

A TERRACOTTA BOX FROM ROMAN EGYPT

There are two terracottas in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, that deserve special attention on account of their rarity; they were made in Egypt under the Roman empire. One of them, an oblong box with semi-circular ends on the shorter sides (Figure 1)¹, is in a very fragmentary condition, with about half of the box missing. Its shape and iconography can, however, be fully reconstructed on the basis of a piece in the Fouquet Collection (Figure 3)², made from the same mould. The ensuing description refers to the complete specimen.

The face covering the entire side of the box is bordered above and below by a simple rim which consists of a broader and a narrower strip. The relief is of medium depth; the centre of the main scene is occupied by a four-wheeled chariot drawn by two he-goats proceeding towards the right. The upper part of the vehicle is shaped like a *kline*; on it we see a recumbent figure leaning his head on his right arm, and having a garland on his head and round his neck. His body, naked to the waist, is covered by a mantle below. His build, like that of all the figures on this relief, is short and squat and of a childlike character, with short limbs. With his left hand he touches the back of the naked, winged (?) child who drives the chariot. The relief does not show

¹ Inventory No. T. 502. From P. Arndt's collection. First mentioned by Weber: *Die ägyptisch-griechischen Terrakotten*. Berlin 1914, I, 184, note 9. See also Z. Oroszlán: *Az O. M. Szépművészeti Múzeum antik terrakotta gyűjteménye* (Collection of Greek and Roman Terracottas in the Museum of Fine Arts). Budapest, 1930, 69, D. 47. Made of reddish-brown clay. Height: 4,5 cm.; length: 8,6 cm.; width: 5,4 cm.; thickness of clay: 4–5 mm.; depth of relief: 3–4 mm. Made from two moulds, with the line of junction clearly discernible at the bottom and the shorter sides. After fitting the two pieces together, the interior of the box was smoothed and retouched by hand. The box stood originally on four knobs attached to the bottom; two of these are still extant while the third, made of plaster, is a modern addition. (Cp. the box of Hildesheim, Figure 5.) The piece is fragmentary: one of the long sides and the greater part of the adjoining short side are extant, the other two sides are missing. Defects are due partly to insufficiently washed clay and the worn state of the moulds, partly to later abrasion and minor injuries to the surface.

² P. Perdrizet: *Les terres cuites grecques d'Égypte de la collection Fouquet*. Nancy—Paris—Strasbourg. 1921. I, 94–5, no. 239, Plate XXXVI, below. Length: 11 cm., height: 4,5 cm., width: 5,6 cm.

clearly where this child is seated, since the vehicle is not even the length of the reclining figure. The reins are hollowed into the base of the relief. The chariot is faced by a briskly striding naked child who turns his head in the direction of the vehicle's progress; he is holding a staff in his left hand, a token of his office as a messenger. In front of him we see another naked child, running towards the right and holding a large lamp in his right hand. The procession is opened, beyond the line joining the two sides of the relief, by a winged female figure dressed in a long *chiton* and blowing a long instrument held upwards. This figure is separated by a shaped pillar from the next scene which fills the greater part of the relief. This banquet scene, comprising six figures, is centred around two *klinai*. The first *kline*, immediately adjoining the pillar, is occupied by a reclining figure, with his back to the spectator. Except for the cloak covering his leg, he is naked and is leaning with his left elbow on a cushion, while in his right hand he is holding a drinking vessel. Standing to the left of the *kline*, a naked child pours wine into his cup from the *krater* that stands on the ground. Above the reclining figure, a rich bunch of grapes hangs down from the cornice. The other *kline*, somewhat larger, is placed at the other end of the scene, immediately behind the chariot drawn by goats. On this couch there are two recumbent figures: one of them is a winged child, stripped to the waist, who reaches out with his right hand to the small, three-legged table at the head of the *kline*; the other figure, of which only the head and shoulder are to be seen, is bending towards his companion. From the left, two naked, winged children are hurrying towards the couch, one of them holding a loaded basket, the other a lamp or round box.

The other piece mentioned above is a terracotta plate, corresponding in size to the ground-area of the above box (Figure 2)³ The base of the relief is smooth, except for a single grooved line: above it we see a naked female figure, with the characteristic gesture of the *Aphrodite Anadyomene* type, standing within the architectural frame of a pillared niche. The *aedicula* is supported by two twisted columns of the Corinthian or Composite order, resting on cubic plinths; they are surmounted by a triangular pediment having a small hemisphere in the middle, probably symbolizing the sun. Inside this frame we

³ Invent. No. T. 503. From P. Arndt's collection. Mentioned by *Weber*: op. cit. 122, note 2. See also *Oroszlán*: op. cit. 67, D. 32. It is made of reddish-brown clay. Height: 11.2 cm., width: 5.4 cm., thickness: 4–5 mm., depth of relief: 4–5 mm. In the hollowed portions there are occasional traces of white colouring. There are two clamp-holes on the right. Cast from one mould, the reverse side hastily smoothed over by hand, showing finger-marks. Undamaged except for some minor abrasions.



Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.

see another pair of similar columns, but considerably thinner and without flutings, surrounding a niche with semicircular conch-ceiling. Between the columns, practically to the full height of the niche, there stands a broad-hipped, naked female figure, drying her hair with her raised hand. Below the *aedicula* we see a *tabula ansata*, with the following inscription in scratched: *HXAPIC*.

Arndt, the previous owner of these pieces, regarded the box as the fragment of a trough and did not connect it with the other piece described.⁴ Similar boxes were first discussed by Theodor Schreiber.⁵ He mentions them in connection with the clay-trough sarcophagi of Alexandria and comes to the conclusion that some of the clay sarcophagi must have been ornamented with reliefs; in his view, the boxes are miniature replicas of such sarcophagi. He fails to give a description of the two boxes mentioned in his text and reproduced in drawing; his drawings show, as a matter of fact, that he did not understand the scenes represented in them. The Budapest box was mentioned by Weber⁶ who gave expression to the erroneous view that the occupants of the chariot are Eros and Psyche. He also refers to the other relief, independent of the box, regarding the inscription for some reason as a joke.⁷ Paul Perdrizet discusses in some detail the box in the Fouquet Collection, made from the same mould.⁸ According to his interpretation, the relief represents the nuptials of Eros and Psyche. In Perdrizet's view, Eros is proceeding to the wedding in the goat-team; one of the couches is occupied by Dionysus, the other by Eros and Psyche, while the female figure at the head of the procession, blowing the trumpet, must be identified with Nike. The most recent reference to the two pieces is by Z. Oroszlán who also fails to see any connection between them; in his view, the relief must be regarded as a jocular present,⁹ the box as a representation of the wedding of Eros and Psyche. Oroszlán adds that the work was made on the model of the »reliefs and paintings representing the nuptials of Bacchus and Ariadne«.¹⁰

⁴ It is described in his files as follows: »Fragment eines Troges, darauf in Relief bacchische Kinder.«

⁵ Expedition Ernst Sieglin. Die Nekropole von Kom-esch-Schukafa. Leipzig 1908, 190.

⁶ Op. cit., 184, note 9.

