

# A mask of ἡγεμόν θεράπων with ὄγκος(?) from Paphos

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Excavations in the eastern part of the so-called Hellenistic House conducted by Prof. W.A. Daszewski have established that the area was little disturbed in comparison to other sectors of the site and was rich in important finds, including marble and limestone sculptures, terracottas, fragments of inscriptions, metal objects, lamps, and pottery (Daszewski 1995: 71; 1996: 93–96; 1997: 113–117, Figs 1–2; 1998: 119–124, Figs 2–3; 1999: 164–166, Figs 2–3; 2010; Daszewski *et alii* 2006: 403–407; Daszewski, Meyza *et alii* 2008: 511–517; 2010: 509, Fig. 7; Papuci-Władyka 2008: 524–527; Łajtar 2009: 147–152; see Nowakowski 2010).

The Professor has treated this area as a favorite field of interest since the discovery of a stone table on a fluted support in the northeastern corner of room 19 in 1994 (then thought to belong to the so-called Early Roman House) and has spent much of his time in that place, including most recently the study campaign of 2010. I consider it therefore a veritable obligation on my part to present this particular curio newly found there by accident.

The winter of 2009 was very rainy in Cyprus and many open trenches were literally flooded, while uncovered surfaces changed into consolidated floors irrespective of their state of preservation. This happened also in the case of room 19 of the Hellenistic House. Due to water precipitation the uncovered surface of this room changed into a smooth, hard layer and the few protruding stones were washed clean of any soil. Standing out in the middle of the room was the polished surface of a piece of marble.

The location, which was cleared as part of salvage excavations in preparation for the construction of a huge shelter over the site, is off limits to visitors, but the excluding barriers are often breached by tourists. Therefore, in agreement with Dr. Eustathios Raptou, Archaeological Officer at Paphos, I thought it better to remove the piece of marble, which evidently belonged to a sculpture of quite large size. It was hard to tell without excavating what the condition of this sculpture was; upon removal, however, the fragment turned out to be quite small. At first the piece was seen as broken off from a large torso with breaks heavily caked in plaster. Once washed, when most of plaster had been removed, it started to show very rough, but regular features on the ‘back’ side [*Fig. 1*].

The stratigraphic position of this find determines its chronology. A thick layer of rubble was superimposed on the floor of room 19, the walking level only with approximately even surface (Daszewski, Meyza *et alii* 2008: 511, 515, Figs 6–7). Finds from



*Fig. 1. Marble sculpture remade into theatrical mask: back and side views (top, from left), front viewed at two different angles (Photo K. Bajerowicz-Dolata)*



*Fig. 2. Theatrical mask from Paphos  
(Photo K. Bajerowicz-Dolata)*



*Fig. 3. Theatre mask representing the type of First Slave from New Comedy. Pentelic marble, probably beginning of Roman period. Found at the Dipylon Gate in Athens; National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Department of Sculptures Inv. 3373 (Photo Marsyas, <http://commons.wikimedia.org> under GNU Free Documentation License 1.2)*

the soil immediately on top of this level from several surrounding rooms can be used as a common indication of *terminus ante*, summarily dated to the first half of the 2nd century AD (Papuci-Władyka 2008: 524). The layer in which the marble piece was embedded consisted of a light brown surface, 5 cm thick, under which an ashy grey, clayey layer with plaster fragments formed a substratum. The pottery found together with the mask was limited to mendable pieces of an Italian terra sigillata bowl of form Conspectus 3, dating the assemblage precisely to the second half of the 1st century AD.

