private collection in New York, and are all the products of Etruscan goldsmiths working in the early fifth century B.C.

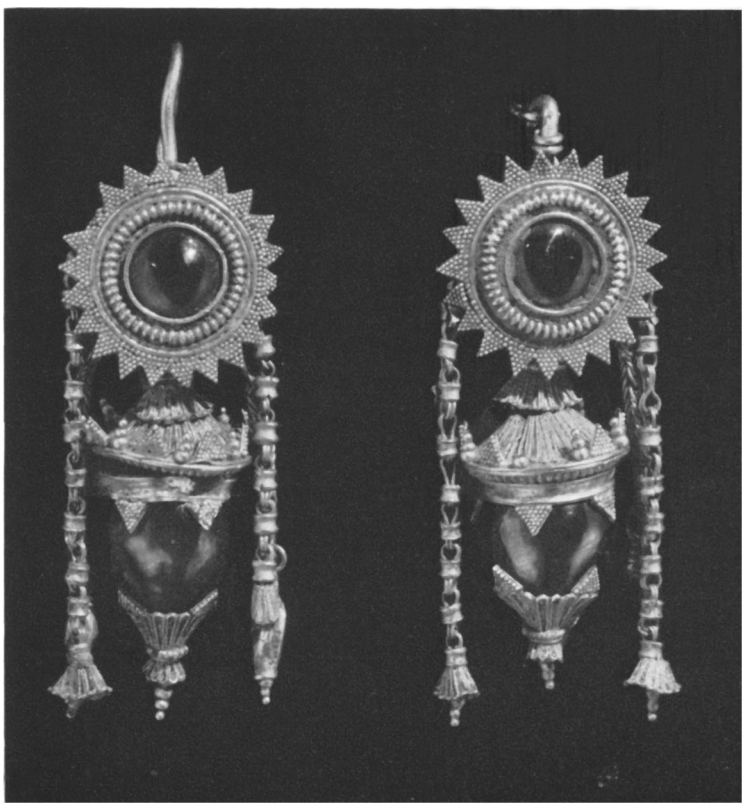
Earrings in the form of a tubular hoop were common in Etruria during the fourth century. Figure 25 shows one of several pairs that came to the Museum in 1895 as part of the extensive collection of Etruscan and Roman jewelry formed by Samuel T. Baxter. The embossed decoration on each earring consists of an acanthus stalk bordered by wave patterns, but they are not identical in detail although obviously of the same general design. Each was made individually. A rounded puncheon was used to hammer the design into a gold sheet which had been placed over a core, perhaps of pitch. A pointed instrument produced the background of dots. At some stage, the sheet was folded over into a tube, and a fluted collar embodying a lenticular bead was added at one end of the hoop.

The pair of earrings shown in Figure 26 exhibits influence of the Greek design of disk and pendant. Here, the central pendant is a garnet cut cabochon and mounted in gold collars above and below. Chains ending in flowers or buds hang on either side. Above, set in the center of the disk that shields the pin, is a smaller garnet. Gold granulations cover the serrated edges of the disk. Earrings of this type are common in Etruscan jewelry of the third and second centuries. Their abstract ornaments point the way to Roman jewelry, in which geometric forms predominate.

BELOW:

25. Pair of gold earrings. Etruscan, IV century B.C. Height 1½ inches. Formerly in the collection of Samuel T. Baxter. Purchased by subscription, 95.15.182,183

26. Pair of gold earrings. Etruscan, III or II century B.C. Height 1½ inches. Formerly in the collection of Samuel T. Baxter. Purchased by subscription, 95.15.201,202



27. *Gold necklace with pearls and beryl beads. Roman, I or II century* A.D. *Length 13⅞ inches. Gift of George D. Pratt, 25.192.1*

