

## REALISTIC ART IN ALEXANDRIA

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IT is now almost a century since Theodor Schreiber started his crusade for the discovery of Alexandrian art. In his first article in *Athenische Mitteilungen* in 1885 he maintained, among other things, that the metropolis on the Nile had been the true birth-place of Hellenistic genre in painting and sculpture.<sup>1</sup> The evidence he produced was not very impressive, consisting of a few original bronzes from Alexandria in the Dimitriou Collection in Athens, which he had not even seen himself. He suggested, however, that famous genre sculptures in Rome like the so-called shepherdess in the Palazzo degli Conservatori were also Alexandrian works.

As is well known Schreiber's provocative thesis met with a very strong reaction. His opponents immediately and rightly objected that the interest in realistic topics was a common trait of Hellenistic culture and art and not at all confined to just one part of the Hellenistic world.<sup>2</sup> There followed lengthy polemics on the question, whether such masterpieces of Hellenistic realism as the Fisherman in the Vatican or the Drunken Woman in Munich had their origin in Alexandria or in Asia Minor. Not one of these problems was solved and still in 1950 in his handbook on Greek sculpture Lippold philosophically remarked: 'Of the types representing everyday people some go back to Alexandria, others certainly belong to Asia Minor.'<sup>3</sup>

Returning to these questions I would like to begin with some observations about those sculptures which have been passed down through ancient copies. I must say, however, beforehand that regarding this group I have no decisive arguments either and cannot solve the problem for any given case. Nevertheless it may be useful to rehearse some of the existing evidence. The origin of the Drunken Woman is mostly sought in Asia Minor, since Pliny

<sup>1</sup> *Athenische Mitteilungen*, 10 (1885), pp. 380 ff., 391.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. G. Cultrera, *Saggi sull'arte ellenistica* (1907).

<sup>3</sup> G. Lippold, *Griechische Plastik* (1950), p. 331.

mentions a statue of that type in Smyrna.<sup>1</sup> This hint is seemingly corroborated by the fact that the influence of the Drunken Woman can already be detected in the art of Asia Minor at the turn of the third and second century BC.<sup>2</sup> But whether these observations can decide the question seems doubtful. The ivy-crowned lagynos, which the old drunkard is hugging in her lap, had a special meaning for Alexandria where the popular feast of the Lagynophoria was named from it.<sup>3</sup> The vase reappears with a type of small bronze showing a hunchback on the way to the picnic connected with the feast. Pl. VII*d* is an early example of the series recently acquired by our Akademisches Kunstmuseum in Bonn.<sup>4</sup> In his left hand the bald-headed cripple holds a basket with victuals and a cock for sacrifice; in his right he is carrying the lagynos. Bronzes of this type were very popular in the Hellenistic world and were reproduced still in the first century BC. One example was even excavated in Strasburg, considered to be an Alexandrian import rather than a Gaulish imitation (another such specimen was found in Augst near Basle). That a creation like the Drunken Woman is possible in Alexandria typologically as well as stylistically may be proved by a plastercast from Memphis in Hildesheim, which still belongs to the third century and represents the same figure squatting on the ground and with the same heavy and ornament-like folds in her garment.<sup>5</sup> The extremely fine ivy pattern in the background makes it clear that this picture also is to be seen in a Dionysiac setting. Controversial as the arguments are, I dare not decide whether Alexandria or Asia Minor has a better claim to the statue.

The situation is almost the same as with the spinario of the Castellani type, the influence of which on the art of Asia Minor is proved beyond all doubt by the well-known caricature in terracotta from Priene in Berlin which dates from the late second century.<sup>6</sup> Despite this evidence, however, it should not be forgotten that there are strong arguments for Alexandria as well. I am thinking not only of the structural relationship between the spinario and Alexandrian statuettes, like the bronze beggar in Berlin, whom we shall discuss later, but of even closer similarities.

<sup>1</sup> *NH* xxxvi. 33. Cf. Cultrera, loc. cit., pp. 72f.

<sup>2</sup> Himmelmann, *Drei hellenistische Bronzen in Bonn* (1975), pp. 17f.

<sup>3</sup> O. Rubensohn, *Archäol. Anzeiger*, 44 (1929), 204ff.

<sup>4</sup> Bonn, inv. no. C 656. Cf. Ch. Picard, *Gallia*, 16 (1958), 183ff.

<sup>5</sup> C. Reinsberg, 'Studien zur hellenistischen Toreutik' = *Hildesheimer ägyptologische Beiträge*, 9 (1980), 321, no. 57, Abb. 82.

<sup>6</sup> Himmelmann, loc. cit., pp. 26ff.

The head may be compared to the terracotta fragment in the Benaki Museum, which has tentatively been identified with Philopator, in whose reign I am sure the prototype of the spinario is to be dated.<sup>1</sup> As to imitations, there are several of them from Egypt—for example, a statuette in Hartford, whose Egyptian origin is likely because of the material used.<sup>2</sup>

A third magnificent masterpiece of Hellenistic realism, the Fisherman in the Vatican, was well known in Asia Minor as is shown by numerous copies from imperial times.<sup>3</sup> The excellent head in the Konya Museum is perhaps the best replica in the whole tradition. On the other hand, the earliest hint of the statue is found on a sherd from Alexandria, allegedly in Dresden.<sup>4</sup> It belongs to a very rare species of relief vases, which to my knowledge has not as yet been described and classified, but whose origin in the third century cannot be doubted. Obviously the fragment reproduces a kindred type of figure with loincloth, stooping frontally and standing with parallel legs. The Fisherman, whose origin in my opinion must be sought in the late rather than in the early third century, is one of the most influential creations of Hellenistic art. The impression this statue made on contemporaries is even testified to by an Athenian witness, i.e. the magnificent terracotta from the Kerameikos, which cannot be much later than the prototype.<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately it is a stray find without context and still unpublished (Pl. XI*d*).