⁷ Op. cit., 122, note 2: »Ein netter Scherz, eine kleine Figur in einer Muschelnische mit Triangulardach und gedrehten Säulen. Ein Schildchen darunter mit der Aufschrift eines Witzbolds.«

⁸ Op. cit. I, 94—5.

⁹ Op. cit., D. 32.

¹⁰ Op. cit., D. 47.

The terracotta plate with the reliefs is, no doubt, the lid belonging to the box. If we recognize this connection, the unity of the two pieces becomes clear at once. The fact that they belong together is shown, first of all, by the correspondence of form and size, not only in the case of the Budapest pieces but with all specimens hitherto published. Additional evidence is supplied by the two holes near the edge of the lid corresponding to two holes in one of the longer sides of the boxes — the purpose of which was obviously to fasten the lid on.¹¹ A further proof in the case of the Budapest box and lid is supplied by the identical quality and colour of the material.

With the establishment of the unity of box and lid an interesting group comes to light. Among the Graeco—Egyptian terracottas published so far there does not seem to be another complete box like the one in Budapest. The piece best known is that in the Fouquet Collection (Figure 3) which served as basis for the above description; it was made from the same mould as the lower part of the Budapest box. The box in the Akademisches Kunstmuseum in Bonn is identical in representation and size (Figure 4).¹² It was made, however, from a badly worn mould, so that the relief is very indistinct. This is probably the reason for the inaccurate drawing made by Schreiber who first published an account of this box¹³. It was Schreiber, again, who drew attention to another box in the Pelizäus Collection, then still in Cairo (Figure 5).¹⁴ Since this piece was not adequately published at the time, it may be useful to devote a little attention to it.¹⁵

The box is identical in size and shape with those described so far.¹⁶ The faces are bordered, above and below, by smooth rims and are divided by small, flat pilasters into panels. Two of these occupy the two main faces, the remaining two the shorter sides. The main face represents three child-figures. Two of them are turning towards the left,

¹¹ See Figures 3—4. In the Hildesheim box the upper part of the back-side is broken off; this may have been due to the drilling of the holes which weakened the wall.

¹² I wish to express here my sincere gratitude to Prof. Ernst Langlotz for putting the photographs and data at my disposal. The inventory no. of the box is D. 524. It was made from two moulds, the upper edge is damaged. The size is a few millimetres smaller; this may be due to the use of a secondary or tertiary mould. Length: 10.8 cm.; height; 3.5 cm.

¹³ Exp. Sieglin I, 190, Abb. 125.

¹⁴ Op. cit., 190, Abb. 123—4.

¹⁵ Publication was made possible by Dr. H. Kayser, Director of the Pelizäus-Museum, Hildesheim; I have to thank him not only for the photographs and information but also for the plaster-casts which clear up every doubtful point.

¹⁶ Hildesheim, Pelizäus-Museum, Inv. No. 582. Length: 11 cm.; height: 4.3 cm. Made from two moulds, with four hemispherical legs.



Fig. 3/a

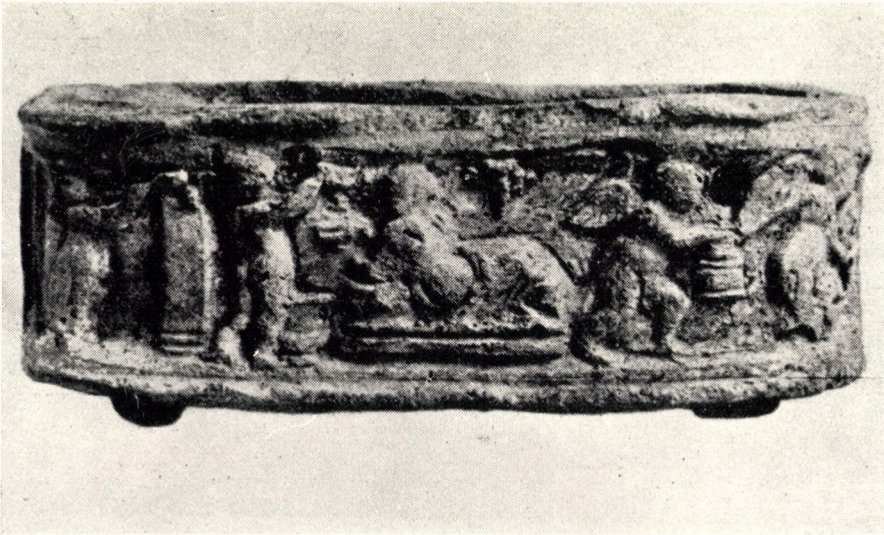


Fig. 3 b.

in a half-sitting, half-reclining position on two small couches. The one to the right is holding an indistinguishable longish object (thyrsos?) in his left hand, while his raised right hand carries a drinking-vessel. The central figure lowers his left arm, his raised right hand grasps a longish vessel (?). The third figure steps in from the left and places a fairly large vessel on the stand at the foot of the couch. As far as can be ascertained, all three figures are unclad except for some covering round their waists. The next short side towards the right is divided into two panels: in one of them we see a ten-leaved palmette, with grooved leaves, in the other (Figure 6) a winged little Eros in a boat. The prow rises sharply from the water, the child is in a crouching position, with legs bent, driving the boat with a paddle or a pole (this point cannot be clarified owing to the broken state of this side). On the next long side there seem to be only two figures: beside a round, broad-rimmed vessel on a small stand we see on the left a naked, winged little Eros squatting on the ground; he lifts his left hand to his mouth, obviously holding some food taken from the vessel.¹⁷ To the right there is another child on a similar couch. The upper part of this side is broken off; the two feet that can be made out are placed rather far apart: hence it cannot be definitely ascertained whether we have to do with one or two figures. Beside the pilaster closing this scene there is the relief of a *syrix* hung on the wall. The adjoining short side is adorned by a palmette, the counterpart of the one described, while the next panel is occupied by a low, ribbed round altar¹⁸ and the figure of a little winged Eros who is offering his sacrifice.¹⁹ The child is stepping out briskly towards the right; he is clothed from the waist downwards, his right hand, holding an indistinguishable object, is stretched out towards the altar. Above the altar, somewhat to the right, a rich bunch of grapes is hanging down, while beside the altar a *thyrsos* is resting against the pilaster.

¹⁷ This figure was mistaken by Schreiber (as it appears from his drawing) for an elephant sitting on the ground.

¹⁸ Round altars were employed primarily in the cult of the Chthonian deities and of the dead; they are found mostly in the Aegean islands and in Asia Minor. See *Reisch*: »Altare PWRE I. 1675–6. For shape of the altar see *Deonna*: Le mobilier Délien. Exploration archéologique de Délos. XVIII. 1938, 95. Pl. XXXVIII. 269.

¹⁹ For the setting of this sacrifice cp. the Eros sarcophagus in Beyrouth (*F. Cumont*: Syria 10. 1929, 217–237); on the reverse side of the sarcophagus a naked winged Eros is offering sacrifice on a small *thymiaterion*; opposite him we see a winged Eros with *nebris*, holding a bunch of grapes over the altar. The scene on the box is a simplified version: the bunch of grapes hangs by itself above the altar. For sacrificial scenes on Eros sarcophagi see *Gütschow*: Das Museum der Praetextat-Katakomben, 142–149. Pl. 24–8, no 16; in Athens: *Cumont*: Syria 10, 1929, 223, fig. 3. = *Reinach*: Répert. reliefs II, 405.

