

disputes straining relations between the descendants of the original Thereans, embodied in the person of the king, and the newly arrived colonists. Demonax's solution was to reduce the royal property holdings and to split up the citizenry into three tribes for purposes of breaking up some of the king's temporal powers for distribution among tribal magistrates. Herodotus says that the tribes represented 1) the original Thereans, 2) the Peloponnesians and Cretans, and 3) the people from the islands, from which it is possible to deduce in rough terms the geographic sources for the second, ca. 580, colonization wave.

Whatever political and social stability resulted from these basic reforms was rudely shattered by Arcesilaus III, who took the throne some time before 525 and wasted no time in repudiating Demonax's anti-royalist measures. This led to yet another round of civil war. Arcesilaus was forced to flee to Samos, where he agitated to raise troops by promising land grants to his supporters. Seemingly successful as a recruiter, he returned to Libyan soil with a "vast host" to prosecute his quarrel with his domestic opponents. But at this point history parts company with Arcesilaus, felled by assassins and leaving his Samian "host" to disappear from the pages of our account like water spilt into the desert sand.

Center stage is now occupied by Pheretima, the queen-mother presented to us as a perfect embodiment of evil. This curious figure loses no time in embroiling Egypt once again in Cyrene's affairs by persuading its Persian governor to send a second expeditionary army to Libya to punish her son's killers taking refuge in Barca (a second Libyan town founded ca. 570 B.C.). For motives that were anything but altruistic, Aryandes expedited a land force, backed with naval support, to lay siege to Barca, which, after a tough resistance, was tricked into a false truce. The town was then stormed and its people subjected to barbaric cruelty and Pheretima's sadistic craving for revenge. The ring leaders of the rebellion were crucified and their wives mutilated in a particularly disgusting fashion; the rest of the town was sold into slavery and eventually ended up in Bactria (northern Afghanistan!).

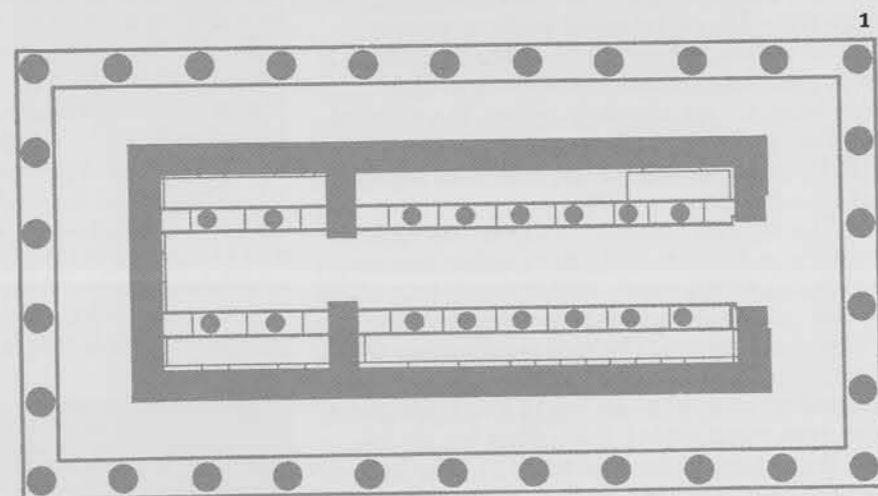
After menacing Cyrene on their way back to Egypt the Persians quit Libya, leaving Pheretima to die an unpleasant death from natural causes ("her body swarmed with worms which ate her flesh while she was still alive; thus do men, by over-harsh punishment, draw down upon themselves the anger of the gods").

We can leave Herodotus' story here, where it terminates nearly a century and a half of such unrestrained melodrama that it becomes difficult to imagine that the people of Cyrene had any time at all for normal peace-

time activities such as commerce, agriculture, and building. It is, however, precisely here that archaeology has been successful in restoring some kind of proper balance to our picture of the town's archaic period.

The Excavated Monuments

Leaving aside the quest for exportable works of art that characterized 19th century "archaeology," the diggings at Cyrene fall into two periods. Work between 1912 and 1939 tended to concentrate on bringing to light the major walled remains, which often survived in remarkably good condition, and restoring them. Activity since the 1950's has been more concerned with deep-level stratigraphical investigation conducted over more limited areas. The first phase, a kind of golden age for archaeology in Italy's colonial possessions, saw the exploration and clearance of the Sanctuary of Apollo, the Agora, and the Zeus Temple, which, along with some of the tombs that line the main roadways leading to and from the ancient city, have yielded important information for the archaic period, particularly when it has been possible to verify the conclusions reached by their original excavators by rechecking with spot sondages.



