

2. TWO LATE BRONZE AGE FAIENCE RHYTA FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION IN NICOSIA

by P. Flourentzos

Cyprus Museum, Nicosia, Cyprus

In the possession of Mr. A. Triantafillides of Nicosia there are two faience Late Bronze Age rhyta, which are among the rarest antiquities found in Cyprus. Their provenance is unknown but they were definitely found in Cyprus.

DESCRIPTION

1. Faience rhyton in the shape of a young horse's head. Only the head is preserved. The cylindrical neck at the body is missing. The protome of the horse is painted in cream colour, the eyes, ears, hair and the muzzle in dark brown colour. Traces of an undercoat of light green faience on the upper part of the head and under the muzzle. Ex. Ht. 14 cm. Ex. D. 6.5 cm. (Pl. XLIV 4-7).

2. Faience rhyton in the shape of a lioness's head. The hair is decorated in yellow colour. All the details of the face were covered with yellow paint, now preserved only on the eyes; the incised ring, which runs in relief around the neckline, is also covered with yellow paint. The neck of the vessel is painted in light sky blue colour. On the inner walls there are two opposed string-hole projections. Externally around the mouth of the vessel there is an incised ring partly preserved. Ht. 10 cm., Max. D. 7.5 cm. (Pl. XLIV 1-3).

Although there was a tradition of faience production in Late Bronze Age Cyprus,¹ animal-shaped rhyta are rare. All the specimens of such rhyta known hitherto in the Island come from Enkomi. These pieces were found there in tombs of Late Cypriote II period. One is in the shape of a mule or horse's head,² another in the shape of a ram's head³ and a third in the shape of a deer's head.⁴

As regards the rhyta from Mr. A. Triantafillides Collection, the piece in the form of lioness's head is unique in Cyprus. A similar face can be observed on a faience lioness's statuette, resting on a small plaque, found in the same tomb at Enkomi as the rhyton with the mule's head mentioned above.⁵ It seems that in Cyprus the production of faience rhyta with animal

heads was strongly influenced by the Late Minoan tradition. In the island of Crete (e.g. at Knossos, Zakros) a great number of rhyta were found in terracotta, faience and stone, dated to the fifteenth and fourteenth centuries B.C.⁶

It is quite probable that this type of rhyton, especially, was made locally in Cyprus under the inspiration of the Late Minoan culture with which Cyprus had contacts during the Late Cypriote period.⁷ The overall shape, the technique of manufacture and the iconography of these Cypriote animal-shaped faience rhyta clearly illustrate this Cretan connection.

On the other hand, there is also a North Levantine tradition of production of animal-shaped rhyta,⁸ which is based on literary tradition (Ugaritic poetry). Moreover, Syrians are depicted on Egyptian wall-paintings, dated in the reign of Thutmose IV, carrying bird's head rhyta. However, the absence of this type of vessel at sites on the Levantine coast, still prevents us from estimating the extent of Levantine influence on Cypriote examples like those published here.

⁶ N. Platon, *Zakros* (New York 1971) 146, 160; S. Hood, *The Minoans* (London 1971), figs 53, 54; Chr. Zervos, *L'Art de Crète* (Paris 1956), pls 486, 520.

⁷ L. Aström, *Studies on the Arts and Crafts of the Late Cypriote Bronze Age* (Lund, 1967), 122, 123.

⁸ E. J. Peltenburg, *op. cit.*, 135-6.

3. MORE ABOUT THE GREEK GEOMETRIC POTTERY AT TELL ABU HAWAM

by M. D. Herrera* and J. Balensi†

**Santander University*; †*CNRS, B.P. 19053, IL 91019, Jerusalem*

A recent paper in *Levant* XVII¹ refers to two "PG vases" from Stratum III of Tell Abu Hawam (TAH). The discovery of an additional Greek sherd during the revision, currently in progress, of the results of Hamilton's pioneering excavations and publications,²

¹ E. D. Francis and M. Vickers, *Levant* 17 (1985), 131-138.

² Of the material from Hamilton's excavations stored at the PAM, some 80% remains unpublished. Preliminary studies of it and its stratigraphical context have begun: 1. J. Balensi, *Les fouilles de R. W. Hamilton à Tell Abou Hawam, niveaux IV & V (?1600-950 env. av. J. C.)*, unpublished doctoral dissertation (Strasbourg, 1980). A summary of this monograph (which can be consulted in full at Jerusalem (PAM, École Biblique), Nicosia (DAC) and Athens (BSA)) is to be found in: 2. J. Balensi, *BASOR* 257 (1985), 65-74; 3. M. D. Herrera, *Tell Abu Hawam: catálogo de los materiales del "Stratum III"* (unpublished "mémoire" of the École Biblique (Jerusalem, 1983)); a summary of its main results (stratigraphy, materials and chronology) are found in: 4. J. Balensi and M. D. Herrera, *RB* 92 (1985), 82-128; 5. M. D. Herrera and J. Balensi, *Revista de Arqueología* 54 (1985), (forthcoming).

¹ E. J. Peltenburg, in *Acts of International Congress of Cypriot Studies* (vol. A Nicosia 1972), 129-136.

² A. S. Murray, A. H. Smith and H. B. Walters, *Excavations in Cyprus* (London, 1900), fig. 62 and pl. III.

³ *Ibid.*, fig. 61 and pl. III.

⁴ *SCE*, I, pl. LXXXIV:2, 38.

⁵ A. S. Murray, A. H. Smith and H. B. Walters, *op. cit.*, fig. 62.