

MOURNING ODYSSEUS

(PLATES 64–66)

TO one whose eyes were opened to Greek sculpture by Rhys Carpenter, it is a privilege to be able to offer him, for further enlightenment, even a mere trace of a masterpiece of the late 5th century B.C. One such trace is presented here, a trace, to be exact, left in clay by a metal relief probably from the hand of a goldsmith who worked on the Parthenos.

This ancient impression is now in the Stoa of Attalos Museum (Pl 64, a)¹ in Athens although it was not found in the Agora excavations. According to the man who brought it into the Museum, it had been found by a friend who was filling his cart from a clay pit in the Sacred Way. The greenish yellow clay of which the impression is made is not fine nor well washed; it is full of white bits and a little gravel. This clay looks like that in the interior of a foot of a terracotta statue from the Agora excavations (T 3717) which has been called Corinthian by R. V. Nicholls.² Objects of Corinthian clay, not all necessarily imports, have been found in levels of various periods in Athens; it is not always certain whether it is the clay or the finished article that travelled.

Chance has preserved a record of the person who made this impression. On the back is the clear imprint of a right hand. Even in a photograph (Pl. 64, b) the palm of the hand is visible with the “life line,” the “heart line” and the horizontal folds at the base of the thumb. The outlines of the three first fingers with their joints and whorls are also sharply preserved. Only the side of the little finger, however, was included and only a small part of the thumb. The thumb of the left hand that evidently held the relief itself made its own impression above that of the right thumb. The wad of clay had evidently been held in the right hand and pressed down on the relief as it lay on the open left hand. This imprint brings us hand to hand, so to speak, with the craftsman in the moment of creation. Its size is interesting, measuring in width 7–8 cm. and in height a little more than 12 cm.³ Even allowing for the shrinkage of the clay after manufacture, this is decidedly smaller than most modern male

¹ Inv. T 3393. H. 11.8 cm., W. 11.5 cm., T. 4 cm., H. of relief *ca.* 5 cm. Modern cast of Attic clay, unfired, measures: H. 7.2 cm., W. 9.5 cm. Details delicately incised; veins in arms and legs modelled. Bibliography: H. A. Thompson, *Hesperia*, XXIV, 1955, pp. 68 f., pl. 31, c; *The Athenian Agora, A Guide to the Excavation and Museum*, Athens, 1962, p. 179; *Miniature Sculpture from the Athenian Agora*, Princeton, 1959, no. 29.

My debt to my Maestro cannot specifically be acknowledged, for he has shaped my thinking on these subjects. I also owe much clarification to Martin Robertson.

² To be published in *Hesperia*.

³ The fact that the impression fits comfortably into my hand indicates that it could have been made by a woman.

hands. Perhaps a boy, a member of the craftsman's family, carried out such minor assignments. No indication of incompetence suggests that the impression was taken casually; even in the withdrawal of the head every detail is crisp. The apprentice was no amateur.

Another interesting fact is recorded, namely, that the original had been removed from its backing before the impression was taken. This is shown by the traces at the bottom of six tiny holes which had been pierced in the metal to permit stitching it to leather stiffening. Moreover, in four of these holes, bits of thread left their imprint in the soft clay. At the top of the relief, the clay was pushed carelessly over, but traces of two more threads are preserved. Impressions of two rivet heads, *ca.* 0.3 cm. in diameter, lie close to the thin line that forms the border of the decoration. An upper rivet was just missed by the applied mass of clay.

On the other side, two rings, *ca.* 1.5 cm. in diameter, also left their impression. They hung from two spool-shaped loops that were inset in carefully fitted sockets. These rings lie 2.5 cm. apart and 2 cm. from the edge of the relief. They were obviously intended to receive hooks.