0 5 Meter

A case in point is the *Apollonion* or Temple of Apollo, which was originally cleared in the 1920's and recently meticulously reexamined by Sandro Stucchi. Cyrene's principal deity was Apollo, whose Delphic priesthood the sources credit with taking a controlling part in the city's foundation. The earliest version of his temple was a plain rectangular megaron with no outer colonnade, an ancient design with its roots in the late Bronze Age, but here apparently dating to about 550 (in the reign of either Battus the Lame or Arcesilaus III; the regnal chro-

1 Plan of the *Apollonion* by the end of the 6th century B.C.

2 Marble plaque with face of Medusa ornamenting the apex of the *Apollonion's* roof.

3 Thin gold sheet, ca. 5 inches long, with battle scene, found in archaic *Artemision*.



nology breaks down here, but it is perhaps difficult to imagine the latter, who spent a good part of his career on the run, with a temple foundation). The austerity of the plan may simply reflect the economic status of the early town, but it might equally as well be explained by the sheer difficulty in obtaining marble for a proper outer colonnade in a region where it does not occur in natural deposits. In any case, the little temple marks the heart of what was to become in time the most spectacular sacred area in Greek North Africa, handsomely situated in a broad cleft of Wadi Bu Turkia. By the century's end a limestone colonnade had been added, the first of many



changes that were to alter its appearance; and with the further addition of a gorgon face acroterion of imported marble to its roof, Apollo's temple had attained both a creditable size and appearance which, in turn, are evidence for the town's material well-being despite the antics of its rulers.

Other buildings can be documented for the same period. Along the eastern edge of the Agora, for example, a small sacred precinct honoring a minor benevolent daimon was set up not long after the original settlement of the town, while nearby a circular burial tumulus was added in the early 6th century, apparently to contain the cremated remains of no less a person than the first king, Battus. By the century's third quarter the Agora received the first of what were to be a number of public porticos or stoas that eventually delimited three of its four sides over the centuries. An approach road was laid out to join the Agora zone with the town's fortified Acropolis located to the northwest (still largely unprobed, but perhaps the site of the royal residence). And in the Apollo Sanctuary just north of the *Apollonion* was constructed a temple in honor of Artemis. In its original form the *Artemision* had a curious plan, rectangular, but only slightly longer than wide, and with a row of two columns dividing its interior into two chambers, each with independent entrances.

Certainly a primitive, experimental design, which seems to support the Italians' view that the *Artemision* predates the earliest version of the *Apollonion* by perhaps as much as 50 years, i.e. dating ca. 600. Did one of its chambers serve to house Apollo's first shrine, the other that of his divine sister, Artemis? It is quite possible, since there is the example of Olympia where Zeus had to share his wife's temple for nearly 150 years before gaining his own. However, the interest of the *Artemision* is as much a matter of its contents as its date and form. When its foundations were dug between 1925 and 1930 a rich cache of temple offerings was found, objects made of gold, silver, ivory, shell, amber and iron, along with imported Corinthian and Attic lamps and pottery.

1



This material was published in some detail in 1931 and as such comprises one of the very few instances of the publication of small finds in conjunction with their stratified contexts undertaken by the Italians before 1939. Moreover, the war years themselves led to the dispersal of most of the unpublished pottery and other related objects into private, unauthorized hands (whether Italian, German, or English), where they have been lost forever. Since the 1950's Sandro Stucchi has carried out a series of stratigraphical tests in the Agora specifically designed to supplement the work of his predecessors in documenting the site's early years through pottery and other small find sequences. While the published evidence is still insufficiently plentiful for statistical analysis based on type frequencies, Stucchi's research has provided solid proof for commercial contacts between Athens, Corinth, Laconia, Rhodes and the East Greek islands from the third quarter of the 7th century onward, and for the first time in the history of the excavations of Cyrene archaeological results were able to illuminate specifically the movements of peoples to North African soil.

The Early Sculptures

Another way to shed light on the city's developing economic growth as well as its ties with the outside world has been through the analysis of its sculptures. Herodotus (II, 184) relates an amusing story how the pharaoh Amasis (ca. 569-525) took a girl from Cyrene named Ladice for his wife. The girl's first bedroom appearance had the sorry effect of turning Amasis impotent. He sheltered no doubts as to whose fault this was and threatened to cause his startled bride "to perish more miserably than woman ever perished yet" unless she cleared up his malady forthwith. Exhibiting exemplary common sense Ladice turned to Aphrodite for help, vowing a statue if sexual desire returned to her husband within the same day. Her prayer, one needs hardly add, was heeded, and the statue commissioned by Ladice stood in Cyrene's Aphrodite Temple until Herodotus' own day. But neither it nor the gold-plated image of Athena dedicated at Cyrene by her grateful husband has survived the passage of time. Nevertheless, enough archaic sculpture has been found over the years to tell us quite a bit.

Cyrene's earliest piece was found in the *Apollonion*. It is a statuette of forged iron, an unusual technique which one authority points out was attributed by the ancient authors to Theodorus the Elder of Samos sometime late in the 7th century. The object, which could be either male or female, seems to belong to roughly the same time or slightly later and therefore can be used as evidence for trading contacts between the North African colony and the East Greek world before its second colonization wave.

It has furthermore been argued that a blue-gray marble head once part of a male statue found in the Apollo Sanctuary implies the same kind of relationship with the Aegean, where it was made at sometime during the first decade of the 6th century. A pair of headless marble *korai* (statues of women) discovered recently east of the City Walls and dating ca. 560-550 would certainly appear to substantiate contacts with East Greece following the ca. 580 influx of new immigrants, in corroboration with Herodotus' statement that one of Demonax's three tribes represented the island people.

