



In the ancient world, terracotta sculpture was ubiquitous. Readily available and economical—unlike stone suitable for carving—clay allowed artisans to craft figures of remarkable variety and expressiveness. Terracottas from South Italy and Sicily attest to the prolific coroplastic workshops that supplied sacred and decorative images for sanctuaries, settlements, and cemeteries. Sixty terracottas are investigated here by noted scholar Maria Lucia Ferruzza, comprising a selection of significant types from the Getty's larger collection—life-size sculptures, statuettes, heads and busts, altars, and decorative appliqués.

Director's Foreword

Introduction

Highlights from the Catalogue



Cat 1. Statue of a Seated Poet (Orpheus?)

A life-size figure of a seated poet playing the kithara, identified as Orpheus, is flanked by two half-bird, half-woman Sirens, who sing to mourn the dead and escort them to the Underworld. The unique group likely belonged to a funeral monument erected for a mortal musician from the region of Taranto.



Cat 48. One of a Pair of Altars with the Myth of Adonis

On a pair of altars connected with the mystery cult of Adonis in Magna Graecia, reliefs show the beautiful youth seated between by his rival lovers Aphrodite and Persephone and dancing female attendants. Fated to die and be reborn each year, Adonis was associated with the life cycle of fertility and regeneration.



Cat 51. Head of a Woman

Votive female heads were dedicated by the hundreds as ritual offerings in Sicilian sanctuaries. Wearing a tall crown denoting divinity, this serene visage may represent the mother goddess Demeter, her daughter Kore, or a young bride on the eve of marriage and procreation.

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Guide to the Collection of South Italian and Sicilian Terracottas

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Authors

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Director's Foreword

Timothy Potts

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Introduction

This catalogue, which features a selection of terracottas from South Italy and Sicily now in the collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum, was born from a preliminary study of the coroplastic collection carried out during a graduate internship at the Getty Museum in 1988–89.¹ The assignment of the terracottas to these geographical areas is based on stylistic analysis, on the appearance of the clay, and on information related to the objects' acquisition. The terracottas were for the most part purchased on the art market from the 1970s onward; a few were private donations. Most have never been published, though some have been presented in preliminary and general publications. One group of nine examples comes from the collection of Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman, acquired by the Museum in 1996.²

Only one of the sixty terracottas presented in this publication comes from a certain, datable context ([cat. 60](#)), and thus for the most part it is impossible to reconstruct with confidence their potential associations with other materials. Furthermore, this selection intentionally presents significant variations in typology and chronology, spanning many centuries from the Archaic to the Late Hellenistic period. In addition, the intrinsic nature of the collection imposes certain limitations on this catalogue, as one cannot base the interpretative theories on solid foundations that might deepen our understanding of a specific center, region, or cultural context.

Certain aspects of the methods, objectives, and results presented in this catalogue merit attention. The catalogue presents a selection of the most significant typologies of the terracottas in the collection, and includes unique pieces as well more ordinary ones that were acquired as donations. Overall, the Getty's antiquities collection is comprised of over 1000 terracotta statues, statuettes, and other object types, ranging in date from the Neolithic to the Roman period, the great majority of which can be associated with votive deposits in southern and central Italy, especially the areas of Campania, Lucania (Metaponto), and Puglia (Taranto). The decision to organize the catalogue by region and site, even if such identifications are hypothetical, derives from the methodological approach of the study.

The purpose of this work is to present a range of objects of significant iconographic and stylistic interest, in some cases characterized by those qualities of uniqueness that generally reflect the tastes of private collectors. Comparisons with material from excavations and critical discussions helps not only to define those qualities but also to narrow down, as much as possible, the objects' place of manufacture and possible cultural context. In this manner, we have identified the Lakonian colony of Taras (Taranto) and the sites of ancient Canusium

(Canosa), Medma (Rosarno), Selinous (Selinunte), Kentoripa (Centuripe), and Morgantina as possible original centers of production for most of the objects presented in this volume. I considered it to be especially useful to indicate the hypothetical findspot of each object, even if doubtful (in some cases, noted at the time of acquisition), rather than limiting my work to a general typological or stylistic analysis, which would inevitably have relegated the items to the status of decorative pieces.

My approach could hardly overlook certain difficulties. First and foremost is the circulation of molds and statuettes among the various centers of production in Sicily and Magna Graecia, a circumstance that leaves significant margins of doubt as to the exact origins of an object. Moreover, in cases where no scientific analysis of the clay was performed, visual examination can provide only a hypothetical attribution of context. Nonetheless, I feel certain that this study, when made available to a wider audience, can enrich further research in the field and contribute substantially to our understanding of various aspects of the artifacts from the ancient world. In fact, such artifacts, having been handed down through the filter of collectors, sometimes seem to fit poorly within established hermeneutic categories, which too often are excessively codified and conventional. I hope that this catalogue and the accompanying *Guide to the Collection of South Italian and Sicilian Terracottas*, which indexes over a thousand other statuettes and molds at the Getty, will encourage wider comparison and connections to materials of more certain archaeological contexts.³

Notes

1. The manuscript was mostly completed in 2008 in a new context of cultural and scientific collaboration between the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Italian Ministry of Culture, and the Assessorato Regionale dei Beni Culturali e dell'Identità Siciliana. Prior to final editing, bibliographical references have been updated through 2010 or in selected cases, to 2013; the bibliography for individual objects is current through 2015.
2. Cat. 24, 27, 29–33, 35–36, 44–46, and 58. The collection was published in the catalogue *PASSION FOR ANTIQUITIES* 1994.
3. See the essays by P. Pelagatti and N. Bonacasa in PELAGATTI AND GUZZO 1997, pp. 9–28, and the introduction to the British Museum catalogue BURN AND HIGGINS 2001, pp. 16–17.

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I would also like to thank current and former colleagues in the Department of Antiquities—Mary Louise Hart, Kenneth Lapatin, Janet Burnett Grossman, and Alexandra Sofroniew—whose professionalism and collaboration made my task a privilege and a pleasure. Special thanks are due to Jerry Podany, former senior conservator of Antiquities, and to Jeffrey Maish, Susan Lansing Maish, Erik Risser, and Marie Svoboda in the Department of Antiquities Conservation, for their observations and contributions on the scientific analysis of several terracottas. Stimulating discussions of technical problems made me more confident in my understanding of unusual aspects of some of the terracottas. I am grateful to Benedicte Gilman, Marina Belozerskaya, Ruth Evans Lane, Greg Albers, Eric Gardner, Steph Grimes, and other staff at Getty Publications who made this catalogue a reality.

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My gratitude goes also to my family for their patience in enduring my preoccupations during the production of the book.

Classification

The catalogue includes sixty terracottas, presented according to presumed origins from two major areas: South Italy and Sicily. Within these two major groups, the objects have been further subdivided by the specific contexts they suggest and are generally organized by their typological classes.

Each catalogue entry begins with a brief description of the terracotta fabric and the decoration. The fabric has been analyzed using a macroscopic examination aimed at identifying the consistency and chromatic characteristics, defined with reference to the Munsell color charts. However, this examination method has intrinsic limitations, since a single type of clay can take on different colorings or nuances in different sections of an individual piece, depending on the temperature and duration of the firing process and the conditions of the kiln. More importantly, there is a high level of subjectivity involved in this form of visual analysis.¹ As regards decoration, the presence of white clay slip or diluted clay has been reported, and in cases where the piece has been subjected to a technical examination, the presence and type of pigments have been noted.

Measurements are given in centimeters and in general are the maximum height (H), width (W), and depth (D); in some cases, other significant dimensions are also included.

The “Condition” section provides information about the piece’s state of conservation and technique of manufacture. Further analyses have been carried out by the Antiquities Conservation Department on several of the terracottas with the intention of determining the presence of polychrome pigments, the nature of potential anomalies or prior restorations, as well as the technique of manufacture. In such cases, the results are shown in appendices at the end of the catalogue entry.

Under the heading “Provenance,” the object’s collection history prior to acquisition by the J. Paul Getty Museum is given.

The object “Bibliography” section lists both publications devoted to the piece in question and those in which the piece is only mentioned. Citations that are mentioned several times in the catalogue and notes are cited with an abbreviation; the full references are in the general “Bibliography.”

The body of each catalogue entry consists of an iconographic description and a critical commentary with the pertinent comparisons, dating hypotheses, and possible origins. The

suggested dating is based, where possible, on comparisons with materials from excavation contexts or, more frequently, through references to stylistic and iconographical analogies.²

Notes

1. *Munsell Soil Color Charts*, rev. ed. (New York, 1992). For concerns that have been raised about the use of color charts, see N. Cuomo di Caprio, *La ceramica in archeologia: Antiche tecniche di lavorazione e moderni metodi d'indagine* (Rome, 1985), p. 175, and M. BARRA BAGNASCO 1986, p. 106. Only an accurate archaeometric analysis can definitively identify differences in the structure and mineral composition of the fabric.
2. The chronology, based on stylistic considerations, always pertains to the creation of the prototype: because molds were used for the serial production of pieces, iconographical and typological models could persist over a very long period.

Production Techniques

The production process for terracotta statuettes and statues has been thoroughly described in many publications, so only a brief summary of the most recent studies on the subject is provided here. The technique for the manufacture of the *arulae* (altars) and reliefs is described in the individual entries.

Statuettes were generally made with single or bivalve molds that were, in turn, made from a clay model, also known as an archetype, matrix, or prototype. The prototype also made it possible to fashion individual sections of models, which, when combined with other cast parts, could form a new type.¹ After the firing of the model, the mold was obtained by pressing clay into the model until it reached the proper thickness.² A very important step during the production of a mold was the retouching of the individual details; in some cases, this work was very substantive and could differentiate the new cast from the archetype.

If the object to be reproduced was very large and it presented a number of points that were undercut or parts that projected out sharply (for example, forearms or bent legs), it was preferable to create a number of partial molds, or half molds, added *à la barbotine*—that is, adhered with a clay slip—after the positive cast had been molded but before it was fired; this approach offered a number of obvious technical advantages but also permitted a variety of compositional solutions. In much the same way, special accessories could be added to the clothing, hair, or ornaments. In some cases, the back section of the positive-cast statuette might consist of just a simple sheet of clay, or it could be rounded off and worked roughly by hand to give the impression of the curved back of the cranium; or there could be a fully modeled back, made with a bivalve mold. In the latter case, to facilitate the assembly of the two parts, a guideline was marked on the mold, consisting of incised lines or a light relief on the edge. Signs, numbers, or letters might be marked on the mold, or even on the positives, usually on the back, as is the case with the five statues of mourning women from Canosa (cat. 38–42); these were for the artisan’s use during the production process.

When the first-generation molds became worn, new ones could be made. In cases where it was no longer possible to reuse the original model, new molds could be made from an existing positive. These second-generation molds were thus somewhat smaller than their predecessors, and subsequent generations were smaller still as the process continued.³

Once the mold was fired, it was ready for serial production. Clay was pressed into the interior to the desired consistency and thickness. The clay was allowed to dry partially and therefore to shrink, facilitating the extraction of the positive from the mold. In some cases, the head

was not part of the figure mold but was added to the figure once the latter was extracted from the mold. The head might be a solid piece or, if large, hollow. It could be attached through straightforward assembly or by use of a necklike tenon, as in the head of a male banqueter ([cat. 7](#)).

Details, such as earrings or wreaths, were generally done freehand. Before firing, the coroplast had a last opportunity to retouch the figure with a spatula or other sharp tool. Usually the hair was defined during this phase. The holes of various sizes and shapes that we often find on the back of the figures were not only for ventilation during drying and kiln-firing but could also help in modeling the figure; if they were for ventilation alone, they could have been much smaller than is often the case.

Next came the firing of the positive casts, during which great care had to be taken to ensure that the artifacts were at the proper distance from the heat source and that the temperature was properly regulated in order to prevent cracking or other forms of damage. A layer of clay slip or white pigment (white lead kaolinite, or calcite) was usually applied to the entire figure, rendering it waterproof and improving its appearance by eliminating obvious porosity, as well as providing a good undercoat for the decoration. Analysis carried out at the British Museum on the white ground present on a group of statuettes from various locations demonstrated that this procedure must have been done after firing. This was certainly true when kaolinite was used, as it breaks down at temperatures above about 500°C.⁴

After firing, the figure would be decorated with colored pigments: black (lampblack for the Seated Poet and Sirens group, [cat. 1–3](#)) was generally used for the eyes and eyebrows; dark red (red ocher) for the hair or for coloring male flesh; red (mercuric sulfide, or cinnabar) for hair, lips, and some parts of the clothing; pink (red ocher and chalk; or cinnabar, lead white, and chalk) for female complexions and for accessories or parts of the clothing and drapery; dark blue (Egyptian blue) for various accessories (or, for instance, on the beard of the head of Hades, [cat. 60](#)); and dark brown (umber, iron oxide) for accessory parts.⁵

Production techniques could differ for mid-sized and larger statues. Recent studies of statues of mourning women from Canosa now at the Musée du Louvre showed that the statues were made by laying clay pieces over a conical tubular clay structure; arms and head were then inserted into special holes made in the structure (see [cat. 38–42](#)). In the case of the Seated Poet and Sirens group ([cat. 1–3](#)), the figures were the result of a careful process of manual modeling around an armature, possibly of wood; a number of parts were then added, some cast from molds and others hand-worked. The figures were then assembled and finished by rendering details with careful tool work during the retouching phase.⁶

Notes

1. The use of these terms is not necessarily consistent in the literature on the subject, inasmuch as they imply varying degrees of resemblance to the finished product. On the use of the terms *series*, *group*, and *type*, R. V. Nicholls defines a *group* as including works that are linked together by shared features traceable back to the same artisan or workshop. Arthur Muller, on the other hand, uses *group* to designate works that can be linked by features of a technical order but which may not necessarily originate from the same workshop. *Type* generally signifies a number of pieces that share the same image, while a *series* is a set of products derived mechanically from a single prototype. See R. V. Nicholls, "Type, Group and Series: A Reconsideration of Some Coroplastastic Fundamentals," *BSA* 47 (1952), pp. 217–26. The work of Nicholls, along with the considerations of Jastrow (E. Jastrow, "Abformung und Typenwandel in der antiken Tonplastik," *OpArch* 2 [1941], pp. 1–28) laid the groundwork for the classification of coroplastastic art through the identification of prototypes and variants, a system that has been thoroughly debated and explored in the publications of coroplastastic material originally from votive deposits in central and southern Italy. This method has progressively been imposed upon the systems of classification based on stylistic and iconographic analysis. For a summary of the problem, see BONGHI JOVINO 1990, pp. 19–59, and F. Blondé and A. Muller, eds., *L'artisanat en Grèce ancienne: Les productions, les diffusions: Actes du colloque de Lyon, 10–11 décembre 1998* (Lille, 2000), pp. 437–63.
2. On the technical production of the molds, see A. Muller, "Artisans, techniques de production, et diffusion: Le cas de la coroplastathie," in Blondé and Muller, *L'artisanat en Grèce ancienne*, op. cit., pp. 91–106.
3. The clay shrinkage amounts to about 9 to 10 percent. For the most part, it takes place during the drying phase and varies according to a number of factors, such as the quality of the clay and the duration and temperature of the firing.
4. See in this connection: BURN AND HIGGINS 2001, pp. 18–20 and Appendix 2 for the analysis of the white grounds. See also V. Brinkmann, "The Polychromy of Ancient Greek Sculpture," in *COLOR OF LIFE* 2008, pp. 18–39.
5. For the use of color on Hellenistic terracottas, see JEAMMET ET AL. 2007 and Brinkmann, "Polychromy of Ancient Greek Sculpture," op. cit.
6. For the technique of production of the statues from Canosa and of the Seated Poet group, see the pertinent entries: respectively cat. 38–42; cat. 1–3.

Abbreviations

fl.	flourished
l./ll.	line/lines
n.s.	new series
pl.	plate
suppl.	supplement
AA	<i>Archäologisches Anzeiger</i>
Aevum	<i>Aevum: Rassegna di scienze storiche, linguistiche e filologiche</i>
AION	<i>Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli</i>
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AntK	<i>Antike Kunst</i>
ArchCl	<i>Archeologia Classica</i>
ASNP	<i>Annali Scuola normale superiore Pisa: Classe di lettere e filosofia</i>
AttiMGrecia	<i>Atti e memorie della Società Magna Grecia</i>
AttiTaranto	<i>Atti del convengo di studi sulla Magna Grecia, Taranto</i>
BABesch	<i>Bulletin antieke beschaving</i>
BdA	<i>Bollettino d'arte</i>
BICS	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies (London)</i>
BSA	<i>Annual of the British School of Athens</i>
ClAnt	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>
CVA	<i>Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum</i>
EAA	<i>Enciclopedia dell' arte antica, classica e orientale (Rome 1958–1984)</i>
GettyMusJ	<i>The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal</i>
IG	<i>Inscriptiones graecae</i>
JdI	<i>Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
Kokalos	<i>Kokalos: Studi pubblicati dall'Istituto di storia dell'Università di Palermo</i>
LIMC	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i>

MÉFRA	<i>Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome, Antiquité</i>
MonAnt	<i>Monumenti antichi</i>
NSC	<i>Notizie degli scavi di antichità</i>
OpArch	<i>Opuscula archeologica</i>
PdP	<i>Parola del Passato</i>
RdA	<i>Rivista di archeologia</i>
RivIstArch	<i>Rivista dell'Istituto nazionale d'archeologia e storia dell'arte</i>
RM	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung</i>
ScAnt	<i>Scienze dell'Antichità: Storia, archeologia, antropologia (Rome 1987-)</i>
SicArch	<i>Sicilia archeologica</i>
ThesCRA	<i>Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum</i>
Xenia	<i>Xenia: Semestrale di antichità</i>

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Statue of a Seated Poet (Orpheus?)

330-300 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	1
Inventory Number	76.AD.11.1 ✉
Typology	Statue
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	
Orpheus with chair, footstool, and slab (overall):	H: 104 cm; W: 56.8 cm; D: 100.6 cm
Footstool rest:	H: 6.7; cm W: 29.7; cm; D: 24 cm
Footstool rest, flat slab:	H: 3 cm; W: 44.9 cm; D: 34.1 cm

Fabric

Light orange in color, slightly purified with more intense shade (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/3-8/5); the surface is covered by a white slip of calcium carbonate. Preserved pigments.

Footstool (76.AD.11.4): Upper surface, sparse orange-gold pigment. The sides of the footstool show a greater preservation of the orange-gold pigment layer as well as some black pigment. The base (76.AD.11.5) has a reddish tone.

Chair: Little pigment preservation on the sides; the legs were brightly colored in a gold-yellow pigment; the center panel of the chair back is also a gold color, similar to the legs, while the areas between the upper posts of the chair and the panel were red, indicating Orpheus's garment.

Orpheus: The head reveals traces of two colors in two layers: a red color layer partially covered with a layer of brown pigment. The drapery area is covered with a red pigment. The skin is pink.

Condition

The musical instrument and the middle finger of the left hand are missing. The figure was reassembled from a number of fragments prior to its acquisition by the J. Paul Getty Museum. The legs, the head, and several sections of the himation were reattached. Missing sections were filled in, especially on the chair in the area of the backrest and the rear portion of the torso. During this interval, for which no specific documentation exists, it is likely that invasive cleaning also damaged some of the ancient polychromy. Recent investigations have helped clarify that the obscuring encrustations were probably added at this time, especially on the body and the head, in order to conceal break lines and areas of fill, and to give the figure a more uniform appearance overall. The interior of the statue was also widely consolidated and reinforced with an added material, except in several sections where the clay is still visible. As a result, there are only a few places where the original marks of the modeling and the fingerprints of the coroplast can be observed. In 1983, exploratory cleaning on a limited portion of the footstool and chair was performed by the Getty's Antiquities Conservation Department, revealing some of the original polychromy and the presence of footprints on the upper surface of the footstool.

Provenance

– 1976 Bank Leu A. G. (Zurich, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1976.

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BOTTINI 2000, pp. 135–37; D. Tsiafakis, “Life and Death at the Hands of a Siren,” *Studia Varia* from the J. Paul Getty Museum 2. Occasional Papers on Antiquities 10 (2001), pp. 7–24. pp. 7, 12; fig. 2; Getty 2001, pp. 42–43; GETTY 2002, pp. 116–17; A. Bottini, “La religiosità salvifica in Magna Grecia fra testo e immagini,” in SETTIS AND PARRA 2005, pp. 140–50, esp. pp. 141–42; F. Graf and S. Iles Johnston, *Ritual Texts for the Afterlife. Orpheus and the Bacchic Gold Tablets* (London, 2007) p. 65; GETTY 2010, p. 114; C. A. Faraone and D. Obbink, eds., *The Getty Hexameters. Poetry, Magic, and Mystery in Ancient Selinous* (Oxford, 2013) p. 176, pl. 5; GETTY 2015, p. 26.

Description

The male figure is shown sitting on a *klismos* (seat). The seat, with a broad, rounded backrest, is set on a low rectangular platform composed of two distinct sections. The first section has a concave outer edge and is an integral part of the chair, serving as its base; the second section is composed of a movable element with a convex edge that fits flush and snug against the first section. The rectangular openings on either side of the chair may have been used either to lift the figure or to provide ventilation during firing.

The body is wrapped in a mantle that covers his left shoulder and part of his left arm, leaving his chest bare and showing wrinkles around the navel and the armpit. The mantle drops on either side with deep folds, covering the figure’s legs to the calves. The legs are slightly spread, so that the clay of the garment forms thin, deep folds. The right foot rests on the footstool, while only the tip of the left foot touches it. The figure is wearing flat sandals with thongs that cross on the top of the feet. The footstool is made of a rectangular slab with moldings and two lateral elements with a rounded shape, terminating in four corbels.

The figure’s head is erect and turned toward the right. The face is rounded; the mouth, with its fleshy, carefully modeled lips, is partially open, revealing the upper dental arch; a dimple marks the point where the lower lip meets the prominent chin. The curling of the lower lip and the half-open mouth are both signs that this character was probably portrayed in the act of singing. The nose is straight, the nostrils are rounded, and the almond-shaped eyes have distinctly portrayed eyelids, with clearly depicted tear glands. The supraorbital arch, broad and close to the eye, runs directly into the upper part of the nose. The hair must have been painted, as was determined by a careful analysis of the nape of the neck, but it is possible that the head was partially covered by a headdress, as the modeling of the upper part of the forehead seems to suggest. The ears are well modeled.

The right arm, its elbow resting against the torso, is bent, reaching forward to hold a plectrum, while the left hand was probably plucking the strings of a kithara. A trace of the instrument survives in the concavity where it must have rested on the left leg.



Statue of a Standing Siren A

330-300 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	2
Inventory Number	76.AD.11.2 🔗
Typology	Statue
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 140 cm; W: 35.8 cm; D: 55.2 cm; L (from center of belly to tail): 49.1 cm

Fabric

Light orange in color, and in certain places a slightly more intense shade (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/3); covered by a white slip (*latte di calce*). Traces of red are preserved on the claws.

Condition

This statue was reconstructed from several fragments; gaps can be seen in the short chiton and in the right claw. In the sections where the layer of white pigment has been preserved, the surface appears very smooth, especially in the hands and face.

Provenance

– 1976 Bank Leu A. G. (Zurich, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1976.

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GETTY 1978, pp. 48–49; FREL 1979, pp. 25–26, nos. 99–101; GETTY 1980, p. 34; C. C. Vermeule, *Greek and Roman Sculpture in America: Masterpieces in Public Collections in the United States and*

Canada (Malibu, 1982), pp. 150–51, no. 118; M. L. West, *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford and New York, 1983), p. 25, fig. 4; C. Mattusch, “Field Notes,” *Archaeological News* 13, 1/2 (1984), pp. 34–35, illus. p. 35; GETTY 1986, p. 33; HOFSTETTER-DOLEGA 1990, pp. 11, 260–61, no. W 24, pl. 36; GETTY 1991, p. 41; P. G. Guzzo, “Altre note tarantine,” *Taras* 12, no. 1 (1992), pp. 135–41; BOTTINI AND GUZZO 1993; J. Neils, “Les Femmes Fatales: Skylla and the Sirens in Greek Art,” In B. Cohen, ed., *The Distaff Side* (New York and Oxford, 1995), pp. 175–84. fig. 51; GETTY 1997, p. 43; E. Towne Markus, *Masterpieces of the J. Paul Getty Museum: Antiquities* (Los Angeles, 1997), pp. 88–89; HOFSTETTER 1997, p. 1101, no. 97, pl. 742; LECLERCQ-MARX 1997, pp. 37, 38, 288, no. 23, fig. 27; M. L. Ferruzza, “Il Getty Museum e la Sicilia,” *Kalos. Arte in Sicilia* 9, 3 (May–June 1997), pp. 4–11, fig. 8; D. Tsiafakis, *He Thrake sten Attike Eikonographia tou 5ou aiona p.X. (Thrace in Athenian Iconography of the Fifth Century BC)* (Komotini, 1998). p. 231, pl. 74; BOTTINI 2000, pp. 135–37; D. Tsiafakis, “Life and Death at the Hands of a Siren,” *Studia Varia* from the J. Paul Getty Museum 2. Occasional Papers on Antiquities 10 (2001), pp. 7–24. pp. 7, 12; fig. 2; Getty 2001, pp. 42–43; GETTY 2002, pp. 116–17; A. Bottini, “La religiosità salvifica in Magna Grecia fra testo e immagini,” in SETTIS AND PARRA 2005, pp. 140–50, esp. pp. 141–42; F. Graf and S. Iles Johnston, *Ritual Texts for the Afterlife. Orpheus and the Bacchic Gold Tablets* (London, 2007) p. 65; GETTY 2010, p. 114; C. A. Faraone and D. Obbink, eds., *The Getty Hexameters. Poetry, Magic, and Mystery in Ancient Selinous* (Oxford, 2013) p. 176, pl. 5; GETTY 2015, p. 26.

Description

The Siren stands in a meditative pose. She is resting her long, slender legs, which terminate in four long talons, atop a rounded, rocky base marked by a series of protuberances. The upper part of her body is human in appearance: the right arm is folded beneath the breasts and the left hand is propped under the chin. The head is slightly tilted to the left, in keeping with an iconographic scheme generally employed to express grief or sadness. The features of the face resemble those of Orpheus. The face is full and round, with a prominent chin. The neck is short, marked by the “rings of Venus.” The eyes are asymmetrical, with the upper eyelid more pronounced and the arched eyebrows situated close to the eyelids. The nose is straight, with a rounded tip. The lips are fleshy and well designed. The face is framed by a hairstyle characterized by a series of roughly modeled, short, twisting curls applied to the top of the head and partially covering the ears. The figure is dressed in a short chiton with an *apptygma* (capelike fold) that clings to her body, forming pleats that are flattened on the front, while on the sides they open out as if they were tossing in the wind, with beautifully hand-modeled ruffles. A sash is wrapped high around the chest, with two shoulder straps crossing over the bust. In the back, the drapery extends to form a broad, tubular tail, flared

toward the end like a fan. This tail also helped to balance the statue. In the back of the figure, the crossing shoulder straps cannot be seen.



Statue of a Standing Siren B

330-300 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	3
Inventory Number	76.AD.11.3 🔗
Typology	Statue
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 140 cm; W: 48 cm; D: 68 cm; L (from center of belly to tail): 56.2 cm

Fabric

Light orange in color, and in certain places a slightly more intense shade (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/3); covered by a white slip. Preserved polychromy in red (claws).

Condition

Reconstructed from a number of fragments and covered with a thick layer of very compact whitish slip in areas. Most of the curls and the little finger of the right hand have been lost.

Provenance

– 1976, Bank Leu A. G. (Zurich, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1976.

Bibliography

GETTY 1978, pp. 48–49; FREL 1979, pp. 25–26, nos. 99–101; GETTY 1980, p. 34; C. C. Vermeule, *Greek and Roman Sculpture in America: Masterpieces in Public Collections in the United States and Canada* (Malibu, 1982), pp. 150–51, no. 118; M. L. West, *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford and New

York, 1983), p. 25, fig. 4; C. Mattusch, "Field Notes," *Archaeological News* 13, 1/2 (1984), pp. 34–35, illus. p. 35; GETTY 1986, p. 33; HOFSTETTER-DOLEGA 1990, pp. 11, 260–61, no. W 24, pl. 36; GETTY 1991, p. 41; P. G. Guzzo, "Altre note tarantine," *Taras* 12, no. 1 (1992), pp. 135–41; BOTTINI AND GUZZO 1993; J. Neils, "Les Femmes Fatales: Skylla and the Sirens in Greek Art," In B. Cohen, ed., *The Distaff Side* (New York and Oxford, 1995), pp. 175–84. fig. 51; GETTY 1997, p. 43; E. Towne Markus, *Masterpieces of the J. Paul Getty Museum: Antiquities* (Los Angeles, 1997), pp. 88–89; HOFSTETTER 1997, p. 1101, no. 97, pl. 742; LECLERCQ-MARX 1997, pp. 37, 38, 288, no. 23, fig. 27; M. L. Ferruzza, "Il Getty Museum e la Sicilia," *Kalos. Arte in Sicilia* 9, 3 (May–June 1997), pp. 4–11, fig. 8; D. Tsiafakis, *He Thrake sten Attike Eikonographia tou 5ou aiona p.X. (Thrace in Athenian Iconography of the Fifth Century BC)* (Komotini, 1998). p. 231, pl. 74; BOTTINI 2000, pp. 135–37; D. Tsiafakis, "Life and Death at the Hands of a Siren," *Studia Varia* from the J. Paul Getty Museum 2. Occasional Papers on Antiquities 10 (2001), pp. 7–24. pp. 7, 12; fig. 2; Getty 2001, pp. 42–43; GETTY 2002, pp. 116–17; A. Bottini, "La religiosità salvifica in Magna Grecia fra testo e immagini," in SETTIS AND PARRA 2005, pp. 140–50, esp. pp. 141–42; F. Graf and S. Iles Johnston, *Ritual Texts for the Afterlife. Orpheus and the Bacchic Gold Tablets* (London, 2007) p. 65; GETTY 2010, p. 114; C. A. Faraone and D. Obbink, eds., *The Getty Hexameters. Poetry, Magic, and Mystery in Ancient Selinous* (Oxford, 2013) p. 176, pl. 5; GETTY 2015, p. 26.

Description

This Siren is identical in the lower portion of her body to Siren A, but her stance and the position of her arms differ. Her left hand rests on her chest and her right arm stretches out in front of her as if she were accompanying a song with movement.

Her shoulder straps overlap in the opposite direction relative to those of the other Siren. Her head, too, is turned upward and rotated to the right. On the rocky base and beneath her tail, there are three holes. Her left hand has a distinct mark of joining to the wrist, a detail found neither in her other hand nor in the other figure. On her left arm are signs of apparent folds, though that does not seem consistent with the type of short chiton she wears. About halfway up the back section of her body is an incised line; another can be detected at the end of the tail.

Group of a Seated Poet (Orpheus?) and Sirens

Group of a Seated Poet (Orpheus?) and Sirens (cat. 1-3)

This discussion is reproduced on each of the individual object pages

An investigation conducted with endoscopic instruments revealed a great deal about the execution of this sculptural group.¹ The figures must have been the product of a complex process of modeling. One possible hypothesis is that some parts of the group could have been made by hand and then assembled around supports or an armature, most likely made of wood, which kept the fresh clay from collapsing.² The system of internal supports was used to establish the overall structural integrity of the finished statue and might also have extended toward the exterior for certain parts, such as the Sirens' tails, Orpheus's arms, the arms of Siren B, and the seat of the *klismos*. It is likely that, as was frequently done in antiquity, several parts, such as the head, arms, and legs, were molded separately, with individual components then dovetailed together or affixed by either the barbotine method, before firing, or using additional mortar. This procedure not only facilitated the working process but also reduced the risk of breakage during firing.³ Working from the bottom up, artists likely constructed the rough figure around the framework, over which the various parts were modeled. The drapery and a number of elements on the short chitons worn by the Sirens—such as the sash around the waist and the shoulder straps—were made with strips of clay applied to the figure and then carefully shaped and worked with special tools. This is documented by marks left where the shoulder strap detached from the right shoulder of the pensive Siren A. A molded head was then added to the body. X-radiographs of the figures show that the head was inserted deeply into a cavity in the body and that the hands are hollow up to the point where the fingers were attached. The breasts, too, are hollow and were modeled from within. Perhaps the Sirens' framework might have consisted of a vertical structure that held the figures upright while work was proceeding. The framework for Orpheus, on the other hand, was probably a support that roughly approximated the form of the chair, around which the various parts were shaped and assembled. Then the mass of the body was modeled up to the neck and shoulders, possibly continuing to follow the guide of the internal support. The legs, which were propped against the front face of the *klismos*, must also have been modeled by hand and, despite the fact that they were to be covered by drapery, they were modeled as far up as the thighs. This manner of working made it possible to

achieve a more consistent treatment of movement and a more organic relationship between the figure and the drapery, which was shaped over the structure of the body. When examining the interior of the Orpheus figure, one sees that in the area around the chair seat, where the mass of the body rested, the sculptor created a series of small cavities, probably to accommodate the structural supports. These served to reinforce a section that was evidently considered to be especially fragile. Likewise, on the interior of the rocky bases on which the Sirens are perched, it is possible to see evidence of reinforcements arranged around the central cavity.

A subsequent phase focused on working in the iconographic details, such as the plectrum, the kithara, the hair, and the ears, which are perforated, as is the mouth. The facial features were defined before the firing. Next came retouching with pointed tools when the clay was in a leathery state, followed by firing.⁴ The surfaces of the statues were covered by a white engobe slip; this strengthened and protected the surfaces and provided a uniform preparation surface for the polychromy. The white slip is well preserved at a number of points, and it renders the exterior surface very smooth and purified in appearance.

This group constitutes one of the most unusual compositions in the art of Magna Graecia. In the past, because of its uniqueness, the anomaly of its iconography, and its purchase on the antiquities market, many scholars believed it to be a forgery. Tests performed on the clay and polychromy, however, have attested to its authenticity, though before the Getty's acquisition all the figures in the group had been subjected to a substantial and in many respects inappropriate process of restoration and cleaning that altered the surface and original polychromy. Since the group had been acquired through the antiquities market, there is no information about its place of discovery. It was only through an exegetic and stylistic analysis that hypotheses could be formulated as to its intended placement, significance, function, and findspot.⁵

The seated figure has been identified as Orpheus, the poet son of Oeagrus (or Apollo) and the Muse Kalliope. He could charm humans and subdue animals with his song. The shamanistic power of his art and its ties to mystery religions constitute a central theme in the ancient thought on and the iconography of the poet.⁶

In the Classical period, Orpheus was portrayed as a beardless youth playing a kithara or lyre, as in the Nekyia in the Lesche (council) of the Knidians at Delphi, where Polygnotos painted him dressed in Greek style beneath a willow tree and playing the lyre, surrounded by other mythological characters.⁷

In Attic red-figured vase-painting, in addition to images of the poet among the Thracians, there are also depictions of his murder at the hands of the Thracian women and the episode in which his head continues to sing and prophesy even after being severed from his body. Orpheus among the Thracians is depicted with a mantle wrapped around his hips or dressed in a rich Eastern costume, an identifying feature as well as a sign of ethnic affiliation that is found especially in the subsequent repertory of Apulian vase-painting.⁸

The Getty character's seated position, the presence of the *klismos*, and the mantle that softly envelopes his figure, leaving his torso partly uncovered, are also distinctive features of the iconography of poets and philosophers. Such figures were sometimes accompanied by a *volumen* (papyrus scroll), in keeping with an iconographic scheme that was formulated as early as the fifth century BC, but which was more widely adopted beginning in the second half of the fourth century BC.⁹

One slightly later comparison for this statue is a sculpture portraying Pindar, found in the so-called Exedra of the Philosophers in the Serapeion (Serapeum) of Memphis at Saqqara, built in the third century BC and linked to a Dionysian cult. In that statue, the poet is seated on a *klismos* and partly covered by his mantle as he plays the kithara.¹⁰ The same iconographic scheme is adopted for the type of the Apollo Kitharoidos, as documented in vase paintings and statuary. In this scheme, the seated deity almost always wears a mantle draped over his left shoulder and has an elaborate hairstyle. In the case of the Getty Orpheus, the head shows traces of pigments, but that does not rule out the possibility that there was once a headdress or hairdo that extended over the hairline.¹¹

The *klismos*, which is especially well represented in works of the Hellenistic period, is an element that would appear to identify the social status and intellectual gifts of the character who was being depicted in the role of Orpheus, as was also typical in the Attic repertory.¹²

In the context of Magna Graecia, it is difficult to establish close comparisons. Apulian red-figured vases provide extensive documentation of Orpheus's chthonic role, with painters often choosing to depict the episode of the *katabasis*, or descent to the Underworld, rather than other events in his mythology. This episode is featured in a group of Apulian vases decorated with scenes from the afterlife that has been extensively studied. In these vases Orpheus is the principal character, standing in the presence of Hades and Persephone, often close to or inside a *naiskos* (small temple), which could be interpreted as a synecdoche for the Palace of Hades. He is surrounded by inhabitants of the Underworld, such as Sisyphus, Cerberus, or the Furies, or next to a deceased person holding a scroll; the scroll may be an allusion to the religious text that accompanies him into the Underworld, as attested, for instance, on the amphora by the Ganymede Painter in Basel. With the sound of his kithara,

an attribute that appears in all of these scenes, it would seem that Orpheus saves the initiate from the demons of Hades by showing him the path of salvation.¹³

The Getty figure, seated and in all likelihood once holding a stringed instrument (now lost), evokes other iconographies of the intellectual milieu but not specifically linked to Orpheus. In fact, this figure does not wear the elaborate Eastern costume with Phrygian cap that usually identifies the poet in Hades in Apulian vase-painting. All the same, there are some, albeit few, Apulian vases in which Orpheus or a figure very like him does appear wearing a simple mantle and holding a kithara, though the absence of any explicative inscriptions leaves a margin of doubt as to his identity.¹⁴

In light of a preliminary analysis, it is possible to propose that this statue is not a depiction of Orpheus but rather a portrayal of a deceased individual depicted with a number of elements linked to the mythical milieu of Orpheus. These elements include the stringed instrument, used to emphasize the lyrical and poetic context of the poet-intellectual; and the presence of the Sirens, with their clear funerary references.

Orpheus's connection with the world of the dead would have been well known to any contemporary who viewed this group of figures. Through the shamanistic power of his art, Orpheus had succeeded not only in subduing the forces of the afterlife but also restoring souls to the world of the living. This achievement is narrated in the renowned episode in which he nearly rescues his bride, Eurydice, from the Underworld. In it he takes on the role of intermediary between the world of mortals and that of the afterlife, serving also as a guarantor of the rites of purification required in the Underworld.

The chthonic connection of this group is emphasized by the presence of the two Sirens standing on bases, which, with their rocky appearance, clearly allude to the Sirens' origin as demons linked to the marine world. The two figures are imagined in an outdoor setting, as suggested by the movement of the folds on the sides of their short chitons, evoking gusts of sea breeze. Of the two figures, one is characterized by a melancholy, pensive expression, while the other, her arms flexing upward, is caught in a pose that seems to allude to song.¹⁵

The archaeological and literary evidence provides for the Siren a complex profile and a number of different aspects, both positive and negative, that while chiefly linked to the enchantment of music and poetry, are also tied to erotic seduction and nature's life force. Yet the funerary nature of these creatures, who are evoked in many literary sources in the context of mourning, seems to be their prevalent trait. In Euripides' *Helen* (169–75), for example, the Sirens, companions of Persephone in Hades, are invoked and urged to accompany funerary lamentations with their lyres.¹⁶ In funerary contexts, the Sirens assume expressive poses and

gestures linked to lamentation, in some cases accompanying their laments with the sound of the kithara and the aulos. That is how they are presented, as early as the late fifth century, on a number of Attic funerary stelae. This iconography was to persist throughout the Hellenistic period in various parts of Greece, where Sirens appeared, in pairs, on funerary monuments of prominent women or illustrious men endowed with intellectual virtues. One such example is the famed tomb of Sophocles; another is the tomb of the Sophist Isocrates. In both tombs, the Sirens' special relationship with poets and orators is emphasized.¹⁷

In many funerary stelae of the fourth and third centuries BC, Sirens appear, invariably in pairs, posed symmetrically at either extremity of the slab, supporting the inscription with the name of the deceased. In some cases, they are shown with their hands on their heads or holding stringed instruments.¹⁸

The Sirens also served as decorative motifs on the capitals of funerary monuments in the area of Taranto between the end of the fourth century and the first half of the third century BC; they were often depicted with one arm tucked under the breasts and a hand supporting the inclined head in a pose commonly used to indicate melancholy, like that of Siren A in the Getty group.¹⁹

Sirens were portrayed in the Archaic period with birds' bodies and women's heads; such was the case in Corinthian vase-painting, where they were a recurring motif in animal friezes. In Attic vase-painting, by contrast, they were portrayed as protagonists of the Homeric narrative, or else as musicians, as witnesses of heroic deeds, or in scenes of funerary mourning and lamentation. Beginning in the Classical period, they underwent a progressive and radical humanization, as did other mythological figures such as the Gorgon. Over the course of the fourth century BC, in fact, the Sirens would gradually take on a female appearance in the entire upper half of the body, as is documented with crude realism in the above-mentioned funerary stelae and, in the context of Magna Graecia, in images painted on South Italian vases and in the coroplastic art.²⁰ In the previously mentioned Exedra of the Philosophers in the Serapeion of Saqqara, alongside figures of poets and intellectuals, there was also a pair of standing Sirens, each with bird claws and a humanized bust, wearing melancholy expressions, their heads tilted to one side, and small kitharas in their arms.²¹

Thus the Sirens are, in general terms, figures that foreshadow death and accompany the dead into the Underworld. Their role as psychopomp was already suggested in the Archaic period by *askoi* (wine vessels) in the form of Sirens, used primarily for funerary purposes.²² In order to reconstruct the function of the Sirens within the Getty group, however, a more precise interpretation of their iconography and possible semantic values must be sought.

One of the primary activities of Sirens, attested by both the pose of Siren B and a copious literary tradition, is singing in an insidiously seductive manner. Their singing could prove fatal to those caught unawares, those who tended to follow their instincts and the allure of the senses. As mentioned above, the Sirens' song in the Homeric tradition is linked to an ambiguous persuasive power; they are liminal creatures between the past and the future, between earth and the gates of Hades, set in a flowering meadow scattered with human bones. They promise a broad body of knowledge but a deceptive one, as men are lured toward another world that coincides with death. In this context, only a wise man or someone who can summon the forces of reason and thought might hope to pass their terrible test, as the Homeric story makes clear. The redeeming lesson is that only the initiate who attains wisdom through concerted intellectual and ethical striving can aspire to overcome the human condition of suffering and to achieve immortality.²³

The Siren represents this challenge—a crucial aspect of the relationship between Orpheus and the Sirens, and a necessary step in the attainment of wisdom and knowledge—and also our natural fear of death and the unknown, the otherness that extends beyond the limits of humanity.²⁴

If the central character in the Getty group represents a deceased person who has been assimilated to the wise or skilled Orpheus, the two Sirens would find a consistent placement beside him and be assimilated with him *sub specie aeternitatis*. With the harmonious sounds of his musical instrument, he can not only triumph over wild creatures of an ambiguous nature but also, through the wisdom or skill and harmony evoked by the sound of the kithara, he can successfully face the final voyage and achieve eternal salvation. In this context, the depiction of the Sirens in an outdoor setting, perched on rocks, harks back to literary tradition and such works as the *Argonautica* of Apollonios of Rhodes, where in the contest between Orpheus and the Sirens there is an emphasis on an opposition between harmful and beneficial music.²⁵

The Getty group would thus seem to evoke, in a fantastic and ideological synthesis, the figure of an initiate of Orphism who, through the contest and harmony of music and philosophical thought, has controlled the emotional forces of instinct and resisted the enticing song of Siren B. Siren A, in her turn, seems to express the attainment of a new condition, identifying an eschatological prospect for the man.²⁶ Substantial ambivalence characterizes both creatures.

It is worthwhile to consider the hypothesis that the Sirens could be an expression of a positive tone, clearly present in the complex of Orphic and Pythagorean beliefs. However, one should be wary of suggesting too narrow a correlation between figures and philosophical ideas in a sculptural group that lacks all context. Nevertheless, referencing Apulian culture of

the second half of the fourth century BC is essential in proposing a functional reconstruction of the group.

Music (*mousike*) and the study of harmony were central to Pythagorean philosophy, which partly correlates with Orphism, a doctrine that was followed in Taras (modern Taranto) by the circle of Archytas (fl. ca. 428–350 BC), but which, as is extensively documented, was also widely popular in Magna Graecia during the Hellenistic period. For instance, a series of metal lamellae found in graves in Magna Graecia, Crete, and Thessaly are generally interpreted as Orphic documents containing instructions on how to successfully complete the journey to the Underworld.²⁷ Although the connections between Orphism and Pythagoreanism in the dynamic panorama of the Hellenistic period are complex and problematic, one should keep in mind that philosophical and religious doctrines could manifest within various cultural and geographic milieux, in a network of interactions and analogies that makes rigid classification difficult.

According to the philosophical beliefs of the Pythagoreans, the study of music was fundamental to *paideia* (physical and mental training) and *ethos* (guiding standards or ideals), the source of inspiration for political behavior in the quest for *sophrosyne* (temperance) and *eurhythmia* (harmonious bodily health). Likewise, the perfect harmony and geometry of music, amplified in the vision of the cosmos, were models for the creation of civil society. Harmony established the sense of proportion and restraint, in opposition to excess and abuse of power. Plato recognized in *mousike* an indispensable tool for the education of the citizenry and the harmonizing of the civic spirit, because harmony has “motions akin to the revolutions of our souls.”²⁸ The political value of musical education is a central concept in Plato’s *Laws* as well, due to the shaping power that music has on the soul. The kithara was considered an especially effective pedagogical instrument in this context. In striving for a pure sound, the teacher was supposed to ensure that the instrument’s sound was in unison with that of the voice. Musical performance, moreover, demanded a complete involvement, inasmuch as it was accompanied by recitation and bodily movement.²⁹

During the mid-fourth century BC, Taras, under the command of Archytas, became the main center of Pythagorean philosophy and Orphism. According to Aristoxenus, a musicologist and intellectual of the fourth century BC, Archytas—philosopher, mathematician, and statesman—was an ideal representative of the *bios pithagorikos*, in which “good music” inspired a political practice that strove for a wise economic equilibrium among the social classes, and in which philosophical reflection and political practice enjoyed an optimal synthesis. The idea of *apatheia*—which implies not the elimination of passions but rather their moderation through the practice of virtue—is present in the Platonic model and was

later also expressed in *Peri nomo kai dikaiosinas* (*On Law and Justice*), a treatise by Pseudo-Archytas.³⁰ It is intriguing to hypothesize that Siren A expresses the attainment of *apatheia* in the moment of detachment from earthly experience and the awareness acquired through the good music produced by the deceased Orpheus, and that Siren B expresses musical and singing virtue that is attained in harmony with the sound of the kithara. This interpretation can be traced more precisely to Pythagorean thought, which viewed Sirens as creatures linked to the transition from life to death but also as privileged guardians of wisdom and guarantors of cosmic harmony. This concept was borrowed by Plato as well; it is expressed in the myth of Er in the tenth book of *The Republic*, in which he writes that the Sirens coordinate the harmony of the celestial spheres. It is significant that the central theme of this myth is precisely the individual liberty of man in the choice between good and evil, the freedom to place oneself in the realm of dispersal and oblivion or else to become first a dialectical unit and then a “political being.”³¹

While it has already been cautiously suggested that Archytas or someone from his immediate circle was the likely recipient of the Getty group, it should be considered that the work must have been commissioned by someone of great influence living in Apulia during the first half of the fourth century BC: someone who was close to the Orphic milieu (though it would not be safe to associate it with a specific context).³² As for the original purpose of the group, a funerary placement seems most likely, considering the previous iconographic analysis and the possible identification of the male character as a deceased person. One hypothesis would place the group inside a *naiskos* set atop a tomb. This would be in keeping with a Tarentine architectural typology after the middle of the fourth century BC, during a revival of more lavish funerary customs and a return to the use of the chamber tomb. On large vases, probably used as *semata* (tomb markers), there are depictions of *naiskoi* within which appear individual characters and groups of figures, perhaps in imitation of real statues. However, the funerary statues inside the *naiskoi* tended to be made of limestone or marble rather than the less impressive or durable terracotta.³³ The reconstruction of *naiskoi* and their architectural decoration remains somewhat problematic, for though a large volume of *naiskos* architectural fragments have been recovered, few have been found in their original locations; no *naiskos* has yet been discovered on the spot where it originally fell, much less *in situ*. Like the figures in the *naiskoi* on vases, the Getty group is configured as a *mise-en-scène*, reflecting the status of the deceased and probably forming part of a larger group. The use of *naiskoi* as *semata*, augmented with modeled clay decorations, is also attested in Greece as far back as the Archaic period, as Pausanias informs us. Nonetheless, archaeological evidence does not allow a comparative analysis between the types of funerary monuments mentioned by Pausanias and the situation in Taras in the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods. In Sparta as well there is documentation of many *heroa* (shrines dedicated to heroes), also in connection with *leschai*;

funerary monuments comprising large numbers of votive statues have been found, attesting to the prestige of certain families.³⁴

The presence in Taranto, in the area of the Fondo Giovinazzi, of a *heroön* dedicated to Orpheus was at one point proposed, but it has been repeatedly rebutted, in part because of the absence of literary sources.³⁵ An alternative hypothesis would place this group in a chamber tomb, a type present in Taranto in the fourth century BC but widespread mainly in the indigenous context, during the period coinciding with the rise of an aristocratic class.³⁶ This is also supported by a comparison with the tombs of Canosa, which in the fourth to third centuries BC featured terracotta statue groups, probably arranged around the funerary *kline* or dining couch, and by a chamber tomb in Cariati, in Calabria (Brettian territory), dating from the last quarter of the fourth century BC, in which the grave goods also included a life-size statue, of which only fragments have been recovered.³⁷

It was in the indigenous population centers that Orphism and related eschatological belief systems were common, as Paolo Orsi had already suggested. This seems to be indicated by the fact that most of the Apulian vases with depictions of Orpheus were found not in Taranto, but in places such as Ruvo, Armento, Altamura, and Canosa, where they were intended for an elite clientele.³⁸ In connection with this hypothesis, Angelo Bottini has analyzed the attestations of salvation theology and has pointed out that beginning at least in the fifth century BC, a rage for re-elaborated and diversified Orphic and Pythagorean cults swept through the indigenous centers, especially among the localities that were directly involved culturally and commercially with the cities of Magna Graecia.³⁹

A third hypothesis is that the Getty group was created for a purely religious context. The most pertinent point of reference, the Exedra of the Poets and Philosophers in the Serapeion of Memphis, is however quite difficult to imagine in Apulia or Taras, where the Orphic cults were conducted in keeping with more secluded rituals. One must keep in mind that, according to the literary sources, particularly Pausanias, there were a number of sculptural groups depicting Orpheus, now lost, in votive settings.⁴⁰

Stylistically, the figures in the Getty group have some of the formal traits of late-fifth-century BC Tarentine plastic arts. These are characterized by a fondness for fully rounded volumes; eyes with a well shaped, symmetrical outline and distinctly modeled eyelids; fleshy mouths; robust necks; heavy jaws; and solid cranial structures. Such features can also be found in a number of Tarentine marble heads, mostly from funerary statues datable to the end of the fifth century through most of the fourth century BC. They are evidence of the artists' determination to preserve the most distinctive characteristics of the local production,

in which the iconographic types and the formal traits of the Late-Classical Attic school can be clearly identified.⁴¹

The Orpheus figure, with his distinct features and the solid plasticity of the face, seems to be reminiscent of such prototypes as the marble head of Athena in Brescia, which is a copy of a Classical original thought to have once formed part of the bronze sculptural group by Phidias at Delphi. In addition, the head of the so-called Orpheus recognizable in the basanite example at the Munich Glyptothek, an Augustan copy of a Greek original dating from 460 BC (but assigned by Paul Zanker and Brunilde Ridgway to the Late Hellenistic period), can be compared to our male head.⁴²

The Getty Orpheus's general aspect and facial features also recall the acrolithic marble head of Apollo from the Temple of Apollo Alaios at Cirò, datable to the same period (440–430 BC).⁴³

The Getty figure is closely comparable with a number of terracotta pieces attributed to a coroplast or a circle of artists that has been called the circle of the Master of the Singers of Taras, so named because most of the figures seemingly produced by this workshop feature a half-open mouth, as if they were in the act of singing. This workshop is thought to have been active in the second half of the fourth century B.C. The accuracy of the individual details of these sculptures suggests that they used first-generation molds inspired by works from the Classical period, perhaps in bronze; this is indicated by certain technical and iconographic traits, such as the type of finish and the shape of the eyes with their lamellar eyelids, and the curve from the lip to the teeth. The workshop is believed to have specialized in figures of banqueters or poets associated with Orpheus. Many pieces can be linked to this group; unfortunately most of them have been sold on the antiquities market and thus dispersed. They depict male characters, often wearing bands and caps typical of banqueters, or soft, pointed caps reminiscent of the Phrygian cap of Orpheus. Though they differ in dimensions and diverse iconographic details, these figures all feature the same masculine type and physiognomic and technical details. It is debatable whether they were the work of a single workshop. In any case, they demonstrate not only the artistry of the coroplasts in Taranto, but also of their technical prowess, such as the creation of a patrinx (pattern or die) or parallel patrices from which molds were produced and reused, resulting in works diversified in type and iconography but associated by a certain resemblance.⁴⁴ It remains to be seen whether the numerous Tarentine heads with half-open mouths depicted poets and whether they can therefore be correlated with the figure of Orpheus or with Orphic doctrines.

Outside of Taranto, the most interesting parallels in terracotta votive busts come from Ariccia, which can probably also be traced back to Tarentine workshops and dated to the end of the fourth century. These works have affinities in formal elements: clear evidence of the

circulation in an Italic context of models that were also present in Magna Graecia and Taranto.⁴⁵

In the absence of a documented findspot, the group can only be generally dated to the last thirty years of the fourth century BC based on style, iconography, and the hypothetical connection with the cultural climate of Apulia in the second half of fourth century BC. Interpretation based on style alone may well be misleading, given the persistence of Late-Classical traits even into the middle of the fourth century BC.

Appendix

Thermoluminescence of the clay body, X-ray fluorescence, polarized light microscopy, and ultraviolet-visible spectroscopy analysis of the polychromy were performed. They all attest to the group's authenticity.

Results of the pigment analysis:

Orpheus figure

1. **Yellow/gold:** yellow ocher, lead white, chalk
2. **Red:** yellow ocher, burnt sienna
3. **White ground:** chalk (or lead white)
4. **Pink:** cinnabar, lead white, chalk
5. **Red/brown:** iron earth red, chalk

Orpheus footstool

1. **Orange:** yellow ocher red ochre
2. **Black:** lampblack
3. **Pink:** red ocher, chalk

Notes

1. See the report by the Antiquities Conservation Department in the appendix to this entry. Detached curls and other fragmentary elements of the group have the inventory numbers 76.AD.11.6 – 76.AD.11.304.
2. This modeling technique was also used in the Hellenistic period for statues in terracotta. See, for example, the female bust from Falerii (third century BC) in the Musée du Louvre: F. Gaultier, “L’Ariadne de Faléries: Une chef-d’oeuvre retrouvé,” in DAMARATO* 2000, pp. 288–97. The technique was also used during the Renaissance and in modern times. On this, see M. G. Vaccari, ed.,

**La scultura in terracotta* (Florence, 1996), in particular the study by G. Gentilini, “La scultura fiorentina in terracotta del Rinascimento: Tecniche e tipologie,” pp. 64–103.

3. The clearly visible line of the seam in Siren B’s left hand might show where the hand was attached to the arm. On “the technique of added pieces,” see TOMEI 1992, pp. 176–77; this technique is well depicted in a *kylix* by the Foundry Painter in Berlin, q.v. *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum*, Berlin Antiquarium 1, pl. 72–73. With the terracotta fragments from the Palatine, thought to have been made from molds, the circular cavities found in them may have been made by a support used during the assembly phase. The same procedure was identified at Olympia, for instance, in the group of Zeus and Ganymede: see A. Moustaka, *Grossplastik aus Ton in Olympia*, Olympia Forschungen 22 (Berlin, 1993), pp. 64–97, pls. 33–39.
4. For the process of firing in separate parts and subsequent assembly, see also W. Deonna, *Les statues de terre cuite dans l’antiquité* (Paris, 1908), pp. 20–25.
5. Suspicion of their authenticity has been heightened by the singular nature of some parts of the figures, such as the claws of the Sirens, which elude criteria of standardized production, and by the absence of comparisons for the figures as a group due to the rarity of non-architectural terracotta sculptural groups. The improper restoration and reckless cleaning done before the Getty purchased this group—exemplified by the application of artificial incrustations on some sections—has contributed to the anomalous appearance of the figures.
6. For the genealogy and the iconography of Orpheus in general, see GAREZOU 1994.
7. Pausanias’s apparent astonishment as he describes Orpheus’s Greek appearance can lead us to believe that he was more commonly depicted in Eastern dress. For a reconstruction of the painting by Polygnotos (Pausanias 10.30.6), see M. D. Stansbury O’Donnell, “Polygnotos’ Nekyia: A Reconstruction and Analysis,” AJA 94 (1990), pp. 213–35.
8. For the iconography of Orpheus in Attic vase-painting, see GAREZOU 1994, in particular nos. 7–14, 23–26 for Orpheus dressed in Greek style among the Thracians; no. 16 for Apulian vases, especially those produced between 340 and 310 BC, in which Orpheus appears dressed in Greek style; and nos. 20–21, 72–84 for Orpheus in Hades, a theme treated almost exclusively in Apulian vase-painting.
9. On this aspect, see R. Von den Hoff, *Philosophenporträts des Früh- und Hochhellenismus* (Munich, 1994), pp. 23–33; P. Zanker, *The Mask of Socrates: The Image of the Intellectual in Antiquity* (Berkeley, 1995), pp. 52–57, 113–22; J. J. Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 63–69. For examples of philosophers or poets in Greek portraiture, including the portrait of Euripides in the Louvre, probably derived from the statue erected in Athens by Lykourgos between 340 and 336 BC, see G. M. A. Richter, *The Portraits of the Greeks*, vol. 1 (London, 1965), pp. 137–39, figs. 760–61.
10. LAUER AND PICARD 1955, pp. 48–68. For a comparison with the statue of Pindar, see also BOTTINI AND GUZZO 1993, pp. 43–52, nn. 22 and 23.
11. For Apollo Kitharoidos, see W. Lambrinoudakis and O. Palagia, s.v. “Apollon,” LIMC 2.1 (1984), pp. 199–213; FLASHAR 1992, pp. 114–23; D. Castaldo, *Il pantheon musicale: Iconografia nella ceramica attica tra VI e IV secolo a.C.* (Ravenna, 2000), pp. 15–22; for statuary, see M. Mertens-Horn, “La statua di Apollo citaredo della galleria delle statue nel Vaticano,” in CASTOLDI 1999, pp. 323–42. For vase-painting, also consider the image of Apollo seated on the *klismos*, partly wrapped in a mantle, crowned with a laurel wreath, and playing the seven-string kithara, depicted on a vase by the Shuvalov Painter, from 435–425 BC: L. Massei, “Le ceramiche del pittore di Shuvalov rinvenute a Spina,” MÉFRA 85, no. 2 (1973), pp. 437–81, fig. 10. For Apulian vases, see also the Apulian *pelike* (wide-mouthed jars) by the Chamay Painter, in which Apollo, seated and partly wrapped in a mantle, plucks a kithara, in D. Paquette, *L’instrument de musique dans la céramique de la Grèce antique* (Paris, 1984), C48 and C49. For numismatics, see the seated figure of Apollo playing the kithara on a coin from Metaponto (440–430 BC), in S. P. Noe, *The Coinage of Metapontum*, part 2 (New York, 1931), p. 96, no. 431. See also the head of the Apollo of Cirò in which hair, probably of metal leaf, was inserted, in SETTIS AND PARRA 2005, pp. 259–62; M. Mertens-Horn, “Resti di due grandi statue di Apollo ritrovati nel santuario di Apollo Aleo di Cirò,” in SANTUARI DELLA MAGNA GRECIA IN CALABRIA 1996, pp. 261–65.

12. BESCHI 1991, pp. 39–55; for the *klismos* and the type of footstool, see G. M. A. Richter, *The Furniture of the Greeks, Etruscans and Romans* (London, 1966), pp. 37–38 and 49–52. A terracotta chair with a backrest topped by two winged creatures was discovered at Taranto in a tomb in the Via Argentina: see DE JULIIS AND LOIACONO 1985, p. 387, no. 475.
13. For the iconography of Orpheus in Apulian vases, see M. Schmidt, “Orfeo e orfismo nella pittura vascolare italiota,” *ORFISMO IN MAGNA GRECIA* 1975, pp. 105–38, pl. VIII; see also PENSA 1977, pp. 23–31, pl. V, fig. 1, and pl. X.
14. This imagery might derive from a pictorial prototype such as the renowned Nekyia by Nikias: see G. Becatti, s.v. “Nikias,” *EAA* 5 (1963), pp. 476–82. See the conclusions of BOTTINI 2000 and also PENSA 1977, pp. 46–47, no. 146, pls. VII and IX for two volute kraters, one from Armento, now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples, the other of an unknown findspot, now at the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, in which the poet is depicted as a youth wearing a mantle and holding a kithara.
15. For a general treatment of the iconography of the Sirens in chthonic contexts, see HOFSTETTER 1997.
16. In *Andromache* by Euripides (936), the expression “Sirens’ words” is used pejoratively, while in *Alexandra* by Pseudo-Lycophron (714–27), phonosymbolic effects are also used to reproduce the allure and seductive power of their song. As early as the seventh century BC, the poet Alcman placed the Muses and the Sirens on an equal plane in terms of their musical abilities: *Greek Lyric*, vol. 2, trans. D. A. Campbell (Cambridge and London, 1988), pp. 418–19, no. 30.
17. On the presence of Sirens on funerary monuments in general, see HOFSTETTER-DOLEGA 1990, pp. 151–83; on the funerary monuments of Sophocles and Isocrates in particular, see pp. 26–28. For the Sirens in the Serapeion of Memphis at Saqqara, see HOFSTETTER 1997, no. 88. For funerary statues of Sirens from the fourth century BC, from the Kerameikos cemetery in Athens, see S. Karouzou, *National Archaeological Museum: Collection of Sculpture* (Athens, 1968), p. 106, no. 2583 and p. 122, nos. 193 and 775. Sirens also appear in Attic funerary stelae; see examples in M. Comstock and C. C. Vermeule, *Sculpture in Stone: The Greek, Roman and Etruscan Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* (Boston, 1976), nos. 66, 67, 72. On the presence of Sirens performing music in funerary contexts, see BESCHI 1991, p. 40. Also LECLERCQ-MARX 1997, pp. 36–40; WOYSCH-MÉAUTIS 1982, pp. 91–99.
18. P. M. Fraser and T. Rönne, *Boeotian and West Greek Tombstones* (Lund, 1957), pp. 191–94, pl. 31, nos. 2–3 from Apollonia, pls. 7–10 from Thebes. See also the examples of the third century BC: pl. 25, no. 5; pls. 26–27. For the pose, see the funerary statue depicting a female figure from Taranto, datable to the third century BC, see DE JULIIS AND LOIACONO 1985, p. 104, no. 85.
19. See the examples of capitals in WUILLEMIER 1939, pls. 1–3; the weeping Siren in a limestone capital datable to 300–250 BC in C. C. Vermeule, *Sculpture in Stone and in Bronze: Additions to the Collections of Greek, Etruscan, and Roman Art, 1971–1988, in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* (Boston, 1988), p. 26, no. 15; and the Siren in a capital from Taranto (inv. 96.AA.245) at the J. Paul Getty Museum, possibly originally from a *naiskos* and datable to about 330 BC: GROSSMAN 2001, no. 55, pp. 146–47.
20. On the humanized image of the Siren see, for Southern Italy, the Apulian volute-krater from 330–320 BC in HOFSTETTER 1997, no. 45; a Campanian *hydria* with Siren with long bird claws in A. D. Trendall, *The Red-Figured Vases of Lucania, Campania, and Sicily* (Oxford, 1967), p. 376, no. 121; the Apulian *loutrophoros* at the J. Paul Getty Museum by the Painter of Louvre MNB 1148 (inv. 86.AE.680), in D. Tsiafakis, “Life and Death at the Hands of a Siren,” *Studia Varia from the J. Paul Getty Museum* 2 (2001), pp. 7–24, fig. 4. For examples in terracotta, see the statuette of a Siren dated around ca. 460 BC said to have found in the region of Taranto: K. Deppert, “Jahres-berichte Kestner Museum 1973–1976,” *Hannoversche Geschichtsblätter* 30 (1976), pp. 287–89, no. 18; see also from Myrina the statuette of a Siren with a bust of a woman in BREITENSTEIN 1941, pl. 58, nos. 463–64; and examples in BESQUES 1963, pl. 92, dated from the end of the third century BC..
21. In this connection, see LAUER AND PICARD 1955, pp. 216–27.
22. For the function of the psychopomp, see L. Breglia Pulci Doria, “Immagini di Sirene nella Crotoniatide,” in *SANTUARI DELLA MAGNA GRECIA IN CALABRIA* 1996, pp. 239–40.