All these details indicate that the original metal relief must have been made for a belt of a width of *ca.* 6.7 cm. that was fastened by hooks with an overlap of *ca.* 3 cm. We know that bronze belts (*ζωστήρες*) were worn by Homeric heroes and fastened by gold clasps (*Iliad*, IV, 132). Many later specimens have been found in Italy⁴ and recently others have turned up in Greece,⁵ measuring from 4.5 cm. to 11.5 cm. in width. These belts were usually joined by long hooks that fastened into holes, but occasionally rings occur like those on our example. None of the extant pieces known to me approaches our example either in the size or in the quality of the decoration. Fine reliefs, however, have been discovered that belonged to other sections of armor, such as the famous shoulder pieces for a cuirass from Siris (Pl. 66, e) to be discussed later. Other fine reliefs have been attested for Greece by other clay impressions, mostly made from the cheek pieces of helmets.⁶ It may be taken for granted that our impression is a record of a particularly handsome belt buckle in bronze or silver, probably gilded, for the parade armor of a distinguished officer.

Let us look at the cast of our impression (Pl. 65, b) in order to appreciate the appearance of the relief itself. The original lay on the proper right hand side of the wearer. The figure faces away from the center. It represents a nude, mature man sitting on a rocky ledge with his torso turned almost frontally toward the spectator,

⁴ G. M. A. Richter, *Greek, Etruscan, and Roman Bronzes in the Metropolitan Museum*, New York, 1915, pp. 422-425. A. Hagemann, *Griechische Panzerung*, I, *Der Metallharnisch*, Leipzig and Berlin, 1919, pp. 101-106.

⁵ S. Karouzou, *Χάλκινος ἀρχαῖκός ζωστήρ*, Δελτ., XVI, 1960, pp. 60-71, pl. 25.

⁶ *Mon. Ant.*, X, 1901, cols. 342-350, no. 1290, figs. 71 b, 74. H. B. Walters, *Catalogue of the Bronzes . . . in the British Museum*, London, 1899, p. 351, nos. 2856-2858.

but his legs extended in profile. His bare toes grip the irregular rock. His large shield is set deep on his left side into a hollow of the terrain; it serves as a support for his left forearm. His right hand holds a spear of which the butt⁷ is propped against a bit of protruding rock. On a ledge above the spear rests a pilos with a wide flaring brim. The pose of the entire figure, particularly the way in which the head is bowed to rest the forehead on the right hand, is poignantly expressive of sorrow.

The details of this relief are all worked out with the most delicate feeling. The head, covered with long, wavy locks that hang down on the shoulder, is a study of restrained grief. The face is dignified and handsome with a strongly lidded eye, of which the eyeball is incised, a drooping moustache, and a soft beard that curls gently into a point. The body is athletic, but not over muscular; the modelling of the torso is clear, but not hard, the nipples are in relief; even the fingernails are defined. The pubic hair is rendered in a thin line. The style is thus strongly reminiscent of that of the Parthenon frieze.

All the details of the armor are treated minutely. The shield (Fig. 1; Pl. 65, a) has an ornamented border, apparently an interlaced studded pattern that was customary on shields of the period.⁸ Less usual is the finely etched zone of tongue pattern encircling the bowl of the shield at the junction with the rim.⁹ The large relief Gorgoneion decorates the exterior; its hair is arranged in two rows of snaky locks covering the ears with snakes tied under the chin. The lower lip is heavy, or possibly the tongue protrudes. The facial type is thus not grotesque as in early days, but rather the grim type preferred for Gorgons and Furies of the later 5th century.¹⁰ The suppression of the grotesque details, like the tongue, makes this Gorgon akin to the Sirens that were set under the handles of bronze hydriai.¹¹ A clay impression, taken from one of these heads, was found in the Athenian Agora;¹² it has the same huge eyes, heavy nose, grim mouth, and wavy locks as does our Gorgon. These two types are creations of the same Attic taste that in the later 5th century B.C. preferred the solemn and sinister to the grotesque.

Behind the shield, the warrior's sword must lie hidden, suspended on the double strap over his left shoulder. His cloak lies carelessly tossed over the shield under his left arm and down over the rock beneath him. This rock is stippled with punch marks as on other metal work; its projections and hollows flow easily wherever needed in

⁷ D. M. Robinson, *Olynthus*, X, Baltimore, 1941, no. 2172, pl. CXXIX, pp. 416-418. The butt (συνωρτήρ) had a ring around it to prevent the tip from sinking deeply into the ground.

⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, no. 2381, pp. 443-446, fig. 27, pl. CXXXV with full bibliography. Cf. T. L. Shear, *Hesperia*, VI, 1937, p. 347, fig. 12.

