

# The discovery of six unique Cypro-Archaic statues at Tamassos<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

The six unique Cypro-Archaic statues of Tamassos are the product of an accidental discovery dating back in the very first month of year 1997. Five of them are exhibited and since the end of 1997 adorn Room V of the Cyprus Museum in Nicosia.

## Historical background

Tamassos is situated in the central part of Cyprus, in the area of the modern village of Politiko, about 22km. southwest of Nicosia. It is one of the 10 ancient city-kingdoms of Cyprus which were mentioned on the well known stela of Essarchadon dated to the first half of the 7th century B.C. (673/2 B.C.). On the stela Tamassos is mentioned under the name *Tamesu*.

Tamassos, as a Cypriot city, is referred to by various authors from the 1st century B.C. (10/9 B.C.) until the 6th century A.D. Of course the earliest mention of it is considered to be verse 184 of Rapsody A' of Homer's *Odyssey*, where it is referred to as *Temesi*.

Ancient Tamassos had known great prosperity that was mainly due to the exploitation of the rich copper mines which the city and the surrounding region possessed.

From the ruins that came to light up to this day, we know that the region of Tamassos was first inhabited during Prehistoric times. But we consider that the city of Tamassos was established after the discovery of copper and its economy as well as its prosperity came mainly from the exploitation of this rich product of its earth.

The earth of Tamassos gave very important

antiquities which came either from "excavations" undertaken at different times during the past century and are connected with the name of Max Ohnefalsch-Richter or from the systematic archaeological excavations of the decade between 1970-80 which were directed by Hans-Günter Buchholz. These last brought to light part of the city of the Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods.

Last century's "digs", which are due to Ohnefalsch-Richter, resulted many tombs being discovered in cemeteries which belong chronologically to the Late Bronze Age (*Lambertis*), to the Hellenistic and also to the Roman period (*Agios Mnason*). Ohnefalsch-Richter was also the man behind the discovery of unique pieces of art coming from amateur excavations of various known temples and from other unknown localities in the area of Tamassos, which adorn today the Cyprus Museum (the Colossus of Tamassos) as well as major Museums abroad such as The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, museums in Vienna and Berlin, The British Museum in London, housing the Chatsworth Head, and various other museums.

1. This article is the result of a lecture I gave three years ago at the Cyprus American Archaeological Institute (CAARI). At this point I would like to warmly thank all the colleagues, our foreman Orthodoxos Liasides and his team of workmen, the Technicians and especially Stavros Lagos, the photographers Xenophon Michael, Andreas Savva and the people from our photographic department, the conservator Andreas Georgiades and his team, Mary Chamberlain for her drawings, Gregoris Christou, Nancy Serwint who went through my English text, Niki Nicolaou who typed the paper and all those who worked and helped me so that I would be able to publish this article.



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Fig. 1

From the visible archaeological ruins still preserved at Tamassos, the most important are the two majestic built "royal" tombs, located in the northeast of the village of Tamassos, the ruins of a small part of the city including a temple dedicated to Aphrodite, part of the fortifications, and installations for the production of copper.

According to Dr Demos Christou<sup>2</sup> the "royal" tombs of Tamassos belong chronologically to the end of the Cypro-Archaic I period, that is, to 625-600 B.C. (Tomb 1 dates to 600-550 B.C., and is about 25 years later than Tomb 2). Of these tombs, two are located next to each other and are very well preserved, while a third one, which was found at a distance of about 50m. to the west of Tomb 1, was destroyed in the past by the inhabitants of Politiko village who used architectural material from the tomb for the construction of new houses in the village. The location of this tomb, which was unknown for many years, was defined after a sounding was undertaken in 1971 by the German Archaeological Mission of Giessen University and by the German Archaeological Institute under the direction of H.-G. Buchholz.

### Max Ohnefalsch-Richter and his relation with Tamassos

Max Ohnefalsch-Richter was a Prussian who came to Cyprus at the age of 28, and exactly in the year the island passed from under the Ottoman yoke to British rule. He arrived for the first time to Cyprus in 1878 in the capacity of a journalist writing political news. However, in a very short time he lost his political interest in Cyprus and developed new ones focusing on archaeological matters. In 1879 Ohnefalsch-Richter began his activities as an "archaeologist" in the area of Larnaka-Kition. In 1889 as a result of his good relations with the then Archbishop of Cyprus, Sofronios, who was a member of the Council of the Cyprus Museum, Ohnefalsch-Richter managed to obtain on behalf of the Berlin Royal Museums, an excavation permit for a piece of land belonging to the Archbishopric which was near Tamassos and the Monastery of Agios

Herakleidios. In 1890, after a twelve-year stay in Cyprus, he returned to his country. In 1894/95 the couple Max and Magda Ohnefalsch-Richter were given hospitality at the Monastery of Agios Herakleidios and they began excavating near Tamassos on behalf of the R. Virchow Institution. In 1895 Ohnefalsch-Richter undertook yet another archaeological mission in Cyprus with imperial backing. Upon their return to Germany, the couple Ohnefalsch-Richter published an album with photographs which they dedicated to the imperial couple Sachsen-Meiningen-Hildburghausen, as a sign of gratitude. These photographs are very valuable today because many of them refer to antiquities and to archaeological sites which Ohnefalsch-Richter "excavated" during the previous century.

The excavation of Tomb 1 started on the 4th of July 1889 and was completed in the same month. Tomb 2 which is smaller and which is situated about 20m. to the east of Tomb 1, was excavated by Ohnefalsch-Richter in 1894.<sup>3</sup>

After Ohnefalsch-Richter's excavations, the archaeological site of Tamassos was disregarded during the period that the island was under British rule. For more than 75 years, the site was prey to intense activities of looters.

### The excavation

It was the 30th of January of 1997, Thursday, a rainy day, when at around 8.30 in the morning my office telephone rang. At the other end the voice of our foreman Orthodoxos Liasides who was at that time working with his workmen at the archaeological site of Tamassos. The workmen were in those days working on the maintenance of the monumental tombs. The words of Orthodoxos were: "Mrs Marina you must come here to Tamassos because I think we found two statues".

2. D. Christou, *The Cypro-Archaic Monumental Tomb Architecture*, 198 (Nicosia 1996).

3. According to information given to me by Professor Buchholz, Ohnefalsch-Richter in his diary gives number 5 for Tomb 1 and number 12 for Tomb 2.