23. BREGLIA PULCI DORIA 1987, p. 43; L. Breglia Pulci Doria, “Le Sirene, il confine, l’aldilà,” in *Mélanges Pierre Lévéque* 4 (Paris, 1990), pp. 63–78.
24. On this interpretation consider the review by F. Gilotta of HOFSTETTER-DOLEGA 1990 in *Prospettiva* 67 (1992), pp. 83–85; also GIANGIULIO 1986, pp. 101–54; and B. D’Agostino, “Le Sirene, il tuffatore e le porte dell’Ade,” *AION* 4 (1982), pp. 43–56.
25. G. Iacobacci, “Orfeo argonauta: Apollonio Rodio I,” in MASARACCHIA 1993, pp. 77–92. Compare the analysis in M. L. West, *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford, 1983), pp. 25–26, 29–33.
26. For this interpretation, see BOTTINI 2000, pp. 136–37.
27. For Orphism in general, see the bibliography in TRA ORFEO E PITAGORA 2000; for the complex issue of relations between Orphism and Pythagoreanism and for Plato’s view on Orphic thought, see M. Tortorelli Ghidini, “Da Orfeo agli orfici,” in TRA ORFEO E PITAGORA 2000, pp. 11–41; also P. Bourgeaud, ed., *Orphisme et Orphée, en l’honneur de Jean Rudhardt* (Geneva, 1991); W. K. C. Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion* (Princeton, 1993). For the Orphic laminae, see G. Pugliese Carratelli, *Le lame d’oro orfiche* (Milan, 2001); and idem, “L’orfismo in Magna Grecia,” in PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1988, pp. 159–70, with previous bibliography.
28. *Timaeus* 47d; see also *Republic* 2.376e.
29. Plato, *Laws* 7.812 and *Republic* 3.398–400. On the value of music in the context of Orphic and Pythagorean theories, see L. Beschi, “La prospettiva mitica della musica greca,” in *Religion, Mythologie, Iconographie*, ed. L. Kahil, MÉFRA 103, no. 1 (1991), pp. 39–43; and L. E. Rossi, “Musica e psicologia nel mondo antico e nel mondo moderno,” in *Synaulia: Cultura musicale in Grecia e contatti mediterranei*, ed. D. Musti, A. C. Cassio, and L. E. Rossi, *AION* 5 (2000), pp. 105–10. See also F. Cordano, “La città di Camarina e le corde della lira,” *PdP* 49 (1994), pp. 418–26; L. Todisco, “Nuovi dati e osservazioni sulla tomba delle danzatrici di Ruvo,” *Atti MGrecia* 3, n.s. (1994–95), p. 135, n. 96; G. Pugliese Carratelli, “L’orfismo in Magna Grecia,” in PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1988, pp. 159–70.
30. Although the text itself is problematic, it contains a number of elements that can be linked to the activity of Archytas. See A. Visconti, “Musica e attività politica in Aristosseno di Taranto,” in TRA ORFEO E PITAGORA 2000, pp. 463–85; for the pseudo-Archytan Pythagorean treatises, see also B. Centrone, “Il *perì nomo kai dikaiosinas* di Pseudo Archita,” TRA ORFEO E PITAGORA 2000, pp. 487–505; also A. Mele, “I pitagorici e Archita,” in *Storia della Società Italiana* 1 (Milan, 1981), pp. 269–98; A. Barker, “Archita di Taranto e l’armonia pitagorica,” in *Tra Sicilia e Magna Grecia: Aspetti di interazione culturale nel IV secolo a.C. Atti del Convegno, Napoli 1987*, ed. A. Cassio and D. Musti (Naples, 1991), pp. 157–78; F. Cordano, “Sui frammenti poetici attribuiti ad Archita in Stobeo,” *PdP* 26 (1971), pp. 299–300.
31. Plato, *Republic* 10.614–621; BREGLIA PULCI DORIA 1987, p. 43; for the Sirens and the cosmic music linked to them, see W. Burkert, *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), pp. 350–68; also GIANGIULIO 1986, pp. 101–54.
32. For the group and the figure of Archytas, see P. G. Guzzo, “Altre note tarantine,” *Taras* 12, no. 1 (1992), pp. 135–41. For the political career and the death of Archytas, see G. Urso, “La morte di Archita e l’alleanza fra Taranto e Archidamo di Sparta (345 BC),” *Aevum* 71 (1997), pp. 63–70.
33. For *naiskoi* in the context of necropoleis of Taranto, see A. Pontrandolfo, “Semata e naiskoi nella ceramica italiota,” *AION* 10 (1988), pp. 181–202; for the relationship between iconography in vase-painting and archaeological reality, see LIPPOLIS 1994, pp. 109–28, and E. Lippolis, “Taranto: Forma e sviluppo della topografia urbana,” pp. 119–69 in *Atti Taranto* 41, 2001 (Taranto, 2002). For an overall analysis of Tarentine necropoleis, see E. Lippolis, “Organizzazione delle necropoli e struttura sociale nell’Apulia ellenistica: Due esempi: Taranto e Canosa,” in *Romische Graberstrassen: Kolloquium in München vom 28. bis 30. Oktober 1985*, ed. H. von Hesberg and P. Zanker (Munich, 1987), pp. 139–54. On Macedonian influence on Tarentine funerary sculpture from the end of the fourth through the third century BC, see E. Lippolis, “Ricostruzione e architettura a Taranto dopo Annibale,” in *Sicilia ellenistica, consuetudo Italica: Atti del Convegno, Spoleto, Complesso monumentale di S. Nicolò, 5–7 novembre 2004*, ed. M. Osanna and M. Torelli (Rome, 2006), pp. 211–26.

34. Pausanias 3.12.8–9, and 3.25–27; for funerary monuments in Sparta from the Archaic period, see S. Raftopoulou, “Contributo alla topografia di Sparta durante l’età geometrica ed arcaica,” in *Atti Taranto* 41, 2001 (Taranto, 2002), pp. 25–42; also NAFISSI 1991, pp. 321–22, 331–34.
35. On the supposed *heroön* of Orpheus, see LIPPOLIS 1982, esp. 126–28**.
36. In this connection, see LIPPOLIS 1994, pp. 41–66. The context of a chamber tomb might have ensured better preservation of the group than a *naiskos*; archaeological studies have revealed that *naiskoi* were already being dismantled in Roman times, with resulting dispersal and fragmentation of the material.
37. P. G. Guzzo and S. Luppino, “Due tombe fra Thurii e Crotone,” *MÉFRA* 92, no. 1 (1980), pp. 821–914, figs. 18–19.
38. See BOTTINI 2000; also L. Todisco, “Nuovi dati e osservazioni sulla tomba delle danzatrici di Ruvo,” *Atti MGrecia* 3 (1994–95), p. 138, n. 112, and PENSA 1977, pp. 83–88.
39. Evidence would include materials placed in the tomb, not just signs of prestige but also objects that affirm religious or social behaviors. See, for instance, the small golden lamina found at Caudium (modern Montesarchio) in a tomb from the fourth century BC, and the discovery of tombs such as the one in Ruvo del Monte that yielded a red-figured calyx krater showing the abduction of a young man by Eos, which can be interpreted as a metaphor for the hope of winning a new life after death. Similarly, the reference to Orphism, more allusive in the indigenous centers, can be viewed in the context of a theme of redemption and salvation, with reference to the myths of Boreas and Helen as well. Historical and philological studies have revealed the participation of indigenous personalities in Pythagorean life; in this connection, see A. Bottini, *Archeologia della salvezza* (Milan, 1992), pp. 104–15; P. Poccetti, “La diffusione di dottrine misteriche e sapienziali nelle culture indigene dell’Italia antica: Appunti per un dossier,” in *TRA ORFEO E PITAGORA* 2000, pp. 91–126; BOTTINI 2000; and A. Mele, “Il Pitagorismo e le popolazioni anelleniche,” *AION* 3 (1981), pp. 61–96.
40. See F. G. Cavarretta, “Diffusione diacronica dell’iconografia di Orfeo in ambiente occidentale,” in MASARACCHIA 1993, pp. 399–407. Pausanias mentions a statue of Orpheus on Mount Helikon, surrounded by statues of animals (9.30.4); at Therae in Laconia in the Temple of Eleusinian Demeter, there was a *xoanon* (cultic image) of Orpheus (3.20.5), and at Olympia, in the donarium of Mikythos, there was a votive statue of Orpheus from 460 BC (5.26.3).
41. For Tarentine marble sculpture, BELLÌ PASQUA 1995, pp. 3–8 and for the connections with Attic production, pp. 45–46; see, in particular, the head of Athena from the first half of the fourth century BC, derived from a prototype of the last third of the fifth century BC, pp. 47–48. On the cultural ties between Taras and Athens in the fifth century BC, see also E. Lippolis, “Taranto e la politica di Atene in Occidente,” *Ostraka* 6, no. 2 (1997), pp. 359–78.
42. For the head of Athena in Brescia, see A. Giuliano, “I grandi bronzi di Riace, Fidia e la sua officina,” in *Due Bronzi di Riace: Rinvenimento, restauro, analisi ed ipotesi di interpretazione*, BdA ser. speciale 3 (1984), pp. 297–306, figs. 4–5. The head of Orpheus in Munich has been identified on the basis of its very close resemblance to a small bronze statue of Orpheus with a kithara at the Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg: see file no. 15, by R. Wunsche, in *I marmi colorati della Roma imperiale*, exh. cat., ed. M. De Nuccio and L. Ungaro (Rome, Mercati di Traiano, 2002), pp. 315–16.
43. See SETTIS AND PARRA 2005, pp. 259–62.
44. The term “Master of the Singers of Taras” was proposed by Bonnie M. Kingsley in an unpublished study, which I was able to read. Some examples with similar features could be attributed to this workshop’s production: (1) a male bust wearing a pointed cap in the Sackler Museum at Harvard University (inv. 1943 1085); (2) two heads with a band and a wreath at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, published in L. D. Caskey, “Greek Terracottas from Taranto,” *Bulletin of the Museum of Fine Arts* 29, no. 17 (1931), nos. 2 and 10; (3) a bust of a banqueter from the antiquities market in Basel, cited in Münzen und Medaillen AG (Basel), sale cat., August 1962, pp. 23–24, no. 55; (4) a bust of a bearded figure from the collection of Thomas Virzi, which became part of the collection of the Antikenmuseum Basel, in HERDEJÜRGGEN 1982, no. 105 (it should be noted that the distinctive curls on the heads of the Sirens were also sometimes used by the Tarentine coroplasts for beards); (5) a bust in the Museo Nazionale Archeologico di Taranto (inv. 20.003); (6) a head in a Phrygian cap, in FISCHER-HANSEN 1992,

no. 53, dated to 430–410 BC. See also the mold of the front section of a male head in the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire in Geneva, in DEONNA 1930, pp. 67–74, fig. 4, and the head of a banqueter with cap and partly finished head in D. von Bothmer, *Ancient Art from New York Private Collections*, exh. cat (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1959–60), no. 179, pl. 62.

45. For the terracottas of Ariccia, see CARAFA 1996, in particular the bust in fig. 2 and M. Papini, *Antichi volti della Repubblica: La ritrattistica in Italia centrale tra IV e II secolo a.C.* (Rome, 2004), pp. 222–24.



Head of a Man

LATE FIFTH CENTURY BC

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Object Details

Catalogue Number	4
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.12 🔗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 13.5 cm; W: 13.8 cm; H (face): 10.4 cm

Fabric

Orange in color (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/4; 5 yr 7/6), porous, with a friable consistency and small reflective and calcareous particles.

Condition

Head and upper part of the neck are preserved; the surface is covered with a layer of incrustations; large chips appear on the neck, in the locks of hair, and on the ears.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The solidly structured head is tilted slightly to one side; the face is squared off and full, characterized by a determined jaw. The low forehead is framed by a hairstyle made up of large locks of densely striated hair, parted in the middle and arranged around the two sides of the forehead, covering the upper parts of the ears. The asymmetrical eyes are globular, with marked irises. The slightly lowered eyelids are thick, with a well-defined silhouette. The nose is short, and the mouth, tightly closed, has fleshy lips with clear outlines. The chin has a dimple that also defines the connection between the lower lip and the chin.

The head, probably dating to the end of the fifth century BC, presents the usual formal features of Severe-style sculpture, such as the heavy jaw and the hairstyle with broad distinct locks of hair arranged over the forehead and combed in a roll just suggested behind the nape of the neck. The same distinctive linear style appears in many other Severe-style works from Sicily and Magna Graecia dating from the fifth century to the first half of the fourth century BC.¹ In sculpture, this type of hairstyle is reminiscent of the figure of Actaeon in the metope of the Temple E at Selinunte, the marble ephebe from Agrigento, and the bronze ephebe of Selinunte from 470 BC, and it is also comparable in the Attic context to the Ephebe attributable to Kritios from Athens.² In small statuary, the tightly rolled puff at the nape of the neck, present also on female heads (see cat. 9 and 10), can be found in numerous small bronzes and, with an especially calligraphic rendering, is very common in various coroplastic types of the Severe style.³ The evolution of hairstyles can also be traced in coins of Southern Italy and Sicily from the fifth century BC.⁴

Notes

1. For the rendering of the facial features, in particular for the chin and pronounced jaw, see the head of a banqueter dating to the end of the fifth century BC in HERDEJÜRGER 1982, no. 101, p. 41, and the head of a female figure dating to the beginning of the fourth century BC in IACOBONE 1988, pl. 72a, p. 79. For the structure of the face, see the marble head of a youth in A. Giuliano, ed., *Museo Nazionale Romano: Le sculture* (Rome, 1995), vol. 1, pp. 7–9, which can be traced back to a Peloponnesian bronze archetype of the Severe style.
2. For the head of Actaeon, which presents similar locks divided into sections, see C. Marconi, *Selinunte: Le metope dell'Heraion* (Modena, 1994), fig. 69. For the bronze ephebe from Castelvetrano, near Selinunte, whose hairstyle is also articulated into a series of distinct locks of hair, see LO STILE SEVERO* 1990, pp. 239–41, no. 82, and C. Greco, “Isole nell’Isola: Testimonianze e documenti archeologici della provincia di Trapani,” in AMPOLO 2009, pp. 531–49. For the Ephebe from Agrigento and the Ephebe of Kritios, see G. Adornato, “L’Efebo di Agrigento: Cultura figurativa e linguaggi artistici ad Akragas in età tardoarcaica e protoclassica,” **Prospettiva* 128 (2008), pp. 2–26, fig. 5.
3. For an analysis of the rolled hairstyle in the bronze small sculpture from the fifth century BC, see TOMEI 1992, pp. 178–84, and for other examples in the coroplastic art, pp. 181–82. For a meaningful comparison with a mirror handle in the form of a draped man from Locri in the Museo Nazionale di Reggio Calabria, see F. Cameron, *Greek Bronze Hand-Mirrors in South Italy* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 5–6, no. 7, figs. 22–23.

4. See for example the head of Arethusa in the tetradrachm of Syracuse, *LO STILE SEVERO* 1990, no. 173, p. 359 (474–450 BC); for the didrachm from Terina, see B. P. R. Franke and M. Hirmer, *Die griechische Münze* (Munich, 1964), figs. 95–96 (420–400 BC); and for the tetradrachm from Lentini, see *BULLE* 1939, fig. 8 (450 BC).



Head of a Man

LATE FOURTH-EARLY THIRD CENTURY BC

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Object Details

Catalogue Number	5
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.13 🔗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 17.1 cm; W: 14.3 cm; H (face): 11.3 cm

Fabric

Beige in color, with a friable consistency (Munsell 2.5 yy 8/3), a layer of white slip, and traces of red color on the hair and face visible in certain points even beneath the incrustations.

Condition

The base of the neck is broken; the surface is covered with incrustations.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The male head is set on a thick, strong neck and is slightly tilted toward the left. The face is full, the forehead is high, the eyes are small, set close together, and sunken, with the outer corner downturned; the eyelids are thick and the superciliary arches are marked. The nose is short and compressed, the mouth is small and tight, with fleshy lips and an undulating line; the rounded chin has a hint of a double chin. The head is framed by a dense thatch of hair with short, vibrant curls held by a tubular band. The back of the head protrudes, and the hair is finished in an increasingly irregular and summary manner toward the center of the head. There is a circular hole on the nape of the neck.

The hairstyle of this head, with its curly, short locks, can be seen on various types of statues from the Early Hellenistic period. Combined with the distinctive rendering of facial features, it appears to be, if not a full-fledged portrait, at least a strongly characterized depiction of a man.¹

The type is attested in Tarentine coroplastic art of the Early Hellenistic period and is comparable to a number of heads of banqueters in the collection of the Musei Civici di Trieste; to a statuette that forms part of a group of banqueters in a Swiss collection; and to an antefix similar to the Getty head in the broad structure of the face.² The leonine hairstyle with erect wisps recalls portraits of Alexander, which were popular in Magna Graecia, not only in Taranto but also in such southern Italian centers as Fratte di Salerno, Capua, Teano, and Calvi, and in central Italy.³ In particular, the short curls are reminiscent of those on a male head that formed part of the decoration of the temple at the sanctuary of Lo Scasato at Falerii, dating to the beginning of the third century BC, in which Italiote and possibly Tarentine components have been identified.⁴ The treatment of the locks also seems to reflect a Skopasian influence in the context of the stylistic eclecticism that was characteristic of the Tarentine coroplastic production.⁵ The fine locks of curly hair and the type of tubular ribbon that gathers the hair can also be found in heads of athletes.⁶ On the basis of established comparisons, the Getty head can be dated to the end of the fourth or the beginning of the third century BC.

Notes

1. The portrait value of a number of terracotta heads from the second half of the fourth century BC has been analyzed, as regards the central Italic area, by Steingräber who sees in them well characterized types instead of genuine physiognomic likenesses: S. Steingräber, "Zum Phänomen der etruskisch-italischen Votivköpfe," *RM* 87 (1980), pp. 215–53.
2. See, for instance, H. Herdejürgen, "Tarantinischer Terrakotten der Sammlung Schwitter," *AntK* 16 (1973), pp. 53–108, no. 97, and the Tarentine heads in POLI 2010, cat. 443–44. For the antefix, which can be dated to the second half of the fourth century BC, see CARAFA 1996, pp. 273–94, fig. 9; a resemblance in how the features are portrayed can also be detected in a

head from the Contrada Corti Vecchie, datable to the middle of the fourth century BC , IN IACOBONE 1988, pl. 104d, p. 112; further comparison can be made with a bust from a cult area of ancient Forentum, dating to the beginning of the third century BC: see A. Bottini and P. G. Guzzo, "Busti divini da Lavello," *BdA* 77 (1992), pp. 1–10. See also a fistic statue of a youthful masculine type "in the Hellenistic tradition" originally from Eboli, which can be bracketed between the fourth and the third century centuries BC: M. Cipriani, "Eboli preromana: I dati archeologici: Analisi e proposte di lettura," in M. Tagliente, ed., *Italici in Magna Grecia: Lingua, insediamenti e strutture*, Leukania 3 (Venosa, 1991), pp. 119–45, pl. XLVIII, no. 3.

3. On the portraiture of Alexander and its influence in the Tarentine area, see cat. 18. For the Campanian area, see GRECO AND PONTRANDOLFO 1990, fig. 159, pp. 104–5, particularly a male head datable to the third century BC with a type of curly hairstyle similar to that of the Getty piece. See also the terracotta head of Herakles from Teano dating to the end of the fourth century BC in W. Johannowsky, "Relazione preliminare sugli scavi di Teano," *BdA* 48 (1963), pp. 131–65, fig. 13g–h.
4. For the male head from Falerii dating to the end of the fourth or the beginning of the third century BC and believed to be the work of craftsmen probably originally from Magna Graecia, see A. M. Comella, *Le terrecotte architettoniche del santuario dello Scasato a Falerii* (Naples, 1993), pp. 107–9, pl. 34a.
5. The curly hair recalls the statuary type of Meleager: see TODISCO 1993, p. 87, figs. 151–53; this hairstyle also seems reminiscent of a marble head of a heroicized deceased individual produced in Taras at the end of the fourth century BC, in BELLINI PASQUA 1995, pp. 80–81.
6. See, for instance, the Ephesus-type athlete: TODISCO 1993, pp. 54–55, fig. 58; for the bronze statue of the victorious athlete attributed to Lysippos or his school, and dating from between 340 and 320 BC, see MORENO 1995, pp. 68–73. A type of tubular or rolled headband is also present in the portraits of Hellenistic monarchs: see R. R. R. Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 34–35.



Head of a Man

FOURTH CENTURY BC

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Object Details

Catalogue Number	6
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.18 🔗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 13.1 cm; W: 9.1 cm; H (face): 8.2 cm

Fabric

Light beige in color, with a friable consistency, fairly well purified with very infrequent reflective inclusions (Munsell 10 yr 8/3–8/4), a layer of slip consisting of diluted clay.

Condition

The ears, nose, and the base of the neck are chipped; a number of curls have broken away from the forehead; there are diffuse incrustations on the surface.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The young man's head is set on a bull neck. The face is squarish, the facial features are marked, the cheeks are full, the eyes are large and asymmetrical, the nose is broad, and the mouth, with its sharply drawn and fleshy lips, is half-open. The curly hair is rendered rather carelessly in small clumps arranged in an arc across the forehead, leaving the large ears uncovered; the ears are characterized by swollen auricles. On the nape of the neck and on the occiput, the hair is left unfinished.

Given the tight, snug head of hair and the mouth with fleshy lips, this type might well depict an African, but the large ears are reminiscent of an athlete and, more specifically, a boxer, since such ears were considered characteristic of those who practiced this sport. Sports enjoyed a long tradition in Taras and, together with Metapontion (Metaponto) and Lokris, the Laconian colony had won numerous victories at Olympia. As a result of the ties established between athleticism and the philosophical culture of Magna Graecia, images of athletes and athletic contests had become preferred iconographic motifs in vase-painting as far back as the sixth century BC.¹

The image of an athlete within a cult precinct that may have belonged to the necropolis, as for example at Satyrion, might be a reference to the social and political function attributed to the offerer or the deceased.

The childish appearance of this face and a number of formal elements hark back to the heads of young athletes in the Severe style, such as a marble head from the Baths of Diocletian in Rome, a Roman copy after a Severe-style prototype with close-cut hair, large eyes with thick eyelids, and the heavy overall structure.² A marble male head from Taranto, datable to the end of the fourth century BC and probably of the local school, though influenced by Attic production, presents similar characteristics in the fleshy face and the hair rendered in globular clumps on the sides; the shape of the thick eyelids and the full face, reminiscent of the Getty head, are characteristics found in other Tarentine heads from the Early Hellenistic period.³

Notes

1. For sports in Magna Graecia and boxing in particular, see L. Masiello, "Le specialità agonistiche: Il pugilato," in *Atleti e guerrieri: Tradizioni aristocratiche a Taranto tra VI e V secolo a.C.*, exh. cat. (Taranto, Museo Nazionale, 1994), pp. 105–11; F. G. Lo Porto, "Tombe di atleti tarantini," *Atti MGrecia* n.s. 8 (1967), pp. 31–96; and F. G. Lo Porto, "Considerazioni su una tomba di atleta a Metaponto," in *APARCHAI* (1982), vol. 1, pp. 339–45. On athleticism in Magna Graecia, see N. C. Stampolidis and Y. Tassoulas, eds, *Magna Graecia: Athletics and the Olympic Spirit on the Periphery of the Hellenic World* (Athens, 2004).
2. For the head of a young athlete, see M. Cadario, cat. 41 in *LA REGINA* 2003, p. 226.

3. BELLI PASQUA 1995, pp. 80–82. See also F. Rausa, *L'immagine del vincitore: L'atleta nella statuaria greca dall'età arcaica all'ellenismo*, Ludica 2 (Treviso and Rome, 1994), pp. 136–38.



Head of a Male Banqueter

400-300 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	7
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.11 🔗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 20.3 cm; W: 13.9 cm; H (face): 12.2 cm

Fabric

Beige in color with light green nuances (Munsell 2.5 yr 8/3–8/4), highly purified, porous, and friable in consistency. Surface covered with a layer of slip of diluted clay. Paint: traces of red color on the hair and ocher on the forehead.

Condition

Preserved are the head, neck, and part of the tenon for insertion into the torso; a small portion of a wreath remains behind the nape of the neck. The nose is chipped. The surface is covered with incrustations that conceal the surviving traces of paint.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The head formed part of a statue, as is shown by the tenon, still preserved at the base of the broad, flared neck, which was used to attach the head to the figure's bust. The back portion of the head shows hasty, summary modeling; the wreath and hair were applied separately before the firing. A circular opening can be seen in the back of the neck.

The face is round and full, the eyes have thickened eyelids that are asymmetrical and irregular in shape; the mouth, barely half-open, has fleshy lips. The hair is parted in a "pincer" style over the forehead and arranged around the face with lively locks defined by fine striations. The head must once have had a headdress with bands that fell on either side of the face and a wreath: a distinctive element in the typology of banqueters to which this head is linked. A number of heads of statuettes of banqueters from Taranto wear wreaths with rosettes topped by a complicated floral *fastigium* (crown).¹ The most distinctive element is the hairstyle, in which it is possible to recognize a Polykleitan influence that extended in Taras even beyond the fifth century BC.² The head, larger than other comparable heads (which generally belong to medium-sized statuettes), presents a nesting system by means of which it was inserted into the body of the statue, a technique not unusual in coroplastastic workshops.³

Notes

1. There are numerous comparisons with statuettes of varying sizes from the Tarentine context, for example: IACOBONE 1988, pp. 95–96, pl. 90a–b, head and bust of banqueters from the votive deposits of the Via di Palma and of Contrada Corti Vecchie, datable to the first half of the fourth century BC; the statuette from the votive deposit of the Via di Palma, inv. 200354 in the Museo Nazionale Archeologico di Taranto; and the piece in CAPORUSSO 1975, no. 14, pl. IX, from the end of the fifth to the beginning of the fourth century BC. Dating to the same period is a head with traces of red color on the hair; see LEYENAAR-PLAISIER 1979, vol. 1, no. 155, pl. 27; BREITENSTEIN 1941, p. 17, no. 10; HERDEJÜRGGEN 1971, no. 25, fig. 9; LEVI 1926, fig. 38, no. 141; BARTOCCINI 1936, fig. 56, p. 158 (head of a banqueter with the same arrangement of locks of hair from a votive deposit in Contrada Corti Vecchie); the head from the Fondo Giovinazzi in Taranto, from the late fourth century BC in HIGGINS 1954, pl. 176, nos. 1284–85; and the unpublished piece now in the Musei Civici di Trieste, POLI 2010, cat. 376, p. 241, from the end of the fifth to the beginning of the fourth century BC. See also the Metapontine head in LETTA 1971, pl. XII, no. 3, pp. 84–86. A metal wreath imitating a braiding of branches, garlands, and festoons was also found among grave goods. It is generally considered to be related to eschatological beliefs. For the headgear, see also head at cat. 21.
2. In this connection, consider the Herakles by Polkleitos: P. C. Bol, *Polyklet: Der Bildhauer der griechischen Klassik*, exh. cat. (Frankfurt, Museum Alter Plastik, 1993), pp. 199–205, characterized by hair in short locks, flattened and adhering to the skull. This creation can be assigned to the artist's maturity.
3. From Lucera, compare the head dating to the end of the fourth century BC, possibly originally part of a full-size figure, in D'ERCOLE 1990, p. 69, pl. 13a.



Head of a Male Banqueter

FOURTH CENTURY BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	8
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.9 ☞
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 17.2 cm; W: 14.5 cm; H (face): 10.3 cm

Fabric

Light orange in color (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/6), talcous, purified, with reflective inclusions.

Condition

The central and left-hand sections of the wreath and probably the central and right-hand rosette, the strips of cloths, and the locks of hair on the sides of the neck are fragmentary; there are diffuse incrustations on the surface.

Provenance

– 1982 Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The head, with its oval face, is tilted slightly to the right and has pronounced cheekbones; the small eyes have downturned outer corners and thickened eyelids; the nose is straight; the open mouth leaves the teeth visible; the lower lip is quite prominent. The figure wears ornamental headgear added to the head and decorated with ribbon, a wreath, probably three rosettes, and bands falling on either side of the face and onto the shoulders. The hair protrudes from beneath the head covering and, leaving the ears uncovered, is arrayed on either side of the face in wavy locks, clearly separated by incisions. In the center of the forehead, the hair is less clearly defined and more softly brushed; two three-dimensional ringlets dangle at the sides of the neck. The head can be assigned to the type of the young, beardless banqueter represented in the act of singing, found in Tarentine production from the end of the fifth and the first half of the fourth centuries BC.¹ The wreath decorated with three symmetrically arranged rosettes and sometimes topped by a small palm tree is distinctive to the Tarentine area and can also be found in a number of bronzes that are probably depictions of Zeus Katabaites.² The details of the fine locks of hair, the half-open mouth, and the tilted position of the head are also found in a number of busts and terracotta sculptures from Taranto.³ Music and song constituted significant moments during the symposium, and these iconographic elements, much like the individual attributes accompanying the depictions of the banqueters, must have had a specific value in various phases of the ritual, related to status and age, which identified the banqueter in the context of the political and social community.⁴

Notes

1. On the type of the reclining figure in general, see the [introduction](#) and [cat. 6](#). See also the pieces with diadems, bands, and rosettes in TARANTO 1995, pl. VIII, no. 3; and HERDEJÜRGER 1982, pp. 66–67, no. 121. For the headgear, see also FISCHER-HANSEN 1992, p. 80, no. 48 (female head dating from 400–375 BC).
2. In this connection, see LIPPOLIS 1982. On the wreath as an obligatory ornament for participants in the symposium, see P. G. Guzzo, “Corone d’agone tra guerra e morte in Magna Graecia,” in LA REGINA 2003, pp. 92–101, in which the author analyzes the possible and extensive meanings of the wreath in the Italic context and in Magna Graecia.
3. Among other possible comparisons are: C. Belli, *Il tesoro di Taras* (Milan, 1970), p. 208, and the head of a banqueter in the Musei Civici di Trieste, in POLI 2010, cat. 452 (last decades of the fourth century BC); see also a terracotta head in Berlin with an open mouth, previously linked to the figure of Orpheus, in BULLE 1939, pp. 3–19, no. 15.
4. On the role of music and singing in the ritual of the funerary banquet, see the “Orpheus group,” [cat. 1–3](#), n. 29; F. Lissarrague, *The Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet: Images of Wine and Ritual* (Princeton, 1990), pp. 123–39; G. Lambin, *La chanson grecque dans l’antiquité* (Paris, 1992), pp. 216–19; D. Musti, “Musica greca tra aristocrazia e democrazia,” in A. C. Cassio, D. Musti, and L. E. Rossi, eds., *Synaulia: Cultura musicale in Grecia e contatti mediterranei*, AION Quaderni 5 (Naples, 2000) pp. 7–55; and *TARANTO* 1995, pp. 51–53.



Head of a Woman

ABOUT 350 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	9
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.3 🔗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 17.8 cm; W: 14.1 cm; H (face): 11.1 cm

Fabric

Pinkish orange in color (Munsell 5 yr 7/6–7/8), purified and friable, with tiny reflective particles.

Condition

Missing left earlobe, some scratches. The surface is covered with incrustations and is deteriorated.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The head is set on a powerful neck that is slightly tapered and marked by two Venus rings. The face is oval; the forehead is high; the eyes are asymmetrical, set on two different planes, and slightly sunken. The eyelids are thick and the outer corners are twisted downward. The lips are fleshy, the chin is full and rounded with a dimple at the beginning of the lower lip; the nose is straight with a flattened ridge. The hair, parted in the middle, is arranged in long, parallel, serpentine locks with sharp ridges; it puffs out on either side of the face and is gathered in a roll behind the neck, leaving the earlobes uncovered. In the middle of the hair is a flattened triangular space, suggesting that a diadem may have been inserted there. On the nape of the neck, the hair is depicted with wavy, parallel incisions. The ears are pierced for the insertion of earrings. The chin is quite pronounced. On the left side of the nape of the neck, there is a small hole.¹

The head shows considerable stylistic and iconographic affinities with the head at cat. 10, especially in the rendering of the hairstyle and the general treatment of the facial features, though the workmanship is less precise and the hair shows a looser style in front. Like the previous head, this type can be compared with the Sicilian busts which in Magna Graecia were modified in keeping with local stylistic preferences and preserved, in some cases, the frontal appearance and features from Classical models. All the same, the absence of the *polos* and comparison with the types of banqueters could link the bust to the image of an offerer or a deceased woman.² This hairstyle with linear, serpentine locks, the eyes with raised-band eyelids, and the sinuous line of the mouth characterize many fictile Tarentine heads from the first half of the fifth century through the fourth century BC.³

A very close comparison, in terms of both the hairstyle and the rendering of facial features, can be made with a number of female heads probably belonging to statues originally from Saturo. Comparison can be made with another head, smaller in format, seen alongside a reclining figure and dating to the middle of the fourth century BC, and with a female head antefix from the sanctuary of Persephone in Contrada Mannella at Locri, dating to the middle of the fourth century BC.⁴ Tarentine influence seems evident as well in the seated female figure in a terracotta slab that decorated the interior of a chamber tomb in Centuripe in the third century BC, which is similar to the Getty head in its hairstyle and in the facial features that bespeak a Classical model.⁵ This hairstyle is also found in a soft-stone head that can be dated between the last quarter of the fourth century and the first quarter of the third century BC, which attests to the presence of a single stylistic approach among both coroplasts and sculptors.⁶ These comparisons suggest the dating of this type to approximately the middle of the fourth century BC.

Notes

1. This hole is ancient and was made in the wet or pre-fired clay. A number of busts from Morgantina feature a small hole on the neck, probably intended for the insertion of ornaments. See BELL 1981, no. 116.
2. See cat. 11, esp. nn. 2 and 3.
3. For some of these characteristics of Tarentine coroplastics also present in marble and stone sculpture of the same period, see BELLI PASQUA 1995, pp. 70–71. For the hairstyle, see the comparable female head in terracotta belonging to a statue from Taranto from the first half of the fourth century BC, in PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1996, p. 723, no. 284. Also note the so-called head of Apollo in a private collection in Berlin, discussed in M. Borda, “Lineamenti e problemi dell’arte tarantina del V secolo a.C.,” in *Studi triestini in onore di Luigia Achillea Stella* (Trieste, 1975), pp. 271–309, no. 16; the terracotta head in the Musei Civici di Trieste, POLI 2010, cat. 179, inv. 5216; a statue head from Taranto from the first half of the fourth century BC in ORLANDINI 1983, fig. 546; and the head in HERDEJÜRGGER 1982, no. 121, pp. 66–67, from the first half of the fourth century BC. See also a female head from Fratte di Salerno that has the same treatment of the locks (broad and wavy on the forehead), discussed in GRECO AND PONTRANDOLFO 1990, fig. 151; and the piece in *Important Antiquities*, Sotheby’s New York, sale cat. December 17, 1992, lot 106.
4. From Saturo comes a piece from Favissa 6 (crate 1292) and also, from the same favissa, another head with “flame-shaped” locks of hair (crate 1290); see the head of the banqueter in IACOBONE 1988, pl. 76 a, p. 82, dating from the first half of the fourth century BC. For the antefix from Locri, see PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1996, no. 347, p. 740.
5. A. Pautasso, “Rilievi da una tomba d’età ellenistica di Centuripe,” in G. Rizza, ed., *Scavi e ricerche a Centuripe* (Catania, 2002), pp. 115–26, figs. 2, 11.
6. In CARTER 1975, p. 41, pl. 4d; for relations between coroplasts and sculptors working with soft stone, see pp. 28–29.



Head of a Woman

ABOUT 350 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	10
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.2 ↗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 23.5 cm; W: 17.2 cm

Fabric

Light beige color with pinkish nuances (Munsell 10 yr 8/3), porous and friable with small calcareous and reflective inclusions. The surface is covered with a layer of slip consisting of diluted clay. A small trace of red pigment is visible at the attachment of the shoulder.

Condition

The head, the neck, and the attachment of the right shoulder are preserved; the surface appears to be encrusted; a portion of the hair behind the right eye is missing, and there is a chip on the left eye.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The face is set upon a strong neck marked by two Venus rings. The features are full in form, with asymmetrical eyes and thick eyelids folded downward at the outer corners. The right superciliary arch is closer to and parallel with the upper eyelid. The mouth, with a fleshy lower lip, is close to the straight, tapering nose with its flattened ridge; the chin is rounded with a dimple where it joins the mouth, and the jaw is full. The hair, parted in the middle, and evident on the nape of the neck as well, is depicted by means of deep, sharp incisions, possibly executed with a comb-like tool, and it is held back in the middle of the forehead by a diadem. The hair is combed in thick parallel waves toward the back of the neck and gathered in a roll behind the neck, leaving the earlobes uncovered. The ears are pierced for the insertion of earrings, probably of metal.¹

The type is reminiscent of the votive busts widespread in southeastern Sicily and Magna Graecia in the fifth and the second half of the fourth century BC and is characterized by elements that can still be assigned to the Classical period. The piece, which retains a certain schematic rigidity accentuated in part by the frontal composition, displays a stereotypical depiction of facial features that is common in Sicilian bust types connected to the Demeter cult.² Certain distinctive elements, such as the linearity of the hairstyle and the roll of hair behind the neck, can also be found in a number of female types from Centuripe and Morgantina.³ The detail of the Venus rings is found also in a number of Tarentine heads datable to the fourth century BC, such as a marble head from Taranto now in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, which is close to the Getty bust in the compactness of its forms and the downward-turning corners of the eyes with close-set eyebrows. Based on its style, the Getty head can be dated to the middle of the fourth century BC.⁴

Notes

1. The practice of drilling holes through the earlobes for the insertion of metal earrings was common in the workshops of Magna Graecia and Sicily; in this connection, see cat. 51.
2. On the problems relating to the busts from Sicily, see FERRUZZA 2013, with bibliography; PORTALE 2008, pp. 22–25; KILMER 1977, pp. 122–23, 159–76. n. 52. The most recent studies on this topic have discussed the connection of votive female busts to the Demeter and Kore-Persephone cult; underlining how the possible association of a votive with a specific god or goddess can only be affirmed by study of the entire system of dedications. For their diffusion in Magna Graecia and Central Italy, see GRECO AND PONTRANDOLFO 1990, pp. 99–103; and CARAFA 1996.
3. For the striations used to depict the hair and the “rolled” hairstyle at the back of the neck, see the Tarentine bust of a banqueter in HERDEJÜRGER 1982, no. 107, pp. 48–49, dating to the end of the fifth century BC and the head in BULLE 1939, no. 1, p. 3; the hairstyles of the maenads in the Tarentine antefixes from the middle of the fourth century BC in HIGGINS 1954, nos. 1270 and 1270a, pl. 174, and the female head by LEVI 1926, p. 43, no. 182, fig. 44. See also the same rendering of the hairstyle in the heads found in Taranto in the Musei Civici di Trieste: POLI 2010, nos. 534–35 and 667. For Centuripe, see

LIBERTINI 1926, pp. 96–99, pl. XIX, no. 3, busts with *polos* and veil characterized by a powerful neck and a distinct joint between jaw and neck; for Morgantina, see BELL 1981, no. 112, pl. 31, possibly around 300 BC. The hairstyle is also found in many male and female heads of the Severe style, see RIDGWAY 1970, pp. 138–39, fig. 179. For the rolled hairstyle, see also cat. 7. In the sculpture from Metaponto, one finds the same distinctive rendering of the hair as thin strands in dense, parallel waves: P. Orlandini, “L’arte in Magna Grecia e in Sicilia: Aspetti e problemi,” in *Les Grecs et l’Occident: Actes du Colloque de la Villa “Kérylos,”* 1991 (Rome, 1995), pp. 123–39.

4. For the marble head with the earlobes perforated for earrings, see BELLI PASQUA 1995, p. 62. For the wrinkles on the neck, see also the bust of Demeter in Ariccia discussed by CARAFA 1996, fig. 2, pp. 277–78, n. 18; and the considerations in GROSSMAN 2001, pp. 15–16.



Head of a Woman

375-350 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	11
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.7 🔗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 17.3 cm; W: 12.3 cm; H (face): 8.9 cm

Fabric

Pale orange with reflective inclusions and a dusty and purified consistency (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/4 8/6); the surface is covered with a layer of diluted clay.

Condition

The slip of diluted clay has detached at several points, making the surface rough and worn, especially on the left side of the face. The left earring is missing.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The female head has regular features and is turned slightly to the right. The oval yet full face has a rounded chin, understated cheekbones, lowered superciliary arches, and small, asymmetrical, almond-shaped eyes with clearly defined eyelids. The nose is small and the fleshy neck is marked at its proper right side by a wrinkle made by the slightly tipped head. The low forehead is framed by hair gathered in two wavy bands and combed softly toward the occiput, with two ringlets falling alongside the neck, leaving the ears uncovered. The figure wears disk-shaped earrings. At the back of the head, the hair, parted in the middle, is combed into horizontal and parallel waves rendered by quickly executed incisions. On the nape of the neck, there is a circular hole.

The softness of the shaping and rendering, the slight turn of the head, the barely parted lips, the way the eyes are sunk into the orbital cavities, and the prominence of the superciliary arches, which emphasize the intensity of the gaze and accentuate the pictorial surface values, all place this head in the context of Tarentine sculpture of Praxitelean inspiration.¹ In particular, one terracotta female head, now in Kassel, dated from the beginning of the fourth century BC, presents similar characteristics, such as the hairstyle with two curls dropping down alongside the neck and the regular, nuanced facial features with sunken eyes with a rim of shadow just beneath the eyebrows.² The rounded strands of hair form loose waves from a central part down to the temples, with curls falling along either side of the neck. They also recur in a mold in the Getty Museum (inv. 74.AD.54 reproducing a female head signed “LY,” referring perhaps to a Tarentine coroplast active in the middle and third quarter of the fourth century BC.³ This may also be compared with another head from Taranto in Basel, which has a similar hairstyle but is in a frontal position and is characterized by a harsher expression. For the treatment of the hairstyle and the coloristic rendering of the locks, a comparison can also be made with a bust of a seated female figure in Basel datable to the second quarter of the fourth century BC period in which the Getty head might be dated.⁴

Notes

1. For comparable facial features, see the marble female head dating to the end of the fourth to the beginning of the third century BC in BELLÌ PASQUA 1995, p. 78, vol. 4, no. 8, and the head at cat. 14. On the disk earrings found in numerous variants in Taranto, and often associated with a pendant, see T. Schojer, “Orecchini,” in DE JULIIS 1984, pp. 129–46, referring to the second type.
2. See U. Sinn, *Antike Terrakotten* (Kassel, 1977), no. 47, with previous bibliography, and IACOBONE 1988, p. 149, pl. 137a, for a head of Praxitelean inspiration, datable to the second half of the fourth century BC. A certain stylistic resemblance is also notable in the hairstyle of the head in the Musei Civici di Trieste, Poli 2010, cat. 534, p. 269, before the middle of the fourth century BC.

3. For the Getty mold, see KINGSLEY 1981, pp. 45–46, no. A.1, figs. 1 and 5 (incorrectly cited as 74.AD.22). Thirty-one other examples of Tarentine molds are in the Getty collection, together with seven molds generally identified as South Italian. See *infra*, “Guide to the Collection of South Italian and Sicilian Terracottas.”
4. HERDEJÜRGÉR 1982, pp. 66–67, no. 121, for the female bust; see also *ibid.*, no. 122 (second quarter of the fourth century BC).



Head of a Woman

350-300 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	12
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.8 🔗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 14.4 cm; W: 11.5 cm; H (face): 10.2 cm

Fabric

Bright, deep orange in color (Munsell 5 yr 7/6), with many reflective and calcareous inclusions (5 yr 7/6) and a friable and dusty consistency; a layer of white slip is preserved especially on the right half of the face and neck.

Condition

Intact, with a number of cracks and incrustations distributed over the entire surface.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

This female head has a broad, full face; the eyes are small and almond-shaped with thick eyelids; the nose is straight; the mouth has fleshy, barely open lips; the chin is rounded. The hair is combed into short, fine, curly locks at the sides of the face, leaving the ears uncovered; the locks appear to be held by a ribbon whose ends fall in the middle of the forehead. On the head and at the nape of the neck, the hair, parted in the middle, is treated summarily in wavy locks that are rendered through light incisions. The figure wears lunate earrings interrupted in the middle by a knurled thread. This type of head, thought not especially widespread, is present in the Tarentine coroplastic repertory of the Early Hellenistic period. Heads of statuettes from the Via di Palma votive deposit, datable to the fourth century BC, show the same broad facial structure and the hairstyle consisting of short, curly locks framing the forehead; this type is also found in the fourth century BC in busts of banqueters.¹ The type of “lunate” earrings, with two vertical elements set midway along the crescent, is well attested in Taranto and can be found in the funerary deposits from the second half of the fourth century BC.²

Notes

1. The head from Via Di Palma, see IACOBONE 1988, p. 34, pl. 26c, generally dated to the fourth century BC. A similar head comes from Saturo (crate 713).
2. For the earring type, see R. A. Lunsingh Scheurleer, “Terracotta ‘Imitation’ Jewellery,” *BABesch* 57 (1982), pp. 192–99, no. 5, fig. 6. In general, on the typologies of earrings recurrent in Taras during the Hellenistic period, see T. Schojer, “Orecchini,” in DE JULIIS 1984, pp. 129–32, no. 57.



Head of a Woman

400-350 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	13
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.16 🔗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 16.5 cm; W: 12.6 cm; H (face): 11.7 cm

Fabric

Orange (Munsell 5 yr 7/6), porous, very fine, with reflective inclusions; the surface is covered with a layer of diluted clay.

Condition

The head and neck are preserved, with diffuse incrustations covering the entire surface; there is a crack along the neck and the right cheek; a number of locks of hair in the back have been detached.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The head is set on a flared neck; the hair is arranged on either side of the face in flame-shaped locks defined by deep incisions; beneath the nape of the neck it is rendered with thick strips of clay worked by hand and applied before firing.

The face is broad, the outer edges of the eyes are turned downward, and the eyebrows are contiguous with the upper eyelid. The nose is broad at the base and the mouth is elongated and fleshy, very roughly finished, and apparently twisted in a grimace. On the head is a *sakkos*; the ears are adorned with a pair of spherical earrings. The head echoes, in part, the characteristics of the head at cat. 21, especially in the hairstyle and the shape of the eyes, but this head is less carefully modeled and the facial features are more roughly executed.

The type of hairstyle—pulled back and covered by a *sakkos*—can be found in a number of Tarentine heads from the fourth century BC.¹ The mouth and the especially broad-based nose are found in the terracotta head of a deity from Taranto dating to the first half of the fourth century BC.² The snakelike locks of hair with sharp-edged ridges, partially covering the ears, can also be found in marble sculpture as early as the beginning of the fourth century BC, as is attested by a female head in which the influence of the Attic post-Phidian style has been recognized.³

Notes

1. Such styles are documented in HERDEJÜRGER 1982, no. 123, dating to the end of the fourth century BC; see also the previously mentioned head of a banqueter in IACOBONE 1988, pl. 76b, p. 82, from the middle of the fourth century BC; the head on pl. 129; and the piece in BESQUES 1986, pl. 128b, dating to the last quarter of the fourth century BC. For small ball earrings, see cat. 16, n. 3.
2. In E. Paul, *Antike Welt in Ton* (Leipzig, 1959), fig. 23, no. 77.
3. BELLÌ PASQUA 1995, pp. 51–53.



Head of a Woman

400-350 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	14
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.14 🔗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 12 cm; W: 10.3 cm; H (face): 8 cm

Fabric

Light orange in color (Munsell 5 yr 8/6), dusty, not very porous, with calcareous inclusions and reflective particles.

Condition

The head, neck, and a small fragment connecting to the bust are still preserved; diffuse incrustations and various cracks appear on the surface.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The head is tilted slightly to the right. The face is oval, with a rounded chin and full cheeks. The eyes are small, asymmetrical, and close-set, with prominently marked eyelids and lowered eyebrows. The nose is straight and the mouth is small, with soft lips whose outlines are vaguely defined. A dimple separates the lower lip from the chin. The hair, parted in the center, frames the forehead and temples and is combed into large wavy locks defined by fine striations. From the part, two fine, short, symmetrically opposed locks dangle over the forehead.

The rendering of the finely drawn and almost adolescent features, along with the melancholy of the face, link this head to a type that is well documented in Taranto in the fourth century BC, although the detail of the two fine locks of hair on the forehead are not particularly common.¹ The head is characterized by a number of asymmetries, such as the eyes of different sizes and the slightly flattened left cheek. It recalls two busts of banqueters from the first half of the fourth century BC, both because of their rapt expressions and because of the wavy, gathered locks of hair, which can be found on other female heads belonging to the larger typology of reclining figures.² It also recalls a later marble female head from Egnazia with a general Praxitelean intonation, but linked to Alexandrian production of the first half of the second century BC.³

Notes

1. For the two fine locks of hair that fall in the center of the forehead, compare the terracotta bust of a female deity from Ariccia, CARAFA 1996, fig. 2; see also the votive heads from Capua and Lucera, D'ERCOLE 1990, pl. 14; and a head from Palestrina from the last quarter of the fourth century BC in PENSABENE 2001, pl. 43, no. 198.
2. See the busts in HERDEJÜRGÉR 1982, pp. 59–61, nos. 115, 116, dating to 380–360 BC, with other bibliographic references; also a small head from the votive deposit of Corti Vecchie in Taranto, in BARTOCCINI 1936, p. 160, fig. 62. Also compare with the female figure in C. Belli, *Il tesoro di Taras* (Rome and Milan, 1970), p. 195, and the Tarentine molds in DEONNA 1930, pp. 67–74, fig. 5. The face with the rapt expression is also reminiscent of the small female head in the Musei Civici di Trieste, inv. 3999.
3. For this head, see E. Ghisellini, “Una statua femminile alessandrina da Egnazia: Considerazioni sui rapporti tra Apulia e l’Egitto tolemaico,” *Xenia* 2 (1993), pp. 45–70.



Bust of a Woman

LATE FIFTH-FIRST HALF OF THE FOURTH CENTURIES BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	15
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.4 ↗
Typology	Bust
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 16.9 cm; W: 13.2 cm; H (face): 9.4 cm

Fabric

Pinkish beige color (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/3), lighter in at a few points, porous, with a friable consistency and micaceous inclusions; the surface is covered with a thick slip of diluted clay.

Condition

The head and the attachment of the right shoulder are preserved, along with the edge of a dress at the shoulder; there are various incrustations over the entire surface.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The head, which must have belonged to a bust or statue, is set on a massive neck marked by a single “Venus ring.” The face is broad, with a rounded chin and full cheeks, almond-shaped eyes with heavy eyelids, well-defined eyebrows, a straight nose, and a slightly open mouth with fleshy lips and a more prominent lower lip. The hair is drawn up under a *sakkos* (hair covering) with a banded edge and emerges on either side of the face in thick, wavy locks that bulge outward, leaving the earlobes visible. The figure is probably dressed in a chiton fastened at the shoulder by a round button. On the top of the head, corresponding to the button of the *sakkos*, we can see a hole marked by radial incisions.

This type is well attested in Tarentine coroplastic art and can be dated between the end of the fifth and the first half of the fourth century BC.¹ The traits it displays—a big face with a rounded jaw, small nose, mouth with sinuous lips, all largely derived from Attic Classical prototypes—are also found in the local sculptural tradition.² Even the type of hairstyle is influenced by echoes of the post-Phidian school, which influenced not only the plastic arts but also a number of coin types in Magna Graecia, such as the female head found on staters from Terina after 420 BC.³

Notes

1. There are some unpublished comparisons from *favissa* 6 of Saturo (crate 1290), in particular a statue head with a *sakkos* featuring the same radial detail indicating the folds around the button on top of the head covering; see also a piece in HERDEJÜRGER 1982, p. 65, no. 120 (dated 375–350 BC); IACOBONE 1988, pl. 128 d, p. 135, dating from the middle of the fourth century BC. Further, a small female bust is reminiscent of the head in terms of hairstyle and heavy facial features: LETTA 1971, pl. XV, no. 1, p. 93–95; see also HIGGINS 1954, pl. 175 (late fifth century BC); FISCHER-HANSEN 1992, no. 54, p. 84, as the beginning of the fourth century BC. For the type of chiton closed by “buttons,” see D’ERCOLE 1990, p. 95, pl. 33b.
2. On the Attic influence in Tarentine sculpture between the fifth and fourth century BC, see the previous entry and BELLI PASQUA 1995, pp. 5–6; and for a female marble head of the fourth century BC, pp. 70–71. This female type could be reminiscent of Phidian models, such as the head of the “Kore Albani,” known only in copies dated to 440 BC on the basis of comparison with a similar figure in the South Metope XIX of the Parthenon: LA ROCCA, 1985, fig. 6. See also, for this type of face and hairstyle, the head from the Athenian Agora (Agora S2354): BOARDMAN 1985, fig. 105.
3. For the coin types, see A. Stazio, “Monete e scambio,” in PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1983, p. 164, figs. 139–42. For the hairstyle with *sakkos* and separate locks of hair on the forehead, there are also some comparisons in red-figured Attic vases, i.e., the female bust that decorates one extremity of the *epinetron* (thigh protector worn while weaving) of Eretria (425 BC): see R. Kousser, “The World of Aphrodite in the Late Fifth Century in Greek Vases,” in C. Marconi, ed., *Greek Vases: Images, Contexts and Controversies*, Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition 25 (Boston, 2004), pp. 97–112.



Bust of a Woman

450-350 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	16
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.5 ↗
Typology	Bust
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 16.2 cm; W: 9.2 cm; H (face): 7 cm

Fabric

Pale pinkish beige (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/4), with a friable consistency and a high content of small calcareous and micaceous inclusions.

Condition

The head, neck, and attachment of the shoulders are preserved. The surface is covered with a thick layer of incrustation.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The head, which belonged to a bust or a statue, features an elongated oval face with lowered superciliary arches. The eyes are asymmetrical and the eyelids are lowered; the upper rims of the eyelids in particular are notably thickened. The nose is straight, the mouth small and slightly open, with a fleshy lower lip. The hair pushes out from beneath the *sakkos*, which has a button on top marked by a raised edge along the forehead; the hair is arranged alongside the face in puffy locks, rendered by means of deep incisions. The figure wears spherical globular earrings.

This piece is comparable to a bust of a banqueter from the votive deposit of the Via di Palma in Taranto dating to the second half of the fifth century BC.¹ In particular, the stylization of the locks of hair and the sharply lined eyelids are recurring elements in the Tarentine coroplastic art, as are the lowered gaze and the expression of melancholy found in local plastic art from the end of the fifth century to the first half of the fourth century BC.² The spherical earrings are quite common, as is the *sakkos* with a high edge, which is found on some heads of statues found in the *favissae* of Saturo.³

Notes

1. See IACOBONE 1988, pls. 89a–b, p. 93, pertaining to a male bust and attesting to a workshop practice that allowed artisans to adapt a single type of head to both male and female figures; see also BESQUES 1954, pl. XCIV, C362, from the end of the fifth century BC.
2. See the terracotta head from Taranto discussed by W. Lambrinoudakis, s.v. “Apollon,” LIMC 2 (1984), p. 256, no. 580, dating to the mid-fifth century BC. See also the male bronze statuette in P. Kranz, “Ein Zeugnis lokrischer Toreutik im Cleveland Museum of Art,” RM 85 (1978), pp. 209–55, no. 143, figs. 101, no. 1, and 107, no. 1, especially for the rendering of the locks of hair around the forehead, the structure of face, and facial features; also HERDEJÜRGGEN 1978, p. 34, A. 25, and the statuette of a banqueter from the late fifth century BC in HERDEJÜRGGEN 1982, no. 107, pp. 48–49. For the marked eyebrows, see ibid., no. 106, from the end of the fifth century BC. See also the head from 420–400 BC, possibly from Taranto, in U. Gehrig, *Antiken aus Berliner Privatbesitz*, exh. cat. (Berlin, Antikenmuseum, 1975), no. 273. For the linear rendering of the hairstyle, compare also nos. 9 and 10 in this catalogue, as well as the head, probably from Taranto and dating from the same chronological range, in C. Vermeule, *Greek, Etruscan and Roman Art: The Classical Collections of the Museum of Fine Arts* (Boston, 1963), fig. 11.
3. For instance, in FISCHER-HANSEN 1992, nos. 54, 56, 58, 60. A head with *sakkos* with hair emerging more freely from the headgear comes from *favissa* 6 in Saturo (crate 1299).



Bust of a Woman

400-250 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	17
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.10 🔗
Typology	Bust
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 15.9 cm; W: 12.3 cm; H (face): 9.4 cm

Fabric

A light orange color (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/4-7/6) with beige in certain points of the front section, with numerous calcareous and micaceous inclusions.

Condition

The head and the beginning of the right shoulder are preserved; a fragment has been reattached to the neck; the extremities of the locks of hair have been partly lost. The head is covered with incrustations. The ringlets were applied before firing.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The head, turned to the left, presents an elongated face with oval eyes and thickened eyelids, straight nose and fleshy lips (especially the lower one), a full chin, and a short neck. The hair is treated as large locks applied to the head, separated by sharp, deep cuts, arranged radially around the face, and hanging on either side of the face in tubular curls. At the nape of the neck, there is a wide, irregularly shaped hole. The physiognomy of the face is reminiscent of Tarentine examples dating to the middle and second half of the fourth century BC and characterized by a somber expression accentuated by the tilt of the head. The hairstyle and the tubular ringlets are more unusual. A head in Copenhagen, dating to the second half of the fourth century BC, presents the same tilt, the regular facial features, and the hair treated in molded modules, clumped roughly over the forehead, and articulated by a potter's tool.¹ In central Italy, such so-called Libyan ringlets can be found in a number of heads with elongated faces datable between the late fourth and the third century centuries BC. These heads have been linked with a number of Tarentine antefixes dating to the beginning of the fourth century BC, as well as with funerary sculptures of the second half of the fourth century BC, though the ringlets in that case are arranged vertically on either side of the face in groups of two or three.² In the context of the third century, this type of hairstyle seems reminiscent of that of Isis, adopted by Egyptian queens. Two terracotta female heads now in the Louvre, similar to the head of Demeter Isis on the Farnese Cup (*Tazza Farnese*) in Naples, offer significant comparisons. A high-relief of Aphrodite-Berenice, found in the agora of Cyrene and alluding to the marriage between Berenice and Ptolemy III Euergetes (performed in 246 BC), shows potential affinities in the tilt of the head and in the hairstyle.³

The lack of more exact comparisons to the Getty head means that no precise dating is possible. In stylistic terms, the head can be generically attributed to the fourth century BC, the period of most of the comparable facial features from the Tarentine area, but the possibility that, given the type of hairstyle, this head might date to around the middle of the third century BC should not be ruled out.

Notes

1. FISCHER-HANSEN 1992, p. 87, no. 60 (dating from 350–325 BC). The facial type can already be found in the late fifth century BC, as for instance, a head in a frontal position in HERDEJÜRGER 1982, p. 39, no. 99.
2. See the examples from Palestrina in PENSABENE 2001, pp. 90–91, pl. V, no. 2. For the “Libyan” hairstyle, see M. Papini, *Antichi volti della Repubblica: La ritrattistica in Italia centrale tra IV e II secolo a.C.* (Rome, 2004), pp. 238–40.
3. For relations between Taras and Ptolemaic Egypt, see MOREL 2002, pp. 593–601, and N. Bonacasa, ibid., pp. 593–601 in *Atti Taranto 41, 2001* (Taranto, 2002). For the hairstyles of the Egyptian queens, see S. Stucchi, “Osservazioni su una phiale reale alessandrina,” in S. Stucchi and M. Aravantinos, *Giornate di studio in onore di Achille Adriani, Roma, 26–27 November 1984*

(Rome, 1991), pp. 89–112, figs. 25–27. For the high relief of Aphrodite, see L. Bacchielli, “Berenice II: la regina della riunificazione fra Egitto e Cirenaica,” in idem, *Parole d’oltremare* (Urbino, 2002), pp. 120–25.



Head of a Youth

300-250 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	18
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.17 ✉
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 16.5 cm; W: 13.1 cm; H (face): 11.3 cm

Fabric

Pinkish orange in color in the back (Munsell 5 yr 7/6) and a lighter orange in the front (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/6), friable and porous, with reflective particles.

Condition

The front of neck and chin are chipped; there are diffuse incrustations on the surface.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

This head, depicting a young male, is tilted toward the left. The face is lean and elongated, and the eyes are almond-shaped, irregular, and asymmetrical, with thick eyelids. The nose is straight and wide at the base; the lips are well shaped; the lower lip is fleshier than the upper. The low forehead is framed by flame-shaped locks of hair that are defined by narrow, deep incisions; the locks begin in the center of the forehead and spread out on either side of the face, leaving the ears uncovered. An incised line divides the nape of the neck into two parts, and the locks in the back are rendered only through roughly molded shapes. The hairstyle, with the wavy hair pushed back as if the figure were in motion, is reminiscent of the head of Pyrrhus in the limestone metope depicting a battle scene from the Doric frieze of a *naiskos* datable to around 270 BC—a readaptation of the motif of a horseman striking from a rearing horse, formerly on the monument commemorating the Battle of the Granicus fought between Alexander the Great and the Persian Empire in 334 BC, carved by Lysippos.¹ This type of hairstyle seems to link to the portraiture of Alexander, a source of inspiration for coroplasts in the Tarentine area and diffused through various versions in Magna Graecia and Etruria in the third century BC. Close analogies to this wavy hair can be found in a Tarentine antefix. The method of rendering the hair through deeply incised curly locks is also present, though in more rigid form, in other iconographies that were widespread in the Tarentine area between the middle of the fourth and the third century BC, as can be seen, for example, in a Gorgon-head antefix now in the British Museum and in a fragment of a mask depicting Pan from Monte Sannace.² The expression of pathos, the low forehead, the fine, low eyebrows, and the accentuated tilt of the head are also reminiscent of a male head dating to the beginning of the third century BC and assignable to the pediment decoration of the sanctuary at Lo Scasato in Falerii, in which a Tarentine component has been acknowledged.³ The Getty head might date from around the first half of the third century BC.

Notes

1. For the influence of Lysippos in Taras, see P. Moreno, *Scultura ellenistica* (Rome, 1994), pp. 55–60, 115–23.
2. For the antefix fragment, see C. Drago, “Taranto: Rinvenimenti e scavi 24 agosto–17 novembre 1934,” *NSc*, ser. 7, no. 1 (1940), p. 329, fig. 20; for the antefix in the British Museum from the first half of the fourth century BC, see HIGGINS 1954, no. 1335 bis, pl. 185; for the mask of Pan from the end of the fourth century BC, see A. Ciancio, “Una tomba gentilizia sull’acropoli di Monte Sannace (Gioia del Colle),” *Taras* 9, nos. 1–2 (1987), pp. 99–104, pl. XXXIV, no. 1; for other comparisons, see the head in POLI 2010, cat. 611, from the last decades of the fourth century BC; an unpublished head of a banqueter from the votive deposit of Fondo D’Ayala, inv. 3406; a head of a statuette from the Via di Palma votive deposit, inv. 200264. For the type of clearly defined locks of hair, see also the pieces in HERDEJÜRGGEN 1982, no. 132, from the third quarter of the fourth century BC; the heads from Lucera in D’ERCOLE 1990, pl. 7, pp. 28–29; and the male bust from Lavello of the third century BC in A. Bottini and P. G. Guzzo, “Busti divini da Lavello,” *BdA* 72 (1992), pp. 1–10.

3. In A. Comella, *Le terrecotte architettoniche del Santuario dello Scasato a Falerii: Scavi 1886–1887* (Naples, 1993), pp. 107–10.



Head of a Youth

THIRD-SECOND CENTURY BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	19
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.6 ↗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 17.4 cm; W: 9.2 cm; H (face): 9.3 cm

Fabric

Beige color on the front (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/4), orange on the interior and in the back (5 yr 8/4), with reflective inclusions, and a slip consisting of diluted clay.

Condition

The head evidences the detachment of a number of locks of hair and chips off the neck. There are diffuse incrustations on the surface, especially on the back.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The head of a young man is characterized by a long neck that broadens toward the base and an elongated oval face with finely defined features. The eyebrows are lowered, the eyes are small and regularly shaped, with sharply outlined eyelids; the nose is straight; the mouth is nicely designed with half-open lips. The smooth hair is parted in the center of a broad forehead; the hair is combed forward in small, sparse tufts defined by small incisions; the hair leaves the ears uncovered.

