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FROM THE EDITORS

In answer to several recent inquiries, the editors of Nestor give notice concerning their policy on back issues of Nestor. For issues which have not been received under a regular subscription, subscribers may request sending of the missing pages until 1 March of each year. (This year the deadline is extended to 31 May 1984.) Subscribers are urged to check their copies for completeness. After the 1 March date, \$.15 (U.S.) per page must be charged plus actual postage and a minimum of \$.50 handling. The price for complete back issues is \$7.00 per year plus actual postage and a \$1.00 handling charge.

ERRATA

pp. 1712,1776, §812160	Read Pelon, O., for Peron, O., in both cases
p. 1713, §812170	Read "...von der älteren zur jüngeren Eisenzeit" for "...von den älteren zur jüngeren Steinzeit"
p. 1718, §832221	Read "(Nov.-Dec. 1982)" for ("April 1983)"

COMMUNICATIONS

The Bead Study Trust, formed in England in 1981, is now publishing a twice-yearly Newsletter inspired by Nestor for archaeologists, anthropologists, historians of jewelery and technology, and others interested in any aspect of the study of beads. The Secretary welcomes contributions of news (conferences, dissertations, lab and excavation work) and recent bibliography and will send subscription forms on request. Subscriptions are \$5.00 or £3 (£2 within U.K.) for four issues, spring and autumn of 1983 and 1984. Address: Mrs. Flora Westlake, Talland, Fullers Road, Rowledge, Farnham, Surrey GU10 4DF, G.B. For more information about the work of the Trust see Antiquity 50 (July 1981) 132-3, and the progress report to appear in Antiquity, July 1984.

The Brock University, Department of Classics, announces an Archaeological Practicum on Cyprus, to be conducted at the prehistoric site of Kalavassos-Tenta. The practicum is scheduled from 4 July through 14 August 1984. Inquiries to be sent to Prof. David Rupp, Department of Classics, Brock University, St. Catherines, Ontario L2S 3A1, Canada.

L'Union Internationale des Sciences Préhistoriques et Protohistoriques announces its XIth Congress/XI^e Congrès - Southampton & London/Londres, Britain (Grande-Bretagne) 1 - 7 September 1986. Interested parties may contact the National Secretary/Le Secrétaire national, Prof. P.J. Ucko, Department of Archaeology, University of Southampton, Southampton SO9 5NH, England.

FORUMI Athena and the Sirens

It is generally agreed that the Sirens originated in the Orient. Their special connexion with Persephone (and Hades) is consistent with this, for she is clearly an Ishtar figure. Nilsson also underlines the association of the Sirens with Athena, so close and frequent that they must be recognised as her attribute. Athena, the warrior virgin, also has certain vegetation functions in common with Persephone. At the Procharisteria, at the end of the winter, offerings were made to her on the occasion of her anodos to further the burgeoning of the sown crops. From Sophocles (fr.844) it emerges that winnowing fans were set up as votive offerings to her. Finally, like Persephone, Athena is referred to as the Maiden (kore), but this does not imply perpetual virginity. At the Plynteria her virginity was renewed when the ancient Xoanon was dipped in the sea (at Argos in the Inachos), a rite which is recorded for other divine 'virgins' including Hera.

Looking east we find it is Ishtar herself who appears in Siren form. During her descent into the Underworld she sheds a garment at each of seven gates and finds herself nude and helpless in the realm of darkness where the denizens 'are clothed like birds, with wings for garments'. Now in her absence all sexuality, animal and human, ceases. Parrot (Sumer, fig. 367, A,B,C,) gives three illustrations of the naked Ishtar. B emphasizes the pubic triangle prolonged by the leg-line. Above is a bird, symbolic of the Underworld. Relevant now is the painted terracotta relief A, for here she stands with bird's wings, feathered legs and claw-footed on her characteristic lions. She is flanked by two owls, birds of darkness, another striking feature of Athena. Much earlier (III M.) is the owl-headed idol (Parrot XVII, XVIII) of the goddess holding her breasts, nude except for the necklace.

The Aegean 'picture book' provides another illustration. The clay sealing (PM I 696, fig. 518 f.) has a central rosette surrounded by four owls. Evans comments 'probably of the small species - Carine Noctua - still so abundant in Crete - the bird of Athena'. Does this represent atanapotiniya 'The Mistress of Athana' of KN V 52, which links her with the War God Enyalios and Poseidon?

Finally, the names of the goddesses may add their suspect witness to an Oriental source. To account for the manifold variations of Persephone, L. Wächter has posited a West Semitic Para'atšaphon 'Fürstin des Saphon'. It was on the holy north mountain Saphon that the dead Ba'al was buried by his sister Anat, another 'virgin' goddess of love, blood-lust and war. Observing that Athanaia is an adjective requiring a prop-noun, O. Szemerényi would connect Pallad- with Ba'alat, feminine of Ba'al. Geographically intermediate is Hieroglyphic Luwian pahalati 'Lady-my' (cf. Adoni-lord-my).

II The Double Axe

The primary problem is why such an axe should have four cutting edges. The earlier specimens simply have a double profile. This will have been a simple convention for representing one axe behind another (like a horse with a double profile). The two divinities will have been feminine, if we accept Nilsson's finding that the D/A is always in the possession of a goddess. It is an easy step to link the axe-pair with the Linear B Wanasso, an example

of the ancient use of the dual which names a constantly associated pair after the dominant member. From this we conclude that Wanassa (equated in Cyprus with Astarte) has 'priority' over 'The Old Lady' (grawja).

This identification can be tested on the combinations of the D/A with other motifs: they must 'make sense' within the general East-West context. Prominent is the combination with the rosette. A Knossos sealing has a central rosette framed by four D/As (BSA 9, (1902) 103, fig. 61). Combinations with water symbolism recur: PM IV, 343, fig. 285 (with reeds); IV, 342, fig. 285 (D/As decorated with spirals, rosettes in the field and on the shaft, flanked by plant motifs). In an earlier example (1st Shaft Grave) the handle takes the form of vertical undulations. Compare the four D/As on the cover from Pseira, set in a field of undulating lines. Late is the askos from Volos where the D/A is flanked by spirals.

Plant motifs are also frequent. The shaft is elaborated as a tree-trunk or stem with side-shoots and a leafy head above (Gournia). On the D/A from Mochlos the 'trunk' has the imbrications of the palm-tree and above a rosette flanked by sprouting heads (cf. the example from Zakro with side-shoots on the shaft, rosette above, surmounted by a wavy band).

The intimate connexion of the D/A with the cult of the dead was stressed by Evans: in the Tomb of the Double Axes the grave had been hewn into a D/A form and there was a columnar shrine with D/As.

These insights permit important re-readings. Bucranium + D/A = Bull-God + Wanassa (or their pre-Greek Forerunners); Bucranium + rosette = Bull-God + 'Persephone', and so on. The oriental source is clear. The combination of bucranium and D/A is known from c. 3,500 B.C., when the Cilician plain and N. Syria shared a common culture. R.D. Barnett (Nimrud Ivories, 33) interprets them as symbols of a Mother-Goddess and a Storm-God. If we amend 'Goddess-pair', this brings in the much earlier Çatal Hüyük Bull-God + Goddess-pair, one of whom is shown 'calving'.

Thus we have three strands: (1) Sumerian, (2) Proto-Anatolian combination of Goddess-pair with Bull-God and (3) Interpretatio indo-europea, conflation of Bull God with Stallion God.

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