A headless marble *kouros* (male statue) once again found in the *Apollonion* betrays a more specifically Samian character, and its 540's date may reflect relations between the two cities at the time of Arcesilaus III's forced sojourn at Samos, in which commercial ties paved the way for the king's exile. The following decade (540-530) saw the importation of two more marble *kouros*, found headless



2

near the altar of Artemis. Although Attic in workmanship we should probably resist interpreting their presence as proof of anything more than strong trading contacts between Peisistratid Athens and Cyrene, since the sources nowhere indicate an immigration of Attic settlers to this part of the world during the 6th century. However, marble is not found in natural deposits anywhere in Cyrenaica, and whether it came from the islands or from Attica its use in Cyrene, where it had to be shipped in and then laboriously dragged up the *gebel's* 2000-foot slopes, is a strong economic indicator of the city's expanding growth and prosperity.

Coins and the Export Trade

The actual bases of the economies of ancient cities that often dealt with commodities whose exchange left little in the way of tangible records is a notoriously slippery subject, but an approach that has often proven helpful has been through a study of their currency system. In Cyrene's case the earliest coins are usually listed as being issued first around 570 or about a decade after Battus II's second immigration wave, but most numismatists are disinclined to believe that they are quite that early. In any event, the city emblem carried by all the early coins is the silphium plant, an umbelliferous growth that flourished wild on the *gebel* slopes around the ancient town. The native Libyans must have taught the Greeks to harvest it as a medicinal drug and garnish for food, and they in turn were busy exporting it abroad by as early as when their first coins began their circulation.

Silphium's popularity was quite immense, so much so that it was largely extinct by the first century of this era, and its sale must have bulked large in the early city's economy. Eventually its trade appears to have become a royal monopoly, and it may be bags of the stuff that Arcesilaus is shown loading on shipboard on the Laconian cup scene, although the argument has recently been made that they contained wool rather than silphium.

From literature we know that the Athenians were avid silphium consumers, and indeed they may have traded it in exchange for their own silver bullion, which, like marble, does not occur in natural deposits in Cyrenaica. It is important to note in this respect that some of Cyrene's earliest silver coins were actually restrickings of discarded Attic coins and that the Attic system of weights and denominations was used by the Cyreneans until the end of the monarchy ca. 435. Consequently, the coins, along with the imports of Attic sculptures and the Athenian pottery and lamps reported by Stucchi from his Agora soundings, support a picture of close commercial ties between the two cities.

The remaining basis of Cyrene's early economy is pieced together mainly from the literary testimony, where we learn that the region was known for the exporting of animals, sheep (the epithet for Libya in the *Odyssey* is "nourisher of sheep"), goats, and horses, which were highly regarded in antiquity for roughly the same qualities as modern-day Arabians; and for agricultural products such as olives, almonds, figs and, above all, wheat. It has to be admitted that archaeology to date has failed to document specifically agricultural activities for archaic Greek times, but the evidence from ground surveys and aerial reconnaissance for Roman period farms spreading out all about the ancient city is extensive and constantly increasing.

Current Excavation of the Sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone

Four seasons of work have been expended since 1969 on the sanctuary grounds lying athwart the steep Wadi Bel Gadir, a natural ravine of great beauty separating the ancient walled city from its suburbs that once spread southwest in the general direction of Balagrae (modern El Beida, capital of Libya under the recently deposed king). Enough has been accomplished to tell that the site took the form of a substantial walled precinct that incorporated within its limits at least 4200

1 One of the pair of marble *korai* found in 1966 outside the city walls.

2 Silver coin struck by Cyrene during the 5th century and found in 1969 in the Sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone. Depicted is the umbelliferous plant silphium, whose export formed an important part of Cyrene's economy.



1

square meters of terrain distributed over five or more terraced rises in ground level across the south slope of the wadi. Each rise is marked off by cut-stone retaining walls that support a variety of architectural units of differing sorts. The lowest two terraces are extensively damaged by erosion and are poorly known. But Terrace Three and Terrace Four, on the other hand, rise above a handsome stretch of regular ashlar limestone masonry over 60 m. in length and nearly 5 m. high. Since both are relatively intact they have been the target of most of our digging so far.