On the back of the neck, in contrast, the hair is rendered in broad, flattened locks by simple parallel grooves. There is a regular-shaped circular hole in the back, where the neck attaches to the head. The face, which presents a number of distinctive features, is characterized by a vaguely languid expression emphasized by the half-open lips. This type does not appear to be particularly common in the Tarentine area of the Hellenistic period. It is possible, however, to make some comparison with a head from Taranto now in Musei Civici di Trieste, characterized by an especially lean adolescent face, but with a somewhat different rendering of the hairstyle; and with two other statuette heads from the votive deposits of the Borgo Arsenale Militare and the Via Duca degli Abruzzi.¹ The type of hairstyle, in particular, can be found in numerous terracotta heads belonging to the central Italic area and datable between the end of the fourth and the third century BC.² The long, tubular neck, the elongated face, and the hairstyle characterized by flattened locks can be linked to some heads from the third and second centuries BC found in Campania.³

Notes

1. See the piece in the Musei Civici di Trieste, inv. 4008; also the head from the Borgo Arsenale Militare, inv. 200112; and the head from the votive deposit of the Via Duca degli Abruzzi, inv. 162845 in the Museo Nazionale Archeologico di Taranto.
2. Compare with the terracotta head of a young man in the Museo Gregoriano Etrusco Vaticano: S. Ensoli, "Alessandro: L'immagine del principe," in MORENO 1995, pp. 331–37, fig. 4; for the scheme of the elongated face, see also the bust from Lucera discussed in D'ERCOLE 1990, pp. 90–91, 103, pl. 27b, from the end of the fourth and the third centuries BC. The lean face, half-open lips, and rapt gaze are also reminiscent of the votive terracotta head from the Portonaccio Sanctuary at Veii dating to the end of the fifth century BC, an early example of a typological portrait of an adolescent: F. Roncalli, "L'arte," in G. Pugliese Carratelli and M. Pallottino, eds., *Rasenna: Storia e civiltà degli Etruschi* (Milan, 1986), pp. 533–676, esp. p. 655, fig. 573.
3. See the type of the young male head from Capua rendered with less exacting workmanship, short hair, and slender, tubular neck, discussed in M. Bonghi Jovino, *Terrecotte votive: Catalogo del Museo provinciale campano, 1. Teste isolate e mezzeteste, Capua preromana* (Florence, 1965), pl. XLIV, nos. 2–3. From the votive deposit of the sanctuary of Minerva Medica in Rome comes a later head that can be dated between 100 and 70 BC and which is reminiscent of the Getty piece: see L. Gatti Lo Guzzo, *Il deposito votivo dell'Esquilino detto di Minerva Medica* (Florence, 1978), pl. XLI, pp. 99–100. For relations between the production in Taras and that in southern Etruria and the Italic centers consider the observations of S. Ciaghi, "Sulle formazione di un

tipologia di teste votive etrusco-italiche con particolare riferimento alla produzione calena,” in BONGHI JOVINO 1990, pp. 127–45.



20

Head of a Youth

400-350 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	20
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.19 🔗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 13.4 cm; W: 12.2 cm; H (face): 10.4 cm

Fabric

Light beige in color (Munsell 10 yr 8/3), with a talcous and porous consistency, many reflective particles, and infrequent calcareous inclusions. The head was made with a bivalve mold, evidenced by a seam dividing the front and the back sections; the ears were separately applied over the seam. In the back, the clay is bright orange in color (Munsell 5 yr 7/6); the surface was covered by a layer of slip consisting of beige diluted clay.

Condition

Intact; the nose and the left ear are chipped; there are diffuse dark incrustations on the surfaces of the exterior and interior. See Appendix under “Description,” below for additional observations.

Provenance

– 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The head of the young man is set on a broad neck that tapers from the base; it tilts slightly to the left. The face is full; the large eyes have sharply outlined eyelids; the mouth is half-open with fleshy lips, the thick ears are set forward, and the nose is broad at the base with pierced nostrils. The hair is parted in the middle and arranged in short, fine, wavy locks around the face, presenting a bifurcation of the two central locks of hair in the middle of the forehead. There is a regular-shaped circular hole above the left ear and another small hole above the upper lip. On the nape of the neck, the hair is arranged on either side of a central part in tousled, parallel locks, defined by cuts. From the arrangement of the hair, one may conjecture that a band or a wreath was set on the head.¹ Beneath the ears, one can see the seam that divides the two parts of the head. The eyes, mouth, dimple beneath the nose, and hair have all been finished with a sharp tool.

The face does not feature a typical childish smile; it seems rather to have the appearance of an adolescent. The closest comparison is with a Tarentine head in Basel, dated to the end of the fifth century BC. It presents similar facial characteristics, such as the rendering of the hair, the fleshy mouth, and the structure of the head, as well as similar technical details, such as the hole above the ears. The hairstyle is slightly different because in this example the locks of hair are finer and more sparse.² The jug ears, the pudgy face, and the hairstyle distinguish the iconography of the boy or young man in later instances as well.³ The Getty head, perhaps later than the one in Basel, can be dated to the first half of the fourth century BC.

Appendix

The conical shape of the hole tapering toward the object's interior indicates that a pointed instrument was inserted into the soft clay and then turned in a circular fashion to enlarge the hole. If this were modern, the hole would have been cut into hardened clay, using tools such as drill bits, which would have left a distinctive crisp edge at the entrance and interior exit of the hole. Instead, both have a soft, rounded edge, which is expected with manipulation in soft clay. Equally, the interior surface of the hole appears identical to the exterior and interior clay surfaces of the object. If the hole were recent, the interior surface would have been very smooth and different in appearance from the rest of the object's surface.

The texture and thickness of the obscuring soil incrustation is very even on both exterior and interior, drawing some suspicion. Its strong attachment to the terracotta surface, evidenced in the area at the base of the neck where mechanical cleaning has been attempted, seems to indicate high clay content. Examination under ultraviolet light aided in this interpretation, showing no presence of pigments or organic binders. Examination under visible light in normal conditions and magnification shows areas where the clay incrustation is entirely lacking, which is more consistent with deposition rather than modern application. In these areas—many of which are high points of relief, such as the edge of the ears and tops of the hair—the clay and some of the terracotta seem to have been removed through abrasion. If the clay were applied in recent times, such areas would presumably present a different appearance, with the clay smoothly transitioning to reveal the underlying terracotta, which would most likely be little affected.

Notes

1. One cannot prove that this figure originally wore a wreath, but the presence of adolescents among banqueters is attested, for instance in Sparta, where young men could attend certain parts of the banquet. In this case, there was likely an emphasis on the transition from the state of *pais* (child) to the state of *aner* (man). On this, see P. Schmitt Pantel, *La cité au banquet: Histoire des repas publics dans les cités grecques*, Collection de l'école française de Rome 157 (Rome, 1992), pp. 77–78; and R. Buxton, *Imaginary Greece: The Contexts of Mythology* (Cambridge [U.K.], 1994), pp. 21–44. Especially meaningful here is the find in Taranto of a tomb of a child buried with a silver headband with applied rosettes and a set composed of a skyphos and a strigil; see P. G. Guzzo, “Corone d’agone, tra guerra e morte, in Magna Grecia,” in *LA REGINA* 2003, pp. 92–103, esp. p. 96.
2. HERDEJÜRGEN 1971, no. 34, pl. 14, pp. 50–51.
3. See, for instance, the head from Lucera in D’ERCOLE 1990, pl. 24, A3.XI, datable between the third and second centuries BC.



Bust of a Youth

LATE FIFTH-FOURTH CENTURY BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	21
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.15 🔗
Typology	Bust
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 26.8 cm; W: 15.5 cm

Fabric

Light beige color (Munsell 10 yr 8/3), purified, friable, porous, with occasional reflective particles. Extensive traces of polychromy on a layer of white slip: red (hair), pink (flesh).

Condition

The head, the attachment of the right shoulder, and the right section of the bust are preserved; a number of gaps can be noted on the nape of the neck and the top of the head. The surface appears to be worn and it is covered with a layer of incrustation. Some of the torso's sections were repaired and the outside joins were inpainted to mask the joins; this inpainting may explain the unusual surface quality and color in these areas.

Provenance

- 1982, Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The bust once belonged to a statue of a male figure, probably a banqueter. The head, in three-quarter view, is also tilted slightly to the right. The face is oval and elongated; the eyes, with clearly marked borders, have their outer corners turned downward; the eyebrows extend in an arch out to the temples. The nose is thin and straight, with a flat dorsal ridge; the mouth is small, with fleshy lips; the chin is pronounced and there is a dimple between the chin and the lower lip. The hair on the forehead is rendered in fine, sparse locks. This gives the head, at least in its present configuration, an almost bald appearance, while the hair at the nape is portrayed more clearly; from the central part, the hair extends out in parallel waves. The well-shaped ears must have been left uncovered. The pectoral muscles are marked by slight gradations. The bust seems to have been conceived to be seen foreshortened and from below, as attested by the notable asymmetries between the two halves of the face, with the eyes differing in size and level and the central facial axis shifted to the right, making one half of the face more prominent.¹

The head presents a number of characteristics that can be found in Tarentine coroplastic types from the end of the fifth century to the fourth century BC., such as the lean, elongated face; the sharply outlined eyelids; the sad, lowered gaze; and the chiaroscuro formed by the shadow beneath the eyebrows. These elements recur in many small-format statuettes of banqueters datable to the second half of the fourth century BC.² In this bust, the rigid frontality present in many earlier examples has been attenuated in favor of a looser, more expressive pose. The locks of hair arranged in a parallel, horizontal manner on the nape of the neck recur in Lysippian-style sculpture that probably flowed into the eclectic stylistic vocabulary of the Tarentine coroplasts.³

The identification of this piece as a figure of a banqueter is especially persuasive based on comparisons with other male nude busts of reclining figures in Tarentine contexts of the late fifth century and the fourth century BC. The iconography of the reclining figure that is attested by terracotta finds in the various votive deposits of the city, is characterized especially by complicated floral wreaths and bands. From an examination of the Tarentine typologies, how the coroplasts could diversify production even while working from relatively standardized types is evident. In some cases, they endowed the figures with individualized facial features.⁴

The theme of the reclining figure has given rise to a number of hypotheses as to the origin and identification of the male and female characters in relation to heroic, Orphic, and chthonic cults. Some have interpreted this figure as the very act of the completed sacrifice, achieved through the depiction of the faithful.⁵

In Macedonian wall-painting of the fourth century BC, whose similarity to the painting of Magna Graecia has already been pointed out, participants in the symposium are depicted as bare-chested and are characterized by a lively set of gestures.⁶

Appendix

The piece had been broken and repaired before the Getty Museum acquired it. A thermoluminescence test conducted at the Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art at Oxford confirmed that the terracotta is of ancient manufacture.

Notes

1. For optical corrections in Tarentine sculpture, see BELLÌ PASQUA 1995, pp. 51–53, on a female head of the end of the fifth to the beginning of the fourth century BC.
2. Compare the female bust, [cat. 14](#), and the bust in HERDEJÜRGÉR 1982, pp. 46–47, no. 105, dating to the late fifth century BC; see also the reclining figure on a triton, datable to the first half of the fourth century BC, from the votive deposit in the Via di Palma, in IACOBONE 1988, pp. 69–70, pl. 58a. From the same deposit, see also the unpublished item, inv. 20013, and a statuette from the finds at Villa Beaumont, likewise unpublished (inv. 2285); for a stylistic analysis of the type, see HERDEJÜRGÉN 1971, pp. 20–23.
3. In particular, this type of hairstyle appears in Lysippos's *Hermes Untying His Sandal*, see MORENO 1995, pp. 230–31. The same pattern of locks of hair brushed forward from the nape of the neck can be found in a number of heads of young boys painted on Volterrana vases, which also refer back to Lysippian types; in this connection, see G. Hafner, “Männer- und Junglingsbilder aus Terrakotta im Museo Gregoriano Etrusco,” *RM* 73–74 (1966–67), figs. 16, 1–2.
4. For other comparisons from the Via di Palma votive deposit, see IACOBONE 1988, pp. 93–94, pl. 89a; see also pl. 103b–c (second half of the fourth century BC); see also the unpublished banqueter, inv. 20004, with raised arms; see also the head of a bust from the middle of the fourth century BC from Contrada Corti Vecchie in ABRUZZESE CALABRESE 1996, no. 149, p. 202.
5. For the theme of the banqueters, see the discussion of [cat. 4–23](#).
6. See the frieze in the chamber tomb of Agios Athanasios (Thessaloniki) dating to the last quarter of the fourth century BC: M. Tsimbidiou-Avloniti, “Revealing a Painted Macedonian Tomb near Thessaloniki,” in PONTRANDOLFO 2002, pp. 37–42.



Fragment of a Head

440-430 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	22
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.1 🔗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 14.2 cm; W: 14 cm

Fabric

Light beige color (Munsell 2.5 yr 8/3), very fine, with a porous consistency and small, reflective inclusions; surface covered by a slip of diluted light-yellowish clay.

Condition

Part of the front is preserved, along with the right side of the face and the attachment of the neck. A layer of soil incrustation is present over the white slip.

Provenance

– 1982 Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

This fragment, probably once part of a statue, has an oval face and full regular features. The elongated eyes have very thick eyelids with sharp edges. The pupil, iris, and tear duct are emphasized, and the eyebrows are well defined; there is a distinct juncture between the forehead and the lowered arch of the eyebrows. The nose is straight, and it directly joins the eyebrow arches; the mouth has fleshy, parted lips, a sinuous profile, and small dimples at the sides. The gaze is slightly lowered. The surface of the face has been carefully smoothed.

The definition of the facial features finds parallels in Tarentine terracotta heads dating from the middle of the fifth century BC, such as in the elongated eyes and eyelids already present in the Severe style, and elements that can be found even in mature Classicism, such as the fleshy cheeks enlivened by dimples at the corners of the mouth and nostrils, the broad flat chin, and the flat arch of the eyebrows.¹ The head may show the influence of a sculptural prototype, perhaps in bronze, as is suggested by the accuracy of the features, which are close to the Attic style of the second half of the fifth century BC. A comparison could be made with the marble head of Athena in Taranto, dated to this period, which shares the same tendency to emphasize the eyelids, the puffed-out cheeks, and those features that confer greater organic qualities and lively expression to the faces.² The details of the sensuous, fleshy lips and the lower part of the face clearly point to the Cirò Apollo, datable to 440–430 BC, suggesting the same Attic stylistic culture.³ The head of Theseus from the pediment of the Temple of Apollo Sosianus in Rome, which has been dated around the third quarter of the fifth century BC, would also seem comparable, especially in the puffy flesh, the fleshy cheeks, and the thick eyelids.⁴ It is difficult to place the Getty head chronologically. Stylistic analysis and comparisons cited above suggest dating it to about 440–430 BC.

Notes

1. For the characteristics of Tarentine coroplastic art of the fifth century BC, see HERDEJÜRGEN 1971, pp. 14–25; ORLANDINI 1983, pp. 463–64. Among the possible comparisons in terracotta, see a fragmentary head possibly from Taranto dated to 440–420 BC in SCHÜRMANN 1989, no. 133, pl. 2, and the head in Fischer-Hansen 1992, no. 53, with bibliography. From other contexts, see also the terracotta head from Reggio di Calabria in R. Ross Holloway, *Influences and Styles in the Late Archaic and Early Classical Greek Sculpture of Sicily and Magna Graecia*, Publications d'histoire de l'art et d'archéologie de l'Université catholique de Louvain 6 (Leuven, 1975), pl. 58, fig. 1, and the heads cited in QUARLES VAN UFFORD 1941, figs. 56–57, p. 108. See, further, the statuette of Artemis, dating to the second half of the fifth century B. C., at the Allard Pierson Museum in Amsterdam, discussed by L. Kahil, s.v. “Artemis,” LIMC 1 (1984), pp. 618–753, esp. no. 572. In addition, the head from a cistern on Temple Hill at Agrigento shows similar eyelids; see G. Pugliese Carratelli and G. Fiorentini, Agrigento: Museo archeologico (Palermo, 1992), pp. 86–87, fig. 89.
2. For the marble head of Athena in Taranto, see CATONI AND SETTIS 2008, p. 319, no. 19 and BELLI PASQUA 1995, pp. 31–38. See also the marble female head in Copenhagen, a Tarentine work of 460–450 BC comparable to the Getty head in a number of its

facial features (for example, the certain heaviness in the lower portion of the face), discussed in FISCHER-HANSEN 1992, no. 7, p. 37.

3. For the acrolithic marble head from the Temple of Apollo Aleo at Cirò, see SETTIS AND PARRA 2005, pp. 259–62; and Madeleine Mertens-Horn, “Resti di due grandi statue di Apollo ritrovati nel santuario di Apollo Aleo di Cirò,” in *SANTUARI DELLA MAGNA GRECIA IN CALABRIA* 1996, pp. 261–65.
4. See LA ROCCA 1985, esp. pp. 61–62, pl. XIII.



23

Head of a Child

300-200 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	23
Inventory Number	82.AD.93.20 🔗
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 13.5 cm; W: 11.5 cm; H (face): 11 cm

Fabric

Orange in color (Munsell 5 yr 7/6), very fine, with many reflective inclusions; in the front, bright orange color. The surface is covered with a layer of slip consisting of diluted clay.

Condition

Reassembled on the nape of the neck from three fragments. The front part of the neck is missing; there are diffuse incrustations, especially on the forehead; a number of cracks can be identified on the nape of the neck.

Provenance

– 1982 Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1982.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The head is tilted slightly to the left. The face is oval, the forehead is quite broad, and the eyes are small, with the outer corners turned downward. The mouth is wide, with well-shaped lips and a smiling expression. The hair is arranged in fine locks, closely plastered to the cranial structure, leaving the ears uncovered and turned forward. On the nape of the neck, the hair is rendered conventionally with incisions in parallel waves, parted in the center. There is a hole above the left ear.

Representations of children are attested in the votive contexts of Magna Graecia in the Hellenistic age. In particular, this type of head appears in the *favissae* of Saturo, along with fragments of statuettes of boys in a crouching position with attributes such as balls, symbolizing childhood. This might point to cults of a kourotrophic nature, given also the presence of the spring in the sacred precinct. Alternatively, as has been recently suggested, this type of offering could be dedicated to Aphrodite and Gaia, focusing on the possible multiplicity of the cult's aspects in this sanctuary. In Taranto, many terracottas representing children have been discovered in the "Pizzone" votive deposit, probably connected with rites of passage.¹ The type of the crouching boy, widespread in the Near East and in Greece, especially during the Hellenistic period,² is also found in Magna Graecia,³ and in the Italic Etruscan world, in connection with the fertility of the fields and the cycle of life. In the votive deposits of central Italic sanctuaries, they are frequently associated with statuettes of children in swaddling.⁴ This head, which belonged to a statue, possesses characteristics that are peculiar to the heads of smiling children, which are generally almost entirely glabrous (smooth and hairless), with sunken eyes.

This head can be dated generically through stylistic comparisons to the third century BC.

Notes

1. For Saturo, see the terracottas representing children from Favissae 6 and 9 in SETTIS AND PARRA 2005, p. 440, nos. 363–65, from the second half of the fourth century BC. For Favissa 6, see MONETTI 2004–2005. See also the smiling child's head, tilted to one side, in *TARANTO* 1995, pl. XXXI, no. 4. A child's hairless head, in the Musei Civici di Trieste (inv. 4150), shows close affinities to the item in question. For the children's terracottas from the Pizzone deposit, see POLI 2010a, n. 10.
2. For the crouching children from the sanctuary of Demeter and from the Asklepieion in Corinth, datable to between the third quarter of the fifth century BC and the fourth century BC, see MERKER 2000, pp. 68–73. More generally, for the typology of crouching children, see T. Hadzisteliou Price, "The Type of the Crouching Child and the 'Temple Boys,'" *BSA* 64 (1969), pp. 95–111; C. Beer, "Comparative Votive Religion: The Evidence of Children in Cyprus, Greece, and Etruria," in *Gifts to the Gods: Proceedings of the Uppsala Symposium 1985* (Uppsala, 1987), pp. 21–28; and J. Neils and J. H. Oakley, *Coming of Age in Ancient Greece: Images of Childhood from the Classical Past*, exh. cat. (Hanover, N.H., Dartmouth College, Hood Museum of Art, 2003), pp. 77–81, and pp. 163–94 for the child in the funerary setting.

3. For the presence of crouching children in contexts from Magna Graecia, see E. Lissi, "La collezione Scaglione a Locri," *Atti MGrecia* 4 (1961), pp. 67–128, esp. p. 96, no. 109, pl. XL (small in size and of uncertain date). Examples of terracotta children are documented, for instance, in Lucera, dating from between the beginning and the middle of the second century BC: D'ERCOLE 1990, pp. 99–100, and pl. 25a, p. 110. Numerous variants of squatting children have been found in the Privati votive deposits near Castellamare di Stabia and from the votive deposits of the Italic temple at Paestum: see P. Miniero, "Il deposito votivo in località Privati presso Castellamare di Stabia: Nota preliminare," in *L'iconografia di Atena con elmo frigio in Italia meridionale: Atti della giornata di studi, Fisciano, 12 giugno 1998*, ed. L. Cerchiai, *Quaderni di Ostraka* 5 (2002), pp. 11–27. For the presence of children in indigenous sanctuaries in southern Italy, see L. Cerchiai, "Acque, grotte e dei: I santuari indigeni nell'Italia meridionale," *Ocnus* 7 (1999) pp. 205–22.
4. For Etruscan contexts, see A. Pautasso, *Il deposito votivo presso la porta nord a Vulci* (Rome, 1994), pp. 33–34, 59–63, pls 12–15; see also the heads of swaddled children in the Campetti sanctuary at Veii, characterized by a round face, puffy cheeks, and half-open lips, poised in a smile, in A. M. Comella and G. Stefani, *Materiali votivi del Santuario di Campetti a Veio: Scavi 1947 e 1969*, Corpus delle stipi votive in Italia 5, Regio VII (Rome, 1990), pp. 40–41, pl. 11; on the chronology and the spread of the types of swaddled children, see S. G. Smithers, "The Typology and Iconography of Etruscan Terracotta Curotrophic Votives: The Heads and Bambini," Ph.D. diss., University of Iowa (1988), pp. 13–24.

Group of Heads and Busts from the Taranto Region

Group of Heads and Busts from the Taranto Region (cat. 4-23)

This discussion is reproduced on each of the individual object pages

The group of twenty heads and busts (cat. 4-23) that were acquired by the Getty Museum in 1982 share a number of technical characteristics, despite the fact that they can be assigned to differing typologies and very probably come from the same Tarentine workshop.

Chronologically they span a period from the second half of the fifth century BC to the third and second centuries BC, and seem to be linked by a shared history.

In the documentation about this acquisition, the group of terracottas was said to be connected to the extensive collection of Jacob Hirsch, a renowned early twentieth-century numismatist and art dealer; his collection also included a substantial array of material from Medma and Taranto. At or shortly before Hirsch's death in 1955, a portion of this collection, which included over eight hundred terracottas, became the property of his colleague Thomas Virzì, an antiquarian of Palermitan origin who over the years played a crucial role in the illegal sale and exportation of major artworks from Magna Graecia. Virzì was also a key figure in the story of the "enthroned goddess" from Taranto, now in the Altes Museum, Berlin, and he was an executor of Hirsch's will, along with R. Schlesinger and J. Caskell. In 1957, an auction was held in Lucerne, and a selection of Hirsch's original collection was offered for sale. Initially, in 1961, Virzì attempted to sell a portion of the eight hundred terracottas to the Antikenmuseum Basel; but it was not until the end of the 1970s that the Swiss museum actually purchased a block of artifacts from the former Virzì collection. This material had previously been exhibited, along with other privately owned terracottas, in 1978. The twenty examples published here show close parallels with the material from Basel.¹

The Saturo Hypothesis

In the same documentation held by the Getty Museum, this group is said to come "from Satyrion," (modern Saturo), which stood on a promontory to the southeast of Taranto. This area was occupied as early as the Bronze Age, and it was one of the key locations in the region's colonization, as well as a major place of worship.²

The Acropolis of Satyrion was a sacred site dating back to the Archaic period, with evidence of a polyadic cult and worship attributable to Athena, as attested by a dedicatory inscription. Behind the acropolis, in a valley with a freshwater spring, there was a second vast cultic area, showing signs of occupation dating back to the seventh century BC, as we know from the rich votive offerings that have been found there. This site of worship was probably redefined in the Hellenistic period with the construction of a *sacellum* (unroofed sacred building), inside which stood a sacred statue and a *thesauros* (storehouse or treasury). A second *thesauros*, containing coins and jewelry, was unearthed outside of the *sacellum*. A vast necropolis, used from the Archaic through the Hellenistic periods, covered part of the sacred area. Excavations were begun on the acropolis in 1959 and continued in the 1960s and 1970s, extending to the sanctuary area near the spring, with an intensification of digging between 1973 and 1977. The archaeological campaigns covered a broad territory, but the complex stratigraphy of the sites was not definitively established. Archaeologists did, however, unearth a substantial body of material, amounting to several hundred thousand artifacts, some of high quality, which still await a thorough critical publication. Inadequate maintenance and protection of the excavation over the years has resulted in serious tampering with the sites and circulation of a great deal of material originally found in the sanctuary.³ According to a recent study, the finds from deposits of votive offerings seem to date from no later than the third century BC, when the sanctuary suffered serious damage during the Hannibalic War. There is evidence of subsequent occupation of the area, with materials belonging to Roman farms that can be dated between the first century BC and the first century AD. Opinions differ as to the deities worshiped in the area: candidates range from the nymph Satyria to Aphrodite Basilis associated with Gaia or Persephone, in accordance with a complementary relationship of divine functions that linked military domination of the territory with the general realm of fertility, as evoked by the presence of the spring, and the chthonic world.⁴

Archaeological finds sold on the antiquities market are frequently assigned generic findspots from the best-known archaeological sites, such as Canosa, Taranto, or Locri (ancient Lokris). Also for this reason, Saturo deserved special attention as a very probable place of discovery. In fact, a brief and entirely preliminary examination of just a small portion of the large array of material from Saturo, especially the material linked to several *favissae* (burial places for sacred objects), allowed me to establish the presence of heads belonging to statues that had dimensions and typologies comparable to the Getty group, as well as specifications of fabrication and a type of fabric that were substantially similar, based on autoptic analysis.⁵

In addition to the Basel material mentioned above, the Getty heads can also be compared to the Tarentine heads in the collection of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, which in all likelihood originated at least in part from the rich votive deposit of the Fondo Giovinazzi

in Taranto. The latter must have been the site of a major sanctuary linked to an adjoining necropolis, abounding in coroplastic material of a variety of types, but most commonly that of the banqueter.⁶ Other links can be seen to the Tarentine terracottas now in the Musei Civici di Trieste.⁷

Recently, wide-ranging research has been undertaken on objects originating in various Tarentine votive contexts, which unfortunately are often chance discoveries or finds lacking any reliable documentation. Research in progress is based on scientifically cataloguing, on archival information review, and on examination of the objects' associations and contexts, with a view to reinterpreting the individual typologies in terms of peculiarities and functions specific to each topographic context.⁸ A similar study of the votive deposits of Saturo and its coroplastic material, with special attention to the statues and heads, might yield important new findings regarding the prototypes to which they might be linked through variants and molds of various generations.

The Typologies

The Getty group of terracottas comprises both busts and heads. The heads can be assigned to statues and busts of medium and large format probably deriving from one or several *favissae*, given that the votive offerings appear to have been deliberately broken off at the neck or torso; this ritual breakage was intended to prevent reuse of previously consecrated material. The terracottas display a considerable typological diversity and vary widely in age. There are female busts, generally datable to the second half of the fourth century BC, with a prevalently chthonic character ([cat. 9–10](#)); heads and busts of banqueters, characterized by wreaths and bands ([cat. 7](#)), and in one case depicting a figure in the act of singing ([cat. 8](#)), or with a nude bust ([cat. 21](#)); and heads of male children and youths, some with strongly individualized features, comparable with the coroplastic types of central Italy of the middle Republican period ([cat. 19, 20, 23](#)).

The other heads, which can tentatively be dated to the fourth and third centuries BC, can be traced to types that are also well established in various Tarentine votive contexts, reflecting the influence of sculptural prototypes by Lysippus and Praxiteles developed with the distinctive eclecticism that seems to be a main trait of the Tarentine coroplasts of the Early Hellenistic period. During this period, especially between the fourth century and the first half of the third century BC, Taras enjoyed remarkable prosperity and participated in the extensive cultural interactions among Greeks, Etruscans, Italic ethnic groups, and those further afield, thanks to its situation along trade routes that stretched from Greece, Egypt, and the East to Italy and Sicily. Located at this crossroads, Tarentine artists both received and transmitted stylistic models and types to and from other regions.⁹

Thus, in a number of works, such as the head at cat. 21, we find distinctive features derived from the portraits of Alexander the Great, which were especially popular also in the workshops of neighboring Heraclea and other Italic and Campanian centers.¹⁰ In other heads (cat. 14 and 18), we can identify echoes of Praxitelean style, especially in the mournfully tilted heads and in the soft, modulated chiaroscuro that seems to characterize a large portion of Tarentine production in the fourth century BC. From the end of the fifth century to the fourth century BC, moreover, we find other distinctly Tarentine types: alongside the types that appear sorrowful, with rapt expressions (for instance, cat. 21), with thin faces, lowered gaze, and thickened eyelids, there are others (for example, cat. 15 and the head of Orpheus, cat. 1) that have full faces, marked features reminiscent of the Severe style, and small mouths with fleshy lips that can be found in the sculpture of the same period, influenced by Attic art of the post-Phidian period.¹¹ The original contributions of Tarentine masters can be seen in the countless adaptations, revisions, variations, and reprises of the figurative vocabulary emanating from the Hellenic world and merging with vital local elements, which led to a continuous renewal of the Tarentine figurative culture. This rich and inventive vein can also be seen in soft-stone statuary and in marble funerary heads datable to the late fourth and third century centuries BC.¹² In particular, a number of our heads reveal a marked characterization of the facial features; though they cannot be classified as full-fledged portraits, they seem to reflect individualized features within the context of a somewhat rigidly codified iconographic repertory and representational models.

In fact, we cannot rule out the possibility that the artisans may have used as prototypes portraits derived from Early Hellenistic imagery, adding to those models individual features or distinctive attributes appropriate to the pertinent religious context.¹³ The influence of Tarentine coroplastic models, which developed in the context of the koine of early Hellenism, would ultimately influence not only southern Italian centers such as Lucera or Heraclea, but, in some cases, more distant regions such as Etruria, middle Italic centers, and even Rome, which, as it absorbed this tradition, enriched it with various components of Italic Hellenism. The discovery of terracotta statues and heads in a votive deposit in Ariccia, for instance, suggests that southern Italy may have played a role as intermediary in the transformation of tastes and formal choices of artists and craftsmen in central Italy, in part following Roman conquests in Magna Graecia.¹⁴

The presence of various types of votive offerings in Saturo and the relations among them, as is generally the case in the Tarentine religious contexts, is an area of study that awaits thorough examination based on a systematic analysis of individual sites. Such typological and iconographic diversity can only be understood in relation to the nature of deities worshiped in Saturo and their manifold and complementary roles, some of which were mentioned above:

military protection of the territory, assurance of fertility, safeguarding of children from illness, and chthonic and funerary rites.

The Female Busts

In the case of the busts (cat. 9–10), the similarity to Sicilian prototypes is reasonably straightforward. The typology, however, was modified and elaborated by Tarentine coroplasts with the introduction of new hairstyles (such as hair gathered in a roll behind the neck, derived from the Severe style) and a distinctive stylistic vocabulary. This is particularly notable in the emphatic rendering of the eyes and mouths and in the precise, compact forms, coupled with the linear treatment of the hair (probably achieved by means of special comb-like tools that helped to speed a vast serial production), which suggests a link between the Getty busts and the Tarentine workshops; in particular, cat. 9 and 10 seem to indicate a transitional phase from the shorthand depiction of deities (often depicted with *polos*, the high crown worn by goddesses) to the actual portrayal of the offerers, shown with progressively individuated facial features. In statuary, this phenomenon would become increasingly marked as Roman influence grew.¹⁵

Children

The head of a child (cat. 23), characterized by a cheerful expression and a sentimental pose conveyed by the slight tilt of the head, displays an iconographic affinity with comparable heads from the central Italic area as well as with the specific typology of crouching children that became common in the Near East and in Greece beginning in the fourth century BC. Crouching children, often depicted holding an object or a small animal, can be found in Magna Graecia and in Saturo, but also throughout the Etruscan and Italic world between the third and second centuries BC. It may be that a number of types already present in the central Italic context were re-elaborated by the coroplasts of Magna Graecia in response to specific cult practices and patronage. As regards Saturo, there may be links with kourotrophic cults as well as with the presence of the spring, or with rites of passage from infancy to adulthood.¹⁶

The Banqueters

The heads at cat. 7, 8, 20, and 21 are certainly linked to reclining figures or banqueters. Many unanswered questions remain regarding the banqueters in Saturo, including chronology, context, cult significance, and iconography; their numerous and diffuse presence, however, is attested in votive deposits of the Tarentine funerary zone at least up to the end of the fourth century BC, when other types common throughout the Hellenistic Mediterranean were introduced in Taras. The type of the banqueter, which could be interpreted in a variety of

ways, is more significant if it can be related to the specific context and associated material, which is unfortunately unknown for this group.

The reclining figure has often been assimilated with the figure of Hades or compared to the Tarentine hero Phalanthos, but also to the heroized deceased affiliated with the funerary cult of Zeus Katabaites. Enzo Lippolis has discussed the hypothesis that the image of the banqueter represents the transition of the deceased to the new otherworldly life, a moment that is codified through participation in a ritual symposion and the offering of an image of the heroized deceased. He notes that examination of the coroplastic material of the Tarentine votive deposits makes it clear that the banqueter is almost invariably associated with diversified typologies, ranging from female figures belonging to the sphere of Demeter, to reliefs featuring the Dioscuri (Castor and Pollux), to the types of Polyboia (Polyboea) and Hyakinthos, to the statuettes of Artemis Bendis. For this, he refers to the study of individual contexts to attempt to clarify the specific aspect of the image.¹⁷

Of special interest in this connection is the discovery in a chamber tomb at Centuripe (a center that in the Hellenistic period had cultural and economic relations with the Apulian area) of a terracotta relief depicting a banqueting scene, a male figure with a horse, and an athlete, dating from the third century BC, in which there appear to be strong iconographic and typological links with Tarentine artisanal production. In these relief slabs, we also see motifs and elements that can be interpreted as the heroization of the deceased, clearly defined in terms of the social and political role that he played within the Centuripe community.¹⁸ This tendency in funerary practices to emphasize the decedent's status has yet to be defined with certainty in the Tarentine context. Though it seems that no banqueter has been found in the contents of a tomb, it can be proposed that the image of the reclining figure may be connected to specific ritual functions within the necropolis and that it was intended to codify the new status of the deceased with reference to a specific otherworldly collocation.¹⁹

Technical Aspects

The fronts of pieces were produced with a mold; so, probably, were the backs, though the latter are only rounded off and not detailed. The hair might in some cases have been attached, as suggested by [cat. 19](#) in which the separation of the locks is quite evident; attributes such as crowns and diadems could have been applied later as well.²⁰ The hole in the back of the head was intended for ventilation during the firing process.

The pieces feature, primarily, fabrics of two hues: a pinkish-orange and a light beige. Both fabrics are porous, with a reasonably soft consistency and micaceous inclusions, with

thickness ranging up to 2 centimeters. The pieces show evidence of uneven firing, resulting in shades that varied according to their distance from the heat source and to the presence or absence in the clay of grease-cutting substances that were used to ensure greater porosity and reduce the risk of deformation during the drying process. A grayish, poorly baked core characterizes some of the pieces. Before firing, the pieces were retouched with a pointed or toothed tool; and the hair, headgear, hats, and other accessories were added or shaped, a procedure that made it possible to diversify standard types.²¹ Nearly all the heads feature marked asymmetries in the faces. In sculpture, faces with asymmetries were usually intended to be seen in three-quarter view, from below, making it possible to recompose visually the entire facial structure in a more organic manner. The presence of these asymmetries in mass-produced terracottas, unconnected to the final placement, remains to be explained. We cannot exclude the possibility that the objects were derived from sculptural prototypes with these lifelike characteristics.²²

Once they were fired, the pieces were painted so as to emphasize their most distinctive features and, in some cases, to cover up defects and inaccuracies in workmanship; the pigment was applied over a layer of white, which generally consisted of calcite or kaolinite, smoothed over the clay surface for better adhesion of the pigment. Occasionally, a piece would be coated with a layer of diluted clay before the white pigment was laid on. The limited palette was part of the well-established artisanal tradition. From the traces of pigment that have survived, it has been deduced that the hair on the male heads was painted red, as were the lips, while pink was used for the complexion. The use of strong colors was intended to enliven the figures' expressions. The quality of the molds was quite good and the details were well defined. In a number of the heads, two holes are visible at the sides of the head, probably corresponding to the points where the hair was attached, or at the base of the neck, where decorations could be inserted. The fact that the backs of the heads were not properly finished would indicate that the pieces were to be viewed only from the front.

Notes

1. The history of the Hirsch-Virzì collection, with specific reference to material from Medma, now in the collection of the Basel Antikenmuseum, has been reconstructed in PAOLETTI 1981, pp. 69–71, with bibliography, and in a review, also by M. Paoletti, of HERDEJÜRGEN 1978 in *Prospettiva* 23 (1980), pp. 90–95. For the catalogue of the auction held in Lucerne, see A. Hess, *Bedeutende Kunstwerke* (Lucerne, 1957). For the Basel material: HERDEJÜRGEN 1971; H. Herdejürgen, “Tarentinische Terrakotten der Sammlung Schwitter,” AK 16 (1973), pp. 102–8.
2. For the research carried out in Saturo between 1970s and 1980, see F. G. Lo Porto, “Satyrion (Taranto): Scavi e ricerche nel luogo del più antico insediamento laconico in Puglia,” NSc 18 (1964), pp. 177–279; F. G. Lo Porto, “L’attività archeologica in Puglia,” in *Atti Taranto* 11, 1971, text volume (Taranto, 1972), p. 500; idem, *Atti Taranto* 12, 1972 (Taranto, 1973), pp. 363–76; idem, *Atti Taranto* 13, 1973 (Taranto, 1974), pp. 413–22, esp. 420–21; idem, “Recenti scoperti archeologiche in Puglia,” *Atti Taranto* 16, 1976 (Taranto, 1977), pp. 725–45, esp. 728–33; *Atti Taranto* 17, 1977 (Taranto, 1978), pp. 495–504, esp. 499–500.

Also, see M. Torelli, in *Atti Taranto 16, 1976* (Taranto, 1977), p. 956; E. De Juliis, *Atti Taranto 19, 1979* (Taranto, 1980), pp. 428–29. On the cults present in Saturo, see M. Osanna, “Sui culti arcaici di Sparta e Taranto: Afrodite Basilis,” *PdP* 45 (1990), pp. 81–94; E. Lippolis, “Le testimonianze del culto in Taranto greca,” *Taras* 2 (1982), pp. 81–135. For a summary of the research done in Saturo, see SETTIS AND PARRA 2005, pp. 439–40; TARANTO* 1995, pp. 80–87. For coroplastic material, see also MONETTI 2004–2005. The bibliography of material on Saturo has been enriched over the years by various contributions on specific research topics, in particular on Laconian vases from Saturo, on which see P. Pelagatti and C. M. Stibbe, “La ceramica laconica a Taranto e nella Puglia,” in **Atti Taranto 41, 2001* (2002), pp. 365–403. On the topography and models of settlement, see M. A. Dell’Aglio, *Leporano alle origini di un territorio*, exh. cat. (Taranto, Castello di Leporano, 1993); A. Alessio and P. G. Guzzo, “Santuari e fattorie ad est di Taranto: Elementi archeologici per un modello di interpretazione,” *ScAnt* 3–4 (1989–90), pp. 363–96; OSANNA 1992; and M. A. Dell’Aglio, *Il parco archeologico di Saturo Porto Perone: Leporano, Taranto* (Taranto, 1999).

3. In this connection, see P. Pelagatti, “Sulla dispersione del patrimonio archeologico: Le ragioni di un secondo incontro e il caso Sicilia,” in PELAGATTI AND GUZZO 1997, pp. 9–28, esp. p. 24.
4. On this topic, see SETTIS AND PARRA 2005, LIPPOLIS 2001; TARANTO* 1995, pp. 84–85; and OSANNA 1992. In general, on the presence in a sanctuary of religious rituals directed toward deities other from those to whom the sanctuary was dedicated, see B. Alroth, “Visiting Gods,” **ScAnt* 3–4 (1989–90), pp. 301–10; B. Alroth, “Visiting Gods: Who and Why,” in LINDERS AND NORDQUIST 1987, pp. 9–19.
5. In the past, I was able to view a limited part of the extensive material from Saturo that lies in storage at the Soprintendenza Archeologica of Taranto. For the terracottas quoted as comparisons, I noted the pertinent *favissa* number and number of the crate in which it was stored. I would like to thank the former director of the Museo Nazionale Archeologico di Taranto, Dr. Antonietta Dell’Aglio, for allowing me to view this material, and the museum personnel for their courteous help. The association between the Hirsch-Virzì collection and the sanctuary at Saturo remains to be clarified. It may be that in the complicated paths of acquisition diverse and conflicting information muddied the history of the pieces.
6. For the Copenhagen material, see FISCHER-HANSEN 1992, pp. 75–97; on the Fondo Giovinazzi: *TARANTO* 1995, pp. 71–77.
7. The collection of terracottas now in the Musei Civici di Trieste was formed through a series of acquisitions on the antiquities market in the late nineteenth century. The catalogue of the collection is newly published: POLI 2010. See also N. Poli, “La collezione tarentina del Civico Museo di Storia e Arte di Trieste: Storia della formazione,” *Taras* 21, no. 2 (2001), pp. 79–94. A number of items appear in WINTER 1903 (i.e., the pieces on p. 4, no. 8b; p. 31, no. 2; p. 42; and p. 52, no. 7), where drawings are reproduced. Several references to these materials, some of which probably came from the funerary deposits of Pizzone, can be found in WUILLEUMIER 1939, pp. 396–439; for this large deposit, see POLI 2010a. M. Borda published a number of statuettes in his *Arte dedalica a Taranto* (Pordenone, 1979), pp. 36–38, 46–55, and “La kourotrophos dedalica da Taranto del Museo Civico di Trieste,” *APARACHAI* 1982, vol. 1, pp. 85–96.
8. See LIPPOLIS 2001. Also worth noting is the methodological introduction in TARANTO* 1995, pp. 41–49: most of the Tarentine votive deposits show a clear relationship with the necropoleis, even though the function of terracottas in funerary rituals and their iconographic interpretation within this context remain problematic. In this connection, see D. Graepler, “La necropoli e la cultura funeraria,” in **Atti Taranto 41, 2001* (Taranto, 2002), pp. 193–218.
9. An overarching picture of the cultural exchanges between Taras, the Apulian region, and cultural centers of the eastern Mediterranean—particularly Macedonia and Egypt—is laid out by J. P. Morel in “Taranto nel Mediterraneo in epoca ellenistica,” in *Atti Taranto 41, 2001* (Taranto, 2002), pp. 529–74, and in the contribution by N. Bonacasa in that volume, pp. 593–60; see also E. Ghisellini, “Una statua femminile alessandrina da Egnazia: Considerazioni sui rapporti tra Apulia e l’Egitto tolemaico,” *Xenia* 2 (1993), pp. 45–70. On the influence of Taranto on the workshops of Corinth, Cyrene, and Sicily, especially in the third century BC, see D. Graepler, “Des Tanagréens en offrandes funéraires: L’exemple de Tarente,” in JEAMMET 2003b, pp. 277–84. The production of entire life-sized (or slightly smaller) terracotta statues is clearly attested in Taranto and in Magna Graecia; see, for example, the head in PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1983, pp. 501–502, figs. 546–47; see also the statues found near Heraclea, ibid., p. 501, fig. 545.

10. On Lysippos's influence in Taras, see also LIPPOLIS 1996, pp. 314. Excavations performed on the acropolis of Heraclea uncovered coroplastic workshops with kilns for firing both vases and figures and many molds reproducing various types of statuary by the Sicyonian artist presumably connected to a “branch of the school of Lysippos” that moved to Heraclea. See P. Moreno, *Il genio differente. Alla scoperta della maniera antica* (Milan, 2002), pp. 151–59.
11. On characteristics of Tarentine plastic arts in the Hellenistic period and relations with the Attic post-Phidian milieu, see ORLANDINI 1983, pp. 482–506. For a more general discussion of the blending of various elements in Western sculpture, particularly at the beginning in the second half of the fifth century BC, see ROLLEY 1994–99, vol. 2, pp. 191–96. The melancholy type with finely drawn features, so common in Taranto, also characterizes the heads of the Dioscuri in a group from the Ionian temple of Marasà in Locri dating to the late fifth century BC; see F. Costabile, “Le statue frontonali del tempio Marasà a Locri,” RM 102 (1995), pp. 9–62; P. Danner, *Westgriechische Akrottere* (Mainz, 1997), p. 63, B 40. See also CROISSANT 2007, pp. 316–20.
12. On marble or stone funerary statues in the Hellenistic age, see BELLI PASQUA 1995, pp. 65–67.
13. On the presence of typified terracotta heads in the mid-Italic region and relations between Taras and the production of southern Etruria and the Italic centers, see M. Papini, *Antichi volti della Repubblica: La ritrattistica in Italia centrale tra IV e II secolo a.C.* (Rome, 2004), pp. 207–80. See also S. Ciaghi in BONGHI JOVINO 1990, pp. 127–45 and PENSABENE 2001, pp. 88–89; C. Rolley, “La scultura della Magna Grecia,” in PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1996, pp. 378–79; S. Steingräber, “Zum Phänomen der etruskisch-italischen Votivköpfe,” RM 87 (1980), p. 236; A. Maggiani, “Il problema del ritratto,” in *Artigianato artistico: L’Etruria settentrionale interna in età ellenistica* (Milan, 1985), pp. 89–95.
14. For the presence in Lucera of Tarentine craftsmen specializing in works of higher artistic quality, such as statues, see D’ERCOLE 1990, pp. 307–12; ORLANDINI 1983, pp. 501–6. For the Tarentine influence in Ariccia, see CARAFA 1996, pp. 273–94. We should also consider observations on fragments of later fictile statues from the area of the Domus Tiberiana on the Palatine Hill, Rome, dating from the first century BC and related to a neo-Attic milieu; it is apparent from the hairstyles and the rendering of the facial features that they derive from the plastic arts of Magna Graecia of the fifth and fourth centuries BC; see TOMEI 1992, pp. 171–226.
15. For the passage to a more individualized typology see P. Pensabene, “Cippi busti e ritratti: Nota in margine a M. F. Kilmer, ‘The Shoulder Bust in Sicily and South and Central Italy,’ Göteborg, 1977,” ArchCl 16 (1977), pp. 425–35. On the Romanization of Apulia, see E. Lippolis, *Fra Taranto e Roma: Società e cultura urbana in Puglia tra Annibale e l’età imperiale* (Taranto, 1998) pp. 39–55, 101–11.
16. For crouching children, see the bibliography for cat. 23.
17. For reclining figures, see TARANTO* 1995, pp. 166–69 and nos. 6 and 9; for Metaponto, see G. M. Signore, “Rilievi fittili con recumbente dal Ceramico di Metaponto,” *Studi di Antichità 9 (1996), pp. 299–359. On the reclining figures in Locri, see M. Barra Bagnasco, “I recumbenti,” in BARRA BAGNASCO 1977, pp. 151–69. For the reclining figures in Sicily and in particular those coming from the votive deposit of Fontana Calda at Butera, see PORTALE 2008, pp. 42–44 with prior bibliography. For the subject in general, see J. M. Dentzer, *Le motif du banquet couché dans le Proche-Orient et le monde grec du VII au IV siècle avant J.C.*, Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d’Athènes et de Rome 246 (Rome, 1982).
18. See A. Pautasso, “Rilievi da una tomba d’età ellenistica di Centuripe,” in G. Rizza, *Scavi e ricerche a Centuripe* (Palermo, 2002), pp. 115–26. The close ties between the craftsmen of Taras and those of Kentoripa (Centuripe) in the Hellenistic period can be documented not only in the field of terracotta but also in polychrome pottery. Those contacts were probably established in part through the military campaigns conducted in Magna Graecia by Dionysius I and II and Agathocles and in the wake of the Hannibalic War; regarding these, see E. Lippolis, “La ceramica policroma tarantina,” Taras 14 (1994), pp. 263–310. For the discoveries of Tarentine reclining figures in Sicily, see also M. Barra Bagnasco, “I recumbenti,” in BARRA BAGNASCO 1977, pp. 151–69, n. 27.
19. On the heroic connotation and the aristocratic ideal that can be seen in the funerary deposits of the Hellenistic period, see ABRUZZESE CALABRESE 1996, pp. 189–97. We should also consider in this context the significance of the *semata* in LIPPOLIS

1994, pp. 109–28. On the relationship between votive deposits and funerary areas in Taranto, see *TARANTO* 1995, pp. 41–49.

20. See the introduction, above, and also E. Paribeni, “Volti, teste calve e parrucche,” *Atti MGrecia* n.s. 2 (1958), pp. 63–68. For rounded-off backs of heads achieved by molds, see the example of a head and bust mold of Artemis in Geneva’s Musée d’Art et d’Histoire published in KINGSLEY 1981, pp. 44 and 46, figs. 6–8.
21. On the effects of technical procedures, see MERKER 2000, p. 18.
22. On the facial asymmetries, see S. Stucchi, “Nota introduttiva sulle correzioni ottiche nell’arte greca fino a Mirone,” *Annuario della Scuola archeologica in Atene e delle Missioni italiane in Oriente* 30–32 (1952–54), pp. 23–73; and L. A. Schneider, *Asymmetrie griechischer Köpfe vom 5. J.-h. bis zum Hellenismus* (Wiesbaden, 1973), pp. 6–10. On relations between terracotta statuary and bronze sculpture, see C. Vaphopoulou-Richardson, “Large Sculpture and Minor Arts: A Brief Survey of the Relationship between Sculpture and Terracotta Figurines,” in *Akten des XIII Internationalen Kongresses für klassische Archäologie, Berlin, 1988* (Mainz am Rhein, 1990), pp. 396–97. On the hypothesis that certain prototypes were developed from models designed for bronzes, see MERKER 2000, p. 14.



Head of a Bearded Man

300-250 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	24
Inventory Number	96.AD.243 ✉
Typology	Head
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 11.5 cm; W: 8.2 cm

Fabric

Orange in color (Munsell 5 y 7/6), hard and compact, with small reflective inclusions. The back is formed by a slab of clay; the front was made with a very fresh mold.

Condition

There is a broken edge at the neck. Some of the decorative elements in the headdress have broken off. There are incrustations and dirt accretions in many of the recessed areas and traces of red pigment on the hair.

Provenance

Thomas Virzì, Italian, 1881–1974 (Munich, Germany)¹; by 1994–96, Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman (New York, New York), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996.

1. For a discussion of the Virzì Collection, see the discussion section for cat. 4–23.

Bibliography

PASSION FOR ANTIQUITIES 1994, p. 354, no. 217; ACQUISITIONS 1996–1998, p. 67.

Description

The face is elongated, and the brow is furrowed with an especially pronounced crease in the middle; the eyes are small with thickened eyelids; the nose is turned downward, the small mouth is sunken between the mustache and beard, and the lower lip is fleshy. The wavy hair is treated in separate locks marked by a series of pronounced striations, forming three bands in the center of the forehead and falling in an orderly fashion on either side, leaving the ears uncovered. The beard is long, with dense, linear locks; the attachment of the beard to the face is marked. Atop the head is set a convivial wreath that was originally decorated with floral elements.

This head, representing a banqueter, can be linked to a well-known Tarentine typology present in numerous examples in Taranto and in many museum collections. In particular, the head is directly comparable, in the type of hair and the definition of the furrowed brow, with Tarentine examples now in the Basel Antikenmuseum: a head of the same size, but without a wreath, and a bust, both datable to the third quarter of the fourth century BC.¹ This type of bearded banqueter seems to be derived from the Boeotian masks of Dionysos dating from the second half of the fifth century BC, especially in view of the rendering of the lower part of the face, with the projecting lip and the beard with pronounced striations bespeaking an archaizing inflection.²

Notes

1. HERDEJÜRGEN 1971, no. 132, pp. 78–79, with bibliography. There are many comparisons in the Museo Nazionale Archeologico of Taranto, most of which are unpublished, such as the bearded head from a votive deposit in Via D. Peluso (Taranto MN I. G. 3277). See also DE JULIIS AND LOIACONO 1985, p. 348, fig. 416. Also comparable are the heads in the Musei Civici di Trieste datable from the third quarter of the fourth century BC, POLI 2010, nos. 430–31; see other comparisons in BESQUES 1954, pl. LXX, C85, and in BREITENSTEIN 1941, no. 304.
2. For the masks of Dionysos, see C. Gasparri, s.v. “Dionysos,” *LIMC* 3 (1986), pp. 424–25; F. Frontisi-Ducroux, “La masque du dieu ou le dieu masqué?” in BERTI 1991, pp. 321–26; F. Frontisi-Ducroux, *Le dieu-masque: Une figure du Dionysos d’Athènes* (Paris and Rome, 1991), pp. 203–11.



Statuette of a Woman

400-250 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	25
Inventory Number	78.AD.294.2 ↗
Typology	Statuette
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 16.8 cm; W: 7.5 cm; Diam (vent hole): 2.3 cm

Fabric

Light beige in color (Munsell 10 yr 8/3), well fired and purified. Polychromy: well preserved on white slip are remains of violet (chiton, edges of the *chlaina*); light blue (himation and pillar), pink (complexion and central sash of the chiton), purple (hair), and black (ivy leaves). The front part was made with a simple mold; the back is flat with a circular vent in the middle.¹

1. Tarentine statuettes of the Tanagra type could also be in full relief, made with bivalve molds

Condition

Intact; worn surface.

Provenance

– by 1978, Bruce McNall (Encino, California), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1978.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The standing young female figure bears the weight of her body on her left leg. Her right foot rests on the base of the small pillar with a rectangular cross-section and her right hand rests on a capital. The head is turned slightly to the left, her left arm extends down her side and is covered by the *chlaina* that falls behind her, leaving her shoulders uncovered. She wears a high-waisted chiton that drops in soft folds, emphasizing the pose, which is characterized by a turn of the hip. Her hair, parted into six large clumps, in keeping with the so-called melon coiffure, is gathered into a low bun; on her head is a wreath of ivy leaves, with a circular element in the center. Her oval face has a small, fleshy mouth and a prominent nose; she wears large circular earrings.

This figure belongs to the extensive typology of the female figure leaning against a small pillar, comparable to Tanagra figurines, which developed from Boeotia in the second half of the fourth century BC. This typology became increasingly common also in Magna Graecia,¹ in particular at Taranto,² where it was commonly used for generic portrayals of Aphrodite, maenads, or partially draped reclining female figures. These figures rarely, if ever, provide clear indications that would identify their cult. The compositional scheme of diverging masses, characterized by the contrast between the upper and lower parts of the body, only hinted at in this case, was utilized in the early examples of leaning figures, in which the intention of establishing the figures with unstable equilibrium can be seen. At Taranto, in particular, two types of female statuettes leaning on small pillars were especially widespread. The first is dressed in a high-belted chiton with the head crowned as in this statuette, and it may be depicted also with a tympanon or simply standing.³ The second consists of partially draped or nude female figures identified with Aphrodite; these would continue to be produced until the end of the second century BC.⁴

The statuette finds comparisons among examples that can be dated between the fourth century and the middle of the third century BC. It shows extensive traces of the original polychromy, characterized by strongly contrasting hues, in keeping with the local style.⁵

Notes

1. For dressed figures from Magna Graecia leaning against small pillars, see, from Capua, BESQUES 1986, pl. 54a–c, datable from the second half of the third century BC; BONGHI JOVINO 1990, pl. 3; S. Baroni and V. Casolo, *Terrecotte votive: Catalogo del Museo provinciale campano, 5: Piccole figure muliebri panneggiate*, Capua preromana (1990), pls. XVI, no. 1, and pl. XXVII, no. 2, from the end of the fourth century beginning of the third century BC. From the necropolis of Heraclea, see G. Pianu, *La necropoli meridionale di Eraclea* (Rome, 1990) p. 158, pl. LXV, no. 4 (from a tomb dating from the end of the fourth century or beginning of the third century BC); DE JULIIS 1984, no. 7, pp. 429–30 (from a trench tomb in Egnazia dating from the

beginning of the third century BC); DELLA TORRE AND CIAGHI 1980, p. 36, pl. XIII, no. 2 (similar also in terms of pose, type of chiton, and small head wreathed in ivy).

2. For Tanagra statuettes in funerary deposits in Taranto between the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the third century BC, see D. Graepler, “Des Tanagréennes en offrandes funéraires: L'exemple de Tarente,” in JEAMMET 2003b, pp. 277–84; for Tanagra in a votive context, see E. Lippolis, “L'usage votif des Tanagréennes en Italie méridionale,” in JEAMMET 2003b, pp. 272–76; ABRUZZESE CALABRESE 1996, pp. 194–95, n. 117; see also GRAEPLER 1994.
3. See the comparisons in GRAEPLER 1997, fig. 58, p. 111 (late fourth century BC–early third century BC); BARTOCCINI 1936, fig. 14 (from a tomb in the Via Cesare Battisti in Taranto); DE JULIIS 1984, p. 401; GRAEPLER 1984, pp. 85–109, pl. XXX, no. 3. The type also spread in the central Italic milieu with an array of variants until the Late Hellenistic period: see L. Gatti Lo Guzzo, *Il deposito votivo dall'Esquilino detto di Minerva Medica* (Florence, 1978), pp. 163–66, pl. VII, and pp. 37–38, 156–58; and P. Pensabene, M. A. Rizzo, M. Roghi, and E. Talamo, *Terrecotte votive del Tevere*, Studi miscellanei 25 (Rome, 1980), pl. XXVI, fig. 89. For the type of the head wreathed in ivy with minute facial features, diffused throughout the Mediterranean, see also BELL 1981, no. 594, pl. 103, dating from the end of the fourth century BC.
4. For the type of seminude figure leaning against a small column, see GRAEPLER 1996, no. 188 (beginning of the third century BC); GRAEPLER 1997, figs. 59–60, 105–6, 143–44, 208–9.
5. For the use of polychromy, see JEAMMET ET AL. 2007; there are also comparisons in GRAEPLER 1996, p. 233, no. 187; and J. Chesterman, *Classical Terracotta Figures* (London, 1974), no. 79, p. 69.



Plaque with a Woman

LATE FOURTH-THIRD CENTURY BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	26
Inventory Number	78.AD.294.1 ✉
Typology	Plaque
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 16.4 cm; W: 5.9 cm

Fabric

Light orange in color (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/6), purified, with reflective inclusions, white slip over the entire surface of the front. Polychromy: red (base), traces of black (hair, chiton, *phiale*). Suspension hole.

Condition

Reassembled from two fragments; polychromy and slip are worn away.

Provenance

– by 1978, Bruce McNall (Encino, California), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1978.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The female figure is shown frontally, standing on a curving base marked at the upper and lower edges by a fillet in relief and decorated by a pair of horizontal red lines. She places her weight on the left leg, while the right leg is bent. The right arm hangs straight down the figure's side and is gathering folds of drapery in her hand; the left arm, by contrast, is raised, and the left hand, beneath which a broad hem of himation hangs vertically, holds up a patera. She wears a chiton gathered by a belt beneath the breasts, and a himation drapes down in broad transverse folds on the left side. The face is oval and elongated and the facial features are expressed sketchily; the hair is parted over the forehead and gathered up. The statuette, made from a worn mold, must originally have been painted with bright colors.¹

The relief could depict Polyboia, sister of Hyakinthos. She is a character of uncertain origin, generally portrayed with attributes such as a cornucopia, lyre, flabellum, pyxis, grape cluster, swan, rooster, or phiale mesomphalos, a bowl used in rituals.²

Such reliefs with a female figure or an ephebic figure are widespread in Tarentine coroplastic production, especially between the end of the fourth century and the third century BC.³

A number of myths, like that of Polyboia, entail couples involved in death and apotheosis; the story of her death as a virgin and ascension to heaven links her to the host of mythological figures whose existential condition is closely connected with the cycle of the seasons. Certain sources associate Polyboia to chthonic deities like Kore, with whom she shares the state of virginity and the specific attributes of the Underworld.⁴

The cult of Hyakinthos, an ancient pre-Dorian deity closely affiliated with Apollo, had its chief center at Amykles in Laconia. Pausanias described the renowned funerary monument there in Hyakinthos's honor, and it was where the *hyakinthia*—among the most important festivals of the region—were held. The cult of Hyakinthos, which inherited a number of iconographic attributes from that of Apollo, enjoyed great popularity in the Laconian colony of Taras where, according to Polybius's account of Hannibal's taking of the city, a *taphos extra moenia* (a funerary monument placed outside the city walls) allegedly stood, though its location remains in doubt.⁵ Likewise, we must assume, despite the absence of written evidence, that the *hyakinthia* must have taken place in Taras with methods and rituals similar to those in Sparta. These rites probably also included elements typical of the Dionysian cult, such as the ivy wreath present in the ephebic and female examples referring to the divine couple. The extensive presence in Taras of this type of relief after the second half of the fourth century BC is documented by the material found in the excavations of Castelsaraceno, of the Via Peluso, and of Masseria del Carmine, and in the votive deposits of the Via Leonida.⁶

It seems likely that unforeseen political developments, such as a request of military aid from Sparta, made it necessary to reinforce diplomatic relations between the two regions, in order to reaffirm their common origins through the revival of specific cults.⁷

A Tarentine findspot is nearly certain, though in the absence of objective data, it is not possible to assign the relief to a more specific cult context.⁸

Notes

1. The bright coloration is documented by better-preserved examples of the same typology. For the use of polychromy, see ABRUZZESE CALABRESE 1996, p. 194, no. 115.
2. On the mythological figure of Hyakinthos, see L. Villard and F. Villard, s.v. "Hyakinthos," *LIMC* 5 (1990), pp. 546–50; for Polyboia, see A. Kossatz Deissmann, s.v. "Polyboia," *LIMC* 7 (1992), pp. 425–26; also PICCIRILLI 1967. On the relationship between Hyakinthos and Polyboia, see also ABRUZZESE CALABRESE 1987, pp. 25–26.
3. On the Tarentine finds, see below, n. 6. These reliefs are also found in Heraclea, for which see G. Pianu, *La necropoli meridionale di Eraclea: Le tombe di IV e III secolo a.C.* (Rome, 1990), pl. XLIV, no. 3, p. 98, from the late fourth century BC; in Lucania, for which see M. C. D'Anisi, "Nuovi dati sui culti lucani: Un deposito votivo inedito da Accettura," in NAVA AND OSANNA 2005, pp. 167–78, fig. 10; and at Capua, for which see BESQUES 1986, pl. 35d, from the end of the third century BC.
4. On relations among Polyboia, Kore–Persephone, and Artemis, see PICCIRILLI 1967, pp. 99–116, n. 100. The chthonic relevance of the deity appears to be confirmed as well by the attestation of nocturnal rituals in the context of the *hyakinthia*: see A. Stazio, "La documentazione archeologica in Puglia," in *Santuari di Magna Grecia, Atti Taranto 4, 1964* (Naples, 1965), pp. 153–79, pl. XI; WUILLEUMIER 1939, p. 404.
5. Pausanias (3.19.1–5) relates that on the pedestal of the statue of Amyklean Apollo, there was a depiction of the apotheosis of Hyakinthos and Polyboia before an assembly of deities. On the Amyklean and Tarentine *hyakinthia* and the problem of identifying the funerary monument in Taranto, see ABRUZZESE CALABRESE 1987, pp. 11–12, 23–32. See also Polybius 8.2. Lippolis's study of this type of relief refuted the identification of the Polybian *taphos* with the votive deposits of the Contrada Carmine, based on topographical considerations, further calling into question whether these reliefs depict Polyboia and Hyakinthos: see *TARANTO* 1995, pp. 56–58.
6. On the Tarentine finds, see E. Lippolis, "Pratica rituale e coroplastica votiva a Taranto," in NAVA AND OSANNA 2005, pp. 91–201; ABRUZZESE CALABRESE 1987, pp. 9–11. See also Contrada Vaccarella, in IACOBONE 1988, p. 160, pl. 1. The chronology was proposed on the basis of a partial typological analysis, considering that many examples come from old excavations that are inadequately documented. For comparisons in terms of general composition and the iconographic characteristics of the relief, see the examples in TARANTO* 1995, pp. 61–62, pl. XX, fig. 4; D. Rossi, "Sei terrecotte tarantine e il culto di Hyakinthos," in *APARCHAI* 1982, pp. 563–67, pl. 161, no. 2 (*reliefs probably from the Masseria del Carmine*); G. Zampieri, "La collezione Casuccio del Museo civico archeologico di Padova (Padua, 1996), pp. 405–9, nos. 139–40; WINTER 1903, p. 76, no. 5; LEVI 1926, p. 36, no. 139; BREITENSTEIN 1941, no. 404, pl. 49.
7. In this connection, see ABRUZZESE CALABRESE 1996, pp. 193–95.
8. It should be pointed out that the votive deposit of Masseria del Carmine suffered a massive dispersal of the material in the years following its discovery.



Statuette of a Seated Comic Actor

FOURTH-THIRD CENTURIES BC

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Object Details

Catalogue Number	27
Inventory Number	96.AD.164 ↗
Typology	Statuette
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 10.3 cm; W: 4.1 cm

Fabric

Light beige in color (Munsell 10 yr 8/3), with a very fine and friable consistency, and small blackish inclusions; a layer of white slip. The statuette was made from a bivalve mold; it is open in the back, and there is a circular hole underneath the figure, probably for attachment to a base.

Condition

The statuette is missing its original base and its surface presents diffuse calcareous incrustations.

Provenance

– 1992, unknown [sold, Fine Antiquities, Christie's, London, July 8, 1992, lot 121, to Charles Ede.]; 1992, Charles Ede, Ltd. (London, England); 1992–96, Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman (New York, New York), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996.

Bibliography

Fine Antiquities, Christie's London, sale cat., July 8, 1992, lot 121; PASSION FOR ANTIQUITIES 1994, pp. 233–34, no. 117; ACQUISITIONS 1996–1998, p. 67.