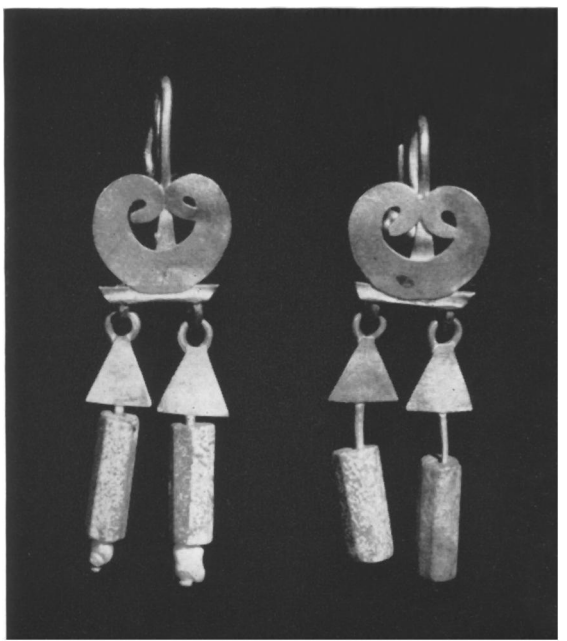
28. *Pair of gold earrings with pearls and beryl beads. Roman, II or III century* A.D. *Length 1⅝ inches. The Cesnola Collection, purchased by subscription, 74.51.3948, 3949*

In the Roman Republic lavish use of jewelry was frowned upon and in some cases prohibited by law. Not until the Augustan period was jewelry made in quantity. In style it is the logical descendant of late Hellenistic and Etruscan jewelry.

The two necklaces illustrated on these pages (Figures 27 and 30) represent two widespread types of Roman necklace, one having gold sheets cut in various shapes alternating with glass beads or semiprecious stones, the other having a simple chain and a single pendant.

The necklace on the left is composed of lozenge-shaped gold strips linked to pearls and beryl beads. A rosette circle forms one part of the clasp. The other necklace consists of a heavy chain with a crescent-shaped pendant. At the ends of the chain, and forming part of the clasp, are two openwork wheels studded with gold balls. Necklaces with similar pendants and wheels have been found at Pompeii. Both necklaces can be dated in the first or second century A.D.

Sometimes the pendant takes the form of a gold coin, mounted and framed by a cut-out border. Figure 29 shows an aureus of the Emperor Philip the Arab, who reigned from A.D. 244 to 249. It is likely that the coin had been in circulation for many years before being incorporated into an ornament. The practice of using gold coins in this way may go back to the first century A.D., for coins of that period have been found set into pendants.



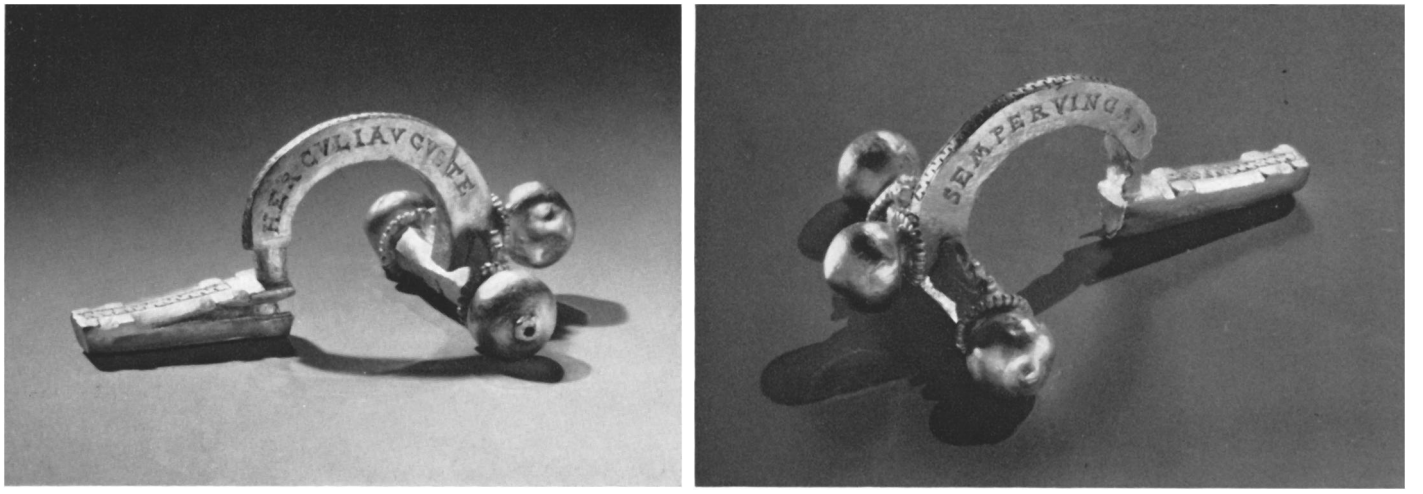
29. *Pendant with an aureus of Philip the Arab. Roman, III century* A.D. *Diameter 1 5/16 inches. Bequest of Joseph H. Durkee, 99.35.70*

30. *Gold necklace. Roman, I or II century* A.D. *Length 14 5/8 inches. Rogers Fund, 21.88.90*

Pomponius, a Roman jurist who flourished in the first half of the second century, and who is quoted in Justinian's *Digest of Laws*, mentions that gold and silver coins were habitually used as ornaments. The majority of such pendants, however, have coins of the third and fourth centuries A.D.

The necklace illustrated in Figure 27 has its counterpart in earrings, and the pair shown here (Figure 28) is an example selected at random from many similar ones in the Museum's collection. With numerous variations, the type has been found at many sites of the Roman Empire. This pair was found in Cyprus and came to the Museum with the Cesnola collection. A cut-out gold crescent is attached to the pin, while pearls and beryl beads are threaded to gold triangular pendants below. Such earrings were probably inexpensive objects and must have been made in quantity during the second and third centuries.

Flavius Vopiscus, the biographer of Aurelian (Emperor from A.D. 270 to 275), recorded that it was during his reign that soldiers were first permitted to wear fibulas of gold instead simply of silver. The fibula illustrated in Figure 31, discovered at Arezzo in 1866, is probably the sort referred to. It is of the crossbow type, having a bow with a catch at one end, and a transverse member at the other, to which the pin (now missing) was hinged. The cross-piece is decorated with hollow balls and two cut-out dolphins. Bronze fibulas of this type were common in the third and fourth centuries. It is not the gold, however, that sets



31. Gold fibula (safety pin). Roman, early IV century A.D. Length 2¾ inches. Formerly in the collection of Samuel T. Baxter. Purchased by subscription, 95.15.113

this fibula apart from most others, but rather the Latin inscription engraved on both sides of the bow: HERCULI AUGUSTE SEMPER VINCAS (Hercules Augustus, may you always conquer).

A brief historical resumé is necessary to interpret the inscription. In A.D. 293, the Emperor Diocletian enlarged the government by creating a tetrarchy, a form of administration having four rulers, two co-regents in the West with the titles "Augustus" and "Caesar," and two in the East with the same titles. Diocletian placed the Eastern branch of the tetrarchy under the protection of Jupiter, and the Western branch under Hercules. The inscription on the fibula refers, therefore, to a ruler in the West with the title of Augustus. There are a number of possible candidates. A stylistically similar fibula in Turin, bearing an inscription with the name of Constantine, makes it highly probable, however, that the inscription on this fibula also refers to Constantine. He became a member of the tetrarchy with the title of Caesar in 306, and assumed the title of Augustus a year later. In 310, he abandoned Hercules as his protector, and adopted Sol Invictus instead. Constantine can only have used the title "Herculi Auguste" from 307 to 310, and the fibula, which probably belonged to a high-ranking soldier in his command, must have been made during those years. Jewelry made much later than this fibula cannot properly be called Roman because in 325 Constantine once again transferred his allegiance, giving up Sol Invictus to proclaim Christ as his protector, and we may say with good reason that this momentous act marked the close of the age of classical antiquity.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

Dietrich von Bothmer noticed the juxtaposition of the names of Laodamia and Sappho in Brantôme's *Vies des Dames Galantes*, and from there it was possible to trace the names to the original sixteenth-century reference.

The Museum's collection of classical jewelry has come from different sources. A large amount of Mycenaean, Greek, and Roman jewelry from Cyprus was acquired with the Cesnolà collection in 1874. Much of it is published in volume III of *A Descriptive Atlas of the Cesnola Collection of Cypriote Antiquities in The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York, 1903). A smaller collection, composed primarily of Etruscan and Roman jewelry, formed in Florence by Samuel T. Baxter, was acquired in 1895. Only a portion has been published. Since then many excellent pieces have come to the Museum by gift or through purchase, and the best have been illustrated in Christine Alexander's *Jewelry, The Art of the Goldsmith in Classical Times* (New York, 1928), in her *Greek and Etruscan Jewelry* (New York, 1941), and in G. M. A. Richter's *Handbook of the Greek Collection* (Cambridge, 1953). A good handbook in English on classical jewelry is R. A. Higgins's *Greek and Roman Jewelry* (London, 1962). The recent exhibition catalogue by H. Hoffmann and P. F. Davidson, *Greek Gold Jewelry from the Age of Alexander* (Brooklyn, 1965) gives an excellent account of Hellenistic jewelry.

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