I told Orthodoxos to stop working until an archaeologist from the Department could visit the site. The workmen had already finished working on the insulation against dampness for Tomb 1 and were working on the same project for Tomb 2. Together with Technician Stavros Lagos, we arrived at the site at 10.30' and we made our way to the open low and narrow trench, 1m. wide, exactly to the west of Tomb 2. The trench was roughly covered with plastic because of the rain which had been falling since early in the morning. We stood in front of a large head of a lion having its face in the soil (1997/VII-15/1). Next to it to the south (Fig. 1: 1), there was another part of a statue which at that time looked like the back part of an animal with a tail. It finally proved to be another lion (1997/VII-15/2) much bigger than the first but broken into four parts along its body and head.

We unearthed first the broken lion and then we excavated the head of the first lion discovered which finally proved to be a second recumbent lion (Fig. 1: 2), smaller than the second lion discovered, that is the broken one. The two statues were found at a distance of 4.40m. to the west of the west wall of Tomb 2 and at a depth of 40cm. from top soil.

With the continuation of the excavation and only a few centimetres behind and to the west of the two statues, a third statue of large dimensions came to light. It was a sphinx (1997/VII-15/3) with its face turned downwards. Time had already gone by, and it was 3 o'clock in the afternoon, without us really realizing it. We didn't feel the cold nor the rain. But because it was time for the workmen to stop work and go back to their base—they were coming everyday from Larnaka—and because we could not continue excavating due to the heaps of debris from the previous day's work and also because it was getting dark, we decided to call it a day, protecting the statues *in situ*. After asking the guardian of the site, Technician Gregoris Ioannou, to guard the statues throughout the night until the next morning when we would go back to continue the excava-

tion, we left Tamassos in great hesitation at around 3.30' in the afternoon.

The next day Friday, the 31st of January, at 8.30 in the morning I was at the site together with Stavros Lagos. Also with us on this second day was senior Technician Xenophon Michael who was taking photographs during the excavation without omitting the phase of the statues' transportation to the Cyprus Museum.

In the meantime we had arranged for a mechanic excavator to be present in order to remove the heaps of debris so making possible the continuation of the dig. We also asked the driver to remain there to help us carry the statues on the two double-cabin cars which were to transport them finally to the Cyprus Museum.

At around noon we managed to send the three statues, loaded on the two cars, to the Museum and I remained at the site together with Stavros Lagos and the workmen to continue the excavation.

We often use the Greek expression "the earth gives birth". Well, from that moment onwards our excavation looked like it was giving birth. I remember so vividly the workmen shouting "Mrs Marina there's another one coming!!!". The fourth statue that came to light was the head and, unfortunately, only the front part of a large size lion, similar to the second lion, the one which had been found broken. This second broken lion, which was also found face downwards, was at a distance of 5.80m. to the west of Tomb 2.

Continuing the dig, a fifth statue came to light. It was a lion identical to the first. This one was found at a distance of 6.20 m. to the west of Tomb 2. At approximately the same distance and exactly to the south of this lion, there came to light the sixth and the last great find. This time it was a second sphinx, identical to the first which had been discovered the previous day.

It was already 3.00' o'clock in the afternoon when we managed to load the two cars with the other three statues in order to transport them to the Cyprus Museum. The six statues were tem-



Fig. 3

porarily placed outside the Museum's restoration laboratory. Their conservation started the next day, that is the 1st of February 1997 and lasted almost a month. The head of the conservation team was, of course, our Department's Conservator Andreas Georgiades. At this point I would like to mention that the treatment was a basic one, that involved cleaning the soil from the statues, consolidating the coloured surface, and repairing the broken parts because the statues had otherwise been found in an excellent condition.

Because of the importance of the finds, we decided to continue the excavation of the area in case of the probable existence of other finds, should these be other statues or architectural ruins of another tomb or of some other building.

This excavation work started on Monday 10/2/97 and continued until Thursday 27/2/97 with a week's interruption due to bad weather conditions. It was some of those rare days that it snowed in Nicosia.

The excavation started contiguous to the site where the six statues were found and a large square measuring 6×6m. was created. Then an oblong trial trench 1.50m. wide of east-west direction, was opened approximately in the middle of the square. This was done in order to look for the possible existence of another tomb situated in between the two already there. The only finds from this excavation work were some animal bones and a small number of ceramic material of various periods, dating from the Archaic up to the Medieval.<sup>4</sup>

### DESCRIPTION OF THE STATUES (RR 5480 1997/VII-15/1-6)

The six statues, all of large dimensions, are made of the local Cypriot limestone. The macroscopic analysis of the Tamassos statues was undertaken by Geologist Dr Michel Morisseau, whom I sincerely thank for his valuable collaboration, has shown that all the sculptures are made of biodetritic limestone, ivory coloured, and rich in small shell fragments. The stones used come all from the same locality, that is the same quarry.<sup>5</sup>

1997/VII-15/1 (H.: 68cm.; L.: 88cm.; W.: 39cm.) (Fig. 3: 1)

Recumbent lion turned to the right, with head turned full-face. The forepaws are crossed (the left on top of the right). The tail coils up from under the right hindleg and its edge, which is decorated with incisions, is placed on the thigh which is rendered in a quite naturalistic way since the artist created the appearance of the bones beneath the flesh. The left hindleg is tucked under the body in such a way that the paw is visible over the right hindleg. The lion has small, rounded erect ears vertically placed on the head. The left ear is missing and part of the right foreleg is damaged. The large head of rounded triangular shape, has a wide open mouth, a broad pendant tongue encircled by four long canine teeth, visibly larger than the other teeth, seven joint and of equal length incisors. The top lip is slightly turned upwards. The eyes are large and rounded, and at the inner corner of the eye the sculptor had rendered the tear ducts quite naturalistically. The nose is broad and flat and beneath are the whiskers rendered as eight incised lines curving upwards and placed as a set of four on either side of the nose. The mane, which creates a sort of collar around and below the muzzle, is rendered by short parallel incisions imitating the hair. At the top of the head these incisions form a decorative motive in the shape of a flower with open petals.

The back side of the statue is not worked and the chisel marks are clearly visible.

The statue still preserves traces of its original painted decoration.<sup>6</sup> Preserved are the following colours: red on the tongue, the gums, the ear, the

4. From what I was told by the guardian of the site, this could be debris from Prof. Buchholz' excavations.

5. On the subject I would also like to warmly thank a very dear geologist friend, Mr Nikos Charalambides who also gave me valuable advice concerning the quality of the stones.