The general import of the representation, notwithstanding some obscure details, is clear: we have to do with a Dionysiac banquet attended by Eroses. Thus the Hildesheim box is closely connected

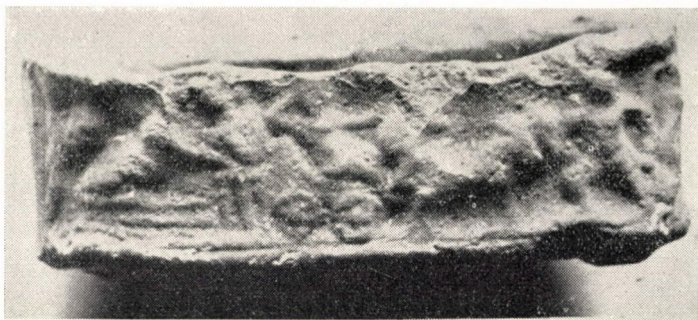


Fig. 4/a.

with those described above, not only in shape but also in the subject of its reliefs. This close connection is further reinforced by the fact that parallels to the scenes represented are found in exactly the same places as in the cases described below.

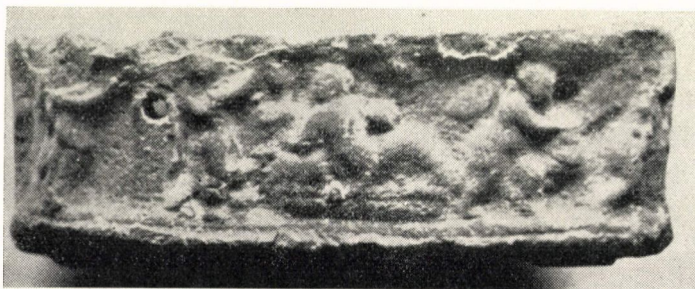


Fig. 4/b.

I could not trace any precise analogy to the lid. The closest parallel is the piece published by Kaufmann²⁰ though it differs in details from the Budapest piece and bears no inscription. The two specimens published by Breccia, from the material of the Alexandria Museum, are inscribed.²¹

²⁰ *Graeco-ägyptische Koroplastik*. 2. Aufl. Leipzig—Kairo 1915. No. 232. T. 30, found in Philadelphia, in the Fayûm.

²¹ *Terrecotte greco-egiziane del Museo di Alessandria*. 16, no. 7. Tav. V. 13—4. I had no access to this publication and know it only from references: *Graindor*: *Terres cuites de l'Égypte Gréco-Romaine*. 1939. Antwerpen, p. 23. *Campbell Bonner*: *Studies in Magical Amulets*. 1950, p. 179, note 96.

These few pieces, obviously connected with each other, lead us to suppose that we have to do with a group probably made in the same workshop within narrow time limits. The group shows at least two variations in its iconography but the pieces must have served an identical purpose.

The form of the box is somewhat unusual. I am not aware of any small boxes of this shape having come down to us from earlier times.²² The shape is known in familiar objects of a larger size, such as watering-troughs, wine-vats, and coffins. The Greek name *ληνός* applies equally to any of these.²³ Of these objects, only sarcophagi are ornamented with figural reliefs, so that we must examine these in the first place.

According to the testimony of written sources the word *ληνός* was current as early as the 5th cent. B. C. to denote a sarcophagus.²⁴ Such sarcophagi were discovered in children's graves dating from the 5th cent. B. C.²⁵ The simple clay vats unearthed in the Athenian cemetery along the road to the Piraeus are probably troughs used for inhumation; some of them, with closely fitting lids, seem to indicate that vessels were also made expressly for this purpose.²⁶ It is a well-known fact that the burial of children usually differed in a number of respects from the interment of grown-ups. Besides clay troughs, the bodies of children were often committed to earth in *amphorai*, the probable reason being that these cheaper vessels were also suited to holding the little corpses. By the time of the empire, the use of vat-shaped sarcophagi had been filled with an unmistakable religious content. The coffins imitated the shape of the wine-vat, thus contributing to the Dionysiac bliss of the departed.²⁷ Such wine-vats may be observed, in the original form, on vase paintings of the 6th—5th centuries, and later on reliefs of sarcophagi dating from the times of the empire.²⁸

²² Except for the oval-shaped Etruscan cistae (*Mau*: Cista PWRE III. 2596, 2602) which show, however, a different shape and can, in any case, hardly be historically connected with the boxes discussed here.

²³ *Pape—Sengebusch*: Griechisch-deutsches Handwörterbuch. 3rd ed. II. 40. A less frequent designation is *πύαλος*; see *ibid.* II. 814. The Latin equivalents are *lacus* and *alveus*; see *Altmann*: Architektur und Ornamentik der antiken Sarkophage, 46.

²⁴ *Altmann*: *op. cit.*, 46—7.

²⁵ R. A. I. 1844. 388—9, Pl. 12. *Brückner—Pernice*: Ein attischer Friedhof. AM. XVIII. 1893, 163, 184. *Hamburg*: PWRE. »Sarkophage«. 2. Reihe I. 2531.

²⁶ *Brückner—Pernice*: *op. cit.*, 163.

²⁷ *F. Matz*: Vindemia. Zu vier bacchischen Sarkophagen. Marburger Winkelmann-Programm 1949, 19—26. *Nilsson*: Geschichte der griech. Religion II. 349.

²⁸ *Hamburg*: *op. cit.* 2541—2. *Altmann*: *op. cit.*, 47. *Gerke*: Die Christlichen Sarkophage der Vorkonstantinischen Zeit. Taf. 13.1. *Jones*: Catal. Mus. Capit., 331, Pl. 83 (on Materna's sarcophagus).



Fig. 5, a.



Fig. 5/b.

The shape is oval, slightly tapering; on the side one or two taps, adorned with lion's heads, serve to draw the must. The marble sarcophagi adhere to this form. The space between the lion's heads is usually filled out with ribbing in S-design. The lion's heads are later supplemented with the image of a huntsman and the full figure of a lion mangling an ox,²⁹ while the ribbing is replaced by reliefs taking their subjects from the Dionysiac circle.³⁰ In this case, the upward tapering of the sarcophagus chest, recalling the shape of the original wine-vats, usually diminishes.³¹

The use of simple vat-shaped clay sarcophagi survives under the empire, thus e. g. in the Graeco-Roman cemeteries in Egypt.³² The collection of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts contains a small clay sarcophagus from Roman Egypt (Figure 8)³³. Schreiber's conjecture, viz. that clay coffins with relief ornaments were also used, cannot be substantiated for lack of remains.³⁴ It is clear, therefore, that the models of the boxes adorned with reliefs and imitating the shape of the sarcophagi must be sought among the marble sarcophagi made under the empire.

