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CYPRUS: RELIGION AND SOCIETY

FROM THE LATE BRONZE AGE TO THE END OF THE ARCHAIC PERIOD

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**Music and cult:
the significance of percussion and the Cypriote connection**

Images of musicians are a favourite subject in Cypriote iconography of the Iron Age. The genre shows solo performance or musical ensembles including string, wind and percussion instruments, sometimes with the accompaniment of dance. Musical imagery is depicted on a handful of vases, seal stones and bronze bowls, where in most cases the narrative suggests that the performance is associated with cult and ritual (Karageorghis 1973; Dikaios 1936-37; Karageorghis and Des Gagniers 1974-79; Gjerstad 1946; Markoe 1985, cat. nos Cy 3, Cy 5, Cy 6, Cy 7, Cy 13; Reyes 2001, 68, nos 74, 75; Iacovou 1997). But the vast number of representations of musicians is to be found in the coroplastic art of the Cypro-Geometric and the Cypro-Archaic periods (Karageorghis 1993, cat. nos LGA[iii]:5-7, LGB:1, LGC:1,8; Karageorghis 1995, cat. nos I[v]1-8, I[vi]1-7, I[vii]1-19, II[iv]5, III[i]1-10; Karageorghis 1998, cat. nos I[ix]1-36, I[x]3, 4, I[xi]h.60-80, II[xiii]2, 4, II[xiv]1-5, II[xv]1-71; J. Karageorghis 1999, chaps VI-VIII; Meerschaert 1991). The terracottas were manufactured with the explicit purpose to be offered as votives in sanctuaries or to be deposited in graves and, apart from the customary lyres and auloi, they particularly favour the representation of percussion instruments such as tambourines, cymbals and bells.

With its choice of subject matter, Cypriote coroplastic art exemplifies the deep underlying connection between cult and musical performance. This is not surprising, as in most cultures music is an important part of religious ceremonies and rituals. The role of music in ritual is more than a mere accompaniment or a means of entertainment on the side of the religious happenings. The performance of music and the performance of rituals are two interdependent social acts. Each of them serves as an outlet and a framework for the other, and they provide each other with set forms of action that are linked to the fundamental religious and social beliefs of a given culture.

Rhythm, ritual and percussion

This profound connection between music and ritual lies in the fact that the element of rhythm, which is essential for the performance of music as it is inherent in any melody, is also vital for most aspects of human communication, for social integration and interaction, and for the practice of rituals themselves. Rhythm is the primordial expression of life inherent in man as it is already experienced from the beat of the mother's heart (Disanayake 2000). It underlies all human motor and vocal/sound behaviour, as it is fundamental for organizing temporally acoustic, verbal or kinetic material.

Rhythmical organization is basically a by-product of the phenomenon known as redundancy. The latter is characteristic of temporal (or sequential) arts like music, dance

and oral poetry, which are created and perceived whilst their elements are unfolded consecutively in time revealing their patterned arrangement. But redundancy also governs other related continuing processes such as language and discourse (Brown 2000; Merker 2000). Repetition, formularization and expectancy are the three main redundancy devices which govern music making and discourse. By repeating melodic and rhythmic motifs, a high level of fixed patterns (formulae) is achieved, which in turn are anticipated as they have become part of a collective knowledge or experience (Schutz 1977; Sloboda 1985; Blacking 1992; Richman 2000). From the stock of known patterns new combinations are likely to emerge, which eventually become familiar through repetition and thus increase the number of anticipated formulae. The composition and transmission of oral poetry and primitive song are prime examples of the effectiveness of the redundancy mechanisms (Lord 1960; Nagy 1996; Janko 1998; Bowra 1962).

Such processes require interaction, and occur through group activities where, in effect, individuals need to be in synchrony with the other members of the group in order to stay involved and become integrated (Bowra 1962, 34-47; Nettl 1983; Sloboda 1985). Integration is a key point in human survival and in the making of social structures, and it is largely achieved by means of rhythmic organized patterns that condition the sound, movement and vocal communication process. Modern research on biomusicology, neurology, evolution and language has shown that repetition and synchronism, in other words adherence to set rhythmic patterns, facilitate interaction, allow group participation and bonding and lead to group behavioural conditioning (essays in Wallin, Merker and Brown [eds] 2000). This conditioning could not be achieved if humans did not have the neural propensity to respond cognitively and emotionally to temporal patterns produced by other humans in order to confirm unity and affiliation.

The emotive impact of rhythm and music is a fundamental factor for the incorporation of musical performance in a ritual process. As a matter of fact, rituals become established as interactive patterned temporal sequences that embody enculturation and structure feelings, and in this sense they are irrevocably connected with the primary essence of music making (Merriam 1964; Dissanayake 2000; Freeman 2000). The practice of rituals, especially of those highly differentiating rituals that transform a generalized mass of people into a particular community, is grounded in specific concepts that forge the group identity, and the ideas behind the ritual performance are brought about through audio-kinetic arrangements (Blacking 1976). In this sense, the patterned behaviour followed in ritual happenings is intertwined with the arrangements and patterns of the musical performance employed alongside the ritual.

What is important in the practice of rituals is the experience of group-synchrony and bonding, which is intensified when the movement is vocalized with accompanying sounds. In this sense, it is not melody that matters, but the sheer rhythmic awareness and the sensation of percussion reverberations that have an affective impact on the body (Needham 1967). It is the essence of rhythm to re-structure time, being practically a new 'organization of time'. Continuous sounds and the persistent repetition of single or

multiple rhythms can incite exuberance beyond the normal levels and create an alternative state of consciousness, a trance feeling. Musicians, dancers and audience are all participants in this new order and collectively share a new state of consciousness (Needham 1967; Hanna 1992; Rouget 1987; Rudhardt 1992; Bélis 1988).

Because rhythm is intrinsic in the performance of music and in the practice of rituals, providing the guidelines for the consecutive introduction of the various sounds and actions in time, it is the non-melodious percussion instruments that are most prominently associated with cult.¹ In effect, the playing of percussion in communal celebrations and festivals as well as at important events in one's life (such as rites of passage, succession to office, death and birth), is a widespread and diachronic phenomenon (Needham 1967; Marcuse 1975; Schatkin 1978; Brocato and Buda 1996; Smith 1996).