The piece, 16.8 cm long, 15.9 cm wide, originally belonged to a marble sculpture of large size, probably the torso. The primary, polished surface is gently bent at an angle of approximately 35 degrees. The breaks were re-cut to form a mask, probably for suspension as decoration or fixing to a wall. The piece of marble was rounded on one side of the bend, where a larger part of the stone has been preserved; the other side of that curve was broken or re-cut perpendicularly to the original polished surface. This surface was partly removed and roughened with a chisel, possibly to make it easier to set in plaster. On the opposite side, the rounded end constitutes the hair of the mask, rendered as rows of curls, three in the centre and two on sides of the curved, semicircular groove representing the forehead and surrounding the face [Fig. 2]. In the centre below there are eyebrows and wrinkles, S-curved above the nose. The nose is straight and roughly made as a line connecting the eyebrows and gaping mouth, where it assumes triangular form. The eyes are made by multiple drilling, at differing angles, triple (with shallower fourth) in case of the right eye, very irregular in effect; an effort at correcting this was evidently made. Drilling was double in the case of the left one, which is more regular and round. Both eyes were surrounded by a ridge probably representing the eyelids, wrinkled around. The mouth is wide open, with the lips at an almost right angle to the line of the nose, i.e., the lower jaw drawn clearly back. Within the mouth some indications of upper teeth can be seen.

The representation on the back side of the fragment of sculptural torso seems unfinished, but the only possible identification is a likeness to a theatrical mask. Masks of ancient Greek and Roman theatre are known from two types of sources. A little can be gleaned on these elements of delusion from written sources other than ancient plays. The *Onomasticon* of lexicographer Pollux (IV, 133–154), contains a list of 76 mask types used in different kinds of performances to identify the numerous *prosopa* (faces) and respective characters. The final part of this section (143–154) refers to the New Comedy. The set of masks changed over time, but it seems that by the 3rd century BC a canon readily identifiable by anyone in the audience had been established, so Pollux's list can be viewed as the final effect of a series of developments (Webster 1965: 13; Webster *et alii* 1995: vol. 1, 7). The most important elements of a mask were the hairstyle and the furrowed forehead and brows. Pollux's work is generally a late 2nd century AD compilation based on earlier work(s), probably by one of the Alexandrian 3rd century BC scholars, and the author's interest lay definitely in the glosses, not reality. It is not surprising therefore that relating some of Pollux's types to actual mask images is not easy, particularly in the case of tragedy.

There are no original masks preserved from antiquity, but the number of different representations of masks is considerable. Masks of the New Comedy are the best known and long studied, the first larger essay having been published before the the first World War by Carl Robert (1911). Miniature and more seldom life-size copies in clay are the most numerous, as are also less frequent terracotta images showing actors wearing masks. A number of terracotta workshops, particularly in Asia Minor, have been identified as producing such copies (Besques 1972: 83–87, 250, 253, 255, 352, no. E/D 1970, D 494, 496–502, 507–510, 2006 and 2007, D 2023 and 2026, E/D 3027–3029, Pls 107–111, 324d, 328a, 328e, 329b, 329h, 433f, 435e, 433d). Lipari is also an important source, the figurines and masks there being collected mainly during regular excavations of the necropolis (Brea, Cavalier 2001), thus ensuring a good chronology of masks and figurines from this Aeolian island. Consequently, the series also reflects changes in mask production and usage, as well as overall theatre organization, particularly at the time New Comedy was ushered in. It seems that the popular terracottas played an important role in disseminating new trends and establishing a standard stock (Besques 1984).

Masks were initially related to the cult of Dionysus. The apotropaic and soteriadic character of masks was reflected in their funerary use, and has developed into symbolism of peace, well being and abundance. Alexander the Great used Dionysiac imaginery in his propaganda and his followers extended royal display of *tryphē* (Zanker 1998: 6–13, 89). Aspects of prosperity and peace appear to have continued in use in the Imperial period. Therefore, masks as a symbol of Dionysus were used quite often, parallel to private use, as decoration in various circumstances; in some cases whole sets were shown in galleries of dramatic and comedy personages. These were sometimes representing actual stocks of masks available for actors represented in art, as e.g. a set from a Terentius codex in the Vatican (Krien-Kummrow 1961, 916, Fig. 1091). More frequent were however mask reproductions hung in peristyles in residences of the rich, collected according to various principles (Cain 1988, 162–165). The mask representations were sometimes modified under the influence of other contemporary sculpture. The frieze from the Propylon of the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias, one such set containing unmodified masks, includes several masks that could be taken into account: *Lycomedes* (Chaisemartin 2006: 43, Fig. 3a); *sphenopogon* (Chaisemartin 2006: 46, Fig. 7) and *hegemon therapon* (Chaisemartin 2006: 47, Fig. 8; Jory 2002: Fig. 38). The last is the most popular and it was probably the type followed in our mask.

