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THREE UNPUBLISHED ANTIQUITIES IN THE MUSEUM OF THE PIERIDES FOUNDATION IN LARNACA¹

(PLATES XII - XIV)

At the beginning of Zeno Kiteius street in Larnaca is the house of the Pierides family where the rich collection of the Museum of the Pierides Foundation is exhibited.² The present appearance of the house is principally due to the modifications and extension of 1903. In the 19th century it was a single storey house of neoclassical-like style, as seen in a photograph taken in 1865 (Pl. XII: 1).

The collection of the Pierides Museum includes not only antiquities covering the ancient and medieval civilization of Cyprus, but also many other treasures such as furniture, various tools, old arms, embroidery and other specimens of popular art, as well as ancient maps, the archives of the family, old books and paintings, that enrich and complete the chronological arrangement of the exhibits which range from the Neolithic era down to modern times.

During the last thirty years the collection of the Museum has been preserved thanks to Mrs. Theodora Zeno Pierides who has also arranged the exhibits as they are today, not only in the main galleries of the ground-floor but everywhere in the house.³

HEAD OF 'HERAKLES-MILQART' (Pls. XII: 2-3, XIII: 4-6)⁴

Unknown provenance. Limestone. Sculpture in the round. Ht.: 34.7 cm.; width at the top: 23.2 cm.; width at the bottom: 27 cm.; maximum thickness (at the chin): 23.6 cm..

This head belonged to a statue of the type known as 'Herakles-Milqart'.⁵ Although only the

1. The purpose of this article is to contribute to the publication of all the unpublished material in the Museum of the Pierides Foundation in Larnaca. A great part has already been published in different works, particularly in that of Dr. V. Karageorghis, *Cypriote Antiquities in the Pierides Collection, Larnaca, Cyprus*.

We are grateful to Mrs. Theodora Pierides, President of the Foundation, for permission to publish two terracottas and one limestone head of the Cypro-Archaic period.

2. For the history of the Pierides family and that of the collection see A.Λ. Κουδουνάρης, *Μερικαί παλαιαί οικογένειαι της Κύπρου*, Λευκωσία, 1972, pp. 87-101, and D. Z. Pierides in V. Karageorghis, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

3. V. Karageorghis, *op. cit.*, p. 6 and D.Z. Pierides, *op. cit.*

4. Unfortunately none of the objects in the Museum has an inventory number so far, and it is only now that they are being catalogued and numbered.

5. For 'Herakles-Milqart' and his iconography cf. Sophocles Sophocleous, *Atlas des représentations chypro-archaïques des divinités* (Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology), Göteborg, 1985 (hereafter Sophocleous 1985), pp. 28-56 and pls V-XII. See also S. Sophocleous, 'De quelques aspects de l'ancienne religion de Chypre', *Kypriakai Spoudai*, MH', 1984. The second component of the god's name, *MLQRT* should be Milqart in Phoenician and not Melqart as in Hebrew; see M. Szynger, 'Les noms de métier et de fonction chez les Phéniciens', in *La vie quotidienne à Chypre de l'antiquité à nos jours*, Paris, Musée de l'Homme, 15-17 Novembre, 1982 (forthcoming); I also express my thanks to Josette Elayi for her useful comments about the name of *MLQRT*.

head of the statue has been preserved, we can still form an approximate idea of the statue's attitude. This can be deduced from the trace left on the head which signifies the point where the club the god was brandishing in his right hand joined the head (Pls XII: 3, XIII: 4-6).⁶

The head is in a bad state of preservation. The face is very eroded with a broken nose and probably intentionally damaged eyes (Pls XII: 2-3, XIII: 4). Only the upper part and back of the head (Pl. XIII: 5-6) are better preserved, with only slight erosion. The parts of the lion skin (*λεοντή*) flanking the cheeks of the god have their extremities broken.