Cymbals, clappers, tambourines, rattles, bells, gongs and scrapers are such instruments; on the whole they produce simple and repetitive rhythmical sounds that are usually of invariable and indeterminate pitch. The lack of pitch melody is nevertheless redeemed by the variety of timbres that percussion instruments can offer due to their different materials (metal, clay, membrane, bone and wood among others) and playing techniques, and by their ability to produce continuous sounds which range from an overpowering high volume to a subtle suggestive hum that is just about audible. In this respect, percussion can produce a remarkable variety of sound effects which aid the enactment of the ritual. Playing the aulos or the lyre might offer a more sophisticated melodic aspect, but using percussion would serve a more vital purpose, as it accentuates the focus on rhythm, affects emotive and psychological factors, and reinforces the feeling of integration and bonding. This is essential not only for the participation in religious rituals and mysteries, but also for other situations where group-synchrony is crucial, such as war and battle.

In the course of the ritual, but also in everyday life, the rhythmical sound, timbre and volume of percussion instruments act as a catalyst, intensifying emotions and even rousing fear. Aeschylus refers to the terrifying, subterranean and thunder-like sound of *tympa* (*Fragmenta* 10A.71a.14), and it is precisely with her *tympanon* playing that Kybele was able to scare off a lion, according to Simonides (*Epigramata* 6.217.5). The powerful emotive effects that percussion had upon its audience could only be associated with the supernatural, and as a consequence the playing of percussion eventually became a powerful prophylactic and apotropaic action. For instance, myth has it that Heracles frightened off the Stymphalian birds with bronze clappers given to him by Athena and manufactured by Hephaistos (Pseudo-Apollodorus *Myth.* 2.93.1-7), and that the infant Zeus was protected from Kronos by the noises that the nature-spirits Kouretes and Korybantes made as they danced banging their shields, beating tambourines and clashing clappers and cymbals (Callimachus, *Hymn to Zeus* 50-52).

¹ The term percussion is used here collectively to describe both the category of idiophones (instruments whose whole body is set to vibrate by striking, shaking or scraping) and membranophones (instruments that are sounded by means of a taut membrane that vibrates).

Beating bronze, in particular, was a standard practice in antiquity and the Middle Ages in order to avert evil in everyday life and in the course of purification, funerary or religious rituals (Cook 1902; Villing 2002, 284-94; Schatkin 1978, esp. 156-64). Ancient literary sources indicate that the sound of bronze was ascribed extraordinary magical powers. According to Apollodorus, the expiatory rites for a murderer included the clash of bronze which had the power to purify due to its own purity (Cook 1902, 14 n. 1; Apollodorus *fr.* 38), whereas the Pythagoreans thought that when bronze was beaten, its sound emitted the voice of a demon trapped inside (Schatkin 1978, 150 n. 56; Villing 2002, 290 n. 269); hence, a spot was sanctified in the name of chthonian Artemis by banging a bronze object (Theocritus *Id.* ii.36). The most celebrated bronze percussion instrument whose ritual use exemplifies the protective qualities of bronze-produced sound was a sort of bell or gong that was set at the sanctuary of Zeus at Dodona and was known as the 'Δωδωναῖον χαλκεῖον'. In one version, a file of overlapping bronze cauldrons encircled the sanctuary; when one of them was struck, the whole file reverberated. In another version, the wind caused a chain set above a single cauldron to strike it; the continuous echoing sound protected the precinct permanently (Cook 1902).

Such examples illustrate how the essential practice of marking rhythmic synchrony evolves into the concepts of purification, divine presence, protection and sanctification of a location by means of sounding bronze. The reason behind these notions may well be found in the primordial importance of rhythmic synchrony for social integration and interaction, and in the emotive character of percussion sounds that complemented the patterned actions of the ritual. The importance of the metal/bronze substance was a later phenomenon, a result of the technological improvements and the significance of metal in Bronze Age societies. One should, therefore, look for profound religious symbolism not only in bronze percussion instruments, but in all forms that are able to mark group-synchrony effectively, no matter how humble their material may be.

Percussion in Cyprus

Percussion instruments made of simple materials such as clay and bone are attested in the Cypriote archaeological record since the Bronze Age.

Clay rattles are the earliest instruments to be found on the island. More than fifty examples of terracotta awl-shaped rattles are known from Enkomi, Hala Sultan Tekke, Idalion and other sites, deposited mainly in Middle and Late Cypriote graves (Buchholz 1990). The daemonic character of the awl suggests that they were played in rituals. Furthermore, since these rattles are never found in the context of children's burials, it is unlikely that they were used as toys (Buchholz 1990, 35). The modelling of a unique horse-shaped terracotta rattle from a Late Cypriote II-III tomb at Kazaphani (Karageorghis 1993, cat. no. H2, pl. XIV.5) is probably prompted by the fact that jingles and bells were often hung from the necks of animals, and especially horses, in order to protect

them from evil as well as to keep track of them (Villing 2002, 271-3 with further references; Hickmann 1951 and 1965).

Clay rattles in the shape of pomegranate, phormiskos (bottle) and pig are also known from the Cypro-Geometric to the Roman period. Their context, when known, is usually funerary and the shapes have explicit religious connotation (Buchholz 1966; Buchholz 1990, 36 n. 10; Morris 1985, 235, pl. 265). The pomegranate was a symbol of regeneration, life and death, as it was thought to have sprung from the blood of the slain Dionysos (Frazer 1949, 389). Buchholz has also drawn attention to the religious symbolism of the pig as the sacred animal to Demeter (Buchholz 1966, 151). During the Eleusinian Mysteries pigs were thrown into sacred caverns, dramatically representing the descent of Persephone into the Underworld. The pig was also sacred in the Syrian and Phrygian worship of Attis who, according to the myth, was killed by a boar, as well as in the Egyptian cult of Osiris, where it was sacrificed annually. In all these cases the pig embodies the deity, becoming a symbol of strength and a means of divination in ritual (Frazer 1949, 31, 347, 464-76). The deposition of pig rattles in two child burials at Salamis and Trikomo (Buchholz 1966, 145-6, nos 3, 4, 8) may suggest that these rattles were also used as toys. It is unlikely, however, that the instrument would be devoid of its cultic significance even when used outside the ritual.