It is interesting to note in this respect our small unfinished piece provides information which is somewhat contrary to the standard pattern. The following facial features can well be identified with known masks of the leading slave, ἡγεμών θεράπων: one brow lifted with the other low to form a dissymmetric Z, open gaping mouth, surrounded by round beard. A good, probably contemporary reference is the marble large-scale mask from the Kerameikos. There are differences of opinion concerning the date of this mask: Webster advocates Early Roman, while Kaltsas opts for the 2nd century BC (Webster 1961: 107–108; Webster 1995: 272, cat. 4AS 3; Kaltsas 2002: 283, cat. 595,

inv. 3373). The Kerameikos mask provides a clear instance of all the characteristic features of a late mask image, particularly the cut of the lower mouth. In our find, however, there are two important elements which do not sit well with the standard. Firstly, the hair, here in rows of curls, which for a leading slave should be bound in *speira*, a smooth crescent-like coil on the forehead. In fact the rows of curls, separated from the brows by a deep hollow and higher over the central part of the forehead, recall the *onkos*, a high mass of hair characteristic of Tragedy masks. A *pseudo-onkos* occurs in the Roman period also in Comedy masks, but in the case of young men. Secondly, there is the nose, which should be flattened wide at the end. The most characteristic feature, however, is the lack of symmetry, making this mask twofold, one side angry, the other prying. Marshall (2006: 135, note 44) has listed as many as six masks with asymmetric brows, but not all of his examples are convincing. Three clearly fall in this group: mask 3, of the Leading Old Man with lifted right eyebrow (*hegemon presbytes*); mask 7, the Lycomedian, with the other eyebrow lifted to indicate prying; and mask 22, the Leading Slave, less explicit because, following Pollux, it raises the eyebrows and contracts the forehead. To Webster this means a characteristic Z-shaped asymmetry. Marshall argues that including mask 22 necessitates the inclusion of also mask 8 of a *pornoboskos* (contracts his eyebrows), mask 27, wavy-haired leading slave similar to mask 22 apart from the hair, which is episeistos, and mask 17, “the Flatterer who raises his eyebrows in evil intentions”. Here, the evidently curly hair may be of help. The Lycomedian (Pollux mask type no. 7) should have curly hair, but the identified masks were aberrant with regard to the asymmetric brows. The shape of the lower jaw is yet another difference. In standard slave masks of the New Comedy, a trumpet mouth becomes the rule: the lower part elongated or round, but always protruding, even if cut in the manner of the Dipylon marble mask [Fig. 3]. In our case, however, the lower jaw is not exaggerated and may have even been shortened by the breaks in the primary sculpture.

The demands of aiding spectators in identifying scenic personages enforced on one hand a typization of mask creation and use. On the other hand, poets were the first to transcend petrified classes (Webster 1965). The personae belonging to various stages of play developments and different genera of performances were mixed, particularly in the late phases of ancient history. The difficulties in identifying types listed by Pollux are partly due to his lexicographic purpose with intended abridged descriptions. A part was also played by those rendering mask images, who mixed features of various types and added elements from images in vogue at a particular time, forming conglomerates that no longer fitted neatly into the standard scheme. All this contributes, in spite of the abundance of images of masks and masked actors, to an inability for proper classification of representations. Our small, unfinished mask seems yet another example in which case one hesitates in attributing it between the Principal Slave and some other New Comedy persona.