Description

This character is depicted with his legs crossed; his right arm is folded beneath his chest, and his left hand is propped beneath his chin in a pose of reflection. The original seat is missing, but in accordance with numerous comparisons to the type, it may be conjectured that it was a parallelepiped-shaped altar. The figure wears a short tunic with sleeves and belt and, over it, a short cloak of which a section hangs below the left shoulder; on his feet are sandals with T-straps. The face is broad and the hair is brushed in a *speira* hairstyle, which forms a compact mass with radial striations around the face; the mouth is open wide and is surrounded by a large trumpet shape formed by the mustache and the short beard, which still leaves the lips and gums visible. The figure has a snub nose that is quite broad at the base; the eyebrows are prominent and asymmetrical and join at the middle of the forehead, which is creased by deep wrinkles. This figure is a depiction of the leading slave (*hegemòn therapon*), a key character of New Comedy: a protagonist in amorous intrigues, often described and portrayed in lively or mocking stances. Whereas in Old Comedy and Middle Comedy the slave appeared in grotesque costume, the New Comedy figure wears only the short chiton and cloak; these distinctive characteristics make him easily recognizable in the context of New Comedy masks.¹ In particular, the snub nose, the *speira* hairstyle (often painted red to emphasize the character's negative nature), and especially the singular “trumpet” that frames and deforms the mouth—previously found in Old Comedy and Middle Comedy as permanent attributes of the character—appear more stylized in this period.

The character of the seated leading slave, who has escaped from some dangerous situation and takes refuge in a sanctuary, is derived from Athenian typological models. It is found in a number of variants and interpretations in numerous centers of Greece and the Mediterranean basin between the end of the fourth century and the third century BC.²

In Magna Graecia and in Sicily, the extensive presence in funerary deposits of terracottas with theatrical subjects and powerful symbolic and religious values has generally been linked to the spread of the cult of Dionysos, and can be interpreted in eschatological terms.³

In the Hellenistic period, as is known from funerary deposits—especially from non-adult tombs—Taras seems to have become the most active center in Magna Graecia for the

coroplastic production of material with a theatrical subject, a context to which this type may be tentatively linked. It is prevalent in such deposits dated between the last quarter of the third century and the first quarter of the second century BC.⁴ It has been proposed that the statuettes of theatrical subjects, including this Getty statuette, could be linked not only to the Dionysian cult but also to burial sites of children who died at an age when they were preparing to participate with adults in the life of the theater; such statuettes could therefore be intended to emphasize the transition from childhood to maturity.⁵

At Lipari, where a prolific production of comic statuettes extends over a period from the first half of the fourth century to the first half of the third century BC, the type of the seated leading slave is represented by a group of Middle Comedy statuettes, while the standing slave is the type that is chiefly documented for New Comedy. The mask of chief servant is, in any case, the type most frequently depicted in New Comedy terracottas of Lipari.⁶

In Morgantina, statuettes of comic actors derived from the Attic repertory and elaborated on a local basis have been found in both sanctuaries and dwellings, and they seem to date primarily between 330 and 280 BC. According to Bell, they should be related to the cult of Demeter.⁷ From Centuripe in Sicily comes a statuette of a slave seated on an altar, with legs crossed, the trumpet-shaped mouth, and the short cape tossed over the left shoulder; another piece representing a slave seated on an altar comes from the votive deposit of Butera dating from the second half of the fourth century BC.⁸

The slave taking refuge on an altar is also depicted on Sicilian red-figured vases, as for example on a skyphos from Manfria that interprets Attic typologies in a peculiar local vein.⁹

Notes

1. The mask of the leading slave is documented in the catalogue of Julius Pollux, *Onomastikon* 4.148. For a discussion of the character of the leading slave, see WEBSTER 1995, vol. 1, pp. 26–29, 229–32; the character is presented in the pose corresponding to the Webster's iconographic scheme a2. See also BERNABÒ BREA 1981, pp. 201–3, and PORTALE 2008, pp. 33–35. On the origin and development of the mask, see T. B. L. Webster, "Leading Slaves in New Comedy, 300 BC–300 AD," *JdI* 76 (1961), pp. 100–10; for the evolution of the type in Attica, see also D. Burr Thompson, "Three Centuries of Hellenistic Terracottas," *Hesperia* 21 (1952), pp. 142–43, nos. 45a–d, pl. 38.
2. For comparisons, see HIGGINS 1954, no. 743, pl. 98 (from Athens, dating from the third quarter of the fourth century BC); BIEBER 1961a, figs. 231–32, 271; BREITENSTEIN 1941, pl. 39, no. 330 (statuette probably from Tanagra, with its hands on its knees); BESQUES 1963, pl. 173e (from Myrina and dating to the end of the third century BC); WINTER 1903, p. 419, nos. 2–8 (examples from Athens, Cyrenaica, and Boeotia). The figure of the seated slave continued to be depicted in the Roman period as well: see F. Dunand, *Catalogue des terres cuites gréco-romaines d'Egypte: Musée du Louvre, Département des antiquités égyptiennes* (Paris, 1990), no. 600, p. 219. See also the seated slave in the same position in a Graeco-Egyptian two-wick oil lamp, datable between the first century BC and the first century AD, in PASSION FOR ANTIQUITIES 1994, no. 118, p. 234.
3. On the significance of the terracottas of theatrical subjects in the funerary deposits of Lipari and Taranto, see BERNABÒ BREA 1981, pp. 21–27; GRAEPLER 1997, pp. 180–90, 231–34.

4. GRAEPLER 1997, pp. 128–29, 229–34, 237, pl. 111–12, statuettes from 225–175 BC, and a statuette of a slave with a wreath sitting on a rectangular altar from a male tomb dating from 175–25 BC; also see pl. 276. There is also, from Puglia, a statuette of an actor sitting on a cubic base, datable to the end of the fourth century BC, in BESQUES 1986, pl. 68b.
5. For this hypothesis, see GRAEPLER 1997, pp. 231–32; L. Todisco, “Bambini, fanciulli e dediche votive in Italia meridionale,” in *Depositi votivi e culti dell’Italia antica dall’età arcaica a quella tardo-repubblicana: Atti del Convengo di Studi Perugia, 1–4 giugno 2000*, ed. A. Comella and S. Mele (Bari, 2005); and PORTALE 2008, pp. 33–35.
6. On the presence of this character in the repertory of theater masks from Lipari linked to New Comedy, see BERNABÒ BREA 1981, pp. 79–81, 200–3; BERNABÒ BREA 1971–74, p. 172, fig. 7.
7. BELL 1981, pp. 67–69; for the seated slave, p. 212, no. 724, pl. 115.
8. For the statuette from Centuripe, see BERNABÒ BREA 2002, pp. 141–53, fig. 139; for the piece from Butera, see PORTALE 2008, pp. 33–35, fig. 33, with previous bibliography and more comparisons from Sicily.
9. For the subject of Sicilian red-figured vases, see PORTALE 2008, p. 35, n. 2.



Statuette of a Seated Old Woman

400-200 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	28
Inventory Number	78.AD.295 ✉
Typology	Statuette
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 11.5 cm; W: 5 cm

Fabric

Pinkish beige in color (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/4) with a friable consistency and small calcareous inclusions. Head and body were made with a mold; a number of details, such as the drapery, were retouched after molding. The back was merely sketched out; the interior is hollow.

Condition

The statuette is missing both arms and the base that supported the feet.

Provenance

– 1978, Bruce McNall (Encino, California), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1978.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

This figure, hunched slightly forward, is seated upon a stool; originally the arms were extended forward. She wears a chiton beneath which it is easy to make out the sagging breasts and the belly. The very large head has pronounced, roughly modeled facial features that caricature the elderly female character. The hair is brushed in an arch over the forehead and raised in the middle, pulled back into a sort of *sakkos* that culminates in a broad bow. The mouth is large with half-open swollen lips twisted into a mocking smile; the eyes are elongated with upper eyelids exaggerated in order to convey the idea of swelling. The nose is broad, the eyebrows are furrowed, and the forehead is marked by two deep creases. She wears sandals on her feet, and there are small holes on either the side of the head.

Statuettes depicting seated old women can fit into the repertory of comic-theater types, in which the comic force sprang precisely from an emphasis on physical decay. Figures are often accompanied by wineskins or *skyphoi*, evident allusions to the motif of the drunken old woman, which is one of the best known iconographies in the category of genre subjects.¹ In some cases, statuettes of old women are depicted holding babies or children, and in such cases they can more readily be identified as elderly nurses; in this kourotrophic context, the figures act as symbolic objects intended to protect the life of a young child.² The type features no characterizing attributes, save perhaps for the accentuation of physical decay and the mocking expression, which are found also in the types of elderly *hetairai*;³ it therefore seems more likely that this is a genre figure assignable to the context of the rich production of Magna Graecia and Sicily, dating from the fourth and third centuries BC, and oriented toward comic themes.⁴

At Lipari, statuettes depicting elderly female slaves or housekeepers have been identified by Bernabò Brea as Middle Comedy characters, while various mask typologies have been found in funerary deposits of the late fourth century and the first half of the third century BC. Some of these are characterized by mouths with only two surviving teeth.⁵ Figures of elderly seated women are also present in Sicily in funerary deposits from the second century BC in Centuripe. The type has significant correspondences in Taranto where, among the five seated women found in funerary deposits that can be dated to the period from the first quarter of the fourth century BC to the first quarter of the second century BC, none of them is holding a child, while some have folded arms. Here, too, the custom of placing statuettes of theatrical subjects in tombs must have had a link to the cult of Dionysos, which is intimately related with the funerary world and with an eschatological vision of the afterlife.⁶

Notes

1. On the theme of the drunken old woman, see P. Zanker, *Die Trunkene Alte: Das Lachen der Verhönten* (Frankfurt am Main, 1989); see also the relationship between the coroplastic art and “fine art” in connection with a statuette from Montagna di Marzo, see C. Greco, “Una terracotta da Montagna di Marzo e il tema della ‘vecchia ubriaca’,” in *Alessandria e il mondo ellenistico-romano: Studi in onore di Achille Adriani* (Rome, 1983–84), pp. 686–94.
2. A figure of an elderly nurse sitting with a child in her arms, possibly from Attica, dates from after the middle of the fourth century BC and is thought to depict one of the first types created in Athens; see UHLENBROCK 1990, no. 15, p. 122. For examples from Tanagra, see HIGGINS 1967, pl. 44b (statuette of an elderly nurse, datable between 350 and 325 BC); and BIEBER 1961a, figs. 251–52. For the mask of the elderly nurse in comic theater, see WEBSTER 1995, vol. 1, pp. 37–38.
3. For the depiction of old women, see S. Pfisterer-Haas, *Darstellungen alter Frauen in der griechischen Kunst* (Frankfurt am Main, 1989), pp. 36–43, 55–64, figs. 103, 107, 109, 110, 113; in particular, for another statuette in the Getty collection (inv. 73.AD.53, said to be from Sicily), identified by Pfisterer-Haas as a *hetaira* and dated to the fourth century BC, see fig. 100, no. III.35, pp. 59 and 134.
4. Figures of elderly seated women are also present in Sicily in funerary deposits of various contexts, as for example Centuripe; see LIBERTINI 1926, pl. XXXIII, and LIBERTINI 1947, pp. 271–72, fig. 6c. See also the small head of an old woman from Lentini, datable between the end of the fourth century and the middle of the third century BC, in M. Frasca, “Lentini: Piccola coroplastica ellenistica da un’abitazione rupestre di Contrada Crocefisso,” *BdA* 91 (1995) pp. 1–21, pl. IIId. For the elderly slave in the votive deposit of Fontana Calda at Butera, see PORTALE 2008, pp. 35–36.
5. BERNABÒ BREA 1981, pp. 72–73, fig. 129 and pp. 212–13 (statuette of an elderly slave woman, assignable to the sphere of Middle Comedy, an immediate precedent of the *oikouron gradion* that is found in the masks of New Comedy); also BERNABÒ BREA 1971–74, p. 176, figs. 11–12.
6. For the statuettes from Taranto and for the significance of the seated elderly women in the Tarentine funerary deposits, see GRAEPLER 1997, pp. 228–31, fig. 35, p. 105 (an example datable to 375–325 BC) and figs. 264, 266–68 (examples datable from between the second quarter of the fourth century BC and the first quarter of the third century BC); also GRAEPLER 1996, p. 233. See also the unpublished Tarentine statuette in the collection of the Musei Civici di Trieste, inv. 3994.



Statuette of a Mime

225-175 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	29
Inventory Number	96.AD.166 ↗
Typology	Statuette
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 18.9 cm; Diam (vent hole): 2 cm

Fabric

Bright orange in color (Munsell 5 yr 7/8), darker in back (Munsell 7.5 yr 7/6), with a friable consistency, and with many reflective and carbonous inclusions. Extensive traces of polychromy over a thick layer of white slip: bright pink (arms and *kekruphalos* [hairnet]), light pink (face and legs), and red (left foot). The body and the head of the statuette were made with bivalve molds, while the arms, legs, and various secondary elements were worked freehand and applied to the figure before firing. On the back is a circular vent hole.

Condition

The fingers of the proper right hand and ornamental detail on the hairnet are missing, as is much of the white ground layer.

Provenance

– 1990, Unknown (sold, *Fine Antiquities*, Christie's, London, July 11, 1990, lot 239, to Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman.); 1990–1996, Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman (New York, New York), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996.

Bibliography

Fine Antiquities, Christie's London, sale cat., July 11, 1990, lot 239; H. Mallalieu, "Around the Salerooms," *Country Life* (August 30, 1990), pp. 114–15; PASSION FOR ANTIQUITIES 1994, NO. 119, PP. 235–36; ACQUISITIONS 1996–98, P. 67.

Description

The slender character, with skinny arms, stands with its right leg slightly bent and tucked behind; the head is turning sharply to the left. The left arm is poised on the hip while the right arm is outstretched to the side in a declamatory gesture. The figure is wearing a short chiton and cloak that covers the shoulders, then crosses over behind the back and is rolled up around the waist like a sash. Fluttering folds at the sides suggest the figure's dancelike movement.

The hair, arranged in an arch over the forehead, is held back by a *kekruphalos*, the ends of which are knotted over the forehead. The nose is hooked; the large eyebrows are furrowed, forming two creases across the forehead, which is marked by a large protuberance; the gaze is grim.

The chiton and the short cloak rolled over the hips, as well as the headdress and the short boots, are specific features of the costume of Artemis, in keeping with an iconography that originated in the fourth century BC and spread throughout the Hellenistic period in a number of variants.¹

The arm raised to one side, too, is typical of many statuary types, such as the small statue of Artemis from Piraeus, datable to the third quarter of the fourth century BC.² The hand on the hip is also found in various depictions of the goddess, holding either bow and quiver or a torch, a recurrent theme in both Hellenistic coroplastic art and South Italian vase iconography. In particular, the exaggerated, theatrical pose of the character, which seems to parody common iconographies of the pugnacious goddess between the fourth century and the third century BC, might be intended to evoke Artemis herself in the throes of rage over a misdeed or in a querulous stance.³ In this case, it is likely that the figure represents an actor performing in a "phlyax farce" or hilarotragedy, in the role of either the goddess or a member of her entourage; indeed, phlyax plays owed their popularity to the sort of caricatural deformation and grotesque parody that are expressed in this figure.⁴

Tentatively, this character could be related to the mythological tale of Kallisto, the Arcadian nymph who was a follower in Artemis's virginal entourage; Zeus took her as a lover, however,

and she bore him a son, Arkas; according to a number of sources, Kallisto was then condemned by Artemis and transformed into a she-bear. The sad story of Kallisto was the subject of a tragedy by Aeschylus, now lost, and a comedy by Amphis. Euripides also mentions her in his play *Helen*, but in general the literary sources on the nymph are fragmentary and conflicting. Kallisto was depicted in a number of red-figured Apulian vases that can be dated to a very narrow window of time, from 380 to 360 BC, and possibly linked to political events that involved Arcadia (the constitution of the Arcadian League in 371 BC). In the scenes depicted, probably influenced by literary sources and paintings as well, the nymph is presented wearing a long, gauzy chiton that leaves the shoulders uncovered or, in some cases, showing incipient feral traits that allude to the impending metamorphosis that is her punishment. In this case, the statuette could depict Artemis, who inflicts the punishment on the nymph with an imperious gesture.⁵

It is unclear whether the character is wearing a mask, but according to Pollux's description, the facial features are more reminiscent of the mask of a *parasitos* (sponger), especially with a view to the decidedly *epigrypos* (aquiline) nose and the furrowed brow with a bump in the middle. But the face may also be supposed to represent the mime's own visage, molded through his acting skill and adept use of make-up.⁶

The piece, reportedly from Asia Minor, has been ascribed to Myrina,⁷ but the figure can also be compared with a number of statuettes from the funerary deposits of Taranto, datable between the last quarter of the third century and the first quarter of the second century BC. This was a period in which the coroplastic repertoire was enriched with new typologies characterized by flowing movements and by a dynamic placement of the figure in space. This statuette can also hypothetically be linked to a Tarentine tomb context datable to between the end of the third century and the beginning of the second century BC, on the basis of stylistic comparisons and the type of clay,⁸ and in view of the popularity of phlyax farces—especially the plays of Rhinthon, who was active in Taras between the end of the fourth century BC and the beginning of the third century BC—and their influence on Apulian artistic production, in close connection with Dionysian funerary ideology.⁹

Notes

1. For the iconography of Artemis in the Hellenistic period, see KAHIL 1984, in particular for the fourth century BC, pp. 747–51; for the clothing and the hairstyle with *sakkos* or *kekruphalos*, influenced also by the costumes of Amazons, compare types nos. 172–75, 396, 459, 470, 746, and 1066.
2. For the little Artemis of the Piraeus, see KAHIL 1984, no. 162; for the type with a hand on the hip, nos. 19, 204, 405. This pose is also found in the Hellenistic type of Artemis *dadophoros* (torchbearer); see example nos. 495–503, from Athens, Sicily, and Asia Minor, datable to the fourth or third century BC.

3. For the coroplastic pieces, see KAHIL 1984, no. 249 (fragment of a mold from the Athenian Agora, dating from the second century BC); no. 264 (statuette, perhaps from Tanagra, dating from the fourth or third century BC); no. 265 (from Egnazia), and no. 389 (from Rhodes). See also WINTER 1903, no. 5, p. 428, and the statuette from Athens (fourth century BC), possibly depicting an actor, at KAHIL 1984, no. 248. For the pose, see also the statuette, possibly depicting a nymph, in the Museo Civico di Centuripe, inv. no. 580, and the statuette of Artemis with a short chiton in LIBERTINI 1947, fig. 6d; see also a statuette of seated Artemis, wearing a short skirt with broad pleats, in U. Spigo, in *LA SICILIA GRECA* 1989*, no. 363, p. 172, *dating from the second half of the third century BC. For a similar declamatory gesture, compare the terracotta group from Centuripe, datable to 150–50 BC: see G. Falco, “Due gruppi fintili di soggetto teatrale da Centuripe e da Adrano,” *MÉFRA 109, no. 2 (1997), pp. 813–32.* See also the statuettes of actors and a series of masks from Myrina, datable to the Late Hellenistic period, in BIEBER 1961a, figs. 372, 379, 386, and a head from Smyrna in BURN AND HIGGINS 2001, no. 2395. For Artemis depicted with hand on hip and an arm thrown out to one side in South Italian vases, see KAHIL 1984, nos. 1287–88.
4. For the phlyax farce, see BIEBER 1961a, pp. 258–300; M. Gigante, “Profilo di una storia letteraria della Magna Grecia,” in PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1988, pp. 275–81. For depictions of phlyax farce in vase painting, see A. D. Trendall, *Phlyax Vases*, 2nd. rev. ed., BICS, suppl. 19 (1967); F. G. Lo Porto, “Nuovi vasi fliacici apuli del Museo Nazionale di Taranto e scene teatrali e soggetti caricaturali su nuovi vasi apuli di Taranto,” *BdA* 49 (1964), pp. 14–20; and F. G. Lo Porto, “Scene teatrali e soggetti caricaturali su nuovi vasi apuli di Taranto,” *BdA* extract (Rome, 1966).
5. For the iconography of the nymph Kallisto, see I. McPhee, s.v. “Kallisto,” *LIMC* 5 (1991), pp. 940–44; for literary sources on Kallisto, see A. Stenico, “Kallisto,” *Quaderni ticinesi* 6 (1977), pp. 79–86. For her iconography in Apulian vase-painting, see A. D. Trendall, “Callisto in Apulian Vase Painting,” *AK* 20 (1977), p. 100, pl. 22, no. 4; L. Rossi, *Ceramiche apule nel museo di Cremona* (Bari, 1981), pp. 31–32; and G. Arrigoni, “Un mito enigmatico: La Lyssa di Kallisto,” in G. Sena Chiesa and E. Arslan, eds., *Miti Greci: Archeologia e pittura dalla Magna Grecia al collezionismo* (Milan, 2004), pp. 236–38.
6. For an analysis of the parasite mask at Lipari, see BERNABÒ BREA 1981, p. 192–94; BIEBER 1961a, pp. 107, 189, figs. 260, 261b; for a terracotta mask from Taranto, found in a funerary deposit, p. 100; for the mask worn by comic actors, see the statuette from the area around the theater of Locri, dating from the fourth century BC, see L. Todisco, “Teatro e *theatra* nelle immagini e nell’edilizia monumentale della Magna Grecia,” in PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1990, pp. 103–58, no. 178. Enormous curved noses and jug ears were standard features in the depiction of mimes during the Hellenistic period: in this connection, see the terracotta, possibly from Egypt, in H. Kayser, *Das Pelizaeus-Museum in Hildesheim* (Hamburg, 1966), p. 34, fig. 47, and a group of small heads from Smyrna depicting mimic actors in BESQUES 1972, p. 230, pl. 309.
7. See *PASSION FOR ANTIQUITIES* 1994, pp. 235–36.
8. For comparisons with Tarentine coroplastic material, see a statuette from a tomb in the Via Corvisea, assignable to 225–175 BC, GRAEPLER 1994, fig. 220; GRAEPLER 1997, p. 202, fig. 192; WEBSTER 1995, vol. 2, pp. 255. For the pose with the right arm extended forward, see also the satyr-like figure from the funerary deposit of Tomb 7 of the Via Campania in Taranto, datable to the second half of the second century BC, which also presents a technique and a type of polychromy that are quite similar to the present piece: A. D’Amicis, A. Dell’Aglio, and E. Lippolis, *Vecchi scavi, nuovi restauri*, exh. cat. (Taranto, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, 1991), p. 91, no. 713; and the statuette of Artemis, inv. 4100 from Tomb 2 of the Via Duca degli Abruzzi, in the garden of the church of San Francesco di Paola. In Taranto, one can also find a type of fabric that is orange in color, compact, with reflective inclusions; see IACOBONE 1988, pp. 7–8.
9. M. Gigante, *Rintone e il teatro in Magna Grecia*, Esperienze 7 (Naples, 1971), esp. pp. 84–86, 125–27; regarding mentions of the phlyax farce in an artistic milieu, see E. M. De Juliiis, “Due crateri apuli con scene teatrali di tipo fliacico,” in D. Adamesteanu, ed., *Studi in onore di Dinu Adamesteanu* (Galatina, 1983), pp. 77–85.



Statuette of a Dancer

400-200 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	30
Inventory Number	96.AD.246 🔗
Typology	Statuette
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 23.7 cm; W: 10.4 cm

Fabric

Light beige in color (Munsell 10 yr 8/2–8/3), porous. Polychromy: on a white slip (white lead), pink (face), light blue and turquoise (leaves of the wreath), purple (hair), violet (himation and chiton), and white (clothing and face). Head and body were made with two bivalve molds; the back features an oval vent hole; there is a small hole where the statuette would have attached to a base.

Condition

The statuette has no supporting base and is missing its left foot. Also missing are a number of ornaments from the wreath. There are losses in the paint and ground layer overall and small chip losses in the leaves of the headdress and the bottom of the drapery. There is a modern hole drilled in the bottom (possibly for diagnostic testing); there are some root marks on the back surface and grayish accretions in many places, especially around the neck, the back of the shoulders, and the lower part of the drapery on both sides. There is a dark reddish brown stain-accretion on the left hip.

Provenance

– by 1994–1996, Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman (New York, New York), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996.

Bibliography

PASSION FOR ANTIQUITIES 1994, no. 221, p. 354; ACQUISITIONS 1996–98, p. 67; GETTY 2010, p. 117.

Description

The female dancer has a petite, elongated physique. Her left arm is bent and resting on the hip, while the right arm holds the folds of the himation in front as she makes a subtle dance step, in which the left leg extends in front of the right; the lowered head turns toward the right. The long chiton extends to the feet, the himation wraps softly around the figure, and a hem held back by the left hand falls to one side in zigzagging folds. Following the movement of the figure, the garments form a series of fluttering folds at the feet. The face has delicate features with large spherical earrings and the head features a melon-style hairdo, with a round bun on the top of the head and a wreath decorated with ivy and two small, round pieces of fruit.¹

The statuette can be assigned, both through typology and clay, to the Tarentine milieu. The type of female dancer articulated in space probably originated in Attica at the beginning of the fourth century BC.² It spread into the Tanagra repertory, recurring in South Italy and especially in Tarentine funerary deposits of the third century and the first quarter of the second century BC, when there was a notable recovery in Taranto of funerary coroplastic production with an enriched iconographic repertory and improved technical quality.³ A number of Tarentine statuettes present a similar iconographic scheme and stylistic characteristics, including the elongated torso and the dynamism of the figure, similar to the type of the late third-century BC bronze statuette in the Metropolitan Museum of Art known as the Baker Dancer, in which elements of Alexandrian style have been recognized.⁴

The Getty dancer shows a clear Dionysian character, to which the ivy wreath also points; Dionysian elements played a dominant role in the Tarentine funerary iconography of the fourth and third centuries BC.⁵ Further evidence of the popularity of the type in the coroplastic production comes from Sicily, particularly in a number of examples of female

dancers from Morgantina, Syracuse, Cefalù, and Monte Saraceno, generally dating from the third century BC.⁶

Female dancers are well attested in the Hellenistic period, including among the votive deposits of the sanctuaries of Demeter. Corinth, for instance, is the source of a number of examples datable between the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the third century BC. These show a number of recurring characteristics, such as the left arm on the hip; the drapery that entirely envelops the figure, forming fluttering folds in motion; and a foreshortened composition.⁷ Figures of female dancers that are very similar to this one, characterized by a rich movement of the drapery—which is reminiscent of the stylistic signature of some Hellenistic sculptors—have also been found in Priene, Pergamon, and Troy, where they would continue to be produced until the first century BC.⁸

Appendix

The statuette was examined under polarized light microscopy (PLM) and X-ray fluorescence. The blue was identified as Egyptian blue and the white as white lead. There is no indication of modern repainting.

Notes

1. For the clothing of the dancers, see L. Forti, “La vita quotidiana,” in PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1988, pp. 285–326, see esp. fig. 353 (on the right, a statuette of a female dancer from the Museo Archeologico Nazionale of Taranto, dating from the third century BC).
2. The pose of this type seems to derive from the Attic type of the veiled female dancer, see JEAMMET 2003b, cat. 95.
3. For the examples from the Tarentine funerary deposits, see GRAEPLER 1984, pp. 99–102, pl. XXVII, no. 2; and GRAEPLER 1997, pp. 125–29, figs. 95, 99–100, 101–2 (datable to between 225 and 175 BC), and p. 222, fig. 248 (a female dancer that presents a comparable pose and mode of drapery, datable to the third quarter of the third century BC); E. Lippolis, L. Giardino, and R. Sciotti, *Emergenze e problemi archeologici: Manduria, Taranto, Heraclea* (Manduria, 1990), p. 74 (dancer from a tomb in the Contrada Vaccarella in Taranto); and REEDER 1988, no. 86, p. 179 (draped female figure with hand on hip, from Taranto, datable to the third century BC). The type is also present in Metaponto; see P. C. Sestieri, “Metaponto: Campagne di scavo (marzo–aprile 1939),” NSc, ser. 7, no. 1 (1940), pp. 51–122, esp. pp. 68–69, fig. 17.
4. For Hellenistic statuettes of dancers, see F. G. Naerebout, “The Baker Dancer and Other Hellenistic Statuettes of Dancers: Illustrating the Use of Imagery in the Study of Dance in Ancient Greek World,” *Imago Musicae* 18–19 (2001–2), pp. 59–83. For the Baker Dancer, see also D. B. Thompson, “A Bronze Dancer from Alexandria,” *AJA* 54, no. 4 (Oct.–Dec. 1950), pp. 371–75.
5. On objects assignable to the Dionysian sphere in Tarentine funerary ritual, see D. Graepler, “La necropoli e la cultura funeraria,” in *Atti Taranto* 41, 2001 (Taranto, 2002), pp. 193–218. In general, for the role of dance in the Dionysian cult, see M. H. Delavaud Roux, “Danse et transe: La danse au service du culte de Dionysos dans l’antiquité grecque,” in *Transe et théâtre: Actes de la table ronde internationale, Montpellier, 3–5 mars 1988* (Montpellier, 1989), pp. 31–53. See also G. Ricciardelli, “Mito e performance nelle associazioni dionisiache,” in *TRA ORFEO E PITAGORA* 2000*, pp. 265–82; and H. A. Shapiro et al., s.v. “Dance,” **ThesCRA* 2 (2004), pp. 299–343, esp. p. 333. For the connections between the dancers and representations of nymphs, see JEAMMET 2003b, cat. 95.

6. For Centuripe, see BESQUES 1986, pl. 37a (statuette attributable to the third century BC); LIBERTINI 1947, pp. 287–88, no. 5, and p. 309, no. 2; BIEBER 1961b, figs. 553–56; WINTER 1903, p. 153, no. 9; SCHÜRMANN 1989, nos. 790–92, fig. 132 (end of the third century BC). For Morgantina, see BELL 1981, pp. 64–65, nos. 454–56 (group of dancers dating from the third century BC). For the statuette of a dancer found on the acropolis of Monte Saraceno datable to the end of the fourth century or the beginning of the third century BC, see A. Siracusano, *Monte Saraceno di Ravanusa: Un ventennio di ricerche e studi* (1996), pp. 7–40, pl. XXXVIII, no. 2. For female dancers from necropoleis of Cefalù of the end of the third century, see C. Greco, “Le terrecotte figurate,” in A. Tullio, ed., *Cefalù: La necropoli ellenistica 1* (Rome, 2008), pp. 121–26, TC 4–5, pl. XXIV, no. 2.
7. For the dancers of Corinth, see MERKER 2000, pp. 151–56.
8. On the relations between Taras, Pergamon, and Priene, see GRAEPLER 1996, p. 236; M. Bell, “Hellenistic Terracottas of South Italy and Sicily,” in UHLENBROCK 1990, pp. 64–70; R. Higgins, “Tarentine Terracottas,” in *Taranto nella civiltà della Magna Grecia, Atti Taranto 10, 1970* (Taranto, 1971), pp. 267–81. See the pieces in HIGGINS 1967, pl. 58c (from Priene, first century BC) and in E. Töpperwein, *Terrakotten von Pergamon* (Berlin, 1976), pp. 43–45, no. 169 (fragment of a statuette with a cluster of folds around the ankles, similar to this piece, datable to the third century BC). For a group of dancers from funerary deposits of the vicinity of Troy and datable to around 340 BC, see S. Besques, “Le commerce des figurines en terre-cuite au IV siècle av. J. C. entre les ateliers ioniens et l’attique,” in *Proceedings of the 10th International Congress of Classical Archaeology, Ankara–Izmir, 23–30 September 1973* (Ankara, 1978), pp. 617–26; see also the statuette of a dancer from Perge (Turkey), see J. Inan, “Eine hellenistische Tänzerin aus Perge,” in *Akten des XIII. Internationalen Kongress für Klassische Archäologie, Berlin 1988* (Mainz am Rhein, 1990), pp. 347–48.



Comic Mask

300-200 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	31
Inventory Number	96.AD.247 ✉
Typology	Mask
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 9 cm; W: 8.4 cm

Fabric

Beige in color (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/3–8/4), very hard and compact, with many small reflective inclusions; extensive traces of polychromy over a layer of white slip; brownish red (hair), pink (complexion).

Condition

Incrustations, white in color and calcareous, especially on the right side of the back section. The internal surface of the two holes on either side of the head is abraded, probably due to the original presence of metal elements.

Provenance

Thomas Virzi, Italian, 1881–1974 (Munich, Germany)¹; by 1994–1996, Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman (New York, New York), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996.

[cat. 4-23, n.1.](#)

1. On the Virzi Collection, see “Group Description” section for

Bibliography

PASSION FOR ANTIQUITIES 1994, p. 354, no. 222; ACQUISITIONS 1996–1998, p. 67.

Description

The mask presents a rounded skullcap and two holes for hanging in the upper section of the head. The general characteristics suggest that it is associated with the New Comedy character *Colax*, an adulator (vain flatterer), described by Pollux and also documented in the corpus of theatrical masks of Lipari in five separate examples. This character has a malevolent, ambiguous smile, an oval face with puffy cheeks, a strong jaw, and a long, thin nose. The convex forehead features a cleft in the central area and a frontal eminence above that. The eyes are half closed with the upper eyelids partially lowered; the eyebrows are raised in an arching curve; the mouth is broad and wide open, with fleshy lips; the chin is full, with a dimple. The hair, painted red, forms a crown of radial striations around the forehead, with a raised section in the middle. The *Colax* masks from Lipari, found in stratigraphic contexts associated with vases in the style of Gnathia and of the Lipari Painter, can be dated to the first half of the third century BC.¹ Hypothetically, the *Colax* mask might be attributable to the Apulian area and, though there is no direct comparison with other Tarentine masks, it can be placed in the larger repertory of theatrical terracottas that characterize the local production and the funerary votive deposits of the third century BC.²

Notes

1. On theater masks of New Comedy described in the catalogue of Julius Pollux, see BERNABÒ BREA 1981, pp. 133–42; for the mask of the adulator in particular, see pp. 189–91; WEBSTER 1995, vol. 1, pp. 22–23; see also BERNABÒ BREA 1971–74, pp. 167–80.
2. For the masks in the Tarentine funerary deposits, see GRAEPLER 1997, pp. 231–34.



Statuette of Eros with a Deer

325-250 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	32
Inventory Number	71.AD.137 ✉
Typology	Statuette
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 14.3 cm; W (base): 11 cm

Fabric

Light beige in color (Munsell 10 yr 8/4), porous and friable, with small and intermittent reflective inclusions; in a number of points, the fabric presents an orange color (Munsell 5 yr 7/8), with calcareous inclusions. The polychromy has been preserved in a number of areas, laid over a layer of white slip: pink (wings), purple (hair, complexion, and animal fur), and black (sections of background). The front part was made with a simple mold; the back part, not modeled, features a circular vent hole. The wings and tail were applied to the figure before firing; a number of details, such as the deer's rear hoof, were retouched by hand.

Condition

Partially reassembled from numerous fragments; there are many gaps in both the back and the front sections.

Provenance

- Robert Hecht (Rome, Italy); 1971, Royal Athena Galleries (New York, New York), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1971.

Bibliography

SELECTED WORKS 1971, no. 61; HERMARY AND CASSIMATIS 1986, p. 873, no. 236.

Description

The little Eros is resting its weight on its bent left leg while its right leg is extended to one side; with both arms it embraces the neck of a deer, which rests its muzzle on the Eros's left cheek. The Eros's head is tilted slightly while its shoulders are turned toward the animal. The face is plump; the eyes are round with indications of pupils; the mouth is fleshy; the hair cascades down onto the shoulders in wavy locks and is woven into a braid from the center of the forehead backward. The Eros is dressed only in a chlamys fastened on the right shoulder with a circular clasp; his feet are shod with sandals. The Eros's wings are spread. The front of the fat body is naked and folds of flesh are indicated on the inner thighs and abdomen. The figures are set upon a low, hollow, parallelepiped-shaped base.

The child Eros is found throughout coroplastic production in southern Italy mostly from the second half of the fourth century BC. It was probably derived from Greek models and adapted for the needs of local worship.¹ The type covered only with a chlamys, which is quite common, is accompanied by attributes that allude to the multiplicity of functions that the figure of the Eros could perform. When found accompanied by an animal in South Italy, this type is primarily associated with funerary deposits, as is the case in Taranto and Metaponto.² The subject can also take on other meanings in connection with the sphere of Aphrodite, mystery and Dionysian cults, or rites of passage from childhood to youth. In the absence of a specific context, however, these references must remain merely speculative.³

The type can be dated between the end of the fourth century and the first half of the third century BC on the basis of stylistic comparisons with statuettes originating from datable contexts. Although a Sicilian findspot has been proposed, the type also has affinities with Tarentine pieces.⁴

Notes

1. On the iconography of the Eros and the multiple meanings attached to the image, see HERMARY AND CASSIMATIS 1986, pp. 939–41.
2. In terracotta figurines, Eros is more commonly accompanied by piglets, dolphins, or birds. For the association of Eros with cervids, see HERMARY AND CASSIMATIS 1986, pp. 872–73. For the type of an Eros embracing the neck of an animal, see BELL 1981, no. 322, pl. 70 (a late example dated to the middle of the first century BC). On the presence of Eros statuettes in tombs, see HERMARY AND CASSIMATIS 1986, p. 941, and the examples in GRAEPLER 1997, pp. 210–12, 228–231, figs. 216, 218, 261; in this funerary context, Erotes with kitharae and amphorae can be associated with other statuettes that have links to the

Dionysian sphere, such as maenads. For Metaponto, see F. G. Lo Porto, “Metaponto: Rinvenimenti nella città antica e nel suo territorio,” *NSc* 42–43 (1988–89), pp. 374–75 (child’s tombs, datable to the second half of the fourth century BC).

3. For the association between Eros and mystery cults, see D. B. Thompson, *Troy: The Terracotta Figurines of the Hellenistic Period*, Suppl. Monograph 3 (Princeton, 1963), pp. 137–39; A. Bottini, “Appunti sulla presenza di Dionysos nel mondo italico,” in BERTI 1991, pp. 157–70; and see, in more general terms, C. Beer, “Comparative Votive Religion: The Evidence of Children in Cyprus, Greece and Etruria,” in LINDERS AND NORDQUIST 1987, pp. 21–29.
4. See GRAEPLER 1997, esp. fig. 261; there are other significant comparisons in BREITENSTEIN 1941, no. 725, pl. 87; for the pose, see also the Eros with a cart, originally from Nola and datable to the third century BC, in BESQUES 1986, pl. 14e.



33

Statuette of an Amazon

300-200 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number

33

Inventory Number

71.AD.138 [☞](#)

Typology	Statuette
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 11.4 cm; W: 8 cm

Fabric

Orange in color (Munsell 5 yr 7/8), porous, with reflective inclusions; a layer of white slip.

Condition

The figure is missing the hands and the left ear covering, and there is a gap in the right side of the cloak; the surface is worn. The cloak has been restored in an inappropriate manner: the left edge partially covers the area where the ear covering once rested.

Provenance

– 1969, Pino Donati (Lugano, Switzerland); 1971, Royal Athena Galleries (New York, New York), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1971.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The character is depicted in a crouching position. The head is inclined to the proper left, the arms are extending forward, and the hands may have held a weapon (a sword or an axe). The figure wears an enveloping tunic that extends down to its feet, which is fastened in the front by a broad band with a raised edge; it wears a fluttering short cape about its shoulders; on its head is a Phrygian cap with broad earflaps, from which curly locks of hair and a spherical earring emerge. In the back, there is a small, oval-shaped hole: the body and the head were made with bivalve molds; the arms and the feet were added to the figure before firing.¹

The statuette must originally have been correlated with another figure, and probably formed part of the plastic decoration of an Apulian or Canosan vase; such vases were often adorned with groups of warriors in motion.² As to the iconography, the Eastern headdress links this figure to the typology of the Amazon, depicted in motion as she is about to deal a blow with her weapon. The theme of Amazons in combat enjoyed great popularity in southern Italy

during the Hellenistic period, and it is documented in a variety of materials, with special diffusion of the theme in funerary contexts. Amazons are generally depicted in vigorous movement that either raises their clothing or uncovers their breasts, and in situations of combat with Greek warriors, though there are very few comparisons for this particular crouching scheme. Although Amazons are more commonly depicted with a short chiton, the long tunic with a central sash beneath the breasts points in any case to an Eastern context.³ Often confused with the Arimasps, legendary Eastern warriors who were mostly depicted fighting griffins and with whom they shared numerous iconographic characteristics, the Amazons presented signs of femininity and differentiation, signs which in some cases consisted solely of ornaments such as earrings and bracelets.⁴ The iconography of the Amazons first began to take on funerary significance in Asia Minor and was introduced to Taras in the fourth century BC, forming part of the iconographic repertory of funerary monument decoration.⁵ The statuette may generically be assigned to the third century BC.

Notes

1. Before the Getty acquired it, this statuette had been identified as a fisherman and mounted on an inappropriate trapezoidal base (71.AD.138.2), a procedure that is not uncommon in artifacts intended for the antiquities trade.
2. The crouching position can also be found in figures decorating the vases of Canosa; see, for instance, the *epichysis* (wine pitcher) from the Lagrasta I hypogeum of Canosa depicting a female figure on her knees, with a cape puffing out over her shoulders, datable from the third century BC, in R. Cassano, “Gli ipogei Lagrasta,” in CASSANO 1992, p. 214, fig.6. See also the statuettes of warriors in CERAMIQUES ANTIQUES 1987, nos. 141–42, with bibliography; and F. van der Wielen, “La ceramica a decorazione policroma e plastica,” in CASSANO 1992, pp. 520–29.
3. For the iconography of the Amazons in southern Italy, see P. Devambez, s.v. “Amazones,” LIMC 1 (1981), pp. 586–655; F. van der Wielen–van Ommeren, “Groupe de figurines en terre cuite: Amazonomachie,” AntK 36 (1993), pp. 68–75; for the diffusion of the Amazonomachy in Taranto, see LIPPOLIS 1994, pp. 109–27; for the presence of the theme in soft-stone reliefs as well: CARTER 1975, p. 17, and BERNABÒ BREA 1952, pp. 205–6. The dynamism of the figures and the soft movement of the drapery is a distinctive characteristic of the Tarentine sculpture of the third and fourth centuries BC.
4. For the relationship between Arimasps and Amazons, see GORBOUNOVA 1997; K. Schauenburg, “Arimaspen in Unteritalien,” Revue Archeologique, no. 2 (1982), pp. 249–62.
5. In this connection, see P. Devambez, s.v. “Amazones,” LIMC 1 (1981), pp. 646–47, n. 3.



34

Relief with Two Maenads

350-300 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	34
Inventory Number	71.AD.222 ↗
Typology	Relief
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	H: 6.4 cm; W: 15.2 cm

Fabric

Beige in color, decorated with foil gilding. Traces of pink color on the back.

Condition

The gilding has worn off in a number of areas; a fragment of the base is missing, as is the lower extremity of the vegetal element on the right side. The extremities of the relief have been filled. The faces of the maenads are worn.

Provenance

- 1967, Leo Mildenburg (Zurich, Switzerland); 1971, Royal Athena Galleries (New York, New York), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1971.

Bibliography

SELECTED WORKS 1971, no. 64; KINGSLEY 1976, p. 14, fig. 39; LULLIES 1977, pp. 242, 247, no. 1.

Description

Two maenads are stretched out across a rocky base, bracketed at the ends by two acanthus plants with curving leaves. The figure on the right, with torso seen frontally and legs crossed in three-quarter view, turns her head toward her companion and lays an arm around her; with her right hand, she lifts a large tympanon, which touches the plant. She wears a V-neck chiton with sleeves, belted beneath her breasts, and a himation softly draped over her legs. The maenad on the left, slightly foreshortened, carries the *thyrsus* in her lap; her himation leaves her right shoulder uncovered. Both maenads wear their hair loosely pulled back; it is piled up in the middle on the left-hand figure. In the middle of the base is a hole for attaching the relief to a wooden sarcophagus; at the back of the relief, extensive traces of pink pigment are visible.¹

The relief, made with a mold, is an openwork with hand-finished details; gilding was commonly used on fictile products in order to imitate more expensive varieties of decoration. These appliqués were produced in Taras in the second half of the fourth century BC in conjunction with the revival of lavish funerary customs, probably inspired by luxurious objects from Macedonia and Scythia; they were exported to a number of centers in Magna

Graecia. Such a relief was probably fastened to the head of a *kline* (bed) and arranged so as to create friezes in a dynamic and flamboyant style. For this reason, the most common themes were narratives that lent themselves to a compositional continuum, such as the battle between Lapiths and Centaurs or that between Gryphons and Amazons or Arimasps, with clear iconographic and formal references to the limestone funerary reliefs that were popular in Taranto beginning in the first half of the fourth century BC.²

A relief in Basel, practically identical to this one, also preserves similar traces of pink pigment and was dated by Lullies to the third quarter of the fourth century BC.³ Recently, on the basis of the iconography and the Dionysian themes, a parallel was proposed between Tarentine appliqués and a bas-relief ivory figurine found in the second tomb of the royal necropolis of Vergina, intended as decoration for a wooden funerary *kline*; this comparison revives the problem of economic and cultural relations between the two areas.⁴ Some themes, such as pairs of real and fantastic animals, or Dionysian figures partly outstretched on the ground with drapery wrapped around their legs, can be found also in the tempera-painted decorations on the marble *klinai* of the chamber tomb from Cassandreia, dating from the end of the fourth century BC.⁵ A late fourth-century terracotta from Morgantina presents in the front a painted panel, probably part of a garment, representing a ritual scene with two figures comparable to the maenads of this appliquéd: a seated female holding a tympanon against a pink background next to a reclining maenad probably holding a *thrysus*; two female dancers are placed symmetrically at the sides of the panels. The scene, in this case as in other painted panels on Sicilian busts, is connected to the cult of Demeter and Persephone, the tutelary deities of Sicily, protectors of the fecundity of nature and of women, and deeply connected with the chthonian sphere.⁶

Notes

1. On Tarentine openwork reliefs, see LULLIES 1977, with bibliography; Tarentine reliefs also spread to other centers in southern Italy; see, for example, DELLA TORRE AND CIAGHI 1980, p. 56, pl. XXIII, no. 1.
2. In this connection, see BERNABÒ BREA 1952, pp. 199–201. For the motif of curly acanthus leaves, curving symmetrically inward at the edges, see esp. figs. 57 and 208. For the possible derivation from luxuries of Macedonia, Scythia, and Thrace, see B. S. Ridgway, “Court and Hellenistic Art,” in RIDGWAY 2004, pp. 158–84.
3. HERDEJÜRGEN 1971, pp. 61–63, fig. 19, no. 55.
4. See A. M. Prestianni Giallombardo, “Dibattito,” in *Atti Taranto 41, 2001* (2002), pp. 327–28.
5. See B. K. Sismanides, *Klines kai klinoeideis kataskeues tōn Makedonikōn taphōn* (Athens, 1997), pp. 21–74; F. Colivicchi, “Tra banchetto, sonno e morte: Simbologie dionisiache sui letti funebri ellenistici e romani,” in I. Colpo, I. Favaretto, and F. Ghedini, eds., *Iconografia 2001: Studi sull’immagine: Atti del Convegno di studi Padova, 30 May–1 June 2001* (Rome, 2002), pp. 273–87.

6. For the bust, see BELL 1981, no.106, pl. 27. It has recently undergone cleaning and conservation treatment with pigment analysis by the Getty's Antiquities Conservation Department. These treatments have revealed details of the painted scene and yielded more information about the bust's pigments and the production technique. For painted panels on terracotta busts, see PAUTASSO 2007.



35

Relief with a Fighting Arimaspa

350-300 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	35
Inventory Number	71.AD.221 ✉
Typology	Relief
Location	Taranto region

Dimensions

H: 6.5 cm; W: 8 cm

Fabric

Beige in color, with reflective inclusions, thoroughly baked, with a yellowish slip and foil gilding.

Condition

Reassembled from two fragments; worn surface, cracks on the cloak and on the right thigh; gilding detached in many areas. The upper part of the cloak has been restored. On the *pelta* (shield), a layer of enamel is visible, probably applied in a previous restoration.

Provenance

– 1969, Fallani (Rome, Italy); 1971, Royal Athena Galleries (New York, New York), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1971.

Bibliography

SELECTED WORKS 1971, no. 63; KINGSLEY 1976, p. 14, fig. 42; LULLIES 1977, pp. 243, 244, 248, no. 4.

Description

The Arimaspa with a Phrygian cap is portrayed in profile facing to his right, with sword unsheathed. He is portrayed in the act of striking his adversary, probably a griffin, while leaning on the *pelta* set on the ground. His right leg is bent and thrust forward, the left knee is on the ground, and the bust is rigidly inclined backward. In keeping with the iconography of the fourth century BC, the Eastern warrior wears a Phrygian cap, a short chiton belted under the chest and, over it, a *chlamys* that, following the warrior's motions, is lifting to one side, forming a series of fluted folds.¹

Arimaspas were depicted in Attic products from the fourth century BC that are documented in Taranto. They are often shown battling griffins and conform to conventional iconographic schemes, such as the short tunic, the crescent shield, and the pointed hat. In other Tarentine appliqués, Arimasps are depicted fighting one or two griffins, a recurring theme both in

Apulian vase decorations and in Tarentine soft-stone reliefs, which show the same fondness for movement, often precarious, and for fluttering drapery.² According to the analysis proposed by Weisner, the iconography of the Arimasps originated in the Black Sea and in the Greek colonies of the Pontos region, and then established itself in Magna Graecia and in Taras also, through the intermediary of Metaponto. It became a favorite motif among the Pythagoreans inasmuch as it symbolized hope for an afterlife.³

Notes

1. On the iconography of the Arimasps, see GORBOUNOVA 1997, esp. no. 21, datable to the second half of the fourth century BC. See also K. Schauenburg, “Arimaspen in Unteritalien,” *RA*, no. 2 (1982), pp. 249–62. Very similar to this piece is a relief found in a Tarentine tomb from the end of the fourth century BC, LIPPOLIS 1994, pp. 131–32, fig. 101; L. Bernabò Brea, “Taranto: Rinvenimenti nella necropoli dal 12 novembre 1938 al 31 maggio 1939,” *NSc*, ser. 7, no. 1 (1940), fig. 29, pp. 426–505, esp. p. 456. Many such reliefs flowed into the antiquities market; see for instance, *Antiquities and Islamic Art*, Sotheby’s New York, sale cat., June 4, 1998, lot 116; LULLIES 1962, pl. 2, no. 2.
2. On the diffusion of the iconography in Taranto, see LIPPOLIS 1994, p. 127, chart 3. For the formal affinities between appliqués and sculpture and, in particular, on the taste for fluttering drapery, see BERNABÒ BREA 1952, figs. 41, 93, 114–15, and p. 139; for the Arimasp fighting on his knees, see idem., pp. 200–201, figs. 184–85; for the frieze from the Palmieri hypogeum in Lecce, with various warriors in this position, dating from the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the third century BC, idem., pp. 78–79, figs. 53–54. For the appliqué with the Arimasp being attacked by griffins, see DE JULIIS AND LOIACONO 1985, p. 332, no. 396. For Arimasps in Apulian vase-painting, see H. R. W. Smith, *Funerary Symbolism in Apulian Vase-Painting* (Berkeley, 1976), fig. 7. On relations between Taras, Greece, and the East, see S. Besques, “Transferts de thèmes, simulacres de bijoux en terre cuite dorée et appliques de Tarente,” *Bulletin de la Société national des antiquaires France* (1988), pp. 53–60.
3. In this connection, see J. Wiesner, “Studien zu dem Arimaspenmotiv auf tarentiner Sarkophagen,” *JdI* 78 (1963), pp. 200–17; MOREL 2002, pp. 566–68.



36

Relief with a Bull

350-300 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	36
Inventory Number	71.AD.220 ↗
Typology	Relief
Location	Taranto region

Dimensions

H: 5.8 cm; W: 8 cm

Fabric

Beige in color; hard, purified, and friable, with foil gilding.

Condition

Intact, surface worn.

Provenance

– 1969, Fallani (Rome, Italy); 1971, Royal Athena Galleries (New York, New York), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1971.

Bibliography

SELECTED WORKS 1971, no. 62; KINGSLEY 1976, p. 14, fig. 41; LULLIES 1977, pp. 247–51, no. 3.

Description

The bull is depicted heading to the left with its head tilted in three-quarter view. The left front hoof is raised, and the back right hoof extends forward; the tail curves around full circle. There is a hole pierced through at the bull's neck. A comparable example was found in Tomb 1 in Contrada Tesoro in Taranto.¹

Notes

1. See D. Graepler's cat. entry in DE JULIIS 1984, pp. 393–96, no. 29; LEYENAAR-PLAISIER 1979, no. 165, pl. 28, p. 82.



37

Relief with Two Griffins Attacking a Deer

350-300 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number

37

Inventory Number

80.AD.39.1 [✉](#)

Typology	Relief
Location	Taranto region
Dimensions	
Fragment 1. H: 2.6 cm; W: 4.6 cm	
Fragment 2. H. 4.7 cm; W: 6.6 cm	

Fabric

beige in color, a slip of light-yellow diluted clay, with foil gilding.

Condition

The relief is partially preserved, in two fragments.

Provenance

- 1980, David Swingler (Santa Monica, California), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1980.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The two fragments, identifiable as a Tarentine appliquéd, still show extensive traces of the original gilding. The first fragment preserves only the body of a griffin with truncated back legs; the second fragment depicts a griffin in a symmetrical position, in the act of clutching with its left front claw a fallen animal, perhaps a stag, only the back part of whose body is still preserved. The griffin holds its prey still with its right back claw as it sinks its fangs into the animal's back. The attachment of the griffin's right front claw to the animal's body forms an eyehole that was probably used to attach the relief to the sarcophagus.¹

Notes

1. For the griffin motif, see C. Delplace, *Le griffon de l'archaïsme à l'époque impériale: Étude iconographique et essai d'interprétation symbolique* (Brussels, 1980); and idem., "A propos de nouvelles appliqués en terre cuite dorée représentant des griffons, trouvées à Taranto," *Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome* 39 (1968), pp. 31–46.

Statue of a Mourning Woman

300-275 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	38
Inventory Number	85.AD.76.1 🔗
Typology	Statue
Location	Canosa
Dimensions	H: 96.2 cm; W: 23.5 cm; H (face): 12.3 cm; thickness of walls: 1.9-6.5 cm

Fabric

Light orange in color (Munsell 10 yr 8/4), friable, fairly well purified with very small reflective particles; white slip or ground layer is in color, tending toward a light greenish yellow on the surface. Polychromy: organic pink (vertical band along the left side of the chiton), iron-based red pigment (hair, sandals, and traces within the lips), and possible black details (chiton and himation).

Condition

Broken and repaired with some terracotta abrasions. There is significant loss of the white ground and polychromy, and what remains is covered by burial accretions and modern overpaint.

Provenance

- 1985, Galerie Hydra (Geneva, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1985.

Bibliography

ACQUISITIONS 1986; M. Mazzei, “L’ipogeo Monterisi Rossignoli di Canosa,” AION 12 (1990), pp. 123–67, esp. pp. 138–39; M. Mazzei, “Ipogeo Barbarossa,” In R. Cassano, ed., *Principi imperatori vescovi: Duemila anni di storia a Canosa* (Venice, 1992), pp. 197–202, esp. pp. 199–201; M. L. Ferruzza, “Quattro statue in terracotta provenienti da Canosa,” *Studia Varia from the J. Paul Getty Museum* 1 (1993), pp. 71–82; F. van der Wielen-van Ommeren, “Orantes canosines,” *Genève et l’Italie: Mélanges de la Société génévoise d’études italiennes* 3 (Geneva, 1999), pp. 43–65, nos. 14–17; JEAMMET 2003a, pp. 271 and 291, nos. 43–46.

Description

The standing female figure in a frontal position has a bent left leg, pushed slightly forward; her arms are bent at the elbows and her hands are raised in a gesture of lamentation; the fingers are spread wide and are clearly shaped, with an indication of fingernails. The head is tilted slightly to one side and turned toward the left; the face is oval and lean, the chin is sharp, the forehead is high, the eyebrows are furrowed, the nose is accentuated; the pupils and the irises are etched, and the eyelids are clearly marked; the mouth, with its lower lip projecting more than the upper, is stretched in an expression of sadness.

The figure wears a chiton adorned by a vertical pink band on the proper left side and a himation with a pointed border worn as a shawl that drapes over the bust, revealing the chiton beneath on either side; the chiton is defined by a circular hem in the front and by broad pleats rendered sketchily in three dimensions. This type of costume is also found on figures painted on Apulian vases.¹ An “H” sign is incised into the himation.

Notes

1. On the relationship between the statuettes of orantes applied to Canosan vases and the large statues, see Jeammet 2003a, pp. 271–75.



Statue of a Mourning Woman

300-275 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	39
Inventory Number	85.AD.76.2 🔗
Typology	Statue
Location	Canosa
Dimensions	H: 95.6 cm; W: 31.9 cm; H (face): 11.6 cm; thickness of walls: 1.4-9.5 cm

Fabric

Orange in color (Munsell 7. 5 yr 8/6); white ground and polychromy as on the previous piece. Polychromy: organic pink (vertical decoration along the proper right side of the chiton); iron-based red pigment on the hair and feet, with minor traces in the mouth.

Condition

Broken and repaired with some terracotta abrasion. The tip of the pinky finger on the left hand is missing; the middle, ring, and pinky fingers of the right hand have been broken and reattached. The figure retains a heavy layer of burial accretion and modern overpaint, which covers the white ground.

Provenance

– 1985, Galerie Hydra (Geneva, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1985.

Bibliography

ACQUISITIONS 1986; M. Mazzei, “L’ipogeo Monterisi Rossignoli di Canosa,” AION 12 (1990), pp. 123–67, esp. pp. 138–39; M. Mazzei, “Ipogeo Barbarossa,” In R. Cassano, ed., *Principi imperatori vescovi: Duemila anni di storia a Canosa* (Venice, 1992), pp. 197–202, esp. pp. 199–201; M. L. Ferruzza, “Quattro statue in terracotta provenienti da Canosa,” *Studia Varia from the J. Paul Getty Museum* 1 (1993), pp. 71–82; F. van der Wielen-van Ommeren, “Orantes canosines,” *Genève et l’Italie: Mélanges de la Société génévoise d’études italiennes* 3 (Geneva, 1999), pp. 43–65, nos. 14–17; JEAMMET 2003a, pp. 271 and 291, nos. 43–46.

Description

The position and weight of the figure are similar to those of the other members of this group (cat. 38–41). The coroplast worked on the individual pieces, varying the position of the heads and retouching the facial features and the drapery. The head is tilted to the right and the knee of the bent leg is turned a little more to the left; the eyebrows are arched to a greater degree, forming two furrows in the middle of the forehead; the upper lip is fleshier, and the expression of grief is more marked. Incised on the lower hem of the himation on the proper left side is the letter *alpha*.

Statue of a Mourning Woman

300-275 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	40
Inventory Number	85.AD.76.3 🔗
Typology	Statue
Location	Canosa
Dimensions	H: 93.4 cm; W: 31.2 cm; H (face): 12.5 cm; thickness of walls: 1.4-6.4 cm

Fabric

light orange in color (Munsell 7. 57.5 yr 8/4); slip and polychromy are like those of the other members of this group. Polychromy: vertical organic pink bands along the right and left sides of the chiton; iron-based red pigment in the hair, feet, and traces in the mouth; white pigment ground layer. There are two circular holes, one on the lower edge of the chiton and another on the figure's right side.

Condition

Broken and repaired, abraded terracotta surface. The figure is covered in thick burial accretion and modern overpaint, which extends over the white ground layer.

Provenance

– 1985, Galerie Hydra (Geneva, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1985.

Bibliography

ACQUISITIONS 1986; M. Mazzei, “L’ipogeo Monterisi Rossignoli di Canosa,” AION 12 (1990), pp. 123–67, esp. pp. 138–39; M. Mazzei, “Ipogeo Barbarossa,” In R. Cassano, ed., *Principi imperatori vescovi: Duemila anni di storia a Canosa* (Venice, 1992), pp. 197–202, esp. pp. 199–201; M. L. Ferruzza, “Quattro statue in terracotta provenienti da Canosa,” *Studia Varia from the J. Paul Getty Museum* 1 (1993), pp. 71–82; F. van der Wielen-van Ommeren, “Orantes canosines,” *Genève et l’Italie: Mélanges de la Société génévoise d’études italiennes* 3 (Geneva, 1999), pp. 43–65, nos. 14–17; JEAMMET 2003a, pp. 271 and 291, nos. 43–46.

Description

The figure is similar in its general characteristics to the preceding two pieces; here, however, the weight of the body is resting on the left leg, while the right leg is pulled back and bent, and the head is turned toward the left. The facial features are similar to those of cat. 38. On the lower right of the himation, a mark (comparable to the letter *lambda*) is engraved.



Statue of a Mourning Woman

300-275 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	41
Inventory Number	85.AD.76.4 🔗
Typology	Statue
Location	Canosa
Dimensions	H: 95.5 cm; W: 32.1 cm; H (face): 12.2 cm; thickness of walls: 2.1-8.4 cm

Fabric

Beige in color (Munsell 2.5 yr 8/4–5yr 7/6 at the core); white slip and polychromy are as the previous piece. Polychromy: vertical organic pink band on the proper right side, back, and front of the chiton; iron-based red pigment on the hair and feet, and minor traces in the mouth; white pigment ground layer.

Condition

Broken and repaired, abraded terracotta surface. The middle, ring, and pinky fingers of the right hand are broken and repaired. The figure is covered in a heavy layer of burial accretion over the white ground.

Provenance

– 1985, Galerie Hydra (Geneva, Switzerland), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1985.

Bibliography

ACQUISITIONS 1986; M. Mazzei, “L’ipogeo Monterisi Rossignoli di Canosa,” AION 12 (1990), pp. 123–67, esp. pp. 138–39; M. Mazzei, “Ipogeo Barbarossa,” In R. Cassano, ed., *Principi imperatori vescovi: Duemila anni di storia a Canosa* (Venice, 1992), pp. 197–202, esp. pp. 199–201; M. L. Ferruzza, “Quattro statue in terracotta provenienti da Canosa,” *Studia Varia from the J. Paul Getty Museum* 1 (1993), pp. 71–82; F. van der Wielen-van Ommeren, “Orantes canosines,” *Genève et l’Italie: Mélanges de la Société génevoise d’études italiennes* 3 (Geneva, 1999), pp. 43–65, nos. 14–17; JEAMMET 2003a, pp. 271 and 291, nos. 43–46.

Description

The figure is similar in its general characteristics to cat. 40, though the leg is not drawn as far back; in both the slight hollow and undulation in the fold of the drapery over the right breast is evident. There are two marks incised into the himation: two parallel lines on the proper left, and a mark like a *lambda* on the proper right. There is a circular hole on the lower edge of the chiton in the figure’s back.

Four Statues of Mourning Women from Canosa

Four Statues of Mourning Women from Canosa (cat. 38–41)

This discussion is reproduced on each of the individual object pages

This group of mourning women, often understood as orantes (female figures in prayer), likely comes from a chamber tomb in the Canosa area, as is attested by comparable examples in various collections. A technical examination of some statues from Canosa conducted by the Louvre conservation laboratories has made it possible to identify certain details of the fabrication. The figures were made not with molds, as was initially conjectured (considering, among other things, the lack of joint lines and the overall resemblance among the various pieces), but rather through a modeling process over a hollow, conical, and fairly thick structure. Working from the bottom up, clay pieces were laid over this structure to define the anatomy and iconographic details of the figure. The forearms, created separately, and the head, made with a bivalve mold, were inserted in holes specially made by the craftsman. The tubular structure was then modeled from within to establish the round shapes of knees and breasts, and from the exterior, through the application of clay parts, to depict in three dimensions the details of the chiton and himation, such as the circular folds and the hem of the himation on the figures' torsos and the lateral folds of the chiton. On the inside bent knee of one figure (cat. 38), there are vertical strokes in the clay, made by fingers pulling downward. The structure is in any case well smoothed and finished on the interior: there is a slight ridge at the waist in two of the statues. The coroplast attempted to smooth the surface, probably using a throwing stick, from the opening in the base, as can be seen by the circular traces left on the interior surface. A spatula and other sharp tools were used to define the hair, eyes, and various details of clothing.

The facial features, in a clearly local style, are made with a type of mold also utilized for other pieces from Canosa.¹ As in other statues, there are circular holes in the lower extremities into which wooden pins would have been inserted to fasten the statue onto a base.² The symbols, carved directly into the fresh clay, can be interpreted as alphabetical markers to aid in the practical requirements of the factory process; given the nature of these signs, which suggest haste, it is impossible to interpret them with any certainty.³

The colors were applied after the firing over a preparatory layer of white slip, which has been preserved in several areas. The slip is heavily applied in large “swipes” as though done with a tool. It is possible to see some striations in the swipes but not fingerprints.⁴ The palette shows little variety, consisting of pink, red, white, possibly dark brown, and black, although the latter two pigments cannot be confirmed. This limited palette is found in other examples and corresponds to a chromatic taste also attested in the Canosan vases.