Passing now to the scene represented on the box we have to point out that Perdrizet's interpretation is hardly satisfactory. His conjecture is supported neither by the reliefs themselves nor by the parallels adduced. I am not aware of any instance of Eros going to his wedding in a chariot. Nor is there one jot or tittle of evidence to show that the wingless figure reclining on the vehicle has to be identified with Eros. Moreover, Perdrizet's conjecture fails to throw any light on the identity of the figures reclining on the couches. It is highly questionable whether the scenes represented on the boxes may be connected at all with the story in Apuleius. Reitzenstein succeeded³⁵ in connecting the story only in one or two cases with figural representations, but his parallels are not entirely accurate. The well-known sarco-

²⁹ Robert: JHSt. 1900, 97.

³⁰ For examples and literature see Altmann: op. cit., 48.

³¹ Lehmann-Hartleben—E. C. Olsen: Dionysiac Sarcophagi in Baltimore. Baltimore 1942, fig. 42. As regards shape, the closest parallel to the box among the marble sarcophagi may be observed in no. 221 in the Villa Albani. There is an exact correspondence in proportions as well as in the design of rims both above and below, while the subject of the reliefs (Erotes at play) points to a more distant relationship. See Arndt—Amelung: Einzelaufnahmen 3610.

³² Schreiber: Exp. Sieglin I, 208, note 45. This type of sarcophagus was probably employed in districts barren of stone and timber, as e. g. in Babylonia. See Koldewey: Das wieder erstehende Babylon. 1913. Abb. 196—7, S. 268—9.

³³ Invent. no. 51. 2711. Oroszlán—Dobrovits: Az Egyiptomi Gyűjtemény (The Egyptian Collection). p. 33, 35b. Height: 23 cm.; length: 74 cm.; width: 29 cm. Made of reddish-brown clay. The rim is grooved so that a lid may be fitted to it. The upper edge is broken in places.

³⁴ See above, note 5.

³⁵ Eros und Psyche in der ägyptisch-griechischen Kleinkunst. Sitzungsber. der Heidelberg. Akad. d. Wiss. Phil.-hist. Kl. 1914, 12. Abh.

phagus relief which represents Eros and Psyche lying on a couch³⁶ is of too general a character to admit of such an identification. It is certain that by the time in question the representation of small, winged Eros figures had become widespread and impersonal, so that it is hardly necessary to look for a definite myth or story that would account for their presence.

It is more conducive to a correct interpretation of the reliefs on the boxes if we compare them with a scene from the *putto*-friezes on the Casa dei Vettii in Pompeji.³⁷ These paintings represent the triumphal progress of Dionysus, with small Eros figures. In the centre



Fig. 6.

Fig. 7.

we see a four-wheeled vehicle drawn by a couple of he-goats; the upper part of the chariot is shaped like a couch, with the figure of Dionysus-Eros holding the *thyrsos*. The right hand is placed over the head: this characteristic gesture explains the clumsy leaning position of the corresponding figure on the box. As on the box, the chariot is driven here, too, by a little Eros appearing immediately behind the haunches of the goats. We see also the two children in front of the carriage, with the difference, however, that the one turning towards the chariot holds forth a *kylix* to the goats, while the child striding forward is holding a long torch instead of the lamp. The other figures of the procession

³⁶ British Museum. *Smith*: Catalogue Sculpt. Brit. Mus. Vol. III. 1904. No. 2320. — *Cumont*: Recherches sur le symbolisme funéraire des Romains. Paris 1942, 298, fig. 66.

³⁷ *Hermann-Bruckmann*: Denkmäler der Malerei des Altertums. Taf. 25., p. 39. — *Mau*: RM. XI. 1896, p. 82 foll. — *Rostowtzeff*: Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft I. Taf. 13. 1., p. 215.

do not reappear on the box. This comparison convinces us that the representation on the box is Dionysiac in character and that the figure travelling by the goat-team has to be identified with Dionysus-Eros. It also becomes manifest that the female figure at the head of the procession is not Nike blowing a trumpet, but a Bacchante playing the flute, a frequent figure in the representations of *thiasoi*. Thus it is unnecessary to connect this scene with the nuptials of Eros and Psyche.

Another scene in this cycle of frescos³⁸ represents a banquet attended by *putti*. It seems obvious that the representations are unconnected, both here and in the case of the box, with the legend of Psyche.

There is no doubt, however, that the frescos in the Casa dei Vettii could not have served as direct models for the reliefs on the box.³⁹ The shape of the box shows that the model has to be sought among the sarcophagus reliefs. Many of the sarcophagi dating from the 2nd — 3rd centuries A. D. are adorned with *thiasoi* of *Erotes*. The majority of them are children's sarcophagi. The origin of this type of representation must be probably sought in the East, in Greece and Asia Minor. The finest specimens are attributed to a workshop in Attica, flourishing under Hadrian.⁴⁰ The children peopling these reliefs form thiasic and agonistic scenes, thus uniting two conceptions of conquering death, both characteristic of the period of the empire. The thiasic scenes are composed in all instances of practically the same elements: dancing *Erotes* reeling with drink, with drinking-vessels, musical instruments, torches, lamps, *thyrsoi*, *peda*, etc. in their hands, their heads and necks wreathed with garlands, the figures being usually divided into small groups mutually supporting one another.⁴¹

The second element in the iconography of the box, viz. the goat-team is also present in the sarcophagus reliefs, mostly on children's

³⁸ *Mau*: op. cit., 80—1.

³⁹ It was pointed out to me by J. Gy. Szilágyi that the compositions of the Pompeii frescos reappear frequently on Sarcophagus reliefs. The probable explanation of this parallelism is that in both sets of cases pattern-books of a Late Hellenistic origin were used. See Lehmann—Hartleben—Olsen, *Dionysiac Sarcophagi in Baltimore*, 73.

⁴⁰ Ostia: *G. Calza*: La necropoli del porto di Roma nell' Isola Sacra. 1940. 210—215, fig. 112—115. — Rome: *Gütschow*: Das Museum der Praetextat-Katakomben, 142—149, Taf. 24—28, no. 16. — On the group as a whole: *Rodenwaldt*: Der Klinensarkophag von S. Lorenzo. J. d. I. 1930, 116 foll.

⁴¹ Berlin: *G. Bruns*: AA. 1948/9. 97—102. (Destroyed during the war). — Ostia: *Calza*: Necropoli 215/6 fig. 116. — Vatican: *Amelung*: Vatikan. Katal. I. Taf. 62, no. 446. T. 50, no. 251. T. 31. I. T. 39, no. 97, 99. T. 19, no. 73a. — Vat-shaped: *Amelung*: op. cit. I. T. 29, no. 188. — Lateran: *Cumont*: Syria X. 1929. 227. Pl. XLII. 3. *Benndorf—Schöne*: Die antiken Bildwerke des Later. Mus. Leipzig 1867. No. 125. T. XXI—XXII. — Museo delle Terme, vat-shaped: *Cumont*: Symb. fun. 338—9. Pl. XXXVIII. — Athens, *Cumont*: op. cit., 223, fig. 3.