Following the model of Mesopotamian, north Syrian, Levantine and Egyptian incised bones that have been interpreted as scrapers (Manniche 1991, 36; Webb 1977 with further references; Caubet 1987, 735-7, figs 1-2; Caubet 1996, 12-13; Braun 2002, 176-8), it has also been proposed that the numerous incised bovine scapulae which have been found in Cyprus had a similar function (Karageorghis 1990a, 159). These were mainly recovered from Late Cypriote contexts, but there are also examples from the Cypro-Archaic and Cypro-Classical periods. Incised scapulae have been excavated at Kition, Enkomi, Myrtou-*Pigadhes*, Limassol-*Komissariato* and Palaepaphos (Courtois 1971, 277-80; Webb 1977 and 1985; Karageorghis 1990a; Taylor 1957, 78, 100, pl. V.d). In all the above cases they are associated with temples and sanctuaries. Only one example comes from a tomb at Palaepaphos (Karageorghis 1990b, 67, pl. XXVII). A cultic use for these objects can, therefore, be surmised quite certainly, although not all scholars agree with the interpretation of the incised scapulae as scrapers, since no plectra have been found with the Cypriote examples to confirm this theory; alternative suggestions that the scapulae were used for account keeping at the temple or for scapulomancy have also been put forward (Taylor 1957, 78; Webb 1977; Braun 2002, 178). However, the careful polishing of the surface of the scapulae is more compatible with their interpretation as sound making devices, as it is a feature that would make scraping much more effective. Additionally, evidence of wear perpendicular to the incised area of the bone has been reported from Ugarit and Kition (Caubet 1996, 13; Karageorghis 1990a). The monotonous, unmelodic, rhythmic sound of the scraped scapulae creates a continuous, mystifying sound effect appropriate for certain phases of the ritual. The choice of animal/material is important in the making of a sound tool with

overtly religious character like the scraper (Marcuse 1975, 93-4), and in this respect the use of bovine scapulae is totally relevant with the Cypriote bull cult of the Late Bronze Age.

Images of percussion

Returning to the Cypriote musical iconography, it is noteworthy that instruments such as rattles and scrapers never found their way into the iconographic repertoire, despite the ample archaeological evidence for the continuous cultic use of these types of percussion in the Bronze and Iron Ages. On the other hand, tambourines are depicted repeatedly on terracottas and other media from the Late Cypriote III period onwards. From the Cypro-Geometric period cymbals and bells also begin to appear in Cypriote coroplastic art, increasing significantly in number during the Cypro-Archaic period. These instruments are strongly linked with fundamental religious concepts, as will be shown, and their portrayal in Cyprus follows the general trends of the musical iconography of the Near East and the Levant during the Late Bronze and the Early Iron Ages.

Tambourine

The most celebrated percussion instrument in Cypriote iconography is the small, portable frame drum (also known as tambourine), that is first encountered in the Late Cypriote III period (Pl. 23.1). Frame drums consist of a circular wooden or metal frame upon which the leather skin (membrane or head) is nailed, glued or laced. Sound quality is determined by the membrane, which must first of all have the right thickness in order to resonate; the pitch of the instrument becomes higher by tightening the membrane and its tone gets deeper by increasing the diameter of the head. Beating the rhythm on the membrane with bare hands is the most common playing technique for medium/small portable tambourines, and this is how they are usually played in Cyprus as well as in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece and the Levant, although the use of beaters is also attested in Old Babylonian and Roman representations (Sachs 1940, pl. IV.b,c; *LIMC* III.2, s.v. Attis 248).

As no other types of drums (kettle drums or tubular drums for instance) are illustrated in Greek iconography, the Greek words *tympanon* and *typanon*, derivatives of *typtein* (to beat), invariably denote tambourines (Euripides *Bacchae* 120-5; Suda s.v. 'Τύμπανον'; Hesychius s.v. 'Τύμπανον'). Literary sources associate *tympana* with the Mother Goddess and her attendants the Kouretes, and with the related deities Demeter, Kybele, Rhea and Dionysos (Pindar *fr.* 125; Homeric *Hymn to the Mother of Gods* 1-5; Euripides *Bacchae* 58-59, 120-134, 151-167, *Helen* 1338-1352, *Cyclops* 63-70, 203-205; Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae* XIV, 636a; Callimachus, *Hymn to Zeus* 50-52; Strabo

Geogr. 10.466.7, 10.468, 11.469-70; Sch. Soph. *Ajax* 699e.4). *Tympana* are generally considered of Phrygian origin connected with the rites of Kybele and Dionysos, but in a passage from Euripides it is the Cretan Kouretes that are credited with the invention of the 'ring covered in stretched hide' (*Bacchae* 120-5, 'βυρσότονον κύκλωμα'; transl. Barker 1984, 74). The Kouretes were renowned for their noisy orgiastic dances accompanied by the beating of shields, cymbals and *tympana* in the worship of Zeus Kretagenes, a cult associated with fertility/regeneration and initiation rituals including a process of death followed by revival as a new-born deity or grown youth respectively (Willets 1962, 88-9, 213, 239-43). The well-known votive sheet deposited at the Idaean Cave, depicting winged daemons in Assyrianizing style striking round objects, might be a visual reference to shield or *tympanon* beating (Braun-Holzinger and Matthäus 2000, 298-310), due to the important role that percussion played in this kind of ritual.

The cultic association of the tambourine with Bacchic worship and notions of fertility and regeneration may stem from the original connection of the primitive form of drum with earth. This was a skin stretched to dry over a hole in the ground, the hole eventually acting as a resonator; the skin was secured in place by pegging on poles driven into the earth (Blades 1984, 49). The actual physical connection of the stretched hide with the earth may have initiated its significance as a metaphor for earth in religious ritual. It is a standard practice in Greek fertility cults to beat the earth with mallets or with bare hands in order to evoke the chthonian deity to arise and thus make the earth thrive. Many representations on Greek vases illustrate this particular ritual action that causes the epiphany of the deity (Bérard 1974, 75-87). The symbolic meaning of beating the earth is thus reflected in the playing of the frame drum as a synecdoche for earth, beaten by the bare hands of the musician-worshipper. In fact, the association between the earth and the *tympanon* is so strong, that it is met even in the context of philosophical-scientific debate, where the shape of the earth is compared with the round and flat surface of the *tympanon* (Anaxagoras *Testimonia* 88.8 'πλατεῖα οὖσα καὶ τυμπανοειδὴς ἡ γῆ'; Aristotle *Cael.* 293b.32). But the deep religious connection between the two is best illustrated by two references in Suda, where it is mentioned that the personified Earth withholding the winds is represented as a statue of a female holding a *tympanon* (Suda s.v. 'Γῆς ἄγαλμα' and 'Εστία').