Among the less well-known works of Hellenistic realism I would like to mention the obvious similarity which exists between the head of a peasant or fisherman in Dresden and a terracotta fragment from Alexandria in Budapest.<sup>6</sup>

These sculptures, of big or moderate size and known to us through copies, do show connections with Alexandria, but the evidence is ambiguous and other centres may raise their claims as well. A clearer answer may be expected from the original statuettes in bronze, faience and terracotta, which exist in great numbers. As for the bronzes, their provenance is mostly unknown

<sup>1</sup> H. Kyrieleis, *Bildnisse der Ptolemäer* (1975), pl. 39. 3, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Himmelmann, *Drei hellenistische Bronzen in Bonn*, pls. 18, 19*a*.

<sup>3</sup> Th. Wiegand, 'Torso eines Fischers aus Aphrodisias' = *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* (1916), 1. The head in Konya, *The Art Bulletin*, 9. 69, figs. 126-7.

<sup>4</sup> *Expedition v. Sieglin*, ii. 3, pl. xxvi. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Photograph no. KER 10073-4 of the German Archaeological Institute in Athens.

<sup>6</sup> Terracotta Budapest inv. no. T. 376. Dresden Hermann 178 = Brunn-Bruckmann, pl. 395. 1.

but in many cases their Alexandrian origin can be demonstrated by technical criteria. Alexandrian bronzes are rarely touched up or polished after the casting process, but usually show the dull wax-like surface of the original model.<sup>1</sup> Closely related to the bronzes are the figurines of faience and terracotta, which may be assigned to Alexandria on material, technical, and iconographical grounds. Since on this occasion the terracottas are my main interest, I will make only a few remarks about the bronzes.

Specialities of the Alexandrian workshops are the exquisite, small bronzes of crippled beggars and hunchbacks, which obviously served as apotropaic table decoration. A related type of dwarf figurine is once mentioned as a *πάταικος ἐπιτραπέζιος*.<sup>2</sup> The attribution is controversial in the case of the famous statuette in Berlin, its origin having been sought in Asia Minor as well as in Alexandria.<sup>3</sup> The problem is easily decided by a fragment of faience in Geneva showing a head very similar to that of the bronze in Berlin.<sup>4</sup> The motif of the whole figurine was probably also the same, since a small remnant gives evidence that the cripple touched his chin with one of his fingers. The bronze in Berlin has its nearest relative in a statuette of the Hamburg museum, which has not yet been attributed to any known school.<sup>5</sup> The picture of the crippled idiot here reaches the utmost macabre pathos, very reminiscent of similar tendencies in the Hellenistic epigram. That it too comes from Alexandria is proved by similar heads from Memphis in the Petrie Museum of London University College.<sup>6</sup> The elongated skull is clearly an Egyptian element as is the small pigtail at the back of the head. Dorothy Thompson has made a very good case for the Alexandrian origin of the dancer in the Baker collection, which, because of modern cleaning but also because of its exceptionally high artistic quality, defies the usual technical criteria.<sup>7</sup> Among other arguments used, Dorothy Thompson has shown that the thin veil covering the face is a detail often found in Alexandrian terracotta figurines. Her impression is corroborated by a wonderful faience fragment in London Uni-

<sup>1</sup> Kyrieleis, *Antike Plastik*, xii (1973), 138.

<sup>2</sup> Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encycl.* xviii. 2, 2551.

<sup>3</sup> K. A. Neugebauer, *Die griechischen Bronzen der klassischen Zeit und des Hellenismus* (1951), no. 62, pl. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Geneva, inv. no. 13225.

<sup>5</sup> D. G. Mitten-S. F. Doeringer, *Master Bronzes from the Classical World* (1967-8), no. 116.

<sup>6</sup> G. M. A. Richter, *Coll. Latomus*, 48 (1960), pl. 26, figs. 129-30.

<sup>7</sup> *AJA* 54 (1950), 371 ff.

versity College (Pls. Xa, b).<sup>1</sup> It belongs to the still unpublished finds from Petrie's excavations in Memphis and makes especially refined use of the motif, showing beneath the veil the features of an attractive negroid woman. The fragment seems to represent *in nuce* the refinement of Alexandrian life, the enchantment of which is so often attested by ancient authors. I take the opportunity to attribute to Alexandria a small bronze in Baltimore showing a figure of uncertain sex in a garment with long sleeves.<sup>2</sup> I think the type is identical with that of a big marble statuette in Florence.<sup>3</sup> The Alexandrian provenance of this piece was long ago demonstrated by Amelung. The meaning is controversial and I cannot offer a new interpretation. The very rough surface is typical of Alexandrian bronzes. Compared to the Florence marble with its flat, one-dimensional view; the statuette in Baltimore shows a more complicated composition and a more plastic treatment of the garments; it is obviously the older one.

I must leave the bronzes since today I am mostly concerned with the Alexandrian terracottas of which there are considerable numbers but which offer great difficulties for classification. At a first glance there are two large groups.<sup>4</sup> The terracottas from the early cemeteries like Sciatbi and Hadra are usually of tolerable artistic quality but they only show types which are also known from the repertoire of the Greek homelands. Realistic and Egyptianizing statuettes seem to be lacking. On the other hand, we have huge numbers of that coarse material called 'Fayumi', which are perhaps the most ugly products of ancient art. In this group realistic and Egyptian features are very prominent indeed. The term 'Fayumi' originally meant terracotta figurines coming from the oasis of that name. Many authors still use it as a geographical term to mark the presumed difference between the coarse products of the province, the *χώρα*, and the more refined manufacture of the metropolis. I am not going to deny that there is such a difference, but on the whole this concept is misleading. Fayumi-like terracottas have also been found in Alexandria itself and in the fashionable resort of Kanopos, so that it is much more likely that the phenomenon marks a chronological rather than a geographical difference. The transition from the earlier group to the later

<sup>1</sup> Inv. no. UC 2321.

