A FOOT - NOTE FROM PERSEPOLIS

C. Nylander and J. Flemberg*

A fragment of dark limestone from Persepolis, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, showing minute graffiti of two bearded human heads and the heads of a lion, a dog and a bull, has been an important point of reference in discussions of the part played by Greek craftsmen in Persepolis and of Greek influence in Achaemenid art (Fig.1) (1). It is the purpose of this brief note in honour of Professor Akurgal, who has always taken a keen and creative interest in Iranian problems, to summarize what is known about the fragment and to add a few considerations inspired by recent research.

It was known that the fragment was a piece of a foot of a sculpture of Darius, though it was for a long time unclear from which particular sculptural context it derived (2). This means that the fragment has been discussed entirely on its own merits, mainly from the point of view of stylistic affinities and of the ethnic background of the person who made the graffiti. It was already pointed out by the discoverer, Ernst Herzfeld, that the graffiti were unique amongst the rich though canonically formalized imagery of Persepolis: "masterpieces of design, rivalling the very best Greek vase-paintings" and "among the immense amount of Achaemenian sculpture... (the) one piece entirely free from convention." (3) Herzfeld discussed the piece within the framework of an ongoing debate concerning the nature and originality of Persian art, which was often attacked by classical scholars, but warmly defended by a number of Near Eastern archaeologists, not least by Herzfeld himself (4). Thus the graffiti did indeed suggest Greek associations to Herzfeld, but he stated emphatically "but of course they are no Greek work" (5). Instead he considered the graffiti as "one of the finest specimens of Achaemenian art". (6).

A few years later, in 1946, Gisela Richter discussed the fragment briefly in an important article on "Greeks in Persia" (7). Miss Richter, after a
summary of features in Persepolis which seemed to indicate the presence and important contribution of Greek artists and craftsmen, commented on the "unmistakable Greek style" of the graffiti and pointed out that Greek vase painting of the late sixth century offered striking parallels. Her conclusion was that a "Greek artist in Persia who engraved these charming designs evidently gave vent to a sudden desire to work in his own manner, untrammelled by the restrictions imposed upon him. By this whim he has left us precious evidence of his presence in Persepolis" (8). Other scholars have agreed with Miss Richters's conclusions (9).

In fact, there can be no doubt about the "Greek-ness" of the piece. Not only do the human faces display all the conventions of contemporary Greek drawing but also the lion head closely resembles those of late Archaic Greek vases, while differing very much from Near Eastern lions in general and from the numerous Persepolitan lions in particular, whether sculpted or incised (Figs 2,7) (10). It has thus been thought that in a moment of leisure a Greek stonemason/sculptor at work on a sculpture of the Great King in one of the Persepolis palaces, quickly but elegantly, sketched, among other things, the heads of some of his fellow Persian workmen, soon to be covered by the red paint often used on royal shoes. The only small point of difference has been that where some have seen the drawings as representing Oriental fellow workers, others prefer to see them as Ionian craftsmen colleagues (11). In either case, this is then a precious piece of evidence of undoubtedly Greek work in Persepolis, a point of clear interest as it has not always been easy to agree on the nature and significance of such work in Iran. But what exactly does this fragment tell us about the part played by Greeks in Persia or at Persepolis?

Here we are confronted with the problem of the original context of the Metropolitan Museum fragment. This is of course important, as there seems to be no doubt whatsoever that a man steeped in the conventions and style of contemporary Greek painting and drawing had somehow been involved in the making of the sculpture on which the graffiti were incised. Although Herzfeld was never explicit about this problem, it is now possible to determine the exact original position of the fragment. Thanks to the kindness of the late Vaughn E. Crawford of the Near Eastern Department in the Metropolitan Museum of Art I obtained, in 1973, a cast of the fragment with which to test possible locations on the extant royal sculptures in Persepolis. It was then possible to prove that the original location of the fragment was on the foot of the royal figure of Darius in the west jamb of the west entrance to the private area in the north of the so-called Tachara or Place of Darius (Figs 3,4). In the meantime this observation has been confirmed by other means: Dr. Ann Britt Tilia has found a passage in Herzfeld's unpublished diary, now in the Freer Gallery, Washington, which reports the same fact (12).