Fig. 8.

coffins adorned with the reliefs of children who are travelling on coaches drawn by he-goats or rams.⁴² In Wilpert's view⁴³ we have to do here with representations of journeys to the other world, a survival of the similar iconography of Etruscan tombs. This reading may be accepted with the qualification that the scenes represented are not simple journeys but scenes of beatification, indicated by the presence of Dionysiac animals, or else agonistic-triumphal processions, reminding one of the chariot-races of Eros.⁴⁴ In this connection special interest attaches to two sarcophagus reliefs, one of them in the Vatican, the other in Paris. The lid of the Vatican sarcophagus relief⁴⁵ is divided into two panels: one of them show a boy and a girl travelling in a goat-team attended by servants, the other shows us the children taking part in a banquet, the object of the journey thus being made clear. As to the sarcophagus in the Louvre,⁴⁶ it represents on the left panel a child travelling in a ram-team, in the centre the sitting figure of a young »orator«, and a banquet scene on the right panel. All these reliefs represent, in various forms, the »beatification« and blissful life of the deceased beyond the grave. A peculiar feature of these representations is that practically all the participants are children, winged or unwinged. This is partly due to the fact that the reliefs adorned the coffins of deceased children, partly — as in the case of children's figures on the coffins of grown-ups — to a religious view which imagined the deceased or his soul in the shape of Eros.⁴⁷

In the light of the above it will be seen that the representations on our box fit its particular form very well. A Dionysiac procession and a Dionysiac banquet, both with Erotes as participants, would

⁴² Fragment of a sarcophagus lid: Rome, Museo delle Terme: *Wilpert: Rendiconti* III. 1924—25, p. 65, fig. 1. — Vatican: *Amelung: Katalog* T. 70, nos. 529—40. *Wilpert: op. cit.*, p. 63. T. II. 2—3. — Bologna: *Robert: Sarkophagreliefs* III. 1919, p. 538, fig. 444. T. CXLIII. (»ungedeutet«).

⁴³ L'ultimo viaggio nell'arte sepolcrale romana. *Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia. Serie III. Rendiconti* vol. III. Roma 1925, pp. 61—72.

⁴⁴ For the role of the goat-team in the Hellenistic conceptions about the world to come, see, the plastic ornament of a sepulchral vase from Tanagra, *Lunsingh Scheurleer: Catalogus eener Verzameling egyptische grieksche romeinsche en andere ouden. 1909. Gravenhage*, pp. 142—144. — The iconography of a funeral diadem from Eretria was discussed by *K. Kuruniotis: Goldschmuck aus Eretria. AM. 1913. XXXVIII. 321—326. Abb. 11.*

⁴⁵ *Amelung: Katalog* I, 356—7, Taf. 38. no. 69; *Wilpert: op. cit.*, 62, 64. Tav. II. 4.

⁴⁶ *Cumont: Symb. fun.*, p. 335. Pl. XXXVI. 2. *Syria* 10. 1929. 234—5. Pl. XLIII. 2.

⁴⁷ The views held on this point are discussed in some detail by *Cumont: Un sarcophage d'enfant trouvé à Beyrouth. Syria* 10. 1929. 217—237, as well as in *Symbolisme fun.*, passim. For a critical analysis of his findings see *A. D. Nock: Sarcophagi and Symbolism. AJA.* 1946. 140—170. See also *F. Matz: Vindemia. Marburger Winckelmann-Programm, 1949. p. 24.*

be completely in place on a sarcophagus from the period of the empire, even if we cannot trace the precise model. The various motives of the representation as well as its fundamental content are entirely in keeping with the range of thoughts and images peculiar to the sarcophagus reliefs dating from the age of the empire.

The same applies also to the iconography of the box in the Pelizäus Museum. Apart from the Pompeii frescos,⁴⁸ its models must be sought among the sarcophagi. In one of them, now in the Museo delle Terme, a banquet scene is coupled with Erotes boating on the Nile.⁴⁹ Feasts of children are frequently represented, in other connections, too.⁵⁰ We must draw attention also to a later piece, a cylinder-shaped bone *pyxis* now in the Berlin Museum.⁵¹ On its side we see, carved in low relief, winged little Erotes sitting round an amphora placed on a stand; their posture and the couches occupied by them are very similar to those represented on the Hildesheim box. The figure of the boating Eros, also, appears frequently on sarcophagi.⁵² The nearest parallel may be found on the left side-face of a child's sarcophagus in the Ravenna Museum.⁵³

The lid presents a much thornier problem; the form and the iconography alike militate against regarding it as the imitation of a sarcophagus-lid. The figure itself repeats a conventional Hellenistic type of Aphrodite, very frequent under the empire.⁵⁴ Its peculiarities

⁴⁸ See Note 38.

⁴⁹ No. 113065. See *Aurigemma*: Le Terme di Diocleziano e il Museo Nazionale Romano. 1946, p. 14. Aula I. 7. It was discovered in 1932 on the Via Ostiense.

⁵⁰ See Notes 36 and 45.

⁵¹ I. 3309. *Wulff*: *Altchristliche Bildwerke*. Berlin 1909, p. 117, no. 411, Taf. XXV. Three similar *pyxides* from Naples are mentioned by Graeven, *Antike Schnitzereien*. Hannover 1903, 38, 39. The *pyxis* dates from the 3rd–4th century. — This MS had been already closed when *K. Zahn's* posthumous article came to hand (*Das sogenannte Kindergrab des Berliner Antiquariums*. Jbdl 1950–51). The author publishes here a bone casket from Alexandria, adorned with reliefs; the representations, particularly the figure of a reclining Eros on one of the longer sides (p. 269, Abb. 5/22), remind one strongly of the iconography of the boxes. The find dates from the beginning of the 1st cent. A. D., so that this casket serves as additional evidence to the Hellenistic origin of reliefs with Eros figures. The closest analogy to the banquet scene represented on the boxes is shown by a carved bone box found in Pannonia, in the district of Intercisa. See Hekler, *Forschungen in Intercisa*. ÖJh. XV, 1912, p. 194, Abb. 137–138. The Alexandrian origin of the ornamentation on this box, dated by the coin of Marcus Aurelius, is evident from the stylistic features, above all by a head of Isis-Demeter (Abb. 140), characteristically Egyptian.

⁵² *E. Gerke*: *Die christlichen Sarkophage der vorkonstantinischen Zeit*. Berlin 1940, p. 163.

⁵³ *Gerke*: op. cit., p. 163. note 5. Taf. 58, 1. giving a list of literature. Date: about 300 A. D.