The most pertinent comparison for these statues can be found in the type called “orantes with the long himation.” This group, according to a recently proposed classification, shows affinities in the treatment of the clothing and in the weighting and position of the arms. The comparison is especially good with the group of such orantes, which have heads showing harsh and marked facial features and hair pulled back into a point on the back.⁵ Relative to these other pieces, the Getty statues are characterized by a general lack of plasticity and by sketchy modeling, underscored by a certain compositional naïveté, an excessively rigid pose, and a general lack of compactness in the structure.⁶ The same stylistic tendency can be found in other coroplastic products such as full-relief statuettes in the round, depicting female figures, Nikai, and Erotes, that decorate *askoi*; these are characterized by a superabundance of decoration. The similarity attests to the close collaboration that existed among potters, painters, and coroplasts in creating a substantially unified expressive language.⁷ Among the numerous examples are the orantes that decorate an *askos* in the Museo Nazionale Archeologico di Taranto, with the same type of clothing and raised arms, and an *askos* from the Varrese hypogeum (rock-cut funerary complex) of Canosa, with similar statuettes, equine protomes, and a head of Medusa datable to the third century BC.⁸ Likewise, the figures painted on the wall of the chamber tomb in the Sant’Aloia area of Canosa, dating from the first half of the third century BC, are characterized by facial features and a general compositional structure reminiscent of the Getty statues; they also seem to point to models from the Campanian area, such as the figure from “Tomb X” of Paestum.⁹

The statues, which were intended to be placed around a funerary *kline*, constituted an especially costly funerary offering and were thus probably intended for a fairly prestigious client who, in the context of Romanization in the area, aspired to underscore his economic prosperity, personal identity, and native traditions, in part through emphasis on funerary rituals.¹⁰ In Canosa between the second half of the fourth century and the first half of the third century BC, there was a culturally advanced aristocracy that was anxious to affirm its status and more open to the influence of the Greek regions of Magna Graecia and Macedonia, in part due to the political and military relations established with Alexander I of Molossia (r. 362–330/329 BC). Links with and influences from the Macedonian world can be identified, for instance, in the funerary architectural models that were absorbed and adapted to local

cultural traditions.¹¹ Although it is possible to note considerable differences among the various examples of statues, both in terms of clothing and in poses and hairstyles, the statues do seem to depict one type of youthful female figure, probably envisioned as one of the female mourners who, during funeral ceremonies, and especially during the *prothesis* (laying out of the body), expressed their grief at the loss of the deceased.¹²

The archaeological context of the orantes from Canosa has been extensively debated and mostly remains unresolved. The pieces have been dispersed among various museum collections, both public and private, due to the massive diffusion of Canosan grave goods into the antiquities market.¹³

Recent studies have examined four hypogea about whose discovery more is known. Scanty though these accounts of discovery are, they seem to attest that the statues must have been placed inside the tombs in pairs or in any case in multiples of two. In particular, eight pieces are thought to originate from Scocchera B hypogea in Canosa. Of these, two are currently in the Musée de la Ville de Rouen (inv. 1965) and in the National Museum of Copenhagen (inv. 4995); one is in the Worcester Art Museum (inv. 2008.50); another pair, from the description provided by Cozzi of the actual discovery of the hypogea, may be those now in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow (inv. II 1° 634 and 635). The solitary figure in the Museo Castromediano in Lecce might belong to this same context; great uncertainty persists concerning the identification of the eighth piece.¹⁴

A number of statues must have come from the Barbarossa hypogea, and of these, three may now be in the collection of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples.¹⁵ An orant generally attributed to the Barbarossa hypogea might actually have come from the Lagrasta I hypogea, which was excavated between 1843 and 1845.¹⁶ Finally, the Tomb of the Gold Ornaments (Tomba degli Ori) was the source of three or four statues of orantes: the pieces now in the Museo Civico Archeologico in Canosa and the Museo Archeologico di Santa Scolastica in Bari might have come from this context.¹⁷

The problem of dating the Getty figures is bound up with the reexamination of funerary deposits belonging to the Canosa hypogea. For the Scocchera B tomb, dates have been suggested between the end of the third century and the second century BC; but the statues are thought to date from the first half of the third century BC, since the hypogea remained in use for about a century following its construction, as attested, among other things, by the presence of glass vases.¹⁸ For the Barbarossa hypogea, the same chronological discrepancy exists, given the presence—alongside red-figure vases from the end of the fourth century BC and the statues of orantes—of glass pieces and goldwork as well that can be dated to the second century BC; once again, these discrepancies are due to the

continued use of the hypogea over several generations.¹⁹ In the Lagrasta hypogeum, too, alongside the red-figured vases, there have been finds of glass pieces and a Latin inscription from 67 BC.²⁰ For the Tomb of the Gold Ornaments, on the other hand, the end of the third century BC seems to be a date widely accepted by scholars.²¹ In the absence of reliable excavation contexts, it seems advisable to date the group of orantes to the early third century BC.

Notes

1. For the technical working of the statue and the hypothetical use of bivalve molds, see JEAMMET AND NADALINI 1997; for a review of the problem, JEAMMET 2003a. This study, which explores the problems linked to Canosa statues in the Louvre and surveys all the pieces in the various public and private museum collections, proposes a classification according to technical and iconographic criteria. According to this scheme, the Getty orantes have been included in the group characterized by a “long himation and a conical structure that tends to widen at the height of the shoulders.” The bivalve mold for the heads, catalogued as m5, seems to have been used for the pieces in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen as well.
2. The circular holes can also be found on the majority of statues, including the examples in Rouen, Copenhagen, and Bari, and on the statues in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples: see LEVI 1926, pl. II, no.1.
3. See also G. Siebert, “Signatures d’artistes, d’artisans et des fabricants dans l’antiquité classique,” *Ktema* 3 (1978), pp. 111–31, esp. p. 124; and V. Casolo, “Marchi di fabbrica su terrecotte campane,” *Acme* 40 (1987), pp. 57–64.
4. A chemical analysis of the slip taken from four *askoi* from Canosa showed that milk of lime was used as well as a white kaolinite slip; in this connection, see A. Ruiny and F. Schweizer, “Analyse de l’engobe blanc et des traces d’adhésifs anciens prélevés sur des vases de Canosa,” *Genava*, n.s. 28 (1978), pp. 162–69; see also P. Aureli, “Il restauro,” in Cassano 1992, p. 333; C. Meucci, “Analisi dei vasi sovraddipinti,” in Cassano 1992.
5. In particular, two orantes from the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen (inv. HIN 422 and 419), a pair of orantes from the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples (inv. 22246 and 22247), and the orant from the Musée du Louvre (inv. 7500); respectively: Fischer-Hansen 1992, pp. 101–3; Levi 1926, no. 235, pl. II, no. 3, inv. 22246–47; see also Jeammet 2003a, Group 3, head m5, pp. 288–92.
5. In particular, two orantes from the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen (inv. HIN 422 and 419), a pair of orantes from the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples (inv. 22246 and 22247), and the orant from the Musée du Louvre (inv. 7500); respectively: FISCHER-HANSEN 1992, pp. 101–3; LEVI 1926, no. 235, pl. II, no. 3, inv. 22246–47; see also JEAMMET 2003a, Group 3, head m5, pp. 288–92.
6. For this issue, see MOREL 2002; A. Giuliano, “L’influenza greca nell’arte italica,” in PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1996, pp. 591–606.
7. See n. 1 above. For the *askoi* of Canosa, see also F. van der Wielen, “Ceramica a decorazione plastica e policroma,” pp. 310–26 in Cassano 1992, nos. 50–76; A. Rinuy, F. van der Wielen, P. Hartmann, and F. Schweizer, “Céramique insolite de l’Italie du Sud: Les vases hellénistiques de Canosa,” *Genava* n.s. 26 (1978), pp. 141–69, pp. 317–18; for the plastic oinochoai, see A. Riccardi, “Vasi configurati a testa umana di provenienza o produzione canosina,” in A. Riccardi, A. Sciancio, M. Chelotti, L. Rossi, and F. van der Wielen-van Ommeren, *Canosa I, Studi sull’antico* 3 (Bari, 1980), nos. 7–8, pp. 7–21; F. Rossi, s.v. “Vasi canosini,” *EAA suppl.* 2 (1994), pp. 848–49. For the type of clothing, see the figures painted by the Patera Painter or by the Baltimore Painter: A. D. Trendall and A. Cambitoglou, *The Red-Figured Vases of Apulia* (Oxford and New York, 1982), vol. 2, pp. 723–24 and 856–60. See also M. Dewailly, “Les femmes des guerriers indigènes dans les scènes de libation représentées sur les vases à figures rouges d’Italie du Sud au IVe siècle,” *MÉFRA* 94 (1982), pp. 581–623.

8. M. Borda, *Ceramiche apule* (Bergamo, 1966), p. 60, fig. 49. For the *askos* from the Varrese hypogeum, see L. Todisco et al., *Introduzione all'artigianato della Puglia antica dall'età coloniale all'età romana* (Bari, 1992), fig. 77. See also the *askos* from Canosa at the Louvre, decorated with figures of *orantes*, in BESQUES 1986, pls. 135–37.
9. For the tombs of Paestum, see PONTRANDOLFO AND ROUVERET 1992, p. 221; for Apulian painting, see E. M. De Juliis, “Nuovi documenti di pittura figurata in Apulia,” *Ricerche di pittura ellenistica*, Quaderni dei Dialoghi di archeologia 10 (Rome, 1985), pp. 163–68; on the paintings in the Sant’Aloia tomb, see also L. De Lachenal, “Il rilievo frammentario con cavalieri reimpiegato a Castel del Monte,” *RivIstArch* 14–15 (1991–92), pp. 131–51. See also R. Benassai, *La pittura dei Campani e dei Sanniti* (Rome, 2001), fig. 248, pp. 236–37. In particular, we can also draw a comparison between these *orantes* and the female figure from a tomb in Isernia that also seems reminiscent of the figure of Calypso in a painted tomb in Kerch, Ukraine. For comparisons also between the statues of *orantes* and the painting from northern Greece, see M. Mazzei, “La Daunia e la Grecia settentrionale: Riflessioni sulle esperienze pittoriche del primo ellenismo,” in PONTRANDOLFO 2002, pp. 67–77.
10. For the presence of statues around the funerary *kline*, see the painting from the north plaque of Tomb 53 in the necropolis of Andriuolo, depicting a scene of pathos, in PONTRANDOLFO AND ROUVERET 1992, pp. 140–41, fig. 546. For the funerary ritual, see E. M. De Juliis, *L’ipogeo dei Vimini di Canosa* (Bari, 1990), pp. 129–33; and DE JULIIS 1984, pp. 19–21.
11. On aspects of Hellenization in indigenous centers, see n. 7 above and J. L. Lambolley, “Les hypogées indigènes apuliens,” *MÉFRA* 94, no. 1 (1982), pp. 91–148; L. Todisco, *Introduzione all’artigianato della Puglia antica: Dall’età coloniale all’età romana* (Bari, 1992), pp. 32–37; M. Torelli, “Principi, indigeni e classi dirigenti italiote: Per una storia della committenza dei vasi apuli,” in G. Sena Chiesa and E. A. Arslan, eds., *Miti Greci: Archeologia e pittura dalla Magna Grecia al collezionismo*, exh. cat. (Milan, Palazzo Reale, 2004), pp. 190–92; and M. Torelli, “Aspetti materiali e ideologici della romanizzazione della Daunia,” *Dialoghi di archeologia* 10 (1992), pp. 47–64.
12. It has been proposed that the iconographic differentiations among the statues may point not only to differences in age, but also to different roles played by women in funerary rites: MAZZEI 1992. See also DE JULIIS 1992, pp. 231–32. On reexamination of the funerary deposits of the hypogea of Canosa, see JEAMMET 2003A, pp. 276–81.
13. The dispersal of material from Canosa is documented, in part, by the numerous pieces that have appeared on the antiquities market, i.e., the statue of an *orante* in *Antiquities*, Bonhams Knightbridge, sale cat., November 26, 1997, lot 316 (current location unknown). The *orant*, very similar to the Getty ones, in *Classical, Egyptian and Western Asiatic Antiquities and Islamic Works of Art*, Sotheby’s New York, Sale 6717, June 1, 1995, lot 113, is now in the San Antonio Museum of Art (inv. 95.18.2).
14. The most recent study of the context of the Scocchera B tomb is in JEAMMET 2003A, pp. 276–77. A different reconstruction of the grave goods is presented in OLIVER 1968, p. 15. For a description of the tomb at the time of its discovery, see S. Cozzi, “Gruppo di camere sepolcrali appartenenti alla necropoli canosina,” *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità* (1896), p. 495. For an analysis of the hypogeum and the corresponding grave goods, see also De Juliis 1992. The Rouen piece is also published in *Hommes, dieux et héros de la Grèce*, exh. cat. (Rouen, Musée des Antiquités, 1982), p. 153, no. 66; for the Copenhagen *orant*, see BREITENSTEIN 1941, fig. 80. A second *orante* in the Worcester Art Museum was acquired in 1927 (inv. 1927.45). A preliminary list of statues from Canosa was drawn up in W. Deonna, *Les statues de terre cuite dans l’antiquité* (Paris, 1908), pp. 72–77.
15. According to the hypothesis set forth by Jeammet, it was instead the Barbarossa hypogeum that might have been the source of four *orantes*: the two now in the Louvre, the one in London, and the one in the Sant’Angelo collection of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples: JEAMMET 2003A, pp. 278–7; see, also, MAZZEI 1992, nos. 6–8. For the statues in Naples, see also LEVI 1926, pl. II, 1–3, nos. 233–37, pp. 55–56.
16. JEAMMET 2003A, p. 279; also R. Cassano, “Gli ipogei Lagrasta,” in CASSANO 1992, p. 204; OLIVER 1968, p. 22.
17. For the Tomb of the Gold Ornaments, see JEAMMET 2003A, pp. 277–78; M. Corrente, “La tomba degli Ori,” in CASSANO 1992, pp. 337–45, no. 58; R. Bartoccini, “La tomba degli Ori a Canosa,” *Japigia* 6 (1935), pp. 225–62; E. Lippolis, in DE JULIIS 1984, pp. 450–51.

18. DE JULIIS 1992, p. 236; DE JULIIS 1984, p. 454.
19. See MAZZEI 1992, pp. 197–202; M. Mazzei and E. Lippolis, “Dall’ellenizzazione all’età tardo repubblica,” in *La Daunia antica: Dalla preistoria all’altomedioevo* (Milan, 1984), pp. 191–92. The dating is also discussed in A. Ciancio, “I vetri alessandrini rinvenuti a Canosa,” pp. 31–66 in Riccardi et al., *Canosa I* (cited in n. 7 above), p. 46, n. 74.
20. R. Cassano, “Gli ipogei Lagrasta,” in CASSANO 1992, pp. 203–24.
21. E. Lippolis, in DE JULIIS 1984, pp. 450–52.



Statue of a Mourning Woman

300-250 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	42
Inventory Number	79.AD.194 »
Typology	Statue
Location	Canosa
Dimensions	H: 96.5 cm; W: 31 cm

Fabric

Light brown, slightly reddish, in color (Munsell 2.5 yr 8/4 7/6). No slip or ground layer is preserved on this figure. Polychromy: red pigment on the hair.

Condition

Assembled from numerous fragments. The arms and the left foot are missing, and with the exception of areas on the hair, the abraded terracotta surface has been completely stripped of all polychromy and burial accretions. Vertical striations are visible over most of the figure where the artisan scraped a tool over the surface to smooth it. The interior shows signs of being pressed and worked with hands. There are striations running horizontally across the inside and fingerprints are present in several areas. There are two firing cracks, both in the back of the figure.¹

1. The head is thought to be associated with the m4-mold type of Jeammet's classification: JEAMMET 2003a, p. 290. See in particular the orant published in LEVI 1926, no. 235, inv. 22246; and also S. De Caro, *La Magna Grecia nelle collezioni del Museo archeologico di Napoli* (Naples, 1996), p. 151, no. 11.

Provenance

– 1979, Dr. Paul Flanagan (Costa Mesa, California), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1979.

Bibliography

M. L. Ferruzza, “Quattro statue in terracotta da Canosa,” *Studia Varia from the J. Paul Getty Museum* 1 (1993), p. 77, figs. 6a–b; F. van der Wielen-van Ommeren, “Orantes, canosines,” *Genève et l’Italie: Mélanges de la Société genevoise d’études italiennes* (1999), pp. 43–65, no. 24; JEAMMET 2003a, pp. 271 and 290, no. 39.

Description

This statue, like those in the previous entries (cat. 38–41), has been assigned by Violaine Jeammet to the group of mourners or orantes wearing a long himation with a conical structure, tending to broaden at the shoulders.¹ The face is modeled with greater freedom of expression; the hair, again rendered through stylized incisions, is arrayed on the forehead in softer waves and is gathered at the back. The head is tilted to the left, the furrowing of the brow is expressed by four wrinkles carved in the center and on the sides of the eyebrows, which are profoundly arched and accentuate the cavity of the eyes. There are three circular holes (approximately 1.5 cm in diameter) on the lower part of the chiton in the front and back of the figure, and vertical striations are visible on the surface, left by the coroplast’s tools.

In its general composition, it shows close similarities to an orant in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples, already linked to the Barbarossa hypogeum.²

Appendix

The piece has been subjected to a thermoluminescence examination, which confirmed its authenticity.

Notes

1. JEAMMET 2003a, pp. 271.

2. For the Barbarossa hypogeum, see n. 16 of the previous entry (cat. 41).



Statuette of a Standing Woman

LATE FOURTH-THIRD CENTURIES BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	43
Inventory Number	81.AD.158 🔗
Typology	Statuette
Location	Canosa
Dimensions	H: 23.5 cm; W: 7.3 cm

Fabric

Orange in color (Munsell 7.5 yr 7/4), friable and fairly well purified, with small reflective inclusions; extensive traces of polychromy over a thick layer of white ground: brownish red (hair), pink (complexion, himation, and chiton), light blue (leaves of the wreath), and red (mouth).¹ The body and head were made with two bivalve molds. There are two small holes on the shoulder and an oval-shaped hole in the back.²

1. The undercoat for the polychromy, as found in other examples, is made of unfired kaolinite; see F. Van der Wielen-van Ommeren, “La céramique hellénistique de Canosa: Techniques de fabrication,” in *Proceedings of the Third Symposium on Ancient Greek and Related Pottery, Copenhagen, August 31–September 4, 1987* (Copenhagen, 1988), pp. 665–73.
2. For the presence of holes on the shoulders, see the example in *CÉRAMIQUES ANTIQUES* 1987, no. 107, said to be for the insertion of small metal ornaments.

Condition

The base was restored with pink mastic, the polychromy is worn away, and there are a number of blackish stains on the surface.

Provenance

– 1981, Robert Blaugrund (Los Angeles, California), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1981.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The statuette depicts a draped female figure in a standing position, resting her weight on the left leg, while the right leg is bent and drawn back. The left arm is folded against the side while the right hand holds the himation in the front. The himation completely envelops the body, with a fold that drapes over the left shoulder. On the lower part of the body, beneath the cloak, is the pink chiton with heavy, ample folds. The oval face is painted pink, with regular facial features; the lips of the small mouth preserve traces of red pigment. Parted in the middle, the hair is combed to either side in wavy locks that form a chignon at the nape of the neck; atop the head is a diadem and wreath of ivy leaves. The small eyes turn downward; the figure wears spherical earrings.

The statuette is a product of Canosa from the end of the fourth century BC to the beginning or the third century BC, based on numerous statuettes from this Daunian center with comparable typology, fabric, and polychromy. The figure echoes a type, inspired by the production of Tanagra, with a characteristic ivy wreath, which can be traced back to a Dionysian model; the arrangement of the himation gathered in the front was a widespread motif in Taranto, and recurs also in various examples from Campania.¹ Standing draped female statuettes were also utilized as attachments on large polychrome vases with plastic decoration made in Canosa, datable between the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the third century BC.²

Notes

1. For the presence of the Tanagra repertoire in Canosa, see V. Jeammet, “Entre tradition grecque et indigène: Canosa,” in JEAMMET 2003b, pp. 290–91. See also the statuettes from Canosa in *CÉRAMIQUES ANTIQUES* 1987, nos. 139, 144, and 145, and from Taranto in BESQUES 1986, pl. 24e, datable to the beginning of the third century BC, with the spool base typical of Tarentine production. Also see the statuette, from the third quarter of the third century BC, from the funerary deposit of a tomb on the Via Tito Livio, in A. dell’Aglio and D. Graepler, “Découverte d’une tombe à Tarente,” in JEAMMET 2003b, pp. 285–89, no. 226. See also a small draped female figure from Cuma from the second half of the fourth to the first half of the third century BC, in BONGHI JOVINO 1990, pp. 65–96, pl. I, nos. 1–3, a type also found at Minturno and at Capua.

2. See F. van der Wielen, "Ceramica a decorazione plastica e policroma," in CASSANO 1992, pp. 310–21.



Statuette of Apollo

200-100 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	44
Inventory Number	96.AD.266 ✉
Typology	Statuette
Location	Canosa
Dimensions	H: 21.8 cm; W: 10.9 cm

Fabric

Hazelnut brown in color (Munsell 5 yr 8/4), with a delicate and porous consistency and small reflective inclusions. The polychromy applied over a white slip is well preserved: purple (hair and base), pink (skin), white (himation, rocky base, and part of the kithara), and light blue (hem of the himation, leaves of the wreath, and lower part of the kithara).

Condition

Worn surface, various scratches, especially on the back of the figure. Several elements are missing, including a number of leaves of the wreath, the upper part of the instrument, and part of the *plektron*. There are small gaps in the back part and white accretions and black stains overall.

Provenance

Antike Kunst Palladion (Basel, Switzerland); by 1986–1987 Galerie Nina Borowski (Paris, France), sold to Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman, 1987; 1987–1996 Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman (New York, New York), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996.

Bibliography

Galerie Nina Borowski, exh. cat. (Paris, 1986), no. 6; PASSION FOR ANTIQUITIES 1994, p. 355, no. 243; ACQUISITIONS 1996–98, p. 67.

Description

The figure stands on an irregularly shaped base. The body's weight rests on the right leg, while the left leg is bent, with the left foot resting on a projection that resembles a low rocky relief. The head is turned toward the left; the belly is plump, with the linea alba defined. The facial features are delicate and drawn in a soft chiaroscuro, giving the face a vaguely pathetic aspect; the long hair, parted in the center, is arranged in wavy locks, with two long ringlets draped onto the chest; in the back, the hair is gathered in a soft ponytail. A wreath with pointed leaves crowns the head. The ample himation is draped over the figure's left shoulder, leaving the torso and right shoulder bare, then rolled up on the hips, falling to the left in ample, thick folds. The feet are shod with high sandals. The kithara, held in the left hand, leans against the left shoulder. The right arm is bent and extended forward; the right hand, resting against the belly, holds the *plektron*.

The statuette depicts a crowned god with a kithara, probably Apollo or Dionysos, as the crown with triangular leaves seems to suggest. This subject was extensively portrayed in Magna Graecia and in Sicily in both vase-paintings and the coroplastic art. The type of Apollo with kithara, created in sculpture of the Classical age, was variously interpreted in the Hellenistic age. Particularly in the first half of the fourth century BC, the iconography of Apollo became the subject of new depictions, influenced by the statuary, which tended to emphasize the image of the musician and inspiring god. Apollo shared various iconographic affinities with the Dionysos as well, such as the hairstyle, the crown of ivy leaves, and the himation draped around the legs.¹

The iconography of Dionysos holding a lyre or kithara occurs rather infrequently and only at the end of the fifth century BC. It is represented, for example, in the Apulian context in a small group of red-figured vases decorated by the White Saccos Painter in the first half of the fourth century BC, probably reflecting a new tendency in Greek religion and an iconographic syncretism between Apollo and Dionysos already evident in the sculpture of Dionysos with kithara in the pediment of the Classical temple of Apollo at Delphi (360–320 BC).²

Depictions of Apollo standing nude or partially clothed with a foot resting on a rocky elevation were preferred in the Hellenistic period for the unstable rhythm of the pose, which gave greater dynamism and sharper tension in accordance with the new concept of the figure.

Some distinctive features, such as the cloak wrapping around the legs, the free left leg, the kithara held on the left side with the arm raised to the head—as in the Apollo Lykaios by Praxiteles—and the long hair drawn back also characterize the Apollo Kitharoidos sculpted by Timarchides in 180 BC. It is known in various copies, the most complete of which is the so-called Apollo of Cyrene.³ However, this type was extensively modified in its many variants with the introduction of other elements, some of which appear in this statuette, such as the position of the right arm, bent forward with the *plektron* in hand.⁴ In stylistic terms, this figure emphasizes Praxitelean influences, as evident for example in the Apollo Lykaios, upon which this statuette seems vaguely to be modeled, especially in the flexing position of the body, the soft, full nude figure, and the feminine hairstyle.⁵

The Getty statuette can be assigned to the production of Canosa in the second century BC; there is a very close parallel in another statuette, probably made from the same molds, now in a Swiss private collection, and also likely originating in Canosa.⁶ The type of the Apollo Kitharoidos is well documented in coroplastic art, with numerous eclectic variants, from other centers in Magna Graecia and Sicily—in Taranto, Egnazia, Caulonia, Paestum, and Centuripe.⁷ The popularity of the Apollo Kitharoidos iconography in Magna Graecia is also documented as early as the Classical period on a stater from Metaponto dating from 430 BC. It shows Apollo seated, looking right, and intently playing a large kithara.⁸

A number of statuettes of Apollo standing with kithara and *plektron* were also found among the deposits in the Campetti sanctuary at Veii, which are dated to the fourth century BC.⁹ At Myrina in Asia Minor, the type is well attested and fits into the more common production of Hellenistic coroplastic art, documenting an intense circulation of typologies and iconographies between eastern and western workshops.¹⁰ This Apollo is shown with the so-called Italiote kithara, which is well documented in the decorative repertory of South Italian vase-painting as early as 360 BC.¹¹ Characterized by a long rectangular shape, this instrument has narrow, straight vertical arms, a rectangular soundbox, and small disks at the ends of the arms. The number of strings can vary from five to nine. This instrument is also often associated with objects that symbolize matrimonial rites, and it appears in a symposium scene painted in a Macedonian chamber tomb.¹²

Appendix

The work was manufactured in three principal parts, each pushed into an open piece mold consisting of the body and head, three-quarters of the right arm, and the base. The body was formed by joining the front and back of the figure, indicated by the seams up both sides that join at the crown of the head. The right arm was manufactured separately, and seams are visible at the bicep and the hand. The figure is hollow but does not have a hollow underside; rather it has a separately made base. In clay and handling, the base is consistent with the body and right arm and continues the details and profile of the figure on its exterior. On the underside, there is a preserved swirl, which appears to have been rendered with the tip of a finger while the clay was still wet.

Normally the bottom would have been left open as a ventilation hole to prevent potential expansion or explosion during firing. However, because of the clay used, the continuous figural profile, and the lack of fracturing or any signs of later addition, it is apparent that the base with preserved swirl is original to the piece.

Structurally, the piece is sound but shows evidence that the head had been broken off and the figure broken in two at the waist. Both areas show plaster fills with overpaint, apparent in visible and ultraviolet light. After examination under a microscope and sample analysis with PLM and XRF, the extent of overpainting was found to be confined to the plaster fills, and none of the coloration of the figure had been refreshed or renewed.

Notes

1. For the iconography of Apollo in the early Hellenistic period in Magna Graecia and Sicily, see W. Lambrinoudakis, s.v. "Apollon," *LIMC* 2 (1984), esp. pp. 208–9 and n. 198 for a terracotta from Taranto. On the type of the Apollo Kitharoidos in sculpture, see FLASHAR 1992, pp. 124–25. On iconographic affinities between Dionysos and Apollo, see C. Gasparri, s.v. "Dionysos," *LIMC* 3 (1986), pp. 511–12; and A. Bottini, "Dioniso e Apollo nei grandi crateri di Celia," in *Studi in onore di Michele D'Elia: Archeologia, arte, restauro e tutela, archivistica* (Spoleto, 1996), pp. 46–56.
2. A. Cera, "Il dioniso citaredo del Pittore del Sakkos Bianco," *ACME* (Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università degli Studi di Milano) 65, no. 2 (2012), pp. 31–57.
3. For the Apollo of Cyrene, see FLASHAR 1992, pp. 124–27; and P. Moreno, *Scultura ellenistica* (Rome, 1994), pp. 522–23. MARCHIONNO 1998; and M. Mertens-Horn, "La statua di Apollo citaredo della galleria delle statue nel Vaticano," in CASTOLDI 1999, p. 336, no. 744.
4. See, for example, the type of Apollo playing a kithara with a *plektron* in a statue in Venice: G. Traversari, *La statuaria ellenistica del Museo archeologico di Venezia* (Venice, 1986), no. 42, pp. 129–32; for other types, see MARCHIONNO 1998, pp. 364–65, n. 9.
5. On the hairstyles of Apollo in the Hellenistic period, see MARCHIONNO 1998, pp. 366–68; and Lambrinoudakis, "Apollon" (see n. 1 above), pp. 314–16, nos. 83–85.
6. See ART GREC INSOLITE 1988, no. 21 (generically identified as a kitharoidos of the entourage of Dionysos).

7. For the presence of the type in Magna Graecia and Sicily, see M. Bell, "Hellenistic Terracottas of Southern Italy and Sicily," in UHLENBROCK 1990, pp. 65–70; for the statuettes of Apollo Kitharoidos in Paestum dated between the fourth and third centuries BC, see M. Torelli, *Tota Italia: Essays in the Cultural Formation of Roman Italy* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 57–65, pl. II; at Caulonia, a statuette of Apollo with kithara comes from the area around the altar of the Punta Stilo Sanctuary, and another piece comes from the Temple of Apollo Alaios at Cirò: M. C. Parra, "Riflessioni e novità intorno al santuario Punta Stilo (Kaulonia)" in NAVA AND OSANNA 2005, pp. 27–42. For Taranto, see G. Fiorelli, "Scoperte di antichità nell'area dell'antica città greca e nell'acropoli," *NSc* 9 (1880–81), pp. 513–14 (seven statuettes of Apollo, partially draped, with kithara); *LA MUSIQUE ET LA DANSE* 1996, pp. 52–54 (findspot assumed); LEVI 1926, no. 139, fig. 37; and WINTER 1903, p. 352, nos. 1, 4, 6–7 (Apollo with ivy wreath and kithara from Egnazia and Taranto). From Sicily, see *LA MUSIQUE ET LA DANSE* 1996, no. 47, pl. 10; LIBERTINI 1926, pl. XXXIV, no. 1 (statuette of Apollo Kitharoidos sitting on a rock from the necropolis in Contrada Cannatelli in Centuripe, datable from the second to first century BC).
8. See S. P. Noe, *The Coinage of Metapontum*, part 2 (New York, 1984), p. 96, no. 431.
9. See A. M. Comella, *Materiali votivi del santuario di Campetti a Veio* (Milan, 1990), pp. 43–44.
10. For Myrina, see BESQUES 1963, pl. 101c–d, dating to the first century BC; also BREITENSTEIN 1941, no. 508, from Syria.
11. On the identification of the musical instrument carried by Apollo and the distinction between the lyre and the kithara, see MAAS AND SNYDER 1989, pp. 175–78; S. Sarti, "Gli strumenti musicali di Apollo," *AION* 14 (1992), pp. 95–104. For this type of kithara, see also several scenes painted on Apulian and Sicilian vases in D. Paquette, *L'instrument de musique dans la céramique de la Grèce antique* (Paris, 1984), p. 104, C4, C22, C23. For Apollo with the Italiote kithara, see the scene depicted on the lid of a Sicilian *lekanē* (low handled bowl) dating to 340–30 BC, in Maas and Snyder 1989, p. 176.
12. For Macedonian wall-painting, see the seated female figure playing an Italiote kithara during a symposium in M. Tsimbidou-Avloniti, "Revealing a Painted Macedonian Tomb near Thessaloniki," in PONTRANDOLFO 2002, pp. 37–42.



Seated Eros A

LATE FOURTH-THIRD CENTURIES BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	45
Inventory Number	96.AD.265.1 ✉
Typology	Statuette
Location	Canosa
Dimensions	H: 10.5 cm; W: 5.8 cm

Fabric

A hazelnut brown color (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/6), porous, with numerous reflective inclusions. Thick white slip with polychrome pigments preserved in a number of places: pink (upper section of the wings, complexion), black (hair), light blue (edge and lower part of the wings), and red (lips and straps). Made with bivalve molds.

Condition

There are losses at the tip of the left hand and the fret boards of the instrument; surface accretions and black stains appear overall. There is a small circular hole beneath the buttocks.

Provenance

- 1988, Acanthus Gallery (New York, New York), sold to Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman (New York, New York), 1988; 1988–96, Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman (New York, New York), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996.

Bibliography

PASSION FOR ANTIQUITIES 1994, p. 355, no. 241a; ACQUISITIONS 1996–98, p. 67.

Description

The little nude, winged Eros is shown seated. The left arm holds a small lyre pressed against the abdomen; the right hand holds a *plektron*. The bright, lively polychromy is spread over a layer of white slip.¹ Two faint red straps cross over the chest; the forms of the body are plump, with a prominent belly and a clearly marked navel, chubby legs, and short, spread wings. The figure's back is flat. The face is round with delicate facial features, the eyes are slightly sunken, and the mouth is small and fleshy. The hair forms a curly mass over the forehead. For further discussion, see [cat. 46](#).

Notes

1. On polychromy in Daunian terracottas and vases, see F. Van der Wielen-van Ommeren, "Polychrome Vases and Terracottas from Southern Italy in the J. Paul Getty Museum," in *Greek Vases in the J. Paul Getty Museum, Getty Museum Occasional Papers on Antiquities* 2 (1985), pp. 171–82.



Seated Eros B

LATE FOURTH-THIRD CENTURIES BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	46
Inventory Number	96.AD.265.2 ↗
Typology	Statuette
Location	Canosa
Dimensions	H: 10.2 cm; W: 5.9 cm

Fabric

A hazelnut brown color (Munsell 7.5 yr 8/6), porous, with numerous reflective inclusions. Thick white slip with polychrome pigments preserved in a number of places: pink (upper section of the wings, complexion), black (hair and eyes), light blue (edge and lower part of the wings), white (wreath), and red (lips and straps). Made with bivalve molds.

Condition

The right hand, *plektron*, and part of the wreath are missing; there are several large chip losses on the left wing, light surface accretions, and black stains overall, probably of biological origin. The right arm has been reattached; there are three repaired breaks on the fret boards of the instrument. The surface under the wing has been abraded by the metal mount. The head is slightly larger than that of cat. 45, and it is crowned with a wreath of leaves and fruit; the lyre has been preserved intact. The straps cross over the chest and run around the attachment points of the thighs; red bands can be seen on the calves.¹

1. For the iconography of Eros in the Hellenistic period, see HERMARY AND CASSIMATIS 1986, pp. 936–42.

Provenance

– 1988, Acanthus Gallery (New York, New York), sold to Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman (New York, New York), 1988; 1988–96, Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman (New York, New York), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996.

Bibliography

PASSION FOR ANTIQUITIES 1994, p. 355, no. 241b; ACQUISITIONS 1996–98, p. 67.

Statuettes of a Seated Eros

Statuettes of a Seated Eros (cat. 45–46)

This discussion is reproduced on each of the individual object pages

These musician Erotes must originally have been mounted on animals: beneath the buttocks, there are no traces of slip or polychromy. The typology is reminiscent of Daunian examples from Canosa in the third century BC, but is also similar to the Erotes from the Hypogeum of Ganymede in Arpi. Unlike most of the Erotes from Arpi, however, these two still preserve their musical instruments.¹ The effeminate appearance of little Erotes like these is often accentuated, especially in terracotta statuettes, by such ornaments as necklaces and leg bands.

Eros, who in the Classical period is primarily a figure complementary to Aphrodite and Dionysos, enlarged his role in the Hellenistic period to become an interlocutor with the female world and a protector of marriage and female fertility, while continuing to operate in the sphere of Dionysos and Aphrodite in a broad array of situations, with the chief function of spreading good cheer and merriment. The type of the child Eros playing musical instruments was, beginning at the end of the fourth century BC and in the third century BC, widespread throughout the entire Mediterranean and became a point of reference in the iconography of goldwork and toreutics.² In the Daunian area and especially at Canosa, where there was a close relationship between coroplastic art and vase decoration, small Erotes were also attached to polychrome vases of the same period.³ There was an especially close link between Eros and music: in Attic vase-painting, Eros is often shown handing musical instruments to ephebes or watching a musical performance in the context of the gynaikeion (women's quarters), while in the Hellenistic period Eros also accompanied the Muses, as documented by images on gems.⁴ Similar Erotes from the region of Daunia are now found in many major museum collections and frequently appear on the antiquities market, often in pairs and groups of four, as they must have originally been found in their source contexts.⁵

Notes

1. M. Mazzei, *Arpi: L'ipogeo della Medusa e la necropoli* (Arpi, 1995), pp. 140–41, nos. 142–48, and pp. 261–70, with bibliography. For examples from Canosa, see *ART GREC INSOLITE* 1988, nos. 20–21 (small Erotes on dolphins and an Eros Kitharoidos); and CASSANO 1992, pp. 324–25, nos. 63–73, and pp. 520–29.

2. On the multiple roles of Eros, in Magna Graecia in particular, see HERMARY AND CASSIMATIS 1986, pp. 941–42; see also nos. 180, 218, 676. For other comparisons, see BESQUES 1972, pl. 59b, from Aegina, dating from the third quarter of the third century BC. See also the statuette of Eros with a Deer, [cat. 32](#).
3. On Daunian vases, see M. Mazzei, “Note sulla ceramica policroma di Arpi,” in *Proceedings of the 3rd Symposium on Ancient Greek and Related Pottery, Copenhagen, August 31–September 4, 1987* (Copenhagen, 1988), pp. 407–13.
4. On the relationship between Eros and music, see L. Faedo, “Le Muse suadenti: Contributi sull’iconografia delle Muse,” *Studi classici e orientali* 42 (1992), pp. 165–87.
5. CERAMIQUES ANTIQUES 1987, no. 140 (referring to the plastic decoration of a vase from Canosa). On the clandestine excavations of Arpi, see M. Mazzei, “Dalla Puglia, il caso di Arpi,” in PELAGATTI AND GUZZO 1997, pp. 95–97. On the archaeological research in Arpi, see M. Mazzei, “Arpi preromana e romana: I dati archeologici: Analisi e proposte d’interpretazione,” *Taras* 4 (1984), pp. 7–46.



One of a Pair of Altars with the Myth of Adonis

LATE FIFTH-EARLY FOURTH CENTURY BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	47
Inventory Number	86.AD.598.1 🔗
Typology	Altar
Location	Medma
Dimensions	H: 41.8 cm; W (base): 34.2 cm; D (base): 29.2 cm; W (top): 31.6 cm; D (top): 27 cm; W (hollow): 2 cm; D (hollow): 1.6 cm

Fabric

Reddish in color (Munsell 10 r 6/6-8/6) with numerous micaceous, sandy, carbonous, and calcareous inclusions of medium and large sizes; the clay is gray at the core. Pigments were applied over a layer of yellowish diluted clay and white slip.

Sporadic traces of red (hair of the figure on the left), reddish brown (drapery of the same figure), and green pigment (musical instrument of the figure in the middle and drapery of the figure on the right).

Condition

This altar and its pair, [cat 48](#), was reassembled from numerous fragments, and the polychromy is almost entirely worn away. Before acquisition, they were probably subjected to an excessively aggressive cleaning that abraded the surface at several points. Nevertheless, large areas of a pale slip remain, over which traces of pigments can be seen. Slight amounts of soil/carbonate incrustations are also visible, especially in folds and details of the figures.

Provenance

– by 1984–1986, Robin Symes (London, England), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1986.

Bibliography

ACQUISITIONS 1986, p. 160, no. 6; GETTY 1991, p. 40; * S. Settis, “Idea dell’arte greca d’Occidente fra otto e novecento: Germania e Italia,” in SETTIS 1994, pp. 855–902, esp. pp. 893, 896, figs. 20–21; GETTY 1997, p. 42; E. Towne Marcus, *Masterpieces of the J. Paul Getty Museum: Antiquities* (Los Angeles, 1997), pp. 84–85; GETTY 2001, pp. 42–43; SALAPATA 2001; GETTY 2002, p. 115; D. Sacks, *Encyclopedia of the Ancient Greek World* (New York, 2005) p. 6, illus.; GETTY 2010, p. 113; GETTY 2015, p. 23.



One of a Pair of Altars with the Myth of Adonis

LATE FIFTH-EARLY FOURTH CENTURY BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	48
Inventory Number	86.AD.598.2 ☞
Typology	Altar
Location	Medma
Dimensions	H: 41.8 cm; W (base): 33.4 cm; D (base): 28.8 cm; W (top): 31.5 cm; D (top): 27.8 cm; W (hollow): 1.7 cm; D (hollow): 2.7 cm

Fabric

Reddish in color (Munsell 10 r 6/6-8/6) with numerous micaceous, sandy, carbonous, and calcareous inclusions of medium and large sizes; the clay is gray at the core. Pigments were applied over a layer of yellowish diluted clay and white slip.

Red (hair of the seated male figure in the center and of the female figure seated on the *cista*), and green pigment (drapery of the seated female figure in the middle).

Condition

This altar and its pair, [cat 47](#), was reassembled from numerous fragments, and the polychromy is almost entirely worn away. Before acquisition, they were probably subjected to an excessively aggressive cleaning that abraded the surface at several points. Nevertheless, large areas of a pale slip remain, over which traces of pigments can be seen. Slight amounts of soil/carbonate incrustations are also visible, especially in folds and details of the figures.

Provenance

– by 1984–1986, Robin Symes (London, England), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1986.

Bibliography

ACQUISITIONS 1986, p. 160, no. 6; GETTY 1991, p. 40; * S. Settis, “Idea dell’arte greca d’Occidente fra otto e novecento: Germania e Italia,” in SETTIS 1994, pp. 855–902, esp. pp. 893, 896, figs. 20–21; GETTY 1997, p. 42; E. Towne Marcus, *Masterpieces of the J. Paul Getty Museum: Antiquities* (Los Angeles, 1997), pp. 84–85; GETTY 2001, pp. 42–43; SALAPATA 2001; GETTY 2002, p. 115; D. Sacks, *Encyclopedia of the Ancient Greek World* (New York, 2005) p. 6, illus.; GETTY 2010, p. 113; GETTY 2015, p. 23.

Pair of Altars with the Myth of Adonis

Pair of Altars with the Myth of Adonis (cat. 47–48)

This discussion is reproduced on each of the individual object pages

Due to their distinctive formal and iconographic features, this pair of altars (*arulae*) constitutes a document of extreme importance for our understanding of the cult of Adonis in Magna Graecia.

With a rectangular shape and walls tapering inward toward the top, each altar consists of five terracotta slabs assembled using *barbotine* (a liquid binder of clay and water) before firing. On all four sides, the lower and upper cornices have an egg and dart molding, made by a cylinder mold.¹ The altars are hollow with a reinforcing partition wall on the interior; small pieces of clay were added by the coroplast to reinforce the suture points. Vertical striations are visible over most of the surface where a tool was scraped over the surface to smooth it. There are many evident tool marks, including striations running horizontally across the inside, and the interiors show signs of being pressed and worked with hands; fingerprints are visible in several areas.² The main side of each altar is decorated with mold-made reliefs, depicting two related scenes. There the coroplast intervened with handwork on the drapery and the hair, refining the details with a potter's rib, and completed the decoration with polychrome pigments. A hollow with a rectangular cross section breaks the cornice, opening in the middle of the inside upper edge of each altar. Especially on cat. 48, a groove and a darker stain can be seen along the interior wall, probably left by a liquid that ran into it. A hypothesis has been put forth that the hollows used to contain pins that joined the two altars, thus making the two a unified composition not only iconographically but also structurally.³ On the upper surface, a cover—probably metal—must have been provided to protect the surface from fire, as demonstrated by the regular shape of the silhouette that is visible in infrared photographs, corresponding to the area that was protected from combustion.

This type of altar is not especially widespread but is attested in Magna Graecia and in Sicily. It could have been used for small votive offerings or, as is likely here, to burn perfumes and incense.⁴

On cat. 47, three female figures, depicted with their faces in profile and their bodies in three-quarter view, walk rapidly to the right over rocky ground; the terrain is rendered by protuberances defined through light incisions. The hands of the outer women clasp the other about her shoulders as they move in apparent procession toward the group depicted on cat. 48. Each figure, characterized by a rapt expression, is wearing a *peplos* that shows the form of the body beneath in a fluid interplay of folds that are ruffled at the ends. The woman in the middle has a *sakkos* on her head and she carries an eleven-part sistrum (percussion instrument) with both hands, while her companion on the right is holding a tympanon (drum) with her left hand.⁵ The hair of the flanking figures is short and curly, and they all wear hoop earrings with pendants.⁶

On cat. 48, a male with a youthful and effeminate appearance, turned in a three-quarter view, is seated on a rock with his legs crossed. A himation is wrapped around the legs and, leaving the torso uncovered, covers his head like a veil with a ruffled edge. The long curly hair is held back by a *mitra* (a Near Eastern headband) and extends over the shoulders.⁷ With his left hand he pulls the hem of the himation away from his face; with the right hand, he embraces the female figure seated next to him, who is depicted with torso turned frontally and ankles crossed. This figure turns her head toward the youth and wraps her left arm around his torso; her right arm is laid on her right thigh, and she is shod in sandals. Her flame-shaped locks of hair are gathered in a *lampadion* (knot) atop her head and curl alongside her face, in accordance with a fashion attested from the end of the fifth century BC, but already documented before then.⁸ On either side of this pair are two female characters: the woman on the left, shown standing behind the rocky platform, turns toward the couple; her left hand touches her head in a gesture of grief, while her right arm drops along the side of her body, her right hand holding a tympanon. She has the same hairstyle as two of the figures on cat. 47, but she wears a veil with a ruffled edge that drapes over her shoulders; her left breast is uncovered. In the foreground at right is a female figure shown in profile, seated upon a *cista* with side openings. Grasping her right knee with both hands, her head is bowed and her expression is doleful. She wears a chiton that drapes in flowing folds, and her hair is gathered in a *sphendone* (headband).

The scenes depicted on the two altars summarize crucial moments of the myth of Adonis.⁹ According to Apollodorus, who derived his account from Panyassis, Adonis was born of an incestuous love between the Assyrian king Theias and his daughter Myrrha; Aphrodite was smitten by the infant Adonis's great beauty and hid him in a box (*cista*), which she entrusted to Persephone. When Persephone opened the box, she too fell in love with the beautiful infant and decided not to give him back to Aphrodite. Zeus interceded in the quarrel between the two goddesses and ordered that Adonis should spend a third of the year with Aphrodite, a

third with Persephone and the last third wherever he liked—but Adonis chose to devote that time to Aphrodite as well.¹⁰

Well attested in the Near East, and in particular in Byblos, the cult of Adonis was brought to Greece as early as the Archaic period, probably through the Phoenician colonies and Cyprus, a major crossroads for cultural exchange between the Near East and the Greek world.¹¹ From Greece, the cult spread throughout the West, especially to Etruria, which was sensitive to Eastern models, and to Magna Graecia. There the myth and the festivities linked to it underwent substantial modification within the context of existing political and religious institutions and in relation to specific cult requirements.¹²

The first figurative evidence of the myth dates back only to the first half of the fifth century BC; images of it can be found in a number of *pinakes* (votive tablets) from Locri and from Francavilla di Sicilia and, more widespread, in Attic and Apulian vases of the late fifth century and early fourth century BC.¹³ In Etruria, scenes of the myth of Adonis decorate bronze mirrors; a terracotta urn with a dying Adonis, datable to the third century BC, comes from Tuscania.¹⁴

Despite its relatively abundant iconographic and literary documentation, there is very scant archaeological evidence of the cult of Adonis. Hence the excavations conducted in the Etruscan sanctuary at Gravisca, identified as an *Adonion*, are of great interest,¹⁵ as are the excavations undertaken in the so-called Casa dei Leoni in Locri, where the public cult of Aphrodite was supplanted in the fourth century BC by the cult of Adonis.¹⁶

On the Getty altars, according to this hypothesis, the male figure in cat. 48 rendered with a hint of languid sensuality is Adonis. He is shown embracing Aphrodite, in keeping with the scheme of the *hieros gamos* (marriage between deities), in an epiphanic projection intended as the hypostasis of the nuptial union, though his veiled head and the gesture of touching the himation hem are fairly uncommon and seem to underscore the effeminate nature of the deity.¹⁷ The couple enveloped in an air of amorous complicity is in any case a recurrent image in the Attic milieu of the end of the fifth century BC;¹⁸ it is also found in the depiction of the *hieros gamos* between Dionysos and Ariadne, who are shown seated on a rocky base on the bronze krater with Dionysian scenes from Tomb B of Derveni in Macedonia, datable between the mid-fourth century and 330 BC, which follows an Attic prototype, perhaps pictorial, of the fifth century BC.¹⁹

In this context, to maintain narrative consistency, the woman in the foreground, seated on the *cista* inside which Aphrodite supposedly concealed Adonis, can hypothetically be identified as Persephone. Depicted in a melancholy posture that enhances the expressive

intensity of the entire narrative, she also endows the scene with the sense of “fleeting life” that characterizes the myth of Adonis. Persephone is often associated with a *cista*, an iconographic attribute appropriate to this context of union and separation.²⁰ The *cista*, a distinctive element of the female world and an integral part of a bride’s trousseau, takes on a powerful symbolic value in this scene by alluding to the sad fate of Adonis. Its conceptual relevance made it a privileged iconographic motif that recurs in many depictions of the myth.

The ideological and cultic nodes that link Persephone and Aphrodite are especially close in reference to the sphere of marriage and rites of passage, and it is natural that, in the context of Adonis, the goddess of the Underworld would be physically present.²¹ The episode of the feud between Aphrodite and Persephone is clearly illustrated also on Apulian amphora from Gorgoglione (Basilicata) and on an Apulian *pelike* from Canosa, dating from the mid-fourth century BC, in the Collezione Santangelo. According to Mario Torelli, the depiction of the squabble between the two deities can be explained in terms of the process of assimilation of the Eastern myth by the Greeks and, in particular, by the Western Greek colonies. The *anodos* (ascent), the return to life, the *hieros gamos*, and Adonis’s stay in Hades, in the cyclical progression of events, offered a customary scheme in Greek mythology that was easily adaptable to situations and elements in Greek culture.²²

On the left side of cat. 48, the female figure, along with the rock motif, might constitute the visual link between the two altars. Having already come into the presence of the divine couple as the three other figures continue to hasten forward, this figure manifests profound grief, with her hand on her head and her garments in disarray. As attested also by the literary sources, lamentations and scenes of grief were an integral part of the Adonic rite.²³ The ritual also called for the display of an *eidolon* (image of an idol) representing Adonis and the preparation of a little garden (*kepos*) of short-lived, aromatic plants placed on the roofs of houses, so that with the heat of summer they might flourish and then rapidly wither, alluding to the death of the god and the brevity of life itself.²⁴ The *kepos* was acknowledged as a *thalamos*, that is, the site of the *hieros gamos* between Aphrodite and Adonis, but also a space in which to display the image of the body of the young god amid vegetation, albeit now desiccated. The rite was prevalently nocturnal,²⁵ and had widespread, intense participation, including banquets, singing, and dancing to the music of flutes, *krotales* (cymbals), and tympana. Joyful exaltation accompanied grief, and the *hieros gamos*, the death, and the ritual burial of the god were commemorated, at times with loud laments and violent gesticulations, at times with manifestations of giddy rejoicing.²⁶

The character next to the divine couple, quite similar to the first moving figure on cat. 47, might therefore be a female worshiper of Adonis witnessing the sacred wedding, a tragic

prelude to the young god's death, and bemoaning with intense mimetic force his sad fate, which is underscored by the dramatic opposition between life and death.

The three women on [cat. 47](#), who are moving rapidly to the right, are characterized as a unified group and seem to be taking direct part in the event depicted on [cat. 48](#), integrating themselves and converging ideally toward it with a tightly coordinated rhythmic concatenation. Together, the scenes depicted on the two altars seem to constitute a sacred representation of events, compressed spatially and temporally in order to synthesize and accentuate a number of significant moments in the rite.²⁷

The open-air setting of this scene, suggested by the rocky outcrops on which the figures stand and sit, and the musical instruments that they carry, such as the tympanon and sistrum, suggest the context of the *adonia*, understood as a collective female celebration within which orgiastic music, dance, and banqueting must have constituted essential components. The female figures of [cat. 47](#) constitute a *choros* and, leaning on one another with their arms around each other's shoulders, they seem to proceed in a rhythmic step, evoking a ritual dance with a strong eschatological valence.²⁸

Despite the absence of a reliable archaeological context for the altars, the distinctive characteristics of the clay that they were made in Medma, a center of coroplastic production known not only for a large series of votive terracottas, but also for a group of *arulae*, decorated with subjects taken from Attic tragedies, which have stylistic affinities with the Getty's pair of altars.²⁹ It is significant, therefore, that in Locri Epizephyrii, the mother colony of Medma, archaeological evidence of a cult of Adonis has emerged, which is reliably dated to the middle of the fourth century BC.³⁰ As previously noted, Syracuse may well have played a fundamental role in the importation of the Adonis cult to Locri, given the strong political and cultural ties between the two cities dating back as far as the reign of the Deinomenids.³¹

Although the debate over the characteristics of Italiote artistic production—outside influences versus originality—remains largely open, there can be no question that between the end of the fifth century and the beginning of the fourth century BC Syracuse became a special point of reference for the diffusion of new trends in the visual arts. Attic style, and in particular post-Phidian mannerism, prevailed there through an intense exchange of models, developed and consolidated in continuity with earlier traditions.³²

The reliance upon Attic models is also clearly evident in the style of these altars, especially in the rendering of the solid organic forms (despite occasional incongruities) and in the definition of a spatially balanced composition. The coroplast succeeded in suggesting a depth of field by arranging the figures on different planes, in part through the rocky landscape, a

contrivance that clearly points to influence from developments in contemporary painting.³³ The formal rendering also exhibits a taste for motion and chiaroscuro, accentuated by the fluttering draperies and the figures' hairstyles, which lends a fluid dynamism to the overall composition and enhances its pictorial effect.³⁴ These stylistic characteristics hark back to the same Attic context of the late fifth century BC, and to certain tastes that emerged in various artistic milieus. The latter were interpreted with great originality by the first generation of Sicilian and Apulian vase-painters, influenced by Athenian artists, and by the coroplasts and master die-engravers of Magna Graecia.³⁵

The translation of Attic exempla into the coroplastic production of Medma has been recognized both in the aforementioned *arulae* from Medma decorated with subjects taken from Attic tragedies, and in a head possibly depicting the nymph Medma and datable to the same period, now in the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire in Geneva. The compactness of form, enlivened by vibrant, vivid surfaces, as well as the fullness and fleshiness of the faces, found in the Geneva head, suggest the prevalence of a sophisticated workshop tradition.³⁶ Contacts between Medma and Athens may be related to the diplomatic mission of the Athenian ambassador Phaeax during that city's ill-fated expedition to Sicily, as previously conjectured by Salvatore Settis through a careful reconstruction of the historical events.³⁷ On the other hand, the mother colony of Locri Epizephyrii, through Syracusan mediation, may have played a role in transmitting artistic or religious traditions. It is difficult to determine with any certainty which scenario prevailed, but the current state of research suggests that the distinctive Attic imprint only partially influenced the production of Locri in the field of coroplastic art.³⁸ Taken together, the evidence suggests that the altars date between the end of the fifth and the beginning of the fourth century BC, and may come from the Medma area, possibly from a funerary context; such a context is attested for the previously mentioned Medma *arulae* and is also suggested by the state of preservation, though the altars may not originally have been intended for a tomb. It is more reasonable to suppose that the altars were conceived as an iconographical and structural pair that would have been used during the rituals of the *adonia*, as suggested by the traces on the upper edge left by a tray that protected the surface from fire.³⁹ In any case, they can be considered an expression of that cultural and political context in the area of Medma, which for a brief period between the fifth and fourth century BC, was marked by an Athenian presence.

Notes

1. For similar examples in terracotta, see the cornice of a fifth-century BC *arula* from Gela: P. Orsi, "Gela: Scavi del 1900–1905," *MonAnt* 17 (1906), fig. 217; the motif of the egg, dart, and tongue pattern is notably also on the *arula* from Crotone: see L. La Rocca, "Arule e ceramiche a rilievo di produzione crotoniate," in R. Belli Pasqua and R. Spadea, eds., *Kroton e il suo territorio tra VI e V secolo a.C.: Aggiornamenti e nuove ricerche: Atti del Convegno di studi, Crotone, 3–5 Marzo 2000* (Crotone, 2005), pp.

43–52, pls. XVI–XVII; also dating from the fifth century BC are two fragments of acroteria, respectively from Metaponto and Caulonia, in E. Douglas Van Buren, *Archaic Fictile Revetments in Sicily and Magna Graecia* (Washington, 1973), pl. XVII, figs. 69–70. See also the cornices of an Archaic *arula* from Naxos in LENTINI 1993, pp. 99–100, AND FROM HIMERA, IN BELVEDERE 1982, pl. XXV, no. 1.

2. For the system of fabricating *arulae*, see MEIJDEN 1993, pp. 10–11; BELVEDERE 1982, pp. 61–67; D. Ricciotti, *Antiquarium Comunale di Roma: Terrecotte votive*, 1. *Arule* (Rome, 1978), pp. 8–13.
3. According to Salapata, because the hollows actually damaged the cornice, they must have been made later: SALAPATA 2001, esp. p. 25.
4. For similarly sized altars, see the examples from Medma dating to the end of the fifth century BC; these come from funerary contexts and depict scenes from Attic tragedies: M. Paoletti, “Arule di Medma e tragedie attiche,” APARCHAI 1982, vol. 1, pp. 372–92. Also likely from Medma, but dating from the Archaic period, is a fragment of an *arula* with *korai* and Ionic capitals: see MILLER AMMERMAN 1985, p. 10. Compare also with the altars from Locri and Selinunte: C. Yavis, *Greek Altars: Origins and Typology* (St. Louis, 1949), pp. 170–71, 174; the three *arulae*, of substantial size, from the emporium of Gela datable to the first quarter of the fifth century BC, in R. Panvini, *Tiranni e culti della Sicilia in età arcaica*, exh. cat. (Siracusa, Palazzo Bellomo, 2001). See also the *arulae* from Himera originally from domestic settings, in BELVEDERE 1982, pp. 103–6. Although mentioned in literary sources, pairs of *arulae* or altars are only rarely found: of note are two terracotta *arulae* found together in a domestic setting in Locri: M. Barra Bagnasco, “Aspetti di religiosità domestica a Locri Epizefiri,” in SANTUARI DELLA MAGNA GRECIA IN CALABRIA 1996, pp. 81–88. Also from Himera are two *arulae* of the same shape and size, datable to 430–409 BC: BELVEDERE 1982, pp. 80–81, pl. XIV. On the presence of a tray on the top surface, often corresponding with a depression, see D. W. Rupp, “Greek Altars of the Northeastern Peloponnese, ca. 750/725 BC to ca. 300/275 BC,” Ph.D. diss., Bryn Mawr College (1974), p. 502.
5. The sistrum held by women in Apulian iconography of the fourth century BC, frequently present in wedding and funeral contexts, was a musical instrument consisting of a series of horizontal elements, probably with metal cores, that were joined by vertical crosspieces. The sistrum produced sound either through percussion or shaking. The type shown here is more rarely seen and smaller in size than the examples depicted on Apulian vases; its horizontal and vertical elements terminate in small spheres. The horizontal elements were of varying thickness, which produced sounds of higher or lower pitch. On the origins, structure, and depiction of the sistrum, see L. Lepore, “Il sistro italico strumento, attributo, oggetto di culto,” *Imago Musicae* 8 (1991), pp. 95–108; H. R. W. Smith, *Funerary Symbolism in Apulian Vase Painting* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1976), pp. 126–32.
6. The typology of the earring with a circular silhouette with pendant is fairly common in Magna Graecia; see P. G. Guzzo, *Oreficerie della Magna Grecia* (Taranto, 1993), p. 247.
7. The *mitra* was also often worn by the wine god Dionysos or the mythical boatman Phaon, and is a recurrent element in the iconography of deities involved in erotic scenes or scenes of passion; in this connection, see CASSIMATIS 1987. In fact, the iconography of Adonis between the fifth century and the fourth century BC is in many ways similar to that of Dionysos and other young lovers of Aphrodite: they are characterized by an effeminate appearance with flowing hair and are depicted in languid sitting poses. See C. Gasparri, s.v. “Dionysos,” LIMC 3 (1986), p. 414, nos. 743–45; and L. Burn, “A Dinoid Volute-Krater by the Meleager Painter: An Attic Vase in the South Italian Manner,” *Greek Vases in the J. Paul Getty Museum*, Occasional Papers on Antiquities 5 (1992), p. 118, fig. 7b–c. For the iconography of Adonis in the late fifth century BC, see also J. Reed, “The Sexuality of Adonis,” ClAnt 14 (1995), pp. 342–46. For the position of Adonis, see also the figures of Herakles seated before an altar on a stater from Crotone, datable to 420–390 BC, which recalls an image of Dionysos painted by the Karneia Painter in the late fifth century BC: see R. Ross Holloway, *Art and Coinage in Magna Graecia* (Bellinzona, 1978), pp. 88, 138. On the gesture of the hand on the shoulder as an indication of possession and consummated union, and open to interpretation in a nuptial context, see M. Baggio, *I gesti della seduzione: Tracce di comunicazione non verbale nella ceramica greca tra VI e IV secolo a.C.* (Rome, 2004), pp. 203–10.

8. The *lampadion* hairstyle has, in general, been dated to the beginning of the fourth century, but in Sicily it can also be found in coroplastic material assigned to the last years of the fifth century BC; in this connection, see SPAGNOLO 2000.
9. For a bibliography on the myth and cult of Adonis, see TORELLI 1997, pp. 233–91; by studying the iconographic and literary sources available, the author was able to interpret the so-called delta building of Gravisa as an *Adonion*, identifying each part of the structure with a specific phase of the ritual. For the iconographic documentation, see SERVAIS-SOYEZ 1991.
10. Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* 3.14.4–5.
11. On the relations between Adonis and the East, see RIBICHINI 1981, pp. 21–27, 145–70; S. Ribichini, *Poenus advena: Gli dei fenici e l'interpretazione classica* (Rome, 1985), pp. 50–54.
12. The spread of the cult of Adonis in Greek territory, according to Torelli, was encouraged by those distinctly eastern aspects of the god's myth pertaining to royalty and the exercise of power, which found resonance in the Archaic Greek context; in this connection, see TORELLI 1997, p. 245.
13. For the *pinakes* from Locri with the scene of the “youth with a ‘cista mystica,’” see TORELLI 1997, p. 264; and H. Prückner, *Die Lokrischen Tonreliefs: Beitrag zur Kultgeschichte von Lokroi Epizephyroi* (Mainz, 1968), pp. 31–36; for Francavilla, see U. Spigo, “I pinakes di Francavilla di Sicilia: Nuova classificazione e brevi note sugli aspetti culturali,” in *DAMARATO* 2000, pp. 211–12, types xix, xx; U. Spigo, entry no. 167, in PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1996, p. 647. For the iconography of Attic and Apulian vases, see TORELLI 1997, p. 233, NN. 3–6; SERVAIS-SOYEZ 1991, nos. 1, 5, 8–11, 27, 45–49.
14. For Etruscan mirrors, see SERVAIS-SOYEZ 1991, pp. 223–28, where Adonis is often depicted bare-chested, with long hair, sitting on a rock; see also RALLO 1974, no. 6, pl. XVI, no. 1. For the urn from Tuscania, see B. M. Felletti Maj, s.v. “Adone,” *EAA* 1 (Rome, 1984), pp. 68–71.
15. For the *Adonion* of Gravisa, see TORELLI 1997, pp. 234–44.
16. See BARRA BAGNASCO 1994.
17. For the iconography of the *theogamia* represented by the seated embracing couple, see CASSIMATIS 1987, pp. 77–80. See also the group of Dionysos and Ariadne depicted in Attic vases from the first half of the fourth century BC in BERTI 1991, nos. 10, 12–13. Adonis is depicted lifting a himation with his left hand on a volute krater by the Baltimore Painter: see A. D. Trendall, *Red-Figured Vases of South Italy and Sicily: A Handbook* (London, 1989), fig. 251.
18. In this connection, see SERVAIS-SOYEZ 1991, p. 229. A comparable iconographic scheme can also be found in a bronze relief from the early Hellenistic period, found in Paramythia (Epirus), and perhaps depicting Aphrodite and Anchises on Mount Ida, for which a Tarentine origin has been conjectured; see C. Tzouvara-Souli, “Cults and Temples in Epirus, Magna Graecia and Sicily,” in *La Magna Grecia e i grandi santuari della madrepatria, Atti Taranto* 31, 1991 (Taranto, 1992), pp. 116–19, pl. IV, no. 4. For the seated male figure, depicted in three-quarter view, with legs crossed in a relaxed position, a figure found also in the coinage of Magna Graecia of the late fifth century BC, see R. Ross Holloway, *Art and Coinage in Magna Graecia* (Bellinzona, 1978), pp. 58–59, 138; L. Massei, “Schemi statuari nella ceramica apula,” *APARACHAI** 1982, vol. 1, pp. 483–500; see also the group of Ariadne and Dionysos (or a satyr) sitting on a rock in a Tarentine mold that was probably used for the decoration of *arulae, vases, or thymiateria (incense burners); here too the male figure has his legs crossed and long hair: A. Muller, “Petite plastique de Tarente: Modeleurs et mouleurs,” *Genava* 48 (2000), pp. 37–54; see also the terracotta group of Aphrodite and Adonis from Nisyros, now in the Badisches Landesmuseum in Karlsruhe, published in J. Thimme, ed., *Antike Terrakotten*, Bildhefte des Badischen Landesmuseums (Karlsruhe, 1960), fig. 18.
19. For the Derveni bronze krater, see C. Rolley, “Les bronzes grecs: Recherches récents,” *RA* 2 (1987), pp. 335–60, esp. pp. 352–57; E. Youri, *Ho Krateras tou Derveniou* (Athens, 1978), and B. S. Ridgway, “Court and Hellenistic Art,” in RIDGWAY 2004, pp. 158–84. See also M. Pfrommer, “Italien–Makedonien–Kleinasiens: Interdependenzen spätklassischer und fruhhellenistischer Toreutik,” *JdI* 98 (1983), pp. 235–85.