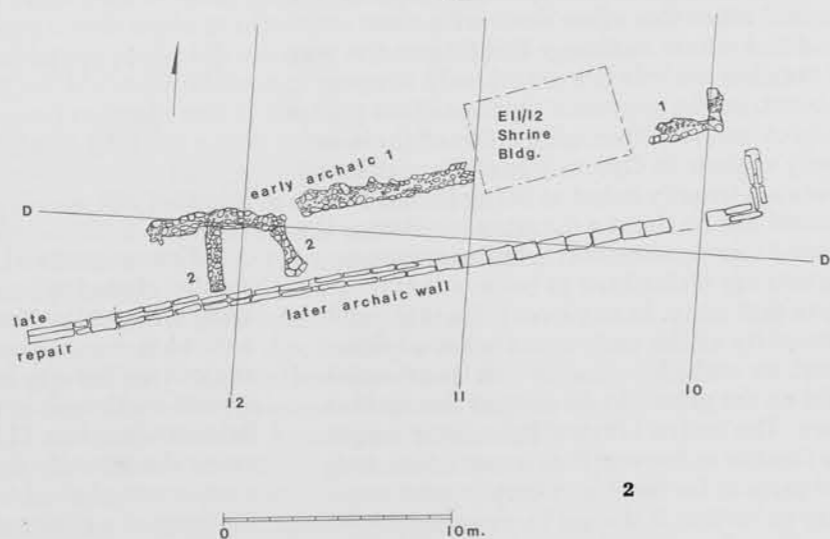
However, the term "terrace" may be something of a misnomer here because the ground inside the peribolos (i.e. sacred enclosure) walls of Three and Four ascends too irregularly to permit considering them as parts of a single, orderly architectural cluster of rectilinear units. Instead, there seem to be here simply a lower and an upper zone, each characterized by small independent sacred buildings and at least one fountain house, placed at different levels along the rising bedrock and bound by their own separate rules for orientation, rather in the spirit of Apollo's sanctuary at Delphi.

Most recently a Fifth Terrace has begun to come to light. As in the case of the Fourth and Third Terraces it supports buildings, and we now believe that there is reason to suspect that both the main entrance gateway (Propylaeum) and the principal sanctuary architectural climax (a temple or hall for initiates) were set out at this level, dominating the top of the sanctuary grounds.

Although most of the visible interior walls have appeared since 1969, chance investigations after 1913 led to the recovery of certain objects, including pieces of inscriptions, that brought about the theory that the grounds were consecrated to Demeter. We now know that this identification was correct

and, moreover, that the worship of Demeter along with her daughter Persephone was practiced without significant interruption from soon after Cyrene's 631 foundation down to the second half of the 3rd century A.D., when the sanctuary was obliterated by a severe earthquake. Many of the visible remains are products of the Hellenistic and Roman periods when the sanctuary received its monumental layout and, falling outside the chronological scope of our subject, need no further description. On the other hand, there is a rapidly growing body of evidence for the practice of the early cult, and this has turned out to have had an immediate and considerable importance for our understanding of the archaic city. The evidence comes in two forms, the walled remains and the recovered votives.

So far our work has brought to light significant traces of early walls only on the level of Terrace Four, and those mainly restricted to its eastern half. But the last season (1974) has given strong reason for suspecting that more, and possibly highly important 6th century architecture, awaits discovery on the Fifth Terrace. What has been found so far? This is not so easily answered, owing to the fact that we have apparently hit on only the edge of whatever comprised the Fourth Terrace complex, and this itself represents a number of phases. The earliest wall was built from roughly shaped polygonal stones with dressed faces laid up in fairly regular courses over a rubble foundation. This has been exposed for an east-to-west run of nearly 15 meters' length, with a gap where the much later "E11/12 Shrine House" was inserted into place. At its east end it jogs north for a short distance before getting lost under the foundations of another later period independent building prosaically dubbed the "E10 Building." Two less carefully made (and therefore probably somewhat later) rubble walls were added at its opposite end. It is frankly hard at



2

this stage to read much into this welter of incomplete walls, but the finds recovered in their immediate vicinity point to an initial construction date by the late 7th, early 6th century, putting whatever we have here into the category of "Early Cyrene," and this for now is their most outstanding feature!

However, just a short distance to their south we have uncovered a parallel-running construction of far greater refinement and structural complexity. In contrast to their predecessors, the foundations here are made up of good-sized rectangular limestone blocks laid on their flat sides directly onto, and sometimes actually into, the natural bedrock that has been carefully trimmed away to receive them. On top of these there then are set two parallel courses of thin slabs, set on edge and parallel to one another so that about a 10 cm. wide gap was left between. Their outer faces were carefully dressed with broad chisel strokes, and the intervening space packed with dirt. The arrangement of upright slabs was then repeated for another course. Although the resulting wall nowhere survives higher than its second course of paired upright slabs, we are assuming that at this point a flat bonding block was laid across the wall's width to tie it together and give it the necessary vertical stability. What results then is a somewhat bizarre variation of pseudoisodomic construction in which two upright courses alternate with a flat course (A-A-B-A-A, as opposed to A-B-A, which would be more normal).

This quite lovely and decorative Bi-Slab Wall, as we have come to call it, runs across the Fourth Terrace for nearly 30 m. before "degenerating" into late repair at its west end and turning north at its opposite, east end for a short distance before getting lost again under later construction. Certainly too unstable to support the weight of a building of any great size, and in any case too long to be part of a single room, it must be a section of the first monumentalized sanctuary peribolos or outer enclosure, that was eventually swallowed up by the Hellenistic terrace system that replaced it.

What is worth noting here is that a vogue for this kind of masonry technique developed in East Greece during the later 6th century, and as a matter of fact there are points of comparison between this wall and certain East Greek, Ionian structures known at Delphi and elsewhere. While the finds associated with this wall point to a construction date late in the 6th century, we still have to recover direct (i.e. stratified) proof for this assertion. Be that as it may, it was to Ionia that Arcesilaus III exiled himself, and the ties with this part of the Greek world—already substantiated by the Agora pottery finds and sculptural imports—may be behind the Cyren-



3

eans' decision a generation later to use an experimental "Ionicizing" building technique in place of their more customary, and frequently rather stereotyped, application of Dorian practices.