⁵⁴ It recurs very frequently among the Egyptian terracottas dating from the period of the empire. See e. g. *Kaufmann*: *Koroplastik* Taf. 30, pp. 92–3. On lamp-house: *Kaufmann*: op. cit. Taf. 30. no. 233. The type reappears in Gallia on similar small terracotta reliefs: *Reinach*: *Catalogue illustré du Musée*

appear partly in the architectural frame, partly in the inscription. The architectural frame is characteristically Eastern. The *aedicula* surrounded by twisted columns, the conch-ceiling with the central concavity pointing downwards⁵⁵ — these features spread from the eastern provinces throughout the empire, to a large extent precisely owing to the influence of columned sarcophagi.⁵⁶ The type may have originated in Asia Minor and Syria. It is certainly no mere accident that the figure of the Anadyomene represented in an *aedicula* surmounted by a conch-ceiling is found most frequently among the terracottas hailing from Africa, especially from Carthage.⁵⁷ In connection with this type of representations one must not bear Aphrodite alone in mind: we have to do rather with a composite type of goddess, with an oriental tinge.⁵⁸

The inscription on the lid — *H XAPIC* — goes a long way towards explaining the destination of the box. The word *χαρις* is connected with the verb *χαίρειν*; its most general sense is a thing causing gratification or delight.⁵⁹ This is the meaning it bears in the papyri, according to the data in Preisigke's dictionary.⁶⁰ The most frequent semantic shades are as follows:

1. »Liebreiz, Anmut«,
2. »Gunst, Wohlwollen, Gefälligkeit, Gnade, Gnadenerlass (der Kaiser)«,
3. »Erkenntlichkeit, Dank, Dankbarkeit«,
4. »Gegenstand der Gunst, vermögensrechtliche Zuwendung, Schenkung, Schenkungsurkunde, Stiftung«.

des Antiquités Nationales au Château de Saint-Germain-en-Laye. I. Paris 1921. p. 131, no. 28097, where several pieces are listed. For another terracotta relief from Ruvo see *Walters*: Catalogue of the Terracottas, p. 354. D. 288. Pl. XII. A similar piece from Cumae is now in the Museum of Naples, Inv. no. 140137. *Alda Levi*: Le terracotte figurate del Museo Nazionale di Napoli. Firenze (1926), p. 114, no. 497. A cameo made of cornelian, now in Berlin, is discussed by *Furtwängler*; *Gemmen* XLVI. 1. The piece shows a moon in the pediment of the *aedicula*.

⁵⁵ *Maria Bratschkova*: Die Muschel in der antiken Kunst. Bulletin de l'Institut Archéologique Bulgare XII. 1938, p. 53, fig. 57. From the pieces listed by Bratschkova it appears that, among the eastern provinces, the architectural utilization of the shell-form was most frequent in Syria and Palestine, chiefly in the 2nd cent.; in Egypt, its use became wide-spread mostly in the 4th–5th cent. The origin of the shell as an ornamental motive is, in any case, connected with the myth of Aphrodite; see *Bratschkova*: op. cit., 53–4 etc.

⁵⁶ *Rodenwaldt*: Säulensarkophage RM. 1923–4, p. 8, 14–5.

⁵⁷ *Breitenstein*: Catalogue, Pl. 133, nos. 959–964. — *La Blanchère* — *Gauckler*: Musée Alaoui. Céramique. Nos. 39–45, p. 136.

⁵⁸ Cp. the Syrian goddess in Egypt who is similarly represented in the nude, in an *aedicula* framed by columns: *Wilcken*: Festgabe Adolf Deissmann (1927). Zu den »Syrischen Göttern«, pp. 1–19. — *O. Rubensohn*: Ein Kultdenkmal aus dem Bereich der syrischen Göttin. Genava. XVIII. 1940. 88–98. — *Cumont*: Dea Syria. PWRE. IV. 2240.

⁵⁹ *Pape-Sengebusch*: Griechisch-deutsches Handwörterbuch. II., p. 1337.

⁶⁰ *F. Preisigke*: Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyrusurkunden, II. Bd. Berlin 1927.

An examination of the relative frequency of these different meanings shows that the most wide-spread use of the term expressed a favourable relation between man and man, particularly between emperor and subject, or between god and man, as seen both from the angle of grace and of gratitude for favours received. The word was adopted in this sense by early Christian literature.⁶¹

The usage of the magical papyri⁶² differs only slightly from the general use of the word, in so far that it denotes more frequently divine grace or the power, wealth, beauty or victory that were the objects of magic action. *H XAPIC* could thus mean equally the object of man's desire longing for something higher and the divine grace which could satisfy this longing. This is the meaning of the phrase *ἡ χάρις τῶν θεῶν* which we find in a magical papyrus from the 3rd cent. A. D., now in London.⁶³ A cameo in the Michigan Collection (no. 26104)⁶⁴ has a particular bearing on the inscription of the box. This incised black glass paste, used as an amulet, represents the figure of Harpocrates of Pelusium, with the inscription *H XAPIC* on its back. In Bonner's view, this is an abbreviated version of an exclamation to the god; but the inscription may just as well denote the favour of the god which the owner was bent on obtaining by the magic power inherent in the amulet.⁶⁵ We may take it for certain, therefore, that the inscription on the lid of the box is also an abbreviated magical-religious formula.

Campbell-Bonner would assign to a different category the inscriptions connected with Aphrodite and her myth⁶⁶; this group would include the inscriptions on the lids of Alexandrian boxes, too. In his view, the meaning of the word within this group would simply be »charm or beauty«. There is nothing inherently improbable in this conjecture; but bearing in mind, first, that these remains date from the same period as the cameos and papyri, and, secondly, that Aphrodite herself played no insignificant role in the art of magic, I see no particular force and cogency in the suggestion. One might rather suppose that, in this particular instance, the *XAPIC* refers to the sphere of love indicated by the goddess.

⁶¹ See e. g. Rev. 22, 21, I. Cor. 16, 23, I. Thess. 5, 28.

⁶² *H. I. Bell—A. D. Nock—H. Thompson: Magical Texts from a Bilingual Papyrus in the British Museum. Proceedings of the British Academy 1931, pp. 259—261. Campbell Bonner, Studies in Magical Amulets, Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian. Ann Arbor 1950, pp. 178—9.*

⁶³ *Bell—Nock—Thompson: op. cit., p. 259.*

⁶⁴ *Campbell Bonner: Harpocrates (Zeus Kasios) of Pelusium. Hesperia XV. 1946, pp. 56—7. Pl. XII, 9.*

⁶⁵ The word *XAPIC* occurs also in longer magical texts inscribed on cameos. See *Bell—Nock—Thompson: op. cit., pp. 259—60.* For other similar inscriptions, chiefly accompanying representations of the Osiris cycle, see *Campbell Bonner: Studies, p. 179.*

⁶⁶ *Op. cit., p. 179.*

As to the use to which these boxes were put, this question can be decided only by a close examination of the circumstances under which they are unearthed. If the group derives, in fact, from Egypt, these miniature sarcophagi may represent the survival of an ancient Egyptian custom: the natives of this country were wont to bury with their dead an ushabti figure or a tiny, sham-mummy enclosed in a miniature coffin.⁶⁷ If this conjecture were to be corroborated by excavations, we would receive most valuable indications on the survival and transformation of Egyptian customs under the empire.