This type of a seated deity holding (and not playing) a large frame drum is very common from the Classical period onwards and is usually identified with Kybele, a deity who is nevertheless associated with Demeter, Rhea, Mother Goddess and Astarte (Daremberg and Saglio 1875, I.2, s.v. 'Cybele'; see representations in *LIMC* VIII.2, s.v. Kybele 17-20, 32-40, 42, 47, 59, 94, 98, 109, 113 and *LIMC* III.2, s.v. Attis 389, 397). The same imagery is found on a late Cypro-Archaic II female terracotta that presents precisely an enthroned figure holding a disc with her right hand in front of her upper body, while her other arm rests on her lap (Pl. 23.2). The figurine is reputedly from Idalion, but its context is not known (Karageorghis 1998, 34, cat. no. I[x]3, pl. XXI.11). The rendering of the tambourine as a clay disc, flat and large enough to cover the upper

body of the figure, is the standard way of representing the instrument in Cypriote coroplastic art. Enthroned figures are not common in this class of artefacts, and it is possible that in this case the throne with high backrest and footstool indicates the divine nature of the female figure. It can be compared with the early Cypro-Archaic II terracotta figure of the Syro-Phoenician god Baal-Hammon from the Meniko sanctuary, who is seated on an identical throne with footstool (Karageorghis 1998, pl. LXXX:8; Vandenabeele 1986, 354, pl. XXX.1). The identity of the female terracotta with tambourine cannot be ascertained, but a connection with Aphrodite/Astarte, the Cypriote version of the Mother Goddess, seems plausible.

Apart from the unique seated female with tambourine, Cypriote iconography presents tambourine players standing or dancing. We find three iconographic types of tambourine representation, where the instrument is: (a) held perpendicular to the body and played, (b) held parallel to the upper body and played, and (c) held on the ventral area with one hand, without being played.

Type (a) is the most commonly found in Mesopotamian, Levantine, Egyptian, Cypriote and Greek iconography. The instrument is shown perpendicular to the body, supported from below with one hand (usually the left), whereas the other hand (usually the right) strikes the membrane. It is held at the level of the face/chest, positioned either at an angle or vertical to the plane of the body, as is shown on the terracotta with wheel-made body and mould-made head from the Lapithos workshop (Pl. 23.3). This type of representation reflects a widespread technique that is still used today for the playing of the frame drum in the eastern Mediterranean and the Arab world (Fig. 1) (Collaer and Elsner 1983). One hand grips the tambourine from below; the frame of the instrument



Fig. 1. Tambourine player, type (a).



Fig. 2. Tambourine player, type (b).

rests between the palm and the thumb, allowing the four fingers to strike the front of the membrane, whereas the thumb alters the tone by pressing the back of the membrane and stretching it. The other hand beats the rhythm with the palm and fingers, and it has flexibility to move about and alternate between striking the circumference and the centre of the membrane. This creates different acoustic effects, as the centre of the membrane produces deeper sounds from the edges (Blades and Montagu 1976, 15, 37-8; Blades 1984, 385-6).

This manner of tambourine playing is first encountered in Cypriote coroplastic art with a Cypro-Geometric I/II female dance group accompanied by a male musician (Karageorghis 1993, cat. no. GD3, pl. XXVIII.11). In the Cypro-Archaic period it is very popular with the female representations from the workshops of Lapithos (Pl. 23.3) and Larnaca-*Kamilarga* (Karageorghis 1998, cat. nos I[xi]h, II[xv]; see also discussion on cymbals below), and it is also found with male terracotta tambourine players from Ayia Irini, Yeroskipou-*Monagri* and elsewhere (Karageorghis 1995, cat. nos I[vii]1, 13, 16-19). The same playing technique is acquired by the female tambourine players that are part of the music ensemble shown on four bronze bowls decorated with scenes of ritual banqueting and symposia (Markoe 1985, cat. nos Cy3, Cy5, Cy6, Cy13). An abbreviated form of these scenes, including the tambourine player, is depicted on a seal of the Lyre Player Group from Ayia Irini (Reyes 2001, 68-9 no. 74, fig. 97; Boardman and Buchner 1966, 35 no. 125, fig. 36; Boardman 1990, 15 no. 125, fig. 12). Limestone examples of tambourine players of the iconographic type (a) are also known, but they are limited in number (Vandenabeele 1994, 129-30, pl. XXXIX.b).

The iconographic type (b) shows a different playing technique, with the instrument held parallel to the body (Fig. 2, Pls 23.1 and 24.1). Both hands grip the frame of the tambourine with the palm and thumb (the latter resting flat on the outer surface of the frame), while the rest of the fingers strike the membrane and beat the rhythm (Fig. 2). This technique is still used in Arab countries today enabling complex rhythms to be performed, as both hands are engaged in playing. The hands are placed opposite to each other, either striking the membrane on different levels of its circumference (one towards the bottom and the other towards the top) or both positioned at the lower part of the tambourine (Collaer and Elsner 1983). It is possible that these variations in playing are also illustrated in Cypriote coroplastic art, as the tambourine players of this iconographic type have their hands either arranged diametrically on the surface of the clay disc (Fig. 3, Pl. 23.1) or placed right below it (Pl. 24.1).

Playing the tambourine in this manner is first shown on Old Babylonian terracotta plaques of the early 2nd millennium BC that show female tambourine players; these are depicted semi-nude, wearing jewellery, with accentuated breasts, ventral and pubic area (Bisi 1980, 58-9, pl. II.1; Rashid 1984, 96, figs 92-95). Similar plaques representing nude or dressed female tambourine players were produced in the Levant between the 12th and the 6th centuries BC, and they are found on cultic sites and in funerary contexts (Braun 2002, 126-33, pls IV.6-9, 12). In Cyprus, the iconographic type (b) features the

earliest iconographic evidence for tambourine playing on the island, and is contemporary with the earliest Levantine representations. It is shown on a Late Cypriote III terracotta (Base Ring ware), whose overall modelling is influenced by the Old Babylonian prototypes, as it emphasizes in a similar manner the pubic and ventral area (Pl. 23.1) (Karageorghis 1993, cat. no. A[vi]1, pl. VII.2). Seen in profile, the thin clay disc held by the figure is slightly tilted forwards, recalling real life tambourine playing, a detail missing from the two-dimensional relief plaques from Mesopotamia and the Levant. These are generally thought to be cult images of fertility, combining both profane and sacral symbolism, either denoting a female attendant of the temple or alluding to the divinity (Bisi 1980, 59, 70; Spycket 1972, 181; Braun 2002, 131-3). This is in accordance with the religious symbolism of the tambourine as a synecdoche for earth, whose fertility is consequently associated with female sexuality. Base Ring ware also includes images of *kourotrophoi* and of females with hands over their ventral area, a fact corroborating the view that this class of terracottas is concerned with similar notions of birth and fertility. It is reasonable to suggest that the female Base Ring ware tambourine player represents a ritual action ensuring fertility.

Terracotta tambourine players of the iconographic type (b) continue to be produced in Cyprus during the Cypro-Archaic period. In one case, a male figure with hollow bell-shaped body, perforations for movable legs, and a beard rendered in black paint, holds the instrument flat on his upper body and plays it with both hands arranged diametrically on the clay disc (Fig. 3) (Karageorghis 1995, 43, fig. 22, cat. no. I[vii]20; Morris 1985, pl. 206).