We can thus locate our fragment in its original context. This broadens the scope of our inquiry into the problems of the graffiti. From a foot and a shoe we can now let the eye consider a whole royal relief statue of the classical Achaemenid and Persepolitan type, mutilated by later iconoclasts yet hinting at its former splendour of sumptuous dress, inlaid beard and golden crown and bracelets (Fig 4) (13). And we may, with reasonable certainty, assume that the man who made the graffiti on the foot of the statue was also involved in the creation of the whole relief, one of the richest and most elaborate in Persepolis. Was he the sculptor? We are here confronted with the question as to whether it is to be expected that a presumably Greek craftsman/sculptor in Persepolis, probably originally from Asia Minor, would also be so at ease with the subtle and rapidly developing art of drawing and painting in his native sphere as to be able to produce sketches and designs similar in style and quality to good contemporary Attic vase painting. It is true that surface patterning and incised decoration were important in some archaic Greek sculpture and that sculptors may have been trained accordingly (14). There is, however, some difference between tracing abstract, mostly geometric patterns to be coloured and being familiar with the latest advances and fashions in other types of drawing and painting.

Important recent research, especially that of Ann Britt and Giuseppe Tilia who have done so much for Achaemenid studies, here comes to our aid (15). We know, from much textual and archaeological evidence, that the Achaemenid rulers and other noble Persians used richly embroidered and decorated clothes (16). Thanks to the publications of Erich F. Schmidt and the Tilias we also know that the artists and craftsmen of Persepolis not only sculpted the rich, calm forms of the Achaemenid royal and noble figures in parade dress but, not infrequently, also gave these dresses a sumptuous surface decoration, first engraved and then brightly painted (17). The careful observations of the Tilias have documented to what extent this kind of incised and painted decoration was used, mainly for royal figures but also for the equipment of soldiers and guards (18).

This means that craftsmen in Persepolis were expected to handle not only architectural stonework and sculpture but, amongst several other artistic activities, also a great deal of engraving and painting (19). Even though the total extent of such colouring and of such engraved sketches as
preparation for colouring in Persepolis has not been firmly established, it
seems possible to draw some preliminary conclusions from the evidence so
far reported. As is to be expected, the greatest effort was devoted above all
to the figure of the Great King. And it is an interesting fact that, while the
royal crowns differ, the intricate decoration of the royal robe seems to be
very much the same in all the palaces (20). This probably means that there
was one particular ceremonial robe in which the Great King appeared on
special occasions and that great care was taken to reproduce this dress as
exactly and faithfully as possible (Fig 5). The great importance of precision
in this respect is also indicated by a sketch slab found beneath the
Persepolis Terrace by the Tillas and then carefully published and discussed
by Paavo Roos (21). Here a workman in Persepolis practised drawing
lions, circles and lotus flowers of the identical types that recur in the
decoration of the royal robe. In several cases even the dimensions of the
concentric, compass-drawn circles coincide.

Looking then at the particular royal figure from which our fragment
was taken and at his "brothers" or replicas in the other three door jamb
of the entrances to the northern apartments of the Tachara we can still
today see traces of such rich surface decoration: walking lions, encircled
palmettes, flower patterns and concentric, compass-drawn circles in
great number covering the surface of the dress (Figs. 6.7). (22). It is obvious
that a considerable amount of painstaking work went into the finishing of these
sculptures including the preparation of the painted patterns by means of
sketches made with a sharp instrument, often on such difficult surfaces as
the stacked folds of the dress (Fig. 6.). It seems a reasonable assumption that
all this was specialist work, and that the maker of our graffito was most
probably the same man who, with the same sharp tool, engraved all those
rich surface patterns on the royal ceremonial dress. We may perhaps get a
further glimpse of his "oeuvre", both as an engraver/painter and as a
"graffitist", by looking at the corresponding royal figure on the other,
eastern, jamb of the same doorway which was almost certainly worked on
by the same man. Here similar patterns are seen and, in addition, there is a
somewhat clumsy sketch of a hybrid, ursine animal in a location later to be
covered with paint (23).