The Archaic Votives

However, an unquestionably more reliable source of information for Demeter's early cult as well as the urban development than the sets of incomplete walls just described is the rich series of votives that have been retrieved from the soil from all over the sanctuary grounds. If so far the early walls have been restricted to one half of a single terrace, it is fair to say that the votives have turned up in varying concentrations on all levels thus far tested, including the Fifth Terrace. They are frequently discovered commingled with considerably later material in a deep and quite ubiquitous earthquake stratum that blankets the site, showing that they have "traveled" from their positions before the A.D. 262 earthquake. All of the archaic votives were seven and a half centuries "old" at the very least at the time of this final destruction. But their time span as functioning offerings might have been as short as a year or considerably less, depending on whether their use lay in their employment as long-term display pieces or was conterminous with the rituals accompanying their initial dedication. In this respect

1 The Sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone from across the Wadi Bel Gadir.

2 Plan of the archaic walls on Terrace Four.

3 View of the cleared sections of Terrace Four with the long stretch of later archaic Bi-Slab Wall bisecting the length of the trench.

it is interesting to speculate on what happened to them over the centuries preceding the earthquake.

It would have been quite normal if, after serving out their use, they were ceremoniously discarded (which for some meant being broken to prevent their being reused) and then buried in *favissae* or underground pits constructed for storing used sacred offerings. However, we have failed to isolate any walled receptacles inside the terraced walls containing this kind of material. Admittedly it is just possible that the original siting of these hypothetical sacred dumps was the Fifth Terrace, which we are just beginning to get familiar with, since it is clear enough that on such a steep slope the force of the earthquake would have propelled our small finds a considerable distance down the hill once the retaining walls had been cracked.

On the other hand, there are examples in other sanctuaries where a large part of the sub-surface soil surrounding a cult building was treated as an extended, unwalled *favissa*. At the present stage in our investigations it seems somewhat more likely that this is what happened here, with the earth filled in around the later sacred buildings spilling forward to jumble its contents of early votives with the broken architectural parts of the later buildings, into what can only be described as a gigantic stratigraphical mess! The confusion that results is typified by our discoveries of parts of single pots turning up separated by as much as 10 m. from each other.

Luckily there are a limited number of areas in which the archaic occupation levels have escaped serious contamination by later finds. These should become more numerous as we are able to probe more fully the archaic walls; those that have so far been uncovered have provided the majority of the unbroken, or at least fully restorable, archaic pots found to date. Their more complete condition probably reflects a functional difference, which will be further explored below.

Separated into categories of usage, the votives apparently fulfilled either one or more of the functions of a) gifts, b) ritual implements and c) objects of personal adornment. The last may well be simply a specialized aspect of the first, whereas it seems quite certain that the category of ritual implements retained a separate and distinct identity in the mind of the ancient dedicant, so we can begin by taking a look at it.

Most of the pottery (whose recovered sherds now number in the thousands) and the terracotta lamps took their primary function from ritual. Painted pottery offers a quite broad geographic range of imported late 7th and 6th century types (so far no local archaic wares have been identified), with the fabrics originating from both the mainland and the islands. However, by way of contrast, the



1 Rim fragment of a 6th century Athenian pot. One piece was found in 1971 on Terrace Three, the other in 1974 on Terrace Five at least 12 meters away.

2 Small jug or squat lekythos made at Corinth in the late 16th century B.C.

3 Fragments of a single large and expensive pot made at Athens ca. 570 B.C. and painted with both human and animal figures.



range of shapes is considerably more restricted. The most frequent of these are cups, bowls, dishes, plates and jugs. After these come small perfume and oil jars (*aryballoi*, *cothons*, and *alabstra*) and little cosmetic jars called *pyxides*. These are balanced by locally produced kitchen coarse wares and some largely plain, but black painted, big vessels, such as *kraters* (wine mixing bowls). Consequently it can be said that most of our imported pots were originally moderately priced and mainly conspicuous for their lack of representation of the larger, more luxurious shapes, such as the great amphoras, hydrias and *kraters*, familiar to the museum-goer for their large, ambitious figural scenes created by their Attic and Corinthian painters for show. Four seasons of digging have brought to light just enough fragments of such luxury class shapes to provide the exception to our rule. So unless the class of worshippers that dedicated pottery at Cyrene's Sanctuary of Demeter were too poor to offer more expensive imported display pieces (an hypothesis that cannot be excluded entirely out of hand at this stage in our work), we ought to look for a use for the pottery other than display (i.e. gifts).