The god wears the lion skin that covers his head like a helmet and hides his hair apart from a row of curls on his forehead reaching to the ears. The upper jaw of the lion (with the teeth indicated?) frames the forehead, and the lower jaw, cut in two, passes behind the ears and flanks his cheeks (Pls XII: 2-3, XIII: 4). The facial characteristics of the lion skin covering the head of the god (Pl. XIII: 6) have been remarkably well rendered, with the eye-balls indicated as though the lion was alive. Moreover, if we look at the top part of the sculpture from above (Pl. XIII: 6) or from the back (Pl. XIII: 5), we perceive only a lion's head, with the sculpture giving the impression of a zoomorphic image. The anthropomorphic appearance of the god is noticed only if the sculpture is seen frontally or in profile (Pls XII: 2-3, XIII: 4).⁷ As stated, the zoomorphic aspect of the figure can also be seen from the back (Pl. XIII: 5) which depicts the lion's mane. The mane is represented by deep incisions to render the animal's hair in a realistic manner. The same realism characterizes the treatment of the hair and the beard, the rich curls of which seem to have been meticulously rendered, in spite of the erosion they have suffered. The moustache has almost disappeared, but traces of it can be made out above the smiling mouth which is also seriously damaged.

The bad condition of the god's face makes the dating of the sculpture somewhat difficult. At first glance it seems to date to the end of the Archaic period. However, the realistic treatment of the beard and of the god's hair above his ears confirms the influence of the innovative trends in Greek sculpture which heralded Classicism, and suggests a date of around the middle of the 5th century B.C.. The smile of the god which, despite the erosion, seems to have been well rendered, also indicates the Archaism of this sculpture, so it can be classified in the first sub-Archaic Cypriot-Greek style.⁸

FIGURINE OF 'PTAH-PATAIKOS' (Pl. XIV: 8-11)⁹

Unknown provenance. Moulded terracotta, solid apart from a bell-shaped hollow plinth; reworked after moulding (=fingers and toes indicated by incisions). Space between legs is not hollowed out. Flat back side (Pl. XIV: 10-11).

Ht.: 13.7 cm.; width at the plinth: 5.5 cm.; width at the shoulders: 4.8 cm.; thickness at the head: 3.1 cm.; thickness at the plinth: 4.8 cm..

The state of this figurine's preservation is almost perfect, with only some traces of erosion on the upper part of the head. Finger-prints of the ancient coroplast who touched the figurine before firing are preserved on the left arm and leg.

6. For the representations of 'Herakles-Milqart' brandishing a club, cf. Sophocleous 1985, pp. 29-45 and pls. VI-XII.

7. For the interpretation of the lion skin see Sophocleous 1985, pp. 47, 50-53. For another illustration of the top part of a head of 'Herakles-Milqart' viewed vertically, showing only a lion's face, cf. *Swedish Cyprus Expedition (SCE)* III, pl. XXXVI: 5.

8. *SCE* IV: 2, pp. 117-22.

9. For 'Ptah-Pataikos' and his iconography cf. Sophocleous 1985, pp. 149-54.

The god is presented standing, in a frontal position, giving the impression that he is squatting, with his somewhat 'deformed' looking legs, the arms held against the chest with the hands closed (clasping two serpents?) and with a prominent abdomen. He is nude and seems to wear a wig,¹⁰ but he could also be wearing the Ptah's skullcap or have a shaved head.¹¹ The facial characteristics are barely indicated as are the large ears. The hands and feet are only outlined and the genitals are summarily rendered.

The god appears to grasp two serpents that crawl in front of his shoulders, as on Egyptian prototypes (amulets of Ptah-*Pataikos* and the 'stelae of Horus'=Pl. XIII :7) which seem to have been the origin of this cypro-phoenician divine image.

The date of this figurine can only be estimated approximately because of the lack of a datable context in which it was found. In general, Cypriot terracottas of this type found in a datable context date from the 7th to the 5th centuries B.C..

The conventional name 'Ptah-*Pataikos*' of this kind of figurine belonging to the cypro-phoenician *koine* is based on Herodotus accounts¹² and on their similarities with Egyptian amulets of Ptah-*Pataikos*. However, the iconographic type of the cypriot and phoenician terracotta figurines (Pl. XIV: 8-11) seems to be closer to the 'stelae of Horus' (Pl. XIII: 7);¹³ this can be corroborated by the infantile aspect of the cypro-phoenician figurines,¹⁴ which favours an identification of a god represented as an infant. This possibility suggests a new and thorough reconsideration of the identification of these cypriot and phoenician terracottas traditionally named 'Ptah-*Pataikos*' characterized as a dwarf with deformed legs. However, these two last characteristics could be erroneous when the so-called 'Ptah-*Pataikos*' figurines (Pl. XIV: 8-11) are identified with the child Horus grasping two serpents; then the so-called 'dwarf aspect' would be the infantile stature of Horus and the 'deformed legs' would be the typical leg position of infants who frequently have their legs close to the body instead of at full length (in that case the infant god could be seated). The 'deformed legs' could also be the conventional and summary interpretation of a squatting position, like that of moulded terracottas of Bes,¹⁵ Satyrs and other divinities or heroes, where the rendering of the legs gives the impression of deformed members.