⁹ W. Züchner, *Griechische Klappspiegel*, Berlin, 1942, pl. 9, KS 79.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 159, fig. 75; cf. pl. 8, BR 5 and E. Pfuhl, *Malerei und Zeichnung der Griechen*, fig. 798.

¹¹ E.g. E. Diehl, *Die Hydria*, Mainz, 1964, pls. 16, 20.

¹² *Hesperia*, VIII, 1939, p. 304, fig. 15 (now believed to be a Siren rather than a Sphinx).

the composition, to support the right elbow and spear and to form a shelf for the pilos.¹³

This pilos may have been made of metal, as a formal helmet, or it may be intended to represent a leather or felt cap.¹⁴ Considering the other accoutrements, it should be



FIGURE 1

an actual helmet. Both metal and leather helmets of this shape were frequently worn during the 5th century. They were especially popular in South Italy, but an Attic grave relief does show an Athenian soldier wearing just this form.¹⁵ The break on our relief suggests that the pilos had loops on the side, which are characteristic

¹³ The rock is not rendered in sharply offset areas, but in flowing undulations, lightly dotted.

¹⁴ Daremberg and Saglio, *s.v.* Pileus (Paris) ; cf. Pfuhl, *op. cit.*, figs. 633 f., 797 f.

¹⁵ H. Diepolder, *Münch. Jahrb. bild. Kunst*, V, 1928, pp. 225-229, fig. 1.

of the soft type. Particularly striking is the way in which this cap is not left casually on the ground, but set up conspicuously on the rock. Now the pilos, of course, is the well known attribute of Odysseus. It is said to have been given to him first by a painter, either Apollodoros, in the late 5th century, or Nikomachos, in the later 4th century.¹⁶ It became a stock attribute of the hero, worn by him as a warrior as well as by him as a sailor or beggar, in representations well down through Roman Imperial times.

Odysseus, then, must be the protagonist of our scene. Parallels exist to support this identification. Two gems give a somewhat later rendering of the type. One, in Berlin (Pl. 65, c),¹⁷ shows the hero wearing pilos and chiton seated on a rock with his sword, not his shield, beside him. He also leans on his spear propped against the rock. In style, however, the gem is far removed from our relief. Another poor copy¹⁸ presents the figure seated on a stool and carrying a stick. In both cases, the head is turned directly outward.

The same theme is illustrated in a small bronze from Minorca.¹⁹ It shows Odysseus seated, wearing a pilos, despite its early 5th century date. He looks down-cast, as he rests his head on his right hand. Closer to our piece is a relief on a bronze cheek piece from a helmet, found in Megara (Pl. 65, f).²⁰ On this relief, a warrior wearing a pilos sits on a rocky slope. Two spears rest beside his left hand and a sheathed sword lies near his right knee. He is turned toward the spectator's left, like the statuette, but his right hand is raised to his head, eagerly looking outward in a way that suggested to von Sybel that he was Odysseus sitting on Kalypso's shore, longing for home. The presence of the pilos supports this interpretation, but the sword, spears, and chlamys hardly seem suitable equipment for a shipwrecked mariner. Perhaps Kalypso provided them for the journey.

The armor shown on our relief is not the equipment of a hunter. It is the fine panoply of a great warrior, surely that of Achilles which was given by the judgment of the gods to Odysseus. Yet the recipient is not rejoicing, but mourning. The hero of the *Odyssey* was not often given to melancholy. He grieved, however, when he

¹⁶ Overbeck, *Schriftquellen*, no. 1643. Scholiast on *Iliad*, X, 265, *ζωγράφοι καὶ πλάσται πῖλον ἐπέθεσαν Ὀδυσσεύι*. 'Απολλόδωρος ὁ σκιαγράφος ἐντεῦθεν πρῶτος ἔγραψε πῖλον Ὀδυσσεύι. Cf. *ibid.*, no. 1646 and Pliny, *N.H.*, XXXV, 108, where the ascription is made to Nikomachos. Since we know of early examples showing Odysseus wearing the pilos (see below note 19), we must suppose that a painter fixed the already popular attribute.