Fig. 3. Male cymbal player, type (b), with splayed wheelmade body, handmade head and movable legs. Provenance uncertain. Ht.: 13.7 cm. Desmond Morris Collection, Oxford, inv. no. DM-B1-98.

Figures holding a disc/tambourine parallel to the body are encountered particularly in terracottas from the Amathus workshop, rendered in the snowman technique (Pl. 24.1); these are found in settlement deposits, in tombs as well as on the area of the Acropolis with the Sanctuary of Aphrodite at Amathus (Karageorghis 1998, 30-3, cat. nos I[ix]1-36, pls. XVII-XX; Karageorghis and Hermary 1987, 18-19, Group IV; Hermary 2000). The Amathusian tambourine players of type (b) were either exported or imitated by coroplasts at Idalion (Meerschaert 1991, 184; Caubet 1992, 130, Group 3) and Kourion (Young and Young 1955, 36, nos 754-756), where similar figurines were deposited at the local sanctuaries. At Kourion the main sanctuary was that of Apollo Hylates, but there were more sanctuary sites at Idalion, connected with Aphrodite *kourotrophos*, Athena (Anath) and Apollo/Reshef Mikal (Caubet 1992, 136-9).

It is not clear whether these figures are male or female as there is no indication of their sex in their summary modelling. Karageorghis once suggested that they were male (Karageorghis and Hermary 1987, 19), but generally they are considered as female (Bisi 1980, 60; Karageorghis 1998, 30). The latter view may be corroborated by the fact that dressed and indisputably female terracottas holding a disc/tambourine parallel to the body are widespread in the Punic world from the end of the 7th century onwards. Much debate has been aroused by their interpretation; some scholars consider them as divine and identify them with Astarte/Aphrodite (Ferron 1969), while others prefer to interpret them as tambourine players at the service of the deity (Bisi 1966 and 1980). The mass production, generic modelling and lack of attributes of the Amathusian tambourine players suggest that they are depictions of mortals that attempt to invoke or appease the deity.

The clay discs of these figurines are always plain and thin, but they vary in size. Some examples are too small to be convincing tambourine portrayals and they may actually represent a different object or offering, like a fruit, a bowl or a cake for instance (Ferron 1969, 23; Karageorghis and Hermary 1987, 19; Meerschaert 1991, 184; Karageorghis 1998, 30 with a list of various theories; Meyers 1987, 118-9). Similar observations have been made with regard to the various sizes and shapes of the discs held by the females shown on the Levantine terracotta plaques (Braun 2002, 127-9). It may be safer to consider as tambourines only the examples with discs of considerable size, that almost cover the upper part of the body; such is the disc held by the enthroned female terracotta discussed above (Pl. 23.2). However, it cannot be completely ruled out that the smaller discs may also denote tambourines, as instruments with very small diameter are sometimes seen with tambourine players of type (a) (Karageorghis 1995, cat. no. I[vii]16; see also discussion on cymbals).

Some examples of type (b) tambourine players, found in tombs and near the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Amathus, also wear a bell/rattle pendant (Pl. 24.1) (Karageorghis 1998, cat. nos I[ix]2, 6, 31; Hermary 2000, 24, no. 22, pl. 4.22). Such a bronze percussion piece of accoutrement with overtly prophylactic and apotropaic powers was often deposited in tombs, possibly to protect the journey of the deceased in the underworld

and ensure regeneration (Villing 2002, esp. 285-9). The two instruments were played together in Dionysian cult, in order to create the trance feeling that would lead to the experience of *enthousiasmos*, the possession by the divinity (Bélis 1988). The combination of the bell with the tambourine in Cypriote iconography has, therefore, a profound religious symbolism. Conical bell pendants painted in outline or in silhouette are also worn by terracottas with upraised arms (with bell-shaped body and movable legs or with a solid body and *polos*), and by figures carrying a vase on their head (Karageorghis 1993, cat. nos LGA[i], LGA[iv]12; Karageorghis 1998, cat. no. I[i]6, I[iii]1-5, 7, 9-11). In everyday life, bells would be worn as amulets against evil, bearing the prophylactic powers with which bronze percussion instruments were endowed. But in the case of the figurines with upraised arms that may portray the moment of ecstatic abandon or divine epiphany, bells would act first as evocative of the divinity and second as a means of protection from the overwhelming effect of the imminent encounter with the divinity.

Returning to the iconography of the tambourine, the pose of type (c) holding a disc with one hand flat on the side of the ventral area is associated with that of type (b). This motif is found on mould-made terracotta plaques that depict a nude female or a dressed figure in relief, holding a disc of considerable size flat on the side of the ventral area with one hand, the other hand being relaxed. This type is the product of Cypriote workshops, especially that of Arsos; a small number of figures of this type were produced by the Lapithos workshop (Pl. 23.4), and isolated instances are known from the workshops of Idalion, Achna and Amathus (catalogued in J. Karageorghis 1999, 190-210, cat. nos VI[i]1-VI[iv]51, pls LI-LV). Such terracotta plaques of considerable size (reaching 35 cm in height) are also found in the sanctuaries of the Heraion at Samos, Athana Lindia and Kameiros at Rhodes; they are stylistically associated with the Arsos workshop. At least eight figures from Samos have been published (some of them fragmentary) and they come from strata dated between 730-700 BC (Schmidt 1968, his Group 3, pls 49, 51, 70). Blinkenberg has published 30 similar examples from Lindos (Blinkenberg 1931, 491-5, nos 2038-2068, pls 92-94), although many of them are fragmentary and only a few have the tambourine preserved. In Lindos and Kameiros the same type is also rendered in limestone (Blinkenberg 1931, 427, no. 1720, pl. 70; Schmidt 1968, pl. 126).

In all cases the rendering of the dress is very fine and the material transparent, so that the emphasis on the anatomy of the female body is a characteristic feature of these artefacts. As with the Old Babylonian and Levantine mould-made plaques of type (b), it is difficult to decide whether the Cypriote figures of type (c) are attendants to the temple, cult figures or mere worshippers, and again the emphasis on their nudity and the holding of the tambourine link them with a well established imagery of fertility. However, three male mould-made figurines, now in the Louvre, assume the same pose as the female plaques, holding a disc/tambourine with one hand on the side of the abdomen. The only complete example was found in Syria and is wearing a pointed cap and long dress, but the other two figures were found in Cyprus and are associated with the Arsos workshop (Caubet, Fourrier and Queyrel 1998, nos 270, 272, 278). The adaptation of a motif long

associated with females to the iconographic type of a male with pointed cap is indicative of the flexibility that characterizes the Cypriote coroplast, and this flexibility may reflect the practice of the tambourine being played not only by females but also by males, possibly in both the religious and the secular sphere.