The answer seems to lie in the great quantity of pig bones found scattered throughout the ancient levels of the sanctuary. This osteological material, when combined with the literary and archaeological evidence gathered from other sites, makes it a likely assumption that ritual dining played a conspicuous part in Demeter's rites. In fact, the most common type of vessels that we find seem to have been specifically made for use in dining and, although neither kitchens nor dining rooms have been found yet inside the terraced zone, eating ceremonies must have taken place somewhere nearby on a regular basis. After the meal was over the crockery was smashed and the pieces scattered into sub-surface dumps. Even the oil and perfume jars can be explained in the same way if their contents were used either to prepare for or to clean up after a sacred feast. Because the ceremony's emphasis lay more in the act of eating than in what one ate on (which in any event was destined to be soon destroyed), the people who used these wares were principally concerned with having available the right crockery shapes at moderate enough cost so that the act could be repeated. So, in a sense, quality took a back seat to quantity and economy.

The many lamps turning up from all periods include archaic examples that also carry the strong presumption of having served mainly for ritual. The mystery rites of Demeter and Persephone were conducted as a rule in strict privacy, and indeed at times in total secrecy. Remote, out-of-the-way spots were habitually sought out for the location of their



4 Locally made 6th century B.C. lamp.

sanctuaries, as here, with high walls erected to screen the uninitiated from viewing what was not theirs to see. The most secret rites took place at night, in part to insure maximum concealment, and the lamps presumably were used during these nocturnal celebrations.

To confuse matters, this largely ritual use of the lamps and pots has to be balanced against the purposes to which were put their equivalents in miniaturized scale. We continue to find many lamps, cups, amphoras and hydrias (water jars) so small that they can only have been used symbolically. So far the miniature lamps are all post-archaic, but the tiny *kotylai* (cups), *amphoriskoi*, and *hydriskoi* represent the same time span as the larger versions just enumerated. It is hard to be sure just how these were used, but surely, at the very minimum, they must have been treated as inexpensive surrogates for their larger counterparts. Does this mean that a miniature *kotyle* was dedicated in lieu of an actual meal, that a *hydriskos* symbolized a missed purification ceremony, and that an *amphoriskos* stood in place of some expensive display gift never actually offered? Probably whatever took place was more casual, but we really do not know for sure. On the other hand, certain facts are fixed. Miniatures as a type were popular. They tend to be recovered whole and, whatever use they were put to, it did not conclude with knocking them into pieces. All in all, it seems better to regard them as some form of gift.

Gifts to the goddesses came in many forms. There was, for example, the terracotta figurine that turns up in such extraordinary

1 Restored room interior from Demeter and Persephone sanctuary found at Helorus and reassembled in the local museum of Noto, Sicily.

2 Locally made terracotta figurine representing either a seated woman or a goddess.



1

3 Cored glass miniature amphora. Dark blue background, with yellow and turquoise decorations.

4 Bronze rooster figurine.

5 Frontal view of a tridacna shell carved with the face of Istar.

6 Top view of incised tridacna, showing Istar's head and right wing.

7 Faience figurine of a nude woman about 2½ inches high.

8 Rhodian perfume jar in the form of a clam shell.



2

completion of certain prescribed acts, the figurines were not destroyed *pari passu* immediately following their initial presentation. On the contrary, their very essence was to extend the gratitude or fidelity of the dedicant to the deity over a period of time. And as a consequence, the little image could remain on display for an indefinite interval until it was quite literally squeezed off exhibit by the arrival of fresh and normally repetitiously similar gifts.

When this happened, the figurine was buried *à la* the cups and plates, sometimes with its head knocked off to make sure that it could not be reused. Most sanctuaries, our own included, normally preserve their hoards of figurines only when they have reached this terminal stage. It is worth noting in passing, however, that a little known, but highly interesting sanctuary in the southeast corner of Sicily gives us some real insight into how the figurines were employed in their penultimate stage. Outside of Noto (ancient Helorus) about a decade ago, a small rural sanctuary was found, consecrated to Demeter and Persephone. The Italian archaeologists excavated against the inner wall of one of its chambers a low bench flanking a door. Placed on this bench with their backs stuck to the wall by a kind of plaster were a series of standard type Demeter figurines, lined up for display like so many dolls in a child's nursery. Their being crudely fixed to the wall indicates that they were intended to remain in that position for at least some period of time. Three sacred wells (called *bothroi*) were found in front of the wall, two of which were lined carefully along their inner rims with more figurines. Since the *bothros* was viewed as a direct avenue of communication with the Underworld, the rather naive intention of placing the figurines in this extraordinary setting was to insure their attaining the closest possible physical contact with the divine presence of the residing deities, and obviously had nothing to do with "display" in a museum or art gallery sense. Rather the offering of such an object was strictly contractual: either a payment to the goddesses for something accomplished in the past or an attempt to bind them to some future course of action.