20. The typological scheme with the knee grasped by crossed hands generally recurs in funerary contexts and the pose can express either grief or meditation; for female characters, see the two deities generally identified as Demeter and Kore sitting on a cista in the eastern pediment of the Parthenon: O. Palagia, *The Pediments of the Parthenon*, 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1993), p. 20. Also, a coin of Elis depicts the figure of Nike seated with crossed legs in a funerary context: L. Lacroix, "La Nike des monnaies d'Elis," *Études d'archéologie numismatique* (Paris, 1974), pp. 13–21. See the figure of Electra in the scheme of the weeping woman on a panathenaic amphora in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples: A. D. Trendall, *The Red-Figured Vases of Lucania, Campania, and Sicily* (Oxford, 1967), p. 115, no. 597. But it is in the Attic white-ground lekythoi that this pose recurs frequently; see, for instance, D. C. Kurtz, *Athenian White Lekythoi: Painters and Patterns* (Oxford, 1975), pls. 38.2, 44.1. The pose can also be found in male characters, for example in the figure of Amphiaraoς engraved on an Etruscan mirror and in the figure on the Faliscan krater with the myth of the Argonauts, dating from the first half of the fourth century BC: RALLO 1974, pls. I, no. 1, pl. II, nos. 1–2. Hermes is depicted in the same pose on a red-figured kylix: see T. Dohrn, "Gefaltete und verschränkte Hände," *JdI* 70 (1955), pp. 50–80. The seated figure on cat. 48 has also been identified as an attendant of Aphrodite, perhaps Peitho, the embodiment of erotic persuasion, who has carried the bridal chest for the wedding: see SALAPATA 2001, pp. 40–41.
21. The type of the rectangular box with a flat lid and four small feet, in some cases quite large in size, is well attested in Magna Graecia from the second half of the fifth century and in the fourth century BC: see G. M. A. Richter, *The Furniture of the Greeks, Etruscan and Romans* (London, 1966), pp. 74–76. In the *pinakes* of Locri, the cista is a specific attribute of Persephone and emphasizes the powerful connection of the goddess of the Underworld with the world of women and marriage; see SOURVINOU-INWOOD 1978, pp. 110, 116–18. Also, see a statuette from Medma, possibly depicting Persephone seated on a throne, holding a small box in her right hand: R. Miller, "The Terracotta Votives from Medma: Cult and Coroplastic Craft in Magna Graecia," Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan (1984), p. 306, no. 23. For the presence of the box in depictions of the *adonia* in Attic and Apulian vases, see in particular the examples in SERVAIS-SOYEZ 1991, nos. 45, 46, and ATALLAH 1966, figs. 41, 42, 49. See also F. Lissarrague, "Women, Boxes, Containers: Some Signs and Metaphors," in E. Reeder, *Pandora: Women in Classical Greece*, exh. cat. (Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, 1995), pp. 91–100.
22. For the depictions on the two vases, see TORELLI 1997, pp. 272–74; on the significance of the *anodos* of Adonis in connection with the ritual celebration, see pp. 269–70, 272–73.
23. In this connection, consider Sappho's fragment 140 concerning a lamentation of the death of Adonis: see E. M. Voigt, ed., *Sappho et Alcaeus: Fragmenta* (Amsterdam, 1971); see also the references in Thucydides (6.30) and Plutarch's *Lives: Alcibiades* 18. For the manifestations of grief in the *adonia*, see TORELLI 1997, pp. 263–65. In the context of Magna Graecia, Nossis, a female poet from Locri who was often linked to Sappho because of their mutual affiliation with a "female circle" dedicated to the handsome Adonis, in her sixth epigram urged the *korai* to beat their breasts and rend their chitons; in this connection, see M. Gigante, "Nosside," *PdP* 154–155 (1974), pp. 22–39. The ritual burial accompanied by funeral chants is also discussed in E. Di Filippo Balestrazzi, "Il giovane di Mozia: Una nuova ipotesi interpretativa," *Numismatiche e antichità classiche: Quaderni ticinesi* 24 (1995), pp. 133–64, n. 124.
24. For a structural analysis of the myth and the ritual, see M. Detienne, *I giardini di Adone* (Turin, 1975), which emphasizes the contrast between agrarian rites in honor of Demeter and the *adonia*, which were bound up with the concept of infecundity and fleeting sexual pleasure. Women participating in the rite, as an essential requirement for union with the deity, had to climb upstairs to the roof of the house, as is extensively documented in Italiote vase-painting.
25. Alciphron (4.14) tells of a certain Philomena who, in the middle of the night, joined her friends to take part in the ritual of the *adonia*.
26. In the fifteenth *Idyll*, dedicated to a description of an *adionion* celebrated in Alexandria in the third century BC, Theocritus reveals that, on the day after the celebration, women supposedly carried the body of Adonis to the seashore and, beating their breasts with disheveled hair, intoned a lamentation and tossed the simulacrum of the god and the "gardens" into the sea as a purification rite, awaiting the return of the young god: see Theocritus *Idylls* 129–33; see also the commentary in ATALLAH 1966, pp. 112–13. It is evident that the *adonia* could either take on the nature of a public celebration, as in Alexandria in the third century BC, or preserve a private and more licentious character, as documented on Attic and Italiote

vases, especially those depicting the preparation of the “gardens” on the roofs of the houses. These were special occasions that offered women a measure of free expression, including sexual expression, outside of the rigid social boundaries by which they were restricted in Greek society. In this connection, see the vase-paintings in SERVAIS-SOYEZ 1991, nos. 45, 49.

27. This tendency to portray the myth of Adonis as a stage drama, in keeping with the dynamics of ritual, can be clearly seen as well in vase-paintings and in scenes on Etruscan mirrors; see TORELLI 1997, p. 275.
28. For the ritual dances, see also L. Todisco, “La Tomba delle Danzatrici di Ruvo,” in idem, *Pittura e ceramica figurata tra Grecia, Magna Grecia e Sicilia* (Bari, 2006), pp. 17–40. The presence of the tympanon in the *adonia*, often associated with a sistrum, is attested in vase depictions: SERVAIS-SOYEZ 1991, p. 224, no. 10; pp. 227–28, no. 48; TORELLI 1997, p. 256, figs. 22–23. On the role of music and aromas in rituals honoring Adonis, see RIBICHINI 1981, pp. 73–80, with special reference to the Eastern context that the Greeks adopted in interpreting this myth. For the presence of tympanon in terracotta female statuettes from Hellenistic period, frequently connected to the cult of Demeter, Kore, and Artemis, see A. Bellia, *Coroplastica con raffigurazioni musicali nella Sicilia greca, secoli VI–III a.C.* (Rome, 2009), pp. 163–65. For the role of the dance in the cult of Adonis, see H. A. Shapiro et al., s.v. “Dance,” *ThesCRA* 2 (2004), pp. 299–43, esp. p. 318.
29. On the coroplastic art in Medma, see S. Settim, s.v. “Medma,” *EAA*, 3 suppl. (Rome, 1995), pp. 580–82. For *arulae*, in particular, see M. Paoletti, “Arule di Medma e tragedie attiche,” in *APARACHAI* 1982, pp. 372–92. On the dispersal of the terracottas of Medma onto the antiquities market and into private and museum collections, see PAOLETTI 1981, pp. 47–92.
30. For the cult of Adonis in Locri see BARRA BAGNASCO 1994; for the role of Locri in the establishment of the religious system of Medma, see M. Paoletti, “I culti di Medma,” in *SANTUARI DELLA MAGNA GRECIA IN CALABRIA* 1996, pp. 95–97. A myth of Eastern origin that featured Aphrodite and Persephone—deities who in Locri were strongly connected but also contrasting—was likely to find an enthusiastic reception in a context steeped in Eastern characteristics, where the central role of women in both religious cults and social life was well attested; see for this connection: SOURVINOU-INWOOD 1978.
31. In this connection, see E. Manni, *Sicilia pagana* (Palermo, 1963). At the end of the fifth century BC, the tyrant Dionysius I of Syracuse, who married to a woman from Locri, composed a tragedy dedicated to Adonis. In addition, as mentioned in *Idyll 15* of Theocritus, the two women who participate in the Alexandrian *adonia* were in fact Syracusan. For attestation of the cult of Adonis in Sicily as early as the first half of the fifth century BC, see U. Spigo, “I pinakes di Francavilla di Sicilia: Nuova classificazione e brevi note sugli aspetti cultuali,” in *DAMARATO* 2000, pp. 211–12.
32. For cultural and artistic influences in Locri, see M. Barra Bagnasco, “Apporti esterni ed elaborazione locale nella coroplastica locrese tra V e IV secolo a.C.,” *BdA* 25 (1984), pp. 39–52. Regarding the Locri area, consider the private aspect of the cult of Adonis identified by Barra Bagnasco in the “Casa dei Leoni,” which is similar to Athenian ritual of the fifth century BC: see BARRA BAGNASCO 1994.
33. The depiction of space would become an especially important theme in the Tarentine reliefs as well; for the influence of the coroplastic production on subsequent stone sculpture, see CARTER 1975, pp. 28–29, 36–37.
34. A combination of “pictoricism” and plasticity characterizes a number of Attic works; for an instance, see RIDGWAY 1997, p. 6, for the stele of Dexileos. The locks of hair with their sinuous curls are reminiscent of the style of the Chequer Painter, active in Sicily between the end of the fifth century and the beginning of the fourth century BC; he was influenced by such Attic artists as the Meidias Painter and was especially in tune with the echoes of post-Phidian mannerism. In this connection, see M. De Cesare, “Il Pittore della Scaccheria e la nascita della ceramografia figurata siceliota,” in AMPOLLO 2009, pp. 277–94; and A. D. Trendall, “New Vases by the Chequer Painter,” in H. Froning and T. Hölscher, *Kotinos: Festschrift für Erika Simon* (Mainz, 1992), pp. 301–5. Similar characteristics can also be found in coroplastic work, such as the dancing maenad of Locri: see P. E. Arias, “La menade di Locri,” in *Alessandria e il mondo ellenistico-romano: Studi in onore di Achille Adriani* (Rome, 1983–84), pp. 677–79. For the mannerism of the drapery, see the stele from Kos, from the end of the fifth century BC, in A. M. Cornella, *I rilievi votivi greci di periodo arcaico e classico: Diffusione, ideologia, committenza* (Bari, 2002), fig. 83, p. 89.

35. For the influence of Attic vases in Sicily, see F. Giudice, “La ceramica attica del IV secolo a.C. in Sicilia ed il problema della formazione delle officine locale,” in *LA SICILIA DEI DUE DIONISI* 2002, pp. 169–201; U. Spigo, “Il problema degli influssi della pittura vascolare attica nella ceramica a figure rosse,” in *I vasi attici ed altre ceramiche coeve in Sicilia: Atti del convegno internazionale: Catania, Camarina, Gela, Vittoria, 28 marzo–1 aprile 1990*, Cronache di archeologia 29–30 (Catania, 1996), pp. 51–65. The “omega” folds can be found in figures by the Painter of Bologna 501 dating from the first half of the fourth century BC; the refined definition of the folds in the draping cloth would become a stylistic motif in the work of such vase-painters as the followers of the Tarporley Painter and the artists of the Long Overfalls Group; see A. D. Trendall and A. Cambitoglou, *The Red-Figured Vases of Apulia*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1978), pp. 63–68, 79–80; for the Painter of Bologna 501, see pp. 97–98. The sensitive modeling, especially noticeable in the profiles and the treatment of the eyelids, as well as the fluent rendering of the hairstyles, is also reminiscent of the female heads found in the series of coins made by Kimon and Euainetos in the late fifth and early fourth centuries BC; see G. K. Jenkins, *Coins of Greek Sicily* (London, 1976), figs. 68–70, pp. 52–58. For the Attic influence in the coinage of Magna Graecia at the end of the fifth century BC, see N. Franco Parise, “Le emissioni monetarie di Magna Graecia: Dalla fondazione di Thuri all’età di Archidamo,” in *SETTIS* 1994, pp. 403–19, figs. 15–17.
36. In the *arula* from Medma with a representation of Pirithous (king of the Lapiths), similar characteristics are found, such as the jutting rocks; the female figure, seated and lost in thought; the position of Pirithous; and a naïveté in the rendering of the poses and certain details; see PAOLETTI 1981, pl. 96, no. 1; S. Settis, “Bellerofonte a Medma,” in *SETTIS* 1987, pp. 250–58, and in that same volume, for the female head in Geneva, see his essay “Una testa di Medma da Atene a Ginevra,” pp. 263–83.
37. S. Settis, “Una testa di Medma,” op. cit., pp. 269–70, 280.
38. For the Athenian influences in the area of Locri and the diffusion of the Adonis cult, see M. Barra Bagnasco, pp. 326–33 in *Mito e storia in Magna Grecia: Atti Taranto 36, 1996* (Taranto, 1997); on the affinity between Locrian and Attic *pinakes*, see M. C. Parra, “L’arte greca in Italia meridionale, tra scoperte, riscoperte e ricezione” in CATONI AND SETTIS 2008, pp. 79–91, esp. pp. 84–85. On the derivation of Locri’s *pinakes* from Syracusean models, see M. C. Parra, “Pinakes di Hipponium,” *Annali della Scuola normale superiore di Pisa* (1989), pp. 559–65. Compare also a stele from Crotone datable to the end of the fifth century BC, deeply derivative of an Attic model: E. Lattanzi, “Osservazioni su una stele funeraria in marmo con scena di commiato,” in R. Belli Pasqua and R. Spadea, *Kroton e il suo territorio tra VI e V secolo a.C.: Aggiornamenti e nuove ricerche: Atti del Convengo di Studio, Crotone 3–5 marzo 2000* (Crotone, 2005), pp. 19–23; and M. Corrado and R. E. Malena, “Esperienze di scultura attica post-fidiaca in Magna Grecia: Esame tecnico di una presunta stele funeraria polimaterica da Kroton,” *BdA* vol. speciale, *International Congress of Classical Archaeology: Meetings between Cultures in the Ancient Mediterranean* (Rome, 2008), pp. 57–67. For the cultural exchanges between Locri and Medma with regard to the distribution of terracottas, see MILLER AMMERMAN 1985, pp. 5–19. On the possible intermediary role played by Syracuse in the spread of Attic art to Locri, see P. E. Arias, “L’arte locrese nelle sue principali manifestazioni artigianali: Terrecotte, bronzi, vasi, arti minori,” in *Locri Epizefiri, Atti Taranto 16, 1976* (Naples, 1977), pp. 503–5. On the array of problems linked to Attic influences in the context of pottery workshops in Sicily and Locri, see also U. Spigo, “Composizione e racconto: Documenti di cultura pittorica nella ceramica siceliota del IV secolo a.C. dalle necropoli di Lipari,” in M. Barra Bagnasco and M. C. Conti, eds., *Studi di archeologia classica dedicati a Giorgio Gullini* (Turin, 1999), pp. 186–87; see also F. Giudice, *Vasi e frammenti “Beazley” da Locri Epizefiri e ruolo di questa città lungo le rotte verso l’Occidente* (Catania, 1989), pp. 90–91, 96–105. Also on relations between Athens and South Italy in the context of pottery production and the comparative iconographical choices in the second half of the fifth century BC, see L. Todisco, “Atene e Magna Grecia: Percorsi iconologici,” *Ostraka* 6, no. 1 (1997), pp. 135–53.
39. As pointed out above, burning incense or other aromatic substances must have been an integral part of the rituals honoring Adonis.



49

Altar with Animals

350-300 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number

49

Inventory Number

71.AD.148 [e](#)

Typology

Altar

Location	South Italy
Dimensions	H: 8.7 cm; W: 10 cm; D: 10.7 cm; inscription panel: 3.4 x 1.7 cm

Fabric

Reddish in color (Munsell 2.5 yr 7/8–7.5 yr 8/6), hard, and porous with numerous reflective and calcareous inclusions of considerable size.

Condition

Gaps at the corners and in the cornices.

Provenance

– 1968, Fallani (Rome, Italy); 1971, Royal Athena Galleries (New York, New York), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1971.

Bibliography

SELECTED WORKS 1971, no. 60; KINGSLEY 1976, p. 13, fig. 36.

Description

The *arula*, parallelepiped in shape, is squared off with rectangular cornices at the top and the base, above which a thin fillet serves as a ground line for the figures. The underside was hollowed out in order to reduce the weight and to facilitate firing. The four faces are decorated with molded figures of animals in low relief, which were finished with a potter's rib.¹ The letters ΔΙΟ (Dionysos) are inscribed on the top surface.²

On the front, a griffin advances toward the right, confronting the lioness on the adjacent side with its left front paw lifted and wings spread; they are attached at the shoulder and defined by incised, elongated feathers; the left (back) wing appears in profile beneath the creature's head. The anatomical parts are stylized, especially the long, flexing body and the S-curved tail, which belong to the Archaic tradition.³

On the right side, a goat is depicted in a stationary stance facing left, with front and back legs joined and firmly planted on the ground. The animal's head is lowered, with the muzzle

pressed against its chest as if preparing to charge the panther on the adjacent side. The goat has delicate horns that curve back along the neck, a short upturned tail, a prominent phallus, and fleece rendered in small, wavy locks.

On the back, a panther moves toward the right, with its left paw raised. The body is sinuous and arched, with a well-defined attachment of the back left leg; the long tail twists and curves upward in a sigmate shape.

On the left side, a lioness faces left with her right front paw raised. Her body is long, narrowing at the middle, and the fur is rendered in a stylized manner with short, flame-shaped locks; the tail and the attachment of the back leg are similar to the preceding figure.

This type of *arula*—small in size, made from a block of clay, and decorated with animals and mythological creatures—is widespread in Magna Graecia, especially in Metaponto,⁴ Caulonia,⁵ and Locri,⁶ and is generally dated to the second half of the fourth century BC. There are significant ties between the four animals and the deity to whom the *arula* was to be dedicated: the griffin, the panther, the lioness, and the goat, in fact, frequently accompany Dionysos and his entourage. The association with the griffin and the panther seems to be documented as far back as the end of the fifth century, as documented by Apulian vases. The griffin seems to be more closely affiliated with a type of chthonic Dionysos that is probably of Thracian-Phrygian origin.⁷

In Sicily, too, as early as in the Archaic period, *arulae* with depictions of animals have been found, evidence of the early assimilation by the colonial world of iconographic motifs from the Greek and Eastern regions, motifs that, through the medium of vases as well, persist over time without any particular stylistic development. Likewise, a number of Archaic formal conventions, such as the S-shaped tails, found also in small Laconian or Corinthian bronzes diffused in the West, would continue to appear for a long time.⁸ The most pertinent comparison is with a number of *arulae* from Metaponto that present the same typology and subjects, though they are arranged in a different order; the use of individual molds allowed a certain decorative variety within a substantially repetitive production.⁹

There is some debate over the origin of this type: Pierre Wuilleumier believed it could be assigned to Tarentine production due to its similarity to subjects found in appliqués or in imitations of gilded terracotta costume jewelry, as well as in Apulian vases. Other scholars believe the type could be more properly assigned to the area of Metaponto, especially due to the quantity of pieces found in that area.¹⁰

Notes

1. For this type of *arula*, see MEIJDEN 1993, TI 27–34 (from Metaponto) and TI 35 (from Taranto), pls. 24–25, pp. 28–38, 243–44, datable to the second half of the fourth century BC.
2. See the inscription dedicated to Dionysos in abbreviation and in the Achaean alphabet inscribed on an Attic oinochoe dating from the end of the sixth century BC: F. G. Lo Porto, “Testimonianze archeologiche di culti metapontini,” *Xenia* 16 (1988), pp. 5–28, fig. 17. For the abbreviated name of Dionysos in Taras, see WUILLEUMIER 1939, pp. 394–95; *TARANTO* 1995, pp. 181–82.
3. For the depiction of the griffin, see ORLANDINI 1959, pls 29, nos. 3–30; D. Ricciotti, *Terrecotte votive, 1. Arule, Studi materiali dei Musei e monumenti comunale di Roma, Antiquarium Comunale di Roma* (Rome, 1978), p. 62, pl. XXXIII; C. Delplace, *Le griffon de l'archaïsme à l'époque impériale: Étude iconographique et essai d'interprétation symbolique* (Brussels, 1980), pp. 151–60.
4. For Metaponto, see LETTA 1971, pl. XXIX, nos. 1–4 (late fourth–third century BC); LO PORTO 1966, p. 154, fig. 15 (*arula* in reddish clay with the figure of a griffin and a lion, from Contrada Sansone).
5. For Caulonia, see P. Orsi, “Caulonia,” *MonAnt* 23 (1914), fig. 58 (from a domestic context); H. Tréziny, *Kaulonia: Sondage sur la fortification nord, 1982–1985* (Naples, 1989), p. 79, no. 353, figs. 51–54. A Caulonian origin has also been proposed for the four miniature *arulae* found in Naxos, Sicily: see LENTINI 1993, pp. 42–43.
6. For Locri: BARRA BAGNASCO 1989, pp. 55–60, 118–19, pl. XXVI, no. 142.
7. For the association of Dionysos with the panther and the goat, see L. Bodson, *Hiera zōia: Contribution à l'étude de la place de l'animal dans la religion grecque ancienne* (Brussels, 1978), pp. 127–28; J. R. Green, *Gnathia Pottery in the Akademisches Kunstmuseum Bonn* (Mainz am Rhein, 1976), pl. 6, no. 5 (*pelike* with a running panther, 340–330 BC). For the links between Dionysos and the griffin, see WOYSCH-MÉAUTIS 1982, pp. 84–87, and in particular at Metaponto, see TEMPESTA 2005.
8. From Gela, there is an *arula* with a front panel depicting a griffin in deep relief, datable as early as the second half of the sixth century BC; see ORLANDINI 1959, pp. 99–100, figs. 29, 30; see also the *arula* from Vassallaggi (Gela), fig. 30, no. 1a. A similar *arula* comes from Agrigento and is generally dated to the fourth century BC; see SCHÜRMANN 1989, no. 373, fig. 65.
9. Consider the comparison suggested in n. 4; there is a similar *arula* also in S. Lagona, *La collezione Santapaola nel Museo archeologico di Lentini* (Catania, 1973), pp. 107–8, no. 306, pl. XL.
10. The hypothesis that this type originated in Metaponto was also supported in LO PORTO 1966; for the presence of the cult of Dionysos in Metaponto, see TEMPESTA 2005, with further bibliography.

Miniature Altar with Animal Combat

LATE SIXTH-EARLY FIFTH CENTURIES BC

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Object Details

Catalogue Number	50
Inventory Number	77.AD.122 ↗
Typology	Altar
Location	South Italy
Dimensions	H: 4.9 cm; L: 14.1 cm; D: 6.4 cm

Fabric

Orange in color (Munsell 2.5 yr 7/6), with small reflective inclusions; the surface is covered by a thick whitish slip. Intermittent traces of red pigment on the cornices and on the front, and black pigment on the small palm tree.

Condition

Partially reassembled from five fragments; part of the front section is preserved, as well as part of the upper surface, one of the short sides, and a small fragment of the back section.

Provenance

- 1977, Joel Kass (Culver City, California), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1971.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The *arula* is of the type shaped like a parallelepiped box, open on the bottom and decorated with reliefs on both of the long sides. On the front, in a heraldic arrangement, two facing felines sink their fangs into an animal, perhaps a deer, which is looking backward; its legs have already collapsed beneath it. The scene is bounded on the left by a small palmette, which no doubt once had a mate in a symmetrical position at the other extremity. On the corresponding long side, only the upper fragment of a palmette is preserved. The felines are shown in silhouette, with their muzzles seen frontally; they are gripping the animal by the neck and the rump; the bodies are slender, but the mold is worn and the details of the animals' muzzles and anatomy are obscured.

The upper side is smooth, and the decorated sides are framed by a flat cornice above and below. The *arula* was assembled from individual panels, joined together with barbotine; the joining points have been smoothed with a spatula.¹ The lively original polychromy is now almost entirely gone; all that remains are traces of red pigment on the cornices and some black pigment on the palm tree.

This altar type, narrow and elongate in shape with scenes of fighting felines, is reminiscent of *arulae* from Locri and especially from Caulonia, where they are found in great numbers, especially in domestic settings.² The *arulae* from the Achaean colony, exported to Locri or reproduced there from molds primarily coming from Caulonia, stand out for their smaller size relative to Locrian types, and for their surface color, which in the latter is pinkish. After the Locrian types, they were the most common types in Magna Graecia, where there was a notable receptivity toward iconographic motifs drawn from the Ionic tradition, often modified to suit local tastes. In Sicily, too, beginning in the Archaic period, *arulae* with a zoomachia (animal combat) have been found at Lipari,³ Agrigento, Heraclea Minoa, Gela, Monte Saraceno, Himera, Solunto, Zankle, Paternò, and Mozia.⁴

This motif remained in use for a very long time with only slight modifications, such as the type of animals and the composition; new molds were taken from the existing ones, so that dating is especially difficult if there is no accurate context for the excavation. Relying strictly upon a stylistic analysis and comparison with types from contexts that provide better

chronological definition, the type (A 3 I) can be bracketed between the end of the sixth century and the beginning of the fifth century BC.⁵

Notes

1. For the type, fabrication technique, and polychromy, see M. Rubinich, “Arule con zoomachia,” in BARRA BAGNASCO 1989, pp. 53–129, esp. pp. 53–62, and for Caulonia, SIMONETTI 2002.
2. For the *arulae* of Caulonia, see also MEIJDEN 1993, pp. 38–45, pls. 28, 32, 33; H. Tréziny, *Kaulonia: Sondage sur la fortification nord, 1982–1985* (Naples 1989), no. 353, figs. 51, 54; P. Orsi, “Caulonia,” *MonAnt* 23 (1914), figs. 25, 30, 31 (*arulae* found in residential contexts); M. Rubinich, “Arule con zoomachia,” in BARRA BAGNASCO 1989, pp. 53–129, esp. cat. 153, pl. XXVI, pp. 121–22; also in Rubinich, in the Caulonian type of Locri, a plant element appears at the far end of the field, no. 149, pl. XXV.
3. U. Spigo, “Alcune note sulla plastica arcaica e del V secolo a.C. dal Bothros di Eolo,” in L. Bernabò Brea and M. Cavalier, eds., *Melignùs Lipára*, 9. *Topografia di Lipari in età greca e romana* (Palermo, 1998), pp. 415–16, pl. XIIIC–e. Compare also with the examples from Zankle (Messina), *ibid.*, p. 416, n. 33.
4. For Agrigento, see P. Marconi, *Agrigento: Topografia ed arte* (Florence, 1929), p. 191, fig. 131; for Heraclea Minoa, see E. De Miro, “Eraclea Minoa: Scavi eseguiti negli anni 1955/56/57,” *NSc* 12 (1958), pp. 243–57. For Gela, see A. M. Bisi, “Motivi siciliani nell’arte punica di età ellenistica,” *ArchCl* 18 (1966), pp. 41–53; for Monte Saraceno, see E. De Miro, “Ricerche a Monte Saraceno presso Ravanusa,” *Quaderni della ricerca scientifica* 112 (Rome, 1985), pp. 149–66; for Himera, see BELVEDERE 1982, pp. 90–91, pl. XVII, nos. 1–2; for Zankle, see G. Tigano, “Un’arula con zoomachia da Messina,” in *ARCHEOLOGIA DEL MEDITERRANEO** 2003, pp. 665–70; for Solunto, see V. Giustolisi, “Nuovi elementi per l’identificazione della Solunto di Tucidide,” **Kokalos* 16 (1970), pp. 144–65, esp. pl. XIII, fig. 2 (larger *arula*, assignable to the fifth century BC). For Paternò: C. Ciurcina, “Arule con scene di zoomachia,” in LENTINI 1993, p. 41.
5. See SIMONETTI 2002, pp. 362–66 (type A 3 I).



Head of a Woman

350-300 BC

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Object Details

Catalogue Number	51
Inventory Number	76.AD.34 ✉
Typology	Head
Location	Sicily
Dimensions	H: 28.8 cm; W: 19.1 cm; Diam (<i>polos</i>): 12.2 cm

Fabric

Orange in color (Munsell 2.5 yr 7/6–7/8), hard, fairly well purified, with reflective and calcareous inclusions; a white slip and extensive traces of polychromy: pink (face and neck), red (upper border of the *polos*, upper eyelid, and back of the neck); dark pink (central part of the *polos*), white and purple (lower border of the *polos*).

The front section of the bust was made with a mold and the details of the facial features were defined with the use of a potter's rib. The back section is not modeled and has a slightly convex wall, with a large oval vent hole in the center of the occiput.

Condition

A fragment of the back of the neck has been reattached; the polychromy is worn away, and parts of the head and neck are abraded.

Provenance

– 1976, Dr. Max Gerchik, American, 1911–2008 (Pacific Palisades, California), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1976.

Bibliography

LYONS, BENNETT, AND MARCONI 2013, p. 186, fig. 126.

Description

The female head wears a *polos* with a rounded base molding and projecting rim, decorated on the upper edge with small protruding nodes. The thick wavy hair is divided symmetrically into two masses and pulled back; on top, the hair is held by a knotted ribbon whose ends fall in the middle of the part. The hairstyle leaves the earlobes uncovered; they are perforated for the insertion of metal earrings.

The eyes are asymmetrical and slightly sunken, and the eyelids are distinctly defined. The mouth is barely half-open, with a fleshy lower lip and an upper lip almost touching the nose, which is narrow and straight; the chin is rounded and full. Traces of polychromy, still identifiable, show that the bust was originally brightly colored. The lower border of the *polos* is decorated with oblique lines that are painted purple; in the central section, though the pigment is almost entirely worn away, it is possible to make out a dark pink band, interrupted in the center by a rosette. This decorative motif can also be found in other examples, in both relief and painted versions.¹

This type of female bust is extensively documented in the major centers of Sicily, especially in the southeastern area between the fifth and third centuries BC, in particular in Syracuse and Agrigento, where the earliest examples are documented. The most substantial group comes from the *santuario rupestre* (rock-cut sanctuary of Demeter) at Agrigento, but over time female busts also spread to Morgantina, Gela, Grammichele, Himera, Centuripe, Butera, Scornavacche, Selinunte, Adrano, Paternò, Akrai, and Lipari, with variants enriched by different ornaments and attributes.²

The votive bust, derived from the simpler protome, is a distinctly western Greek creation, generally associated with Demeter and Kore–Persephone, the tutelary deities of the island. It is interpreted as the abbreviated image, at once organic and abstract, of Persephone, an evocation of the *anados* of the goddess from the chthonic world.³ Recent studies reviewing the archaeological contexts and their associations with votive offerings have given rise to new interpretations, associating the bust with the *nymphē* or young bride, who through marriage abandons the status of *kore* and reaches sexual maturity. This crucial passage is well exemplified also in the mythological episode of the abduction by Hades, god of the Underworld, of Kore–Persephone, a model for human brides.⁴

The bust type endured for a remarkably long time, and though it preserved certain constant typological characteristics—in this case harking back to Classical models—it also gave rise to many variants. Some variants followed a more traditional stylistic approach, while in other cases the models were developed with greater freedom and independence.⁵ Similar typologies of busts are documented in contexts throughout Magna Graecia, such as, for example, Fratte di Salerno, where the production documents stylistic links with Syracusan terracottas but also with the production of Campania and Locri; the latter was also closely tied to Syracuse politically and culturally, as far back as the Deinomenid era.⁶ The bust type later spread through the central-Italic area, with a number of different typological and iconographic variations, but also taking on a distinct function: it was less closely tied to the chthonic sphere and more often acted as an abbreviated portrayal of the offerer.⁷

The busts have for some time been datable to the final decades of the fifth century BC, in part due to stylistic affinities with the coinage of contemporary Syracusan master die-engravers; they have been dated as late as the second half of the fourth century BC, in the period of Classical revival that corresponds to a general rebirth of the Greek centers in Sicily, led by the tyrant Timoleon. This age, following the crisis of the first half of the fourth century BC, has generally been characterized as a return to classically inspired formal and iconographic motifs. More recent studies, however, including those devoted to the coroplastic material of Scornavacche (near Ragusa), have noted the continuous utilization of the female bust of Classical origin, from the period of Dionysius up to that of Timoleon. This phenomenon is attributable primarily to the workshops of Syracuse, which, just at the beginning of the fourth century BC, held to the Classical style, in part as a matter of cultural identity.⁸

The persistence over time of standardized typologies, due to conservatism in artistic conceptions and the reutilization of older molds, resulted in the production of numerous generations of closely similar examples, which has made a detailed and accurate chronology problematic. Furthermore, the Getty bust echoes certain distinctive features of the Agrigentine busts of the second half of the fourth century BC, especially in the rendering of Classical-style facial features, such as the full chin, the small mouth with a prominent upper lip, and the triangular forehead, as well as in the solid articulation of the facial planes and in the general sobriety of the expression. These characteristics are also found in a group of busts from Morgantina, together with the molding at the upper edge and ears pierced for metal earrings.⁹ The freehand hairstyle, with lively, puffy locks of hair, closely corresponds to the emerging artistic tendencies of the Early Hellenistic period; the latter is also found in a number of Syracusan busts.¹⁰

Notes

1. For the painted busts, see, for instance, examples in Morgantina that can have the *polos* with a pink flower and the unmolded bust decorated with painted panels depicting ritual or mythological scenes: BELL 1981, pp. 29–33, 140–43, nos. 106, 107, 113 (second half of the fourth century, beginning of the third century BC); PAUTASSO 2007. For metal earrings in terracotta busts, see BELL 1981, no. 107.
2. On the theme of busts in Sicily, the bibliography is vast. See PORTALE 2000, and E. C. Portale, “Busti fittili e Ninfe: sulla valenza e polisemia delle rappresentazioni abbreviate in forma di busto nella coroplastica votiva siceliota,” in ALBERTOCCHI AND PAUTASSO 2012, pp. 227–52; PAUTASSO 2012; M. Albertocchi, “La coroplastica siceliota nella prima metà del V secolo a.C.” in ALBERTOCCHI AND PAUTASSO 2012, pp. 142–61; GRECO 2013; and FERRUZZA 2013. A number of examples of uncertain findspot are also currently in the British Museum: see HIGGINS 1954, nos. 1188–89, pl. 162; see also the busts in PELAGATTI AND GUZZO 1997, pp. 12–14, figs. 2–3; and, among the examples that have appeared in auction catalogues: *Antiquities*, Bonhams Knightsbridge, sale cat., April 22, 1999, lot 562; *Antiquities and Islamic Art*, Sotheby’s New York, sale cat., December 2, 1988, lot 102A; *Antiquities and Islamic Art*, Sotheby’s New York, sale cat., December 17, 1997, lot 109.
3. Most of the female busts in Sicily and in Magna Graecia come from votive contexts, generally those linked to the pair of Demeter and Persephone; see KILMER 1977, pp. 133–34; for busts found in funerary contexts, see BELL 1981, p. 105, no. 43; and E. C. Portale, “Busti fittili e Ninfe: Sulla valenza e polisemia delle rappresentazioni abbreviate in forma di busto nella coroplastica votiva siceliota,” in ALBERTOCCHI AND PAUTASSO 2012, pp. 227–52, esp. p. 234. On the religious issues of the female bust, see GRECO 2013, SIRACUSANO 1986–87; G. Sfameni Gasparro, “Demetra in Sicilia: Tra identità panellenica e connotazioni locali,” in DI STEFANO 2008, pp. 25–40; and PORTALE 2008, pp. 24–25.
4. GRECO 2013 and Portale, “Busti fittili” (cited in n. 2 above). As is general with votive products, the busts present a polysemic character and take on a particular meaning only within the “system” of the votive offerings made in a specific context; but a primary meaning related to marriage as a woman’s sexual and existential completion seems to be prevalent.
5. FERRUZZA 2013, pp. 189–91; PORTALE 2000, pp. 273–75.
6. For the busts in Magna Graecia, see in general KILMER 1977, pp. 121–27; PORTALE 2000, nn. 44 and 50. At Fratte di Salerno, there is documentation of a bust with a tall *polos* that, given its general formal structure, can be linked to types of Sicilian production from the fourth to the third centuries BC; see GRECO AND PONTRANDOLFO 1990, fig. 150. For Locri, see also the bust in HIGGINS 1954, no. 1230, pl. 69 (beginning of the fourth century BC).
7. For the issues relating to the busts in the central Italic area, see PENSABENE 2001, pp. 67–69; P. Pensabene, “Cippi busti e ritratti: Nota in margine a M. F. Kilmer, *The Shoulder Bust in Sicily and South and Central Italy: A Catalogue and Materials for Dating* (Göteborg, 1977),” *ArchCl* 29 (1977), pp. 425–35.
8. On this problem, see PORTALE 2000; SPAGNOLO 2000; PISANI 2008, pp. 155–56; and J. P. Uhlenbrock, “La coroplastica nella Sicilia orientale e meridionale nell’età dei due Dionisi,” in LA SICILIA DEI DUE DIONISI 2002, pp. 321–37; RIZZA AND DE MIRO 1985, pp. 238–40; N. Bonacasa and E. Joly, “L’ellenismo e la tradizione ellenistica,” pp. 277–347 in SIKANIE 1985, esp. pp. 313–14. For the influence of Syracusean coinage on Sicilian coroplastic art, see BELL 1972, pp. 7–8, 11; BELL 1981, p. 28, esp. bust no. 112, in which Bell detected affinities with the coins of Euainetos; CROISSANT 2007, esp. pp. 313–16. For the hairstyle, see A. Bignasca, “Nuove terrecotte dell’offerente di porcellino e la prima metà del 4. secolo a Morgantina,” *AntK* 35, no. 1 (1992), pp. 18–53, pl. 6.
9. See, for example, SIKANIE* 1985, nos. 279–80, and the plastic vases in the form of a female head found in Agrigento in the area to the south of the Temple of Zeus, datable from the second half of the fourth century BC. These reproduce a type of female head with hair parted over the forehead in two wavy masses: see E. De Miro, “Agrigento: Scavi nell’area a Sud del tempio di Giove,” *MonAnt 46 (1963), pp. 81–198, esp. p. 115, fig. 31. See also the group of busts (nos. 97–102) from Morgantina with solemn features comparable to a tetradrachm issued by Agathocles about 310 BC: BELL 1981, pp. 27–33.

10. For Syracuse: G. V. Gentili, "I busti fittili di Demetra o Kore di Siracusa," *Archivio storico siracusano* 5–6 (1959–60), pp. 5–20; KILMER 1977, nos. 33–36, figs. 74–75, 82–84, pp. 116–18; G. Voza and P. Pelagatti, *Archeologia nella Sicilia sud-orientale*, exh. cat. (Naples, Centre J. Bérard, 1973), pp. 102–3; and PORTALE 2000, n. 57. For the type of thick hairstyle with loose, wavy locks of hair, see, for instance, the female heads in WESCOAT 1989, no. 3, fig. 19, and the two-headed bust from the *santuario rupestre* in Agrigento: SIKANIE 1985, no. 281.



52

Relief with Orestes and Clytemnestra

550-525 BC

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Object Details

Catalogue Number	52
Inventory Number	81.AD.12 🔗
Typology	Relief

Location	Sicily
Dimensions	H: 26.4 cm; W: 35.5 cm; D: 8.4-9.0 cm

Fabric

Greenish yellow in the front (Munsell 2.5 y 8/3), with orange highlights in the back (Munsell 5 yr 7/6), gray and very coarse in the core, with a friable consistency, and numerous calcareous and carbonous inclusions.

Condition

The relief has been reassembled and consolidated from a number of fragments; there are fills in the upper frame, in the background of the relief, and in left side section. The lower left corner of the frame is missing, as are the corners of the upper frame in the back. The male figure is missing its head and right arm; the female figure is badly damaged, missing both arms and almost all of the body; all that survives of a third figure is the feet and the attachment of the garment.

Provenance

– 1981, Willard B. Causey (Santa Ana, California), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1981.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The relief is framed, at the base and at the top, by fillets supported on each side by a perpendicular element. The back is unworked and the top is slightly concave. The incomplete state of preservation of this artifact and the subsequent restoration attempts make it impossible to establish with precision its original typology and function; nonetheless, it can be conjectured that the relief was set against a wall or in a niche; the traces of detachment in the back section support this view.¹ There are no remaining traces of the polychromy that may originally have decorated this relief.

The figures were worked by hand and retouched to define the details and to ensure that they would adhere to the background. They project from the plane in full relief, as in many other

arulae with mythological subjects found throughout Sicily and Magna Graecia during the Archaic period.² In particular, the right foot of the male figure and part of the corresponding leg emerge completely from the background; the torso adheres to the ground only on the left side; of the third figure, only the outlines can be discerned, and there are no traces of the part corresponding to the body.

Significant comparisons can be made with a series of figured reliefs from the sanctuary of Demeter Malophoros at Selinunte, previously linked to *arulae* of medium and large format, but which might also have been part of votive aedicules. In most of these reliefs, one sees the same high-relief technique, which endows the images with great plasticity, though in these cases the figures completely fill the free space.³

The present relief depicts a nude male character shown in profile, walking toward the right, with his left leg striding forward; he has seized the hair of the central female figure with his left hand; his right arm must have been extending forward in order to strike her with a weapon, probably a sword, presumably positioned on a line with her chest.⁴ The female figure is characterized by a slight torsion; her right arm must have extended down alongside her body; the left arm was probably bent toward the male character in an attempt at self-defense. She is wearing a long, tight chiton that extends down to her feet; her head is slightly tilted to the proper right. Her hair is brushed over her forehead in wavy-edged locks with no part in the middle, and hangs down on either side, forming three braids suggested by little spherical elements. Her face is oval in shape, the mouth is small with swollen lips, and the nose is triangular. The large almond-shaped eyes protrude, with no distinction between the eyeball and the eyelids; her superciliary arches are large, close-set, and parallel, and extend out to the attachment of the ears. A third figure, stepping forward with the right leg, was a witness to the scene.

The male character is rendered through plastic modeling, especially in the legs and the strong, muscular buttocks; the torso is straight and elongated. The hair falls behind the shoulders in large convex braids, layered horizontally.

Due to a number of iconographic elements, the scene can be interpreted as Orestes killing his mother, Clytemnestra, in revenge for her murder of Orestes' father, Agamemnon. In the absence of other identifying features, the gesture of seizing the hair of a female character could be the key to this identification, though it occurs elsewhere in mythology as well. Notable in this connection are two fragments that can be assigned to a metope from Temple C at Selinunte, with the scene of Clytemnestra's murder.⁵ The iconography of this metope is thought to reflect an Archaic motif already present in the shield band reliefs of Peloponnesian production, in particular from Olympia, in which, however, it is more often

Clytemnestra's lover, Aegisthos, who is seized by the hair just before the mortal blow.⁶ On the shield bands, this iconographic scheme can also be found in scenes of battle between such antagonists as Zeus and Typhon or Herakles and Geras. In a plaque from the Argive Heraion, datable to the middle of the seventh century BC, the myth of Orestes is reprised in a depiction that shows Clytemnestra killing Cassandra, gripping her by the hair with her left hand.⁷

In the colonial setting of the Archaic period, the iconography of a character seizing the hair or the head of a competitor or rival was also utilized for other subjects engaged in combat, as is documented in architectural sculpture and in *arulae*; examples include Perseus and the Gorgon in the metope of Temple C in Selinunte and, in coroplastic art, a fragmentary *arula* from Monte Saraceno, datable to the middle of the sixth century BC, in which the left arm of Perseus is raised to grasp the monster's hair, while the right arm is bent upward, holding a short sword.⁸

The scene on the Getty relief was completed by a third figure, of which only the feet, the edge of a long garment, and the outline of the lower body survive. The state of preservation makes it impossible to identify this figure with any certainty, but for narrative consistency, it may be Elektra, Orestes' sister, even though the depiction of this character before the beginning of the fifth century BC is uncertain. A female figure on a bronze lamina from Olympia has been identified as Elektra, and Beazley has recognized her as the character behind Orestes on a proto-Attic krater. In the relief decorating the neck of a Cretan *pithos* (storage jar), possibly the first known depiction of the death of Clytemnestra, it has been suggested that the two female characters might represent the queen's two daughters, Elektra and Khrysothemis. In the colonial milieu once again, for Metope 7 of the Heraion at Foce del Sele near Paestum, it has been suggested, doubtfully, that the female figure urging forward the sword-bearing man might be Elektra.⁹

Orestes' matricide is a relatively uncommon theme in the Archaic period, and portrayals of heroes attacking female characters have been subject to varying interpretations.¹⁰ In a gilded-silver lamina, now in the Getty collection and datable after the middle of the sixth century BC, there is a similar image showing the killing of Clytemnestra by Orestes: the hero, wearing a short chiton, holds his mother by the hair and is about to strike a blow with his sword, while she makes a gesture of supplication; at the feet of these two figures lies the mortally wounded Aegisthos. A southern Italian archaeological context has been proposed for this lamina, but the general Laconian traits that can clearly be identified in this group might also suggest the presence of bronze workers from mainland Greece in Magna Graecia.¹¹ An earlier Archaic bronze relief, mentioned in the previous paragraph and linked to a tripod from Olympia, is also comparable; it is datable to sometime around the end of the seventh century

and the first quarter of the sixth century BC. In that depiction, Orestes strikes Clytemnestra with a sword while seizing her by the neck, as his mother touches his chin in a gesture of supplication; the scene also depicts other figures: Aegisthos, who is trying to hide behind a building, and perhaps Elektra or Erigone (Aegisthos's daughter) behind Orestes.¹² Another object that might attest to the diffusion of the Orestes myth and these iconographies in the Peloponnese, and particularly in Laconia, is a stele dating from the beginning of the sixth century BC, now in the Archaeological Museum of Sparta, was originally from the area of Magoula. It features two figures variously interpreted as Menelaus and Helen, Alcmaeon and Eriphyle, or Orestes and Clytemnestra; the latter hypothesis is supported by the violent gesture of the male figure as he seizes the woman by the neck.¹³ This iconographic motif, therefore, was especially prominent in the Peloponnese, from whence it diffused to the West along with its possible ideological implications.

In the Archaic Peloponnesian context, Sparta was especially receptive to themes linked to the saga of Orestes; the *Oresteia* by Stesichorus emphasized the religious and social traditions of that city, which lay under the protection of Apollo and counted the House of Atreus among its legendary rulers. In the middle of the sixth century BC, the Laconian city was pursuing a "pro-Achaean" political line, in which renewed attention to the myth of the Atreides (Agamemnon, Menelaus, and their offspring, including Orestes) and the recovery of Orestes' bones served as effective propaganda.¹⁴ The emphasis on Sparta's illustrious origins served to reinforce the city's hegemonic role in the Peloponnese and other areas of the Mediterranean, such as Sicily. In northwestern Sicily, the saga of Herakles was put to similar use.¹⁵ Particularly noteworthy is the role that Sparta played in the first half of the sixth century BC: in northwestern Sicily, the Sicilian poet Stesichorus, writing his *Oresteia* at this time, underscored the Spartan setting of the poem's legendary events. It bears mentioning, too, that at the turn of that century, first the Knidian leader Pentathlos and later the Spartan prince Dorieus were in northwestern Sicily to supervise the control of the Sicilian emporia.¹⁶

To return to another colonial context in which the Atreides saga figures—namely the frieze of the Heraion at the Foce del Sele, mentioned above, dating from the second half of the sixth century BC—a new reading of its figurative program raised a hypothetical identification of episodes linked to the *Oresteia* in some of the metopes. In this perspective, Metope 7 shows Elektra urging Orestes, armed with a sword, to commit matricide; Metope 24 shows Clytemnestra holding a double-headed axe; Metope 19 may depict Aegisthos seated on his throne as the hero attacks him; and finally, Metope 25 is variously interpreted as Orestes killing Aegisthos or as Achilles killing Troilus.¹⁷ The various characterizations of Clytemnestra—"frightened and passive" in Selinunte, but "combative and furious" at Foce del Sele (note here, too, the aggressive stance of the heroes at Selinunte, such as Perseus in

the metope of Temple C, or Herakles in the Temple E)—have given rise to a number of hypotheses regarding the derivation of sculpture from literary sources, Stesichorus first and foremost. This approach has recently been reconsidered in a study that analyzed in a more consistent manner the relationship between images and texts or “segments of stories,” with a special focus on the oral tradition, on the articulation of themes in syntactic and hermeneutic terms, and on the social function of images in relation to the context of origin.¹⁸

Complex problems are involved in tracing literary sources that could have influenced sculptural cycles and in attempting to derive the various psychological articulations of the characters from these same sources. It is nonetheless evident that the story of Orestes would necessarily take on great significance within the *polis*, given that the legend is focused on the guilty responsibility of those who violate the moral rules of civil society—committing crimes that strike at the very *genos* (clan) to which they belong—and on the divine curse that struck the entire progeny and the obligatory series of purifications that was then required. In that sense, the mythological themes present in the monument’s decorations reflected the values and cultural identities of the period and of that specific context.¹⁹ In this light, the matricide committed by Orestes became a tragic but necessary condition for freeing the family from an inheritance of guilt, but only the intervention of Apollo allowed the hero, who was pursued by the vindictive Furies, to attain a final purification and to be readmitted to the community.²⁰ It is interesting to note that in Column B of the so-called *lex sacra* of Selinunte—for which a findspot in the sanctuary of Zeus Meilichios, contiguous with the Malophoros sanctuary, has been proposed—instructions are provided for individuals concerning the purification rites to be performed in order to ward off the *elasteros*, a term whose definition is uncertain but which probably means the vindictive fury of a murder victim. On the same sheet (Column A), Zeus is cited in the *epiclesis* (invocation) of Eumenes, with a clear reference to situations of contamination and purification.²¹ As part of this dual chthonic and purificatory role, Zeus would oversee the cathartic rites required of an individual who was guilty of grave crimes (such as the murder of a family member or a member of the same *genos*), in order to be freed from hostile *elasteroi* and readmitted to the community.²²

The hypothesis linking the current relief with Selinunte is strictly conjectural, based on a reconstruction of the cultural context, stylistic comparison with the reliefs from the Malophoros sanctuary, and autoptic analysis of the clay, which seems to show the same characteristics as that from Selinunte.²³ If this link is sustained, the Malophoros sanctuary and, in particular, the area of Zeus Meilichios would suggest itself as a religious and cultural context well-suited to house a depiction of Orestes, given that the Meilichios cult was connected with heroic cults as well. The relief could have been placed with reliefs depicting other episodes of the same story in a consecrated space dedicated to the rituals of specific

ancestral groups.²⁴ The myth of Orestes, it bears remembering, had great significance within the cultural and religious milieu of Selinunte; the theme is also present in a metope of Temple C in Selinunte, identified as an *Apollonian*. Here, the treatment of the myth in the frieze appears to have taken into account both the genealogy of the protagonist heroes, all of them intimately connected to Dorian and Peloponnesian contexts, and the geographic setting of their deeds. This criterion served as the tie between the metope of Perseus and the Gorgon and that of Herakles and the Cercopes (mischievous forest dwellers), perhaps linking the metope of the Dioscuri with the metope with Orestes and Clytemnestra that concluded the frieze on the left. Perseus is, in fact, the hero who stands at the root of the Atreides family tree, while Orestes marks its end. At the same time, the geographic setting of the narratives involves both Argos and Sparta.²⁵ It seems to be no accident that it was precisely Argos in the Archaic period that exerted a powerful influence upon Nisaean (mainland) Megara, where, according to Pausanias, the last king was Hyperion, a brother of Orestes. In this sense, Selinous (Selinunte), a subcolony of Nisaean Megara, affirmed its civic identity in part through an explicit reference to the memorable places and the origins of the community, in Argos and Sparta, in which the saga of the Atreides played a foundational role.²⁶

It is through this thematic thread that the story of Orestes, drawn from the religious and cultural patrimony of the homeland, must then have constituted an ethical point of reference for the new *polis* as well.²⁷ Orestes, who in the wake of the matricide was obliged to undertake a process of purification at the behest of Apollo (the deity who oversaw family relations), would find an appropriate place in the Malophoros sanctuary, in particular given that, among other things, individual groups of aristocratic families seem to have had special ties to the Meilichios cult and to the cult of ancestral spirits, as previously noted in the context of the *lex sacra*.²⁸ In addition, more recent studies have conjectured that the Atreides were connected to Selinous in part through the figure of Iphigenia, Orestes' unfortunate sister, who after her sacrifice by Agamemnon was transformed by Artemis into Hekate. According to Stesichorus in his *Oresteia* and the *Catalogue of Women* attributed to Hesiod, Hekate was the bride of Hades.²⁹ Iphigenia, thus associated with Hekate, would then have been the subject of a chthonic cult—also linked to nuptial rites—that was practiced in the enclosure at the eastern end of the Malophoros sanctuary, outside of the *temenos*.³⁰ In this case, as with the Malophoros sanctuary and perhaps also the sacred area of the Meilichios—whose existence is also hypothesized in Nisaean Megara—the cult of Iphigenia, a constant mythical element of the Megarean world, ultimately expressed a reprisal of the cults found in the Greek homeland.³¹ Indeed, in Nisaean Megara, in the area around the agora, there was a *heroön* of Iphigenia founded, according to legend, by Agamemnon before the expedition to Troy: according to one version of the myth, the hapless girl's sacrifice took place in Megara and, as

mentioned above, the last king of the city was a son of Agamemnon and a brother of Orestes.³²

It would hardly suffice to construct an interpretive model that catalogued exact comparisons in mythological and cultural milieu between homelands and colonies without taking into consideration the complex processes by which the myth was redefined *in loco*. But it is clear that the reprisal of the homeland cults in the *apoikia* (colonies) underscored ethnic, cultural, and political affiliations with the land of origin; this tie was especially strong in the colonies of Megara.³³

A stylistic analysis of the Getty relief shows the coexistence of elements of diverse derivations, which makes it problematic to place the piece in a clearly defined current. The same holds true for much of sixth-century sculpture from Sicily. The scene appears to be well-balanced in the composition of solids and voids, and the figures, aligned in a paratactic rhythm, seem to defy that spatial conception, observable in both Archaic metopes and *arulae*, according to which characters are imprisoned within the bounds of the figured field.³⁴

The coroplast made a special effort to attenuate Clytemnestra's frontal view, placing the feet on different planes and tilting the head toward the viewer, to overcome the traditional Archaic view of front and profile, though the result is not entirely persuasive and the figure still appears slightly disorganized.³⁵ The characters, in almost full relief, jut sharply out of the background creating a well-defined chiaroscuro. It is easy to perceive the coroplast's skill in defining volumes, such as the round plastic masses in the lower part of the male body and in the articulation of the knee.³⁶ Although the interdependence noted between metopes and *arulae*, as discussed above, is not well understood and may appear somewhat forced, it should be pointed out that, in the milieu of Selinunte, there is evidence of a stylistic affinity between the two.³⁷ Orestes, for example, is reminiscent of the Perseus in the metope of Temple C, though the proportions of legs to torso are inverted, while the tubular arms, which are proportionately too short and lack muscular definition, are tapered and slender in comparison with the legs; Orestes' small hands with stylized fingers are reminiscent of those in certain figures of the so-called small metopes at Selinunte, as for example in the Delphic Triad.³⁸ Additionally, the head of Clytemnestra presents a number of stylistic affinities with figures in the small metopes, especially in the cranial structure and a number of other details, such as the small mouth and the large globular eyes, undefined in their details, which are also present in the figure of Apollo in the Delphic Triad.³⁹ The compact hair—with an undulating border, no center part, combed over a low forehead, and falling to the shoulders in a compact mass of curls, layered horizontally—recurs in the figures from an Archaic relief from Selinunte (Casa del Viaggiatore), such as the figure in the small metope of the Quadriga of Apollo. Some of these elements can also be found in small bronzes of Laconian inspiration

imported in the West, which could have served as a source of stylistic inspiration for coroplastic production.⁴⁰ It is the metal objects that seem to determine the Peloponnesian formal koine that emerged in the wake of an artistic language developed by Sparta, and later by Corinth; this language is recognizable, for instance, in the solid, vigorous modeling, in the plasticity of the gestures, and in the clear, incisive outline.⁴¹

For the figure of Orestes, for instance, it is useful to refer to Laconian bronzes, such as a statuette of Hermes, datable to the middle of the sixth century BC. This work shows a comparable definition of the calf muscles and articulation of the knee, in contrast with the flat, elongated torso. The latter would be functional in the case of the small bronze statuette, facilitating the figure's attachment to an object such as a tripod.⁴² The general composition of the figure and the large, undefined globular eyes hark back to characteristics of Corinthian art that are readily identified in the coroplastic art of Selinunte as well in some heads of Temple C.⁴³ In this confluence—a distinctive synthesis of varied cultural and stylistic features—traits belonging to the eastern Aegean milieu do not seem out of place: especially the flattened, elongated torso, which seems to contrast with the massive lower limbs and rotund buttocks in the Orestes figure.⁴⁴

The Getty relief displays a stylistic language in which various influences, mostly Corinthian, integrate into a formal autonomous expression with references to the cultural roots of the homeland, which in the dynamic colonial setting find a fertile context for new elaborations. Religious ties to the homeland were affirmed—with a certain adaptation to the local context—through an iconographic conservatism.⁴⁵

For its figurative layout, compositional solutions, and stylistic characteristics, the relief seems to fit chronologically in the third quarter of the sixth century BC.

Notes

1. For the hypothesis that reliefs were either turned to a wall or embedded in a wall, see (for the Malophoros sanctuary) GABRICI 1927, coll. 118–19, 181–82; and TUSA 1984, pp. 124–25. Terracotta *pinakes* and votive reliefs are well documented in the sanctuaries of Selinunte and in other Demeter sanctuaries; see MARCONI 2009, pp. 200–202, for the stone votive relief depicting Persephone's abduction, which may have been displayed in the propylon of the sanctuary. Also in the *thesmophorion* of San Francesco Bisconti at Morgantina, some *sacella* were provided with wall niches; see RAFFIOTTA 2007, pp. 23–24. The presence of niches in the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Corinth has been variously interpreted: see N. Bookidis and R. Stroud, *The Sanctuary of Demeter and Kore: Topography and Architecture*, Corinth 18, part 3 (Princeton, 1997), pp. 145, 178, 205, 229–30. In Olynthus, in a domestic setting, small altars and aedicules were set within niches: see D. Robinson and J. W. Graham, *The Hellenic House*, Excavations at Olynthus 8 (Baltimore, 1938), pp. 321–23. For examples of aedicules or altars set against a wall in Corinth, especially in domestic cult spaces, see C. K. Williams, "Corinth, 1978: Forum Southwest," *Hesperia* 48, no. 2 (1979), pp. 105–44. Less reliable is the hypothesis that the relief might belong to the front section of an *arula* created through the assembly of individual components before firing; in morphological terms, there seem to be no significant correspondences.

2. See, for instance, *arulae* from Gela that can be dated between the middle and the third quarter of the sixth century BC, with Herakles and Alkyoneus: MEIJDEN 1993, cat. MY 8, p. 299, two *arulae* with Herakles and the Triton (550–525 BC) and a depiction of the suicide of Ajax (530 BC) in FISCHER-HANSEN 1992, nos. 14–15, pp. 45–46; the *arula* with a Gorgon from Capo Soprano, in P. Orlandini, “Gela: Ritrovamenti vari,” NSc 10 (1956), pp. 363–65, fig. 10; an *arula*, also from Gela, with opposing sphinxes, in LENTINI 1993, pp. 129–30; an *arula* with Achilles and Memnon from Locri, see V. Origlia, “Arule con iconografie varie,” in BARRA BAGNASCO 1989, pp. 131–184, esp. no. 167, pl. XXVIII; from Hipponium, an *arula* with a figure of the *potnia theron* (mistress of animals) in LENTINI 1993, p. 30, no. 31. See also examples in T. Fischer-Hansen, “Some Sicilian Arulae and Their Significance,” *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici* 8 (1977), pp. 7–18. For the iconography of *arulae*, see A. Calderone, “Il mito greco e le arulae siceliote di VI e V secolo a.C.,” in *LE MYTHE GREC* 1999, pp. 163–204.
3. Some very close comparisons, for shape, clay, and style, are some fragmentary reliefs from the second half of the sixth century BC, as for example one with a winged figure, probably an Erinys, at the Museo Archeologico Regionale di Palermo (inv. 42343), in MEIJDEN 1993, FR 81; for another, unpublished, see C. Pecoraro, “Arule figurate di età arcaica e classica da Selinunte,” Tesi di Laurea, Università degli Studi di Palermo, Facoltà di Lettere Classiche (2001–2002), no. 24 (inv. 42341). See also a fragment found in the propylaeum of the sanctuary, which still preserves the feet of three figures walking toward the right: see GABRICI 1927, pl. XXXII, no. 4; a relief with two adjoining reclining figures, pl. XXXV, no. 3; a fragment with two standing female figures, probably imported from Ionia, pl. XXXII, no. 1; a fragment with two frontal busts, holding out their hands, pl. XXX, no. 4 (for this fragment, see also E. Gabrici, “Dedalica Selinuntina,” *Memorie dell’Accademia di archeologia, lettere e belle arti di Napoli* 5 [1924], pl. II, no. 3); see also the fragments found in the excavations of 1898, incongruously filled, in GABRICI 1927, pl. XXX, nos. 1 and 1a, and PECORARO 2001, pp. 38–39, n. 18; the two fragmentary figures (a female head and a male bust, with a hand holding it by the arm), assignable to a relief, in GABRICI 1927, pl. XXXII, no. 3.
4. The sword is a customary attribute in the iconography of Orestes, as will be explored below; in this connection, see H. Sarian and V. Machaira, s.v. “Orestes,” LIMC 7 (1994), pp. 68–76.
5. For a discussion of the Archaic metope and the relationship between style and function within the cultural and social context of Selinunte, see MARCONI 2007, pp. 161–68; and MARCONI 2006, fig. 374; see also L. Giuliani, *Die archaischen Metopen von Selinunt* (Mainz, 1979), p. 67ff., and ØSTBY 1996.
6. For the shield bands, see E. Kunze, *Archaische Schildbänder*, Olympische Forschungen 2 (Berlin, 1950), fig. 6, no. 1c, and pl. 8, no. 1f. See also: MARCONI 2007, pp. 104–9, figs. 45–47, 68–69. The relationship between iconographies on shields and a number of *arulae* from Selinunte was also emphasized in connection with the recurring motif of the quadriga, which is found both on *arulae* from the Malophoros sanctuary, and also in the metope of Temple C. For discordant considerations, see MARCONI 2006, p. 625–26. There are also two *arulae* from Himera, each decorated with a chariot, depicted frontally, and two grooms, one on either side, comparable with the chariots from Selinunte: in this connection, see BELVEDERE 1982, pp. 87–89, pl. XVI, nos. 2–3.
7. PRAG 1985, pp. 58–60, pl. 37a. The similarities between the materials found in Selinunte and those offered at Olympia suggest that metopes from the major religious centers of the homeland could, in some cases, have constituted a reference model, especially for the aristocratic classes of the Sicilian and Magna Graecian *poleis*. This would still be consistent with the dynamic local re-elaboration in the representation of myth that was evolving in Archaic Sicily. For relations between Selinunte and Olympia, see CURTI AND VAN BREMEN 1999, esp. nn. 29 and 30.
8. For the metope with Perseus and Medusa, see MARCONI 2007, pp. 142–50. For the *arula*, see E. De Miro, “Aspetti della coroplastica locale: Le arule,” in A. Calderone and M. Caccamo Caltabiano, *Monte Saraceno di Ravanusa: Un ventennio di ricerche e studi* (Messina, 1996), pp. 177–81, pl. CVIII.
9. For the proto-Attic krater, see I. McPhee, s.v. “Elektra I,” LIMC 3 (1986), pp. 709–19, esp. p. 717, no. 73; for the lamina and the *pithos*, see KNOEPFLER 1992, pp. 29–30, fig. 11, and pp. 23–24, no. 2. For the metope from the Heraion at Foce of Sele, see MASSERIA AND TORELLI 1999, pp. 239–40. See also Elektra in a bronze relief from Olympia, in MARCONI 2007, pp. 165.