Cymbals

The earliest evidence for cymbals in Cyprus comes from *Pyla-Kokkinokremos*, where a bronze pair was buried in the external courtyard of a fortified residential building (Room 22, Complex B) prior to its abandonment at the end of the Late Cypriote IIC period. The cymbals were part of a bronze foundry hoard, including crafted artefacts and scrap metal. According to the excavators, the hoard belonged to a bronze-smith, who first secured the metal crafted objects and then fled to avoid an imminent danger (Karageorghis and Demas 1984, 38, no. 68, 56-7, pls XXV, XXVI.68, XLIV.68). A single bronze cymbal was also recovered from a small Cypro-Geometric II tomb at *Palaepaphos-Skales* (Tomb 64). The tomb was used only once, and the offerings include an iron sword and knife, suggesting a male burial (Karageorghis 1983, 153-4, no. 7, pl. LXXXI, fig. CXX). Both Cypriote examples are plate cymbals. Those from *Pyla-Kokkinokremos* have a wide dome and a flange prominently bent upwards; the cymbal from *Palaepaphos-Skales* has a small dome and slightly conical profile for the flange.

The modelling and small diameter (in the range of 10 cm) of the two Cypriote cymbals associate them with the small bronze cymbals from Hazor, Megiddo, Ugarit, Uluburun and other Levantine sites, dating to the Late Bronze Age. In the Levant, the cultic significance of the cymbals is exemplified by the fact that they are sometimes deposited at sanctuaries, like that of Shiqmona and Mevorakh; in Ugarit they are found in the so-called 'priest's house' near the temple of Baal at the Acropolis (Braun 2002, 107-10; Caubet 1987 and 1996; Bass 1986, 288-9, fig. 28).

As for the Aegean, the evidence for the use of cymbals during the Bronze Age is not conclusive. Two or more Late Minoan IIIB2/IIIC bronze bosses (19 cm in diameter) that were deposited in a larnax at Moulana in Crete have been interpreted by many scholars as cymbals, whereas others consider them to be shield bosses (Xanthoudides 1904, 46-7, fig. 11; Younger 1998, 65, no. 25, pl. 22.4; Snodgrass 1964, 37-51; Fellmann 1984, 69, fig. 11). But numerous small cymbals, modelled like the Cypriote examples, are deposited in Greek burials and sanctuaries from the Archaic period onwards; these are dedicated to various deities, such as Athana Lindia at Rhodes, Artemis Orthia at Sparta, Hera Limenia at Perachora, Hera at Argos, Apollo at Delphi and Athena at the Athenian Acropolis.

The find contexts of the two Cypriote cymbals do not provide clear evidence with regard to the cultic use of the instruments. It has been argued that the origin of cymbals as musical instruments emerged from practices of drinking and sound making during

religious rites (Hickmann 1949). Hickmann maintained that the common shape of plate cymbals bearing a deep central dome and flange (like the Cypriote examples) is an evolution from an archetypal rimless cup-shaped variety, without a flange (Hickmann 1949). Such cup- and funnel-shaped cymbals have been found at Nimrud, dating to the 9th-8th centuries (Rashid 1984, 110, 120, figs 126-127). They are depicted in Egypt as early as the 18th Dynasty (Hickmann 1949, 23, fig. 13), and they continue to be in use in the Roman period, as is surmised from the female musician depicted on a 4th century AD silver dish playing cup-cymbals (Blades 1984, pl. 72). It is noteworthy that the cymbals from Pyla-Kokkinokremos and many of their Levantine comparanda have a wide and deep dome, reminiscent of the cup-shaped prototype.

The cup-shaped variety is associated with concave liquid receptacles. In Hittite texts, the term *ḫuḫupal* has a double use, to describe liquid containers and to denote cymbals (De Martino 1995, 2662). The Greek terms for cymbals are *kymbalon* and *kotylai* (Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae* XI.57.45), the latter also denoting round and concave objects according to the Scholiast (Schol. BT Hom. II. 23.34, 'κοτύλας ἐκάλουν πάντα τὰ κοῦλα'). Deep and rimless cymbals, the Latin *acetabula* (vinegar cups made of bronze, silver and gold alloy) and the Byzantine *oxybapha*, are listed among idiophones in Early Medieval literary sources (Marcuse 1975, 13; Blades 1984, 174). The double use of metal bowls as drinking vessels and musical implements is also noted by the late antique writer Clement of Alexandria (1st-2nd century AD) when he describes the mysteries in honour of Attis and Kybele. The rite required drinking and eating from a cymbal and a tambourine respectively, both instruments being the symbolic attributes of the two deities (Clement of Alexandria, *Exhortation to the Greeks* 11, 14P, '... ἐκ κυμβάλου ἐπιον· ἐκ τυμπάνου ἔφαγον ...').

Ancient cymbals were clashed against each other, usually with a horizontal movement of the hands. Sumerian, Babylonian, Hittite and Assyrian representations of cymbal playing on vases and reliefs invariably depict both hands placed symmetrically in the middle of a disc or two superimposed discs that are clashed horizontally at face level (numerous examples in Rashid 1984). A similar arrangement of the hands is also shown on three-dimensional representations. On an ivory female figurine from Ugarit, dated between the 14th -12th centuries BC (Fig. 4), both hands are placed near the centre on each side of a round disc (Caubet 1987, 743 n. 34; Caubet 1996, 10, 27, no. 13). Caubet suggested that the symmetrical position of the hands of this figurine indicates cymbal playing rather than tambourine playing (Caubet 1987), as a tambourine would need to be supported from below with one hand and played with the other, and therefore the hands would be presented asymmetrically and at different levels, as we have seen with the type (a) of tambourine iconography. The disc of the figure from Ugarit thus represents the moment of impact of the two cymbals, which are estimated to be slightly over 20 cm in diameter, proportionately to the hands and head of the musician. Such large cymbals are known from Egypt in Late Antiquity (Hickmann 1949, 455-60, figs 1, 9), but

we do not have any surviving examples from earlier periods (apart from the debatable Moulana bosses from Crete that are 19 cm in diameter).

Another three-dimensional representation of cymbals comes from the Philistine city Ashdod. A late 11th - early 10th century BC terracotta clay stand, decorated with the figures of five musicians, depicts a male cymbal player among them (Fig. 5). His cymbals belong to the small variety and have a rounded shape on the outer surface, marking the prominent dome; here too, the cymbals are clashed at chest level and the hands can be clearly seen holding each instrument in the middle of the boss (Braun 1994; Braun 2002, 171, pl. IV.32.e).