FEMALE FIGURINE (Pl. XIV: 12-15)¹⁶

Unknown provenance. Moulded, hollow terracotta; two round holes on the back, one on the

10. For examples where the wig is well rendered and detailed cf. *ibid.*, p. 152, no. 3 and fig. 20. For Egyptian prototypes of this wig cf. Kazimierz Michalowski, *Histoire mondiale de la sculpture: Egypte*, Verona, 1983, pp. 84, 106-7, 136, 159, 168.

11. The Ptah's skullcap and the shaved skull are more frequent on Egyptian prototypes of these Cypriot and Phoenician terracottas which seem to have been the amulets of Ptah-*Pataikos* and the 'Stelae of Horus'; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 150-52 and fig. 19 (=our Pl. XIII: 7). For an Egyptian bronze figure of Ptah wearing his skullcap cf. Veronica Ions, *Egyptian Mythology*, Italy, 1982, p. 29.

12. Herodotus III: 37. Cf. also *supra*, note 9.

13. Sophocleous 1985, fig. 19. See also Svetlana Hodjash and Oleg Berlev, *The Egyptian Reliefs and Stelae*, Leningrad, 1982, nos 186, 192 and 194.

14. This infantile appearance is very clear on some well rendered and detailed figurines, especially as regards facial characteristics, as on one in the British Museum, inv. no. 1894.11-1.270 (=supra, note 10) found in Amathus and another one from the same city (=SCE II, pl. CLVIII: 1; Sophocleous 1985, p. 153, no. 6).

15. G. Perrot et C. Chipiez, *Histoire de l'art dans l'antiquité*, III: *Phénicie - Cypre*, Paris, 1885, figs 21-22; Veronica Wilson, *Levant VII*, 1975, pls XVI: A (right) - B, and XVII: C (=Sophocleous 1985, pls XL: 4 and XLI: 4).

16. For this type of female figurine cf. Sophocleous 1985, pp. 105-8 and pls XXIV: 4 and XXV: 1-4.

head and another between the shoulders (Pl. XIV: 15).¹⁷

Ht.: 41 cm.; width at the elbows: 13.3 cm.; maximum width at the bottom: 10.5 cm.; thickness at the breasts: 7 cm.; preserved thickness at the plinth: 5.9 cm..

The figurine is well preserved apart from some erosion on the right forearm, on the left breast, and on the rich jewels between the breasts that hang down on the upper part of the belly. The front part of the plinth and the front of the feet are broken. Traces of red paint on the chest.

The woman is represented standing, in a frontal position, with legs together. Her hands touch the under parts of the breasts with the fingertips, with the thumbs slightly parted from the forefingers. She wears the so-called 'cypriot costume',¹⁸ which on our figurine consists of a long thin tunic reaching to the feet, with long(?) sleeves, and tied around the waist (or under the breasts) with a stole. This stole, used as a girdle, appears below the *apoptygma* (=over-fold) of the tunic and falls on the thighs. It is rendered in relief and is decorated with groups of double parallel incisions, as well as with tassels at each end.¹⁹ It is possible that what we interpret as the *apoptygma* of the tunic could be a second short over-tunic. The richly pleated lower part of the costume would then belong to the under-tunic. However, this folded lower part of the costume could also indicate the existence of a unique large tunic, which is tied around the waist or beneath the breasts and appears pleated on the thighs and legs from the end of the over-fold. The costume is completed with a veil which covers the head, falling on the shoulders and arms from where it hangs in folds on the thighs. The figure also wears rich jewellery, some of which no longer appear clearly because of erosion: ear-caps with long pendants and abundant necklaces with pendants decorate the neck, chest and the upper part of the belly. Some of these pendants are remarkable, such as the large circular one (*a bulla*)²⁰ between the breasts and others hanging down to the belly; among the latter are some seals²¹ and probably pendant-amulets.²² Of the coiffure, only the front part, not covered by the veil, can be seen; the hair is arranged in locks radiating from the centre of the upper part of the head and tied across the forehead with a band; the rest of the hair is plaited and falls in front onto the shoulders, forming the so-called 'palm tree's leaf'.²³ The face is characterized by thick brows and large almond-shaped eyes, and the absence of a smile gives it a rather serious expression.