10. For the iconography of the death of Clytemnestra, see Y. Morizot, s.v. "Klytaimestra," *LIMC* 6 (1992), pp. 72–81, and PRAG 1985, pp. 35–43; on this problem, see also MARCONI 1999, p. 32.
11. The lamina, inv. 83.AM.343, has been published by F. Brommer, "Ein Silberstreifen," *GettyMusJ* 12 (1984), pp. 133–38; see also MARCONI 2007, pp. 164–66. The analysis of the relief was also pursued by P. G. Guzzo, "Una lamina d'oro arcaica d'incerta provenienza," *Studi Urbinati* 3 (1986), pp. 35–43, and by ØSTBY 1996, pp. 24–25.
12. In this connection, see KNOEPFLER 1992, pp. 29–30, fig. 11; ØSTBY 1996, pp. 24–25, n. 34; PRAG 1985, pp. 35–36, pl. 23a.
13. See M. Pipili, *Laconian Iconography of the Sixth Century BC* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 30–31; MARCONI 2007, pp. 165–66; ØSTBY 1996, pp. 20–21, n. 26; and R. Fortsch, *Kunstverwendung und Kunstlegitimation im archaischen und frühklassischen Sparta* (Mainz, 2001), p. 217, no. 1832, figs. 152–53.
14. This interpretation is analyzed by I. Malkin, *Myth and Territory in the Spartan Mediterranean* (Cambridge [U.K.], 1994) pp. 57–64; and B. McCauley, "Heroes and Power: The Politics of Bone Transferal," in R. Hägg, ed., *Ancient Greek Hero Cult: Proceedings of the Fifth International Seminar on Ancient Greek Cult, Göteborg University, 21–23 April* (Stockholm, 1999), pp. 85–98. On the location of the Oresteia in Laconia, see CUSUMANO 1997–98, pp. 773–83; and G. Maddoli, "Il VI e il V secolo," in E. Gabba and G. Vallet, eds., *La Sicilia antica* 2, no. 1 (Naples, 1980), pp. 3–102, esp. pp. 28–29.
15. In this connection, see also the analysis in NAFISSI 1991, pp. 140–41, with bibliography, and M. Sordi, ed., *I canali della propaganda nel mondo antico* (Milan, 1976). The special relationship between the Laconian area and a number of settings in the Siceliote world has already been identified for the Oresteia of Stesichorus, with its clear pro-Spartan tone; in this connection, see the essay by N. Luraghi, "Il mito di Oreste nel regno dello Stretto," pp. 333–46 in *Mito e storia in Magna Grecia: Atti Taranto* 36, 1996 (1997); the findings of Laconian ceramics in Sicily attest to a flourishing market dating back as early as the end of the seventh century BC. From the Malophoros sanctuary, too, Laconian vases have been found dating from the middle of the sixth century BC; see P. Pelagatti, "Ceramica laconica in Sicilia e a Lipari: Materiali per una carta di distribuzione," *BdA* 54 (1989), pp. 1–62.
16. Knidos, at least beginning in 520 BC, was considered a Spartan colony; therefore Dorieus could consider himself the natural successor to Pentathlos; see Malkin, *Myth and Territory* (cited in n. 14 above), pp. 57–64.
17. For the metopes of the Heraion at Foce del Sele, see MASSERIA AND TORELLI 1999. See also P. Zancani Montuoro and U. Zanotti-Bianco, *Heraion alla foce del Sele*, part 2 (Rome, 1954); F. Van Keuren, *The Frieze from the Hera I Temple at Foce del Sele* (Rome, 1989); and M. C. Conti, *Il più antico fregio dell'Heraion del Sele: Scultura architettonica e comunicazione visiva* (Florence, 1994).
18. For this methodological approach, see MARCONI 1999, *passim*, and MARCONI 2007, pp. 161–69, 207–9. On the Oresteia of Stesichorus and its various versions, see A. Neschke, "L'Orestie de Stésichore et la tradition littéraire du mythe des Atrides avant Eschyle," *L'Antiquité Classique* 55 (1986), pp. 283–301; M. I. Davies, "Thoughts on the Oresteia before Aischylos," *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 93 (1969), pp. 214–60; C. Mueller-Goldingen, "Tradition und Innovation: Zu Stesichoros' Umgang mit der Mythos," *L'Antiquité Classique* 69 (2000), pp. 1–19. On relations between the poetry of Stesichorus and the sculptural cycle at the Heraion at Foce del Sele, see MASSERIA AND TORELLI 1999, pp. 252–53. On Clytemnestra and the functional dynamics connected to the character, see M. Giuman, "Storie da un delitto: Clitemnestra l'uxoricida, questioni iconografiche," *Ostraka* 14, no. 1 (2005), pp. 35–66, in which the author hypothesizes the coexistence of two parallel narrative traditions, which determined the diverse characterizations of the protagonists and the equally diverse structure of the differing versions of Agamemnon's death, including those in iconography.
19. See MARCONI 2007, pp. 185–222.
20. On the myths in relation to its original contexts, see R. Buxton, *Imaginary Greece: The Context of Mythology* (Cambridge [U.K.], 1994).

21. The inscription, dated by means of the epigraphic characters to the second quarter of the fifth century BC, has been published by M. H. Jameson, D. R. Jordan, and R. D. Kotansky, "A *Lex Sacra* from Selinous," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies Monographs* 11 (Durham, N.C., 1993). The *lex sacra*, an important work of great exegetic complexity, has been the subject of numerous interpretations and analyses; see, in particular, G. Nenci, "La Kyrbis selinuntina," *ASNP* 24 (1994), pp. 459–66; F. Cordano, "Review of Jameson, Jordan, and Kotansky, 'A Lex Sacra from Selinous,' 1993," *Aevum* 70 (1996), pp. 137–41; CURTI AND VAN BREMEN 1999; K. Clinton, "A New *Lex Sacra* from Selinunte: Kindly Zeuses, Eumenides, Impure and Pure Tritopatores, and Elasteroi" (review of Jameson, Jordan, and Kotansky 1993), *Classical Philology* 91, no. 2 (1996), pp. 159–79. For the philological and epigraphic research, see L. Dubois, "Une nouvelle inscription archaïque de Sélinonte," *Revue de Philologie* 69 (1995), pp. 127–44. See also W. Burkert, "Private Need and *Polis* Acceptance: Purification at Selinous," in P. Flensted-Jensen, T. Heine Nielsen, and L. Rubinstein, eds., *Polis & Politics: Studies in Ancient Greek History* (Copenhagen, 2000), pp. 207–16; CUSUMANO 1997–98, pp. 780–82; and A. Brugnone, "Una laminetta iscritta da Selinunte," *SicArch* 30 (1997), pp. 121–30. According to another interpretation, the sacred law of Selinunte and the purification rites were not connected to bloodshed: see A. Giuliani, "La purificazione degli *elasteroi* nella legge sacra di Selinunte," *Aevum* 72 (1998), pp. 68–89; and C. Antonetti and S. De Vido, "Cittadini, non cittadini e stranieri nei santuari della Malophoros e del Meilichios di Selinunte," in A. Naso, ed., *Stranieri e non cittadini nei santuari greci: Atti del convegno internazionale* (Florence, 2006), pp. 410–51; A. Di Martino, "Omicidio, contaminazione, purificazione: Il caso della lex sacra di Selinunte," *ASNP* 8 (2006), pp. 305–49.
22. Both Myskos and Euthydamos, mentioned in the *lex sacra*, aside from being identified as local heroes, are interpreted as personifications of two concepts bound up, respectively, with an impure, negative situation and a positive situation. For this interpretation, see CURTI AND VAN BREMEN 1999, pp. 21–33. The authors place the tomb-*heroön* of Myskos in certain structures of the Meilichios sanctuary previously studied by Gabrici, and interpret the two terracotta cylinders beneath the foundation blocks as containers of the offerings to the Tritopatores (a trio of gods, currently little understood). For the meaning of *elasteroi* in connection with the mythical model of Orestes, see MARCONI 2007, pp. 207–9.
23. See, for instance, the comparable clay in reliefs of certain local provenience in GABRICI 1927, pls. XXXI, nos. 3 and 6; XXXII no. 3; and XXXIV, no. 4. It should be noted that the *lex sacra* became part of the Getty collection in 1981, the year in which some distinctive twinned stelai from the sanctuary of Zeus Meilichios were also acquired (inv. 81-AA.135, 81-AA.136, 81-AA.137, 81-AA.138, 81-AA.139a–d); this coincidence in dates may reinforce the hypothesis that the current object is also from Selinunte.
24. On the pertinence and significance of the subject in the Selinunte area, see also ØSTBY 1996, pp. 31–33. According to a hypothesis that merits further attention, a fragmentary terracotta relief from the Malophoros sanctuary might be a portrayal of the same subject: an armed male character faces a figure looking to the right; of a third character, perhaps Aegisthos, there remain only scant traces. If this identification holds, it would be further evidence of the presence in Selinunte of an ancient iconographic tradition linked to the hero; see GABRICI 1927, col. 188–89, pl. XXX, no. 1. On the hypothesis of a cult of Zeus Meilichios undertaken by *genoi* or *patriai* (birth or caste groups), see GABRICI 1927, col. 403–5; and A. Brugnone, cited in n. 21 above.
- Pausanias also mentions, along the sacred road to Eleusis, an altar of Zeus Meilichios where Theseus is said to have purified himself after killing his cousin Sinis in the course of his adventures (Pausanias 1.37.4). Sanctuaries dedicated to the purifying god were always situated near burial areas, as was the case in Selinunte; see GABRICI 1927, coll. 403–5; for the cult of Zeus Meilichios, see ZUNTZ 1971, pp. 101–4; G. Sfameni Gasparro, "Politica, religione e culti," in LO STILE SEVERO* 1990, pp. 43–54; G. Manganaro, "Mondo religioso greco e mondo indigeno in Sicilia," in ANTONETTI 1997, pp. 71–82. See N. Cusumano, "Zeus Meilichios," *Mythos 3 (1991), pp. 19–47; the author, after examining the evidence on the cult of Zeus Meilichios in the various areas of Greece and the Greek colonies, conjectured that a *genos* (descent, stock) or a *thiasos* (cult retinue) could procure a sacralized space in the rock for its purposes, carve a niche in it, and in that niche inscribe a dedication, as seen, for instance, in Thera and Cyrene. If that were the case, it is possible that the current relief might have enjoyed a similar placement in the Meilichios sanctuary at Selinunte.
25. See C. Marconi, "Due studi sulle metope figurate dei templi C e F di Selinunte," *RivIstArch* 18 (1995), pp. 5–67; MARCONI 1997, pp. 121–34; and MARCONI 2006, pp. 621–30.

26. For ties between Nisaean Megara and Argos, see K. Hanell, *Megarische Studien* (Lund, 1934); and PICCIRILLI 1975, pp. 86–90.
27. In this connection, see MARCONI 2007, pp. 204–5; and CUSUMANO 1997–98; on the presence of Orestes in Sicily and Magna Graecia, see also G. Camassa, “I culti dell’area dello stretto,” in *Lo Stretto crocevia di culture, Atti Taranto* 26, 1986 (Taranto, 1987), pp. 133–62; A. Coppola, *Archaiologhía e propaganda* (Rome 1995), pp. 161–73; see also the exegesis of the *pinakes* from Francavilla di Sicilia assignable to types IX and XI, interpreted as Orestes and Iphigenia, in U. Spigo, “I pinakes di Francavilla di Sicilia: Nuova classificazione e brevi note sugli aspetti culturali,” in *DAMARATO* 2000, pp. 208–20, esp. pp. 213–14.
28. For the role played by Apollo within family relationships, see MARCONI 1997, pp. 131–33.
29. Hesiod, *Catalogue of Women* fr. 23a M–W. In this context, see the analysis and the hypothesis of recontextualization of several fragments from a figured white-ground lekythos with a scene of the sacrifice of Iphigenia found in the area of the Malophoros Sanctuary in Selinunte: C. Marconi, “Iphigenia a Selinunte,” *Prospettiva* 75–76 (1994), pp. 50–54. For the account of Stesichorus, see M. Davies, *Poetarum melicorum Graecorum fragmenta* (Oxford, 1991), vol. 1, frag. 215. For the presence of Iphigenia in Megara, see PICCIRILLI 1975, frag. 15.
30. For the enclosure of Hekate, identified in some cases as the “Pasikrateia” mentioned in the inscription of Temple G (*IG XIV* 268), see GABRICI 1927, coll. 73–75; and DEWAILLY 1992, pp. 146–48.
31. In this connection, see CURTI AND VAN BREMEN 1999, p. 24.
32. See Pausanias 1.43.1; K. Hanell, *Megarische Studien* (Lund, 1934), p. 97; PICCIRILLI 1975, pp. 117–19.
33. On the relations between the homeland and the colonies regarding the cults, see MARCONI 2007, pp. 204–5. For the presence of the sanctuary of Demeter Malophoros in Nisaean Megara, see Pausanias 1.44.3; C. Antonetti, “Megara e le sue colonie: un’unità storico-culturale?” in ANTONETTI 1997, pp. 83–94; and L. Paresi, “Per una storia dei culti della Sicilia antica: Selinunte e Megara Iblea,” in his *Studi siciliani ed italioi* (Florence, 1920), pp. 227–72.
34. See the observations in A. F. Stewart, *Greek Sculpture: An Exploration* (London, 1990), pp. 115–16, and in MARCONI 2009, pp. 193–96, for a small Late Archaic relief from Selinunte in which the heads of the two figures are still frontal.
35. See also the high-relief Archaic female figure from the *temenos* of Hekate in the Malophoros Sanctuary, turned for a three-quarters view: GABRICI 1927, col. 91, pl. XXXI, no. 4. For the theme of the frontal face adopted in the Selinunte sculpture, which seems more connected to visual strategies than to chronological assessments, see MARCONI 2009, pp. 217–22.
36. For this aspect in terracottas, see also the massive legs of the male figure in the *arula* from Monte San Mauro, with sow and piglets, in LENTINI 1993, pp. 127–28, no. 32.
37. ØSTBY 1987, pp. 133–35, emphasizes the tendency both in stone sculpture and in terracotta to work the eyes as globular forms without details. For the relations between coroplastic production and sculpture in Selinunte, see E. Paribeni, “Profilo storico-critico delle sculture selinuntine,” in TUSA 1984, pp. 26–31; MARCONI 1994, pp. 215–19; and PECORARO 2001, which emphasizes an intentional incorporation, in certain *arulae* of the Malophoros sanctuary, of the iconographic themes of the small metopes. It may be that large-production terracottas can also provide significant evidence relative to phenomena of cultural conservatism and iconographic persistence, which are so characteristic of the artistic models used in the western Greek cities; an overall analysis of the reliefs and *arulae* from Malophoros and a general reconsideration of the sanctuary, with a broader view of its contextual and cult milieu, could test this hypothesis. More recently, consider the observations in PAUTASSO 2012.
38. For the stylistic problem of Temple C, see MARCONI 2007, pp. 176–84; for the small metopes, pp. 99–104. Tubular arms also characterize the winged figure in an Archaic metope, possibly from Gela; see FISCHER-HANSEN 1992, pp. 24–25, no. 1.
39. See MARCONI 2007, pp. 122–24. The same globular definition of the eyes can be found in the figures of Temple C; see, for instance, the female figure in the fragmentary metope in MARCONI 2007, p. 136, fig. 166. Similar characteristics are also found in other terracotta reliefs, such as the head, again from the Malophoros sanctuary, in GABRICI 1927, pp. 190–91, pl.

- XXX, no. 1, and a female figure, pl. XXXI, no. 3, especially for the rendering of the ears and the curls on the forehead. The mouth of Clytemnestra, with small, fleshy, horizontal lips, does not present the Archaic smile and seems like a distant heritage of the sub-Daedalic tradition, but the face, inscribed in an oval, belongs to the realm of Archaic sculpture; for this aspect, see G. Vallet and F. Villard, "Mégara Hyblaea: VIII: Remarques sur la plastique du VII siècle," *MÉFRA* 76 (1964), pp. 25–42.
40. For the rendering of the locks of hair at Selinunte, see the relief from the Casa del Viaggiatore in R. Camerata Scovazzo, "Soprintendenza Beni Culturali e Ambientali: Sezione per i Beni archeologici—Trapani: Aggiornamento attività 1988/1992," *Kokalos* 39–40 (1993–94), vol. II.2, pp. 1423–1456, esp. pp. 1436–40, pl. CCX. For the Quadriga metope, see MARCONI 2007, fig. 45. Orestes' hair is modeled the same way as that of the male figure in the Malophoros relief; see GABRICI 1927, pl. XXXI, no. 4. For comparisons with small bronzes, see the hairstyle of the bronze Siren from Edifice B of the sanctuary at Capo Colonna in Crotone, datable to just after the middle of the sixth century BC, which has been identified as a Corinthian production influenced by Laconian prototypes: see R. Spadea, "Oggetti figurati in bronzo," in R. Belli Pasqua and R. Spadea, eds., *Kroton e il suo territorio tra VI e V secolo a.C.: Aggiornamenti e nuove ricerche: Atti del Convegno di studi, Crotone, 3–5 marzo 2000* (Crotone, 2005), pp. 25–41; and STIBBE 2001, fig. 7.
 41. The cultural context is described by M. Torelli, "La cultura artistica dell'età arcaica," in R. Bianchi Bandinelli, *Storia e civiltà dei Greci*, vol. 2 (Milan, 1979), pp. 688–720. On the importation into the west of Peloponnesian metal artifacts, see GABRICI 1927, col. 346–47, fig. 145; see also BELVEDERE 1982, pp. 88–89, n. 110.
 42. C. M. Stibbe, *The Sons of Hephaistos: Aspects of the Archaic Greek Bronze Industry* (Rome, 2000), pp. 122–27, figs. 80–82.
 43. On the Corinthian influence on Sicilian and Selinuntine sculpture, see MARCONI 2007, pp. 176–84; U. Spigo, "Corinto e la Sicilia: Gli influssi dell'arte corinzia nella cultura figurativa dell'arcaismo siceliota: Alcuni aspetti," in *Corinto e l'Occidente, Atti Taranto 34, 1994* (Taranto, 1995), pp. 551–83, esp. pp. 566–69; STIBBE 2001, pp. 27–28; ØSTBY 1982, pp. 15–16; and PAUTASSO 2012.
 44. On Aegean influences on the plastic arts of Selinunte in the middle of the sixth century BC, see ØSTBY 1987, pp. 127–28. For the role and influence of the Samians in Sicily, ROLLEY 1994–99, vol. 1, pp. 299–300. See also F. Croissant, "La diffusione dei modelli stilistici greco–orientali nella coroplastica arcaica della Grecia d'Occidente," in *Magna Grecia e oriente mediterraneo prima dell'età ellenistica, Atti Taranto 39, 1999* (Taranto, 2000), pp. 417–55. The elongation of the figures is also present in the Archaic Laconian plastic arts in which Eastern influences can be detected; see P. G. Guzzo, "Gioie clandestine," *RM* (1987), pp. 162–81, fig. 1.
 45. For this aspect, see MARCONI 2009, pp. 195–99, and C. Antonetti, "Megara e le sue colonie: un'unità storico–culturale?," in ANTONETTI 1997, pp. 83–94. For more on relations in general between the colonial experience and the mother cities, see M. C. Parra, "L'arte greca in Italia meridionale, tra scoperte, riscoperte, ricezione," in CATONI AND SETTIS 2008, pp. 79–91; and P. Orlandini, "L'arte in Magna Grecia e in Sicilia: Aspetti e problemi," in *Les Grecs et l'Occident: Actes du colloque de la Villa 'Kerylos' (1991)*, Collection de l'École Française de Rome 208 (Paris, 1995), pp. 123–39.



Thymiaterion Supported by a Statuette of Nike

500-475 BC

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Object Details

Catalogue Number	53
Inventory Number	86.AD.681 ✉
Typology	Thymiaterion
Location	Sicily
Dimensions	H: 44.6 cm; D (incense cup): 7 cm

Fabric

Light beige (Munsell 10 yr 8/3) with extremely small and diffuse reflective inclusions, and a friable consistency. The polychromy is overlaid on a layer of white slip: red (himation, lower part of chiton, *stephane* [wreath], chiton, dove's and figure's wings, both front and back); dark blue (chiton, upper section of the torso, dove, *stephane*); and black (background of the wings).

The statuette was made from two molds, one for the body and one for the head, while the wings, the arms, the *thymiaterion* with the dove, and a number of other details, such as the band around the torso and the hems of the himation and the drapery, were applied before firing. The folds of the chiton and the himation were also applied into the fresh clay. The work of defining the details of the figure was done by hand and with the use of an instrument.

Condition

The figure was reassembled from thirteen fragments, the censer from nine fragments: the thumb on the right hand, the left hand, the left wing of the dove, the hem of the himation on the figure's right side, and part of the base are all missing. A small gap can also be identified on the sleeves; the sides of the himation are broken. The polychromy is worn away in many points.

Provenance

- 1986, Robin Symes (London, England), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1986.

Bibliography

ACQUISITIONS 1986, pp. 159–60, no. 5; I. G. Fernandez, "J. Paul Getty Museum," *Revista de Arqueología* 115 (1990), pp. 48–56, illus. p. 52; GETTY 1991, p. 40; E. Towne Markus, *Masterpieces of the J. Paul Getty Museum: Antiquities* (Los Angeles, 1997), frontispiece; p. 79; ZACCAGNINO 1998, p. 195; GETTY 2002, p. 114; GETTY 2007, p. 22, illus.; GETTY 2010, p. 112; D. Sacks, *Encyclopedia of the Ancient Greek World* (New York, 2005) p. 225, illus.; LYONS, BENNETT, AND MARCONI 2013 pp. 187–88, fig. 127; GETTY 2015, p. 25.

Description

The female figure is standing; she must originally have stood on a base that has since been lost. The left leg is extended forward and the right arm is raised, with the palm of the hand, with notably elongated fingers, turned toward the viewer. The left arm, which is slightly bent, extends down parallel to the body; the left hand gathers the *paryphe* (woven border) of the chiton. The figure's long, clinging chiton has sleeves fastened at the elbow with circular clasps; it ruffles across the torso in small, delicate folds. Above the chiton, crosswise, lies a red himation, which falls between the breasts and drapes down the right side in a long strip; part of it is now lost. A good portion of the drapery covers the right half of the torso and, owing to the raised arm, falls in a curve that appears a bit incongruous; a strip of dark blue adorns the hem of the chiton and runs sideways across the torso. The folds of the chiton, in the lower half of the body, are indicated by means of fine radial incisions that converge toward the clutching hand.¹

The hairstyle consists of four rows of small globular curls, arranged in an arc across the forehead (a fine clay border sticks out from the first row of ringlets); they fall on either side of the neck in two compact masses. Set atop the head is a *stephane* with a semicircular border, which accords perfectly with the regular oval of the face and the curving line of the hairstyle. The gently smiling face is broad; the cheekbones are emphasized, the chin is full and slightly jutting; the mouth is broad and well designed with fleshy lips; the nose is wide at the base, with a flat dorsal ridge. The eyes are almond-shaped, without any indication of iris; they are elongated and the superciliary arches, regular and highlighted in relief, merge directly with the root of the nose.

The broad sickle-shaped wings are inserted directly into the back. They rise over the figure on each side, and the various layers of feathers, arranged in a fan shape, were chromatically punctuated by red pigment against a black background; these colors are now largely lost. The back of the statue is sketchily modeled, with an indication of buttocks, but it too must originally have been painted, as shown by the traces of pigment on wings and buttocks.²

Supported by the female figure, the *thymiaterion* rests on a short, tubular base atop the *stephane*. It is composed of a low bowl, turned on a potter's wheel, with a vertical lip, covered with a tall, bell-shaped lid that is perforated with a line of seven lozenge-shaped openings; above these are four smaller circular openings. A hand-modeled dove with a fan-shaped tail and spread wings forms the handle of the lid.

The female figure that supports the *thymiaterion* is Nike, the deity who consecrates victory in athletic, musical, poetic, and military competitions and who officiates at sacrificial rites. She is here depicted in keeping with the typology of the Late Archaic *korai*.³

The origin of the *thymiaterion* and of the custom of burning incense in sacred rituals can be sought in the East. With the spread of orientalizing fashions from the Near East, both the custom and its related objects became more common in the Greek world, probably through the mediation of Cyprus. In the West, censing is documented both in funerary and votive deposits, particularly those correlated with the chthonic religious context and the worship of Aphrodite.⁴

The caryatid-style *thymiaterion*, in particular, is documented from the end of the eighth century BC, both in the eastern regions and in Greece.⁵ It was between the sixth and the fifth century BC that this type of *thymiaterion* seems to have spread most extensively. Generally the figure holds the cup directly on its head, or on a tall support. The arms are brought forward, sometimes bearing a votive object; this compositional solution conferred greater lightness on the whole, as attested as well by a number of examples in bronze, from Delphi,

Sicyon, Sparta, and, in the West, from the Etruscan territory (especially the Vulci area) and from Magna Graecia.⁶

Terracotta caryatid *thymiateria* may have been derived from metal prototypes; this is suggested by comparison with the *korai* or Nikai figures utilized as mirror handles and in candelabra, widespread in Greece, Magna Graecia, Sicily, and especially Etruria in the sixth and fifth centuries BC.⁷ Particularly, a figure topping a candelabrum dating from the end of the sixth century BC offers a useful comparison for the Getty's Nike in the pose, the gesture of the hand, the clothing, and the general configuration.⁸

For the present Nike, the reliance upon a metal prototype is attested in part by the shape of the censer and above all by the cover, with its lozenge-shaped fretwork designed to allow the aromatic smoke to escape; this type was probably borrowed from the eastern Aegean and is also found in Greece, Magna Graecia, and Sicily.⁹ The rigidity of the treatment of the textile folds, which are flattened and clinging to the body, and the sickle-shaped wings are also found in small bronzes depicting sphinxes and Gorgons; this too suggests the possible derivation from metal prototypes for the Getty's figure.¹⁰ Two terracotta pieces from Sicily offer significant comparisons: a *thymiaterion kore*, datable to 520 BC, comes from a *pithos* that was destroyed by the foundations of a wall on the Acropolis of Gela (it may have belonged to a sacred building). This *kore* is depicted with a chiton *poderes* (reaching the feet) and a short transverse himation, and its head supports a cup with bobbin handles. The second piece, dating from 530 BC, and now in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, is from an unknown archaeological context, but may also be assignable to Gela: it stands on a rectangular base, bears a flower on its breast, and carries on its head a cup, only the bottom of which is preserved.¹¹

Also in Selinunte, and in particular in the Malophoros Sanctuary, there are probably attestations of terracotta caryatid-style *thymiateria*: a number of examples of *korai*, datable to around 530–20 BC, hold on their heads containers that may be censers.¹²

The motif of the bird used as a cover handle is fairly common. It is found for instance in a silver *thymiaterion*, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, datable to the end of the sixth century BC; it is also attested during the same period in a number of types of bucchero hydriai and oinochoai with dome covers. Doves were also used extensively on Etruscan *thymiateria* of the Hellenistic period.¹³

The dove, a bird sacred to Aphrodite, can by transference accompany other deities as well and can allude to love and the fleeting nature of life, especially when it is present in funerary contexts. In Magna Graecia and Sicily, dove figurines are more commonly found in

connection with the chthonic and funerary sphere, as attested, for example, by a number of examples from Agrigento.¹⁴

Within the typology of caryatid-shaped *thymiateria*, the figures of *korai* seem to prevail in the Late Archaic period; they are also depicted in the type of the *peplophoros* bearing an offering, but images of Nike are more rare.¹⁵

As the officiating deity and guarantor of the rites following a victory, Nike with her *thymiaterion* appears frequently in Attic red-figure vase-painting of the period between 490 and 460 BC, where she is also depicted with other attributes linked to the cult or chthonic sphere, such as phialai, paterae, oinochoai, or torches. In particular, Nike with *thymiaterion* became a favorite subject of the Berlin Painter and the Pan Painter and his circle, who painted numerous lekythoi intended for Sicilian markets.¹⁶

The connection of Nike with the *thymiaterion* is also documented in Apulian vase-painting from the fourth century BC; for the entire Hellenistic period, the Nike was a common iconographic motif in the decorative repertory of jewels, ceramics, and terracottas. Shortly after the middle of the fourth century BC, Athenian sources mention a *thymiaterion* dedicated to Athena Nike.¹⁷

From the Late Archaic period onward, images of winged figures became increasingly more common, both in Greece and in the West, especially in architectonic decoration.¹⁸

Numerous fragments of terracotta statues of Nikai from the Late Archaic period have been discovered at Olympia, some of which were mounted as acroteria on buildings located on the terrace of the *thesauroi* (treasuries). These fragments constitute significant evidence of the diffusion in this context of the winged figure in a particular stance—running and about to take off from the earth—that would come to represent a visual and conceptual link between the terrestrial and the divine spheres. Olympia, the city that symbolized athletic competition, had a special relationship with Nike: Pausanias stated that there was an altar dedicated to the winged goddess there, and she was depicted on the staters of Elis, where Olympia is situated, in 490 BC.¹⁹

During the same period, in the Greek West as well, the image of Nike was widely used in architectural decoration. Among the numerous examples are the fragmentary sima from Paestum; a Nike acroterion from Locri; the fragmentary statue in Karlsruhe bought on the antiquities market and tentatively assigned to either Gela or Camarina; the statue of Nike from the Syracusan Athenaion; and two terracotta Nike acroteria from Taranto, all belonging to the Late Archaic period (first half of the fifth century BC).²⁰ From a votive deposit on the Acropolis of Gela, close to the Athenaion, comes a fragmentary bust in terracotta with a

garment decorated with a rosette and meander motif; due to the musculature and the attachment of the shoulders, it could be identified as a Nike. Another Nike dressed in a short chiton and a himation appears in relief on a fragment of architectural decoration, now in Copenhagen and perhaps originally from Taranto.²¹

The winged figure is recurrent in the coin types of Catania, Syracuse, Gela, and Camarina. In the last-named colony, possibly beginning in 461 BC, silver litrae were minted showing a winged figure with her right hand raised and the left hand gathering her clothing, in accordance with iconography previously seen in vase-painting.²² In Syracuse, the mother city of Camarina, Nike also appears on tetradrachms that can be dated to 480 BC. On these coins, as well as on late-fifth-century decadrachms signed by Euainetos and Kimon, and Catanian tetradrachms dating after 480 BC, she holds a crown of laurel aloft above a chariot. In tetradrachms from Gela dating to 440–430 BC, a flying Nike crowns a man-headed bull.²³

The Nike image, which, as noted, became increasingly common both in Greece and in the West, especially during the first half of the fifth century BC (and in particular following the Battle of Marathon), has been interpreted not only as a potent emblem of victory but as evoking the very presence of the deity on a battlefield or in an athletic contest. From a historical and political perspective, therefore, the journey of the image of Nike offers interesting insight into the determination to import into the West a message of Athenian triumph over the Persians, which in Sicily came to correspond with victory of the Greeks over the Punic element. Thus the winged figure could come to acquire a specific programmatic and ideological value, an eloquent image to seal the affiliation of the colonial cities with the Greek identity, of which Athens constituted in those years the highest expression.²⁴ Even Nike's pose should be seen as connected with her role as a messenger of salvation and celebrant of victory: in vase-painting and in coins, in addition to being depicted in flight or running in a distinctive backward-looking pose, Nike most often shows her arm raised in a gesture of salutation or identifies the victor in an athletic contest.²⁵

Stylistically, in general composition, in the type of clothing, and in the treatment of the hairstyle, the Getty figure echoes the type of the Attic *kore* dating from the Late Archaic period, which is extensively documented in the coroplastic art of Sicily, though the type of flat, curved wings is an Archaic reminiscence.²⁶

It is in the last third of the sixth century BC that Attic-derived stylistic tendencies began to spread to Sicily in the coroplastic production, perhaps through imported molds or by the emigration of artists and coroplasts of Attic origin. In this period, in fact, the Siceliote workshops related to the Siceliote *poleis* had already elaborated specific and distinctive connotations through the assimilation of the stylistic influence from the Greek world,

especially from Attica. Within this dynamic production, the coroplasts found their most vital and original life force in these relationships, by turns resistant and receptive, between the foreign models on the one hand and local contributions on the other.²⁷ Close comparisons for the Getty Nike can be found in Selinunte, where a number of statuettes of *korai* from the Malophoros Sanctuary, dating from between the sixth and fifth centuries BC, attest the same typology and comparable iconographic details, such as the long, narrow chiton with the lower hem draping between the feet; the use of an incised line for the rendering of the folds; the pleated effect of the chiton folds on the torso; the flat transverse hem of the himation; the long fold that falls along the right hip; and the modeled back section. The facial type, too—characterized by the full oval shape and the soft, continuous surface, with almond-shaped eyes, broad, arched eyebrows, a wide nose, and elongated, distinct lips—associated with a hairstyle consisting of dense, small ringlets, seems to have been used in Selinunte for various types of statuettes from the same period. In particular, the bulbous eyes, without distinction from the eyelids (here endowed with a regular almond shape), was already an iconographic peculiarity of sculpture in Sicily from the Archaic period.²⁸ In Sicily, this type of face, which seems to mark a transition from the Archaic style toward the Severe style, also became more widespread in the broader southern area extending between Gela, Agrigento, and Camarina. The type may have been elaborated from an Attic model introduced as part of the intense cultural and economic exchange between Attica and this area. Some comparisons can be detected at Gela in the structure of the face and the hairstyle; in these it bears resemblance to the figure of Eos in a scene with Kephalos, on the altar found in Bosco Littorio near the Archaic emporium at the foot of Gela's Acropolis and datable between 490 and 480 BC.²⁹ The full, fleshy face of the Nike can also be compared to the protome of the “Blank Eye Type” (according to Uhlenbrock’s classification), identified particularly with the Gela area in the last quarter of the sixth century BC and characterized by similar features, though there it was combined with a different treatment of the hairstyle and headdress.³⁰ Also comparable is a protome in the Museo Civico Castello Ursino in Catania, dating from between 530 and 520 BC and assignable to Camarina, though the facial features reflect a distinct Ionian inspiration. One can see the assimilation of Attic influence in the regular, slightly oblique eyes; the fluid outline of the face, slightly heavy in the chin; and the hairstyle with dense waves that almost form tiny spheres.³¹ This hairstyle can also be found in the Tarentine coroplastic production that, as early as the Archaic period, showed characteristics similar to production in a number of areas of Sicily.³² Another head of a statuette—assignable to the earliest phase of settlement in Castiglione (Ragusa), which fell under the sway of Camarina—is datable to the end of the sixth century BC. In the hairstyle, eye shape, treatment of the mouth, and continuous modeling, this head can be linked to the same formal tradition as the Castello Ursino protome, mentioned above.³³

Some terracotta heads from Agrigento also clearly attest to a transformation of the formal and stylistic language within coroplastic production at the end of the sixth century BC, especially in the hairstyle and the soft, rounded rendering of the face, which is somewhat puffy; and in the elongation of the eyes, which are emphasized by the high superciliary arch. These features were characteristic of local production and remained constant over the course of the fifth century, in marble sculpture as well as terracotta.³⁴

The same stylistic trend influenced by the Attic strain in the Sicilian artistic production is also traceable in the same period in some marble sculptures, in which the Ionic elements begin to diminish.³⁵ The derivation of the *thymiaterion* Nike from an Attic model appears especially evident when looking at the head of a terracotta *kore* from the Athenian Acropolis, which has a very similar construction of the face and facial features, or the terracotta *korai* from the Kerameikos cemetery in Athens, dating back to the first decades of the fifth century BC and characterized by the same definition of the eyes, without eyelids.³⁶

Also, a comparison with more sculptural models—such as the Athenian marble *korai* from the very early fifth century BC, characterized primarily by a sharp attenuation of the Ionian formal traits, identifiable as the almost horizontal orientation of the eyes, the faint smile, and the continuous line devoid of any accentuated chiaroscuro modulations—reiterates an intonation that is clearly analogous to that of the Getty Nike.³⁷

The findings may be summarized as follows: (1) The Nike seems to be linked to a colonial setting that had, between the end of the sixth century and the first two decades of the fifth century BC, close, intense ties with Attica, such as Gela, Camarina, or Selinunte. (2) In stylistic terms, the characteristics of the face seem to be linked to a type of Attic influence found in the entire area from Selinunte in the east to Camarina in the west; the area of diffusion also included Agrigento and, especially, Gela.³⁸ (3) Gela, in particular, between 500 and 470 BC appears to have been the prime recipient of Attic vases with depictions of Nike. The diffusion of these items was probably also linked to ideological and propagandistic factors, and the marked interest in Atticism in the colony in the fifth century.

The lack of findspot greatly limits the frame of reference, particularly in regard to the significance of the object's final resting place, whether funerary, domestic, or votive.³⁹

Notes

1. According to analysis by the Getty's Antiquities Conservation Department, the form that appears to be a snake's head coming out of the hem of the chiton across the bust is simply incrustation. It originated from root casing; there are a number of such "snakelike" casings all over the figure, which are hard to discern with the naked eye.

2. On the use of polychromy in statuary and the coroplastic art, see V. Manzelli, *La policromia nella statuaria greca arcaica* (Rome, 1994), pp. 135–36, 261, nos. 90–93, 207; on the polychromy of Archaic sculpture in particular, see V. Brinkmann, *Die Polychromie der archaischen und frühklassischen Skulptur*, Studien zur antiken Malerei und Farbgebung 5 (Munich, 2003).
3. On the iconography of Nike, see A. Moustaka, A. Goulaki-Voutira, and J. U. Grote, s.v. “Nike,” LIMC 6, pp. 850–904; for the figure of Nike in the fifth century BC, see C. Thöne, *Ikonographische Studien zu Nike im 5. Jahrhundert v. Chr.: Untersuchungen zur Wirkungsweise und Wesenart* (Heidelberg, 1999).
4. On the significance, use, and typologies of *thymiateria* in general, see ZACCAGNINO 1998; on the use of *thymiateria* in religious rituals, see I. Battiloro and M. Di Lieto, “Oggetti votivi e oggetti rituali: Terrecotte figurate e thymiateria nel statuario di Torre di Satriano,” in NAVA AND OSANNA 2005, pp. 141–55. For Sicily and Magna Graecia, consider the fictile *thymiateria* found in the votive deposit of Francavilla di Sicilia and the one depicted in the type IX/I *pinax* from the same center, in SPIGO 2000a, p. 47. See also the types found in Medma and dating from the first half of the fifth century BC in ZACCAGNINO 1998, cat. CT 111, pp. 142–44; for the diffusion of the *thymiaterion* in southern Italy, see also FABBRICOTTI 1979, pp. 410–13. See also the *thymiateria* found in the necropoleis of Salamina in Cyprus, see V. Karageorghis, “Chronique des fouilles et découvertes archéologiques à Chypre en 1966,” *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* (1967), pp. 275–370, esp. p. 286; idem., *Excavation in the Necropolis of Salamis* 2 (Nicosia, 1970), Tomb 23, no. 5, pl. B1; idem., *Excavation in the Necropolis of Salamina* 3 (Nicosia, 1973), p. 119.
5. For the association of the figure of Nike with the typology of the caryatid-shaped *thymiateria*, see ZACCAGNINO 1998, pp. 87–88, 127–28, 140. For examples in terracotta from the Kerameikos cemetery in Athens, see for instance two weeping figures, with their hands raised to hold the cup, dated around 680–670 BC: ZACCAGNINO 1998, pp. 81–82, 192–93, CT 159–61.
6. For Delphi, see ZACCAGNINO 1998, cat. CT 164 from the middle of the fifth century BC; for Sparta, see K. A. Neugebauer, *Die Minoischen und archaisch Griechischen Bronzen*, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Katalog der statuarischen Bronzen im Antiquarium 1 (Berlin, 1931), fig. 22, no. 162; for Sicyon, see the *thymiaterion* from 460–450 BC in S. Boucher, *Bronzes grecs, hellénistiques, et étrusques (sardes, ibériques, et celtes) du musées de Lyon* (Lyon, 1970), fig. 12, pp. 28–31. For the Etruscan area, see G. Pianu, M. P. Bini, G. Caramella, and S. Buccioli, *I bronzi etruschi e romani*, Materiali del Museo archeologico nazionale di Tarquinia 13 (Rome, 1995), pp. 300–301; A. Hus, *Les bronzes étrusques*, Collection Latomus 139 (Brussels, 1975), pp. 88–90; and M. Gras, *Trafics tyrrhéniens archaïques* (Rome, 1985), pp. 680–81; see also the Etruscan candelabrum with winged figure from Ruvo del Monte, in A. Bottini, “Il candelabro etrusco di Ruvo del Monte,” *BdA* 59 (1990), pp. 1–14. For Magna Graecia, see, for instance, the example from Locri from 480 BC, in ZACCAGNINO 1998, CT 165.
7. In this connection, A. Naso, “Materiali etruschi e italici nell’Oriente Mediterraneo,” in *Magna Grecia e oriente mediterraneo prima dell’età ellenistica*, Atti Taranto 39, 1999 (Naples, 2000), pp. 165–85. For Nikai utilized as mirror supports in pieces from Greece, see Moustaka et al., “Nike” (cited above in n. 3), nos. 43, 45–47.

For the mirror handles from Magna Graecia, see I. Caruso, “Bronzetti di produzione magnogreca dal VI al IV secolo a.C.: La classe degli specchi,” RM 88 (1981), pp. 13–106, esp. examples “d6” and “d9”; see also the types configured as Nikai from Crotone, in U. Jantzen, *Bronzwerkstätten in Grossgriechenland und Sizilien* (Berlin, 1937), fig. 12, no. 46; fig. 18, nos. 71–72; fig. 19, nos. 75–78; fig. 20, nos. 79–81. For a bronze female figure, from the second half of the sixth century BC, from the necropolis in the Contrada Lucifero in Locri, see E. Lattanzi, ed., *Il Museo nazionale di Reggio Calabria* (Rome, 1987), p. 42. See also a mirror handle depicting a female deity with sphinxes, but perhaps of Tarentine manufacture, assignable to the Late Archaic period, in ORLANDINI 1983, fig. 389.

8. This candelabrum is without a documented findspot and has been partly reworked: see *In Pursuit of the Absolute: Art of the Ancient World from the George Ortiz Collection*, exh. cat. (London, Royal Academy of Arts, 1994), no. 124.
9. See Zaccagnino 1998, pp. 49–50, 83–84, and p. 78 for a type that dates back to Greece at the end of the sixth century and the beginning of the fifth century BC; for a similar censer from Crotone, see R. Spadea, “Il tesoro di Hera,” BdA 88 (1994), pp. 1–34, esp. p. 11, no. 7 fig. 12. For a similar *thymiaterion* cover from the sanctuary of Contrada Mannella at Locri, see V. Meirano, “Vasellame ed instrumentum metallico nelle aree sacre di Locri/Mannella, Hipponion/Scrimbia e Medma/

Calderazzo: Note preliminari,” in Nava and Osanna 2005, pp. 43–53, fig. 3. Also from Medma are examples with a splayed foot supporting a basin or a plate, featuring a perforated cover; see P. Orsi, “Rosarno (Medma): Esplorazione di un grande deposito votivo di terrecotte ieratiche,” *NSc*, suppl. 1913 (1914), pp. 134–35, figs. 176–77. For Francavilla di Sicilia, see Spigo 2000a, n. 216. From Timmari comes a *thymiaterion* of the Hellenistic period with a bell-shaped cover and triangular fretwork, surmounted by a dove; see F. G. Lo Porto, *Timmari: L’abitato, le necropoli, la stipe votiva* (Rome, 1991), pl. LXXVIII, no. 227. For Athens, see B. A. Sparkes and L. Talcott, *Black and Plain Pottery of the 6th, 5th, and 4th Centuries BC*, The Athenian Agora 12 (Princeton, 1970), no. 1345, pl. 44. The shape is also reminiscent of a bronze bell type produced in the sixth century BC in Samos; see U. Jantzen, *Ägyptische und orientalische Bronzen aus dem Heraion von Samos*, Samos 8 (Bonn, 1972), pp. 80–85, B271; see also the silver *thymiaterion* with a bell cover from a tomb in Uşak (Asia Minor), from the beginning of the Achaemenid period, in M. J. Mellink, “Archaeology in Asia Minor,” *AJA* 71 (April 1967), pp. 155–74, pl. 59, figs. 20–21.

10. For other comparisons with terracotta caryatid *thymiateria* found in Magna Graecia and Sicily, see, for example, the wings of a small bronze sphinx from Capo Colonna (Crotone) characterized by a series of parallel ridges, like those painted on the wings of the Getty Nike, as well as the long fingers of the hand of a running Gorgon figure in STIBBE 2001, figs. 3, 5. Hands with tapered fingers can also be found in the horizontal handle attachments belonging to bronze hydriai, such as those from Trebeništa (Macedonia) or Paestum in C. Rolley, *Les vases du bronze de l’archaïsme récent en Grand-Grèce*, Bibliothèque de l’Institut français de Naples, 2nd ser., 5 (Naples, 1982), pp. 83–85, pl. XXII, no. 109. See also the fictile Archaic *thymiaterion* from Taranto in F. G. Lo Porto, “Recenti scoperte di tombe arcaiche in Taranto,” *BdA* 46 (1961), pp. 268–82; and FABBRICOTTI 1979, pp. 410–13, esp. n. 59.
11. See P. Orlandini, “Kore fittile dall’Acropoli di Gela,” *ArchCl* 6 (1954), pp. 1–8; for the one now in Copenhagen, see FISCHER-HANSEN 1992, no. 29, pp. 64–65.
12. GABRICI 1927, pl. LV, no. 3; pl. LVII, no. 1.
13. See ZACCAGNINO 1998, cat. CT 8 (originally from Asia Minor); for examples from Asia Minor, see also, for instance, T. Monloup, *Les figurines de terre cuite de tradition archaïque*, Salamine de Chypre 12 (Paris, 1984), pp. 91–92; for examples from the Etruscan milieu, see L. Donati, “Vasi di bucchero decorati con teste plastiche umane (zona di Chiusi),” *Studi Etruschi* 36 (1968), pp. 319–56, esp. fig. 5a, pl. LXVIIib–c; and A. Testa, *Candelabri e thymiateria*, Monumenti, musei e gallerie pontificie, Museo Gregoriano etrusco 2 (Rome, 1989), pp. 112–23 (from the Hellenistic period). From Sicily, see also the bird-shaped handle in D. Pancucci, “Monte Bubbonia: Scavi nel quadriennio 1972–1975,” *Kokalos* 32–33 (1976–77), vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 470–78, pl. LV, no. 3.
14. DE MIRO 2000, p. 111, pl. CVI; on the relations between the dove and the sphere of Aphrodite, see B. Alroth, “Visiting Gods: Who and Why,” in LINDERS AND NORDQUIST 1987, pp. 9–19, esp. p. 11. For the presence of the bird in the pinakes of Francavilla and Locri, see SPIGO 2000a, p. 41.
15. ZACCAGNINO 1998, cat. FE 8b, pp. 56, 112.
16. For depictions of Nike with a *thymiaterion* in the vase-painting of the first half of the fifth century BC, see Zaccagnino 1998, pp. 87–88, 127; in particular, lekythoi RT 19 and RT 22 from Gela; for the presence and significance of Nike in the iconography of the red-figured Attic lekythoi intended for Gela, see R. R. Holloway, “Three Lekythoi by the Pan Painter in Providence,” in *Archeologia del Mediterraneo* 2003, pp. 401–4 and n. 26.
17. Zaccagnino 1998, FE 21–22, pp. 113–14.
18. The image of Nike in acroterial decorations between the sixth century and the fifth century BC, was the result of a long evolution in the Ionic milieu. See C. Isler-Kerényi, *Nike: Der Typus der laufenden Flügelfrau in archaischer Zeit* (Zurich, 1969), esp. pp. 75–76, 114–15; see also LONIS 1979, pp. 246–47.
19. For the acroterial statues from Olympia, see A. Moustaka, *Grossplastik aus Ton in Olympia*, Olympische Forschungen 22 (Berlin, 1993), pp. 64–97, figs. 52–83. For the stone and terracotta acroteria depicting Nike, see P. Danner, *Griechische Akrotere der archaischen und klassischen Zeit*, RdA suppl. 5 (Rome, 1989), pp. 16–20; and C. Le Roy, *Les terres cuites architecturales*, Fouilles de

Delphes (Paris, 1967), vol. 2: *Topographie et architecture*, pp. 234–40 for terracotta acroteria belonging to the Temple of Athena Marmaria dating from the end of the sixth century BC; for the coinage of Elis, see LONIS 1979, pp. 243–44. For the presence of a monument with a statue of Nike in Olympia in the fifth century and its historical meaning, see T. Hölscher, “La Nike dei Messeni e dei Naupatti a Olimpia: Arte e storia della fine del V secolo,” in E. La Rocca, ed., *L’Esperimento della perfezione: Arte e società nell’Atene di Pericle* (Milan, 1988), pp. 67–108. On the sculptural types from Greece relating to Nike, see ROLLEY 1994–99, vol. 1, pp. 187–88, 257–59, and A. Gulaki, *Klassische und klassizistische Nikedarstellungen: Untersuchungen zur Typologie und zum Bedeutungswandel* (Bonn, 1981), pp. 134–40.

20. For the fragment of a sima from Paestum, see ORLANDINI 1983, no. 396 (530–520 BC); C. Rolley, “La sculpture,” in *Magna Grecia e oriente mediterraneo prima dell’età ellenistica*, Atti Taranto 39, 1999 (Naples, 2000), pl. XIV, no. 1. For the acroterial Nike from Locri, see A. De Franciscis, “La Nike acroteriale da Locri Epizefiri,” in APARCHAI 1982, vol. 1, pp. 221–25. For the Nike of Karlsruhe, see F. Gilotta, “La Nike di Karlsruhe e un’ara di Gela,” *Prospettiva* 98–99 (2000), pp. 155–59, with bibliography; and F. Jurgeit, “Le vicende dell’acquisizione della Nike di Karlsruhe,” in PELAGATTI AND GUZZO 1997, pp. 47–51. For the Nike from the Athenaion of Syracuse, see RIZZA AND DE MIRO 1985, p. 228, fig. 244. For the Nikai from a Tarentine *naiskos*, see L. von Matt and U. Zanotti Bianco, *Grossgriechenland* (Zurich, 1961), figs. 186–87.
21. For the figure from the Acropolis of Gela, see B. Ferrara, “Acroteri a Gela alla luce delle nuove acquisizioni,” in *Deliciae fictiles IV: Architectural Terracottas in Ancient Italy: Images of Gods, Monsters and Heroes: Proceedings of an International Conference held in Rome (Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia, Royal Netherlands Institute) and Syracuse (Museo Archeologico Regionale Paolo Orsi), October 21–25, 2009*, ed. P. Lulof and C. Rescigno (Oxford, 2011), pp. 464–76; and B. Ferrara, “Offerte votive dalla nuova stipe votiva sull’Acropoli,” in PANVINI AND SOLE 2009, vol. 2, pp. 175–78; for the Nike in Copenhagen, see FISCHER-HANSEN 1992, no. 2, pp. 26–27. See also the Nike in relief on a terracotta altar from Gela, now in Kassel, datable to 500 BC: P. Gercke, *Funde aus der Antike: Sammlung Paul Dierichs, Kassel* (Kassel, 1981), pp. 100–105. See also the female bust with attachment for wings from Megara Hyblea in P. Orsi, “Megara Hyblea: Storia, topografia, necropoli e anathemata,” *MonAnt* 1 (1889), pp. 689–950, esp. coll. 931, no. 111, pl. VIII, no. 8.
22. For the coinage of Camarina, see U. Westermark and K. Jenkins, *The Coinage of Kamarina* (London, 1980), pp. 24–39.
23. For the coinage of Syracuse, see A. Stazio, “Monetazione ed economia monetaria,” in SIKANIE 1985, pp. 108–19, nos. 17 (tetradrachm, second half of the fifth century BC), 20, 24. For the coinage of Catania, see SIKANIE 1985, nos. 85–86; for Gela, see K. Jenkins, *The Coinage of Gela* (Berlin, 1970), pp. 58–59.
24. For the significance of Nike in Attic vase-painting, see F. Giudice, “Le divinità della ceramica attica in Magna Grecia,” *I culti della Campania antica: Atti del convegno internazionale di studi in ricordo di Nazarena Valenza Mele, Napoli, 15–17 maggio 1995* (Rome, 1998), pp. 143–47; F. Giudice, “Il viaggio delle immagini dall’Attica verso l’Occidente,” in MASSA-PAIRAULT 1999, pp. 267–327, esp. pp. 267–93. For the iconography and functions of the Attic red-figured vases in a social and cultural perspective, see M. Torelli, “Le ceramiche a figure rosse di Gela: Contributo alla costituzione del profilo culturale di una città,” in R. Panvini and F. Giudice, eds., *Ta Attika: Veder Greco a Gela: Ceramiche attiche figurate dell’antica colonia* (Rome, 2003), pp. 99–144, esp. pp. 99–107.
25. See, for instance, the red-figured lekythos in which Nike, in front of an altar, holds her garment with her right hand while raising her left arm: J. D. Beazley, *Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters* (Oxford, 1963), p. 697, no. 22 (at Bradford).
26. For the *kore* type and the influence of foreign models, see A. Pautasso, “L’età arcaica: Affermazione e sviluppo delle produzioni coloniali,” in ALBERTOCCHI AND PAUTASSO 2012, pp. 113–39, esp. p. 125ff.
27. For this theme, see Ferruzza 2013; A. Pautasso, “L’età arcaica: Affermazione” (op. cit. n. 26 above); and M. Albertocchi, “La coroplastica siceliota nella prima metà del V sec. a.C.,” in ALBERTOCCHI AND PAUTASSO 2012, pp. 143–61.
28. For Selinunte, see the examples in GABRICI 1927, pl. LV, nos. 2, 6, 6a, 7, and the sphinx, no. 8; DEWAILLY 1992, pp. 55–61. For the type of the flat wing, see, for example, J.-P. Descoeuilles, “Head-rest or Celery Holder?” in S. Buzzi, ed., *Zona archeologica: Festschrift für Hans Peter Isler zum 60. Geburtstag* (Zurich, 2002), pp. 111–14.

29. For the altar of Gela, see CATONI AND SETTIS 2008, n. 21, with further bibliography, and for a stylistic analysis, see F. Gilotta, “La Nike di Karlsruhe,” cited at n. 20 above. See also the female head in the late Archaic style from the Lauricella necropolis, in P. Orsi, “Gela: Scavi del 1900–1905,” *MonAnt* 17 (1906), p. 307, fig. 226; two statuettes and a protome in the Museo archeologico regionale di Gela from the sanctuary of Bitalemi, inv. 20345, 23284, and 11072, datable to the second half of the fifth century BC; the fictile mold of a female deity, datable to the end of the sixth century BC, in R. Panvini, *Gela: Il Museo archeologico: Catalogo* (Gela, 1998), no. 67, p. 57; and the head belonging to a sphinx, assigned (with reservations) to Gela and datable to 520 BC, in QUARLES VAN UFFORD 1941, fig. 25, pp. 66, 91. See also the female figure, possibly Artemis, in the terracotta relief fragment at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, dating from the end of the sixth century BC, in C. E. Vaphopoulou-Richardson, *Ancient Greek Terracottas*, rev. ed. (Oxford, 1991), p. 20, no. 21.
30. See J. Uhlenbrock, *The Terracotta Protomai from Gela: A Discussion of Local Style in Archaic Sicily* (Rome, 1989), pp. 82–85, pl. 37a; see also Spagnolo 2000.
31. See A. Pautasso, ed., *Terrecotte arcaiche e classiche del Museo civico di Castello Ursino a Catania* (Palermo, 1996), no. 18; and the example from Camarina in F. Giudice, “La stipe di Persephone a Camarina,” *MonAnt* 49, Serie miscellanea, vol. 2, no. 4 (1979), no. 11, pl. V; see also the face of the Kore “Biscari,” originally from Camarina, in A. Pautasso, “La kore Biscari del Museo Civico di Catania e la coroplastica tardo-arcrica a Camarina,” *Cronache di Archeologia* 36 (1997), pp. 47–59.
32. For the Tarentine types, see Uhlenbrock, *Terracotta Protomai*, cited in n. 30 above, p. 121, pl. 51C; HERDEJÜRGEN 1982, pp. 27–28, no. 89, dating from about 500 BC; see also the hairstyle in a female protome from Timmari, dating from 520 BC, in Lo Porto, *Timmari*, cited in n. 9 above, pl. XXII. For affinity between Sicilian protomes and protomes from Locri, see BARRA BAGNASCO 1986, pp. 39–41. For ties between Sicily, especially Selinunte, and Magna Graecia in the Archaic period, see D. Mustilli, “Contatti fra la scultura arcaica della Sicilia e quella della Magna Grecia,” *Kokalos* 10–11 (1964–65), pp. 189–210.
33. See A. Di Vita, “Breve rassegna degli scavi archeologici condotti in provincia di Ragusa nel quadriennio 1955–1959,” reprinted in idem, *Da Siracusa a Mozia: Studi di archeologia siciliana* (Padua, 1998), pp. 117–35, fig. 31a; and G. Di Stefano, *Il Museo Archeologico Ibleo di Ragusa* (Naples, 2001), fig. 88.
34. Among the numerous comparable pieces coming from Agrigento or Selinunte, see also: DE MIRO 2000, no. 481, pl. XCV (end of the sixth century BC); U. Liepmann, *Griechische Terrakotten, Bronzen, Skulpturen*, Bildkataloge des Kestner-Museums 12 (Hanover, 1975), pp. 74–75, T 66; BREITENSTEIN 1941, pl. 24, nos. 240–41; LEYENAAR-PLAISIER 1979, no. 171; CAPORUSSO 1975, pl. XXXII, no. 48; R. A. Lunsingh Scheurleer, *Grieken im het klein: 100 antieke terracotta's*, Allard Pierson Museum (Amsterdam, 1986), no. 43 (from 500 BC). See also a small head of female figure with the same hairstyle and the rendering of eyes from the sanctuary in Contrada Casalicchio at Licata from the end of the sixth century BC in PANVINI AND SOLE 2009, vol. 2, no. VI/157, p. 229.
35. For this theme and the relation between terracotta production in Agrigento and Athenian models, see G. Adornato, “L’efebi di Agrigento: Cultura figurativa e linguaggi artistici ad Akragas in età tardoarcaica e protoclassica,” *Prospettiva* 128 (2008), pp. 2–26, esp. figs. 17, 25; idem., “Arte ad Agrigento in età tardoarcaica: Problemi di metodo,” in C. Ampolo, ed., *Immagine e immagini della Sicilia e delle altre isole del Mediterraneo antico: Atti delle seste Giornate Internazionali di Studi sull’area elima e la Sicilia occidentale nel contesto mediterraneo*, Erice, 2006 (Pisa, 2009), vol. 1, pp. 269–76. For the hair on the female votive bust, see also SIKANIE 1985, fig. 210.
36. See M. S. Brouskari, *The Acropolis Museum: A Descriptive Catalogue* (Athens, 1974), no. 72; and B. Vierneisel-Schlörb, *Die Figürlichen Terrakotten*, vol. 1, Kerameikos 15 (Munich, 1998), nos. 27–33.
37. G. M. A. Richter, *Korai: Archaic Greek Maidens* (London, 1968), kore no. 684, figs. 581–82; for the formal characteristics of the heads of Athenian korai, datable to the end of the sixth century and the beginning of the fifth century BC, see also Payne and Young, *La scultura arcaica* (cited at n. 2 above), nos. 639 and 649, pls. 90–91; for an analysis of Attic influences on coroplastic art, vases, and numismatics, see CROISSANT 1997.
38. It is significant, in fact, that in the coroplastic production of Camarina there are clear indications of a stylistic convergence with Selinunte in this period; in this connection, see Giudice, “La stipe di Persephone a Camarina” (cited at n. 31 above), pp.

317–19. See also G. Fiorentini, “Da Agrigento a Gela: L’eredità culturale,” in L. Braccesi and E. De Miro, eds., *Agrigento e la Sicilia greca: Atti della settimana di studio, Agrigento, 2–8 maggio 1992* (Rome, 1992), pp. 121–31.

39. Most of the finds of *thymiateria* seem to point to votive contexts: Athenian inventories reveal the custom of using incense and *thymiateria* in rituals honoring Athena Nike: see ZACCAGNINO 1998, pp. 55–56, 87. On the conjecture that Nike in funerary contexts might instead allude to religious concepts of salvation, see Holloway, “Three Lekythoi,” cited at n. 16 above. It does not seem to be pure chance, moreover, that Gela and Camarina should have been the source of the above-mentioned Nike of Karlsruhe, along with numerous other artworks that over the past twenty years have flowed into various foreign museum collections through the antiquities market.



Statuette of Odysseus under a Ram

525-500 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	54
Inventory Number	79.AD.37 ☞
Typology	Statuette
Location	Sicily
Dimensions	H: 14.2 cm; W: 16.7 cm

Fabric

Pinkish in color (Munsell 2.5 yr 7/6), fairly well purified, and friable with small reflective inclusions, covered with a thick layer of paste composed of milk of lime. Sporadic traces of pink pigment on the animal's muzzle. The body is hollow, except for the hooves. Beneath the ram's belly is a vent fissure.

Condition

The left back leg has been reassembled from two fragments and the right front leg from one fragment. The white milk-of-lime paste has almost completely detached and persists only on the head, on the proper left side, and on the front hooves. All four legs have breaks.

Provenance

– by 1971, Alex G. Malloy (New York, New York); 1977–1979, Lee Rizzuto (Lakewood, New Jersey), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1979.

Bibliography

Alex G. Malloy. *Ancient Art and Antiquities II*, New York. Catalogue, 1971, pp. 13, 16, no. 84; LYONS, BENNETT, AND MARCONI 2013, pp. 190–91, fig. 131.

Description

The group depicts Odysseus, or one of his companions, fleeing from the grotto of the Cyclops Polyphemos by hiding beneath the belly of a ram. The animal is rendered in a somewhat stylized manner conceived to be covered by the white paste, with a cylindrical body and short stick legs, while the head reveals more defined modeling, especially in the rendering of the twisted horns and the muzzle.¹ Of the male figure, only part of the head is shown, projecting from between the animal's front legs, with no indication of a body, nor of the arms that in many other depictions of this subject appear gripping the animal's back. The man's face is oval, with globular eyes; the hair is arranged in an arch over the forehead, with small globular ringlets.² The animal's fleece is rendered with a milk-of-lime paste applied to the surface of the clay, then smoothed with a tool. The piece is hollow and low-fired.

This Homeric episode, recounted in the ninth book of the *Odyssey*, is one of the most recurrent themes in Greek figurative culture. Beginning in the Orientalizing period and especially in the Archaic period, the scene was frequently rendered not only within the iconographic repertory of Attic vases but also in fictile reliefs, appliqués, and bronze tripods.³

According to literary tradition, Sicily was the homeland of the Cyclopes, but the topography of the places described in the Homeric text are still very much subject to debate.⁴ Nevertheless, the hero and his wanderings were a very common and lively subject within the culture of the colonies of Magna Graecia and Sicily.⁵

It is possible that a cult of the Greek hero may have arisen as early as the Archaic period in the eastern area of Sicily, as seems to be suggested by the discovery of an *arula* from Megara Hyblaea, dating from the third quarter of the sixth century BC, with a scene of Odysseus escaping from the cave of Polyphemos.⁶

The Getty statuette, which is reported to have come from Sicily, finds its closest comparison with a terracotta now in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, which is presumed to come originally from Barrafranca (Enna) and is likewise datable to the end of the sixth century BC.⁷ Though objective evidence is lacking, the close analogies between the two pieces would support the hypothesis that they shared a common archaeological context.

These two statuettes are closely comparable with a number of works in bronze: an appliqué with the hero beneath the ram, dating from the second half of the sixth century and originally from Delphi; and the handle fixtures—of Laconian inspiration—with rams belonging to bronze hydriai dating from the middle of the sixth century BC, but also found in the Corinthian milieu after 550 BC.⁸

Appendix

The piece has been subjected to UV light testing, which did not reveal any irregularities.

Notes

1. In the Archaic period, depictions of rams are often associated with Odysseus; see A. J. Heisserer, “An Archaic Greek Bronze Ram-Figurine,” *ArchCl* 41 (1989), pp. 383–90.
2. The face of Odysseus, especially in the rendering of the eyes and hair, shows distinctive Archaic characteristics.
3. A complete bibliography on the theme as it appears in various artistic genres can be found in B. Andreae, “L’immagine di Ulisse nell’arte antica,” in B. Andreae and C. Parisi Presicce, eds., *Ulisse: Il mito e la memoria*, exh. cat. (Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, 1996), pp. 49–51, entries 2.17–2.28, pp. 130–32; for a more recent catalogue, see B. Andreae, *Odysseus: Mythos und Erinnerung*, exh. cat. (Munich, Haus der Kunst, 2000), pp. 122–35. See also D. Buitron-Oliver, ed., *The Odyssey and Ancient Art: An Epic in Word and Image*, exh. cat. (New York, Edith C. Blum Art Institute, 1992), pp. 33–37, 66–73, 210–11.
4. On the problems with the “geography” of the *Odyssey*, see A. Mele, “Il processo di storicizzazione dei miti,” in *Mito e storia in Magna Grecia, Atti Taranto* 36, 1996 (Taranto, 1997), pp. 151–66, and in the same volume, L. Braccesi, “Letteratura dei *nostoi* e colonizzazione greca,” pp. 81–95. For the heroic cult of Odysseus in Greece and Southern Italy, see I. Malkin, “Heroes and the Foundation of Greek Cities,” in P. Azara, R. Mar, and E. Subías, eds., *Mites de fundació de ciutats al·món antic (Mesopotàmia, Grècia i Roma)*: Actes del colloqui, Museu d’Arqueologia de Catalunya Monografies 2 (Barcelona, 2001), pp. 123–30.
5. For the iconography of Odysseus in the West, see MASSERIA AND TORELLI 1999, esp. pp. 241–43; see also E. D. Philipps, “Odysseus in Italy,” *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 73 (1953), pp. 53–67.
6. See G. Voza and P. Pelagatti, *Archeologia nella Sicilia sud-orientale*, exh. cat. (Naples, Centre J. Bérard, 1973), pl. 52, no. 480; and MEIJDEN 1993, pp. 113–14, 313–14.
7. FISCHER-HANSEN 1992, no. 39, p. 74. The area occupied by the modern town of Barrafranca was densely populated in ancient times, as attested by numerous materials from necropoleis, datable from the Archaic period to the Byzantine period; in this connection, see G. Bejor, s.v. “Barrafranca,” in G. Nenci and G. Vallet, eds., *Bibliografia topografica della colonizzazione greca in Italia e nelle isole tirreniche*, vol. 4 (Pisa and Rome, 1985), pp. 1–4. For Magna Graecia, see also the ram-shaped terracotta from a Tarentine funerary deposit dating from the first quarter of the fifth century BC, in A. D’Amicis, *Vecchi scavi, nuovi restauri*, exh. cat. (Taranto, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, 1991), from Tomb 12 of the Civic Hospital of SS. Annunziata.
8. See, in this context, C. Stibbe, *The Sons of Hephaistos: Aspects of the Archaic Greek Bronze Industry* (Rome, 2000), fig. 96, and a handle from a hydria from Gela with an unfinished ram’s body in C. Rolley, *Les vases du bronze de l’archaïsme récent en Grand-Grèce*, Bibliothèque de l’Institut français de Naples, 2nd ser., 5 (Naples, 1982), p. 43, fig. 152.