There are, however, certain considerations which render the Egyptian origin of these boxes doubtful. It is a well-known fact that, apart from a few exceptions at Alexandria, interment in stone sarcophagi was not customary in Egypt; even under the empire, the different forms of mummification were most generally practised. One may assume, therefore, that the form and use of the box derive from a territory where interment in a stone sarcophagus was the customary method of burial. The terracotta boxes themselves may furnish us with some indication about their models. They were probably only imitations of boxes made of some finer material. Our suggestion is that this material must have been some kind of metal: the lid published by Kaufmann,⁶⁸ with an ornamentation consisting of small hemispherical balls running all along the edge, a characteristic feature of metal technique, would point in this direction. One feels thus justified in assuming that the models of the boxes have to be sought among the products of the metal-workers of Alexandria or, what is even more likely, of Syria. There are several features pointing in the latter direction: the wide-spread Syrian habit of burying their dead in sarcophagi,⁶⁹ some of the parallels quoted by us by way of illustrating the figural and architectonic treatment,⁷⁰ and, finally a Syrian silver box⁷¹ which, as regards both its

⁶⁷ *Wallis Budge: The Mummy*. Cambridge 1925, pp. 256–8. — *Anthes: Mitteil. des Deutsch. Inst. for Aegypt. Altertumsk.* Cairo 1943, Bd. 12, p. 53: interment of children in Thebes under the 18th dynasty. One of the graves contained, instead of a corpse, two boxes, each with a swathed wooden figure. — Miniature sarcophagi from Tut-ankh-Amun's tomb: *Carter: Tut-enkh-Amun*. III. 107–8, 110. — The Egyptian Collection of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts contains a miniature coffin for a mummy from the age of the Roman empire (inv. no. 51. 2089). — For the small terracotta coffins in the Cairo Museum see *Maspero: Guide to the Cairo Museum*. 1908, p. 325.

⁶⁸ See Note 20.

⁶⁹ See Note 40 and *G. Contenau: La civilisation phénicienne*. Paris 1949, pp. 212–216, with further literature.

⁷⁰ See Notes 41, 55, and 58.

⁷¹ The Walters Art Gallery. *Early Christian and Byzantine Art. An Exhibition Held at the Baltimore Museum of Art*. Baltimore 1947. No. 363, Pl. L, LI. The date assigned (4th cent.) is, in my view, too late: I would not go beyond the 3rd cent. A. D.

shape and iconography, may serve as a secure basis for reconstructing such a group of remains. This piece forms, as it were, a connecting link with the early Christian silver boxes to be discussed below.⁷² Some elements in the representation (little Erotes holding festoons on the chest, the figure of a sleeping Eros on the lid) point in the direction of funeral reliefs, but these motives are found in profane art, too.

On the basis of the above the age of the small terracotta boxes may be fixed within the following time limits :

1. General date for the bulk of figured Egyptian terracottas under the empire : 2nd—3rd cent. A. D. ;
2. development of the custom of using sarcophagi for interment : from the 2nd cent. onwards ;
3. coming into vogue of *aediculae* with twisted pillars and conch-ceiling : end of 2nd cent., 3rd cent.⁷³ ;
4. Dionysiac children's sarcophagi : 2nd—3rd cent. A. D.

If we take into consideration the stylistic features (as far as they can be ascertained in such a small piece), the suggested date for the box will be the end of the 2nd cent. or, more probably, the beginning of the 3rd cent. A. D.

It is a remarkable fact that boxes with a similar ornamentation, similar shape,⁷⁴ and, obviously, similar destination, were made of three different kinds of material, viz. silver, bone, and terracotta, the quality of the workmanship corresponding to this order. The silver boxes were made for the upper stratum of the ruling class ; it is natural that they represent the smallest proportion of the pieces preserved. The remains of ornamental bone boxes are considerably greater in number.⁷⁵ From their occurrence in widely separated areas it is clear that they were also made for export, at Alexandria. The articles of poorest finish, viz. the terracotta replicas, were found only in Egypt ; together with the rest of the Graeco-Egyptian terracottas they catered

⁷² *J. Gy. Szilágyi* has pointed out to me that the closest parallels to the lid of the box may be found among the Carthaginian—Phoenician sarcophagi. The figures represented on the lid are not reclining here over the sarcophagus as on a couch : they are sculptural types in a standing posture, carved out in high or low relief and placed on top of the sarcophagus chests which show an architectonic structure. See *R. Herbig: Das archäologische Bild des Puniertums. (Rom und Karthago. Leipzig 1943, p. 160)*. The Carthaginian sarcophagi belong, in any case, to the Syrian cycle from which I seek to derive the model of the box. Herbig points out that a clay sarcophagus from Lilybaeum (*Whitaker: Motya 239, fig. 30*) is a replica of a Carthaginian marble sarcophagus (*Mus. Lav. Supp. I. Pl. 2, 2*).

⁷³ *Rodenwaldt: Säulensarkophage RM. 1923/4, pp. 14—5. — H. Dütschke: Ravennatische Studien. Leipzig 1909, pp. 129, 196. See Note 54.*

⁷⁴ The square form of the bone boxes was due to the nature of the material.

⁷⁵ See Note 51.

for the taste of the small proprietors in the Egyptian towns and were bought perhaps also by the working class.

There are some very interesting data concerning the survival of this type of boxes. From the 4th—6th centuries we have several silver reliquary boxes, forming part of primitive Christian religious ritual.⁷⁶ These reliquaries are, both in shape and manner of representation, a direct continuation of the boxes discussed here. The earliest and most characteristic of them is the so-called casket of Brivio.⁷⁷ In shape, in the height and disposition of the reliefs it stands very close to the terracotta boxes. The lid is different in construction: instead of lying flat on the chest, as in the case of the terracottas, it bends over it round the edges. The lid is fastened on in the same way: there are two holes on one side, with clamps fitting into them. The reliefs on the reliquary (Adoration of the Magi, the three youths in the furnace; on the lid: the raising of Lazarus) correspond to the iconography of contemporary Christian sarcophagi, with the difference that the lid, too, is covered with low relief, a method of ornamentation rare in the case of the sarcophagi.⁷⁸ The African reliquary now in the Vatican⁷⁹ was discovered in the sepulchre below the altar of the basilica at Henchir-Zirara, in the same way as the specimen from Grado was found in the cathedral's sepulchre which dates from the 6th cent.⁸⁰ The coffin-shape of these reliquaries is thus in natural connection

⁷⁶ *H. H. Arnason*: Early Christian Silver of North Italy and Gaul. The Art Bulletin. 20 (1938) 211—226. — *Ph. Lauer*: La «capsella» de Brivio. Mon. Piot 13 (1906) pp. 229—240. I want to express here my gratitude to J. Balogh for her kind advice and information on this point. Formerly these relics were classed among the products of Syrian metal-work and were connected with the Emesa vase (*Lauer*: op. cit., p. 236, figs. 1—2. — *Neuss*: op. cit., Abb. 139) and other silver-work (on the Esquiline treasure trove see *Bossert*: Gesch. d. Kunstgewerbe. IV. p. 336. Abb., p. 340. — *Stephan Poglayen*—*Neuwall*: Über die ursprünglichen Besitzer des spätantiken Silberfundes von Esquilin und seine Datierung. RM. XLV. 1930, pp. 124—136. The author suggests that Proiecta's silver box was made in the city of Rome). A characteristic feature is the rope-ornament applied on the edges and the frequent enclosing of heads in medaillons. On this point see *Toesca*: op. cit., p. 331. — *Wulff*: Altchristl. und byz. Kunst. I., pp. 197—8. For a comprehensive account of Syrian and, in particular, of Antiochian, metal-work see *L. Bréhier*: Les trésors d'argenterie syrienne et l'école artistique d'Antioche. Gazette des Beaux-Arts. 1920. pp. 173—196. — Recently, there has been a tendency (see esp. *H. H. Arnason's* article) to assign them to the North Italian — South Gallic circle, a school of art which is emerging with increasing clearness and which was probably based on Ravenna. This does not, naturally, exclude an Eastern, Syrian influence which was very pronounced in all spheres of Ravennese art.