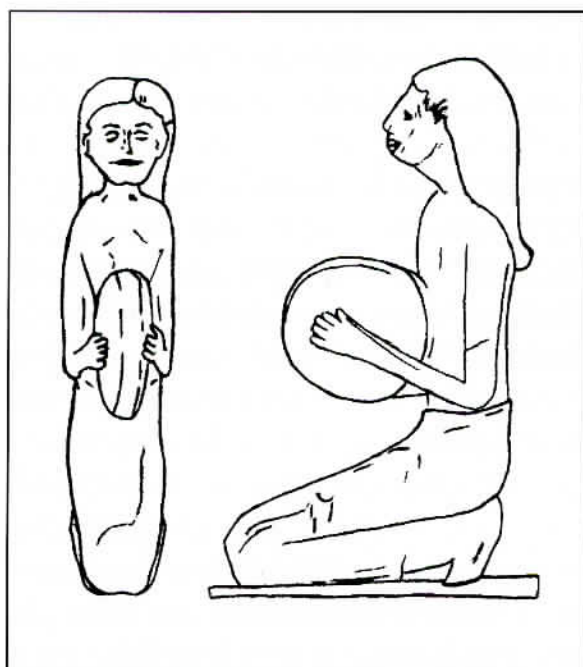


Fig. 4. Ivory female cymbal player from a tomb at Ras Shamra, Ugarit. Ht.: 5.4 cm.

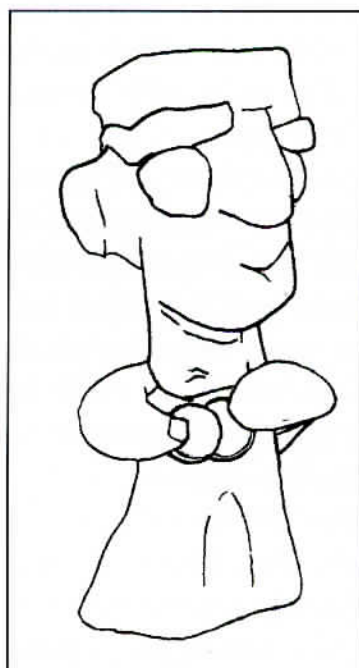


Fig. 5. Terracotta cymbal player on the clay stand from Ashdod.

The antithetic and symmetric position of hands on the same level and on each side of a disc is, thus, a constant diagnostic feature for cymbal playing in the iconography of the Near East and the Levant. Scholars have argued that cymbals are not depicted in Cyprus (Meerschaert 1991, 185), but more than a dozen male terracotta figurines dated between the 8th and 6th centuries BC exhibit the same characteristic position of the hands placed antithetically on each side of a disc (Pl. 24.3) (Karageorghis 1995, cat. nos I[vii]2-12, 14, 15, pls XIX, XX). These are usually described as tambourine players (*ibid.*, 41-2), but it seems more likely that they are cymbal players, given the position of the hands that alludes to the playing technique of cymbals. The cymbals are represented as a single flat disc between the hands, apparently indicating the moment that the instruments are clashed against each other. In general, the size of the clay disc between the hands does not much exceed the size of the palm, indicating that the instrument belongs to the small variety that is also attested archaeologically in Cyprus.

Unfortunately, we do not know the context of most of these terracottas. Some of them were found at Idalion, as was the figure shown in Pl. 24.3, but this stylistic coroplastic type with solid handmade body and head in the snowman technique originated in Amathus, from where it was imported to Idalion (Caubet 1992, 131). To these we can add a few instances of male cymbal players with hollow bell-shaped body and movable legs (Karageorghis 1995, cat. nos I[vii]2, 3, pl. XIX.10-11). Like the solid male cymbal players from Idalion/Amathus, they also hold very small clay discs between their palms. Small cymbals of this type are rarely shown in the hands of female cymbal players; only one terracotta example is known from the Cypro-Archaic I/II period (Karageorghis *et al.* 2003, 95, no. 147). Its mould-made face is stylistically associated with the Arsos and Lapithos workshops, which produce mould-made plaques showing tambourine players, but it has a solid handmade body, just like the male cymbal players from Idalion/Amathus.

The coroplastic type of a female figure with the palms placed antithetically at the centre of a large and thin disc becomes very popular in the Cypro-Archaic II period, with the mass production of terracottas with hollow body, handmade hands and mould-made head from the Lapithos workshop (Pl. 24.2). These figurines were destined for the local sanctuary and were dedicated to the cult of a female fertility deity, a Great Goddess type (Yon and Caubet 1988). Karageorghis has catalogued 34 examples and has acknowledged the existence of at least another 130 in museums and private collections, most of them of unknown context (Karageorghis 1998, 73-5, cat. nos II[xv]37-71, pls L-LV; Yon and Caubet 1988, 10-11, 15, nos 32-35, fig. 6, pl. IV; Morris 1985, pl. 205a-f). The majority of the Lapithos terracottas with mould-made head hold the discs at the centre in the manner of cymbals, whereas five examples represent tambourine players of our type (a), holding the disc from below in front of their chest and beating it with the right hand in the middle (Pl. 23.3) (Karageorghis 1998, 74-5, cat. nos I[xv]37-40, 57, pl. L).² The overall modelling of the Lapithos figurines with mould-made head is closely connected with the similar terracottas from the Larnaca-Kamilarga workshop, which nevertheless usually represent tambourine players (Karageorghis 1998, 69-71, cat. nos I[xv]1-24, pls XLVI-XLVIII; Bernhard-Walcher *et al.* 1999, 146, no. 60), apart from three instances where the discs are held symmetrically (Karageorghis 1998, cat. nos I[xv]15, 20, 24, pls XLVII:4, 8, XLVIII:4). This difference in modelling within the production of the two workshops has been noted and, since the symmetric arm position does not relate to tambourine playing, some scholars have interpreted the Lapithos figurines with mould-made heads as cymbal players (Yon and Caubet 1988, 15), whereas others proposed that in these instances a tambourine is simply held rather than played, the performance being indicated only by the asymmetric arm position (Karageorghis 1998, 73).

² In contrast, the contemporary handmade variety of terracottas with solid bodies from Lapithos only shows tambourine players of type (a), holding a clay disc from below and playing it with the right hand (Karageorghis 1998, 42, cat. nos I[xi]h:60-66, pl. XXVII.5-11; Yon and Caubet 1988, Atelier 1, 5 no. 13).