The date of this figurine must be between 610 and 520 B.C. to judge from the form of the

17. Apart from their use during the firing of the figurine, these two holes could also have served to hang it on a wall. Thus the whole image was made to be seen only frontally, as substantiated by its flat back, moreover it could not stand because its lower part does not end in a flat plinth.

18. J.L. Myres, *Handbook of the Cesnola Collection of Antiquities from Cyprus*, New York, 1914 and 1974, p. 351; J. Karageorghis (*infra*, note 19); Sophocleous 1985, pp. 104-5.

19. The girdle, with a fringe of bobbles at each end, seems, according to V. Tatton-Brown, to be of Near Eastern origin; cf. V. Tatton-Brown in A. Hermary, *Amathonte II*, Paris, 1981, p. 78 and note 97. However, the examples cited in that note are nude; the dressed figurines illustrated in the plates of these publications wear a belt at the waist, but it does not seem to be a long fringed girdle falling in front of the legs. Similar girdles to the one on our figurine (Pl. XIV: 12-15) can be seen on an ivory figurine of Bes from Kition (=V. Karageorghis, *BCH C*, 1976, pp. 880-81, fig. 76) and on two masculine figurines from Amman (= H.Th. Bossert, *Altsyrien*, Tübingen, 1951, nos 1411-14). See also V. Karageorghis *et al.*, *Fouilles de Kition II: Objets égyptiens et égyptisants*, Nicosie, 1976, pp. 122, note 25 and 170; J. Karageorghis, *La Grande Déesse de Chypre et son culte*, Lyon, 1977, pp. 211-12; Sophocleous 1985, p. 105 and notes 230 and 252.

20. J. Karageorghis, *op. cit.*, pp. 208, 211-12.

21. These seals, some of which look like signet-rings, are clearer on other figurines and on limestone statues, especially on one from Arsos (=SCE IV: 2, pl. II; J. Karageorghis, *op. cit.*, pp. 215 and 218, pl. 36: a) and together with the decorated fringed girdle they could represent insignia of various hieratic ranks and functions; cf. M. Yon, *Salamine de Chypre V: Un dépôt de sculptures archaïques*, Paris, 1974, pp. 121-2; V. Karageorghis, *supra*, note 19; J. Karageorghis, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-2 and 218.

22. V. Karageorghis, *supra*, note 1, no. 80.

23. J. Karageorghis, *op. cit.*, pp. 206-7.

brows and eyes which classify it in the eastern Neo-Cypriote style.²⁴ However, the pleated lower part of the costume could indicate a date around the end of the 6th century B.C..

It should be noted that the very thin fabric of the see-through tunic which clings to the abdomen, the pubic region and the thighs, accentuates them; this is undoubtedly related to the religious significance of this type of female figurine²⁵ which belongs to the cult of the Great Goddess Aphrodite. Among the relevant attributes of the figure, with regard to this interpretation, are the fringed stole used as girdle beneath the breasts or at the waist, the rich decoration which may represent embroidery, as may be deduced from the written sources discussed below. Moreover, this girdle is one of the attributes of a type of female figurine belonging to the sphere of cult and iconography of the Great Goddess,²⁶ and may thus be compared with the *κεστός ἱμάς* of Aphrodite, referred to in various literary sources.²⁷ There is reference sometimes to *κεστός ἱμάς* or simply *κεστός*, an embroidered and elaborately decorated thong (cf. Cornutus, Nonnos, Hesychius and Suidas), tied at the breast according to Homer,²⁸ but it could probably be tied at the waist also, since it is referred to as a girdle as well (=ζωστήρ, cf. Nonnos). Nonnos describes the *κεστός ἱμάς* as *σημάντωρ Κυπρογενεῖης*, which indicates that this embroidered and richly decorated girdle was an emblem of the goddess. Should we then assume that this girdle, tied somewhere between the breasts and the waist of our Pl. XIV: 12-15 and other similar figurines is the *κεστός ἱμάς* of Aphrodite, or should we retain a simple hypothesis? The same type of decorated fringed stole can be seen on female figures painted on contemporary cypro-archaic vases;²⁹ on one of them³⁰ the decoration of the girdle is detailed by groups of parallel horizontal lines as on two terracotta figurines.³¹ The descriptions of the *κεστός ἱμάς* in the texts seem to agree with what is depicted on figurines of the type published here (*supra*, note 16), but one thing we cannot understand is where exactly the *κεστός ἱμάς* was tied at the breasts of Aphrodite according to Homer; certainly an embroidered thong would be relatively wide and should go around the chest to be tied there. But was it tied above or beneath the breasts, or did it form an X, crossing between the breasts as on some statues of Artemis?³² It is more likely that it could not be tied at the breast, having been placed more than once around the chest, because it does not seem to be a ribbon or cord and, moreover, Nonnos describes it as a girdle (*ζωστήρ*). We can imagine therefore that the *κεστός ἱμάς* was tied somewhere beneath the breasts or at the waist, and fell in front of the thighs and legs. In this case, the *κεστός ἱμάς* could be the decorated fringed stole we can see on our figurine as well