6. On the subject please refer to the chemical analysis of the pigments undertaken by Dr Ioanna Kakoulli whom I sincerely thank for her precious contribution to the study of these statues.



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Fig. 2

nostrils and the body, and blue is preserved on the mane. High up on the haunch a painted red circle is easily discerned. This detail is a puzzle. I do not know whether this is part of the decoration and, if so, it cannot be explained as part of the representation of the lion's hair.

1997/VII-15/2 (H.: 80cm.; L.: 122cm.; W.: 52cm.) (Fig. 2: 1)

Large life-size recumbent lion turned to the left with head turned full-face. Its pose is identical to the other statues and it is antithetic to the broken lion of which only the forepart and the head are preserved (1997/VII-15/4). This lion was found broken, as it was also mentioned earlier, and was put together in the laboratory of the Cyprus Museum.

On the left foreleg and on the tongue of the lion, erasures are visible which must have been caused in the past from ploughing activities. One must not forget that the statues were found at a very small depth from the surface of the soil.

The back side of this statue, as well, is not worked and the marks of the chisel which worked the stone are visible.

The statue still preserves remains of its painted decoration: red colour on the tongue, the gums and the nostrils.

1997/VII-15/3 (H.: 86cm.; L.: 89.5cm.; W.: 40cm.) (Fig. 4: 1)

Recumbent Sphinx turned to the right, with head turned full-face, and forepaws crossed (the left on the top of the right). The tail coils up along the right hindleg and its edge which is decorated with incised lines, is placed on the thigh. The sphinx has large wings which are turned upwards and they consist of two series of feathers and a decorative band with spiral motives. The feathers are rendered with shallow incisions, and their outer curve is sickle-shaped. The sphinx has a human head and wears the *Pschent*, the royal double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt and the *Nemes*, the royal headdress. The two hanging sides of the royal headdress are drawn behind the

two large ears, drop vertically onto the shoulders, and are decorated with parallel horizontal incised lines. Just below the *Nemes* and on the front, a thin band is visible. The face has a triangular shape with a protruding chin; the mouth is closed and sculpted in a discreet smile, slightly more faint than the one of the antithetic sphinx. The sphinx has large almond-shaped eyes, thick and long eyebrows which are rendered in relief. The head is positioned on a long, straight neck, on the base of which can be seen a kind of flat collar or necklace which is only decorated at its upper and lower edge by two shallow incisions.

The back side of the statue is not worked and chisel marks are still visible.

The statue preserves traces of its original painted decoration. Blue and red colours appear on the wings, the *Nemes*, the crown, the decorative band below the *Nemes*, on the lips, the necklace, the forelegs and black on the eyes for the rendering of the iris.

1997/VII-15/4 (H.: 80cm.; L. pres.: 60cm.; W.: 49.5cm.) (Fig. 2: 2)

Head and forepart of a large, life-size recumbent lion turned to the right with the head turned full-face. It is antithetic to the second lion (1997/VII-15/2). The right ear is missing and the left one is damaged.

On the back of the head there are sharp furrows caused by ploughing activities in the past.

It is also very apparent that the forepart of the lion is deliberately cut from the rest of the body. I will comment on this in the following pages.

Red colour is preserved on the tongue, the gums and the nostrils.

1997/VII-15/5 (H.: 71cm.; L.: 80cm.; W.: 38cm.) (Fig. 3: 2)

Recumbent Lion turned to the left, with the head turned full-face, identical and antithetic to the first one (1997/VII-15/1). In excellent condition.

Red colour preserved on the eyes, ears,



Fig. 4

tongue and the gums and blue colour on the mane.

1997/VII-15/6 (H.: 82cm.; L.: 89cm.; W.: 42cm.) (Fig. 4: 2)

Recumbent sphinx turned to the left, with head turned full-face. Identical and antithetic to the other one (1997/VII-15/3). The upper part of the royal crown of Upper Egypt is missing and it bears no band below the *Nemes* as does the other antithetic sphinx.

The remains of colours on this statue are better preserved than those on the others. We have blue on the *Nemes*, blue and red on the wings, red on the lips, the crown, the necklace, the tail and the claws of its forelegs and black on the eyes for the depiction of the iris.

Like all the others, this statue also has its back side unworked although there are clearly visible chisel marks.

## COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS ON SOME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STATUES

### *Teeth*

The upper and lower canines are joining. In between there are 6 or 7 incisors accordingly (Big lion and small one with missing ear: 7 incisors. Damaged lion and small one: 6 incisors). In actual reality the animal has 6 incisors between the canines. In the middle of the wide-open mouth there is a wide pendant tongue. The upper lip is slightly curved upwards in the middle.

### *Ears*

The ears are of triangular shape, and are represented erect and placed in a pyramidal configuration on the mane. In the interior of the ears of the two large lions and of the small one there is a detail: there are two small rounded protrusions which represent the hair of the ear.

### *Mane*

The surface of the mane is flat, only slightly represented in relief, and rendered by a continuous incised line. The mane encircles the head following a clear line which creates a curve at the top of the head; it then continues down onto the back, the chest and the shoulders.

### *Tail*

(a) On the sphinxes the tail coils up along the hindleg and its edge is placed on the back just below the vertebral column. The tufted end looks more like a closed pinecone. The hair is rendered by incisions.

(b) On the lions the tail coils upwards passing from under the hindlegs.

### *Legs*

The forelegs are roughly rounded but the joints between the legs and the paws are well shaped. The forepaws are crossed, and the hindlegs are bent. The lions have a peculiarity concerning the way in which one of the hindlegs is tucked under the body in a way that only the paw is visible over the other hindleg. I would like to mention here that from all the comparative material that I have used, I have found this detail in only one other funerary statue of a lion which comes from Miletus and dates to the Archaic period.

### *Nails*

The four digits of the paws are bounded by deep grooves without giving the detail of the long, sharp, hooked claws. In actual reality the lion has four digits.

### *Wings*

The three types of feathers that characterise the wings of birds are also apparent on the sphinxes' wings. The primary as well as the secondary feathers are rendered in a very naturalistic way

with shallow parallel grooved lines. The line separating these two types of feathers is clearly marked. On the inner part of the wings the marginal wing feathers are rendered in a very decorative manner since the artist uses spiral motives in a vertical arrangement.

The attempt to render the anatomy is apparent on all statues especially on the thigh.