<sup>2</sup> D. Kent Hill, *Cat. of Classical Bronze Sculpture in the Walters Art Gallery* (1949), pl. 33, no. 139.

<sup>3</sup> M. Bieber, *Sculpture of the Hellenistic Age*<sup>2</sup>, fig. 333. From this statuette it is obvious that a male figure is meant.

<sup>4</sup> R. A. Higgins, *Greek Terracottas* (1967), pp. 129 ff.

one is difficult to detect and has even been denied by such a connoisseur as Gerhard Kleiner. He hypothetically maintained that there was a gap in the tradition and that the manufacture in Alexandria was reopened only in the middle of the first century BC under the influence of Myrina in Asia Minor. On an historical basis this is anything but convincing. So our main task will be to inquire whether there are not still realistic or Egyptianizing terracottas which can be dated to the period, let us say between 250 and 175 BC. For that purpose we shall mostly use stylistic arguments, but we have some criteria based on materials too. Very often early Alexandrian terracottas are made from imported clay. Small statuettes are usually made of it alone; for bigger ones it is mixed with cheap local material.

For reasons of both style and material an old servant in Berlin may be accepted as an Alexandrian work of the third century, as has been proposed by Hanna Philipp.<sup>2</sup> The block-like composition and the heavy treatment of the garments are very near to that of the well-known marble statuette of a servant in the Terme Museum in Rome.<sup>3</sup> This type has already been vindicated for Alexandria by earlier authors on the basis, however, of erroneous assumptions. It is nevertheless interesting that a fragment of a variant in the Vatican shows the old woman with a statuette of Harpocrates in her arm.<sup>4</sup> This, of course, is not sufficient to attribute the original type to the Alexandrian school.

Before considering the next type, I would like to look at two terracotta heads, the meaning of which is not yet clear. The fragment in Budapest (Pl. IIIc, d) seemingly wears a ribbon and is distinguished by its very individual features.<sup>5</sup> For these reasons it has been identified with a late-Hellenistic ruler. Next to it we have a head excavated in Alexandria and of the typical local material, according to Perdrizet who published the piece in the catalogue of the Fouquet collection.<sup>6</sup> The man wears a close-fitting cap and therefore has been baptized as a Dioscurus (this, however, with a question mark, since here the individual features are conspicuous too). I must add that the Budapest head also

<sup>1</sup> G. Kleiner, 'Tanagrafiguren' = 15. *Ergänzungsheft des Jahrb. Deutsch. Arch. Inst.* (1942), pp. 255 ff., 257.

<sup>2</sup> H. Philipp, *Terrakotten aus Ägypten* (1972), no. 4, fig. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Helbig<sup>4</sup>, iii, no. 2424.

<sup>4</sup> G. v. Kaschnitz-Weinberg, *Sculture del Magazzino del Museo Vaticano*, pls. 35, 196.

<sup>5</sup> *Bulletin du Musée National Hongrois des Beaux-Arts*, 22 (1963), 18 ff.

<sup>6</sup> P. Perdrizet, *Terres cuites Fouquet*, pl. 52, no. 253.

wears a cap, because no hair is shown above what is presumed to be the ribbon, and neither a knot nor ends are visible at the nape of the neck. The riddle of the two heads can be solved by a more completely preserved statuette in Hildesheim (Pls. IV, V), where only the arms and part of the legs are lacking.<sup>1</sup> The head of the man is very similar to the Alexandrian fragment, not only in the features but also in the cap, which is very distinct here because of the white colour and the brown hair which projects from beneath. The short mantle, which is draped over the prominent belly and leaves the greater part of the legs uncovered, and in addition the close-fitting tricot make for easy identification. The man is a comedy actor who needs the cap as a pad for the heavy mask worn on the stage. The meaning is already clear from an oinochoe of the late fifth century in Leningrad, where comedy actors prepare themselves for a performance.<sup>2</sup> Hellenistic terracottas of men with this sort of cap, then, belong to a much older iconographical tradition. It is the representation of the actor without mask, the point of which lies in the contrast between the rigid mask and the individuality of the living face behind it. On the well-known vase-sherds from southern Italy in Würzburg, for example, the noble features of the tragic mask are contrasted with the vulgar head of the actor and his bristly beard.<sup>3</sup> One may doubt, however, if the statuette in Hildesheim and related Hellenistic types always carried masks in their hands. The contrast here may have been more subtle and of a merely physiognomical kind: between the pretentious attitude of the actor and the prominent belly of the comic role on the one hand and that sceptical, knowing expression of the almost suffering face on the other. This melancholy of the professional entertainer reminds one very much of the expression on the face of the comic poet as represented most distinctively by the portrait of Menander.<sup>4</sup> Later tradition regarded Menander as a hypochondriac and this was probably suggested by his portrait as well as by some of the characters in his plays. For further comment, see Aristotle on melancholy in the 30th book of the *Problemata*. The role the actor of the Hildesheim terracotta performed was probably that of the parasite.

The provenance of the statuette in Hildesheim is not known,

<sup>1</sup> *Die Denkmäler des Pelizaeus-Museums zu Hildesheim* (1921), p. 172, fig. 72 (2235).

<sup>2</sup> M. Bieber, *The History of the Greek and Roman Theatre* (1961), fig. 184.

<sup>3</sup> *Festschrift für James Loeb* (1930), pp. 5 ff., fig. 1, pl. 2.