The fact that both the symmetric and the asymmetric arrangement of the hands are reproduced by the Lapithos and Larnaca-*Kamilarga* workshops strengthens the view that the coroplast would have made a distinction between tambourine and cymbal playing techniques, given the long association of the symmetric arm arrangement with cymbal playing from the Bronze Age onwards. In three dimensional representations one would expect tambourines to be represented by discs with marked frame, thicker than those of the cymbals (see for instance Karageorghis 1998, cat. no. II[xv]33 from Amathus, Tomb 276). The thickness and the size of the clay disc, however, are subject to the skilfulness of the coroplast. As a result, they vary from workshop to workshop. In the case of the Larnaca-*Kamilarga* and Lapithos workshops they cannot be diagnostic of the instrument because they differ from specimen to specimen. In mass-produced artefacts like these figurines where detail is minimal, it is important to retain the most characteristic features that embody the symbolism of the image. For this reason, the immediate visual impact of the two different playing techniques would be a more effective tool to enable the viewer to distinguish between tambourines and cymbals, than the specifications of the instruments themselves. Given the rough workmanship and the mass production of the figures from both workshops, the position of the arms is the only means that the coroplast had at his disposal to differentiate between the two instruments, and he adhered to this distinction.

With regard to the typology of the cymbals as it is revealed from the iconography, it should be noted that the discs of the Lapithos mould-made figures are larger than those of the Amathus workshop, stretching substantially beyond the palm, but it cannot be ascertained whether they indicate larger cymbals, or if this feature is indeed accidental. In general, the terracottas with small/medium cymbals (Pl. 24.3) are concentrated in the southern part of the island, with the Phoenician population at Kition (and to some extent at Amathus and Tamassos) possibly introducing a few Semitic influences into the local style of production (Vandenabeele 1986; Vandenabeele 1989, 269; Bisi 1986; Bisi 1991, 89). The representations of larger cymbals are mainly found with the northern Lapithos workshop (Pl. 24.2) and could possibly be inspired by the north Syrian/Late Hittite artistic schools of the 9th-7th centuries BC (compare with Fig. 4 from Ugarit). Such an artistic connection has not yet been studied thoroughly, but the influence of Syrian tradition has also been demonstrated in connection with the Cypriote glyptic of the Archaic period (Reyes 2001, 68-76, 200-1, 214; Bisi 1991, 88).

Although cymbals are attested in Cyprus since the 12th century BC, representations of the instrument do not appear prior to the Cypriote terracottas of the Cypro-Archaic I/II period. The examples from Idalion belonging to the Amathus workshop are the earliest, dated to the 8th-6th centuries BC (Pl. 24.3) (Karageorghis and Hermay 1987, 1; Caubet 1992, 131). They are of local Cypriote manufacture and, although they may well have been inspired by the Levantine (Philistine-Canaanite), north Syrian and Assyrian iconographic models, they do not have exact parallels in the coroplastic arts of those areas, where in fact the cymbal playing representations are limited during the early 1st millen-

nium. The terracotta from Ashdod (Fig. 5) is the only comparable example in showing the small cymbals in this particular medium, and in terms of the overall modelling of the figures (both have large heads on a moderate solid body, face with prominent nose and turban-like headdress). However, the reliance of Cypriote terracotta musicians on the pre-Phoenician Philistine-Canaanite tradition of the Ashdod stand model should not be over-stressed (Braun 1994, 142), since the Cypriote cymbal players have their own distinctive style in rendering the instrument and the way it is played (flat disc without details held away from the body, versus boss-like instrument rendered almost in relief). Stylistically the Cypro-Archaic terracotta cymbal players are completely Cypriote in character, but it is possible that the launch of their production was associated with the arrival of Phoenician population in the southern part of the island from the 9th century BC onwards (Vandenabeele 1989; Markoe 2000, 159; Yon and Caubet 1989). In any case, what has been demonstrated once more is the spontaneity, adaptability and, at the same time, adherence to religious concepts, that dictate the images created by the Cypriote coroplast. To a great extent, these are powerful and expressive images of percussion that captivate us in their fervent rhythms.

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SOURCES FOR FIGURES AND PLATES

- Figs 1-2. drawn by Florian Schmidinger after Collaer and Elsner 1983, fig. 110 and 152.
- Fig. 3. after Karageorghis 1995, fig. 22.
- Fig. 4. after Caubet 1987, fig. 7.
- Fig. 5. after Braun 2002, pl. IV.32.e.
- Pl. 23.1. after Karageorghis 1993, pl. VII.2.
- Pl. 23.2-3, 24.1-2. after Karageorghis 1998, pl. XXI.3, pl. LIII.3, pl. XVIII.2, pl. L.6.
- Pl. 23.4. after J. Karageorghis 1999, pl. LXXX.3.
- Pl. 24.3. after Karageorghis 1995, pl. XX.3.



1. Base Ring ware tambourine player, type (b).
Provenance uncertain. Ht.: 12 cm.
Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. no. AM 1.



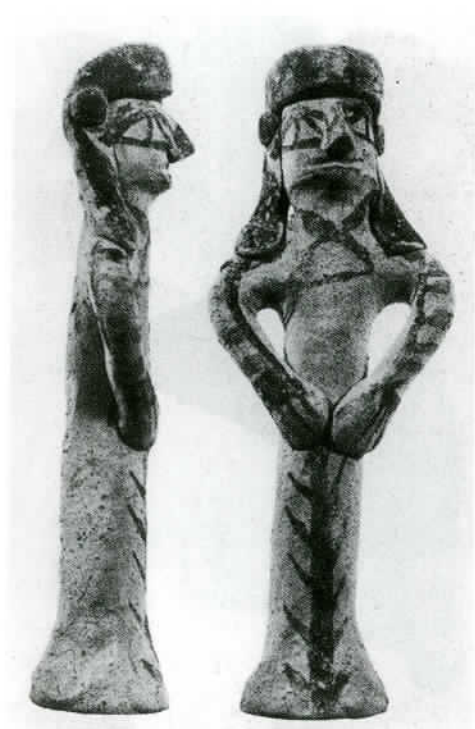
2. Enthroned female figure holding a tambourine.
Provenance uncertain
(possibly from Idalion). Ht.: 9.7 cm.
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York,
inv. no. 74.51.1685.



3. Female tambourine player, type (a).
Provenance uncertain.
Ht.: 14.8 cm. Cyprus Museum,
Nicosia, inv. no. B 107a.



4. Terracotta plaque with female holding a tambourine, type (c).
Possibly from Lapithos. Ht.: 19.8 cm.
Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. no. AM 167.



1. Female tambourine player, type (b), wearing bell pendant.
Amathus, Tomb 232. Ht.: 15.7 cm.
Limassol District Museum.



2. Female cymbal player. Provenance uncertain.
Ht.: 17.3 cm. Cyprus Museum, Nicosia, inv. no. B 164b.



3. Male cymbal player from Idalion. Ht.: 13.5 cm.
Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe, inv. no. B 2426.