¹⁷ A. Furtwängler, *Beschreibung der geschnittenen Steine im Antiquarium*, Berlin, 1896, pl. 15, no. 1378 (whence our Pl. 65, c); *Antike Gemmen*, pl. XXVII, no. 49.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pl. XXVII, no. 51.

¹⁹ *Arch. Anz.*, LVI, 1941, col. 210, fig. 10. I owe this reference to the kindness of Martin Robertson.

²⁰ Berlin Museum inv. 7863. H. 12.2 cm. L. von Sybel, *Jahrb.*, II, 1887, pp. 15-18, pl. I; G. Bruns, *Antike Bronzen*, Berlin, 1947, pp. 44-47, fig. 31; A. Greifenhagen, *Antike Kunstwerke* (ehemals staatliche Museen Berlin), Berlin, 1960, p. 46, no. 13 (whence our Pl. 65, f).

encountered the dead. He is shown with bowed head on a pelike in Boston (Pl. 65, e)²¹ as the ghost of Elpenor rises before him. On a krater from South Italy, he sits in a similar pose gazing sadly down at the head of Teiresias that stares up at him from below.²² The style of these vase paintings is more monumental than that of our relief, but the similarity in composition and in feeling suggests that the ultimate inspiration for both lay within the realm of wall painting. Heroic mythological topics were treated throughout the 5th century by the great painters of the day. Pliny (*N.H.*, XXXV, 132) mentions a painting of the Nekyomantia by Nikias, while Pausanias (X, 29, 9) describes similar scenes in Polygnotos' rendering of the Underworld. These themes were recast in a miniature style by the metal workers, retaining somehow a touch of the grand manner.

Our relief, however, cannot depict Odysseus in either of these episodes, for his sword is not at hand nor does his glance focus on slaughtered victims or on ghosts. He is brooding on the contemplation of a tragedy, much as other heroes brooded,²³ but without any outer clue to the cause of his melancholy. We may assume, however, that to the ancient spectator, the scene was easily recognizable. Very possibly the clue lay in the relief that must be postulated on the opposite side of the buckle. At this period, contrast and balance on the fulcrum of a piquant theme motivated Attic design. This principle, as Rhys Carpenter has often emphasized, was as deepset in Attic art as it was in Attic literary style.²⁴ The meaning of the theme lay in the antithesis. A relief from Olynthos illustrates this principle; it shows a nude youth opposed to a personage in Oriental dress contrasted in their interest on a missing object.²⁵ A similar reclining figure that decorated a helmet (Pl. 66, c)²⁶ shows the more complicated movement that developed a little later; the warrior reverts his glance to his

²¹ L. D. Caskey, *Attic Vase Paintings in the Museum of Fine Arts*, Oxford, 1931, II, no. 111, pl. LXIII (whence our Pl. 65, e).

²² A. D. Trendall, *Frühitaliotische Vasen*, Leipzig, 1938, p. 19, pl. 16; Pfuhl, *Malerei und Zeichnung*, p. 598, fig. 797.

²³ Similar types are used for other heroes, but they are unlikely to fit our case for the following reasons:

- 1) Achilles mourning Patroklos is usually unbearded and heavily wrapped in his mantle.
- 2) Tydeus in despair is accompanied by the head of Melanippos whom he murdered.
- 3) Philoktetes in pain shows his wounded leg and coveted bow.
- 4) Ajax, contemplating suicide, could not have the handsome armor, which he had surrendered to Odysseus, and should hold the sword of Hektor as well as be accompanied by the animals that he killed.

²⁴ As my professor, Henry N. Sanders, used to put it, "a style characterized by the μέν and δέ construction."

²⁵ D. M. Robinson, *Olynthus*, X, pp. 19-30, pl. IV. This composition is echoed on a silver kalathos from Herculaneum representing the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* figures seated on tendrils, perhaps derived from prototypes of the 5th century B.C. (cf. our Pl. 66, c); A. Adriani, *Divagazioni intorno ad una coppa paesistica*, Rome, 1959, p. 33, fig. 12, pl. XLVIII, 139.