<sup>4</sup> G. M. A. Richter, *The Portraits of the Greeks*, ii (1965), 224 ff.

but it obviously comes from Alexandria and must belong to the third century BC. The well-preserved colours speak for an Egyptian find; the clay is rather coarse and typical of Alexandrian products. There are very close stylistic parallels among terracottas in the museum of Alexandria, as, for example, a thick man with himation, which may have been of a kindred type.<sup>1</sup> The similarity of the face to the head from Alexandria has already been noted.

The type of actor with close-fitting cap is probably an Alexandrian creation, which, however, was imitated in other places. The only alternative would be an Athenian origin, the Athenian manufacture of this time being much richer and much more original than is obvious from the publications. Dorothy Thompson told me, however, that there is as yet no trace of this type in the very comprehensive material from the Agora. Besides the head in Budapest already mentioned there are heads from Pergamon and Smyrna and even nearly complete figures from Myrina.<sup>2</sup> All of them are considerably later than the statuette in Hildesheim, which must belong to the middle of the third century. As a contrast, I cite the head from Smyrna in the Louvre. As if made of rubber, the elongated form, the bloated face, and the pathetic expression betray an origin in late Hellenistic times. A counter-check can be made with a fragment from Egypt in Amsterdam, which, with its terse and dry forms, leads back into the third century.<sup>3</sup>

There is another echo of the type preserved in a miniature terracotta from Egypt in Hildesheim (Pl. IIIa, b) showing the same man with prominent belly and a short mantle covering it.<sup>4</sup> He too looks upward with a suffering expression which here, however, is rather exaggerated. This is most probably a caricature of the actor, still belonging to the third century, as is shown by the strongly divergent axes. The same complicated and dissonant rhythm is met in a statuette of another motif, a crippled spastic beggar in Hamburg.<sup>5</sup> He is clad in a mantle, which covers his head and his haunch, but leaves his bottom bare (Pl. VIIc). Very similar to this figurine is a naked beggar of fine clay in Hildesheim which shows

<sup>1</sup> E. Breccia, *Terrecotte figurate greche e greco-egizie del museo di Alessandria* (1930), i, pl. 20. 1, no. 466.

<sup>2</sup> E. Töpferwein, *Terrakotten von Pergamon* (1976), pl. 73, no. 493. S. Besques, *Catal. figurines . . . en terre cuite Louvre*, iii. 2, pl. 287 h = D1532. F. Winter, *Die Typen der figürlichen Terrakotten*, ii. 428, 8. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Inv. no. 7439.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 2375.

<sup>5</sup> *Arch. Anzeiger*, 75 (1960), 96 ff., figs. 36, 37.



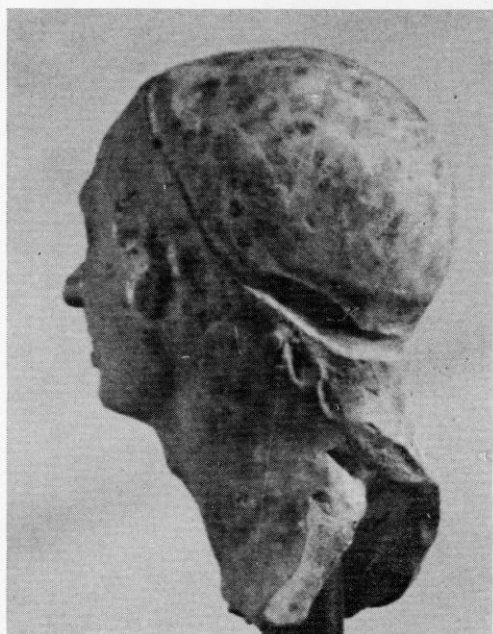


*a.*



*b.*

Caricature of an actor, terracotta figurine, Hildesheim, Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum



*c.*



*d.*

Terracotta head, Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts



Terracotta figurine of an actor, Hildesheim, Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum

\* *Ibid.* no. 1439

\* *Ibid.* no. 1475

\* *Arch. Anzeiger*, 25 (1904), 1511 - *ibid.* 25, 1512.

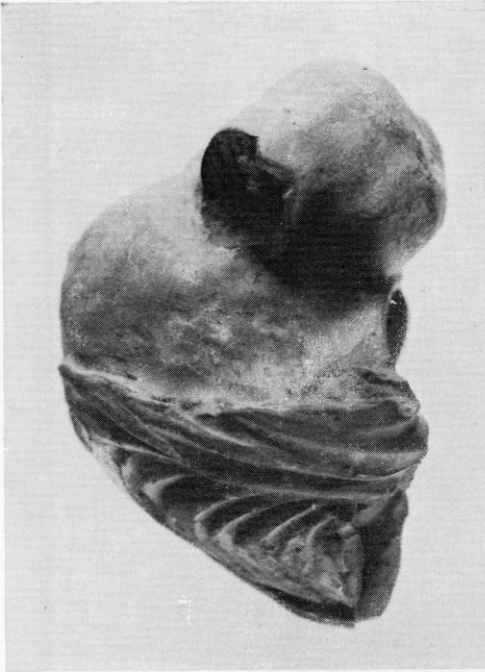


Terracotta figurine of an actor, Hildesheim, Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum

terra-cotta figurine of an actor, Hildesheim, Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum

Terracotta of gawd-paw-tupic, Hildesheim, Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum  
Hildesheim, Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum, L.  
L. Hildesheim

PLATE VI



a.



b.



c.



d.