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# ABBREVIATIONS

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AA	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i> , Berlin
AAAS	<i>Annales archéologiques arabes de Syrie</i> , Damas
ABSA	<i>Annual of the British School of Athens</i> , London
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i> , New York
APF	<i>Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete</i> , Leipzig, Stuttgart
ASAE	<i>Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte</i> , Le Caire
BAAL	<i>Bulletin d'Archéologie et d'Architecture Libanaises</i> , Beirut
BABesch	<i>Bulletin antieke Beschaving</i> , Louvain
BCH	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i> , Paris
BdÉ	<i>Bibliothèque d'étude</i> , Le Caire
BEFAR	<i>Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome</i> , Rome, Paris
BIFAO	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale</i> , Le Caire
BSFE	<i>Bulletin de la Société française d'égyptologie</i> , Paris
CCE	<i>Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne</i> , Le Caire
CCEC	<i>Cahiers du Centre d'études chypriotes</i> , Nanterre
CdÉ	<i>Chronique d'Égypte</i> , Bruxelles
CRAI	<i>Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</i> , Paris
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i> , Vienna
EtTrav	<i>Études et travaux</i> , Varsovie
GM	<i>Göttinger Miscellen</i> , Göttingen
GRBS	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i> , Durham, NC
IEJ	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i> , Jerusalem
JbAC	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
JEA	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i> , London
JGS	<i>Journal of Glass Studies</i> , New York
JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i> , London
JJP	<i>Journal of Juristic Papyrology</i> , Warsaw
JRA	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i> , Ann Arbor, MI
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i> , London
KHKM	<i>Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej</i> , Warszawa
LIMC	<i>Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae</i> , Zurich
MDAIA	<i>Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung</i> , Berlin
MDAIK	<i>Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo</i> , Wiesbaden
MEFRA	<i>Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'École française de Rome. Antiquité</i> , Paris
MIFAO	<i>Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale</i> , Le Caire
NC	<i>Numismatic Chronicle</i> , London
NumAntCl	<i>Numismatica e antichità classiche</i> , Logano
OLA	<i>Orientalia Lovaniensia analecta</i> , Louvain
PAM	<i>Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean</i> , Warsaw
RACrist	<i>Rivista di archeologia cristiana</i> , Cité du Vatican
RBK	<i>Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst</i> , Stuttgart