²⁶ Agora Museum inv. T 2930, *Hesperia*, XIX, 1950, p. 334, pl. 106, b.

counterpart on the other side of the neck piece. We may assume that the counterpart of our relief also turned away from the center. Mourning figures, in fact, often sit back to back on the funeral monuments shown on vases. They also appear as akroteria seated on the anthemia of marble gravestones, or even as figures carved in the round, averting the glance in the loneliness of grief.²⁷

At this period, the obvious, the inevitable counterpart of Odysseus would have been Ajax. Ever rivals, they are often represented by the same type, seated on the rocky shore, deep in sorrow. Ajax is dejected by the realization of the madness that caused him to slaughter animals in the belief that they were his enemies. Holding his bloody sword, he bows his head, contemplating suicide. This type (Pl. 65, d)²⁸ would make the perfect counterpart for that of our Odysseus, who, regretful of the enmity that caused the downfall of his gallant opponent, also bows his head in grief.

The theme to be read into these scenes, then, would be the inevitable nemesis that overtakes hybris. Ajax claimed the armor of Achilles in his pride in having saved the body of Achilles from the battle field. Odysseus, equally proud of being regarded as the greatest surviving Greek warrior, had seized the armor and thus directly caused the death of his old rival. A solemn theme, this, a grim warning to a warrior about to put on this magnificent belt; surely it was not chosen by chance? The armorer who received the order for a decorated belt, a rare adjunct to an Athenian panoply, had no fixed tradition behind him. He must have cast about for a suitable theme and considered the most famous ζωστήρ in Homeric legend, the ζωστήρ that Ajax gave Hector in return for Hector's own gift of a sword. This episode is mentioned in the *Iliad* IV, 303-305,

ὦς ἄρα φωνήσας δῶκε ξίφος ἀργυρόηλον,
σὺν κολεῷ τε φέρων καὶ ἐϋτμήτῳ τελαμῶνι.
Αἴας δὲ ζωστήρα δίδου φοίνικι φαεινόν.

The details are developed and the lesson emphasized in Sophokles' *Ajax* (lines 1024-1033) in which Hector is supposed to have been lashed by this very belt to the chariot rail that dragged him to death, whereas Ajax destroyed the animals and himself with the sword of Hector. Lines 1034-1035:

ἄρ' οὐκ Ἑρινὺς τοῦτ' ἐχάλκευσε ξίφος
κάκεινον Ἄιδης, δημιουργὸς ἄγριος;
"Was it a Fury who had forged that sword?
Was it not Hades who had wrought that belt?"

²⁷ Martin Robertson kindly referred me to several such mourners, e.g. A. Conze, *Die attischen Grabreliefs*, pl. 168, no. 898; pl. 353, no. 1666a; G. M. A. Richter, *The Sculpture and Sculptors of the Greeks*,² New Haven, 1950, p. 80, fig. 212 (Berlin 498 f.).

²⁸ E.g. Furtwängler, *Beschreib. geschnitt. Steine*, pl. 10, nos. 672 f.; pl. 15, no. 1357; pl. 32, nos. 4319, 4321; *Ant. Gem.*, pl. XXX, nos. 64, 66; pl. XXXVI, no. 4 (our Pl. 65, d). Despite the numerous examples of this type on gems, the subject is not treated on red-figure vases.

The recognition of the tragedy created by hybris, of the cruelty of Fate and the gods, and of the inevitable balancing, in the course of time, of injustice by justice—these are the lessons of the play.²⁹ The moral is clearly expressed in lines 1081-1086:

ὅπου δ' ὑβρίζειν δρᾶν θ' ἂ βούλεται παρῆ . . .
 ἐξ οὐρίων δραμοῦσαν ἐς βυθὸν πεσεῖν . . .
 καὶ μὴ δοκῶμεν δρῶντες ἂν ἡδόμεθα
 οὐκ ἀντιτείσειν αὐθις ἂν λυπώμεθα . . .
 "Think not that we can do what pleases us
 Without exaction of the price in pain."

Even more Sophoclean is the final scene in which Odysseus, shocked by the tragedy, forgives his old enemy and speaks kindly of him (lines 1338-1339):

ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἔμπας ὄντ' ἐγὼ τοιόνδ' ἐμοὶ
 οὐκ ἀντατιμάσαιμ' ἄν . . .
 "Yet, despite how he regarded me,
 I shall not requite him with indignity."