Practically all of the figurines from Wadi Bel Gadir depict women. Most are locally made, but are based on foreign types. Some stand, others are seated on thrones. Occasionally they come equipped with types of costumes that can arguably be said to be appropriate for Demeter and Persephone. While it is true that some of the post-archaic types carry objects that specifically allude to the Demeter myth (e.g. torches, which the goddess held while searching for her daughter at night), the earlier represent monotonously similar types, carelessly executed, produced



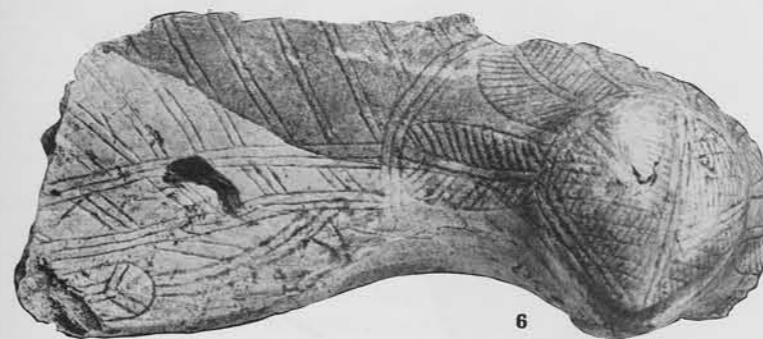
3



4



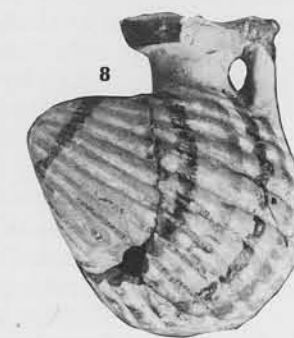
5



6



7



8

at low cost, and offering few, if any, explicit iconographic references to the deities they were intended to honor and please, apart from a commonly shared sex. Pretty clearly then their efficacy as votive gifts lay as much in the repetitive act of giving as in any intrinsic or symbolic value they might possess as objects.

On the other hand, other types of gifts dedicated in the archaic period seem to have been picked out with somewhat greater care. There is, for example, a class of miniature bronze animals, which grows each season in terms of types as well as numbers, reflecting, one assumes, the catholicity of Demeter's interest in all aspects of nature and not just growing grain. These include roosters, hens, hawks, ducks, lions, bulls, and a frog—a pretty strange aggregation so far, but the general intent seems clear enough.

Her worshippers also brought many articles made of glass (a luxury import at this time) to the sanctuary, wrought in a variety of techniques that range from cored to blown to millefiore. The great majority of these glass dedications come in the shape of little vessels copying their far more common terracotta equivalents. These are hard to date when they are found mixed up with the heterogeneous earthquake debris, but some unquestionably belong to the archaic period, as do the related imported faience figurines which again were much rarer and more expensive than their clay equivalents. Perhaps the most exotic of all is a group of carved tridacna shell dedications representing Istar, the Assyrian-Babylonian four-winged deity of procreation and birth, manufactured in the second half of the 7th century, which makes them early trade items to appear in our sanctuary. Perhaps it was their very oddity or slightly chilling alien quality that made them suitable as offerings, whereas the quaint plastic, molded perfume jars in the shapes of animals and people were far more familiar to the people of Cyrene and were dedicated in part on account of the value of their contents.

This brings us at last to objects of personal adornment earlier separated into a special class of votive: silver, bronze and bone dress pins; silver and bronze finger rings and hair coils; beads in terracotta, metal and glass; bronze pendants shaped like clamshells or tiny amphora-like containers or half animals or humans; gold beads and small gold pendants in the shape of crouching lions; scarabs or scaraboid gems and other incised stones perhaps worn on the body as amulets.

These costume accessories may simply have originated in the wardrobe of female worshippers, who passed them on to the goddesses in used condition. But another explanation is worth at least considering. Other Demeter sanctuaries (thus far not here) have provided cultic busts portraying either priestesses or in some cases the goddesses themselves. Some of these are adorned with earrings, pendants, and necklaces modeled in the clay, while others, which are more common, are left plain. In the case of the latter the ears are occasionally pierced in order to permit the application of real earrings, and it is indeed possible that a few of these were actually intended to be dressed up in "real" clothes and bedizened with "real" jewelry offered by the faithful on perhaps the occasion of special festivals, as are indeed images of the saints and members of the Holy Family to this day in certain northern Mediterranean lands. Is it therefore not possible that some of the accessories found in such large numbers at Wadi Bel Gadir were at one point actually applied to cult images?

However, it is only when we come to the traditional archaeological questions of dates and origins that it is possible to assess the enormous potential that Wadi Bel Gadir has for illuminating the history of this corner of Africa in the archaic period. The very earliest ceramic wares go back to the last years of the 7th century, which is also the period of manufacture for certain other items, such as the tridacna shells, and it seems probable that the cult site was in active use within a generation of the original settlement. Athens, Corinth, the islands—including Rhodes, Samos, Chios, Melos and Crete—and Laconia are the most commonly represented pottery centers, in a descending order of abundance. The large number of Attic pots, that begin with the late 7th century and which by the end of the following century have practically excluded all of the other wares, provide substantive proof for a lively and virtually continuous exchange of goods between the two sites throughout the 6th century, previously only hinted at by the presence of a limited number of Attic sculptures and restruck coins.

By ca. 580, Rhodian goods swell to include substantial numbers of manufactured items that include among them pottery, glass,



1 Cow's head bronze pendant.

2 Bronze amulet pendant with twin heads.

3 Two small lion pendants, executed in gold.

4 Fragment of a 6th century Athenian pot, painted in Black Figure style.

5 Armed warrior from a Laconian cup made in the second quarter of the 6th century B.C.

6 Rhodian dwarf figurine. Comic dedications like this were believed to distract the sorrowing mother goddess from the loss of her daughter, Persephone, who had been ravaged beneath the earth by Hades, god of the underworld.