Statuette of a Woman with a Kithara

LATE THIRD-EARLY SECOND CENTURIES BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	55
Inventory Number	73.AD.151 ✉
Typology	Statuette
Location	Sicily
Dimensions	H: 19.8 cm; D (Base): 8.3 cm

Fabric

Pinkish orange in color (Munsell 5 yr 7/4), with a friable consistency and numerous micaceous inclusions; polychromy over a white slip: pink (base and clothing), purple (hair, kithara); red (chiton and feet). The statuette (head and body) was made from single mold.

Condition

The base was reconstructed from five fragments.

Provenance

– 1973, Jerome M. Eisenberg (New York, New York), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1973.

Bibliography

Unpublished.

Description

The statuette depicts a young female musician who, with a cadenced step, walks toward the viewer's right. With her right hand, she plucks an instrument carried on her left shoulder; given its small size, the instrument can be identified as a "cradle kithara." Her weight is on her right leg, which steps forward, while her left leg is slightly bent and crosses behind her. Her torso is flexed strongly backward, as is her head, which also turns to the proper right in a pose of ecstasy. The face is round, the cheeks are full, and her expression is smiling; her tresses, parted into two bands on her forehead, are drawn back onto the nape of her neck in a broad cluster of hair, falling in compact locks onto her shoulders.¹ Following her sinuous movement, her long, high-waisted chiton clings to her body; emphasizing her prominent breasts and buttocks, the garment falls in broad, soft folds. The base is an irregularly shaped oval, on the left side of which is a vent hole.

The figure is characterized by a pronounced flexing of the torso and by a dynamic rhythm that develops progressively from the raised left heel toward the top of the figure. This sort of weighting is found also in many figures of females dancers discovered among the funerary deposits of the Early Hellenistic period from Magna Graecia and Sicily, where dance and music played a prominent role in Dionysian cult contexts as well in rites of passage from childhood to adolescence.²

Dancers and female musicians with lyres and kitharas are particularly well represented in the funerary deposits of Taranto, Lipari, and Centuripe, generally dating from the third century or second century BC.³ Such figures are presented in poses similar to that of the Getty's dancer, that is, characterized by sinuous rhythms and by a new spatial construction of the figure developed in coeval statuary of the Early Hellenistic period.⁴ The presence of music in the funerary context is well documented by finds of these instruments in tomb contexts in Athens and in funerary deposits in Locri, Taranto, and Paestum in Magna Graecia.⁵ Such dancer and musician typologies are also well attested in the Hellenistic period at Priene, Myrina, Pergamon, and Cyrene, where they were produced up until the first century BC; the latter cities were involved in an especially intense exchange of motifs and iconographies with Magna Graecia in which, at least in the third century BC, Taranto seems to have played an especially active role.⁶

The presence of the cradle kithara—a typically female instrument due to its small size and its high-pitched sound—in combination with the theatrical type of chiton—high-belted, light, with short sleeves, which in other typologies may be accompanied by a himation wrapped around the arms or on the hips—can be traced to the iconography of the Muse, which seems to have been the inspiration for this figure.⁷ In gems as well as terracottas, it is possible to

find a number of comparisons for the Muse playing an instrument, though the schemes tend to be different: in fact, it is more common to see the instrument carried on the torso or to one side, rather than over the shoulder. Sometimes the kithara is set on a small pillar, or the figure might be resting a foot on a rocky rise, or playing in a seated position.⁸ The scheme of this statue, with the kithara set on the left shoulder—a position that accentuates the arched back and markedly emphasizes the pelvis, creating an almost grotesque deformation of the figure—is therefore unusual.⁹

In the absence of reliable information on the object's findspot, it is difficult to identify the figure with any precision. Stylistically, it is reminiscent of a number of examples from Centuripe datable to between the end of the third century and the beginning of the second century BC.¹⁰

Notes

1. For the hairstyle, see the small heads from the late third century BC from Morgantina, in BELL 1981, nos. 608, 611, pl. 104.
2. On the role of music in funerary contexts, see BESCHI 1991 and the bibliography already cited for Orpheus group ([cat. 1-3](#)) and [cat. 13](#), n. 4.
3. See the statuette of a female dancer at [cat. 36](#). For the finds in Taranto, see GRAEPLER 1997, pp. 205–12, fig. 183 from Tomb 15 of Phase E (175–125 BC); GRAEPLER 1984, pp. 284–87, pl. XXXI, no. 2. See also the statuette with a flexed torso and raised hands, possibly from Taranto, and dating from the third century BC in BESQUES 1986, pl. 37c. From the necropolis of Arpi come two statuettes of maenads comparable to this one; see M. Mazza, *Testimonianze coroplastiche della Daunia nel Museo di Foggia* (Foggia, 1979), p. 14, fig. 3. See also the group of statuettes of dancers and musicians from the necropolis of Lipari that can be linked to Middle Comedy, and which present similarities to this figure in the pose and the clinging costume, as do types F10 and F14 in BERNABÒ BREA 1981, pp. 110–14. For statuettes with kithara from Sicily of the fourth to third century BC, see A. Bellia, *Coroplastica con raffigurazioni musicali nella Sicilia greca (secolo VI–III a.C.)* (Pisa and Rome, 2009), pp. 165–66, with examples from the necropoleis in Marsala, from the sacred area of San Nicola in Agrigento, and from Monte Sant'Angelo in Licata. For similar types from the funerary deposits of Centuripe, see MUSUMECI 2010, p. 47, nos. 18, 22; p. 65, no. 108 of the second half of the third century BC. See also the dancers in similar poses in SCHÜRMANN 1989, no. 797, assignable to the first half of the second century BC, and in KEKULÉ 1884, pl. XLIV, no. 2–3 (also from Centuripe); the statuette of a dancer in the Museo Civico “Antonio Collisani” in Petralia Sottana (Sicily), in H. P. Isler and M. Sguaitamatti, *Die Sammlung Collisani* (Kilchberg, 1990), no. 125, dating from the end of the third century BC; two statuettes of dancers from Gela, dating from the second half of the fourth century BC, with emphatic poses, in BERNABÒ BREA 2002, figs. 68–69; a female player from the third century, from Lilibeo, now in the Museo Archeologico Regionale di Palermo (N. I. 1315). For the pose, see also the dancer from the middle of the third century BC in F. W. Hamdorf, ed., *Hauch des Prometheus: Meisterwerke in Ton* (Munich, 1996), pp. 111–13, fig. 140; see also the fragment of appliqué with a maenad from the third century, from Palestrina (Praeneste), in PENSABENE 2001, no. 61, pl. 118.
4. See, for example, the type of the “Berlin Dancer,” attributable to Lysippos and assigned to 323–17 BC: R. Cittadini, “Prassilla a Sicone,” in MORENO 1995, pp. 208–17.
5. For the presence of lyres and kitharas in funerary iconography, see also L. Todisco, “Nuovi dati e osservazioni sulla ‘Tomba delle Danzatrici’ di Ruvo di Puglia,” *Atti MGrecia* ser. 3, no. 3 (1994–95), pp. 119–42.
6. For the figures of women playing stringed instruments in Pergamon, see E. Topperwein, *Terrakotten von Pergamon*, Pergamenische Forschungen 3 (Berlin, 1976), nos. 171–73, fig. 27. For the three-dimensional and transparent rendering of

the chiton, see also a dancer from Cyrene (200 BC) in BURN AND HIGGINS 2001, no. 2724. Also from Cyrenaica are the dancers in BESQUES 1992, pl. 26c-f, from the middle and the second half of the third century BC; from Athens, a statuette of a Muse with kithara and plectrum in WALTERS 1903, C20, pl. XXIV; see also the statuette of a girl with phorminx, from the necropolis of Thebes, from the end of the fourth century or the third century BC, in JEAMMET 2003b, p. 228, no. 169. On relations between Sicily, the eastern Mediterranean, and the Hellenistic towns, see GRAEPLER 1996, esp. p. 236; and R. A. Higgins, "Tarantine Terracottas," in *Taranto nella civiltà della Magna Grecia, Atti Taranto 10, 1970* (Naples, 1971) pp. 267-82, esp. pp. 273-74. On such relations with special attention to the polychrome vases of Centuripe, see E. Joly, "Teorie vecchie e nuove sulla ceramica policroma di Centuripe," in *Philias charin: Miscellanea di studi classici in onore di Eugenio Manni* (Rome, 1980), vol. 4, pp. 1241-54.

7. On the iconography of the Muses in the Hellenistic period, see L. Faedo, s.v. "Mousa, Mousai," *LIMC* 7, suppl. (1994), pp. 991-1013. On differences among the various stringed instruments, and in particular among lyra, chelys-lyra, and cradle kithara, see M. Maas and J. M. Snyder, *Stringed Instruments of Ancient Greece* (New Haven and London, 1989), pp. 165-75; M. Maas and J. McIntosh Snyder, "Strumenti a corde per dei e mortali," in D. Restani, ed., *Musica e mito nella Grecia antica* (Bologna, 1995), pp. 63-75, fig. 4; D. Paquette, *L'instrument de musique dans la céramique de la Grèce antique: Études d'organologie* (Paris, 1984), pp. 131-34. See also, for the Dionysian instruments, A. Bélis, "Musica e 'trance' nel corteggio dionisiaco," in Restani, ed., *Musica e mito nella Grecia antica* (op. cit.), pp. 271-87.
8. For the various iconographic schemes, see L. Faedo, s.v. "Mousa, Mousai," *LIMC* 7, suppl. (1994), nos. 162-63, 179, 181-84, 205, 221. The position of the figure with torso bent backward is also comparable to that of a female figure incised in a ring, in G. M. A. Richter, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art: Handbook of the Greek Collection* (New York, 1973), fig. 126, and to a figure with chiton, head turned to the left, and with a lyre in the left hand, dating from the fourth century BC, in idem., *Engraved Gems of the Greeks and the Etruscans* (London, 1968), no. 538, p. 141; for other comparisons, see M.-L. Vollenweider, *Deliciae Leonis: Antike geschnittene Steine und Ringe aus einer Privatsammlung* (Mainz am Rhein, 1984), no. 92 (fragment of an onyx cameo with a figure of a dancing maenad); also see the cameo from the Roman era in *LA MUSIQUE ET LA DANSE* 1996, no. 112.
9. A Muse in a more emphatic pose can be seen in a gem dating from the last third of the first century BC with a figure in profile playing the kithara; this figure shares with the current statuette the torso flexing backward, the tilted head, and the left leg drawn back, but the instrument is held in front. See J. Lancha, s.v. "Mousa/Mousae," *LIMC* 7, suppl. (1994), p. 1021, no. 63.
10. The type seems also to include elements of both caricature and realism that might have reflected tastes of Alexandrian inspiration attested in Sicily and Magna Graecia. The grotesque deformations seem to be reminiscent as well of the steatopygic female figures of Alexandrian inspiration: see R. Paribeni, "Ariccia: Rilievo con scene egizie," *NSc* (1919), pp. 106-12; E. van't Dack, "Les relations entre l'Egypte ptolémaïque et l'Italie," in E. van't Dack, P. van Dessel, and W. van Gucht, eds., *Egypt and the Hellenistic World: Proceedings of the International Colloquium, Leuven, 24-26 May 1982* (Leuven, 1983), pp. 383-406.



Statuette of Aphrodite

LATE FOURTH-THIRD CENTURIES BC

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Object Details

Catalogue Number	56
Inventory Number	71.AD.131 ✉
Typology	Statuette
Location	Sicily
Dimensions	H: 28.7 cm; W: 10.7 cm

Fabric

Light beige in color (Munsell 10 yr 8/3), purified, compact and smooth, with numerous small, reflective inclusions; a layer of white slip; traces of light blue and pink pigments on the drapery, red pigment on the hair, the feet, and the base; and pink color for the complexion. Made with two bivalve molds, the head was applied to the body before firing; there is a large circular vent hole in the back.

Condition

The statuette was partially reconstructed from several fragments. The arms are missing; the head was reattached.

Provenance

- 1969, Leo Mildenburg (Zurich, Switzerland); 1971, Royal Athena Galleries (New York, New York), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1971.

Bibliography

SELECTED WORKS 1971, no. 68.

Description

This half-draped figure has the left leg bent to rest the left foot on a rock; the torso is leaning to the left and the head is turned toward the right. A himation is rolled up on the hips and knotted in front, covering the legs but leaving the groin and the upper body uncovered. The face is oval, the hair is in wavy locks divided into two bands that are gathered on the nape of the neck in a low chignon; the feet are shod in sandals.

This figure adopts the Hellenistic type of the nymph with a bare torso and foot resting on a rocky elevation. This type, quite widespread in Hellenistic statuary, is an amalgamation of various depictions of Aphrodite: the cloak that softly drapes the lower half of the body refers to Aphrodite Anadyomene; the elongated torso is derived from the Aphrodite of Arles; and the general tone of the modeling in the hairstyle and the lean, oval face with its nuanced surfaces is Praxitelean.¹ In its numerous variants this type can be found in various centers throughout the Mediterranean,² and it gained considerable popularity in Magna Graecia and especially in Taranto, where it was reused in the local workshops.³ It is found in Sicily as well, especially in Centuripe, where it developed in many variants with changes in the attributes or the positions of the arms and head, attesting—especially in the Hellenistic period—to the circulation and affinity of Apulian iconographic types among various centers in Sicily, though it is essential to evaluate the specific contexts in order to explain iconography and functions of this type of statuette. Centuripe, in particular, was an important center for the reception and elaboration of outside ideas. This process has yet to be grasped in all its complexity, but in the Early Hellenistic period, the town clearly had direct contact with the art of Magna Graecia, Greece, and Macedonia: a dense web of political relationships, beginning especially in the age of Agathocles, placed Sicily within the larger context of the Hellenistic Mediterranean.⁴ The iconography of the semi-nude woman with her foot resting on a rock was also adopted for the portrayal of female musicians and Nikai, as these were related to marriage rituals and the passage in status from *kore* to *nymphē*.⁵

Notes

1. For the typology of the *nymphē* with a raised foot, see A. Delivorrias, s.v. "Aphrodite," LIMC 1 (1981), pp. 2–151, esp. pp. 73–75, nos. 650–52; E. Sichtermann, s.v. "Ninfe," EAA 5 (Rome, 1963), p. 502–5, fig. 645; C. M. Havelock, *The Aphrodite of Knidos and her Successors: A Historical View of the Female Nude in Greek Art* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1995), pp. 88–89, 97–98. On the

Aphrodite of Arles, see R. Kousser, "Creating the Past: The Vénus de Milo and the Hellenistic Reception of Classical Greece," *AJA* 109, no. 2 (2005), pp. 227–50.

2. From Myrina, see the figure in BESQUES 1963, pl. 107d, dating from the second half of the second century BC and, from Cyrenaica, the statuettes in BESQUES 1992, pls. 2a, b, d, dating from the first half of the third century BC. For a marble statuette of Aphrodite from the eastern Mediterranean, see REEDER 1988, p. 109, no. 32. See also a statue of a *nymphē* or Aphrodite from Rhodes in G. Merker, *The Hellenistic Sculpture of Rhodes*, Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology 40 (Göteborg, 1973), pls. 4–5, no. 12.
3. See, for instance, the statuette from a Tarentine tomb, quite similar to this piece in its raised arms, in GRAEPLER 1984, pl. XXVIII, no. 4 (dating from the second century BC).
4. For the female marble statuette from Centuripe, see R. Patanè, "Quattro sculture nel museo civico di Centuripe," pp. 283–94 in R. Gigli, ed., *Megalai Nesoi: Studi dedicati a Giovanni Rizza per il suo ottantesimo compleanno*, Studi e materiali di archeologia Mediterranea 2–3 (Catania, 2005), vol. 2. For examples in terracotta, see HIGGINS 1967, pl. 59c, dating from the second century BC; LIBERTINI 1926, pl. XXIII, nos. 2–3; LA SICILIA GRECA* 1989, no. 371, *dating from the second half of the third century BC*; SCHÜRMANN 1989, nos. 715–16, pl. 115 *from Centuripe (?)*, *dating from the second half of the second century BC*; and WINTER 1903, p. 103, nos. 3, 5. Also from Centuripe comes the example in E. Simon, **Minoische und griechische Antiken*, Die Sammlung Kiseleff im Martin-von-Wagner-Museum der Universität Würzburg 2 (Mainz am Rhein, 1989), dating from the second century BC, fig. 112, no. 294. On the contacts and affinities between Sicilian and Apulian coroplastic production, see M. Bell, "Hellenistic Terracottas of Southern Italy and Sicily," in UHLENBROCK 1990, pp. 64–69.
5. For example, BESQUES 1972 pl. 59c, originally found in a funerary deposit from Aegina, along with other statuettes with musical instruments, which can be dated to the third quarter of the third century BC.



Statuette of Eros

150-125 BC

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Object Details

Catalogue Number	57
Inventory Number	71.AD.130 ✉
Typology	Statuette
Location	Sicily
Dimensions	H: 22.5 cm; W: 8 cm

Fabric

Pinkish yellow color (Munsell 7.5 yr 6/8), friable and purified, with extensive traces of polychromy over a thick layer of white slip: red ocher (hair and attachments of the wings), calcite (drapery), and Egyptian blue (himation). The pinkish pigment on areas of the chest and pelvis has been identified as shell white, likely a modern pigment applied to cover damaged areas. The statuette was made from two molds, for the front and back; the legs are solid. The head, arms, legs, and wings were applied before firing.

Condition

Missing arms and lower legs. Surfaces are abraded, and the polychromy is faded at many points.

Provenance

– 1969, Leo Mildenburg (Zurich, Switzerland); 1971, Royal Athena Galleries (New York, New York), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1971.

Bibliography

SELECTED WORKS 1971, no. 37.

Description

The young nude Eros is standing with his weight on the left leg and the right leg drawn slightly back, determining the flexed pose of the torso. A roll of fabric is draped around the hips, dangling over his thighs, with two long ends arranged on either side at the rear. The head is turned slightly to the left; the hair is parted over the forehead and, forming a bow at the top, dangles softly in puffy locks on either side of the neck. The face is oval, with pronounced cheekbones; the mouth is small; the facial features are nuanced. The left arm was raised, and the wings (now missing) must have been spread.

This youthful winged Eros with drapery rolled below his hips harks back to an iconography widely documented in Hellenistic coroplastic art.¹ It finds points of contact with other examples, especially those from Taranto and Centuripe that can be dated to the third quarter of the second century BC, for the most part belonging to funerary deposits of children.² The elongated torso with its soft forms echoes the more stereotypical creations of the Praxitelean tradition and resembles the stylistic Erotes that were mass-produced in Myrina, among other places. In the rendering of these figures, we see the same technical methods that characterize the figures of the second century BC: a generally summary modeling accompanied by a fairly rough coloring and inadequate firing. The expressive rendering of the figure is usually focused on the movement of the arms.³

Appendix

The statuette's pigments were examined using PLM. A sample of blue from the rope of drapery at the front of the figure was identified as Egyptian blue. The white on the drapery was identified as containing calcite, and X-ray diffraction (XRD) confirmed this pigment as calcite. The dark red on the hair was identified as red ochre. The pinkish-gray paint seen on many areas of the chest and at the pelvis was identified as possibly a shell white, used in ancient times but much more commonly in inexpensive modern paints. It had a very different appearance under PLM than the original white pigment. UV-visible fluorescence examination shows the overpainted areas clearly. Samples were taken from both the lower half of the figure and from the head. It is assumed that the piece is whole with some damage having occurred in the past. The legs were most probably broken off and reattached, as was the rope of the drapery. The chest suffered some damage and was repaired and painted over

with modern pigments. An arm had probably been reattached to the proper left side of the figure at some point, as adhesive residue is found there. That arm is now missing, as is the right arm.

Notes

1. For the typology of the youthful Eros, see HERMAY AND CASSIMATIS 1986, pp. 939–42.
2. See, for comparison, from Centuripe: LIBERTINI 1926, pl. XXIV, no. 1; KEKULÉ 1884, pls. XLVIII, no. 2; from Taranto: GRAEPLER 1996, p. 246, no. 197 (second and third quarters of the second century B.C.); C. Drago, “Rinvenimenti e scavi: 24 agosto–17 novembre 1934 (Taranto),” *NSc*, ser. 7, no. 1 (1940), pp. 314–54, fig. 6 from a tomb in the Contrada Corvisea.
3. GRAEPLER 1996, p. 237; see the Eros with a wreath in S. Besques, “Deux statuettes de Myrina au Musée Jacquemart-André,” in M. Schmidt, ed., *Kanon: Festschrift Ernst Berger zum 60. Geburtstag* (Basel, 1988), pp. 202–4, dating from the second half of the second century BC. See also the youthful Eros with an elongated torso and plump, delicate facial features in BREITENSTEIN 1941, pl. 88, no. 732.



58

Mask of a Satyr

200-100 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	58
Inventory Number	96.AD.305 ✉
Typology	Mask
Location	Sicily
Dimensions	H: 12 cm; W: 15.5 cm

Fabric

Pinkish in color (Munsell 5 yr 8/4), very porous, with numerous reflective and carbonous inclusions. Polychromy: brownish red (hair and face), orange red (orbital arch and mouth), white (interior of the orbital arch, dentition, and wreath), black (eyebrows), pink (ears); and sky blue (leaves of the wreath).

Condition

Reassembled from about fifteen fragments, gaps on the nape of the neck, traces of repainting over the original polychromy.

Provenance

by 1994–1995, Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman (New York, New York), donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1996.

Bibliography

PASSION FOR ANTIQUITIES 1994, no. 291, p. 356; "Museum Acquisitions Between July 1, 1996, and June 30, 1998." *The Report of the J. Paul Getty Trust*, 1997–1998, p. 67.

Description

The mask depicts a young satyr wearing a wreath, with strongly emphasized facial features and a stern, somewhat threatening expression. The face is round, with a powerful jaw, full cheeks, a short, rounded chin with a dimple in the center, and a wide-open mouth with fleshy, prominent lips; the upper dental arch is visible. The robust nose has enlarged nostrils and an upturned tip with two incisions, one at the base and one in the upper part of the septum. The eyes are staring and hollowed out with convex eyeballs and perforated irises, surrounded by heavy, distinctly marked eyelids; the eyebrows are thick and furrowed; the forehead has a bump in the upper portion and is furrowed by a horizontal crease; the ears are feral and pointed. The hairstyle, which is rendered in the back with fine incisions, rises up over the forehead, where a voluminous wreath, decorated with six ivy leaves and two round pieces of fruit at the center, was applied. There are two suspension holes in the lower part of the nape of the neck.

The mask is configured as a full-fledged scale model of originals that were worn onstage by actors.¹ The wreath was worked by hand and applied before firing. The polychromy, in keeping with tradition, was used to express or emphasize the distinctive character details, such as the red of the male complexion, the white of the eyeballs, or the black of the eyebrows.

The mask seems to echo the general characteristics of the beardless satyr type from New Comedy (*satyros ageneios*, or beardless satyr) described in the *Onomastikon* by Pollux, though in this case the facial features were interpreted with a certain creative license with respect to the Attic prototypes.² The type, however, shows notable affinities with the masks of the so-called Vollmer Group of terracottas, according to T. B. L. Webster's classification, datable between the middle of the second century BC and 50 BC; those masks are distinguished by powerfully plastic modeling with marked chiaroscuro effects and expressive emphasis, accentuated by staring eyes and wide-open mouths. Examples of this group have been found in various centers of the Aegean, southern Italy, and Sicily, but it is likely that the type originates from Campania.

The masks related to the Vollmer Group find parallels also in the production of Myrina and Priene: for example, a mask, possibly depicting a parasite and dating back to the second century BC, presents similar characteristics. This means that, especially in the Late Hellenistic period, distinctive elements peculiar to one type might in some cases be transmitted to and used in other typologies as well, since the serial production of masks had increasingly little to do with actual theatrical performances; the iconography, therefore, tended to move toward the generic.³ In Sicily, examples that could be assignable to this group and which depict various characters from New Comedy were found in Agrigento, San Fratello, and Centuripe.⁴

In other centers, as well, masks have been found that refer to characters other than the one represented by the Getty mask, but which are comparable on the basis of stylistic peculiarities and especially the emphasis on plasticity. At Lipari, for instance, there are a number of small masks, datable to the first half of the third century BC, with a convivial wreath, large staring eyes, and round eyeballs, which exhibit the distinctive characteristics of the group. A female mask found in Adrano is datable by stratigraphic evidence to the third century BC and is characterized by powerful plastic modeling; another mask with the same characteristics at the British Museum, possibly depicting a parasite and datable to the second century BC, has tentatively been assigned to Sicily.⁵ As for the possible archaeological context, it should be emphasized that, according to the current state of research in Sicily, in particular at Adrano and Morgantina, the most substantial group of theatrical materials comes from the settlement areas; in Lipari, by contrast, theatrical terracottas are documented almost exclusively in funerary contexts. Such is the case also at Centuripe, where, between the third and the second century BC, masks are a recurring feature in funerary deposits, expressing most clearly the intimate relationship between the cult of the dead and Dionysian rituals.⁶ Moreover, masks and statuettes of actors are attested in the sanctuaries of Demeter and Kore, deities linked with Dionysos in cult practices; thus one finds evidence of several cults within a single sanctuary, in keeping with a syncretistic approach attested in the Hellenistic period.⁷ Hypothetically, the Getty mask can be assigned to Sicily and is most closely comparable with the production of Centuripe in the second century BC.⁸

Notes

1. On the use of masks in theatrical practice, see U. Albini, *Nel nome di Dioniso: Vita teatrale nell'Atene classica* (Milan, 1991), pp. 75–77. For the masks at Lipari and Centuripe, see BERNABÒ BREA 2002, pp. 9–12.
2. For a description of the mask of a beardless satyr, see J. Pollux, *Onomastikon* 4.1.42; and L. Bernabò Brea and M. Cavalier, *Maschere e personaggi del teatro greco nelle terrecotte liparesi* (Rome, 2001), p. 52, fig. 40. On local interpretations of the Attic prototypes in a number of centers in Sicily, such as Morgantina and Lipari, see BELL 1981, pp. 67–69.

3. For an analysis of the Vollmer Group, see WEBSTER 1995, vol. 1, p. 63; vol. 2, pp. 236–38.
4. WEBSTER 1995, vol. 2, pp. 236–37, 3NT 2a/b, 3NT 3a/b, 3 NT 4; see also the two examples of *satyros ageneios*, of which one is certainly originally from Centuripe, in BERNABÒ BREA 2002, figs. 109–10, with facial features similar to this one. See the masks of New Comedy male characters, probably from Sicily, in BREITENSTEIN 1941, pl. 86, nos. 719–20; and the theatrical mask, perhaps originally from Caltavuturo, in C. Angela Di Stefano, “Nuove accessioni al Museo Nazionale di Palermo,” *SicArch* 12 (1970), pp. 25–30, esp. p. 30, fig. 10.
5. BERNABÒ BREA 1981, pp. 127–29, H 6; also BURN AND HIGGINS 2001, no. 2246; for the female theatrical mask from Adrano, see G. Lamagna, “Terracotte di argomento teatrale da Adrano,” *SicArch* 33 (2000), pp. 221–46.
6. On the function of theatrical masks at Lipari, see BERNABÒ BREA 1981, pp. 21–27; for Centuripe, MUSUMECI 2010, pp. 104–6; WEBSTER 1995, vol. 2, pp. 60–64; and BERNABÒ BREA 1971–74. On the presence of theatrical terracottas in funerary deposits, see also the finds in Taranto: GRAEPLER 1997, pp. 231–34.
7. In this connection, see the observations of L. Todisco, “Teatro e *theatra* nelle immagini e nell’edilizia monumentale della Magna Grecia,” in PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1990, pp. 103–58; also J. R. Green, “Dedication of Masks,” *Revue Archeologique* 2 (1982), pp. 237–48. Performances and playful behavior must have played a major role in the practice of the Demeter cult; in this connection, see PORTALE 2008, pp. 33–37; HINZ 1998, pp. 47–48, 229–30; and BELL 1981, pp. 97–98 and 67–73.
8. On masks originally from Centuripe, see BERNABÒ BREA 2002, pp. 103–6, and MUSUMECI 2010, pp. 94, 100–101.



Clipeus with the Head of Medusa

THIRD-SECOND CENTURIES BC

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Object Details

Catalogue Number	59
Inventory Number	71.AD.255 »
Typology	Clipeus
Location	Sicily
Dimensions	D: 1.9 cm; Diam: 18.6 cm

Fabric

Beige in color (Munsell 10 yr 8/3 and 7.5 yr 8/4), compact and purified, extensive traces of polychromy over a layer of calcite (?) slip: black (strip around the hem), pink (lips and hair), light blue and pink (scales), and red (eyes). Clipeus and head from two molds.

Condition

Reassembled from numerous fragments, faded polychromy.

Provenance

– 1967 Unknown [sold, Kunstwerke der Antike: Terrakotten, Bronzen, Keramik, Skulpturen, Auktion 34, Munzen und Medaillen AG, Basel, May 6, 1967, lot. 75]; 1971, Royal Athena Galleries (New York, New York), sold to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1971.

Bibliography

Kunstwerke der Antike, Terrekotten, Bronzen, Keramik, Skulpturen, Münzen und Medaillen AG (Basel), sale cat., May 6, 1967, pp. 35–36, lot 75; *SELECTED WORKS 1971*, no. 69; BELL 1981, p.

233, n. 930; J. Grossman, “Images of Alexander the Great in the Getty Museum,” *Studia Varia from the J. Paul Getty Museum* 2, Occasional Papers on Antiquities, 10 (2001), pp. 51–78, esp. p. 62, no. 7, fig. 7; LYONS, BENNETT, AND MARCONI 2013, pp. 200–201, fig. 143.

Description

The *clipeus* (plaque) presents a beaded edge with a head of Medusa (gorgoneion), characterized by pathetic traits, applied in high relief just above the center. The Medusa is facing very slightly to the right, with wreath wings on her head. Her undulating snaky hair, parted in the center, flows back on either side of the face; the face is full, and the orbital area is rather marked; the mouth is small and fleshy. On her neck, she wears a tubular necklace with a pendant at the center; beneath it is a pair of intertwined snakes, also encircling her neck. Three concentric rows of scales of increasing size, with a central rib, radiate out from the head. There are two suspension holes on the head.

This Medusa-head *clipeus* can be assigned to a well-known production from Centuripe, widespread, in the Hellenistic period, in Magna Graecia and in a number of centers in southeastern Sicily, such as Morgantina. In Centuripe and Morgantina, *clipei* with gorgoneia were found primarily in contexts dating from the third to the first centuries BC.¹

In Centuripe, especially, the iconographic motif adheres to constant schemes and can also be found in the vases of the time, often decorated with small Gorgon heads applied in relief and characterized also by a similar use and distribution of polychromy. The iconographic scheme was then varied by differences in the treatment of such elements as the hairstyle, the wings, or the snakes.² Despite the fact that the role of the Gorgon in the Hellenistic period was largely decorative, its apotropaic significance must have persisted, given that, especially in Centuripe, it remained one of the most popular iconographic motifs for the decoration of vases and objects intended for funerary deposits. These terracotta *clipei*, which served as *oscilla* (small offerings meant to swing in the wind), seem to have been derived from metal prototypes; in Centuripe, there are reports of gilt-silver *clipei* showing a bust of a maenad in three-quarter view.³

Notes

1. See the examples from Centuripe in LIBERTINI 1926, pp. 117–18, pl. XXXVII, nos. 3–4; LIBERTINI 1947, pp. 273–75, figs. 7, 14 a–c; U. Spigo text for entry no. 362, in *LA SICILIA GRECA** 1989, no. 362, *datable to the middle of the third century BC and originally from the necropolis of Centuripe; for Morgantina, see BELL 1981, p. 233, nos. 928–30, pl. 138, dating from the third century BC and assignable to the production of the Catania Group; and SCHÜRMANN 1989, nos. 975–76, fig. 161 (linked to Centuripe and datable to the third quarter of the third century BC).* For two **clipei* with gorgoneia from the Hellenistic necropolis of Cefalù, datable to the second century BC, see C. Greco, “Le terrecotte figurate,” in A. Tullio, *Cefalù: La necropoli ellenistica*, vol. 1 (Palermo, 2008),

- pp. 121–26, TC 61–62, pl. XXVII, nos. 3–4. The dispersal of the material from Centuripe onto the antiquities market is evidenced by the numerous pieces that have appeared in auction catalogues; see, for instance: *Antiquities*, W. and F. C. Bonham and Sons (Knightsbridge), sale cat., November 26, 1997, lot 352; and April 7, 1998, lot 112. On Centuripe, see E. C. Portale, “Un ‘fenomeno strano ed inatteso’: riflessioni sulla ceramica di Centuripe,” in *Pittura ellenistica in Italia ed in Sicilia: Linguaggi e tradizioni. Atti del Convengo di Studi: Messina, 24–25 settembre 2009*, ed. G. F. La Torre (Rome, 2011), pp. 157–82.
2. For the Gorgon in the Hellenistic period, see I. Krauskopf, s.v. “Gorgo, Gorgones,” *LIMC* 4 (1988), pp. 285–330, esp. 328–29, nos. 129–30 (examples of Gorgons on an *askos* from Canosa and on a *lekanis* from Centuripe); see also the Gorgon on the *lekanis* in E. Joly, “La ceramica: Botteghe e maestri della Sicilia ellenistica,” in *SIKANIE* 1985, pp. 348–58, esp. pp. 352–53, fig. 435.
 3. LIBERTINI 1947, from Grave 22, pp. 272–75, fig. 7.



60

Head of Hades

400-300 BC

[Expand All](#)

Object Details

Catalogue Number	60
Inventory Number	85.AD.105 <small>☞ Deaccessioned</small>
Typology	Head
Location	Sicily
Dimensions	H: 26.7 cm; W: 20.4 cm

Fabric

Pinkish in color (Munsell 5 yr 7/4); in the back, the clay is a lighter hue (Munsell 5 yr 8/2), with a friable, porous consistency. The surface is coated with a layer of greenish diluted clay and a layer of whitish slip (calcite?). Polychromy: light blue (beard), pink (neck, face, lips), reddish brown (curls of hair). The added pigments would have been applied after the firing process.

Condition

The head is broken off on a line with the neck; several curls from the beard and hair are missing; the polychromy is worn away in many places. There are traces of black (from combustion?) on the left cheek and on the curls. The surface is heavily encrusted with clay/dirt and clay/carbonate mixture. There are numerous areas of pigment loss and ground loss. Pigment areas are powdery and fragile, adhering only loosely to the surface.

Provenance

– by 1982–1985, Maurice Tempelsman (New York, New York), sold through Robin Symes (London, England) to the J. Paul Getty Museum, 1985.

Bibliography

C. C. Vermeule, *A Catalogue of a Collection of Greek, Etruscan and Roman Antiquities Formed by a Private Collector in New York City during the Past Few Decades* (Cambridge, Mass., 1983–84), no. 11; ACQUISITIONS 1985, p. 186, no. 19; COLOR OF LIFE 2008, no. 20, pp. 136–37; LYONS, BENNETT, AND MARCONI 2013, pp. 53 and 192, fig. 133.

Description

The male head is characterized by a voluminous beard and a thick hairstyle that covers the entire cranium. Both beard and hair consist of hand-worked thick, spiraling curls that were applied before firing. The face is squared off; the forehead is low and wreathed by a regularly-shaped border of hair; the cheekbones are high, and the eyebrows straight. The almond-shaped eyes are defined by deep incisions made while the clay was still damp; the iris is rendered through a shallower incised line, and the eyelids are indicated by a light swelling. The nose is straight and narrow, the lips are fleshy, barely open, and not joined at the corners; the upper lip is more thoroughly modeled and the lower lip is almost straight. The transition from the smooth cheeks to the curls of the beard is rendered with finely incised lines, and the undulating shape of the moustache is formed by an overlaid layer of clay with oblique lines cut into it.

The facial features are inscribed in the face with a rigid linearity and, in its original appearance, the vibrant intensity and the abstract quality of the applied pigments would have been meant to express the dramatic epiphany of the god. As the discontinuous break on a line with the neck indicates, the head belonged to a larger figure, probably a statue.

This very peculiar head comes from Morgantina, a settlement in central Sicily. Its archaeological context was confirmed by the discovery of terracotta statue fragments in the area of the *Thesmophorion* sanctuary at San Francesco Bisconti in Morgantina, site of the women's cult of Demeter. Among the fragments of drapery and limbs, probably detached from large-scale sculptures, a number of hand-shaped spiral curls were found that are identical to those on this head in terms of dimensions, style, color, and fabric.¹

The extramural sanctuary of San Francesco Bisconti, the most important in Morgantina dedicated to the goddesses Demeter and Persephone, was continuously occupied over a long period of time between the sixth and third centuries BC. It comprises a complex of cultic *sacella* and *naiskoi* built on artificial terraces cut into the hillside.² This sanctuary is the presumed context for a life-size statue of Demeter in marble and limestone, which is

exhibited in the Museo Archeologico di Morgantina in Aidone, as well as two sets of marble acroliths—heads, hands, and feet—belonging to seated cult statues of Demeter and Persephone.³ In interpreting the head's iconography, it is important to consider that it had appeared on the antiquities market together with a terracotta female head wearing a *polos*. The female head is of similar dimensions and displays an identical technical and stylistic rendering of the facial features: voluminous masses of hair, incised eyes, straight nose, and a mouth defined by an undulating upper lip and downturned outer corners. These characteristics make its association with this bearded head almost certain. Considered together, the presumed findspot in the *Thesmophorion* sanctuary and the possible connection with the image of a female deity would allow us to identify the pair as Hades and Persephone, central figures of ancient Sicilian worship.⁴

Both the articulation of the sanctuary architecture and the types and peculiar placement of votive offerings in various areas clearly allude to the cult of Persephone and her mother Demeter, which was closely tied to agricultural fertility, female fecundity, and women's roles as brides and mothers. In this context, the abduction and rape of Kore—Persephone, her marriage to Hades, and her cyclical return to earth (the *kathados* and *anados*) on which the flourishing of nature depends, were understood by the worshipers as the model of mortal marriage, closely intertwined with life and death, and with female and natural bounty.⁵ In particular, Kore's abduction was marked as a metaphor for the crucial and violent passage between maidenhood and a woman's new status as a bride, a moment particularly celebrated within the ancient civic community.⁶

The god of the Underworld, like male figures generally, is infrequently represented in the coroplastic production of Sicily, but occurs somewhat more regularly in Morgantina. From sanctuary deposits at the site, Hades has been identified in a small group of large-dimension statuettes, representing a young, beardless male standing figure wrapped in a himation that covers the legs, datable to the third century BC. In some examples, his arm is bent forward in a sacrificial gesture; he wears the characteristic wreath of the bridegroom; in one case, he holds a turquoise snake, a typically chthonic attribute. According to Bell, the young man identified as Hades is represented as beardless in his role of bridegroom, on the occasion of his wedding with Persephone.⁷

Hades and Persephone are also the main characters in scenes depicted on the *pinakes* dedicated as *anathemata* in the Persephoneion at Mannella, near Locri, mainly datable to 490–450 BC. They depict the various episodes of the myth and the rituals celebrated in honor of the goddess in connection with the passage from childhood to adulthood, and in particular from the status of *kore* to that of *nympha*. In the *pinakes*, the god plays the dual role of Kore's abductor and Persephone's bridegroom in the Underworld. In the first subject, one of the

most frequently represented among the different iconographic variants, Hades is identified with certainty only as an adult with full beard and curly or wavy hair. The beardless young abductor depicted in some *pinakes*, by contrast, has been extensively discussed and is interpreted by some as a mere mortal: in this case, the scene could be a symbolic representation of a ritual celebration of nuptials inspired by the mythological event.⁸

In the *pinakes* belonging to the group of the “consenting rape,” Hades and Persephone are represented as a divine pair sitting calmly in a quadriga, Persephone having already achieved her status as a bride; there is no allusion to the violence of the act.⁹ The divine pair is also extensively depicted in the *pinakes* of the *anakalypteria* (unveiling) group, which shows Hades and Persephone, enthroned as Queen of the Underworld, in a royal, solemn attitude, like two simulacra, receiving offerings from other deities. In such images, Hades is shown wrapped in a himation that covers the lower part of his body; he may hold any of a variety of attributes (a pomegranate, a scepter, a phiale, wheat ears, or a goose). He wears a long beard and moustache, and his hair is either tied with a ribbon, wreathed with leaves or flowers, or adorned with a diadem. In some examples (type 8/10), the presence of a door may recall, as a visual synecdoche, the *thalamos* (bridal chamber), the realm, or a cultic place.¹⁰

Hades’ iconography is generally quite problematic and can entail interpretive ambiguities. Certain distinctive elements, nevertheless, rather than physiognomic features per se, can support his identification: an enthroned position next to a *paredra* (consort); the half-face representation; visual allusions to the realm of the Underworld; or the presence of a scepter and, in some cases, a cornucopia, a snake, or Cerberus.¹¹ There is another remarkable group of *pinakes*, also from the area of the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore in Francavilla di Sicilia, a center that in the fifth century BC was under the political influence of Syracuse. In this group—derived from Locrian prototypes, as is evident from various stylistic and iconographic aspects—the abduction scene recurs with the representation of Hades and Persephone as a divine couple on a quadriga in the schema of the consenting rape, or enthroned in their roles as sovereigns of the Underworld (*theogamiae* group), alone or with other deities. In the *epiphaniae* group, the two heads are depicted in silhouette, detached from any mythological description in order to underscore the essentially abstract and solemn values of the image.¹² In the Francavilla *pinakes*, Hades displays the usual features but also more peculiar details alluding to those *epikleses* (invocations) that better help to connote the god: for example, the wreath or garland, probably of roses, alludes to Zeus Katachthonios (“Underworld Zeus”), who is also assimilated with Hades in his role as sovereign of the Underworld; or to Zeus Meilichios (“kindly” or “honeyed” Zeus), a beneficent figure who was associated with rites of expiation and purification. In some *pinakes*, Hades is also compared to Zeus Eleutherios (“Deliverer”) by holding an eagle-headed scepter and wearing a garland of

oak leaves. The cult of Zeus Eleutherios flourished particularly in Syracuse after the fall of Thrasybulus in 466 BC and the subsequent institution of democratic government.¹³

In Attic vases and especially in Apulian red-figure vases of the fourth century BC, the Underworld couple is extensively depicted seated or standing inside a *naiskos* surrounded by various mythological figures, in lively scenes characterized by the decorative exuberance peculiar to South Italian pottery. In a volute krater from Canosa datable to 320 BC, for example, Hades demonstrates his majesty through an eagle-headed scepter and sumptuous garments while Persephone wearing a diadem and veil stands before her bridegroom holding a four-headed torch; a volute krater by the White Saccos Painter is characterized by a reprisal of the schema of the two enthroned deities that is seen in the *pinakes*.¹⁴ This iconographic model of the couple, repeatedly illustrated on the *pinakes* of Locri and Francavilla, shows them in their chthonic aspect but also in a positive role as givers of fertility, possibly enthroned in a solemn, epiphanic vision. After more than a century, this model was reproduced again in the Getty's head of Hades connected to the near twin head of Persephone, both of which were probably installed within a *sacellum* in the *Thesmophorion* of Morgantina.¹⁵ Another iconographic typology, which was already codified in the fifth century BC in specific contexts, centered on the figure of Persephone; it recurred especially in the area of Syracuse, to which both Francavilla and Locri were connected politically and culturally.¹⁶

This interpretation is necessarily hypothetical, given the paucity of male cult sculptures recovered from sanctuaries dedicated to Demeter and Persephone and the absence of a precise archaeological context.¹⁷ Nevertheless, analysis of the physiognomic and formal elements allow the placement of this head in a context influenced by a number of works of post-Phidian derivation, characterized in some cases by the coloristic effects of the red hair and blue beard. In the fourth century BC, this virile type, defined by the dense mass of hair and voluminous beard, was adopted for a diverse array of deities, such as Dionysos, Hades, and Zeus, evidencing the iconographic contamination that was quite common in the Hellenistic period. In this instance, however, further identifying elements are lacking.

In the rare representations of Hades, the Underworld god often shares traits with Zeus, especially when Zeus takes on chthonic connotations linked with the sphere of natural fertility, as with Zeus Meilichios or Zeus Katachthonios. These traits, as noted above, are assimilated to Hades in the *pinakes* of Locri and Francavilla.¹⁸ In sculpture, a statue of Zeus Katachthonios datable between 440 and 430 BC is known to have been made by Agorakritos, and it has been recognized in the so-called Dresden Zeus, which is characterized by distinctively intense chiaroscuro tones, especially notable in the hair and beard.¹⁹

A number of physiognomic details—the ringlets of the beard, the treatment of the hair under the lower lip, the accentuated cheekbones, and the mustache—place the Getty’s head within an iconographic tradition that runs from the archetype of the Phidian colossus in the Temple of Zeus at Olympia; continuing through the head of Zeus from Cyrene, also traceable to the typology of the Dresden Zeus; and finally recognizable in the middle-Italic and Etruscan contexts in a number of terracotta bearded heads, such as the one in the architectural decoration of the temple at Lo Scasato at Falerii, in Faliscan territory, dated to the fourth century BC. It signals the persistence of the Phidian artistic model, which enduringly influenced generations of artists.²⁰

In the fourth century as well, in two coinage series of Syracuse—datable to after 348 BC, during the Timoleontic period, and imitated in the issues of other Sicilian towns—the profile head of Zeus Eleutherios can be seen, with a long beard and curly hair held back by small olive branches. In particular, one of the series was thought to have been derived from the staters of Elis-Olympia, minted for the first time after 421 BC and influenced by the work of Phidias, which continued to evolve typologically until the middle of the fourth century BC.²¹ Morgantina, during its war against the Romans between 213 and 211 BC, also produced a silver litra characterized by the head of Zeus Eleutherios; on the reverse is the legend SIKELIOTAN, interpretable as an expression of the town’s freedom and independence in this critical period.²²

It is difficult to connect the Getty’s head closely with the Syracusan coins of the second half of the fourth century because the images on the coins rarely find exact iconographic correspondences in other media; nevertheless, stylistically the head can be considered as a local “baroque” or stereotyped interpretation of a noble typology elaborated within the classical Phidian tradition, which characterizes the artistic production of Sicily in this period. In this sense, the reprisal of classical motifs during the age of Timoleon in a production associated with the religious sphere was intended to express, in a conservative and recognizable language, the bond to an artistic model that still felt alive and distinguished, in order to represent religious and political ideals.

Given the lack of comparable male terracotta sculptures from archaeological contexts, it is difficult to bracket the chronology of the piece. Some features, such as the mouth shape and the general facial structure, seem to be related stylistically to the late fifth century BC, but the possibility that these elements represented a stylistic heritage from the second half of the fourth century, drawn from an earlier prototype, a period when Syracusan models dominated the artistic production of Morgantina, cannot be ruled out.²³

The most distinctive feature in the definition of the face—the incised line in the rendering of the eyes—is found in Magna Graecia and Sicily in a number of fictile heads that date from the sixth century BC. Examples include a head, probably of a sphinx, from Agrigento (550–530 BC); a head from Caulonia (late sixth century) now in the Museo Nazionale di Reggio Calabria; a large head of a female deity from Medma (late sixth to early fifth century BC); and a number of protomes from Locri, where the delineation of the eyes through deep incision appears to have been fairly common.²⁴ The same detail, which may point to bronze prototypes, is also found in the Etruscan milieu. A female head from the Campetti votive deposit at Veii, not far removed from this piece in the treatment of the lips, eyebrows, and nose, finds parallels in typologies dating from the Classical period, and is probably assignable to the middle of the fifth century BC. The possibility that the eyes and the incisions in this piece were refined with color in order to give the face greater expressive intensity cannot be excluded.²⁵ On the other hand, it seems improbable that lashes in bronze or any other material were inserted into the incision. This practice was more common on marble statues (such as the female head from the sanctuary of Hera Lacinia in Crotone and a marble head from Metaponto), though metal ornaments such as earrings did often decorate terracotta heads and votive busts.²⁶

The polychromy, in particular the blue beard, clearly had symbolic meaning; blue was emblematic of eternity, due to its resemblance to the color of the sky, as well as being indicative of power and worth.²⁷ From the Homeric age and according to a convention deriving from Egypt and Middle Eastern traditions, the color blue particularly connoted the gods and was used in literature for its evocative and poetic meanings, especially in relation to Poseidon, Dionysos, and Hades. In fact, blue is only used for the representation of mortals when the character is already dead or transfiguring through the intervention of a god.²⁸ In sculpture, the most famous example is the “blue-bearded” monster from the pedimental group of the Old Athena Temple in Athens, datable to 575–550 BC; here, too, the bright color could be a figurative translation of a literary and poetic convention.²⁹

Appendix

This head was subjected to the following analyses: energy dispersive XRF of pigments and ground; microscopic and microchemical analysis of the blue pigment; infrared analysis of the rose color; determination of the terracotta’s firing temperature by means of thermomechanical and thermoluminescence analysis. The results confirmed the authenticity of the piece and the dating proposed here.

Results: Pigment is Egyptian blue. The reddish-brown color contains an iron oxide pigment (ocher); a high lead content also suggests the presence of lead white. The firing temperature

of the terracotta was approximately 785°C. The pigments found on the head are consistent with those used at the proposed date of origin.

Notes

1. For the fragments of a statue from the sanctuary of San Francesco Bisconti, see RAFFIOTTA 2007, pp. 98–110, 124–25; for the curls, *idem.*, p. 102, nos. 138–40, pl. 27. More curls discovered in the same area are stored in the Museo Archeologico di Morgantina in Aidone. The curls were found to join perfectly to gaps in the beard and hair of the head in a 2012 examination conducted by the Getty's Antiquities Conservation Department, which confirmed their findspot in the San Francesco Bisconti sanctuary. The Head of Hades was approved for deaccession in 2012.
2. The first archaeological research in the area was conducted in late 1979, in consequence of unauthorized excavations reported in 1977; a second excavation followed in 1987; see E. De Miro, “L’attività della Soprintendenza Archeologica della Sicilia dal 1976 al 1980: Morgantina (Aidone–San Francesco Bisconti),” in *Beni Culturali Ambientali (Sicilia)* 1 (1980), pp. 134–37; G. Fiorentini, “Ricerche archeologiche nella Sicilia centro-meridionale: Morgantina (Aidone–San Francesco Bisconti),” *Kokalos* 26–27 (1980–81), pp. 581–600, esp. pp. 593–98; G. Fiorentini, “Attività della Soprintendenza Beni Culturali e Ambientali della Sicilia centro-meridionale (Agrigento, Caltanissetta, Enna) (1984–1988),” *Kokalos* 34–35 (1988–89), pp. 501. E. Caruso, “The Sanctuary at San Francesco Bisconti,” in LYONS, BENNETT, AND MARCONI 2013, pp. 52–53. For the most recent research, see below n. 6.
3. On the Demeter statue of Morgantina, see C. Greco, “Afrodite o Demetra? A proposito della statua di divinità femminile al J. Paul Getty Museum di Malibu,” *Kalós: Arte in Sicilia* 2 (April–June 2007), pp. 10–15; C. Marconi, “Una dea da Morgantina a Malibu,” *ibid.*, pp. 4–9; and C. Greco, “Una dea per Morgantina,” *Kalós: Arte in Sicilia* 4 (October–December 2010). For the acroliths in particular, see C. Marconi, “Gli acroliti di Morgantina,” *Prospettiva* 130–31 (2008), pp. 2–21.
4. The female head with *polos* was published in an auction catalogue: *Antiquities and Islamic Works of Art*, Sotheby’s New York, December 8, 2000, no. 85; the piece’s current whereabouts are unknown.
5. For the chthonic cults in Morgantina and in particular at San Francesco Bisconti, see C. Greco, “Il thesmophorion in contrada San Francesco Bisconti a Morgantina (Scavi e ricerche 2002–2004),” in PANVINI AND SOLE 2009; C. Greco, S. Nicoletti, and S. Raffiotta, “Morgantina: Due santuari delle divinità ctonie in contrada San Francesco Bisconti,” in PANVINI AND SOLE 2009, pp. 129–31; see also S. Raffiotta, “I contesti dell’area ennese,” in ALBERTOCCHI AND PAUTASSO 2012, pp. 39–67; RAFFIOTTA 2007, pp. 24–26, 111–29; and BELL 1981, pp. 98–111. For the *thesmophoria* in Sicily, see E. De Miro, “Thesmophoria di Sicilia,” in DI STEFANO 2008, pp. 47–92.
6. For the cult of Demeter and Kore in Sicily, see GRECO 2013, with select bibliography on this theme.
7. For the depiction of Hades in Morgantina, see BELL 1981, pp. 88–91, nos. 295–99; for the statuette with a snake, see no. 297; for the cult of Demeter and Persephone at Morgantina, see *ibid.* pp. 98–103.
8. For the identification of the beardless abductor, see R. Schenal Pileggi, in LISSI CARONNA, SABBIONE, AND VLAD BORRELLI 1999, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 248–56.
9. For the scene of the rape in the *pinakes* of Locri with a bearded abductor, see LISSI CARONNA, SABBIONE, AND VLAD BORRELLI 1999, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 216–22 (group 2, types 2/1); *idem.*, vol. 1, no. 3 (groups 2/18, 2/19, 2/22, 2/30), pp. 740–45, 764–77, 877–91. For the “consenting rape,” see the type 2/24, pp. 814–25.
10. For the *anakalypteria* group, see R. Schenal Pileggi in LISSI CARONNA, SABBIONE, AND VLAD BORRELLI 2007, vol. 1, pp. 14–22; see, for example, type 8/10, pp. 126–35, pl. XVIII; type 8/13, PP. 171–84, pl. XXXVI. For type 8/32, see *idem*, vol. 2, pp. 453–59, pl. CXXXIV.

11. See LINDNER 1988, pp. 389–94. On this problem, see also C. Pizzirani, “Identità iconografiche tra Dioniso e Ade in Etruria,” *Hesperia: Studi sulla grecità d’Occidente* 26 (2010), pp. 47–70.
12. See SPIGO 2000a; for the “consenting group,” see type II, pp. 24–26, in which Persephone wears a low *polos*, a headdress that occurs very rarely in such representations in Locri and Francavilla. For the *theogamiae* group, see SPIGO 2000b, type XII, pp. 15–18; type XIV, pp. 23–27; type XV, pp. 31–33. For the group of the *epiphaniai*, type XVI, pp. 33–35, figs. 47–48. See also M. Albertocchi, “La coroplastica siceliota nella prima metà del V secolo a.C.” in ALBERTOCCHI AND PAUTASSO 2012, pp. 142–61.
13. For the assimilation of Zeus Katachthonios and Zeus Meilichios, see SPIGO 2000b, type XVI.1, pp. 34–35, fig. 48 and n. 105; for Zeus Eleutherios, idem., type XVII, pp. 38–39. See also C. Giuffrè Scibona, “Lo sposo di Persphone a Locri: Tipologia ed ideologia della coppia nella religione demetriaca,” *Quaderni dell’Istituto di Archeologia dell’Università di Messina* 2 (1986–87), pp. 73–90; and G. Sfameni Gasparri, *Misteri e culti misticci di Demetra* (Rome, 1986), pp. 91–99, 103–5.
14. See LINDNER 1988, nos. 126, 132. See also PENSA 1977, pp. 61–66, pls. I–V, for two volute kraters from Ruvo and Altamura; and BELL 1981, pp. 88–91. For the Attic pottery, see H. Metzger, *Les représentations dans la céramique attique du IVe siècle* (Paris, 1951), p. 23, nos. 55–60.
15. The possibility that the terracotta lion’s paw and drapery fragments found in one of the sacella on the upper terrace of the sanctuary of San Francesco Bisconti could be associated with this statue cannot be excluded; see RAFFIOTTA 2007, p. 125, no. 152, pl. 29, and no. 145. A type of throne with lion’s paw feet also recurs in the pinakes of Locri; see, for example, LISSI CARONNA, SABBIONE, AND VLAD BORRELLI 2007, vol. 5, pl. LXIV, CXXXIV, CXXVIII, no. 33; and for Francavilla, SPIGO 2000b, p. 16, fig. 28; p. 36, fig. 29.
16. See GRECO 2013.
17. See on this topic HINZ 1998, pp. 138–39. In these contexts, the few large-scale terracotta sculptures published are female; see also idem., pp. 232–33 for male figurines from Sicilian sanctuaries. One should also mention the discovery of fragments of terracotta statues, also male, that were architectural decorative elements of cultic buildings from the site of Monte Altesina, north of Enna; among them was found the curl of a female protome of the second half of the fourth–beginning of the third century BC, similar to those of our head: see C. Bonanno, “Frammenti di terrecotte architettoniche da Monte Altesina Nicosia (EN),” in *Deliciae fictiles IV: Architectural Terracottas in Ancient Italy: Images of Gods, Monsters and Heroes: Proceedings of an International Conference held in Rome (Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia, Royal Netherlands Institute) and Syracuse (Museo Archeologico Regionale Paolo Orsi)*, October 21–25, 2009, ed. P. Lulof and C. Rescigno (Oxford, 2011), pp. 539–47, esp. fig. 4. In Greece, in the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Corinth, the majority of large-scale terracotta sculptures, Bookidis believes, represent young male votaries “more likely than cult figures,” but the author also remarks that this preponderance is puzzling if we consider that the majority of the figurines are female and “the absence of parallels for this type of material among the excavated sites and the existing sources” should be a warning: N. Bookidis, *Sanctuary of Demeter and Kore: The Terracotta Sculpture*, Corinth 18 (Princeton, 2010), pp. 272–76.
18. For the iconography of Zeus, see I. Leventi, s.v. “Zeus,” LIMC 8 (1997), pp. 310–46. On relations between Zeus and Hades, see LINDNER 1988, esp. pp. 367–69; and W. Burkert, *Greek Religion*, trans. J. Raffan (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), pp. 200–201.
19. For the statue of Zeus Katachthonios and for the Dresden Zeus, see TODISCO 1993, fig. 12, p. 40.
20. In this connection, see P. Moreno, *La bellezza classica: Guida al piacere dell’antico* (Turin, 2001), pp. 92–94; for the heads from Falerii, see M. Cristofani, “La decorazione frontonale in Italia centrale fra IV e III secolo a.C.: Scelte iconografiche e stile,” in *La coroplastica templare etrusca fra il IV e il II secolo a.C.: Atti del XVI Convegno di studi etruschi e italici, Orbetello, 25–29 aprile 1988* (Florence, 1992), pp. 37–55; M. Cristofani and A. Coen, “Il ciclo decorativo dello ‘Zeus’ di Falerii,” *Rivista dell’Istituto Nazionale di Archeologia e Storia d’Arte* 14–15 (1991–92), pp. 73–129; for other comparisons, see a bearded fictile head formerly on the Swiss antiquities market, in M. Cristofani, “Arte ufficiale ed arte privata nell’Etruria del primo ellenismo,” in *Akten des XIII Internationalen Kongresses für Klassische Archäologie, Berlin, 1988* (Mainz am Rhein, 1990), p. 69, pl. 8, no. 8; see also a head from the Palatine in P. Pensabene, “Contributo delle terrecotte architettoniche alla definizione dei luoghi di culto dell’area sud occidentale del Palatino,” *Ostraka* 10, nos. 1–2 (2001), pp. 81–103; and two fragments of a fictile bearded head probably

from the pedimental decoration datable to the beginning of the third century BC, which reflects classical influences: P. Pensabene, "Il tempio della Vittoria sul Palatino," *Bollettino di Archeologia* 11–12 (1991), pp. 11–51.

21. In this connection, see S. Garraffo, "Zeus Eleutherios-Zeus Olympios: Note di numismatica siracusana," *Annali dell'Istituto Italiano di Numismatica* 23–24 (1976–77), pp. 9–37; for the effigies of Zeus Eleutherios in the Syracusan coinage of the second half of the fourth century BC and the problem of links with an earlier iconographic tradition, see C. Tzouvara Souli, "Cults and Temples in Epirus, Magna Grecia and Sicily," in *La Magna Grecia e i grandi santuari della madrepatria, Atti Taranto* 31, 1991 (Taranto, 1992), pp. 91–123.
22. For the silver litra (12 litra), see S. Raffiotta, "Il lungo viaggio del tetradramma di Morgantina," in *Morgantina, a cinquant'anni dall'inizio delle ricerche sistematiche, Atti dell'incontro di studi, Aidone, 10 dicembre 2005*, ed. G. Guzzetta (Caltanissetta, Rome, 2008), pp. 59–68. See also T. Buttrey, K. T. Erim, T. Gros, and R. Holloway, *The Coins, Morgantina Studies* 2 (Princeton, 1989).
23. The problems relative to these later phenomena and the reprisal of earlier models in the second half of the fourth century BC in Sicily, owing in part to the prestige of reference models, has been discussed for the typology of votive busts in PORTALE 2000. For the influence of Syracuse on Morgantina's production, see RAFFIOTTA 2007, p. 118; and in Sicily, PORTALE 2008, pp. 55–56.
24. For Agrigento, see U. Spigo's entry in PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1996, no. 62, p. 673; for the head from Caulonia, see P. G. Guzzo, "I documenti per lo studio della produzione artigianale (VII–IV sec. a.C.)," in SETTIS 1987a, p. 445, no. 391; for the deity from Medma, see ORLANDINI 1983, and CATONI AND SETTIS 2008, no. 17, fig. 319, with further bibliography; for the protomes from Locri, see BARRA BAGNASCO 1986, pp. 29–30, pl. III. This detail appears also in stone sculpture, as shown in the fifth-century marble head from the sanctuary of Apollo Lykaios in Metaponto; see PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1983, figs. 433–34; and PUGLIESE CARRATELLI 1990, p. 300, figs. 453–54.
25. For the female head with the outline of the eyes marked by a deep groove, see L. Vagnetti, *Il deposito votivo di Campetti a Veio: Materiali degli scavi 1937–1938* (Florence, 1971), pp. 46–47, pl. XVIII.
26. For the marble female head from the area of the temple of Hera Lacinia in Crotone datable at 470–460 BC, in which the orbital cavity was outlined with a thin bronze lamina, creating an impressive effect, see R. Spadea, ed., *Il tesoro di Hera: Scoperte nel Santuario di Hera Lacinia a Capo Colonna di Crotone*, exh. cat. (Rome, Museo Barracco, 1996), pp. 85–87; see also the head of Athena from Magna Graecia datable to the beginning of the fifth century BC in CATONI AND SETTIS 2008, p. 327, no. 39. For eyelashes in bronze, see also *COLOR OF LIFE* 2008, fig. 77. For the use of metal ornaments in terracottas, see no. 51 in this catalogue. For metal ornaments in sculpture, see B. S. Ridgway, "Metal Attachments in Greek Marble Sculpture," in RIDGWAY 2004, pp. 158–84.
27. On interpretative problems with the polychromy, see V. Manzelli, *La policromia nella statuaria greca arcaica* (Rome, 1994), pp. 67–92. See also P. Dimitriou, "The Polychromy of Greek Sculpture: To the Beginning of the Hellenistic Period," Ph.D. diss., Columbia University (1947), pp. 94–95; and L. Luzzatto and R. Pompas, *Il significato dei colori nelle civiltà antiche* (Milan, 1988), pp. 127–51.
28. See R. Drew Griffith, "Gods' Blue Hair in Homer and in Eighteenth-Dynasty Egypt," *Classical Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (December 2005), pp. 329–34. For the chthonic value of blue, consider the above-mentioned snake in the male statuette from Morgantina (BELL 1981, no. 297) and, in a different context, the statues of Sirens in the Serapeion of Memphis in Saqqara, datable to the third century BC, which show blue plumage: LAUER AND PICARD 1955, pp. 216–27. These are evidence of a persistent convention that in a few centuries would merge into the artistic and symbolic traditions of Christian art.
29. For the pedimental "blue-beard" group from the Old Temple of Athena on the Athenian Acropolis (570–550 BC), see A. Stewart, *Greek Sculpture: An Exploration* (New Haven, 1990), pp. 114–15, figs. 70–71.

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About

In the ancient world, terracotta sculpture was ubiquitous. Readily available and economical—unlike stone suitable for carving—clay allowed artisans to craft figures of remarkable variety and expressiveness. Terracottas from South Italy and Sicily attest to the prolific coroplastie workshops that supplied sacred and decorative images for sanctuaries, settlements, and cemeteries. Sixty terracottas are investigated here by noted scholar Maria Lucia Ferruzza, comprising a selection of significant types from the Getty’s larger collection—life-size sculptures, statuettes, heads and busts, altars, and decorative appliqués. In addition to the comprehensive catalogue entries, the publication includes a guide to the full collection of over one thousand other figurines and molds from the region by Claire Lyons.

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