24. SCE IV: 2, pp. 105-7, pls VII-IX. Cf. also Sophocleous 1985, p. 220.

25. For the interpretation of these figurines see *supra*, note 21, and Sophocleous 1985, pp. 104-5.

26. Some types of this kind of figurine could possibly be assimilated to the goddess; cf. *supra*, note 25.

27. See: Homer, *Iliad*, XIV: 214-223. Hesychius, *Lexicon* (edition Kurt Latte, *Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon*, København, 1966). For the other writers (Cornutus, Nonnos and Suidas) cf. K. Hadjioannou, 'Η ἀρχαία Κύπρος εἰς τὰς ἐλληνικὰς πηγὰς Β', Nicosia, 1973, nos 9: α-γ and 9: 1-6; About the *κεστός ἱμάς*, see also C. Bonner, 'Κεστός ἱμάς and the Saitire of Aphrodite', *American Journal of Philology* LXX, 1949, pp. 1 f.

28. Concerning the band or string tied at the breast of certain female figurines known as the 'Goddess with uplifted arms', some of which represent the Great Goddess, see J. Karageorghis, *op. cit.*, p. 141; V. Karageorghis, 'The Goddess with uplifted arms, in Cyprus', *Scripta Minora*, 1977-78, pp. 9-10; Sophocleous 1985, pp. 85-93, pls XIX-XXI. See also K. Hadjioannou, *Δελτίον Ἐπιστημονικοῦ καὶ Φιλολογικοῦ Συλλόγου Ἀμμοχώστου*, 1973, pp. 7-8, 101 f., and *idem*, 'Η ἀρχαία Κύπρος εἰς τὰς ἐλληνικὰς πηγὰς Ε', Nicosia, 1983, pp. 164-5 where the author identifies the *κεστός ἱμάς* on the bronze figurine of the goddess standing on an ingot, found in Cyprus and dating to the 12th century B.C. (=H.W. Catling in *Alasia I*, Paris, 1971, figs 3-4).

29. V. Karageorghis et J. des Gagniers, *La céramique chypriote de style figuré. Age du fer (1050-500 av. J.-C.)*, Rome, 1974, pp. 58, 69, 75, 85-8 and 91; *idem*, *Supplément*, Rome, 1979, pp. 24-5; J. Karageorghis, *op. cit.*, pls 32: a-c and 33: a.

30. V. Karageorghis and J. des Gagniers, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

31. See Pl. III: 1-3 and *supra*, note 1, no. 80.

32. Sophocleous 1985, pl. XXXV: 1-2.

as on similar figurines and in painted representations on vases. But not all these female figures wearing such a girdle should be identified with the goddess, apart perhaps from those with the hands under the breasts (Pl. XIV: 12-15) and certain others (*supra*, note 16). Just as in the whole iconographical repertory of the Great Goddess, women associated with her cult (priestesses and others) probably borrowed characteristics and attributes of their goddess to create their own proper image, so this could also be the case here, as regards this type of figurine. It is thus difficult for us today to distinguish the divine from the human representations.³³

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 93, 98-100, 102-4 and 141.