Credit

All photographs and drawings except page 2 no. 1 and page 3 no. 3 by the author. Page 2 no. 1 is from J. Wright, *Libya* (New York 1969) 33, map 1. Page 3 no. 3 is from C. Stibbe, *Lakenische Vasenmaler* (Amsterdam 1972, pl. 81, 2:964).



and perhaps some of the miniature bronzes. A fair number of the scarabs and gems, as well as at least some of the faience objects, appear to have originated on Rhodes, and while most of our terracotta figurines were locally made they often copy Rhodian types. In addition, there are examples of terracottas directly imported from Rhodes in the shape of easily recognized dwarfs and other grotesque types that seem to have been a specialty of the island. Since a considerable part of this material belongs to the second quarter of the 6th century, it adds a real credibility to the putative role of the sons of Pancis in introducing Rhodians to Cyrene after the call of Battus the Fortunate for new settlers. On the other hand, the goods also make clear that at least trading relations existed between the two centers for a short time before that event and persisted for a considerable interval after its immediate effects had worn off.

Laconian pottery is also represented by a body of sherds that grows each season steadily larger, but which is still our rarest archaic pottery import, if the East Greek wares are taken as a single group (Rhodian not included). Dating to the first half of the 6th century it recalls the fact that one of Demonax's three tribes represented the Cretans and Laconians. But what of the Cretans? Actually thus far nothing can be indisputably tied to this source, but it is possible that a discrete number of geometricizing sherds may some day be shown to make the connection.

We have also found a small number of what we take to be possibly Naucratan objects, including the tridacna shells, which may have been distributed to the Greek world through Naucratis, although not necessarily made there, and faience. This creates an interesting problem. Laconia traded with both Naucratis in the Nile Delta and Cyrene. Cyrene supplied in return agricultural commodities, livestock, and silphium, while Naucratis exchanged wheat and Egyptian and Near Eastern manufactured goods for Greek products. But what did Cyrene have to offer Naucratis? Since both were primarily agricultural producing areas, probably very little other than silphium and horses, which explains why relatively few Egyptian objects turn up in the soil of Wadi Bel Gadir, unless one tries to argue that some of the flow of Laconian pottery into Cyrenaica was via Naucratis, which seems unnecessarily abstruse in light of what we know about ancient trade routes. This argument, by the way, assumes that a good part of our scarabs and scaraboid gems are really Greek in origin rather than Egyptian. Hopefully, future research will clear up this last point as well as shed additional light on the fascinating problem of the commercial ties between Africa's two most important Greek colonies.

East Greek pottery and costume accessories, supplementing Stucchi's Agora finds, clearly reflect commerce and population shifts. Most of this activity has died down by the middle of the 6th century, and the flow of small objects has largely ceased by when we think Arcesilaus' Samian exile took place, leaving us with no reflection of Samian troops on Cyrenaican soil (whom admittedly it would be naive to think of having left their mark in our sanctuary). Corinth yields most of the pottery market to Attic wares after ca. 550, but contacts are maintained in minor areas, such as small numbers of terracotta figurine imports. It will be important to check for any possible fall-off in all the imports, including the Attic, during the badly disturbed years between ca. 530 and 515, but that kind of refined assessment must await a return to the field.

It should be stressed, if it is not already obvious, that this survey is still in its infancy. The final, definitive quantification of the archaic data obviously can be carried out only after the digging is over, and we would like at least three more seasons to uncover the main wall features. Nevertheless, thanks to Cyrene's sustained piety, a good beginning has been made toward recording some real information about the extremely elusive nature of this early cult. And, more to the point of this article, it is this work that, after 60 years of digging at Cyrene, is at last creating a broad, factual basis for studying the early years of a site, whose interest certainly transcends its regional setting to form a uniquely fascinating paradigm for the Age of Colonization. 21

Donald White is Associate Curator in the Mediterranean Section of the University Museum. He received his education at Harvard and at Princeton where he took his Ph.D. After doing field work in Sicily, he taught at the University of Michigan for ten years where he did research in Tunisia and directed the excavation of Cyrene's port city of Apollonia. Since 1969 he has directed the excavation of the Demeter and Persephone Sanctuary at Cyrene, initially for the University of Michigan and since 1973 for the University Museum. Preliminary reports on this work have appeared and are scheduled for publication in the *American Journal of Archaeology* and *Libya Antiqua*.



Suggested Reading

Goodchild, R. G.
1963
Cyrene and Apollonia, An Historical Guide.
London.

Wright, J.
1969
Libya, New York,



Cover
Arcesilaus II, King of
Cyrene. Detail of vase
pictured on page 3.

Opposite
Sanctuary of Apollo. The
Apollonion occupies the
center middleground,
with the *Artemision* a
short distance to the
right. The large building
in the foreground is a
Roman and Byzantine
Bath. See page 4.

Graphic Design
Martha Kagan
Barry Kaufmann

Printed by
Novelty Printing Company