*Abbreviations*

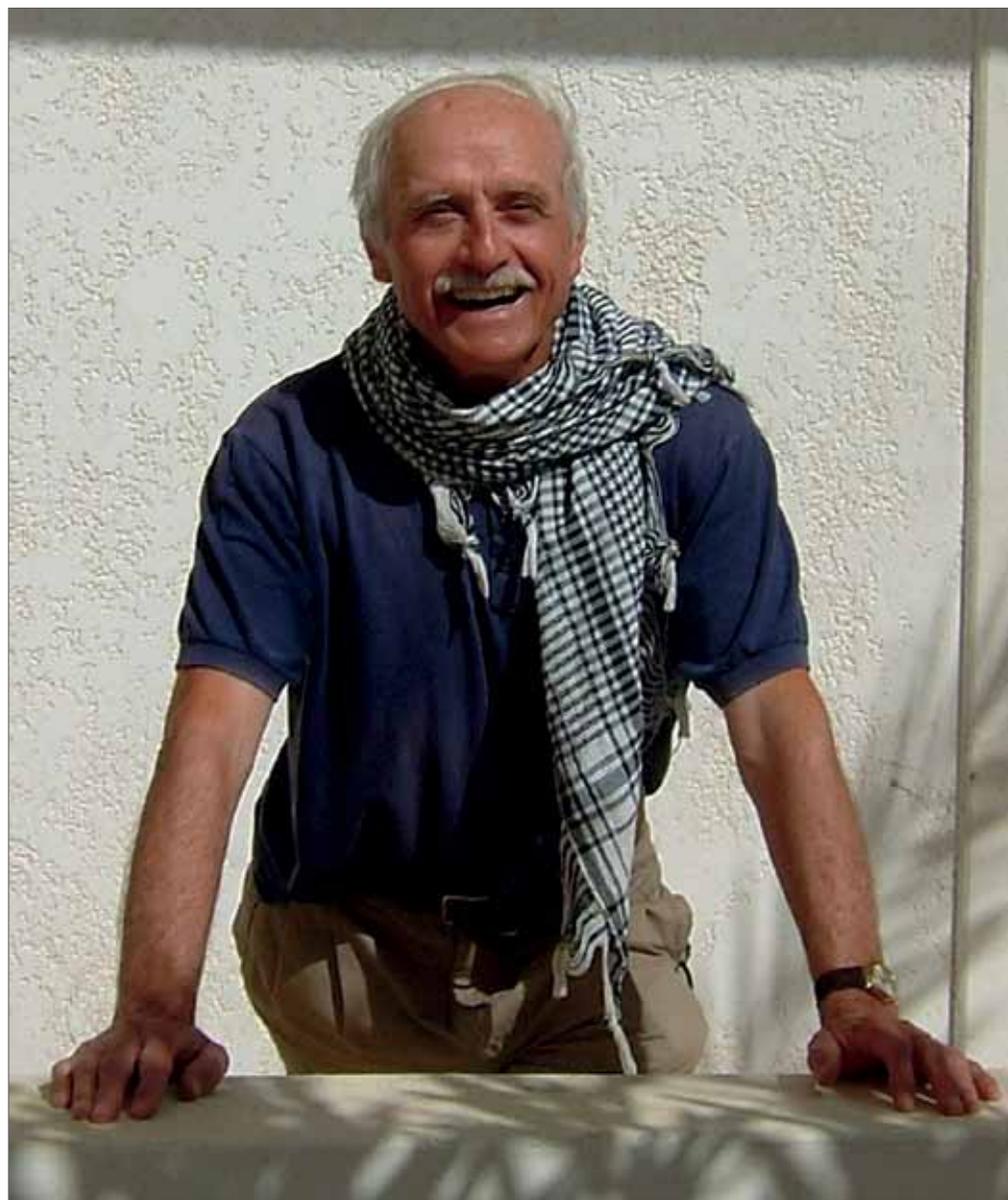
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<i>RDAC</i>	<i>Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, Nicosia</i>
<i>RdÉ</i>	<i>Revue d'égyptologie, Paris, Louvain</i>
<i>REPPAL</i>	<i>Revue du centre d'études de la civilisation phénicienne-punique et des antiquités libyques</i>
<i>RMNW</i>	<i>Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie, Warszawa</i>
<i>RSO</i>	<i>Rivista degli studi orientali, Roma</i>
<i>RTAM</i>	<i>Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale, Gembloux</i>
<i>RTAM</i>	<i>Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale, Gembloux, Louvain</i>
<i>SAAC</i>	<i>Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization, Kraków</i>
<i>VetChr</i>	<i>Vetera christianorum, Bari</i>
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik, Bonn</i>

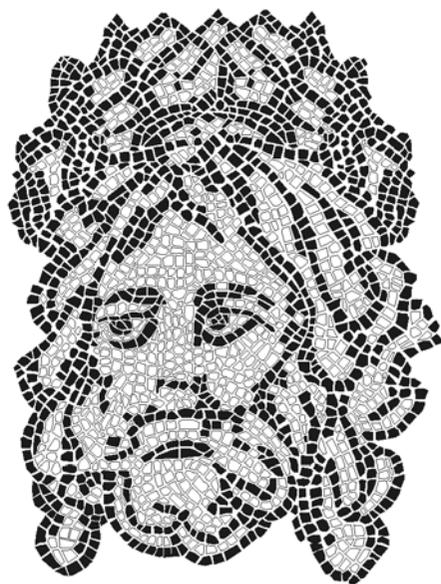
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<i>LCI</i>	E. Kirschbaum, W. Braunfels (eds), <i>Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie</i> , Rom: Herder, 1968–1976
<i>RealEnc</i>	A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, W. Kroll, K. Mittelhaus, <i>Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , Stuttgart–Münich, 1893–1980

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ISBN 978–83–7181–721–2

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