The wide open jaws of the lions with their sharp teeth and the broad pendant tongue gives the impression of the aggressive ferocity of the animal. The calm seated pose of the animals is in contrast with the fierce look of the face which has a more symbolic character. Realism makes way to symbolism.

It is also worth mentioning that the sphinxes are identical to the lions and only differ in the head and the wings. The dimensions of the bodies are similar and the tail coils up along the hindlegs with the difference that we noted earlier, that is on the lions the tail passes from under the two hindlegs.

### The sphinx

The sphinx is classified under the category of monsters. The monsters, those creatures which are half-humans and half-animals, like all composite beings in general, have their origins in very remote antiquity. Every civilisation had its own demonology and its mythological animals. Truly, demonology is a world phenomenon. This is also the reason why it is very difficult to determine the origins of these monsters. The difficulty arises also from the fact that various ancient populations, especially if these were neighbouring or contemporary, were exercising reciprocal influences.

The first examples of sphinxes were found in Egypt during the Old Kingdom (4th Dynasty). And it was during the 3rd millennium that the sphinx coexisted both in Egypt and Mesopotamia, but her real home was Egypt where she remained until the Roman period.

At the time of her appearance during Dynasty

IV of the Old Kingdom, that is between 2600-2480 B.C., the sphinx in Egypt already represented the King or Pharaoh and played the role of the guardian in the kingdom of the dead. The sphinx therefore, has an apotropaic character just as has the lion. The combination of the theriomorphic and anthropomorphic concepts of the Pharaoh resulted in the establishment of his figure as a sphinx, a symbol of supernatural powers.

During the Egyptian Middle Kingdom (2134-1785 B.C.) representations of sphinxes are more frequent. Just like the Great Sphinx, at Giza they continue to be representations of the Pharaoh. Often we find them placed in pairs in front of entrances, an arrangement which combined the significance of the sphinx as an expression of kingship with the symbolism of the lion as guardian of the entrance. Such guardian-sphinxes became numerous. During the New Kingdom (1550-1070 B.C.) and later, guardian-sphinxes were placed in rows on either side of the main avenues leading to sanctuaries and palaces.

The Egyptian sphinx can be found in different variations such as the figure of the human-headed lion (Androsphinx), the ram-headed lion (Criosphinx) and the hawk-headed lion (Ieracosphinx).

The sphinx in Greek Mythology is a monster thought to live in the mountains and originating from Boeotia. The sphinx was regarded as the daughter of the snake, Echidna, and Typhon or Orthus. Her descriptions vary. The most common description cites her as having a lion's body, the face and bust of a woman, the plumage of a hen and a snake's tail. The image of the Greek sphinx is already met in the Minoan-Mycenaean period on cylinder seals and later on in the 8th century B.C. in central Crete. But the classical version of the seated sphinx with protruding forelegs is perfected at around 600 B.C.

Greek and Asian sphinxes were usually guardians or ornaments of temples and tombs and we also find them in the minor arts in ivory or metal and on pottery and cylinder seals. But



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Fig. 5

the shinx as a tomb monument in the Greek world did not have such a wide propagation as the lion.

The centre of propagation of the sphinx is widely thought to have been Syria. Syrian art added upturned wings to representations of the sphinx, and in Syria the sphinx was regarded as a spirit and a supernatural creature; consequently representations of it had to have an element characterising its nature. Later, the Syrians represented the sphinx in a seated pose and they added to her an S-shape tail as a decorative motive. In this way, Syrian artists created a new creature and it is this creature which they will disseminate to the world of the East and to the Aegean. All the populations coming in contact with Syria, will borrow this particular form of the sphinx.<sup>7</sup>

And now we come to our sphinxes, the sphinxes of Tamassos. Following the various types of the Egyptian sphinx, the Tamassos versions belong to the type of the Androsphinx, the human-headed lion which embodies the combination of the lion's force with human intelligence. The Tamassos sphinxes also serve as guardian figures of tomb monuments.<sup>8</sup>

## The lion

The lion is one of the largest, carnivorous wild cats. When fully grown it reaches a length of 120-150cm. and a height of 100-120cm. The male lion has a large head and a mane; it has small, erect ears and small, rather rounded eyes compared to the volume of the head. It has a thick, concise muzzle below hard hair in the form of whiskers. Its legs are rather short, thick and strong and they end in strong paws with sharp hooked claws. The animal has a long, cylindrical tail ending in a tuft. It reaches full growth in its 6th or 7th year of age. Its natural life-span is about 20 years.

The lion, the "king of the beasts" as is very well known, is the symbol of strength, power, royalty, courage, and royal sovereignty. The lion became a common representation in all the great ancient art centres and was, therefore, widely propagated and very much copied.

## Comparative material

In order to better understand the influences for the large size limestone lions and sphinxes from Tamassos, I will use comparative material which comes from the Cyprus Museum and from other museums abroad. The comparanda is not exhaustive but indicative, and consists of mainly limestone sculptures. I will also refer to the minor arts, primarily ivory and metal. But I will not refer to pottery where the sphinx, which is mainly of the Greek type, was much used and was a favourite subject.

The theme of the Cypriot Guardian-Lion and by extension, the Cypriot Guardian-Sphinx, the type class to which the Tamassos statues belong, has been thoroughly studied in the past by Veronica Tatton-Brown,<sup>9</sup> Marguerite Yon<sup>10</sup> and to some extent by Annie Caubet.<sup>11</sup> But all these studies refer to lions and sphinxes as figures surmounting funerary stelai (Fig. 5: 1, 2, 4) or to small-size votive statuettes (greatest height: 12cm.), or large-size seated, but not recumbent, lions and sphinxes. As far as sphinxes are concerned, I mention, only a few as comparanda, and my list is not exhaustive.

## Sphinxes

1. Sphinx made of local limestone, Greek type, from Marion, from Ohnefalsch-Richter's activities; it is now in the Louvre (AM 90). Dimensions: H.: 73.5cm.; L.: 77cm. Date: end of the 6th century B.C.
2. Limestone headless sphinx of unknown provenance (C. 1012) kept in the storerooms

7. Mesopotamia. Crete.

8. Just as Egyptian sphinxes protected the entrance of a city or of a sacred place.

9. V. Tatton-Brown, "Gravestones of the Archaic and Classical periods: Local production and Foreign Influences", *Acts of the International Archaeological Symposium "Cyprus between the Orient and the Occident"* (Nicosia 1986), 439-53.