Torso of grotesque cripple from Memphis, University College London, Petrie Museum



*a.*



*b.*

Terracotta of grotesque cripple, Hildesheim, Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum



*c.*

Terracotta of grotesque cripple, Hamburg,  
Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe



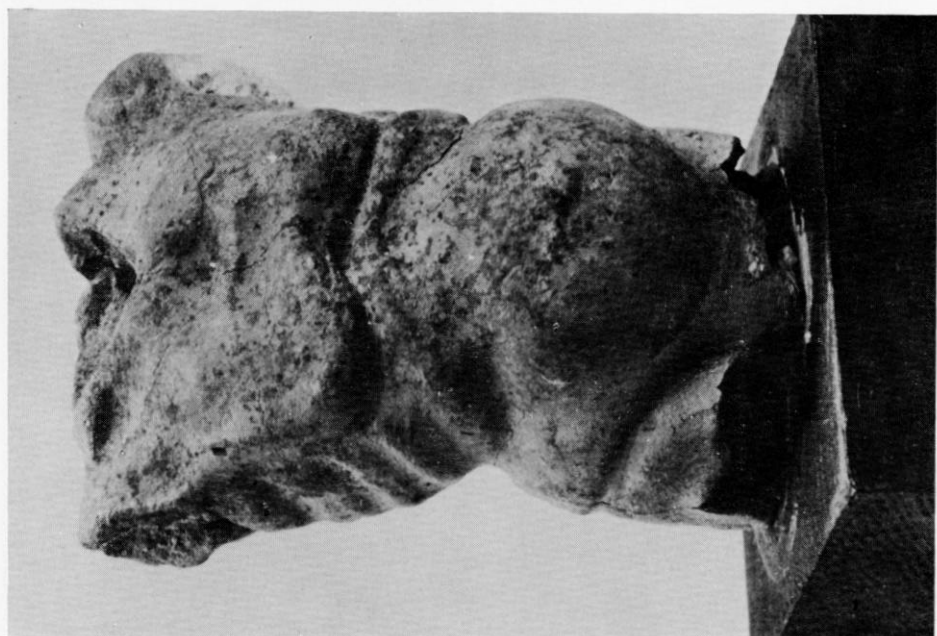
*d.*

Bronze figurine of hunchback with lagynos,  
Bonn, Akademisches Kunstmuseum d.  
Universität

PLATE VIII



Male torso, terracotta from Ras el Soda, Alexandria



Grotesque torso, terracotta from Ras el Soda, Alexandria



Egyptianizing figurine, terracotta from Ras el Soda,  
Alexandria

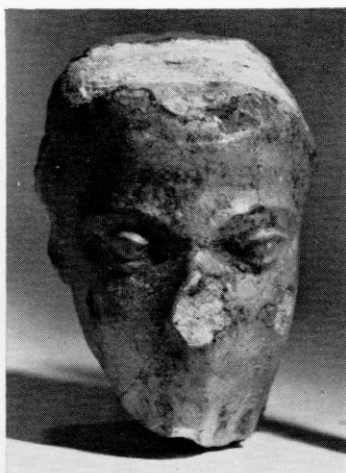
*b.*



Torso of Priest, terracotta from Ras el Soda,  
Alexandria

*a.*

PLATE X



*a.*

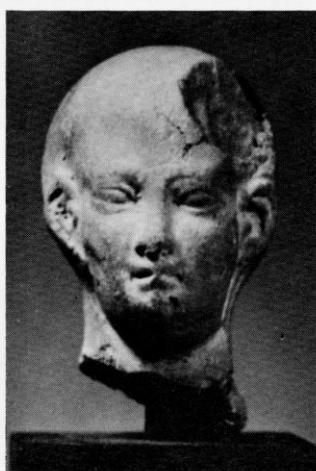


*b.*

Fayence head of veiled woman, University College London, Petrie Museum



*c.*



*d.*

Terracotta head, Karlsruhe, Badisches Landesmuseum



*e.*

Terracotta heads from Ras el Soda, Alexandria





a.



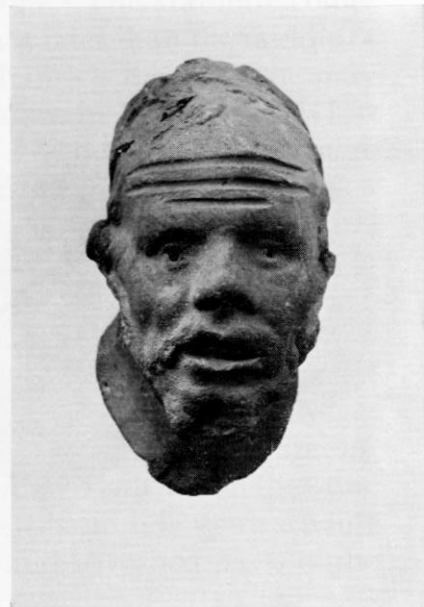
b.

Terracotta head of an old woman from Ras el Soda, Alexandria



c.

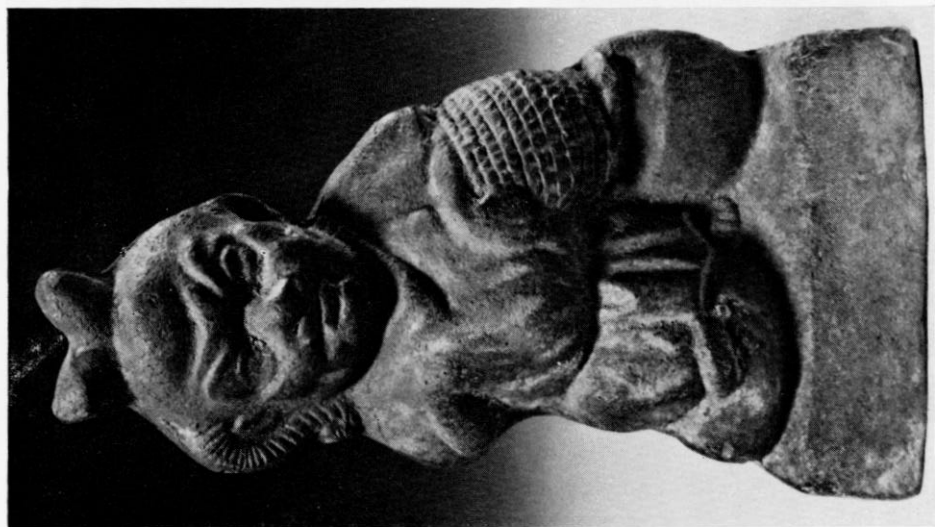
Fayence fragment of Ptolemaic queen from Ras el Soda, Alexandria



d.