It is hard to tell whether this engraver/painter in the Tachara was also
the sculptor of the royal figures there. On the one hand, it is well known
that ancient Greek artists and craftsmen were often impressively versatile,
and we know quite a few cases where sculptors were also painters (24). On
the other hand, there is some evidence that sculptural work in Persepolis
was sometimes organized group-wise with possible divisions of labour

within the working team (25). An immediate assumption that here sculptor
and engraver/painter were the same person should therefore be
approached with some caution. We ought in addition to note the overall
rich ornamentation of these royal figures, including inlaid beard (lapis
lazuli?) and metal inlays for crown necklace and bracelets, which makes
them into the most elaborate of their kind which have been preserved (26).
Their obvious importance, and thus the great care devoted to them, makes
it probable that the very best specialists available were employed for them,
or even for different aspects of their creation. Thus we cannot safely
assume them to be work of only one man, even though this possibility
cannot be excluded. What can safely be said is that the person who
engraved the pre-painting sketches was no doubt of Greek origin and
artistic background and that, having been entrusted with work on some of
the most important sculptures in Persepolis, he must have been a respected
professional. It is tempting, though admittedly speculative, to connect him
with another interesting piece of evidence that a Greek actually did similar
engraving work in Persepolis, namely a fragmentary plaque of local
limestone with an incised sketch of an utterly Greek motif, Herakles's
struggle with Apollo over the Delphic tripod in the presence of Artemis
which is dated to exactly the same period as our graffito (Fig. 8.). (27). The
amount of Greek painters in Persepolis around 500 B.C. can hardly have
been legion.

Anyhow, it seems a reasonable conclusion that a Greek, possibly a
specialist in drawing and painting rather than a sculptor, was active in the
Palace of Darius, sometime in the late 6th century, working on the
demanding, painstakingly veristic reproduction of the ceremonial royal
robe. This was difficult and no doubt sometimes nerve-racking work. It is
not surprising that, at some tired moment, he sought relaxation in a quiet
little revolt against the stylistic straitjacket imposed upon him by the
rigid canons of Achaemenid court art and against the pressure of minute
verism, thereby giving us a glimpse of a moment in the life of an Anatolian
Gastarbeiter in the city of the Great Kings.

(C.N.)

As mentioned above, the human heads have a general resemblance to
bearded heads in contemporary Greek vase painting. It seems therefore
natural to use vase painting as a point of reference when analyzing them,
although the difference of technique between engraving and drawing must
be kept in mind; nor must it be taken for granted that the artistic
conventions of vase painters and engravers/sculptors were the same (28).
The Persepolis reliefs will, of course, also be taken into consideration.
The general shape of hair and beard is very similar to the Greek convention (Fig. 9) (39). Note the outline of hair and beard against temple and cheek. The beard, however, covers a greater part of the cheek than is usual in Greek heads. The eye and eyebrow are drawn in a manner reminiscent of early red figure painters (30): generally, however, around 500 B.C. the eyes become less symmetrical, the tear duct being indicated, as on fig. 9. That the line forming the upper eyelid is almost parallel to the line forming the eyebrow is a feature fairly common in both Greek and Persian relief sculpture (31).

In spite of this similarity, the heads differ from the typical Greek two-dimensional head, a fact implicitly recognized by Miss Richter through some of her comparisons (32).

These differences are most clearly visible in the profile, which shows (especially that of the left head) a very sloping forehead, a marked transition from forehead to nose, and a rather large, aquiline nose. Another unusual trait is the little curved line below the eye, indicating the cheek. The hair and beard are rendered by numerous small lines, giving a realistic appearance compared to the stylization common in vase painting. The very thick fringes and their inward curving are also untypical.

This more realistic way of rendering the human head is, of course, not totally foreign to Greek artistic conventions; the so-called physiognomical renderings in Archaic and Classical art have often been noticed and discussed (33), the problem usually being to determine the beginning of Greek portraiture (34).

Generally speaking, physiognomical representation implies a more realistic rendering of parts of the human body, to various degrees and for various purposes (35). In heads, the most conspicuous feature usually is the lower part of the forehead, projecting slightly above the root of the nose. This is in accordance with real male physiognomy, distinguished by protruding superciliary arches and sloping forehead. (The right head is more stylized at this point). As is well known, this transition is rather faintly indicated in early red figure and by the mid 5th century the profile is often an almost straight line. A sloping profile per se, however, often occurs in late Archaic art, not least in the East Greek area (36). The indentation at the root of the nose occurs also on the Persepolis reliefs (Fig. 10) (37), not, however, the sloping forehead (38). The little line on the cheek could, in this context, be interpreted as a wrinkle (39).

The nose is rather evenly curved (more so that of the right head) and the pointed tip hangs down a little. Similar noses occur in Greek art, but exact parallels are not so easy to find. As with other deviations from the ideal type, a hooked nose often occurs in representations of elderly men, usually in combination with a realistically rendered forehead (40).