10. M. Yon, "Les lions archaïques", *Salamine de Chypre*, IV (Paris 1973), 19-47.

11. A. Caubet, "Stèles funéraires de Chypre au Musée du Louvre", *RDAC* 1977, 170-2.

of the Cyprus Museum. Dimensions: H.: 57cm., L.: 83cm.

Date: 6th or 5th century B.C.

3. Sphinx wings made of marble preserving part of their original painted decoration, from Kouklia "The Siege Mound" (Inv. no. XII-30, 1954). Dimensions: H.: 63cm.; W.: 53cm.; Date: 6th century B.C.
4. Limestone sphinx, seated on a plinth with protruding forelegs, from Rizokarpasso, locality *Oura*, exhibited in the Cyprus Museum (E 895). Dimensions: H.: 85cm.; L.: 68cm.; Date: 4th century B.C. (Fig. 5: 3).

### Lions

1. Lion seated on a plinth from Kyra, exhibited in the Cyprus Museum's court. Dimensions: H. 102cm.; L.: 89cm.  
Date: Archaic period.
2. Two seated lions in the court of the Church of Engomi in the occupied part of Cyprus.
3. Lion seated on a plinth from Triкомо, exhibited, at least until July 1974, in the Famagusta Museum (MA 865). Dimensions: H.: 1.10m.  
Date: Archaic period.
4. Hind part of a recumbent lion from the locality *Toumpa*, 1km. south of Salamis. Famagusta Museum (MA 816). Dimensions: Pres. H.: 30cm.; L.: 75cm.  
Date: Archaic period.

Of the large size lions and sphinxes, just mentioned which are approximately contemporary to the Tamassos ones, none resembles them. The only exception are the hind quarters of the lion from the Famagusta Museum (MA 816), which is somewhat smaller (by 10cm.) than the Tamassos lions.

The rest of the comparative material comes from sacrophagoi which sometimes have lions and sphinxes as ornaments on their lids, from minor art (ivory, metal objects) and from ("Cypriot") small scale votive statuettes, similar to those from Salamis<sup>12</sup> which come from the Acropolis of Lindos in Rhodes<sup>13</sup> and which today are in the

National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen (Department of Near Eastern and Classical Antiquities). For the latter, there has been a great deal of discussion whether they were manufactured in Rhodian workshops under Cypriot influence or whether they were manufactured in Cypriot workshops and were exported to Rhodes. Currently it seems that the second opinion prevails, at least for some of them.

According to Veronica Tatton-Brown,<sup>14</sup> Cypriot lions which are related to funerary stelai belong basically to the same tradition; they are based on the Syro-Hittite type, with various Egyptianising characteristics which are sometimes adopted directly from Egypt, but more often through the Phoenician lion which was known in Cyprus from an earlier period in another material but not in stone. Sometimes, especially during the 5th century B.C. Greek influence is also apparent. All these lions are seated on their tails.

If we consider from where the external inspiration comes for Cypriot artists to place lions and sphinxes on top of their funerary stelai, this must have come from the East. This particular type of funerary stelai lasts only a short time, and not later than the end of the 6th century B.C. Such stelai were found mainly in one area, the area of ancient Golgoi which was probably their production centre. And what is important, the area of Golgoi is located in the middle of the area where limestone is abundant in Cyprus.

The first representations of sphinxes which were found in Cyprus are those decorating the cylinder seals dating to the Late Bronze Age. We find them for the first time in minor sculpture of the 13th century B.C. Furthermore, the Cypriot sphinx which appears in minor sculpture has a special characteristic that other representations of sphinxes do not have. The Cypriot sphinx is usually dressed. Another Cypriot influence for the

12. M. Yon, *op. cit.*

13. Danish excavations of Kinch and Blinkenberg 1901-14.

14. V. Tatton-Brown, *op. cit.*

creation of the sphinx is that which can be seen on the wings. On the outline of the wings, the division between the humerus and the radius is clearly marked.

Five centuries must pass in order to find the closest ancestor to the Tamassos sphinxes. It is the one of the two ivory plaques in relief from Tomb 79 of the "Royal Necropolis" of Salamis which were decorating the sides of the wooden throne found in the dromos of the tomb and which date to the Archaic period *ca.* 700 B.C. There is a remarkable resemblance of the face, the rendering of the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt and also of the wings. Although reflecting a distinct Egyptian look, this sphinx is dressed according to the Cypriot preference mentioned above. It differs from the Tamassos sphinxes in so far as the pose is concerned. From the same Salaminian Tomb we also have our second comparative object. It is the ornament on one of the accessories decorating the deceased's chariot and also dates to *ca.* 700 B.C. This object, together with the rest of the bronze accessories of Egyptianising-Phoenician type, likely was imported from Northern Syria via the Phoenicians according to the excavator, Vassos Karageorghis. There is a strong resemblance as far as the wings are concerned.

The first representations of lions which were found in Cyprus during the Archaic period are definitely the bronze lion heads decorating the deceased's chariot which were found in Tomb 79 in Salamis. The representations are protomes of lions with open jaws and a pendant tongue. These objects, like the ivory plaques in relief, are, as already mentioned, most probably imported from some workshop of Northern Syria.

As far as pure Cypriot art is concerned, the representation of the lion is dated at a somewhat later period if we are to take as starting point one of the first known examples. I refer specifically to the fragmentary lion in the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art.<sup>15</sup> This lion surmounted a funerary stela. It belongs to a type of "menacing" lion with wide open jaws, a pendant flat tongue

and head turned full-face. It dates to the second half of the 7th century B.C. A likely descendant of the Metropolitan's lion is another funerary lion from ancient Marion bearing a syllabic inscription which is exhibited in the Cyprus Museum. It dates to the early 6th century B.C. Both these archaic examples are ones which Gjerstad classified as "Proto-Cypriot", and are related to the type which came from Syro-Anatolia. Via the same route came the bronze lion protomes of Tomb 79 at Salamis.

The Cypriot lion must be considered as the result of a phenomenon which propagated Eastern iconography during the 7th century B.C.

M. Yon mentions that the term "Proto-Cypriot" is wrongly attributed to these lions by Gjerstad. I agree that it would be more correct to include these lions as part of a much more general iconographic current which prevailed in the eastern Mediterranean.