That our relief should express the spirit and mood of the play can scarcely occur by chance. According to the most recent dating, the *Ajax*, the earliest of Sophokles' extant dramas, must date about 447 B.C.³⁰ It shows strong traces of the Aeschylean tradition. It is also contemporary with the beginning of work on the Parthenos. The artist who designed our relief could well have seen the first performance of the *Ajax* and could have held in his memory for ten or fifteen years its lessons and its scenes. The play begins on a rocky shore where Ajax, recovering slowly from his frenzy, sits musing as he prepares for suicide, bidding farewell to the caves, the pastures, and the salt sea (lines 411-427). The play ends on the same shore where Odysseus laments the cruelty of the gods and the death of one of the greatest heroes. The armorer (or the painter that inspired him) has set to pictorial rhythms the drama of those scenes.

Artists, however, seldom draw their inspiration from any art but their own; they follow the tradition of their day. The vase paintings, gems, and the small bronze from Minorca show that an artistic type did exist for the Grieving Ajax and the Mourning Odysseus, types in which the conception for our reliefs could be cast. None of these, clearly, is the exact prototype, nor did the composition long survive. We realize in looking at it how much is permanently lost from the metal tradition of the period. A few other comparable metal impressions serve to emphasize this loss; they

²⁹ C. H. Whitman, *Sophocles*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1951, pp. 59-80. I owe much of my understanding of this play to Whitman's sensitive analysis.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-46.

show that there was a body of original, subtle, and accomplished relief work in precious metals of the late 5th century that has not otherwise survived.

Not dissimilar in style, for instance, is an impression from the cheek piece of a helmet on which a warrior raises his hand to greet his counterpart on the opposite side. He is a sturdy figure⁸¹ wearing a cuirass over a chiton of which the curling edge writhes in exuberant folds like those of the cloak of our warrior. He too has an engraved shield rim, a double sword strap, an heroic air that all belong to the same taste as our relief. Still closer, both in mood and in execution, is another impression taken from a helmet (Pl. 66, d)⁸² showing Aphrodite and Eros, famous for its romantic beauty and worthy of the helmet of Alkibiades himself. It has, unfortunately, disappeared, but its style, as Rodenwaldt claimed, is as close to the type of work that must have decorated the Parthenon as we are likely to see in our time. The subject is different, but the cheek piece exhibits the same skill, the same feeling for the medium. The drooping head is composed much in the manner, close in construction also to heads on the Parthenon frieze, that characterizes our relief (Pl. 66, a, b). The two pieces come from the same post-Parthenon world.

In marble sculpture the metallic influence flowered, as Rhys Carpenter has put it,⁸³ in the "florid formal style" of the Nike Parapet and the related Maenad Base. On both these monuments, mannerisms appear like those on metal originals. The drapery and the pose of the Athena on the Parapet⁸⁴ that rests her arm on her shield resemble those of our Odysseus. Particularly close, on those figures on the balustrade attributed to "Master B," are the "pouches and pockets"⁸⁵ of material that gather at the waist of the Nikai and in the cloak of our hero. The wiry ridges of these folds and the pencilled shadows within their nodules are natural expressions of the fluid movement of metal. Perhaps Rodenwaldt was right when he associated the original creations of the goldsmiths with the influence of Pheidias and Mys.⁸⁶ Our relief certainly breathes the spirit of Athens at this period; it is really impossible to attribute it to any other school. Striking also is the resemblance of our head (Pl. 66, a, b) to the heads on the Siris bronze shoulder pieces (Pl. 66, e)⁸⁷ of which

⁸¹ *Hesperia*, VIII, 1939, pp. 289-293, fig. 4 (T 1931); *Miniature Sculpture from the Athenian Agora*, no. 28.

⁸² *Hesperia*, VIII, p. 309, fig. 17; G. Rodenwaldt, "Ein toreutisches Meisterwerk," *Jahrb.*, XLI, 1926, pp. 191-204, pl. 5 (our Pl. 66, d).

⁸³ *Greek Sculpture*, Chicago, 1960, p. 159.

⁸⁴ Rhys Carpenter, *The Sculpture of the Nike Temple Parapet*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1929, pl. XIX.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁸⁶ *Jahrb.*, XLI, 1926, pp. 200 f.