⁷⁷ Louvre MND 572. The measurements are practically identical with those of the Budapest box: height: 5 cm.; length: 11,5 cm.; width: 5,5 cm. See *Lauer*: op. cit.; *Venturi*: Storia dell'arte italiana. I, p. 550, figs. 450—452; *Morey*: AJA 23 (1919) pp. 115, 122; *H. H. Arnason*: op. cit., 215 foll.

⁷⁸ It is, however, the usual ornamentation of terracotta boxes.

⁷⁹ *Lauer*: op. cit., p. 236. — *Neuss*: Die Kunst der alten Christen. Abb. 141 (reproduction of the lid). — *Lovrie*: Art in the Early Church, Pl. 106a. — *J. Braun*: Der christliche Altar. I, p. 639. — *H. H. Arnason*: op. cit., 216 foll.

whith their destination: they served to »bury« the martyrs' relics under the church-altar, a continuation of the custom which demanded the raising of an altar, later a memorial chapel, above the grave of martyrs. The original form and significance of the reliquaries became gradually obscured. There was a transformation in the cult of the martyrs, parallel with the change that made Christianity, original; opposed to the Roman state, one of the main props in the system of the empire. The coffin-shape of the reliquaries gradually disappears; their lids become increasingly convex, their chests are losing in height; by the 12th—13th cent. they hardly recall their original shape.⁸¹

L. Castiglione

ТЕРРАКОТОВЫЙ ЛАРЧИК ИЗ РИМСКОГО ЕГИПТА

(Резюме)

В античной коллекции Художественного Музея в Будапеште, среди греко-египетских терракотовых предметов находится фрагмент корытообразного ларчика (фиг. 1), к нему принадлежит в качестве крышки пластинка с пластическими украшениями (фиг. 2). Ларчик, изображения которого могут быть воспроизведены при помощи подобных же изображений из коллекции Fouquet (фиг. 3), может служить основой при определении аналогичных предметов других коллекций (фиг. 3—7). Форма ларчиков напоминает ладь видные саркофаги, украшенные вакхическими изображениями. Эти саркофаги, пользовавшиеся большой популярностью в эпоху императоров, выражают своими формами то же самое, что и своими изображениями: днионисское блаженство покойного. Однако не саркофаги, а серебряные ларчики с пластическими украшениями служили непосредственным образцом для изготовления терракотовых ларчиков. Это подтверждается не только манерой украшений, носящих отпечаток металлообрабатывающей техники, но и одним серебряным ларчиком из Сирии, по внешности весьма близким к ним. Так как погребения в каменных саркофагах не были слишком распространены в Египте, можно предполагать, что серебряные ларчики доставлялись в Александрию из какого-то металлообрабатывающего центра Сирии. На это указывает и стиль сохранившихся предметов. На нижней части ларчика изображена по мнению Perdrizet свадьба Эроса и Психеи. Но это не соответствует фактам. Если мы сопоставим изображение ларчика с фресками, находящимися в Casa dei Vettii в Помпее, то можно установить, что на ларчике изображен триумф Диониса с участием представителей Эроса. Другие изображения ларчика показывают также днионисские сцены и пиршества. Все детали этих украшений видны и на саркофагах эпохи императоров. Триумфальные кавалькады с Эросами и пиршества были любимыми сюжетами изображений вакхических представлений о загробной жизни. Те же самые мотивы встречаются и на костяных ларчиках, имевших то же самое назначение, как и серебряные и терракотовые экземпляры. Фигурка на крышке, Aphrodite Anadyomene, не имеет соответствий на саркофагах, но может быть, что за чисто греческой внешностью скрывается какая-то синкретистическая богиня, которая имела нечто общее с символикой смерти. В надписи на крышке

⁸⁰ *Toesca*: Storia dell'arte italiana. I, p. 331, fig. 204. 1. — *Braun*: op. cit., p. 637, Taf. 107. — *Lauer*: op. cit., p. 236. — There is another specimen in the Sancta Sanctorum chapel at the Lateran: (*Volbach*): Guide to the »Museo Sacro«. 1944, p. 47, fig. 17. — *Lauer*: op. cit., p. 68. — *Lauer*: Mon. Piot 15 (1906) p. 71, Pl. XII. 3. — *H. H. Arnason*: op. cit. 211 foll.

⁸¹ Guide to the »Museo Sacro«, p. 49, fig. 22.

(*H XAPIC*) — по свидетельству гемм и папирусов, в частности папирусов магического содержания — выражалось искательство божественной милости. Назначение ларчиков может быть определено только при тщательном учете всех условий их нахождения. Надпись и изображения указывают на две возможные сферы: любви и смерти. При определении хронологии надо учитывать, что

1. большинство изделий египетской терракотовой пластики происходит из II—III веков н. э.;

2. погребения в саркофагах в массовом масштабе распространились по истечении II века н. э.;

3. сосуды с раковинными затворами, украшенные винтообразными колоннами, были в большом употреблении на рубеже II—III веков н. э.; точно так же как и

4. детские саркофаги с дионисскими изображениями.

Следовательно, наш ларчик был изготовлен по всей вероятности в конце II или в начале III века н. э.

Обращает на себя внимание факт, что ларчики подобного же назначения и украшения изготовлялись из 3 материалов: из серебра, кости и терракоты, с отделкой, соответствующей ценности материала. Серебряные ларчики изготовлялись для верхушки господствующего класса; из них сохранилось наименьше экземпляров. Более распространенными являются костяные ларчики, которые — судя по местонахождениям — изготовлялись в Александрии преимущественно с целью вывоза. Только лишь в Египте встречаются самые простые изделия, терракотовые, которые покупались, повидимому, мелкой буржуазией и трудящимся населением египетских городов.

Этот тип ларчиков сохранился и в древнехристианском искусстве IV—VI веков. Серебряные ларчики, украшенные сценами, скопированными с современных древнехристианских гробниц, служили для сохранения реликвий мучеников, следовательно, их связь с саркофагами и вообще с культом умерших еще не поблекла в то время. Позднее, когда культ мучеников, неподчинявшихся светской власти, преобразовался, то форма этих ящиков также изменилась и перестала напоминать старинные ладьевидные саркофаги.

Древнехристианские серебряные ларчики изготовлялись сирийской металлообрабатывающей индустрией. Они произошли, наверно, из того же самого центра промышленности, который поставлял и образцы египетских терракотовых ларчиков.

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