Terracotta head from the Kerameikos, Athens

PLATE XII



b.

Terracotta figurine, Berlin-Charlottenburg,  
Ägyptisches Museum



a.

Terracotta figurine, Olympia

the same spastic attitude (Pl. VIIa, b).<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding the small size and the disgusting motif, these statuettes are of a high artistic quality. There is, for example, a remarkably different treatment of the fleshy and flabby face, the thin skin over the swollen belly, and the backside, where the bony structure of the body is rendered underneath the covering flesh. This differentiation is still lacking in a torso (Pl. VI) of a very bold composition in University College London.<sup>2</sup> It comes from Memphis and is made from imported clay. The attitude is not as complicated as that of the other ones, showing more parallels instead of distortion. It probably dates from before the middle of the third century and represents the earliest example of the crippled beggar type I have been able to find as yet.

Seeking for a lower limit for this group of statuettes, I would like to compare the head of the Hildesheim cripple with a grimace-making head in Hamburg, which clearly shows a different kind of treatment.<sup>3</sup> No longer is there a rendering of the material values of the surface but strongly accentuated and tense globular forms. The same principle of bulging, protruding forms, flatter and with less tension, however, is found in an Alexandrian terracotta from Olympia (Pl. XIIa), which is probably meant as the caricature of a comic poet sitting on a theatrical throne.<sup>4</sup> This statuette comes from a pit, the contents of which were not later than the middle of the second century BC, according to Heinrich Bartels. One may already compare it to a so-called Pataikos in Berlin (Pl. XIIb), a bald-headed freak with the lock of Harpocrates and a huge phallos.<sup>5</sup> Please note the round vase on his left-hand side, which will be of use to us later. The head is very similar indeed, showing the same flat swellings of the face. This, however, is already a typical product of the Fayumi group. The gap noted by Kleiner, then, does not exist: there is continuity of development from the late third to the middle of the second century. Concluding this chapter, I would like to illustrate the difference between the two stages once more by comparing two terracottas of exactly the same motif, a pygmy dancer in a tightly draped mantle.<sup>6</sup> Both are on the same plate in an article by Adriani. On the left-hand side there is a fine difference of treatment between loose and stretched parts of the

<sup>1</sup> Inv. no. 992.

<sup>2</sup> UC 30200.

<sup>3</sup> *Arch. Anzeiger*, 75 (1960), 113, fig. 40.

<sup>4</sup> *VIII. Olympia-Bericht*, pp. 25 f ff. (H. Bartels), pls. 120, 121.

<sup>5</sup> Philipp, loc. cit., pl. 9, no. 11.

<sup>6</sup> *Röm. Mitt.* 70 (1963), pl. 41. 1, 2.

garment; this must belong to the late third century. On the right-hand side, on the contrary, we have these tense swellings of face and body, over which the mantle is stretched tightly and uniformly.

After this preparation we may endeavour to classify a large find of terracottas, which came to light in 1940 near Alexandria in a place called Ras el Soda.<sup>1</sup> Since this group comprises a considerable number of realistic and Egyptianizing types, the chronology is of great interest for us. The find had no stratigraphical context, being probably the contents of a favissa, which was emptied in later times. Among the datable objects there were three coins of imperial times and two Megarian bowls of the second century BC. Adriani, who published the material, saw that it was mainly pre-Roman and dated it to 'the second half of the Hellenistic epoch', whatever that may mean. Reynold Higgins proposed the first century BC, but this is not likely as I will try to show.<sup>2</sup> Apart from these two authors, the find is mentioned only as far as I can see by Peter Fraser, who shares Adriani's opinion.<sup>3</sup>

I would like to begin with a selection of grotesque heads showing globular forms and heavy ornament-like features.<sup>4</sup> They are still very different from the grotesque head in Hamburg mentioned before, being smaller and less tense. One might think of a late Hellenistic origin, but this is precluded by a head of this time in the Vatican.<sup>5</sup> Compared to its rugged, open form, the heads in Alexandria are quite compact. Nor is a date possible in imperial times, represented in the Vatican collection by the flat-faced head of a Fisherman.<sup>6</sup> The shrill expressionism of his head produced by the linear treatment of the features is completely lacking in the fragments from Ras el Soda. Symptomatic of their style is the head of an old woman (Pl. XIa, b) from the same find showing heavy bulging forms, still lacking, however, the tension characteristic of terracottas of the early second century.<sup>7</sup> Symptomatic also of the style of the group are some grotesque torsi (Pl. VIIIa) which may be inspired by models of the early fifth century, like the well-known statues

<sup>1</sup> A. Adriani, 'Trouvaille à Ras el Soda' = *Annuaire du Musée Gréco-Romain*, iii (1940-50), 28-46, pls. 13-29.

<sup>2</sup> Higgins, loc. cit., p. 132.

<sup>3</sup> P. M. Fraser, *Opusc. Athen.* iii. 12f.

<sup>4</sup> Adriani, loc. cit., pl. 20. Cf. pl. 17ff. Average height 2.5-3.0 cm.

<sup>5</sup> D. Facenna, *Rend. Pontif. Accad. Rom. di Archeologia*, 29 (1956-7), pl. 10, no. 67.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* no. 65.