Lions never existed in Cyprus. But the neighbouring countries where these animals existed, could offer a genuine model to the Cypriot sculptor. Before the 7th century B.C., the lion was a usual subject in Hittite, Syrian, Assyrian, and Egyptian art. From the 10th to the 7th century B.C., there are many examples of guardian-lions protecting gates in the Syro-Hittite Kingdoms. But this type has the lions standing.<sup>16</sup>

We have seen influences from Syro-Anatolia and from Assyria. But the Cypriot Lions reflect much stronger influences from Egypt. A Cypriot artist, as a visitor to the temples of Egypt, could very well see and admire the sphinxes which were decorating the sacred ways. Herodotus<sup>17</sup> mentions that King Amasis created the sacred way in the Egyptian city of Sais in Lower Egypt and had as a prototype the sacred avenues lined with sphinx statues in honour of Amenophis III

15. Myres 1914, 242, no. 1393 = Cesnola 1903, pl. xcv, 641.

16. Gate of the Lions in Malatya of Asia Minor, 9th century B.C. Basalt. H.: 131cm. Ankara Archaeological Museum.

17. Herodotus, II 175.

(1417-1379 B.C., 18th Dynasty) and of Ramesses II (1304-1237 B.C., 19th Dynasty).

According to Yon and Caubet, the practice of placing a lion or a sphinx on a tomb to guard the dead seems to have had its origins in the Ionian tradition. This is suggested by the funerary stelai of Xanthos in ancient Lycia and, in particular, The Lion Tomb, *ca.* 540-470 B.C., parts of which are exhibited in the British Museum in London.<sup>18</sup>

According to Kurtz and Boardman lions and sphinxes as grave monuments in the Greek world were known since the Archaic period. But the examples of those statues in the round, which might serve as comparative material to the Tamassos statues, are very few. From the 4th century B.C. and during the Late Classical period, Greek lions appear in pairs and are placed on either side of the tomb's façade; this becomes a frequent phenomenon and occurs often in Attica. Lions were also the usual figure used to mark the tomb of the communal burials of those killed in battle. Kurtz and Boardman also mention that the Greek sepulchral lions dating to the end of the Classical period have a decorative as well as a functional character since they serve as markers delimiting the extent of the burial plot.

During the Greek Archaic period a new type of burial marker made its appearance. There were the columns surmounted by various representations, and among the animals which were represented, the lion and less often the sphinx had a special place. Such funerary columns were used throughout Archaic, Classical and also Hellenistic Greece. A Cypriot example with strong Greek influence is a column surmounted by a lion from Golgoi, dating to the Classical period and belonging to the Hadjiprodromou Private Collection. This antiquity, together with many others of the same collection, are today in the Monastery of Agios Varnavas (Fig. 5: 5).

As we saw earlier, the use of lions and sphinxes is customary in Cyprus for various types of funerary monuments, such as sarcophagoi, stelai, columns or built tombs. However, lions were used more frequently than sphinxes.<sup>20</sup>

The recumbent pose and particularly the details of the tail and the crossed forepaws are characteristic of an Ionian type. The most important representative examples are the lions of Branchidae in Didyma (South of Miletus, 6th century B.C.) but they also originate from Egyptian prototypes of the New Kingdom which were revived during the Saite Egyptian period (26th Dynasty, 663-525 B.C.) and were copied under Phoenician rule.<sup>21</sup>

The Egyptian and the Ionian lions are represented as "calm" and have their mouth closed.

The Tamassos lions, on the other hand, have a "menacing" face with their mouths wide open, exposing their sharp teeth and a pendant tongue, although their pose is completely calm.

As far as the original concept is concerned, it would appear that the Guardian-Lion was imported into Cyprus via North Syria and Anatolia.<sup>22</sup>

But the adoption of morphological elements as well as emphatic details comes directly from Egypt, where the lion and the sphinx, served as guardians of funerary monuments and sacred avenues of Egyptian temples.

That the sphinxes are so similar to the lions is further evidence for direct influence from Egypt, however such influences were further combined influences coming from Egyptianising Syro-Phoenician art.

The sphinxes' faces have the characteristics of Cypriot Archaic sculpture which we also see in other sculptures.<sup>23</sup>

18. F.N. Pryce, *Catalogue of Sculpture British Museum*, Vol. I, Part 1, pl. XVIII (London 1931).

19. Donna C. Kurtz, John Boardman, *Greek Burial Customs* (Great Britain 1971), 84, 135-6, 238-9.

20. A. Caubet, *op. cit.*, 171.

21. M. Yon, *op. cit.*, 39-40.

22. Bronze Lions T. 79 Salamis, end of 8th century B.C. and Funerary lion 7th century B.C., New York Metropolitan Museum of Art.

23. Limestone head of a bearded youth from Golgoi. Cesnola.

The representation of freestanding lion statues is a feature which Cyprus had already borrowed in the 7th century B.C., without having the real model, and was a type of representation which became frequent in the early 6th century B.C.

The Syro-Anatolian region (between the upper valley of the Euphrates, the city of Aleppo and the Sarus valley) lent to subsequent representations dating to the 7th century B.C. the motif of the guardian-lion with wild facial characteristics. The type was copied in the beginning of the 6th century B.C. by Cypriot sculptors who adapted the type to their own customs and traditions as far as technique was concerned and who also adapted the guardian-lions of Egypt as far as details of the type itself was concerned.

In summing up, we have the following.

### Main characteristics of the influences

#### *Egyptian influence*

- (a) Recumbent pose.
- (b) Triangular shape of face, broad and slightly hooked nose, triangular shaped ears placed on the head in a pyramidal configuration.
- (c) Detail of the small rounded protrusions in the interior of the ears representing hair (cf. Saite Egyptian period, ca. 580 B.C.).
- (d) Eyebrows of sphinxes rendered sharply in relief.
- (e) Tail coiling up around the hindleg. This feature is a rule for the Egyptian sphinx.
- (f) Mane with a flat surface, clear drawing of a line outlining the shoulders.
- (g) Crossed forepaws.

#### *Ionian influence*

- (a) Tail coiling up passing first from under the hindlegs.
- (b) Mane rendered by chisel incisions.
- (c) The way the hindleg is tucked under the body in a way so that the paw is visible over the other hindleg.

- (d) Attempt to render anatomy.
- (e) More naturalistic/realistic dimensions. More realism, in general.

#### *Syro-Hittite influence*

- (a) The wide open mouth with the sharp canines ready to attack is a symbol of protection. The realistic rendering of the animal is eclipsed by a symbolic one which results in the figure reflecting its power as a guardian protecting a funerary monument. This concept of the prophylactic virtue of the representations was also disseminated in the Greek world during the Archaic period, and was considered to be beneficial and positive. The lions as symbols of strength against evil powers justifies their role as guardians of the dead in the tombs.