In representations of barbarians, however, it is not as usual as one might expect. To judge by the material assembled by Bovon (41) and Racek (42) physiognomical renderings of Persians are rather few (43). Their dress and equipment make them easily recognizable as Orientals. Perhaps the best parallels to the noses of the graffito heads are that of a Scythian on a black figure cup (Fig. 11) (44) and those of some satraps and dynasts on silver coins from western Asia Minor from the late 5th century onwards (Fig. 12) (45). The combination of a large, aquiline nose with a markedly sloping forehead is, however, rather uncommon, one of the best examples being the Hegesiboulos cup (Fig. 13) (46). On the Persepolis reliefs similar noses occur, albeit mostly smaller than these.

The Hegesiboulos cup also provides a parallel to the rendering of hair and beard; the use of little, diverging lines is similar, also the outline of the whole head. The somewhat fleshy nose and lips have been considered Oriental traits (47) and the name of the potter possibly points to an Ionian origin (48). It should further be noted that the outside has a komos scene with youths wearing sakkos, probably an Ionian fashion (49). The ethnic background of the figure is, however, not of crucial importance.

A more interesting parallel for the hair is provided by the Karaburn Tomb II, near Elmali (50), where a reclining Lycian nobleman is shown in a Persianized milieu (Fig. 14) (51). His hair is very carefully rendered and the fringe seems to consist of two layers, the outer one thin and diaphanous; one is reminded of the ancient practice of wearing a wig, attested for the Medes (52). The protruding fringe certainly resembles the fringes of the graffito heads, although these are less tidy. If this comparison is valid, then we are of course not dealing with workers.

In a Greek context, then, the 'physiognomical' traits that we have discerned in the heads (especially in the left, completed, one) might be interpreted in three, partly overlapping ways (if we exclude the mythological sphere): old age, foreign origin, or portraiture (53). The last alternative is, in my opinion, less likely, at least if by portrait we mean a "true" portrait, representing the individual traits of a definite person. It is doubtful that realistic portraiture was a concern of artists at this time and,
besides, the noticeable stylization of the eye and, in the right head, the profile also speak against it (54). As to the first alternative, it is weakened by the fact that the Greek examples are usually distinguished by partial bald-headedness (55), which is obviously not the case with our heads. More probably, therefore, the artist intended to represent Persians (or a Persian, if the right sketch is just a preliminary study), since both the hairstyle and the aquiline nose can with some probability be regarded as Oriental traits (56).

Foot-Notes

- The first part of the following paper dealing with the Persepolis evidence is written by C. Nylander, the second part discussing iconography by J. F. Plenemberg.

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1. Javanz 45.11.17 Fragment of a relief Limestone Persepolis, Iran Late VI century BC. H. 3 1/4 in. (8.26 cm.). L. 6 in. (15.24 cm.). Th. 2 in. (6.35 cm.) Purchase, 1945 Ernst Herzfeld G.E. Rogers Fund, 1945.548

2. J. F. Plenemberg, Archaeological History of Iran (The Schuch Lectures of the British Academy), London 1935, p. 73,6f. "A small fragment in our collection which once must (my Italic CN) have been part of a piece of sculpture at Persepolis", Iran in the Ancient East, New York 1941, p. 257: "...the minite design, about a square inch in size, of two human heads engraved with a sharp point in the hard stone, a fragment of a shoe from a figure of Darus." E.F. Schmidt, Persepolis II, p. 222, fn. 7.

3. Iran in the Ancient East, New York 1941, p. 257.


8. Iran in the Ancient East, New York 1941, p. 257.


12. Ibid., p. 28.

13. Ibid., p. 28.


15. Ibid., p. 28.

16. Ibid., p. 28.

17. Ibid., p. 28.

18. Ibid., p. 28.

19. Ibid., p. 28.

20. Ibid., p. 28.

21. Ibid., p. 28.

22. Ibid., p. 28.

23. Ibid., p. 28.

24. Ibid., p. 28.

25. Ibid., p. 28.

26. Ibid., p. 28.

27. Ibid., p. 28.

28. Ibid., p. 28.

29. Ibid., p. 28.

30. Ibid., p. 28.

31. Ibid., p. 28.

32. Ibid., p. 28.

33. Ibid., p. 28.

34. Ibid., p. 28.

35. Ibid., p. 28.

36. Ibid., p. 28.

37. Ibid., p. 28.

38. Ibid., p. 28.

39. Ibid., p. 28.

40. Ibid., p. 28.

41. Ibid., p. 28.

42. Ibid., p. 28.

43. Ibid., p. 28.

44. Ibid., p. 28.

45. Ibid., p. 28.

46. Ibid., p. 28.

47. Ibid., p. 28.

48. Ibid., p. 28.

49. Ibid., p. 28.

50. Ibid., p. 28.

51. Ibid., p. 28.

52. Ibid., p. 28.

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99. Ibid., p. 28.