<sup>7</sup> Adriani, loc. cit., pl. 19. 4 (centre), 5 (centre).

from Paros.<sup>1</sup> The terracottas, however, betray their Hellenistic origin by the different treatment of the surface rendering the physical qualities of the body: the bony ribs, the flabby flesh of the breast, and the tense swollen belly. It is useful to compare this with a late Hellenistic torso of the Sieglin collection, which reproduces the Fisherman of the Vatican.<sup>2</sup> This statuette is lacking the clear structure of the older ones; it is just a bloated surface. The same may be said of a jumper from Smyrna in Budapest, the bones of which are treated like rubber.<sup>3</sup> Having checked the catalogues of the big collections, if only superficially, my impression was that none of the grotesque statuettes from Smyrna was much earlier. The much disputed question as to whether Alexandria or Smyrna has the priority in this field may be decided with good conscience in favour of Alexandria.

I would like to offer for Ras el Soda not only a relative but also an absolute chronology. Among the terracottas there is the fine torso of a man (Pl. VIII*b*) with raised right leg and stooping body.<sup>4</sup> Here again we have the bony structure and dry treatment of flesh characteristic of all the naked figures in the find. This very much resembles the famous statue of the dying Gaul in the Capitoline museum, for which the same differentiation in treatment is symptomatic. Since the dying Gaul belongs to a group erected shortly after 225 BC, it is very likely that the related terracottas from Ras el Soda were made in the last quarter of the third century. It is an open question, of course, whether the find also comprises later material. At a first glance, for example, the contorted dancer with thick belly and thin limbs may give the impression of a much later date.<sup>5</sup> But I do not think that this is necessary, comparing it with the cripple of University College London mentioned above (Pl. VI). This figure shows a comparable boldness of composition and the same contrast between belly and limbs. There may be only a short period of development between the two terracottas, the younger one from Ras el Soda showing a greater contortion with divergent axes and a softer treatment of flesh.

If this opinion is sound, we may be able to classify the earliest Egyptianizing figures among Alexandrian terracottas. The find from Ras el Soda comprises several statuettes of crouching or

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pl. 15. 1, 4. Height 5.5 cm. Torsi from Paros A. Kostoglu-Despini, *Problemata tes parianes plastikes tou 5tou aiona* (1979), pl. 39 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Expedition v. Sieglin*, ii. 2, pl. 57. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Inv. no. T. 345.

<sup>4</sup> Adriani, loc. cit., pl. 16. 1 (left), 2 (left). Height 7 cm.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pls. 13. 1, 2, 16. 1 (right), 2 (right). Height 11 cm.

sitting young men with large phalloi, naked or wearing a fringed himation.<sup>1</sup> These are forerunners of the corresponding types which play a prominent part in the repertoire of the Fayumi. As an example, I show only one naked figure (Pl. IX*b*) in the familiar Egyptian sitting position and with the two folds under the breast typical also of the Egyptian tradition.<sup>2</sup> The head, however, resembles Egyptian prototypes less than Ionian faces of the late archaic period. We find the same mixture of Egyptian and archaic Greek elements in a small terracotta head in Karlsruhe (Pl. X*c, d*), which is made from fine imported clay.<sup>3</sup> Here the Ionian face goes together with the elongated skull and the support in the nape of the neck, also common in Egyptian art. For technical and stylistic reasons, the fragment must belong to the last quarter of the third century when native Egyptian influence made itself felt elsewhere.

If the whole find belongs more or less to this epoch, as I assume, we can classify some more realistic types represented in this context. There is a priest of Isis (Pl. IX*a*) clad in a fringed mantle, an elegant terracotta which may be compared to figures on late Ptolemaic oinochoai.<sup>4</sup> The head may have been similar to that of a more complete statuette in Berlin, which is of a somewhat earlier date but has already the same realistic rendering of the shrivelled breast.<sup>5</sup> A very lively head (Pl. X*e*) with shaggy beard, open mouth, and raised brows may represent a fisherman.<sup>6</sup> Finally, I would like to mention two objects of faience, both being of interest for the chronology. One of them shows a well-known type of farmer with basket and has already been dated to the late third century by Dorothy Thompson.<sup>7</sup> I will consider another copy of this type at the end of my paper. The other fragment (Pl. XI*c*) comes from the miniature portrait of a Ptolemaic queen in the guise of Isis.<sup>8</sup> It is a pity that just the face is destroyed but anyway the type of hairdo is identical with that of a big statuette in New York which, according to the inscription, represents Arsinoë II.<sup>9</sup> The fragment then shows Arsinoë II, whose cult, however, lasted for

<sup>1</sup> Adriani, loc. cit., pls. 14. 5, 16. 4, 25. 4, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pl. 25. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Inv. no. H 676.

<sup>4</sup> Adriani, loc. cit., pl. 22. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Philipp, loc. cit., pl. 4, no. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Adriani, loc. cit., pl. 18. 6.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pl. 23. 1, 2. D. Burr Thompson in *Studies in Classical Art and Archaeology*, for P. H. von Blanckenhagen (1979), pp. 175 ff., pl. 50, 3-4.

<sup>8</sup> Adriani, loc. cit., pl. 23. 7.

<sup>9</sup> Kyrieleis, *Bildnisse der Ptolemäer*, pl. 71.

centuries, or one of her immediate successors. This seems likely because of the parallel locks of hair, which on the latest Ptolemaic oinochoai are replaced by a more complicated pattern. This speaks for a date before the end of the third century.