⁸⁷ Walters, *Catalogue of the Bronzes . . . in the British Museum*, no. 285, pl. VIII. D. K. Hill, *Hesperia*, XII, 1943, p. 102; cf. p. 111, fig. 11. Rhys Carpenter, *M.A.A.R.*, XVIII, 1941, p. 29 also dates the Siris bronzes in the late 5th century. Plate 66, e courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

it must show the kind of prototype that was copied in Italy during the late 5th century B.C.³⁸ Our belt, then, must have been made between the completion of the Parthenos and the creation of the Parapet, not far on either side of 430 B.C.

Finally, why was the clay impression made? Such impressions from metalwork are not commonly found, but a fairly large group comes from Athens,³⁹ despite the fact that fine metal reliefs are not discovered in Attic graves of the period.⁴⁰ We may assume that many were exported to the richer Greeks in the West. In order to keep a record to show customers or to use for models, the craftsmen may systematically have taken impressions before sale. Our piece, however, was taken after use; we can only suppose that it appealed to another metal worker, perhaps a foreigner within the city. The clay, apparently not Athenian, might have been in his possession as part of his equipment. We shall never know. At best, such masterpieces must have been rare; we must count ourselves lucky to have even a trace of the sort of armor that was worn by Alkibiades in his days of *hybris*.

At that time, Sokrates questioned the propriety of preferring decorated and gilded parade armor to sturdy battle dress (Xenophon, *Mem.*, X, 14), "Ἐνιοι μέντοι τοὺς ποικίλους καὶ τοὺς ἐπίχρυσους θώρακας ὠνοῦνται. Ἄλλὰ μήν, ἔφη [*sc.* Σωκράτης], εἶγε διὰ ταῦτα μὴ ἀρμόττοντας ὠνοῦνται, κακὸν ἔμοιγε δοκοῦσι ποικίλον τε καὶ ἐπίχρυσον ὠνείσθαι. The spirit of this reproof is sternly expressed on our belt. The prospective owner is cautioned to remember what befell the possessors of magnificent armor even in heroic days. As Sophokles warned (*Ajax*, line 1028),

σκέψασθε, πρὸς θεῶν, τὴν τύχην δυοῖν βροτοῖν . . .
 "Look here upon this picture and on this—."