The Tamassos lions, and by extension, the sphinxes of Tamassos are the result of a mixture of influences: Syro-Hittite, Ionian, Phoenician, and Egyptian with a stronger Egyptian influence as far as the morphological elements and the sharp details are concerned.

All six statues were manufactured in a Cypriot workshop and I do not know whether it would be too much to suggest that they may have come from the area of ancient Soloi where, as we have seen earlier, most of the funerary statues which were studied are attributed.

Commercial transactions allow the transportation of small objects made of ivory, copper, stone, and clay. The artists themselves, the sculptors in this case, also travel. Cyprus benefitted from these transactions during the period when King Amasis himself urged relations between Egypt and the Greek cities. Cypriot Kings paid tribute to Amasis,<sup>24</sup> maintaining their titles and their kingdoms, while conducting their affairs in semi-independent regimes. The favourable treatment of the Cypriot kingdoms by Amasis can be explained in two ways (a) his wife was the Greek, Laodike, from Cyrene and (b) his power was

24. Herodotus, 2, 182.

based on Greek mercenary soldiers who were serving him.

We could date the Tamassos statues to exactly this period. During the reign of Amasis between 569-525 B.C.

As far as their original disposition is concerned and considering all that has been said up to this moment, the most probable location is that they were placed in pairs at the entrances of the three monumental "royal" tombs. This theory is also strengthened by the fact that the back side of the statues is not worked, meaning that it was not visible. The sculptures would be set against the wall of the tombs. They would even be set in such a way that not even the lower back part of their haunches would be visible, since this part was also not worked. If we are to follow the dating of the tombs as suggested by Demos Christou<sup>25</sup> and if we accept the fact that the statues date to the reign of Amasis (569-525 B.C.), then they must have been placed at the tomb entrances after the erection of Tomb 2 and during the erection of Tomb 1.

At this point I would like to push my thought a step further concerning the only one of the six statues which was found mutilated.<sup>26</sup> I voluntarily use this verb because I believe that the large lion head which was antithetic to the life size lion (1997/VII-15/2), was deliberately cut from the rest of the body. Why? Maybe the rest of the body was found in a bad state of preservation without any interest which could turn to a profit so the "bad" piece was cut off.

Now concerning the important questions of how and why they were found as if thrown (Fig. 1) and collected the one next to the other at such a small depth (40cm. - 60cm.) from the surface soil. I think that there will never be a satisfactory answer to this and the various hypotheses that one can make will always bear a big question mark at the end. How is it possible that M. Ohne-falsch-Richter abandoned such a treasure and did not take back with him to Germany these remarkable pieces of art as he did with so many other antiquities small and large? Did he have to leave in a hurry so he hastily discarded and buried the statues having always in mind to come back later and take them with him? And then never returned. If this is the case, it means that this event happened before 1895, the date of Ohne-falsch-Richter's return to his homeland, since he never came back to Cyprus before his death in 1917. Whatever we say on the matter is mere hypothesis.

What is definitely undisputable is that the six limestone large-size statues of Tamassos are excellent specimens of Cypriot sculpture and unique among all the known statues of the Cypro-Archaic period.

25. D. Christou, *op. cit.*, 198.

26. Inv. no. 1997/VII-15/4.

## APPENDIX I

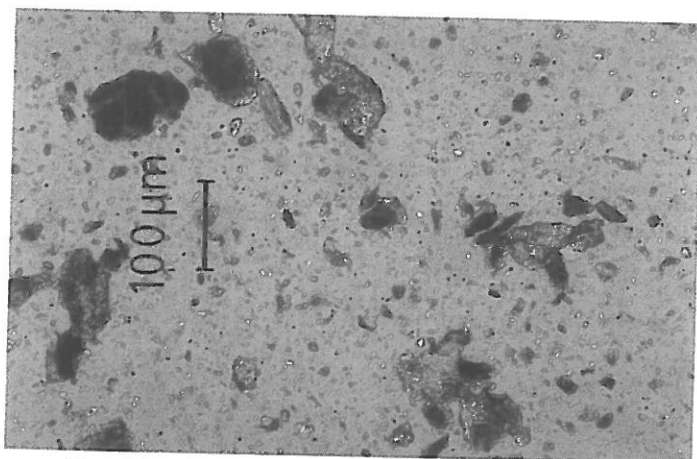
ANALYSIS OF PIGMENTS FROM POLYCHROME SCULPTURES  
EGYPTIAN BLUE*Ioanna Kakoulli**Conservation of Wall Painting Department  
(Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London)*

*Figure 1 Sample 1/2692 photographed in plane polarised light at 220x magnification*

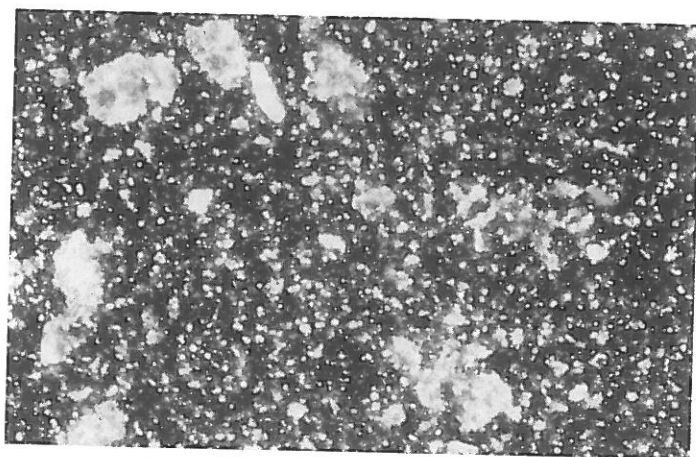


*Figure 2 Sample 1/2692 photographed with crossed polars at 220x magnification*

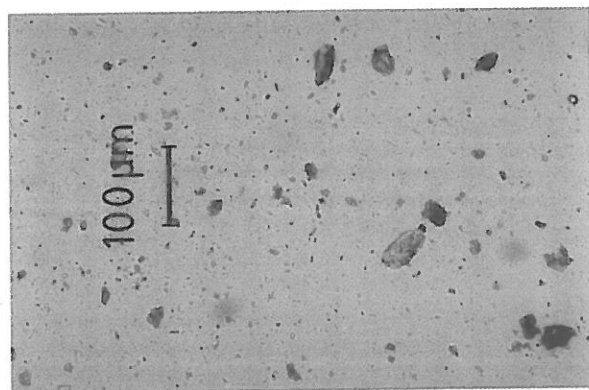
**Figures 1 and 2** Photomicrographs of dispersion sample 1/2692, photographed at plane polarised light and with crossed polars respectively, at 220x magnification. The sample contained red ochre rich in haematite and calcite crystals, the latter probably contamination from the substrate. Microscopically, haematite was readily identifiable since it displayed certain distinct characteristics. Red ochre on the other hand, was more variable as it is frequently polymineralic with both composition and particle size varying according to the source. Haematite displayed hexagonal, almost tabular crystals, and a birefringence masked by the pigment's strong body coloration, showing only a red intense colour. Red ochre, however, was not easily characterised and further chemical analyses were needed. Microscopically, red ochre particles displayed subrounded habit and a dark red brown colour. Particles were isotropic when viewed under crossed polars.