100. Ibid., p. 28.

101. Ibid., p. 28.

102. Ibid., p. 28.

103. Ibid., p. 28.

104. Ibid., p. 28.

105. Ibid., p. 28.
(25) M. Roaf, Sculptures and sculptures at Persepolis (Iran 21), 1983.


(27) I am grateful for the kind permission to reproduce a reconstruction of the three heads engraved in the rock in the Belvédère quarries, Qb 48, 1966/67, p. 68, fig. 38, where some influence of late Archaic and Early Classical painting is probably seen (p. 70).

(28) The head of a woman on a amphora by Euthymides, from FR pl. 81.

(29) E. P. E. Arians und M. Hirmer, Tausend Jahre griechische Vasen kunst, München 1960, pl. 84 (E. Arians), pl. 98 (E. Arians), pl. 100 and 104, middle, (Öffn.). See also G.M.A. Richter und E.H. Hall, Red-figured Athenian vases in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New Haven 1963, p. 8 and fig. 11.


(31) AJA 50, 1946, p. 29, fig. 27 (the giant Aionais) and fig. 28 (an Oriental 7).

(32) P. E. Arians und M. Hirmer, Tausend Jahre griechische Vasen kunst, München 1960, pl. 84 (E. Arians), pl. 98 (E. Arians), pl. 100 and 104, middle, (Öffn.). See also G.M.A. Richter und E.H. Hall, Red-figured Athenian vases in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New Haven 1963, p. 8 and fig. 11.

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(35) AJA 50, 1946, p. 29, fig. 27 (the giant Aionais) and fig. 28 (an Oriental 7).

(36) P. E. Arians und M. Hirmer, Tausend Jahre griechische Vasen kunst, München 1960, pl. 84 (E. Arians), pl. 98 (E. Arians), pl. 100 and 104, middle, (Öffn.). See also G.M.A. Richter und E.H. Hall, Red-figured Athenian vases in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New Haven 1963, p. 8 and fig. 11.


(46) Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art, Dep. of Greek and Roman Art. The vase has been reidentified, cf. ARV² 175; AJA 50, 1946, fig. 28; AJA 62, 1958, pl. 37 b (reidentified); Metzler fig. 2; Pfauhl, Malerei und Zeichnung fig. 340; Richter and Hall, op. cit. supra note 30, pl. 10; FR 2, fig. 60.

(47) Pfauhl, Malerei und Zeichnung pp. 363, 421 called him "alter Semt". Beazley was more cautious: "old man taking a walk". Metzler also thinks a Greek quite as possible as an Oriental (p. 84). FR p. 179: "It is often offered as an alter Platoniker or Hebrer gemeint, dessen Profil mit der gekrummten Nase fastest charakteristisch erfasst ist. Auch der Umris der Schädel ist von dem der normalen griechischen Koppe verschieden", followed by Richter and Hall pp. 24-25: "evidently or Agent a Syrian, a Phoenician, or a Jew". The shape of the head, with a noticeable depression in the middle of the crown of the head, was seen as an Oriental trait also by L. Schmitt, ZDMG 108, 1956 p. 55. For the shape of lips and nose one may compare the grotesque figure, Metzler fig. 3. The painter is close to Skythes (Pfauhl, Malerei und Zeichnung p. 421; Beazley ARV² 175).

(48) Richter and Hall, op. cit. supra note 30, p. 25, n. 3 C.E. Lang op. cit. supra note 9, p. 196.


(50) For this tomb, see Miss Mellink's reports in AJA 75, 1971, pp. 249-255, pl. 54-56 and AJA 1072 pp. 263-9, pl. 57-60, Mêanges Manuel J., Ankara 1974, pp. 537-541, pls. 181-187, CRAI 1979, pp. 884-905. It is dated c. 475.

(51) Courtesy M.I. Mellink, Bryn Mawr College.

(52) DarSag 2, pp. 1452-3, s.v. "galeas". The earliest testimonies are from Aristophanes for Greek and Xenophon (Cyris. 1.3) for Median wars. The term used by Xenophon is ΚΟΠΙΛΛΟΤΤΩΣ COL. Another word, ΚