

Discovered for You

Peplos, Himation and Chiton

A Further Foray into the World of Greek Garments

By Gerburg Ludwig



Fig. 1: AN INTAGLIO WITH ATHENA PARTHENOS. H. 1.2 cm. Agate. Roman, 1st cent. A.D. CHF 2,600

“The queen herself went down to the vaulted treasure-chamber wherein were her robes, richly broidered, the handiwork of Sidonian women. Of these Hecabe took one, and bare it as an offering for Athene, the one that was fairest in its broiderings and amplest, and shone like a star.” (Homer, *Iliad* 6.288-295, trans. A.T. Murray). Hekabe, the queen of Troy, supplicates Athena for help against the Achaeans by dedicating her most precious robe to the goddess. By relating this episode, Homer provides us with valuable insight into the significance of garments for the women of Ancient Greece.

The silhouette-like, dancing women in bell-shaped, patterned skirts found on Late Geometric vases (750-700 B.C.) sketch a first picture. Gradually, a variety of garments that were fastened with pins or brooches emerged. Later on, these were supplemented by tailored robes. The earliest was the peplos, a large rectangle of fabric (wool, precious linen) that was folded over horizontally along the upper edge to create an overfold (apotygma) that reached down to the waist. It was wrapped around the body, fastened at the shoulders and belted at the waist. Excess material could be pulled over the girdle to form a kolpos. The peplos was worn together with other items of clothing that were essentially lengths of cloth: the himation, the kredemnon (a cloak made of heavy fabric), the epiblema, a short cloak that was fastened above the chest or the ampechone, a small jacket that



Fig. 2: A FEMALE STATUETTE. H. 21.7 cm. Terracotta. Greek or Western Greek, 4th-2nd cent. B.C. CHF 5,500

was fastened at the shoulders. Married women covered their heads and sometimes also their faces in public, either with the back overfold of the peplos or with the kredemnon. Around 550 B.C. the chiton, which had previously been worn only by men, became popular with women as well. This garment was often made of linen; it could be either wide or narrow, and had openings for the neck and arms. Gathers at the shoulders provided rudimentary sleeves; longer sleeves were sewn on. The length of the chiton varied and it could be worn with or without a belt. The hem formed folds (stolidotos) or a train (syrtos). There was some regional variation with regard to the clothing worn over the chiton. These garments included the peplos, as exemplified by the Peplos Kore from the Athenian Acropolis (530 B.C.), the ependytes, a sleeveless, unbelted, thicker garment, or simply draped scarves. The scarves could also be wrapped around the body, passed below the armpit and pinned together at the shoulder. The Samian korai from the Cheramyes Group (560 B.C.) and some from the Athenian Acropolis (530-500 B.C.) wear a diagonal cloak that crosses the upper body asymmetrically and cascades downwards forming decorative pointed tips.



Fig. 3: A STATUETTE OF APHRODITE. H. 47.3 cm. Marble. Greek, Hellenistic, 3rd-2nd cent. B.C. CHF 22,000

“Large robes symbolized wealth and leisure.” (A. Fendt, *Das Kleid der griechischen Frau*, in: Cat. Munich 2017, 130). The quality, quantity and variety of the dyed, patterned and ornamented fabrics attested to the social status of woman wearing them, as well as that of her father or husband. The upper classes were eager to import fine, orientally influenced garments from Ionia, the Levant and the northern Black Sea. Vase paintings and also the elegantly robed kores of the Acropolis give an impression of the luxurious clothing worn by the aristocracy, a form of conspicuous consumption that Athens’ reformer Solon (575/70 B.C.), according to Plutarch, sought to curb by means of sumptuary laws. The period after the Persian wars (after 480 B.C.) was characterised by greater sobriety, with a return to traditional values, reorganization and the renunciation of extravagant attire. The peplos came in vogue again. It was simpler and could be worn together with a plain cloak that covered just the back. The young woman in the warrior’s farewell on the amphora illustrated in CQ 1/2020 wears her peplos unbelted (p. 4, fig. 1). The inscribed inventories found in sanctuaries such as that of Artemis in Brauron (2nd half 4th cent. B.C.) attest to the broad range of textiles

that were dedicated. The peplos scene from the Parthenon's east frieze (432 B.C.) depicts a dedication on a grand scale: Athena, who is also the goddess of weaving, receives a saffron yellow peplos with mythological scenes that had been woven by selected Athenian girls. The Athena Parthenos dressed in a peplos on an intaglio currently with the Cahn Gallery (fig. 1) is a miniature representation of the famous cult statue by Phidias (ca. 450 B.C.). The Roman master skilfully cut the details into the layered agate: helmet, lance, round shield and Nike with a wreath of victory. The snake embodies the mythical king of Athens, Erechtheus I. The overfold is richly pleated and belted at the waist, and the breasts and free leg are clearly visible below the fabric.

Women's clothing became increasingly splendid right up to the Hellenistic Period. It was supplemented by the peronatrix, a loose outer garment fixed over the shoulders with fibulae. The chiton attained widespread popularity and the manner in which the himation was draped reached new heights of refinement. Women covered their heads with it, slung it across their bodies both diagonally and transversely, and also wrapped their arms in it, as is the case with the statues of the Herculaneum Women (Skulpturensammlung Dresden) or the Tanagra figurines. The terracotta figurine of a young lady offered for sale by the Cahn Gallery (fig. 2) displays her clothing in a similar manner. Her himation covers her head leaving only the eyes, cheeks and lips free. It envelops her body in two layers, partly covering her chiton and creates an elaborate pattern of folds across her chest and abdomen. With her entirely enveloped left hand, she grasps the ends of the fabric. Traces of polychromy hint at the original colour scheme of the garments. The ostensible concealment of the woman's body has an erotic component, as her breasts and the contours of her body are attractively emphasized by the flowing drapery. The erotic allure of garments is even more in evidence in depictions of the goddess Aphrodite: rendered as if made from sheer fabric and sometimes clinging to her body as if wet, the chiton attained a new level of exquisiteness. The himation of the statuette of Aphrodite offered here (fig. 3) has slid from the right hip, forming a loop that covers the pubes and left thigh, the end cascading downwards. The seemingly wet chiton forms fine folds over the abdomen and waist and its pleated folds on the right leg shimmer through the delicate fabric of the himation.

As our foray into the world of Greek clothing has shown, the development of the garments worn by women was deeply influenced by both social and religious factors.

Literature: E. Baumgartner et. al., *DivineXDesign. Das Kleid der Antike*, Cat. Munich 2017. M. Harlow (ed.), *A Cultural History of Dress and Fashion in Antiquity* (London/New York 2017).

Discovered for you

Himation, Chlamys and Chiton

A Foray into the World of Greek Garments (Part 1)

By Gerburg Ludwig



Figs. 1-2: RED-FIGURE NECK AMPHORA, ATTRIBUTED TO THE DINOS PAINTER. H. 45 cm. Clay. Attic, ca. 430-420 B.C.

CHF 96,000

The impulse to judge people and their social status by the clothes they wear was, and still is, a very human one. In his novella *Kleider machen Leute*, Gottfried Keller embarked on a comical investigation of this tendency of ours, and the proverb “clothes make the man” that Keller chose as his title has remained a popular saying to this day.

Viewing the clothes depicted on original antiquities, two questions spring to mind: Do they reflect reality or do they rather show an ideal, especially in the case of mythological themes? And secondly, how close to reality is the image we now have of ancient attire, which after all was influenced by the sartorial tastes of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment? Costume research, which emerged as a discipline in the seventeenth century, viewed original antiquities as an exact reflection of ancient clothing and hence adopted them in

pattern books for contemporary artists. The larger historical and artistic context of such works was barely heeded. Yet as P. Zitzlsperger recently explained, taking the Roman statue of Artemis Braschi from the Glyptothek in Munich as an example, such a wider critical purview is actually very important. Zitzlsperger observed that the sculptor of that work had modelled both drapery and coiffure on Greek originals that were some 400 years older, and concluded: “It is unlikely that they [people in Antiquity] were dressed completely differently. But works of art rarely provide reliable information as to when which items of clothing were worn. They are, as it were, but a dark mirror of past realities.” (P. Zitzlsperger, *Antike Kleiderdarstellungen*, in: Cat. Munich 2017, 15).

A neck amphora with sophisticated twisted handles now on offer at the Cahn Gallery

(figs. 1-2) shows a scene that recurs on a great number of vases: the warrior's farewell. A young man with sword and lance gives his hand to the older man on his proper right, who is presumably his father. The young woman on his proper left, his wife or sister, invokes the favour and protection of the gods with an offering poured from a phiale. The reverse shows three so-called draped youths engaged in conversation, which is another canonical theme on vases and perhaps a reference to the young warrior's training at the palaestra.

Here we encounter several typical garments: the himation, a long mantle that at first was worn only by men, and the chlamys, a short cape often combined with the petasos, a broad-brimmed hat frequently worn by travellers. We shall discuss the peplos, which is what the young woman is wearing, in the next issue on women's dress.



Fig.3: ROBED STATUE. H.163 cm. Marble. Hellenistic, Asia Minor, ca. 150–100 B.C. Price on request

The older man and the draped youths are all wearing a himation. Initially made of coarse, later of finer, material, this garment mentioned by Homer was one of the main items of clothing for men from the Archaic to the Hellenistic Period. The rectangular cloth was draped – in places overlapping and even folded over – from the left shoulder and then wound round the body back to the same shoulder. The older man's right shoulder and arm are left bare, while his draped left arm clamps the length of cloth in place. The outermost draped youths on the reverse are similarly clad, even if their covered left hands are not shown. Their companion in the middle is completely enveloped in his himation and holds his arm slung into the folded-down neck opening. The play of folds and outlines vary depending on the shape of the figure and the fall and texture of the fabric. Weighted with drop-shaped lead

weights at the corners, the ends of the cloth worn by the older man cascade down off his body. The gnarled staff underscores his dignified image as a citizen. The length of the himation and how it was draped varied over the years, depending on functional factors, the occasion, and the age and social status of the wearer. Some vase paintings show men wearing only a himation. Whether in reality they would always have worn some sort of undergarment underneath is unclear.

Likewise with the chiton (Semitic linen), which was sewn or pinned together out of rectangular lengths of fine fabric (e.g. pleated linen) or wool, sometimes dyed in bright colours, with openings for the arms and head or with sleeves. This garment came from Ionia, where as a result of the orientalisising influence it was made in exceptionally high quality. It is mentioned in Homer's epics and was initially worn only by men. The chiton proved extremely versatile over the centuries. It could be worn as the need arose, either with a girdle (with a fold of cloth draped over it) or without, either short (as a chitoniskos for children or as hunter's or worker's garb) or long (later only for priests, actors and musicians). There were also significant regional variations affecting the quality, quantity and pattern of the material and the use of decorative borders.

The robed statue of a man on offer at the Cahn Gallery also has an arm slung into the loop-like neck opening of the himation in which he is wrapped (fig. 3). Short-lived fashion trends in today's sense were unknown to the Ancient Greeks. His left hand gathers up the cloth to expose the fine folds of the chiton underneath. Fascinatingly, the sculptor succeeds in showing us the vertical folds of the belted chiton worn underneath the himation. Both drapery and posture lend the wearer a dignified appearance. Statues with such luxurious attire are especially typical of Hellenistic Asia Minor. Set up in a public space (the agora or a theatre), they honoured the gift of a wealthy citizen or served such a citizen as self-advertisement.

But back to the young warrior on the amphora: He is wearing a chlamys, a short cape draped loosely from the left shoulder across the back to the right lower arm that underscores the warrior's ideal of nudity – which to the ancients was an expression of male beauty, even though it was scarcely practised in public. A

man wishing to don a chlamys pinned together the rectangular length of cloth with a fibula or pin on the right shoulder. This is how the garment is worn, draped over a short chiton, by the statuette of a youth sitting on a rock at the Cahn Gallery (fig. 4). The right arm thus has sufficient room to move, which is why it was above all young men (ephebes), warriors, hunters and travellers who wore these woolen garments, sometimes dyed or embroidered. Jutting up from behind the shoulder of our warrior is the broad brim of a petasos slung round his neck on a string. This flat felt hat of Thessalian origin was used from the Archaic Period onwards. Hermes, Theseus and Perseus count among the most prominent wearers of this combination of chlamys and petasos.

The originals shown here lead us not into the realm of mythology, but are more like snapshots of life in Antiquity. Since such scenes are repeated in other originals, too, comparing them can help us arrive at a realistic reconstruction of the clothing worn in Antiquity. The "puzzle" posed by the figures depicted, their body language and details of their clothing and attributes together form a whole picture. Depending on the artist's taste and understanding of his subject, however, there may indeed be a touch of idealisation at work in such pieces, as in the case of our warrior.

Bibliography: E. Baumgartner et al., *DivineXDesign. Das Kleid der Antike*, Cat. Munich 2017. M. Harlow (ed.), *A Cultural History of Dress and Fashion in Antiquity* (London/New York 2017).



Fig. 4: SEATED YOUTH. H. 10.5 cm. Clay, white paint. Greek, Boeotia, 3rd cent. B.C. CHF 2,600

Imprint

Publisher
Jean-David Cahn
Malzgasse 23
CH-4052 Basel
www.cahn.ch
ISSN 2624-6368

Gerburg Ludwig
Yvonne Yiu

Translations
Bronwen Saunders

Editors
Jean-David Cahn
Yvonne Yiu

Photos
Robert Bayer
Niklaus Bürgin
Ulrike Haase

Authors
Jean-David Cahn
Marc Fehlmann
Ulrike Haase
Detlev Kreikenbom

Design and Layout
Michael Joos

Printer
Rösch Printservice GmbH

Discovered for You

Theatrum – Setting the Scene for Spectacle and Representation

Insights into Roman Theatre

By Gerburg Ludwig



Fig. 1: Detail of a stage set with pantomime mask, east wall of the Room of the Masks House of Augustus, Rome, Palatine, in situ. Roman, ca. 30 B.C. Photo: Carole Raddato

The so-called Phylak vases of the 4th century B.C. reflect the impact of Greek theatre that we became acquainted with in CQ 3/2019: actors in bizarre costumes and wearing comic masks perform on wooden stages in front of backdrops with windows and doors. The Phylak farces influenced the emergent Roman theatre, as did other farces and mimes performed by the Italic peoples. Their improvised and extemporary character prevented their textualisation. The accounts of the genesis of Roman theatre provided by historiographers such as T. Livius and C. Rufus and the writer V. Maximus are at such variance with each other that it is difficult to create an accurate reconstruction of the world of Roman theatre today.

First so-called *ludi scaenici* (scenic performances) on makeshift stages were performed in Rome in the context of the propitiatory ceremonies held during a plague epidemic (364 B.C., Livius, *Ab urbe condita* 7, 2). Etruscan influences are reflected in words such as the one for actor, *histrion* (Etruscan: *ister*). In the 3rd

century B.C. mimes and Oscan Atellane drama (masques) took the stage. Increasingly popular among the common people were above all the rude, mocking, obscene mimes about intrigue, fraud, adultery, murder, politics and early Christian rites. Their disrespectfulness was harshly criticised by Roman intellectuals and later also by the Church Fathers.

On the occasion of the *ludi romani* (240 B.C., after the end of the First Punic War) Livius Andronicus initiated the production of Latin versions of Greek dramas; it was a decision of cultural-political significance for in this way, the *curule aedile* (officials for the games) referred back to the traditions of the Hellenistic East. Later, Plautus and Terence studied and reworked the comedies of Menander. Seneca likewise used Greek models in the 1st century A.D. It remains unclear whether he wrote his tragedies for performance; it was only in the Renaissance that they were actually staged.

The *fabula saltica* (dancing plays) emerged in Rome in ca. 40 B.C.; at the same time, Cicero and Horace complained about the continuing tendency towards the spectacular. Emperor Augustus' promotion gave the genre of pantomime additional impetus. The pantomimus wore a mask with closed mouth. He acted out a "libretto" based on celebrated scenes from tragedies by means of expressive gestures and actions, and was supported by instrumental music and a chorus that sang the text behind the scenes. The mural shown in fig. 1 exemplifies the effect of such a stage. Personal charisma, great versatility supported by mask changes, and perfect body control were demanded of a pantomimus. Lucian's work on pantomime names Pylades of Cilicia and Bathyllus of Alexandria as the celebrity artists of their time (Lucian, *De saltatione* 34). The pantomimus replaced tragedy and, together with the *mimus*, now dominated the programme.

The full, curved lips of the mask of Attis offered for sale by the Cahn Gallery are closed (fig. 2). The pantomimus played the role of Attis wearing a Phrygian cap, long sleeves and legwear typical of oriental costume. It was truly a tragic



Fig. 2: A PANTOMIME MASKE REPRESENTING ATTIS. H. 23 cm. Terracotta, traces of light blue paint. Roman, 1st cent. A.D. CHF 12,000

role as Attis was driven into a mad frenzy by the jealous goddess Cybele and even emasculated himself. With the revival of the mystical Cybele-Attis cult (mid-1st century A.D.) theatres and private living spaces repeatedly participated in Attis's fate: Nero publicly sang a poem called *Attis*, accompanying himself on the lyre (Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 62, 20, 1 ff.). Reliefs with pantomime masks of Attis adorned suspended marble *oscilla* in villas; monumental masks of Attis graced many a theatre. The eastern wall of the cubiculum of the Casa di Pinario Ceriale (Pompeii, Regio III, Ins. 4.4, ca. 40-50 A.D.) is decorated by a "stage" in the center of which Attis, with herdsman's staff and sickle, leans against a pine tree.

The magnificent lamp fragment with a comic mask offered here also reflects the influence of the theatre (fig. 3). The high-quality relief emphasises the features typical of comic masks: hair standing on end, wide-open eyes, curved brows, funnel-shaped mouth. The lamp has monumental dimensions and may have decorated a sacred space or, as comparable candelabra and chandeliers on wall frescoes show, a private home.



Fig. 3: A MONUMENTAL ARM OF A RING LAMP OF CA. 1 M DIAMETER WITH COMIC MASK. L. 21 cm. Bronze. Roman, 1st-2nd cent. A.D. CHF 16,000

Towards the end of the Republic, politicians sought to win voters' favour by putting the construction of permanent theatres, for which there had long been a demand, on their agenda. The first Roman theatre to be made of stone was built in Pompeii under Sulla in 80 B.C. Rome owed the construction of its first permanent theatre on the Field of Mars (61 B.C.) to Pompeius; Caesar initiated another one which was dedicated under Augustus as the Marcellus Theatre. These buildings were trend-setting. Designed as a solitary edifice with an exterior façade that shut out the outside world, a Roman theatre consisted of a semi-circular *cavea* (auditorium) supported by substructures, in the interior of which were passages directing spectators to their places according to their social rank. On the opposite side the roofed *scaena* (stage building) closed off the complex. Its front section (*scaenae frons*), which became increasingly sophisticated architecturally, had main and side doors through which the performers made their entries. Depending on the theatre's size, other parts of the *cavea* were also roofed over, often with a *velum* (tent roof). The imperial era marked a construction boom throughout the empire. Theatres in the provinces varied and many earlier constructions were rebuilt.

In Roman times, the theatre changed with regard to content, intent and structure. The common people were entertained, thrilled to ecstasy even, but also controlled by rules and social order. By investing in buildings and games, emperors and wealthy citizens cleverly used the theatre as a place of political and pecuniary representation: Pompeius's portrait statue in the theatre on the Field of Mars already symbolized the cult of personality; numerous imperial statues throughout the empire made the theatre the site of the cult of the emperor. With the decline of the Roman Empire, the demise of the old Roman gods, and the reduction of public funding, the ancient theatre tradition also came to an end. Since the revival of the dramas of Antiquity in the Renaissance, however, ancient theatre has continued to exert a complex influence to this day.

Discovered for You

Theatron – A Place of Wonder

Insights into Greek Theatre

By Gerburg Ludwig



Fig. 1: AN ACTOR IN THE ROLE OF A SLAVE IN THE NEW ATTIC COMEDY. H. 13.7 cm. Bronze. Roman, 2nd-3rd cent. A.D. CHF 22,000

Visit any traditional theatre today and you will watch actors playing amid scenery and props on a stage that is separated from the audience by a proscenium arch. Spectators at the Greek *theatron* (from θεάομαι, “to watch with wonder”), were more directly involved in the action, since the more than semi-circular *koilon* (audience area) built into the hillside surrounded the orchestra (performance area) almost completely and the low *skené* (stage structure) was not cut off from the *koilon*. Spectators could therefore gaze at the sky or at the landscape, the view of which must have influenced their impression of the performance: “Theatre and landscape co-existed in a dynamic equilibrium,” (Vovolis, p. 2).

Theatre’s origins can be traced back to the orgiastic festivities of the cult of Dionysos, in which masked and costumed celebrants drank copious quantities of wine and danced rhythmically to work themselves up into a state of madness called *ékstasis* (“being outside oneself”). Athens’ rulers tried to keep these ever more popular celebrations in check by organizing official festivities of their own (6th cent. B.C.) Drama contests called *agone*, for example, were an especially common feature of the Great Dionysia of the spring, and starting in the 5th century B.C. were held in the Dionysos Theatre at the foot of the Acropolis. That is where the People’s Assembly was held, too; and when Athens, as the hegemon of the Attic-Delias League, collected its allies’ dues in the orchestra there, the symbolism would not have been lost on those present. To kick off the festivities, the cult image of Dionysos Eleutherios was ceremoniously carried into the city. At the *proagon* playwrights presented their dramas along with all the performers, *choregoi* (producers/sponsors), actors, chorus leader and chorus, to the audience.

Tragedy first became an integral part of the Great Dionysia during the tyranny of Peisistratos, ca. 535/532 B.C., and was followed only later by comedy (ca. 487/86 B.C.). Elements of the cult of Dionysos such as dance, music played on the aulos, flute and kithara, masks and costumes were worked into the performances. The plots of the tragedies turned on familiar mythological figures and provided guidance for self-reflection on the part of the spectators. Tragedians such as Aischylos (525–455 B.C.) and Sophocles (497–405 B.C.) supplemented their casts with up to three actors, the first of whom was the *protagonistés*. Actors could play several roles simply by switching masks. The comedies were full of direct references to current affairs and were not sparing in their critique of both unsatisfactory situations and politicians. Their key elements were disputation, fable, direct appeals to the audience and innovative means of advancing the plot. Variations in the order and number of actors as well as the costumes and masks shaped the development of Old, Middle and New Comedy. Aristophanes (ca. 450/444–380 B.C.) was the most important writer of the Old and Menander (342–290 B.C.) of the New.

The Greek word for actor, *hypokrités* (responder), references his dialogue with the chorus leader/chorus. Initially, all actors were amateurs. By the 3rd century B.C., however, they had professionalized to such an extent that artists’ guilds began to emerge, such as the Dionysian Technites in Athens. A decree from Delphi (278 B.C.) exempting actors from taxes and military service attests to the high esteem in which they were held. Women were denied access to the stage and women’s parts were played by men. The frequent changes of role demanded great versatility. Powerful texts and gestures more than compensated for the absence of facial expression. Ancient authors tell of superstars with exceptional talents and the airs to go with them. One Theodoros, for example, insisted on being the first to appear on stage so that the audience would become attuned to his voice and not the others (Aristotle, *Politiká* 7, 1336b, 28).

While not a single original theatre mask has survived, reproductions of the same (statuettes, clay masks, vase paintings, mosaics and wall frescos) as well as written sources allow us to reconstruct how they looked. That they sometimes had demonic or even bestial features is proven by ritual votive masks from Sparta and Tiryns (7th–early 6th century B.C.). Also helpful is the series of early Hellenistic, coloured mask replicas found in graves on the Lipari islands in Italy. The *Onomastikon* (mask catalogue) of the Greek scholar Pollux provides further information. Made of stuccoed and painted linen, the mask covered the whole head, but was nevertheless called a *prosopon* (face). Erika Simon explains this through reference to the cult image of Dionysos in Ath-



Fig. 2: A TRAGIC MASK. Mosaic, Casa del Fauno, Pompeii, 2nd cent. B.C., © National Archaeological Museum Naples (public domain).

ens, which consisted solely of the god's face attached to a column overgrown with ivy. The masks essentially were "speaking face(s)" (Simon, pp. 17, 20) and depending on the drama differed in structure and expression (figs. 2–3): raised eyebrows, large eye holes and a wide mouth with drooping corners lent the tragedian's mask its tragic character, later intensified by dishevelled hair or the extravagantly coiffed, piled-up *onkos*.

Two works at the Cahn Gallery present the comedian's costume and mask: the actor leaning casually on an altar with an additional mask (fig. 1) wears the typical slave costume of New Comedy. There are none of the drastic exaggerations of Old Comedy here (the padded belly and buttocks, the large, strapped-on phallus); what there are, are long arm and leg coverings, a short tunic, mantle and ankle-high stage boots. The mask has shaggy hair and a projecting, funnel-shaped beard framing the mouth hole, which is typical of New Comedy masks of slaves and old men. The position on the altar is not by chance: it is to the altar – that is to say, into the arms of the gods – that the slave flees in order to escape punishment for his misdeeds, this being a common subject on the stage. The clay mask (fig. 3) shows even more vividly the typical characteristics of the slave masks: the raised eyebrows and large, flat nose make the goggle eyes even more striking. Here, the funnel-shaped beard frames the mouth hole, while the hair above the forehead is rolled up in a *speira*.

With so many different borrowings from the cult of Dionysos, including music, dance, masks and costumes, performances of tragedies and comedies never quite lost their religious context. Their plots provided spectators with an opportunity for reflection, whether private or on the wider subject of the cohesiveness of Greek society.

Bibliography:

T. Vovolis, Mask, Actor, Theatron and Landscape in Classical Greek Theatre. The Acoustics of Ancient Theaters Conference, Patras, September 18-20, 2011 – E. Simon, Stumme Masken und sprechende Gesichter, in: T. Schabert, Die Sprache der Masken (Würzburg 2002) 17-32



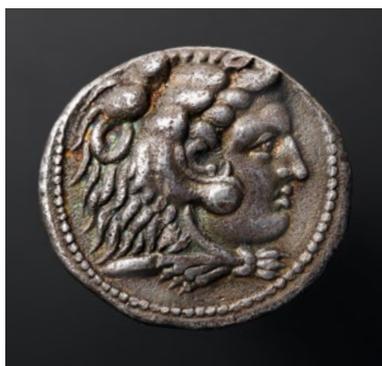
Fig. 3: A THEATRE MASK OF A SLAVE. H. 9.8 cm. Terra-cotta. Greek or Western Greek, 4th-2nd cent. B.C. CHF 7,000

Discovered for you

From Polis to Kingdom

Coins – Symbols of Power or Identity? (Part 3)

By Gerburg Ludwig



Figs. 1-2: A TETRADRACHM. Dm. max. 2.6 cm. Silver. Greek, Macedonia, last quarter 4th cent. B.C. CHF 2,600



Figs. 3-4: A TETRADRACHM, THRACE UNDER LYSIMACHOS (323-281 B.C.). Dm. max. 2.8 cm. Silver. Greek, Thrace, early 3rd cent. B.C. CHF 3,800

The expansionist policies and sophisticated tactics that Philip II of Macedonia (r. 359-336 B.C.) adopted in his pursuit of hegemony over rival Greek poleis such as Athens and Thebes surpassed even those of Dionysios I of Syracuse (see CQ 1/2019, p. 3). His victory over the said city states at Chaeronea (338 B.C.) ultimately spelled the end of the polis as an independent institution. Coins bearing the Panhellenic gods Apollo or Zeus, the biga and Philip's own name, ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ, lent legitimacy to his leadership of the Greeks. One early tetradrachm showing a bearded rider and Philip's name is now interpreted as the very first representation of a ruler on a Greek coin.

In Persia, golden darics and silver sigloi bearing images of the king of kings in warlike pose were minted from the late 6th century B.C. onwards. Those same rulers also tolerated coins minted by satraps (regional governors) bearing their own likenesses. After putting an end to the Achaemenid Empire in his Persian campaign (334-323 B.C.), Alexander advanced eastward, even crossing the Indus. Following his death (323 B.C.) and that of his heirs, the Diadochs, rival generals, families and friends of Alexander, carved up his empire between them. Their struggle for power led to various conflicts and alliances and eventually to the emergence of three economically and culturally prosperous realms: the Ptolemies in the south, the Antigonids on Greek territory and the Seleucids in Asia.

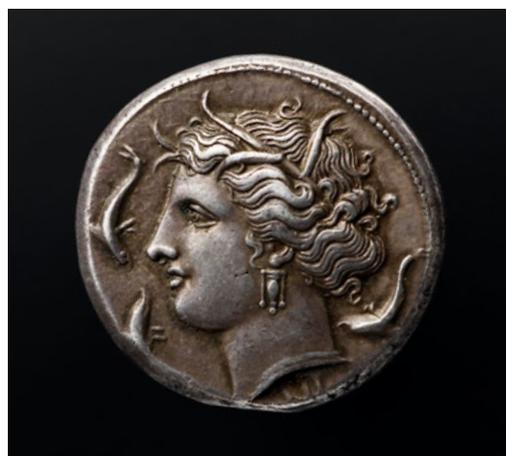
Two major coin emissions financed Alexander's campaign: one after his ransacking of the treasuries of the Persian king (331/330 B.C.) and the other before his dismissal of the veterans (324 B.C.). The coins were issued by

new mints, including those in Susa, Babylon and along the route leading back to Macedonia. Struck in large numbers according to Attic standard weights and widely distributed, the new coins constituted a "Hellenic currency" that supplanted the hitherto predominant Attic tetradrachm. According to Howgego this was "the most important aspect [...] of the circulation of money" at the dawn of the Hellenistic period (Howgego, pp. 59, 113). This "Hellenic currency" would continue to be minted and imitated all over the Hellenistic world for another 250 years.

The youthful head of Hercules with a lion skin and Zeus enthroned with eagle and sceptre on the Macedonian tetradrachm at the Cahn Gallery (figs. 1-2) symbolize Alexander's mythical line of descent. Furthermore, Alexander's name is inscribed on the coin: ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ. Inspired by his pothos (longing), "a powerful striving for great feats, for things great and distant," Alexander regarded the mythical hero Hercules, who tested his own limits and

went to the ends of the earth, as both guide and guardian (Huttner p. 105). The coin motifs were thus an assertion as much of a mission as of his legitimacy. Yet he dispensed with a portrait and the royal title ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ was used only there where it was already common, as in Lydia or in the Persian territories.

The emissions of the Diadochs were the first to show portraits of Alexander as a source of legitimacy. Key attributes such as the diadem, Ammon's horn and elephant scalp referenced his kingship and deification. The tetradrachm of Lysimachos, formerly a member of Alexander's bodyguard, then King of Thrace, from 306/5, and Macedonia, from 285/84 B.C. (figs. 3-4), reflects his especially close relationship to Alexander, who here appears deified with diadem and Ammon's horn symbolizing his sonship of Zeus-Ammon. But there are also individual features such as the upward-looking gaze, the furrowed brow and anastole (hair brushed up from the forehead). Athena with Nike holding the wreath of victory symbol-



Figs. 5-6: A TETRADRACHM OF AGATHOCLES. Dm. max. 2.5 cm. Silver. Syracuse, 310-305 B.C. CHF 10,500

ize Lysimachos' victory over his long-standing adversary, Antigonos Monophthalmos (Fourth War of the Diadochs, 301 B.C.). The inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΛΥΣΙΜΑΧΟΥ and the Macedonian star emphasize the office and the expansion of his power base.

Some Diadochs, among them Ptolemy I, had their own likenesses struck on coins even during their lifetime, while the motif of the founders of their dynasty was added only later on. An ever greater degree of individualization reinforced this kind of self-representation. Certain elements of the Alexander portrait were retained, especially among the sculpted portraits of the Diadochs, many of which feature the wide-open, upturned eyes and the royal diadem. The portrait of Antiochos VII Euergetes, King of the Seleucid Empire (r. 138–129 B.C.) on a tetradrachm (see cahn.ch/works/coins), for example, is modelled in part on the facial features and hairstyle of both his father, Demetrios I and his immediate predecessor and rival heir to the throne, Diodotos Tryphon. The fleshy face, double chin and thick neck are clearly individual traits. The standing figure of Athena Nikephoros bears the royal title and name ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΤΙΟΧΟΥ as well as the epithet ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ (benefactor). This, taken together with the portrait itself, has been interpreted as symbolizing the end of a long-standing family feud among the Seleucids.

The tetradrachm (figs. 5–6) of the tyrant and later King Agathocles of Syracuse (316–289 B.C.) copies known motifs of two master die cutters, namely Euainetos' Arethusa and Kimon's quadriga with the inscription ΣΥΡΑΚΟΣΙΩ(N) under the baseline, whereas the triskelion (the three leg emblem of Sicily) is new. Agathocles at first had to struggle to maintain stability both on the domestic front and against the Carthaginians; hence his choice of an established iconography. The triskelion, his personal insignia, symbolized the unification of Sicily achieved under his leadership. Later, the name of the city was dropped, and, following the Hellenistic model, Agathocles' name – later with his kingly title appended to it – was added, though not his portrait.

The coin emissions of Alexander the Great and the Diadochs brought about a change in the message conveyed by coin motifs and inscriptions. The coin's role as a bearer of the identity of the polis was superseded by the mission and claims to legitimacy of a single ruler, which in the course of time were individualized and supplemented by self-representation in the form of a portrait.

Bibliography:

U. Huttner, *Die politische Rolle der Heraklesgestalt im griechischen Herrschertum* (Stuttgart 1997) – C. Howgego, *Geld in der antiken Welt. Was Münzen über Geschichte verraten* (Darmstadt 2000) – P. Thonemann, *The Hellenistic World. Using Coins as Sources* (Cambridge 2015)

Spartans and Serpents

Iconographic Features of a Laconian Kouros

By Lillian Bartlett Stoner

The Laconian patera handle presented by Jean-David Cahn in CQ 4/2018, possesses some notable iconographic features which are discussed here by Lillian B. Stoner:

Standing starkly upright, the youth holds aloft two serpents (fig. 1). His powerful muscula-

ture is tensed, with massive buttocks, thighs, and calves standing in sharp contrast to the slender waist. Incised lines delineate the thorax, with the segmented abdominal muscles likewise sharply defined. The nipples, knees, and toes are further indicated by means of incision. In contrast, the facial features have



a more plastically modelled, additive quality, with fleshy lips and bulbous nose applied to the smooth planes of the face, which tapers to a narrow chin. The almond-shaped eyes are positioned under a heavy triangular brow, with irises faintly rendered. A great deal of attention has been lavished on the presentation of the youth's hair. Over the brow, the long hair is arranged in vertical undulations. At the crown of the head it is pulled smoothly against the scalp to emerge in a rectangular mass at the nape of the neck, where it takes on even more ornamental form: pleated horizontally and gathered with a beaded fillet to terminate in slim vertical locks between the shoulder blades.

Stylistic considerations make it possible to locate the place and period of manufacture. The almost architecturally conceived anatomy - with massive calves, thighs, and buttocks, and lozenge-shaped kneecaps - is strikingly similar to that of Kleobis and Biton, the pair of Archaic kouroi dedicated at Delphi and thought to have been produced by a Peloponnesian (likely Argive) workshop around ca. 580 B.C. The almost additive quality of the facial features finds a good parallel to Laconian (Spartan) bronzes of the period, in particular a bronze head attributed by Conrad Stibbe to a workshop of the late 7th century B.C. (see fig 2).¹

Our youth once served as the horizontal handle of a patera - a shallow circular vessel used for pouring wine libations across the Greek world. The bodies of two serpents are applied to the upper surface of a frame into which the vessel's rim would have been slotted, with a rectangular tongue providing support for the patera's edge.



Fig. 2: A LACONIAN HEAD OF A GODDESS. H. 5.7 cm. Bronze. Greek, Laconian, ca. 640-630 B.C. CHF 4,500

The positioning of the serpents' heads over the rim of the patera brings to mind the rare and geographically exceptional scenes of the "tippling serpent" motif developed almost exclusively in Spartan workshops and contexts, from the 6th century B.C. Stone reliefs and terracotta plaques showing the unusual sight of snakes extending their bodies towards large cups of wine held by dedicants, have been linked most convincingly with the thriving hero cults of the region, fortuitously blending the serpents' traditional association with the underworld and chthonic powers with their enjoyment of the proffered wine.² The motif appears on bronze vessels (of which Sparta was briefly an acknowledged centre of production in the 6th century B.C.), with the serpent integrated into the rim or handle, so that the sculpted serpents would actually be seen to be tippling from the supply of wine within. Forming the rim of a patera, the snakes of our handle would have seemed to be drinking deeply from wine at the very moment before the libation was poured, in this case likely in honour of a hero.

This performative aspect of the vessel in turn emphasizes the athletic physique of the young man, as the individual holding the patera would have grasped the powerful musculature of the buttocks and thighs forming the handle. While the appreciation of the nude male form was widespread in Archaic and Classical Greece, stylistic and iconographical considerations suggest that our bronze was produced in a Laconian workshop in the second quarter of the 6th century B.C., and this has some bearing on his musculature, as well as the artist's obvious interest in the youth's hair. The cultivation of the male body during adolescence was crucial to this society of aristocratic warriors, and took place by means of a grueling training regimen over several years with the overall intent of symbolically separating youths in terms of class and gender, eventually creating disciplined, fearsome warriors.

Controlling and disciplining the body and spirit was the primary objective during this formative transition in a young man's life (ap-



Fig. 1: A BRONZE PATERA HANDLE IN THE FORM OF A YOUTH. H. 21 cm. Bronze. Greek, Laconian, ca. 570 B.C. Price on request

proximately between the ages of 12 and 20), when aristocratic adolescents spent long periods in the wilderness, and were periodically deprived of clothing and food other than what they could steal or kill. The chiseled abdominals and impressive musculature of our bronze youth plausibly reflect the physical achievements expected of graduates of this stern school. For Spartan men, wearing the hair long was a prerogative only of those who successfully completed this formative training, symbolically marking those accepted into the warrior class, and was a style they were expected to maintain for the rest of their lives. Our youth's long and intricately coiffed hair can be read as a more abstract expression of the psychological and physical rigours expected of an adult Spartan. The form of the bronze perfectly suits its function - a taut, trained youth on the brink of adulthood, and poised to offer libations to his heroic forebears.

¹ Cat. no. 1, pl. 25, 1-4, in: C.M. Stibbe, "Frauen und Löwen. Eine Untersuchung zu den Anfängen der Lakonischen Bronzeindustrie." Sonderdruck aus *JbMusMainz* 43 (1996) 355-381.

² G. Salapata, "The Tippling Serpent in the Art of Lakonia and Beyond." *Hesperia* 75 (2006) 541-560.

Discovered for you (II)

From Polis to Kingdom

Coins – Symbols of Power or Identity? (Part 2)

By Gerburg Ludwig



Fig. 1-2: DECADRACHM, DIONYSIOS I. W. 40 g. Dm. max. 3.3 cm. Silver. Attributed to the die cutter Euainetos. Sicily, Syracuse, 405-395 B.C. CHF 38,000

Our discussion in CQ 4/2018 centred on coins as symbols of identity, as a means by which the polis could present its own self-image. Here, we shall again turn our attention to Syracuse, whose coinage surpasses that of all the other Greek poleis in both quantity and variety. Die cutting in Syracuse reached a climax towards the end of the 5th century B.C. when it was embedded in a series of historically momentous, in some cases turbulent, events: the toppling of a tyrant, a lengthy democratic intermezzo, domestic tensions and an uprising by the indigenous Sicels. Syracuse's constant striving for hegemony brought it into conflict with other poleis. Athens hastened to their aid, but its interventions ended in failure (as in the Sicilian Expedition of 415-413 B.C., Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* 6-8,1). Syracuse's chief strategist Dionysios became the next tyrant (405-367 B.C.) after putting a stop to the Carthaginians' expansionist ventures (409-405 B.C.). He cultivated a monarchical style of rule and with the aid of mercenaries and the right equipment initiated expansionist campaigns in both Sicily and Lower Italy. That he had to use every possible means at his disposal to raise funds for these is reflected in the issue of new coins.

It was against this backdrop that the era of the great die cutters of Syracuse began in ca. 425/420 B.C. The most outstanding of them, masters such as Kimon, Euainetos and Eukleidas, achieved a fascinating blend of precision and artistic licence. Kimon introduced the decadrachm (worth ten drachmae) hitherto

used in Athens probably as a special minting following Syracuse's victory over the Athenians in 413 B.C. The large coin provided plenty of room for variations in relief depth, more dynamic figures and, for the first time ever on coins, images drawn in perspective to face the viewer. Kimon's frontal view of Arethusa, Euainetos' quadriga and Eukleidas' three-quarter images of the gods undoubtedly echo recent developments in sculpture. Euainetos began his decadrachm series in 405 B.C., prompted presumably by Dionysios' expansionist campaigns. So self-confident were the master die cutters that their work sometimes bears signatures, which have been of great assistance to modern numismatists in their efforts to attribute unsigned coins.

The unsigned decadrachm now on offer at the Cahn Gallery has thus been attributed to Euainetos. True to tradition – harking back to the past, so to speak – the obverse features a quadriga, albeit now as a 'snapshot' of a chariot race. The horses and charioteer are organically proportioned. The finely modelled steeds gallop ahead so energetically that scarcely a single hind hoof touches the ground. Captured in perspective, the chariot seems almost to be driving out of the picture, as if it were just at that moment rounding the turning post. The charioteer leans forwards, holding the reins taut and goading on his team with his kentron. Nike, meanwhile, prepares to crown him. In the exergue, a panoply of arms, specifically a cuirass, greaves and helmet, are deposited on a platform.

The Arethusa portrait on the reverse looks softly feminine. Her tied-up hair is a mass of ringlets and curls, adorned with slender reeds. Her deep-set eyes, pursed lips, heavy chin and Venus folds on the neck read like a paraphrase of a sculpture. Encircling the head in the opposite direction, and somewhat asymmetrically, are four dolphins, one of them directly below the base of the neck. The motifs and quality of the decadrachm allow it to be attributed to Syracuse even without an ethnicon as inscription. Euainetos upheld the traditional iconography of the polis, but added the arms, whether as war booty or as the prize awaiting the victor of the race or contest. Perhaps the coin reflects the expansionist ambitions of Dionysios I. This decadrachm was still being minted right up to 393 B.C. and was frequently imitated even after that. Euainetos was held in high esteem as a model die cutter in the workshops of Sicily, Lower Italy, Greece itself, Crete and Iberia. But in Syracuse, the era of the great masters ended once the minting of these artfully designed decadrachmae ceased. Dionysios I's expansionist policies and escalating conflicts with rival poleis as well as the Carthaginians led to the decline of many local mints in Sicily's autonomous communities, though not in Syracuse itself. Even ancient authors judged the rule of Dionysios I to be a textbook example of tyranny (Aristotle, *Politiká* 1305a 26-28; Diodor 13, 96,4). His manner of exercising power anticipated the Hellenistic style of rule and marked a first step on the road to kingship, albeit under the cover of the polis, as the decadrachmae show.

Imprint

Publisher
Jean-David Cahn
Malzgasse 23
CH-4052 Basel
+41 61 271 67 55
mail@cahn.ch
www.cahn.ch
ISSN 2624-6376

Lillian Bartlett Stoner
Yvonne Yiu

Translations
Yvonne Yiu
Bronwen Saunders

Editors
Jean-David Cahn
Yvonne Yiu

Photos
Niklaus Bürgin
Ulrike Haase

Authors
Jean-David Cahn
Martin Flashar
Ulrike Haase
Tomas Lochman
Gerburg Ludwig

Design and Layout
Michael Joos

Printer
Druckerei Deiner
www.druckerei-deiner.de

Discovered for you

From Polis to Kingdom

Coins – Symbols of Power or Identity? (Part 1)

By Gerburg Ludwig



Figs. 1-2: A TETRADRACHM, SYRACUSE. W. 20 g. Dm. max. 2.5 cm. Silver. Sicily, Syracuse, ca. 445 B.C.
CHF 9,600

Would you be able to tell without looking what is depicted on the front and back of the coins that you use every day? Coins are so commonplace that we hardly notice them, but nonetheless their significance is greater than their monetary value. They illustrate selected aspects of the politics, history, culture or architecture of a community and, as such, are symbols of identity. Modern Greek and Cypriot coins do this by referring to ancient history: the Athenian owl with olive branch (5th century B.C.) is featured on the Greek 1 euro coin and the Chalcolithic Idol of Pomos (ca. 3000 B.C.) is represented on the Cypriot 1 euro and 2 euro coins. Another example: the Greek 100 drachma banknote issued in 1927 to commemorate the adoption of the new constitution depicted a stater of the Delphic Amphictyony, a city league that was responsible for the sanctuary of Delphi. The obverse represents Apollo sitting on the Delphic omphalos and the reverse shows the head of Demeter wearing a grain-ear wreath.

The earliest coins from the Greek world date from the late 7th-1st half of the 6th century B.C. and were found in the Artemision in Ephesus. From then on, the minting of coins spread with remarkable rapidity from the Eastern Greek cities over the islands to the Black Sea region and the Greek motherland. Greek colonists who in reaction to a variety of pressures, including overpopulation and Persian expansion, moved to Cyrenaica, South Italy and Sicily brought the concept of

coinage with them. By around 500 B.C. the minting of coins had become a firmly established practice.

This development occurred against the backdrop of far-reaching political, social and economic transformations. One of the most significant changes was the reorganisation of the polis, which in Homeric times was an urban settlement ruled by the aristocracy and whose economy was characterised by barter. Now, the united citizenry of the towns (*astē*) and rural surroundings (*chōra*) took charge of political and economic issues. From ca. 700 B.C. onwards, written sources as well as finds of iron points and bars of gold, silver and electrum of consistent weight document the existence of a standardised means of payment. Solon of Athens, for instance, could still profit from this system when, in ca. 575–570 B.C., he introduced legislation to regulate the trade in silver. But now, as coins with standardised weights were issued by mints in the poleis – in Athens, for example, the mint was located close to the Agora – control over the local currency lay in the hands of the community. Even the periods of tyrant rule – intermezzis on the road to democracy – did not impede this development. The tyrant Peisistratos (r. 546–527 B.C.), for instance, set a milestone in the history of numismatics by introducing the first uniform coin emission in Athens (s. CQ 2/2017, p. 2). If a polis did not have its own mint, it used coins issued by rich neighbouring communities.

Local and long-distance trade and monetary transactions experienced an upswing, thereby strengthening relationships between trade partners and promoting competition. The common denominator for these activities was provided by silver and standardised coins based on the norms set by major mints such as those in Athens, Corinth and Chalcis on Euboea. From ca. 520–510 B.C. onwards, Syracuse, for instance, based its coins on the model provided by Athens. The emission of coins thus served as a catalyst for social and economic development as a whole.

The motifs depicted on coins were taken mostly from myth and religion with an emphasis on foundation narratives and geographical location. The imagery on the coins of Western Greek colonies, for example, generally referred to their Greek mother city. This is how communities visualised their identity, both for themselves and for outside parties. At the time, the themes illustrated on coins were only rarely politically motivated. Even the tyrants refrained from having their name or portrait used on coins, although they might perpetuate the memory, say, of a victory at a Panhellenic competition. When in ca. 480 B.C. the Sicilian poleis Gela and Leontinoi were ruled by the tyrant brothers Gelon (in Syracuse) and Hieron (in Gela), both poleis began minting coins with the Syracusan quadriga, which for centuries graced the coins issued by Syracuse. An example is provided by the tetradrachm (480–475 B.C.) illustrated on p. 6.

Another tetradrachm on offer at the Cahn Gallery was issued some 30 years later and belongs stylistically to the Severe Style (figs. 1-2). Here the die-cutter rendered the same motifs more finely and in greater detail. The quadriga to right is urged on by a bearded, archaic-looking charioteer holding a kentron in his left hand whilst a Nike flourishing a victor's wreath hovers above the team. The attitude and posture of the horses' heads and bodies seems freer, the staggering finer. The ketos (sea monster) with serpentine body in the space below the ground line (*exergue*), permits this coin to be assigned to the so-called Ketos Group (474–450 B.C.). The nymph Arethusa on the reverse wears her hair in a classical coiffure, with a thin fillet



Figs. 3-4: A DIDRACHM, METAPONTUM. W. 10 g. Dm. 2 cm. Silver. Magna Graecia, Metapontum, ca. 350-330 B.C. CHF 5,400

wound round her head and her hair gathered up in a bun at the nape of her neck. The classical stylistic idiom is also evident in the shape of the eyes with pronounced pupils and the heavy, rounded chin. Four dolphins swimming clockwise frame the head.

On this coin, Syracuse presents itself with great self-confidence: The quadriga alludes to its foundation myth, according to which the Corinthian settlers were accompanied by a priest of Zeus from Olympia, and the

Nike is reminiscent of an aristocratic victory in chariot racing. The ketos is interpreted by scholars as a symbol of Syracusan naval supremacy after the victory of the tyrant Hieron over the Etruscans at Cyme (474 B.C.). The personification of the Fountain of Arethusa on the off-shore island of Ortygia provides a local reference. The dolphins, Apollo's companions at sea, symbolise the safe harbours of Syracuse and the inscription "ΣΥΡΑΚΟΣΙ-ΟΝ" proudly refers to its citizens. This was to change in the Hellenis-

tic period, as will be discussed in the next issue.

The second coin presented here is a didrachm issued in 350-330 B.C. by the city of Metapontum on the Gulf of Taranto (figs. 3-4). The obverse refers to the city's foundation myth: The inscription "ΛΕΥΚΙΠΠ(ΠΟΣ)" identifies the bearded man with tilted-back Corinthian helmet as Leucippus, the leader of the Achaeans, who, when the colony was founded in ca. 680 B.C., tricked their Tarentine neighbours into giving them the land required (Strabo, *Geography* 6, 264). On the reverse the grains and fine awns of an ear of barley are naturalistically rendered. A dove ascends from the barley leaf on the right. The inscription "AM(I)" below it names the city magistrate responsible for the coin issue and the inscription "META" on the left is an abbreviated reference to the citizens. The barley ear was a regular feature on the coins of Metapontum during the 6th-3rd centuries B.C. and symbolised the cultivation of cereals in the fertile chōra that was of vital importance to the polis. As the goodwill of the fertility goddess Demeter and her daughter Persephone was essential, coins depicting these deities, such as the stater (430-400 B.C.) illustrated on p. 6, formed a second important group amongst the coins minted in Metapontum.

Discovered for You

Mere Clay, It Shimmers Like Pure Silver

On the Art of Imitating Ancient Metal Vessels

By Gerburg Ludwig



Fig. 1: A TREFOIL OINOCHOE WITH HANDLE APPLIQUES. H. 15.2 cm. Bronze. Etruscan, 5th cent. B.C. CHF 6,800



Fig. 2: A TREFOIL OINOCHOE. H. 16 cm. Clay, black glaze. Attic, 5th cent. B.C. CHF 7,800

It is an observation familiar to us from everyday life: Ornamental design cues are used to enhance materials and media, although they are not necessary from a functional point of view. The embossed seam on rubber shoe soles or a page layout that imitates a ring binder in our computer's word processing program are good examples of this. Though absent from some dictionaries, for instance the German Duden, the term *skeuomorph* used to describe this phenomenon has become current in the worlds of design and software development. It is compounded from the Greek words "σκεῦος" (container, implement) and "μορφή" (shape) and was coined by antiquarians studying archaeological artefacts in

the late 19th century. Defined as an object or feature which emulates the design of a similar artefact made from another material, the *skeuomorph* is a specialised form of imitation.

In ancient cultures such an imitative approach was made possible by the existence of a generally accepted hierarchy of materials, which revealed the social status of the vessels' owners. A Jewish legal text of the 2nd century A.D. whose purpose was to raise funds tells us how natural it was for people to think in such categories. It stipulates that those who used golden vessels should sell these and use silver ones; those who used silver vessels should use bronze vessels, and those who used bronze

vessels should use glass vessels. (Tosephta, *Peah*, 4,11). Bronze was assigned an intermediary value in the ranking list. Due to its reddish-yellow sheen it could be used to imitate vessels made of gold and conversely bronze vessels, themselves of substantial value, were imitated using clay or glass.

Clay imitations of metal vessels were already being made in the Early Bronze Age, as exemplified by the polished grey ceramics of the 4th millennium B.C. produced in the Levant. In the Archaic Period, Attic potters took up this idea again by coating entire vessels with a clay slip – also used for greater contrast in red- and black-figure vase painting –

UPCOMING FAIRS

Please note that this summer we will be exhibiting in London at MASTERPIECE, 28 June - 4 July 2018. In autumn we will be present at Biennale Paris, 10-16 September 2018, and at TEFAF New York Fall, 27-31 October 2018, but not at Frieze Masters London. We look forward to welcoming you at these fairs.

that turned black during firing. This slip, which sinks down and forms a sediment when clay is elutriated, contains very fine components, including minerals which ideally had a high proportion of chromophoric iron oxide. The slip glistens both when it is applied and after firing and is therefore called "Glanzton" in German. The potter applied it with the aid of a potter's wheel, or, as Athenaeus reports of the potters from Naukratis in his *Deipnosophistai*, they plunged the entire vessel into a liquid – the slip mentioned above – so that it would look like silver (Ath., *Deipn.*, 11, 480e). On firing the slip sintered and sealed, forming a black layer on top of the clay.

But why black? It appears unusual from our present point of view, but it was not customary to polish silver in Antiquity. In order to clean the vessels, they were smoked using sulphur. Homer describes how Achilles prepared his drinking cup for a ritual act in this manner (Homer, *Ilias* 16, 225). As a result, the vessels took on a matt, dark grey to black patina (silver sulphide) that protected the surface. This effect was enhanced by the salt in the sea spray that drifted far inland along the coast. It was this colour that was imitated by means of the black glaze. Furthermore, the potters borrowed the shapes and decoration typical of metal vessels. The rib pattern which became popular in the 5th century B.C. and developed into a standard feature some 100 years later was unequivocally derived from metal vessels. Sharp edges are also reminiscent of the valuable metal models.

Let us examine some of the vessels offered for sale by the Cahn Gallery from a skeuomorphic perspective. First two trefoil oinochoai (figs. 1–2): In view of the Attic provenance of the clay imitation (fig. 2), it comes as a surprise that the bronze jug is of Etruscan manufacture (fig. 1). However, the metalsmiths there liked to take their cues from imported silver or bronze vessels from the Greek motherland. Thus, the bronze jug is already an imitation, albeit in a similar or related material. The basic shape and contour of the jugs clearly indicate that the vessels are related. Rising up from a broad base, the wall of the squat body curves outwards and upwards towards the distinctly offset shoulder. In this way the greatest storage capacity was achieved. The short neck with the slightly flaring trefoil rim facilitated precise pouring. The magnificent applique in the shape of a woman's head at the transition from the handle to the rim of the bronze jug is replaced by a slight projection at the top of the handle of the clay version. Just below the shoulder the base of the handle transitions simply into the wall, whereas on the bronze sister-piece this point is adorned by a silen's head. To all appearances the potters first concentrated on the imitation of formal and functional aspects. But as

time progressed, they broadened their range, employing manually produced but increasingly also mould-made appliques, stamped ornaments, embossed decorative bands made using the potter's wheel and the vertical ribs that typically adorn the body wall.



Fig. 3: A RARE KANTHAROS WITH VOTIVE INSCRIPTION TO DIONYSOS. H. 9.6 cm. Bronze. Greek, 2nd half of 4th–3rd cent. B.C. CHF 9,800

If one focusses on the chalice-shaped bodies of two drinking vessels in the Cahn Gallery (figs. 3–4), a formal relationship becomes apparent despite the differences in their overall shape and size. The bronze kantharos (fig. 3) is a typical drinking cup used in the symposium. Its rounded base rested comfortably in the drinker's hand and the sharply bent edges and flaring rim made it easy to grip. This basic shape with the sharp edges was also employed by the potter for his clay version (fig. 4). The slender foot with broad base, the raised encircling band in the centre of the stem and especially the high strap-handles with connecting bar and lateral projections on which the fingers could rest make this kantharos a very imposing vessel. Possibly it was directly modelled on a vessel made of silver.

In the course of the next centuries, this type of pottery was produced on an almost industrial scale which resulted in a considerable loss of quality. The sheer number of preserved examples permits the assumption that such black-glazed ware was, so to speak, the silver of the man on the street.



Fig. 4: A LARGE KANTHAROS WITH HIGH HANDLES. H. 38.1 cm. Clay, black glaze. Boeotian, 2nd half of 5th cent. B.C. CHF 16,000

The Debate

Portable Antiquities: New in The Netherlands

Britain's highly successful Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS), which deals with archaeological finds made by the public, celebrated its 20th anniversary last year. We devoted a feature to PAS in CQ 1/2018 and in the Editorial, Jean-David Cahn made a case for the adoption of this scheme by other countries. We were therefore most interested to note that PAN: Portable Antiquities of the Netherlands, which is clearly based on the British scheme, was launched in 2016. The introduction of PAN was directly related to the coming into force on 1 July 2016 of the new Dutch Heritage Law, which legalised metal detection in the topsoil down to a depth of 30 cm. Previously metal detection had been illegal, but although it was practiced a lot it was generally not prosecuted. PAN aims to document and publish both new finds as well as finds made in past decades by members of the public, thereby greatly increasing the number of artefacts available for scholarly research. Furthermore, PAN seeks to increase public awareness of cultural heritage in The Netherlands.

Further information is available at:
<https://www.portable-antiquities.nl>



Imprint

Publisher
Jean-David Cahn
Malzgasse 23
CH-4052 Basel
+41 61 271 67 55
mail@cahn.ch
www.cahn.ch

Editors
Jean-David Cahn
Yvonne Yiu

Authors
Jean-David Cahn
Martin Flashar
Ulrike Haase
Gerburg Ludwig
Peter-Andrew Schwarz
Jocelyn Wolff
Yvonne Yiu

Translations
Bronwen Saunders
Yvonne Yiu

Photos
Niklaus Bürgin
Shona Cox
Ulrike Haase
Eugen Leu
Peter-A. Schwarz
J. Diaz Taberno
Yvonne Yiu

Design and Layout
Ariane Ballmer
Michael Joos
Yvonne Yiu

Printer
Druckerei Deiner
www.druckerei-deiner.de

The Debate

be censored, since the illegal procurement – the looting of a tomb, in other words – cannot be undone by remaining silent on the art-historical value of a work. The art trade has little to gain from this, since a work without a faultless provenance is all but impossible to sell, even if it has been the subject of scholarly research.

As to the question of inadequate proof of provenance, my plea would be in favour of free trade; that is, proof of legal origins should be deemed lacking only in the absence of *all* sources predating 1970 – in other words, not just written sources but also photographs and evidence provided by the object's conservation history. Where such sources are missing entirely, or where there are good grounds for assuming the object to have come from an illegal excavation, the restrictions on publication mentioned above may indeed help curb the trade in artefacts of dubious provenance. The prevailing views on this question nevertheless remain controversial.

Sincerely,
Thomas

Thomas Christ
*Member of the Foundation Board of the
Basel Institute on Governance*

Some Remarks on Thomas Christ's Contribution

I would like to thank Thomas Christ warmly for sharing his thoughts with us on this complex topic. As the column "The Debate" provides the opportunity to discuss controversial topics, it does at times occur that my stance differs from that voiced by the authors contributing to this column. I would therefore like to point out that in my opinion it is too categorical and too simple to assume that an object has no legal provenance if there is no pre-1970 documentation. The presumption of innocence should hold for such objects, too. It is easily possible that an object was offered on the art market or entered a collection in an absolutely legal manner, even if no documents that prove this have been preserved. Furthermore, I am convinced that the detrimental effect on the illicit art trade of a publication ban for objects with no pre-1970 documentation is greatly overestimated and is by no means commensurate with the considerable loss of knowledge that such a ban entails.

Jean-David Cahn

Discovered for You

Clay Rattles from the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age

By Ariane Ballmer



Clay rattles of the Silesian Lusatian culture, Late Bronze to Early Iron Age, ca. 1st half of 1st mill. B.C. Back row from left to right: A BULBOUS RATTLE. H. 4.4 cm. CHF 1,200. A VESSEL-SHAPED RATTLE. H. 7.3 cm. CHF 1,800. TWO RATTLES. H. 4.5 cm and L. 8.5cm. CHF 2,400. Front row: A CUSHION-SHAPED RATTLE. L. 6.8 cm. CHF 1,800. All formerly Coll. Siegfried Zimmer, ca. 1950.

Prehistoric objects often seem strangely static and cut off from the sensory world to which they once belonged: they are immobile, odourless, and silent. Besides the fossilized and often patchy archaeological situation, the absence of writing means that the relevant circumstances cannot even be reconstructed through textual sources. A few categories of archaeological object nevertheless afford us direct access to the deliberately produced and experienced sounds of the past. Among these are rattles, in other words rhythm instruments.

In Europe, rattles made of clay begin to appear here and there from the Early Bronze Age onwards, i.e. from the 2nd millennium B.C., especially in the Danube-Tisza region. The scope of their distribution broadens noticeably as of the Late Bronze Age. Most prehistoric clay rattles found in Central Europe date from the period between ca. 1050-500 B.C. The objects presented here were

discovered in Silesia (south-western Poland), which was also the heartland of what we define as Lusatian culture. The material remains of Lusatian culture fall in the period between ca. 1400-500 B.C., in other words the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age, when it was the predominant cultural group in eastern Central Europe. Its highly developed metallurgical skills and extensive exchange networks reflect its cultural pre-eminence. The Lusatian culture is further characterised by large, multi-generational burial fields containing grave urns flanked by a lavish array of ceramic vessels by way of grave goods.

A wide range of rattle shapes is known from the Lusatian culture's sphere of influence. These are either stylizations of motifs drawn from everyday life (e.g. animals, ceramic pots, or edible plant parts such as fruits, vegetables, roots and tubers) or abstract geometrical shapes. In principle they

were made using fine clay. In order to create a cavity, the two halves were moulded by hand and then joined together. The seams of the examples shown here have been carefully smoothed over and hence are barely visible. The hollow bodies were filled with small, mobile elements such as tiny pebbles or little balls of clay. The amplitude and clarity of the sound to be produced were determined by factors such as the volume of the sound box, the thickness and hardness of the walls, and the size, weight, and number of rattling particles. In some cases the sound was further optimized by the addition of little sound holes in the sound box. What is especially striking about all these rattles is the quality of the sound produced by the moving particles colliding with the inside of the sound box: it is fine, clear, and surprisingly quiet. The pitch and timbre naturally vary from rattle to rattle.

Clay rattles are the only clearly identifiable sound instruments to have survived from the Lusatian context. Various utensils and ornamental objects that might double as sound-producing instruments are a regular feature of the object spectrum, however; this explains the bronze "clappers" attached to rings, chains, and belts endowed with an acoustic function, for example. Musical and sound-making instruments from pre-historic Europe – or rather what remains of them – are certainly known, especially percussion instruments like drums or wind instruments like pipes, flutes, or horns. Late Bronze Age lurs (wind instruments made of bronze sheet) from the Nordic context occupy an especially important place in musical archaeology.

Even if we can, and indeed must, assume that the deliberate and controlled production and reception of noises and sounds played an important role in people's lives during that period, concrete evidence of this in the form of archaeological finds remains remarkably rare. This could well be the result of the preservation conditions and with them the improbability of such objects being discovered (since many instruments would have been made of organic materials). This makes the clay rattles all the more important.

To interpret these rattles merely as children's toys would undoubtedly be too simplistic, bearing in mind the archaeological situation. As a matter of fact Lusatian clay rattles are frequently found in children's graves, however, not exclusively. Many adults' graves were also furnished with rattles. The fact that most of the rattles found among the remains of the Lusatian culture were discovered in a burial context, whereas scarcely any at all have turned up in set-



Clay rattles of the Silesian Lusatian culture, Late Bronze to Early Iron Age, ca. 1st half of 1st mill. B.C. Left: A BIRD-SHAPED RATTLE. H. 5.5 cm. CHF 2,200. Right: A BIRD-SHAPED RATTLE. H. 4.8 cm. CHF 2,200. Both formerly Coll. Siegfried Zimmer, ca. 1950.

tlements might be interpreted as indicative of a deliberately carried out practice. That they played a role in the ceremonial funeral feast seems likely. In fact, rattles might at the same time have been put to use in everyday life, for example in cultic or magic domestic rituals entailing communing with spirits, warding off evil and such like – the range of possibilities is very wide indeed.

But as stylized and miniaturized references to objects of daily use or animals, rattles are also *symbols*. Many are furnished with holes or a flat base bespeaking a need to hang them up or stand them in a specific place when they were not actively in use. This alerts us to both the aesthetic and symbolic value of these pieces, which apparently were to be legible as symbols even when at rest. Alongside abstract forms and shapes borrowed from ceramic vessels, the large number of bird-shaped rattles seems worthy of note. Depictions of birds were a key element in the mythological iconography of the Central European Bronze Age, in which images tended to be few and far between. Its main theme was the cyclical journey of the sun, which was drawn across the firmament by a vehicle – either by a ship, a chariot or by a bird. Bronze Age cosmology thus credited an (aquatic) bird with the ability to mediate between different levels of the cosmological order. Such a bird could move between the realms of the living and the dead and the supernatural. The symbolically charged motif of an (aquatic) bird was thus used very restrictively and was reserved for

selected carriers only. That in this period the bird should have been objectified in the form of a sound-making instrument is further evidence pointing to the elemental link between music and cult, and with it of the important role played by acoustic stimulation in ritualistic ceremonies.

The rattles presented here broaden our archaeological understanding of Lusatian culture by adding a sensory component, namely that of acoustic experience. In the Late Bronze Age, rattles may have been transcendental media that permitted contact to the supernatural. Today, some 3,000 years later, they have the capacity to bridge the gap to a bygone reality by enabling us to hear the sounds of a now lost culture.

Imprint

Publisher
Jean-David Cahn
Malzgasse 23
CH-4052 Basel
+41 61 271 67 55
mail@cahn.ch
www.cahn.ch

Editors
Jean-David Cahn
Yvonne Yiu

Authors
Ariane Ballmer
Jean-David Cahn
Martin Flashar
Ulrike Haase
Michael Lewis
Yvonne Yiu

Translations
Bronwen Saunders
Yvonne Yiu

Photos
Niklaus Bürgin
Ulrike Haase
Eugen Leu

Design and Layout
Michael Joos
Yvonne Yiu

Printer
Druckerei Deiner
www.druckerei-deiner.de

Discovered for You

Silent Cries for Help to the Gods

A Glimpse into the World of Anatomical and Fertility Votives

By Gerburg Ludwig

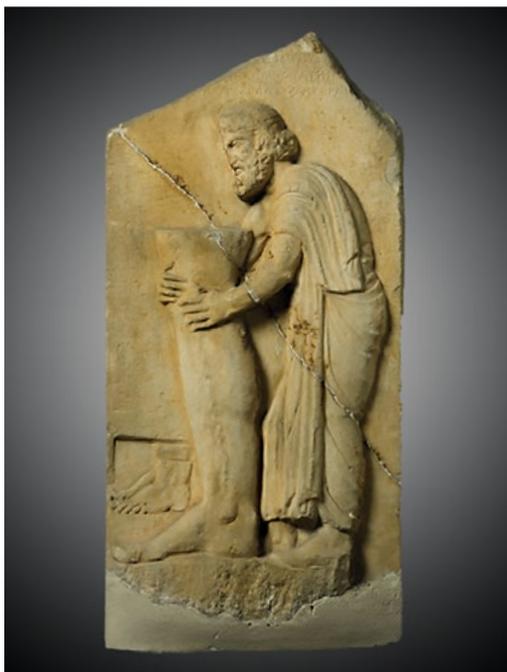


Fig. 1: A VOTIVE RELIEF OF LYSIMACHIDES. H. 70 cm. Marble. 4th cent. B.C. National Archaeological Museum, Athens, inv. no. 3526.

As elucidated in our excursion into the world of ancient votive offerings in CQ 3/2017, votives, whether personalized by an inscription or more generally “formulated”, are a silent medium of prayer or thanksgiving to the gods.

Votive offerings tied to the wish for health and healing could take on some surprisingly concrete forms. In addition to representations of human organs or extremities, we sometimes find graphic visualizations of actual symptoms, too. The healing hero Amynos on the votive relief of Lysimachides from the Amyneion on the Areopagus in Athens, for example, is depicted holding a giant human leg with very prominent varicose veins (fig. 1). Just above the floor in the background at left, moreover, is a niche with two votive feet. It is tempting to imagine that Amynos specialized in legs and feet.

The healing heroes were intermediaries and therapists with a territorially delimited radius of action, much of whose work was later taken over by the healing god Asklepios; hence the ca. 260 anatomical votive offerings made of clay found at the Asklepieion of Corinth, among them ears, eyes, fingers, arms, legs, and genitals (5th-4th cent. B.C.) attesting to the many different forms of succour that were

sought and perhaps granted. Probably it was from Corinth that the custom made its way to Etruria, possibly via Gravisca, the port of Tarquinia on the coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea. The Etruscans, themselves very religious with cultic rules and traditions of their own, turned out to be receptive to religious influences from the East.

Currently on sale at Gallery Cahn is a life-size votive foot made of clay with very naturalistically modelled toes, knuckles, and tendons (fig. 2). The purpose of the hole in the middle of the convex face of the lower leg stump was not to attach the foot to a statue, however; it served rather as a firing hole, as did the two other holes on the underside of the sole. Votive feet like this one, solidly modelled out of clay and often painted, have been found in such huge numbers that we can assume they



Fig. 2: A VOTIVE FOOT. H. 16.3 cm. Beige clay, red paint. Italic, Etruscan, 3rd cent. B.C. CHF 2,800

were proto-industrially made, whether with the aid of moulds or with the bare hands. Evidence of the existence of workshops for this purpose inside sanctuaries, among them the pottery in Marzabotto (south of Bologna), has been found. The giver, in other words, could buy a votive foot either inside or close to the sanctuary, and then dedicate it to a deity whether as a prayer or as a token of thanks for healing. Among the possible addressees were various Etruscan and Italic deities, such as Uni (synonymous with Hera), Menrva (Athena) and Veia (Demeter), Turan (Aphrodite), Aplu (Apollo) or Mefitis as the Samnite and Salus as the Latin healing goddesses.

Looking at the flat arch of Gallery Cahn's votive foot, it is tempting to diagnose a collapsed arch as the source of the problem. Yet

given the speed with which these objects were mass-produced, the extent to which they show actual symptoms must remain a moot point. Very few anatomical votive offerings bear clear visual signs of disease. It seems that all that was needed to solicit succour or to give thanks was a dedication of the relevant body part; that done, the votive would henceforth serve the gods as a permanent reminder of the giver's supplication.

Over time, the Etruscans and their Italic neighbours became masters of the choice of materials, the manufacture, and the design of such votive gifts. From the late 4th century B.C. entire series of single organs and extremities were produced. One Etruscan speciality was the individually manufactured human torsos with the abdominal or thoracic cavity opened up like a window to afford a view of the inner organs. The knowledge of how these looked was obtained from haruspicy, i.e. the inspection of entrails by priests, and perhaps even surgical interventions, albeit of limited scope. All the documented finds of anatomical votives are without exception from sanctuaries and votive depots, most of them in southern Etruria as far south as Campania and Apulia, the main concentrations being in Veji and Tarquinia.

The desire for health was equated with the need for fertility and procreation. Whether the giver of the rather plain, almost minimalist phallos votive made of tufa, which Gallery Cahn also has in its programme (fig. 3), dedicated his offering as thanks for his recovery or to solicit healing or fertility can no longer be



Fig. 3: A VOTIVE PHALLOS. H. 21.7 cm. Tufa with volcanic inclusions. Italic, 4th-2nd cent. B.C. CHF 4,500



Fig. 4: A VOTIVE STATUETTE OF A SWADDLED INFANT. H. 47.7 cm. Clay with dark inclusions. Etruscan, 3rd-2nd cent. B.C. CHF 6,000

ascertained. To answer that question we would have to know more about the origin of the piece and the deity to whom it was dedicated. The choice of material is unusual. Normally reserved for sculpture and buildings, tufa was in such plentiful supply that it constituted a cheap alternative for votive gifts, too.

A more concrete instance is that afforded us by Gallery Cahn's swaddled infant with pretty, cherubic face (fig. 4). Little terracotta votive statuettes like this one were dedicated at the sanctuaries of the Italic birth deities and kourotrophoi (the gods who protected children) by expectant women or parents, either as "personified" thanks for offspring, or to solicit good health, well-being, and divine protection during pregnancy, delivery, and motherhood, and the life of the child. The contrast between the compact, swaddled body – the edges of the swaddling bands actually stand out on some statuettes – and the emphatically three-dimensional modelling of the shoulders, neck, and head is characteristic of these pieces. Occasionally, as with our statuette, the cloth is pulled up to the back of the head to expose the feet. The faces, either hand-modelled or mould-made, in some cases show features that go far beyond those of an infant and are almost adult-like. Not until the Hellenistic Period did the representation of little children as children become standard.

Anyone who investigates churches and chapels in Greece and Italy these days is sure to come across little relief plaques with anatomical images on them here and there. These prove that certain elements of this very graphic, powerfully visual cult practice have indeed been preserved over the centuries and are consciously cultivated even now.

My Choice

A Hellenistic Theatre Mask

By Jean-David Cahn

This exceedingly finely made theatre mask is remarkable for its bulbous eyes under bulging eyebrows reaching deep into the furrowed brow, a wide-open mouth, hair rolled up into a speira encircling the forehead like a wreath, and a finely stranded, fanned-out beard. This small-format version was probably intended as a votive offering, for example for a sanctuary of Dionysos. Since all the aforementioned characteristics are redolent of representations of satyrs or Silenus, some connection to satyr plays like those performed following the three tragedies at the Great Dionysia is certainly conceivable. Another possible interpretation is that of a slave in the New Comedy. A tiny hole at the top of the mask probably indicates that it was suspended originally. The reddish clay and outstanding workmanship are a pointer to Myrina as the mask's place of origin, Myrina being where all the best terracottas were made. The quality of the piece is borne out by the meticulous attention to detail. The model must have still been quite fresh, lending the mask an almost metallic clarity. It was worked while still in a leathery state and then coated in a white clay slip before being painted with red paint.

When I saw the piece for the first time, I felt magically drawn to it. That expression of high drama with bulging eyes and hair standing on end – there is a hint of madness to it! And when I hold the mask in my hand, it is almost as if I could hear the droning iambs streaming out of its open mouth. This is a far cry from the "noble simplicity and serene grandeur" so often associated with the culture of the Ancient Greeks. But Greek society could also be bawdy and blunt and had a penchant for the boisterous and the grotesque.

This mask invites us to partake in the world that produced it. It is a powerful piece, the best possible clay carving one could wish for. And it also supplies but further proof of how artistic value and commercial value may



A THEATRE MASK. H. 11 cm. Terracotta. Greek or Western Greek, 3rd-2nd cent. B.C. CHF 12,000

be miles apart. The mask is not obliging; on the contrary, it makes demands of us and requires background knowledge. But for lovers of Antiquity, it also promises a lot of art for very little money.

Imprint

Publisher
Jean-David Cahn
Malzgasse 23
CH-4052 Basel
+41 61 271 67 55
mail@cahn.ch
www.cahn.ch

Editors
Jean-David Cahn
Yvonne Yiu

Authors
Sir John Boardman
Jean-David Cahn
Martin Flashar
Ulrike Haase
Gerburg Ludwig
Yvonne Yiu

Translations
Bronwen Saunders
Yvonne Yiu

Photos
Niklaus Bürgin
Ulrike Haase

Design and Layout
Denise Barth
Michael Joos
Yvonne Yiu

Printer
Druckerei Deiner
www.druckerei-deiner.de

Discovered for You

In Silent Dialogue with the Gods

An Excursion into the World of Ancient Votive Offerings

By Gerburg Ludwig

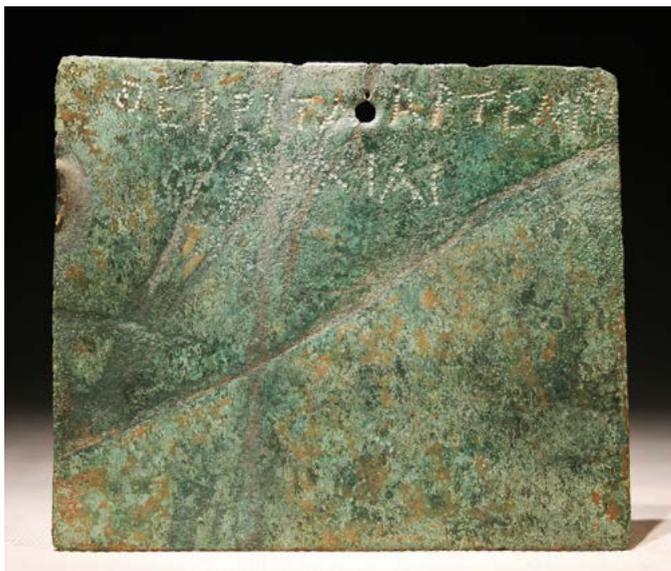


Fig. 1: A SMALL VOTIVE PLAQUE WITH AN INSCRIPTION TO ARTEMIS LOCHIA. H. 10.5 cm. Bronze, Greek, 5th-2nd cent. B.C. CHF 3,400

Roaming the ruins of ancient sanctuaries such as Delphi, Olympia, or the Amphiareion of Oropos, visitors will notice a variety of pointers to the offerings (anathema or votive) customarily made there. There are small buildings, like the Athenian Treasury and Siphnian Treasury at Delphi, reliefs showing cultic scenes, and perhaps the base of a statue bearing a dedicatory inscription.

Scenes of cultic practices on Greek vases and the ceremonial offerings or sacrifices depicted in Roman wall paintings and on official or sacred reliefs round off the picture. Thus we can visualize very well how the cult was practised and the gods venerated. But how do all the many small votive offerings fit into this picture? Or to put it another way: Have you not sometimes wondered about the exact meaning of the terms “votive offering” and “ex voto” used in the descriptions of some small works of art on offer at Cahn Gallery or in its auction catalogues? While both can be applied to dedications of all kinds, in practice they are used primarily in connection with small artefacts intended as gifts to the gods, to whom they were made over with irrevocable effect. The votaries who made such dedications did so either in anticipation of some future benefit, conveying their dearest wishes and prayers in a mute, material form, or in thanksgiving for succour already given or in fulfilment of a solemn vow, in which case the gift was indeed made “ex voto” in the truest sense of the term.

Once set up on special benches and altars inside the sanctuary, suspended on walls, or even from trees, these little votive offerings were a constant presence that must automatically have caught the public eye. They were perceived rather like a form of wordless communication between gods, givers, and other worshippers. The votive offerings themselves symbolized the provision of divine assistance. Their advertisement of the cult and the positive light in which they cast the giver – depending on their material value – were practical side effects of their primary purpose.

Such gifts for the gods varied considerably: The citizens of a city-state might collectively give a treasury that would house small votive offerings, weapons, armour (most of it war trophies), coins, hacksilver, or molten metals; but depending on the giver's social status and economic circumstances, they might take many other forms, too, ranging from large statues and reliefs bearing scenes of cultic practices or sacrifices to votives shaped like body parts or organs offered to a healing cult, small statuettes of humans and animals made of bronze or clay, and even ordinary everyday utensils.

Archaeologists often come across large numbers of the same figures either within the temple precinct, or, for reasons of space, in votive repositories located somewhere nearby, where they were ritually “disposed of”, as well as in settlements or necropolises. Determining the function of each of these pieces is not easy, but nor is it strictly speaking necessary. Worshippers may conceivably have presented a piece of their everyday lives to the gods from time to time, just as placing such objects in the graves of the deceased was likewise a widespread practice. In order to be able to interpret an artefact as a votive offering, it should be known to have been found within a sanctuary or votive repository, and, ideally, have a clearly legible dedicatory inscription.

Although not of any great value, such small votives served as a silent but direct means

of communication between ordinary mortals and the deity. The motivation for such a prayer or token of thanks was deeply personal in most cases and often had to do with the exigencies of everyday life: the hope for good health or wish to be healed, the longing for fertility, personal success, the giver's own personal prosperity, or that of his or her family members.

This is also the case with the small bronze tablet on offer at Gallery Cahn which bears a dedicatory inscription to Artemis Lochia, the goddess of childbearing (fig. 1). The inscription ardently requests a swift delivery with as little pain as possible. The wish is a personal one and Artemis is named as the addressee. Whether the first word identifies the giver is hard to say.

The occasional dedication of a used tool, household utensil, or toy was a way of making over to the gods something that was of symbolic or at least sentimental value to the giver. Such dedications, like the appeal to Artemis Lochia, were highly individualized, intimate cultic acts.

This is certainly not true of most of the votives that have survived, whose iconography tends to reference general cultic practices, as is evident, for instance, from the many miniature versions of the statues of the deity inside the temple that have been found. These were mass produced in external workshops and might be made of bronze, although terracotta was more common. The advances made in casting and the coroplasts' use of moulds made this form of production possible. Standardization, however, inevitably entailed the loss of the votive's individual character.



Fig. 2: A VOTIVE PINAX WITH A CULTIC SCENE. H. 19.5 cm. Clay. Western Greek, Lokroi, 1st half of 5th cent. B.C. CHF 1,800



Fig. 3: A FEMALE PROTOME. H. 25.5 cm. Clay. Western Greek, Classical Period, 4th cent. B.C. CHF 12,000

Such objects could be purchased in the immediate vicinity of the sanctuary. The small rooms to the left and right of the Sacred Way linking Pergamon to the Asklepieion situated on its outskirts, for example, were originally shops for the sale of votive offerings.

Both the relief tablet (pinax) showing a cultic scene from Lokroi (fig. 2) and the two female protomes (figs. 3–4) on offer at Gallery Cahn belong to this category of standardized votive offering. The pinax belongs to a votive series from the sanctuary of Persephone in Lokroi Epizephyrioi in Lower Italy. Originally painted and furnished with holes, such pinakes were intended to be hung up at the sanctuary. With its festively clad young worshipper with a taenia in her hand, this one affords us a glimpse of the cultic acts performed there.

The two protomes were mould-made, bearing a relief on the front face. The woman in the Classical protome, presumably the representation of a worshipper, wears a stephanos with veil. The head of the Archaic protome is crowned with a polos that characterizes the subject as a goddess. Many of the protomes also had holes on the upper edge allowing them to be suspended.

In all three cases, young women or their family members would have presented these votive offerings – along with a petition for the fertility, renewal, and preservation of nature – to Persephone, Aphrodite, Hera, or the Mother Goddess Demeter.



Fig. 4: A GODDESS. H. 17 cm. Clay. Western Greek, Archaic Period, 2nd half of 6th cent. B.C. CHF 2,400

As this brief excursion shows, ancient votive offerings are so plentiful and multifarious that they defy any easy classification. We shall turn our attention to another group of these objects in the next edition of *Cahn's Quarterly*.

Ancient Home Decor

New Artworks Monthly
on www.cahn.ch



AN APPLIQUE IN THE FORM OF BACCHUS' OR A MAENAD'S HEAD. H. 10.2 cm. Bronze. Crowned with an opulent wreath of ivy leaves and corymbs, this youthful head with its wild, tousled hair can only belong to the god of wine, Bacchus, or to a member of his entourage, either a maenad or a satyr. The idealised face with its elongated oval shape and tapering chin, slightly curved forehead, flat eyebrows which transition elegantly into the long, slender nose, small mouth with full, sensuously arched lips and pronounced, slightly hanging chin is firmly rooted in the stylistic idiom of the Hellenistic Period, which lingered on well into the Roman Imperial Period. Hollow case, details in careful cold work. The applique may have adorned a piece of furniture. Nose and the tips of a few leaves slightly worn. Formerly German priv. coll., acquired prior to 1961. Late Hellenistic to Roman Empire, 1st cent. B.C.–2nd cent. A.D.

CHF 9,800



A PART OF A TRIPOD SUPPORT IN THE FORM OF A GOAT LEG WITH SWAN'S HEAD. H. 8.7 cm. Bronze. Naturalistically shaped leg of a goat, from whose upper end the head of a swan with elegantly curved neck emerges. The texture of the feathers and the beak is rendered by fine incisions. At the transition between the two figural elements the beginnings of a slightly curved horizontal bar that continues to the rear. A small support is attached to the highest point of the swan's head. This small fragment undoubtedly comes from an ornamental object. Such objects impress us through their wealth of ideas and shapes and were a component of the lavish decoration of Roman villas. Our object may have come from a tripod stand. In Pompeii larger examples with similar decoration that served as table supports were found. Formerly priv. coll. S. D., USA (East Coast), acquired before 1997. Roman, 1st–3rd cent. A.D.

CHF 1,500

Discovered for You

Laurion – of Silver a Veritable Fountain, a Treasure Chest in their Soil

From lead ore to coins

By Gerburg Ludwig

When, in Aeschylus' tragedy *The Persians*, Atossa, mother of Xerxes I, asks the chorus of Persian Elders what makes the Athenians so special, their leader also tells her of their wealth: "Of silver they possess a veritable fountain, a treasure chest in their soil." (Aeschylus, *The Persians*, 238). The reference is to the rich deposits of ore in the Laurion Hills of south-eastern Attica, which from 6th-4th century B.C. assured the polis of Athens of financial power and wealth.

Even today, the region is dotted with slag heaps both ancient and modern, headframes and smelting plants dating from the 19th and 20th centuries, and, somewhat less obviously, with the relics of ancient mineral processing. Thanks to sophisticated investigation techniques, especially below ground, we can reconstruct both the geology and the mining and extraction methods used in Antiquity. As a western spur of the Attic-Cycladic Metamorphic Complex, the Laurion Hills consist of irregular strata of marble and slate. The silver-rich galena (lead ore) occurred either as a horizontal contact layer on the layer boundaries in the slate or as a vertical stock through all strata.

Extraction began in the uppermost contact layer, in some instances above ground, as the hollowed-out rock faces and mouth holes of short galleries show. Later on, shafts were sunk to afford access to deeper, richer zones. At least 2000 shafts on an area of ca. 150 km² have been preserved, some of them up to 120 m deep. The miners extracted ca. 40 kg rock per man per day. The duration of each shift was defined by oil lamps that burned for approx. 10 hours. The ore-containing rock was removed via the shafts using ladders and rope winches, the holes to secure which are still visible in the shaft walls. The conditions underground must have been inhuman, since the galleries were very narrow, poorly ventilated, and extremely hot. Not by chance were most of the miners slaves – as recommended by Xenophon in his treatise on revenues (*Po-roi*, IV, 22 ff.).



Fig. 1 Rectangular ore-washing facility in Agrileza. © Heinz Schmitz outis.info/archaea_f/1611/laureion.html

Above ground, the initial processing was done in *ergasteria*, as evidenced by the remains of millstones and rectangular stone mills. Rings of limestone of 7-8 m in diameter were recently identified as a second type of stone mill. The aim was to obtain as uniform a grain size as possible for the ore-washing process, which entailed using jets of water to flush the ground rock across a sloping surface into a system of rectangular channels (fig. 1). First the pure ore and then the ore-containing rock, each according to its specific weight, settled on different levels and dried.

The small blast furnace used to smelt the lead ore was supplied with air via bellows. Whatever slag was left over was removed and the silver-containing lead poured into a cupel and heated in a cupellation furnace with a constant air intake to 900-970 degrees, whereupon it oxidized and was run off as litharge. As silver does not oxidize at these temperatures, it collected in the bottom of the cupel. The silver could be further refined by repeating the process. Litharge, converted into lead, was used by both builders and sculptors.

The Athenian mint near the agora was supplied with small bars of silver, which it melted and cast into planchets. Placed on an obverse stamp on the anvil with a movable reverse stamp laid on top of it, each planchet was struck by means of a hammer blow.

By nationalizing the mines, granting mining concessions to individual entrepreneurs – as evidenced by deeds and border markers inside the mines – and distributing the profits, the Tyrant Peisistratos (546-527 B.C.) shrewdly gave citizens a share in Athens' economic prosperity. The minting of standardized coins began, among them the tetradrachm that would dominate the eastern Mediterranean region right up to Alexander the Great's rise to power. The tetradrachm from Athens (fig. 2) on offer here was minted at the time of the Peisistratids. The canonical obverse shows a helmeted Athena, goddess of the polis, and the reverse an owl, the beast symbolizing wisdom and discernment traditionally shown at her side, inside a square field (*quadratum incusum*). The olive branch affirms the alliance with the goddess. The letters AΘE tell us of the coin's origins; thus it came to symbolize the identity of the polis.

Gallery

“La Biennale Paris – en marche”

By Jean-David Cahn

This autumn, Gallery Cahn will participate in the Biennale Paris (11-17 September) for the first time since 1990. This fair, which was called the Biennale des Antiquaires before it was renamed in 2016, was once the glory of Paris. Held in the superb Grand Palais, it was the meeting place of “tout Paris”. The French aristocracy, art lovers and intellectuals gathered there and I vividly recollect seeing Jacques Chirac and his entourage viewing the exhibits. However, the Biennale underwent a deep crisis that was in many ways symptomatic of the situation in general in France. After protracted internal conflicts, the fair was fundamentally overhauled and last year it was re-launched as an annual event. The number of jewellery companies was reduced significantly, giving the fair a new focus on fine art. A more modern design also reflects the new spirit of the Biennale which is now managed by a young



The Grand Palais, Paris, is the venue of the Biennale Paris which will be held from 11-17 September 2017. © Biennale

and innovative team directed by Mathias Ary Jan. A newly established committee headed by the collector and philanthropist Christopher Forbes guarantees the quality of the exhibitors. Although last year's Biennale was overshadowed by the terrorist attacks in Paris, the fair was well visited. Especially the French pub-

lic showed great interest. This year's edition promises to be very exciting and will be host to a stunning special exhibition featuring the Collection Barbier-Mueller. I am delighted and honoured that Gallery Cahn was invited to exhibit at the Biennale Paris and I look forward to welcoming you there.

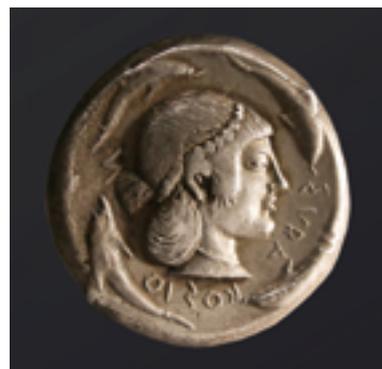


Fig. 2: A TETRADRACHM, ATHENS. 17.19 g. Silver. Greek, 594–510 B.C. CHF 12,000 Fig 3: A TETRADRACHM, SYRACUSE. 17.29 g. Silver. Western Greek, ca. 480–475 B.C. CHF 7,200

Around forty years later, when the Persians were preparing to launch yet another invasion of Greece, the statesman Themistocles ordered a renewal of the Athenian war fleet. This would have been unthinkable without the revenues from the Laurion Hills: Themistocles persuaded the Athenians to invest their share of the profits from the silver mines in the navy; hence the key role played by Athens in the victory against the Persians in the naval Battle of Salamis in 480 B.C.

The coins made their way westward as well, for instance as payment for grain imports from Sicily, where the shortage of silver ore had to be compensated by imports from abroad. The melting down or restriking of foreign coins was also a common practice. In the same year as the Battle of Salamis, Gelo, Tyrant of Syracuse, defeated the Carthagin-

ians who had been summoned to aid its enemy cities at Himera. The second tetradrachm on sale at the Cahn Gallery (fig. 3) dates from this period. The quadriga on the obverse is a reference to the founding of Syracuse under the auspices of a priest of Zeus from Olympia. Later, athletes sent to Olympia performed especially well at horse-racing. The nymph Arethusa and four dolphins on the reverse are local references, specifically to a natural spring of the same name on the peninsula of Ortygia before Syracuse, while dolphins were reputed to escort ships and seafarers to safety. The motifs and the naming of the city, this time in full (ΣΥΡΑ-ΚΟΣΙΟ-Ν), once again serve as a badge of identity for the polis.

But back to Laurion: When Sparta laid siege to Dekeleia in Attica in the Peloponnesian War of 413 B.C. the slave miners of Laurion

switched sides in large numbers. The ensuing collapse of mining activities necessitated the mobilization of the state's reserves. Competition from the silver mines of Macedonia in the 4th century B.C. put an end to the last flowering of mining in the region and ushered in its demise. Around the beginning of the new millennium, Strabo, in his *Geography* (IX, 399), tells of the decline in mining and of the paltriness of the yields; but he also praises the miners, who were skilled and knowledgeable enough to extract silver even from old slag.

Sources:

D. Morin-A. Phitiades, *Les Mines Antiques du Laurion. La puissance d'Athènes*, BT Bibliothèque de travail, no. 1164 (Mouans-Sartoux Cedex 2005)
C. Howgego, *Geld in der antiken Welt* (Darmstadt 2000)
H. Kalcyk, *Untersuchungen zum attischen Silberbergbau. Gebietsstruktur, Geschichte und Technik*, Diss. Munich 1981 (Frankfurt a. M. 1982)

Editorial

Some Thoughts on BAAF Basel

By Jean-David Cahn

People often ask me why the Basel Ancient Art Fair (BAAF) has chosen to leave Basel. An exquisite, intimate fair specialized exclusively in ancient art, BAAF was unique in both content and setting. The quality of the fair, both on an aesthetic level as well as in terms of exhibiting standards, put it on a par with the great international art fairs. Even as a "mini fair", BAAF succeeded in attracting a lot of visitors and hence should not be judged negatively.

The main problem was the overheads, which have to be borne whether a fair is large or small. These costs – for security, stand-builders etc. – inevitably have a knock-on effect on stand rents, which rise disproportionately the smaller a fair is. Dealers therefore have to do brisk business merely to cover their costs. Once the price per square metre has risen to CHF 1,000-1,500, the larger fairs within the EU begin to look cheap by comparison:

Maastricht, for example, costs less than half that amount, but attracts over ten times as many visitors.

To survive in the long run, BAAF would have had to become a similarly powerful crowd-puller. Yet it was never able to attract more than a few thousand visitors, despite being very popular with local art lovers. To compete internationally, it would have had to become either much larger – growth that would not have been possible at the Wenkenpark – or completely different, most likely becoming unrecognizable in the process. The sad truth is that BAAF was no longer a match for TEFAF Maastricht, Frieze Masters in London and the promising new TEFAF New York.

Even if today's trade fair visitors are very mobile and seem quite happy to pop over to London, Maastricht or even New York, upholding Basel's long, illustrious tradition as



AN ASKOS IN THE SHAPE OF A SWAN. L. 18.8 cm. Clay. Greek, 3rd-2nd cent. B.C. CHF 4,600

a centre for collecting and trading antiquities is a matter close to my heart. After a break of several years, therefore, we have decided to revive our traditional Christmas exhibition, which this year will be about "Animals and Mythical Creatures" in Antiquity. The exhibition will be open until 21 December and we hope very much that we will have the pleasure of welcoming you there.

Jean-David Cahn

Discovered for You

Mortised. Dowelled. Cemented.

A Closer Look at Ancient Sculpting Tricks

By Gerburg Ludwig

Standing in the courtyard of the Palazzo dei Conservatori on the Capitoline Hill in Rome and looking at the colossal portrait head of Constantine the Great and the other giant sculpture fragments alongside it, among them a right hand with upward-pointing index finger, we cannot help but imagine the size of the work to which they once belonged. How on earth did the sculptor pull off such a feat? – we

inevitably ask. And perhaps it was just such a question, or another like it, that went through your head on seeing the colossal sandaled foot from a seated statue set up in front of the marquee previewing Cahn's Auction 10 in the park of the Wenkenhof in Basel last November.

From Archaic times, sculptors did indeed show remarkable ingenuity when faced with



Fig. 1: Socket for the head of the Hellenistic "Satyr with Wineskin", formerly Cahn, Auction 7, 3.11.2012 no. 280 with illus.

the static and technical challenges posed by statuary. Very few pieces were made from a single block of stone. And the dimensions varied: in some cases only the nose or beard tip was joined on; elsewhere, the head, arms and legs were made separately and only on completion attached to the body.

Sculptors basically developed two different methods of assembling their work.¹ Either they roughly smoothed the faces to be joined and created a recess in the main piece into which the convex face of the attachment – possibly with a tenon in the middle – could be inserted (fig. 1); or they used a method from building called *anathyrosis*, in which two plane surfaces were joined together and the outer edges so finely smoothed that the seam was barely discernible from the outside. In both cases, dowels were often used to reinforce the join (figs. 1-2), although some artists preferred to do without them.

Even in the Archaic Period, sculptors began making use of these techniques as a means of cautiously separating the arms from the body. The right arm of the figure of Athena on the west gable of the Archaic Temple of Apollo-Daphnephoros in Eretria, for example, was connected to the torso by a round dowel (fig. 3).² To prevent rust, this iron dowel was sheathed in lead poured in through a vertical channel above it. The artist who attached the right lower arm of the Kore no. 673 in the Acropolis Museum in Athens (fig. 4) decided to be safe rather than sorry and fixed the tenon of the arm with a cross-pin. The lavishly pleated drapery typical of Late Archaic sculpture was occasionally fixed in place with the aid of sockets and tenons, as on the left side of the pelvis of Kore no. 672 in the Acropolis Museum (fig. 5).

The advances in posture made during the Classical Period did much to further the development of these technical skills. A statuette of a girl dating from the 4th century B.C. that Cahn was offering for sale in 2015 shows clear evidence of the second method of assembly. The plane surfaces onto which the arms would have been attached are roughly smoothed around the round dowel hole, but finely smoothed at the outer edge (fig. 6).

This development culminated in the unprecedented dynamism of Hellenistic sculpture, with its at times almost serpentine postures and expansive movements. The statuette of Aphrodite or a nymph seated on a rock that Cahn was offering for sale at this year's autumn fairs has several typically Hellenistic



Fig. 2: Torso of the "Tail-Chasing Boy Satyr", showing the surface with dowel hole to which the head would have been attached, formerly Cahn, Auction 4, 18.9.2009, no. 338 with illus.

attachments. The parts most often affected were those projecting into space, which in this case means both feet (fig. 7). But the artist also attached certain elements to the reverse, including parts of the left shoulder, the



Fig. 3: Three-quarter view of the reverse of the statue of Athena from the gable of the Temple of Apollo in Eretria, with dowel hole and rectangular hole for the tenon anchoring it. Source: Adam 1966, pl. 35c.

cloak and the left flank (fig. 8). The surfaces on the legs are only roughly finished, while those on the back are thoroughly smoothed – apart from a few blows in the middle – and contain lead-sheathed iron dowels. The rust-red discoloration of the marble in places indicates that the lead could not always prevent oxidation. The round dowel holes show that an additional support was used. The left



Fig. 4: Point of attachment for the right arm of Kore no. 673 in the Acropolis Museum in Athens. Source: Adam 1966, pl. 21b.

arm of a Hermaphrodite from Kos, now in the British Museum in London, was also attached by means of a dowel. On the shoulder and back of this piece, moreover, the sculptor cemented part of the cloak onto an astonishingly similar, albeit stepped connecting face.³

But how, exactly, can two plane surfaces be joined together without a dowel? Lime-based mortar was used in building from Mycenaean times onwards; later, stucco was also used, as was a mixture of bees' wax and lime. Pliny mentions the use of a cement made of resin and powdered lime (Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis*

historia 33, 30, 94). Remains of this ancient adhesive have indeed been found on some sculptures. Prof. Dieter Salzmann, for example, points to traces of it on the connecting face on the top of the head of the portrait of Drusus

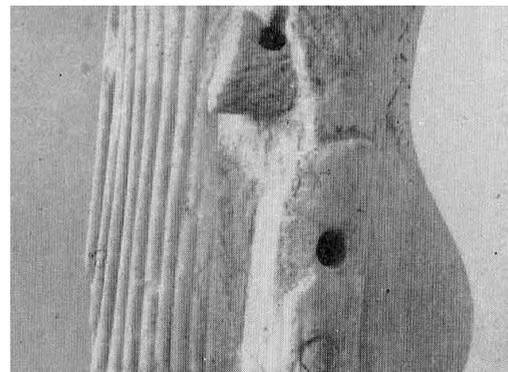


Fig. 5: Tenon joint for part of the drapery of Kore no. 672 in the Acropolis Museum in Athens. Source: Adam 1966, pl. 21 c.

in the Römisch-Germanisches Museum in Cologne, inv. no. 62, 28 (fig. 9), a chemical analysis of which yielded the mixture mentioned by Pliny.⁴ Similarly, when post-antique restorations on the Wilton House Antinoos that Cahn was offering for sale in 2011 were removed, traces of an ancient adhesive compound were found in the vicinity of the original tenon attaching the left upper arm to the rump.



Fig. 6: Statuette of a girl showing the surfaces with dowel holes onto which the arms would have been attached, formerly JDC, 2015.

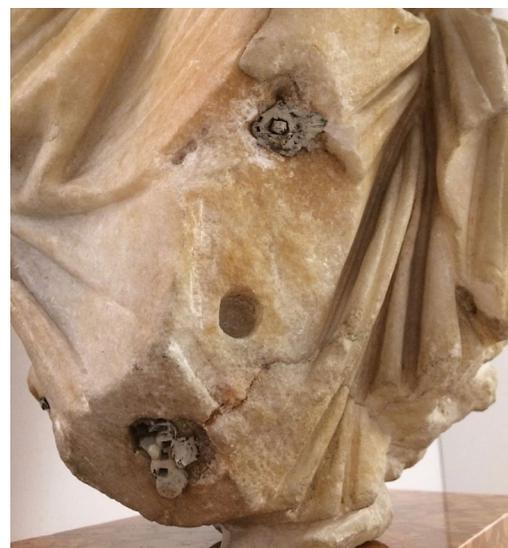


Fig. 7: Point of attachment for the foot of the statuette of Aphrodite or a nymph sitting on a rock, formerly JDC, 2016.

Over the centuries, sculptors optimized and refined all of these tricks and techniques, eventually becoming so skilled at them that not even the modelling and assembly of a colossal statue like that of Constantine the Great in Rome was beyond them.

My Choice

A Veristic Portrait of an Old Man

By Jean-David Cahn



Fig. 8: Point of attachment at left shoulder and back of the statuette of Aphrodite or a nymph sitting on a rock, formerly JDC, 2016.

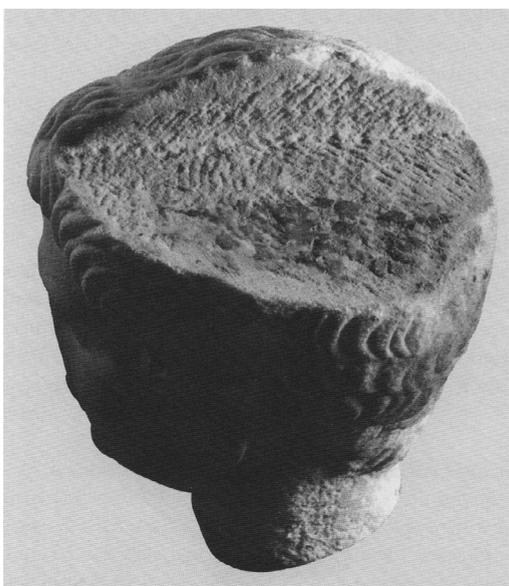


Fig. 9: Connecting faces with traces of ancient adhesive on the head of a portrait of Drusus, RGM Cologne, inv. no. 62, 28, see Salzmann 1990, 168, fig. 61. ©1990 Römisch-Germanisches Museum der Stadt Köln.



A VERISTIC PORTRAIT OF AN OLD MAN. H. 30 cm. Limestone. Roman, 2nd half 1st cent. B.C.-1st cent. A.D. CHF 18,000

Gazing back at us from deep-set eyes is a man who is actually not that old. The face defined by high cheekbones and sunken cheeks is bony, and looks almost emaciated. The hair clinging to the scalp is rendered as finely engraved, individual locks, some of them curled. The high forehead is framed by a receding hairline, and the work ends in an energetic chin and gaunt neck.

Despite its weathered condition, the portrait chiselled in soft limestone makes a very lively impression; its expressiveness is almost uncanny. Whether this somewhat overdrawn realism is called verism or naturalism is a moot point. It is, however, typical of portraits dating from the mid-1st century B.C. – from the Late Republic, in other words. What makes our portrait so fascinating is not just its expressive potency, but also the way its expressiveness is actually enhanced by its reduced condition. It is a timeless piece, reminiscent of Giacometti. The subtlety of the modelling is evident in those details of the corners of the eyes

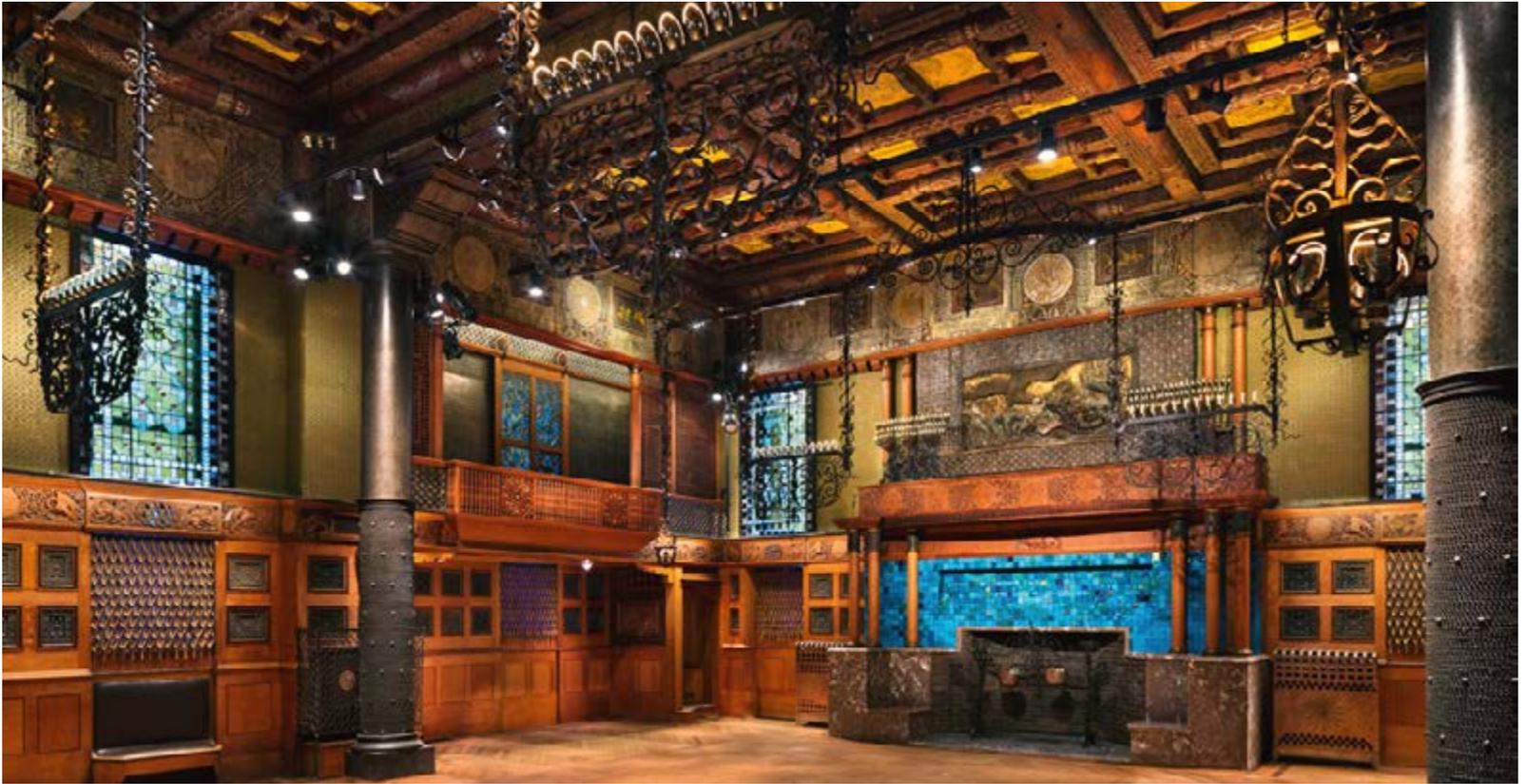
and the hair that have been preserved, and in the lips, too. The subject rests heavily on known portraits of Gaius Julius Caesar, who at the time was a highly influential political leader. It is tempting to believe that the portrait is a likeness of Caesar himself. But that is not the case. We are instead dealing with an instance of the middle classes emulating the upper classes – a phenomenon typical of this period that Professor Paul Zanker and others investigated in great depth some thirty years ago. Both the provenance of this piece from an Egyptian collection and the soft limestone point to Egypt as our Roman's place of origin. The portrait perhaps reflects the presence of Gaius Julius Caesar in Egypt in the latter days of the Republic, when his amorous adventures with Cleopatra VII fired many an imagination; but that is purely speculative. The portrait has been standing on my table for several weeks now. I am impressed by its powerful, haunting presence, which the depletion inflicted on it by the ravages of time seems, if anything, to have enhanced.

¹ Cf. S. Adam, *The Technique of Greek Sculpture in the Archaic and Classical Periods* (Oxford 1966) 80 ff.

² The rectangular hole on the right, which narrows on the inside, was for attaching the statue to the gable background by means of a large, matching tenon.

³ Inv. no. 1854.0519,168. – See *British Museum Research Database*, search with inv. no. Cf. R. Kabus-Preißhofen, *Die hellenistische Plastik der Insel Kos*, *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung*, 14th suppl. (Berlin 1989) 275 f., no. 75, pl. 24,2.

⁴ Cf. D. Salzmann, *Antike Porträts im Römisch-Germanischen Museum Köln*, *Kölner Jahrbuch für Vor- und Frühgeschichte* 23, 1990, 165-168. For many years now, the Max-Planck-Institut für Polymerforschung Mainz and scientists at the Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseum Mainz have been engaged in interdisciplinary research into the composition and application of ancient cements and adhesives.



The Park Avenue Armory Veterans Room after its restoration by Herzog & De Meuron.

that collectors can visit all three without ever encountering the same works twice; so there is no risk of boredom.

America is the engine that drives the global art trade, so a healthy American market is good for the European market, too. American collectors differ from their European counterparts both in their capacity for enthusiasm and in their aesthetic preferences. What pleases the Europeans does not necessarily please the Americans, and vice versa. This means that exhibitors cannot simply repeat

what they do in Europe in the USA; yet it is precisely this that makes this new challenge so alluring and exciting. We art dealers will have to think very hard about what to take to New York and adapt our range according to the customs and tastes of the host country. I myself see this as something positive and fully expect some cross-pollination between the fairs. Others, unfortunately, see only the negative aspects and are afraid that Maastricht has nothing to gain from this move. But this is surely not the case, since the fairs will in any case be very different. No matter

what happens, the coming months are likely to be very interesting and I am very much looking forward to welcoming you to the first Fall Edition of TEFAF New York. I have been allotted a booth in prime position close to the entrance which is, however, very challenging to design. So prepare to be both surprised and delighted by this stunning new venue!

Jean-Jacques Cahn

Discovered for You

A Table-Top with Relief Decoration from the Theodosian Period

By Ulrike Haase

No other religion has had a more decisive influence on the history of European art than Christianity. What began shortly after the year zero as a small Jewish religious community led by one Jesus of Nazareth became, in the following three centuries, a powerful religious force that presented a great challenge to the Roman Empire a polity hitherto

characterised by polytheism, religious tolerance and the cult of the Emperor. Soon the political elite felt that, in order to preserve the religious consensus amongst all inhabitants of the Empire, the activities of these troublemakers, who were termed Christians and who even extended a welcoming hand to slaves, must be curtailed. The following dec-

ades were thus marred by the persecution of Christians. In the year 311, however, the Edict of Tolerance pronounced by Galerius created a framework of acceptance within which the new monotheistic beliefs could become established. The pro-Christian stance of Emperor Constantine I and the interdiction of pagan cults by Theodosius I in 391/2 were



Fig. 1: A Table Top with Biblical Scenes. D. 104 cm. Marble. Early Christian, Roman, late 4th cent. A.D. Price on request.



Fig. 2: A tub-shaped sarcophagus in Rome, S. Maria Antiqua, ca. 270 A.D. At left: Jonah reclining under the gourd trellis. The central trio of orans, philosopher and ram-bearer can be read as either pagan or Christian. Photo: P.C. Bol (ed.), *Spätantike und frühes Christentum*, Exh. cat. Liebieghaus Frankfurt a. M. (Frankfurt a. M. 1983) 247, fig. 283.



Fig. 3: The sarcophagus of Junius Bassus (d. 359 A.D.), Treasury of Saint Peter's, Vatican City. Marble. Photo: W.F. Volbach, *Frühchristliche Kunst. Die Kunst der Spätantike in West- und Ostrom* (Munich 1958) fig. 41.



Fig. 4: Detail with Adam and Eve.

major steps paving the way for the triumph of Christianity, which today is the world's most popular religion, numbering 2.26 billion adherents.

Against the backdrop of the visual omnipresence of the pagan deities and of the Roman Emperor, the nascent Christian communities were soon confronted with the question of whether they, too, should give their religious beliefs visual form. A major challenge was that presented by the need to satisfy both the Old Testament ban on pictures and the needs of everyday life. At least in theoretical discourse, for instance that of the Church Fathers¹, the prohibition of images was certainly a constant source of theological controversy, which culminated in the Second Council of Nicaea in 787.

In practice things were quite different, however. There is evidence of the existence of images with a Christian content as early as the 3rd century. Significantly, these are found in the context of burial practices, which were closely linked with everyday life and not restricted to specific social groups: Thus the walls of catacombs and sarcophagi were adorned not only with traditional but also with Christian imagery. The bucolic representations of Jonah sleeping under the gourd trellis (fig. 2), which recall those of the beautiful youth Endymion, as well as pictorial formulae related to Roman Imperial iconography, such as Christ enthroned or Christ's Entry into Jerusalem, clearly show how intimately the development of Christian imagery and figurative types was linked to pagan visual traditions. The famous sarcophagus of the Roman prefect Junius Bassus (fig. 3), who died in the year 359, provides a good impression of the Christian pictorial repertoire of the mid-4th century.

This brief overview of the religious and art historical developments of the time enables us to better understand the iconographic significance of a ring-shaped marble table-top currently on display at the Gallery Cahn (figs. 1, 4-5). This object, which at first glance seems rather unusual, belongs to a clearly defined group of artefacts which, as research by Jutta Dresken-Weiland has shown, date from the reign of Theodosius I (347-394).² These table-tops or, more precisely, their rims, are



Fig. 5: Detail with the rare representation of the Drunkenness of Noah.

decorated with reliefs which feature both pagan (especially mythological) and Christian themes. Their find-spots are located mainly in the Eastern Mediterranean, and thus it is likely that they were also produced there.

Our relief depicts various scenes from both the Old and New Testaments, reading clockwise: the Fall (Gen. 3, 1-12, fig. 4); lost scene; the Three Youths in the Fiery Furnace (Dan. 3, 1-27); Peter/Moses Drawing Water from the Rock³ (Ex. 17, 6; Num. 20, 10-11); the Massacre of the Innocents (Mt. 2); Noah's Drunkenness (Gen. 9, 21-23, fig. 5); Joseph Sold to the Ishmaelites by his Brothers (Gen. 37, 18-28); Cain Slaying his Brother Abel (Gen. 4, 8).

This raises the question of whether there is a theological programme linking these scenes. Viewed as a whole, they seem to present a broad palette of human failings punctuated by two positive examples: the water miracle and the youths who were saved by their faith. So is the message to lead a devout life and stay firm in faith and hope so that you, too, will be saved?

To date, there is no evidence that the table-tops were used in the context of Christian cultic practices. As their decoration can be both Christian or pagan, these valuable items of furniture were probably used in a private context. Regardless of whether the reliefs illustrate a complex theological concept, serve to admonish the beholder to live a good, Christian life, or simply illustrate stories from Scripture, making them accessible to those who could not read: The guests seated at the table would certainly never have been at a loss what to talk about.

¹ When, for instance, Constantia, half-sister of Emperor Constantine I, wrote to the church historian and Bishop of Caesarea Eusebius (ca 260-340) asking for an image of Christ, he refused her request in very harsh terms, pointing out that this would be a transgression of the second commandment of the Decalogue. (MPG 20, 1545 ff.).

² J. Dresken-Weiland, *Reliefierte Tischplatten aus theodosianischer Zeit*, *Studi di antichità cristiana* 41 (Vatican City 1991).

³ On the water miracle and the question of who is represented, cf. *Cat. Liebieghaus* (as in caption to fig. 2) 200 f.

The Debate

Facts Please, Not Speculation!

By Vincent Geerling



Ancient objects confiscated by US authorities during the raid on IS commander Abu Sayyaf in May 2015.

The current debate about the size of the illicit market in cultural property and the alleged financing of IS with looted antiquities is mainly based on wild speculation. Before taking action the authorities should look at the facts, as this could prevent the wasting of limited law enforcement resources and the introduction of ineffective but draconian legislation like the most recent German law on cultural property.

Collecting and dealing in ancient art has been under attack in the media for some time now. A crucial distinction often overlooked in this public debate is the difference between legitimate trade and illicit trade. The failure to distinguish between the two has already led to poorly framed policies and regulations by NGOs and governments as the authorities react in haste to unsubstantiated speculation, rumour and propaganda in the wider media.

The "Multibillion Dollar Business"

The wider media have quoted the most bizarre figures for the size of the illicit market. Governments and their officials take these for granted, quoting them without question.

They also make little, if any, attempt to test their validity or ask where the figures come from. This "multibillion dollar business" has to be halted, officials shout from the rooftops, using the extreme exaggeration of the figures to reinforce the sense of urgency: claims of \$2-3 billion have done the rounds, soon followed by \$6-8 billion, with *Der Spiegel* going as high as \$7-15 billion in August 2015, quoting UNESCO as its source, in order to give it credibility. However, when asked, UNESCO stated that it never quotes figures for the illicit market because it doesn't know what they are, a response echoed by INTERPOL.

The truth is that nobody knows the size of the illicit market. So where did those alleged billions come from? IADAA asked Ivan Macquisten, a journalist, to find the primary source of the \$2 billion claim that most seem to quote. He initially traced it back to a report from the year 2000, by Neil Brodie, Peter Watson and Jenny Dooley called "Stealing History: The Illicit Trade in Cultural Material", which quoted the figure and gave as its source an article in *The Independent*

Discovered for you

A Hydria by the Chrysis Painter from Castle Ashby

By Yvonne Yiu



A RED-FIGURE HYDRIA, ATTRIBUTED TO THE CHRYSIS PAINTER. H. 44 cm. Clay. Attic, ca. 420-410 B.C.
Price on request

The god of wine, Dionysos, a handsome youth with a wreath in his hair and holding a thyrsos in his arm, sits at ease in a leafy grove. Four nymphs approach; one offers him a kantharos, while another brings him a tray heaped with fruit, delicately balanced on the palm of her hand. A charming composition, which, as suggested by Martin Robertson, might have been inspired by a wall-painting.

This hydria was painted by the Chrysis Painter in Athens, ca. 420-410 B.C. We encounter it again some 2200 years later, in Italy, in the collection of Spencer Joshua Alwyne Compton, the Second Marquess of Northampton. In the two decades 1820-40, he succeeded

in building one of the world's greatest collections of Greek vases, which, following his return to England, he displayed in the family residence of Castle Ashby. The vase collection was published several times, and the *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum* devotes one volume to it (CVA, Great Britain, Fascicule 15, Castle Ashby, by John Boardman and Martin Robertson, Oxford 1979).

In 19th-century Italy, it was customary to restore ancient vases in a manner that would appeal to potential buyers. We can therefore safely assume that the hydria by the Chrysis Painter was restored before the Marquess purchased it, and that it was not subjected to

further restoration after entering his collection. In the above-mentioned volume of the CVA, the authors emphasise that, against the CVA's customary practice, the 19th-century restorations were not removed and the vases only slightly cleaned before photography.

When the Gallery Cahn acquired the hydria in 2015, the question of how to deal with these almost 200-year-old restorations posed itself anew. On the one hand, they are valuable examples of 19th-century taste and restoration techniques, and document the piece's collection history. On the other hand, they do not satisfy current aesthetic demands. Furthermore, there was reason to assume that, in order to "beautify" the vase, sections of the original painted surface which were not so well preserved were overpainted.

After careful consideration of the advantages and disadvantages, Jean-David Cahn decided to let our restorer Cristiana Cimicchi remove the historical restorations in those places where they obscured the Greek original, but to preserve and clean them where they filled in lacunae.

The hydria will be discussed in detail in a brochure, which we will be happy to send to you on request.

Left: Before restoration. Yellowish stucco and overpainting from the 19th century along the diagonal break running from Dionysos's proper right arm, across his chest to his left shoulder. The left half of the torso, including the drapery covering his left hip, and the left arm down to the wrist were also restored and overpainted in the 19th century.



Right: During restoration. Stucco and overpainting on Dionysos's proper right arm, shoulders, left hip and part of the torso removed in order to reveal the original surface. It became apparent that the original fragment with the left third of Dionysos's upper body and his left arm was lost. The 19th-century restorations were therefore preserved.