*[Photomicrographs: Kakoulli 1999]*

Natural iron oxides are usually associated with silica and clay; components of these types are often encountered in a dispersion of a paint sample, and are therefore not indicative of the presence either of red ochre or of haematite.

Haematite is a pure form of anhydrous ferric oxide and provides the red colour to the pigment classified generally as red ochre. The crystal order of anhydrous ferric oxide provides distinguishable properties to the pigment to be identified using PLM. In this study, this was the primary method used for the identification of the pigment, assisted by microchemical tests (confirming the presence of ferric ions).

## HAEMATITE-RICH RED OCHRE



**Figures 3 and 4** Photomicrographs of dispersion sample 2/2693. Photographed at plane polarised light at 250x magnification. Sample 2/2693 from Tamassos Cyprus, was found to be composed of three distinct phases, each of which is associated with the manufacture of Egyptian blue. These were Egyptian blue crystals, glass, and residual quartz. In plane polarised light, the particles of the first phase displayed angular habit and a bluish colour; on rotation of the stage they showed moderate pleochroism [Figures 1 and 2]. In crossed polars they were birefringent with high order interference colours. [Photomicrographs: Kakoulli 1999]

*Figures 3 and 4 Sample 2/2693 photographed in plane polarised light at 250x magnification*

Egyptian blue is an artificial compound of calcium copper silicate. It has been mentioned in literature under various other names [Riederer 1997, 23], but it is generally agreed that "Egyptian blue" refers to a multicomponent pigment with the common and main constituent being a crystalline phase, identical in formula to cuprorivaite mineral ( $\text{CaCuSi}_4\text{O}_{10}$ , with the stoichiometric composition 63.93%  $\text{SiO}_2$ , 21.15%  $\text{CuO}$ , 14.92%  $\text{CaO}$ ).

However, analyses of samples of Egyptian blue show it to have aspects of form and composition that distinguish the synthetic material from natural cuprorivaite. For example, other phases are present, formed from the excess  $\text{SiO}_2$ ,  $\text{CaO}$ ,  $\text{CuO}$  and alkalis that remain unreacted during manufacture. The most common components associated with the crystalline phase are copper-rich soda or potash-bearing glass particles. These can be found in most samples from the Dynastic to the Roman periods. A rarer type of glass can also be identified, with a high concentration of lead oxide but lower concentrations of alkali, residual quartz, and cuproan wollastonite. Minor quantities of other elements present in the glass phase of either composition, such as iron, are likely to derive from impurities in the sand used; while traces of tin and arsenic suggest the use of bronze as the source for copper. Often components such as tenorite ( $\text{CuO}$ ), pyrite ( $\text{FeS}_2$ ), titanomagnetite ( $\text{Fe}_3\text{O}_4$   $\text{Fe}_2\text{TiO}_4$ ) and cassiterite ( $\text{SnO}_2$ ) are present in minor quantities. These minor phases may be artifacts of the conditions during manufacture [El Goresy *et al.* 1986, 14].

According to El Goresy *et al.*, [1986] there were differences in the production methods of Egyptian blue between the Old and the New Kingdoms. In the Old Kingdom, the researchers found Egyptian blue to consisted of cuprorivaite crystals, each some 200  $\mu\text{m}$  in diameter, along with glass, tenorite and wollastonite. In samples of this period, wollastonite appeared as platelets oriented along the basal plane of the crystalline phase. El Goresy *et al.* speculate that this may have been the result of exsolution from a high temperature calcium-rich cuprorivaite. Samples analysed from the New Kingdom displayed a similar composition, but showed a different microstructure. The crystalline phase consisted of large crystals bound in a glass matrix. Wollastonite occupied the interstices of the pigment, and consisted of small crystals.

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## ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Η τυχαία ανακάλυψη των έξι ασβεστολιθικών αγαλμάτων μεγάλων διαστάσεων που παριστάνουν τα τέσσερα καθήμενες μορφές λεόντων και τα υπόλοιπα δύο μορφές σφριγγών σε ανάλογη στάση, έγινε κατά τη διάρκεια των προγραμματισμένων ετήσιων εργασιών συντήρησης που διεξήγαγε το Τμήμα Αρχαιοτήτων στον αρχαιολογικό χώρο των μνημειακών «βασιλικών» τάφων της αρχαίας Ταμασσού.

Τα εντυπωσιακά αυτά αγάλματα, που διασώθηκαν σε άριστη κατάσταση και διατηρούν ακόμη την χρωματική τους διακόσμηση, αποκαλύφθηκαν τις τελευταίες ημέρες του Γενάρη του 1997 σε πολύ μικρό βάθος κάτω από την επιφάνεια του εδάφους, το ένα πολύ κοντά στο άλλο και έδιναν την εντύπωση ότι ήταν βιαστικά ριγμένα στο συγκεκριμένο χώρο.

Παρουσιάζουν έντονη αιγυπτιακή επίδραση και η χρονολόγησή τους εντάσσεται στα μέσα περίπου του 6ου αιώνα π.Χ., δηλαδή κατά την περίοδο της Αιγυπτιακής επικυριαρχίας στην Κύπρο, στα χρόνια της βασιλείας του Άμασι (659-525 π.Χ.).

Όσον αφορά την αρχική τους θέση και χρήση, φαίνεται ότι ήταν τοποθετημένα ανά δύο μπροστά στις εισόδους των τριών μνημειακών τάφων (σήμερα σώζονται μόνο δύο) και είχαν ρόλο φυλάκων/φρουρών των νεκρών των τάφων.