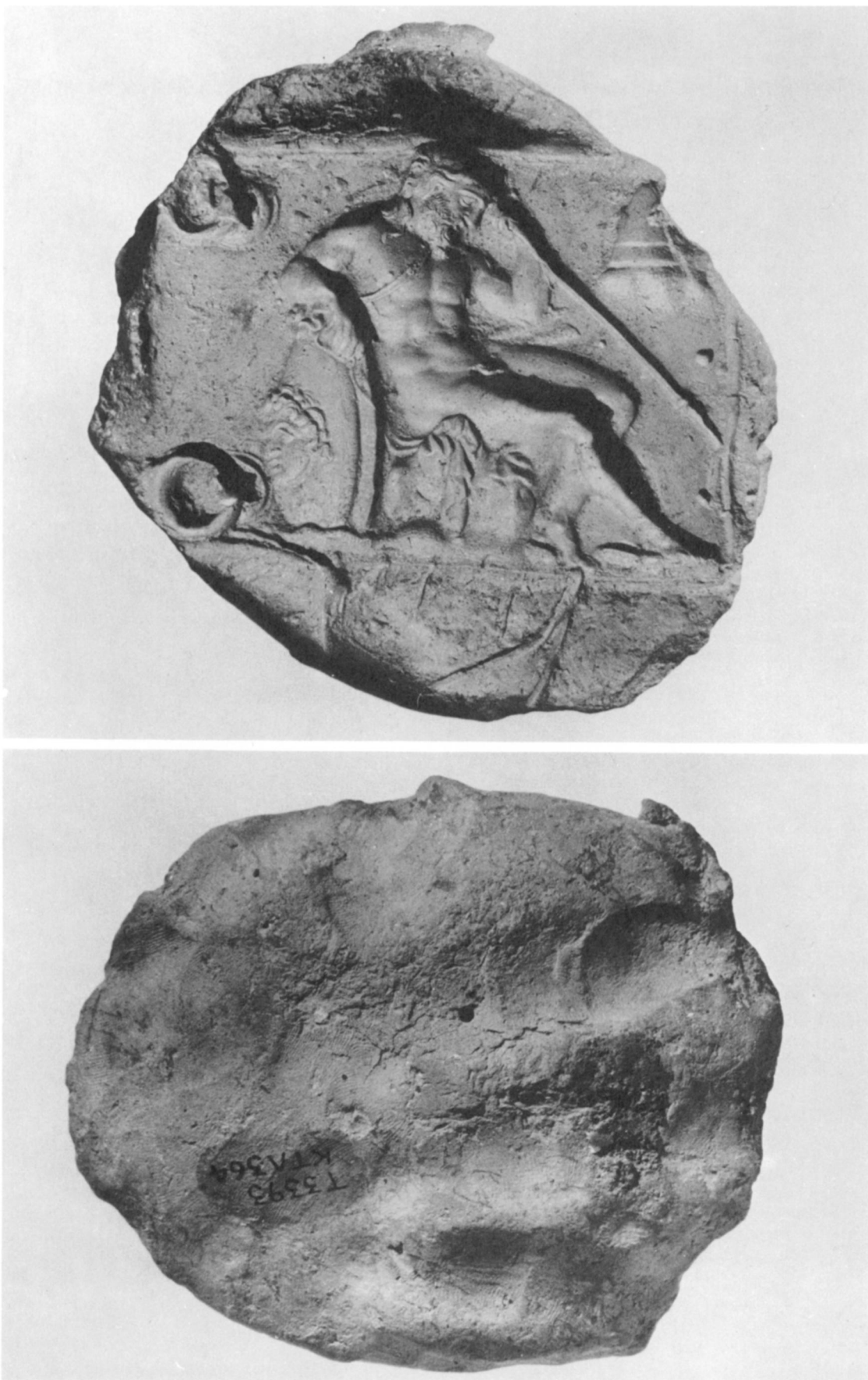
DOROTHY BURR THOMPSON

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 29 note 1; *Sculpt. of Nike Temple Parapet*, p. 81.

³⁹ In general, D. B. Thompson, *Hesperia*, VIII, 1939, pp. 285-316; D. K. Hill, *ibid.*, XII, 1943, pp. 97-114.

⁴⁰ Cf. Züchner, *Gr. Klappspiegel*, pp. 221 f.



a. and b. Metal Impression Agora T 3393, Front and Back
DOROTHY BURR THOMPSON: MOURNING ODYSSEUS



a. and b. Metal Impression Agora T 3393, Modern Cast, Detail of Shield and Complete



c. Berlin Gem No. 1378 d. Berlin Gem (Antike Gemmen, Plate XXXVI, No. 4)



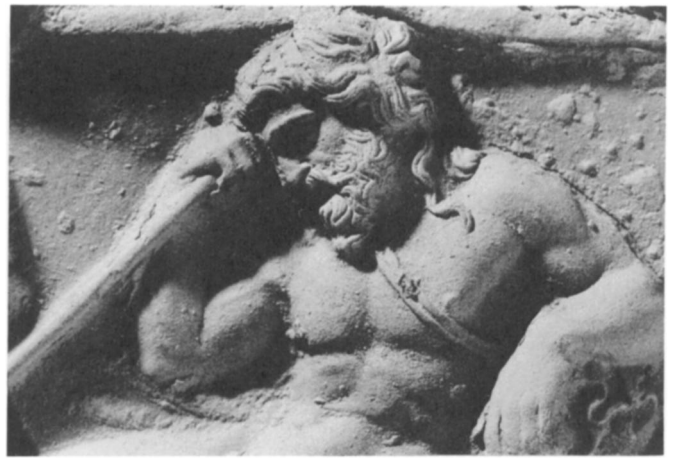
e. Pelike. Boston Museum of Fine Arts



f. Bronze Cheek Piece from Megara



a. Metal Impression, Detail of Head



b. Metal Impression, Cast of Head



c. Metal Impression Agora T 2930, Cast



d. Metal Impression, Cast



e. Siris Bronze Relief