I would like to conclude with a big bronze statuette in the Metropolitan Museum of New York, acquired in 1972.<sup>1</sup> With a height of 40.5 cm and finely worked, it is a masterpiece of realistic art from antiquity. The bronze shows an old man with short unathletic legs, flat feet, and sagging belly. He wears the exomis, having put a closed diptychon behind the fringed girdle. His left shoulder and arm are naked, the withered flesh of the old man being rendered in a very naturalistic way. The left arm is across the body; the lost right arm must have been raised against the head, which is looking downward with an expression of deep thoughtfulness. The head corroborates the impression that the man is a banausos. His forehead is bald and he wears a short beard. The wrinkled front and the eyes, which are set close together, add to the picture of a narrow-minded character. All these features make it impossible to recognize here a philosopher merged into 'les profondeurs de la pensée'. A philosopher of course would wear a himation, not the exomis as we have it here. This is rather the mark of a banausos and, more specifically, a craftsman. The statuette resembles very much indeed the type of Daidalos as we meet him on Roman sarcophagi or on gems. I give only one example, where the short legs and flat feet and the prominent sagging belly are the same.<sup>2</sup> On a sarcophagus with Pasiphaë in the Louvre Daidalos is clad in an exomis and is in attitude just like the New York bronze.<sup>3</sup> Thus it would be legitimate to name the man Daidalos, were it not for the brooding expression which needs a special explanation.

This interpretation is complicated by the fact that the type of the New York banausos can be found also among Alexandrian terracottas. A statuette from the Sieglin collection, formerly in Leipzig and lost during the last war, shows the same man with short legs and his left arm across his body.<sup>4</sup> The figurine proves that we were right to think the right arm was raised and probably supported the head, though there is no trace of this on the bronze. The identity of type is clear also from the diptychon sticking in front of the belly. Other details, however, are different. The man

<sup>1</sup> Inv. no. 1972, 11, 1. *Mon. Piot*, 54 (1965), 25 ff.

<sup>2</sup> G. Lippold, *Gemmen und Kameen des Altertums und der Neuzeit*, pl. 48. 1.

<sup>3</sup> C. Robert, *Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, iii. 1, pl. x, no. 35.

<sup>4</sup> J. Vogt, *Expedition E.v. Sieglin*, ii. 2 (1924), pl. 71. 1.

wears a shawl with fringes at the end. His head is without beard and he does not concentrate on thinking but looks rather bored and impudent. This makes it very probable that a waiting slave is meant, the typical attitude of whom we already find on so many red-figured vases. The fringed shawl perhaps gives him a special Alexandrian note, the exact meaning of which eludes us.

The type of terracotta described must have been very popular in Alexandria and was reproduced there for centuries. I cite another example in Berlin, which dates from the late third century AD.<sup>1</sup> There are other copies from the same mould in Hildesheim and elsewhere. At a first glance the identity of type with the terracotta in Leipzig is not obvious but this is due to the difference of style over such a long time (the figurine in Leipzig being probably of the first century BC). The terracotta in Berlin not only shows the same attitude but also details, such as the short legs and the fringed shawl. That we were right to connect the type of terracottas with the New York banausos is proved by the head, which does not follow the statuette in Leipzig but returns to the type of the bronze, repeating the bald forehead, the short beard, and the brooding expression. On his right-hand side the man is flanked by a pillar with a globular vase on it. This may hint at the context of the figure, but it does not help us very far. You may remember the identically shaped vase represented with the Pataikos in Berlin, where this was obviously meant as a symbol of the cult of Harpocrates, who often holds this sort of vase himself. Here (together with the fringed shawl) it may mean that the man is a slave in a precinct of Harpocrates, but the point of the character and especially of his brooding expression remain an enigma to us.

As to the date of the New York bronze, it is much easier to reach plausible results. I compare it to a faience in the Benaki Museum showing a farmer with basket of a type already mentioned.<sup>2</sup> The attitude of the figurine with parallel legs and one arm across the body is very similar and adds to the impression that the New York banausos comes from this typological tradition. The style of the faience, however, is quite different. In spite of its much smaller size it shows stronger accents and the rendering of naturalistic details is more powerful. The belly bulges over the girdle, the arm is not flat but seen in profile. The contour is disturbed by the basket and by the diagonal roll of the himation. The faience type has been dated to the late third century by Dorothy Thompson and this is quite convincing. If you compare the New York bronze it is much flatter

<sup>1</sup> Philipp, loc. cit., pl. 46, no. 48. Perdrizet, loc. cit., pl. 91, no. 441.

<sup>2</sup> Burr Thompson, loc. cit., pls. 49f.



and its contours speak very clearly. The next parallel to this kind of composition is the statuette of a waiting slave in Lyon, which also may be of Alexandrian manufacture or at least an imitation of an Alexandrian prototype of the second half of the first century BC.<sup>1</sup> I think that this is the date of the New York banausos too. This tradition is still continued by figures like the late bronze of a fisherman from Volubilis, who follows a very similar scheme of composition.<sup>2</sup>

Last but not least there is the provenance of the New York statuette which speaks for an Alexandrian origin. It was found in the sea off North Africa, probably not far from Cherchel, ancient Iol-Caesarea. There was always a very close cultural contact between Alexandria and the Numidian capital. It had its climax when in 20 BC Juba II, the famous connoisseur on the throne, married Cleopatra Selene, daughter of the last reigning Ptolemaic queen. It is obvious that the family saw themselves in the tradition of the Ptolemies, as is shown by the name of the crown prince. There was also a gallery of ancestral portraits, among which the heads of probably the first Ptolemy and Cleopatra VII were found.<sup>3</sup> Against this background it becomes very likely that the New York bronze is an original work from Alexandria bought for Iol-Caesarea in the time of Juba II. As one of the few masterpieces of ancient art preserved, it is a late but outstanding witness to the high artistic level of realism in Alexandrian art, to which my brief remarks were dedicated.

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<sup>1</sup> St. Boucher, *Bronzes grecs, hellénistiques et étrusques des musées de Lyon* (1970), 50, no. 29.

<sup>2</sup> C. Boube-Piccot, *Les Bronzes antiques du Maroc*, i (1969), 169 ff., no. 180, pls. 103-7.

<sup>3</sup> *Die Numider* (Exhibition in the Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn, 1979-80), pp. 516-19.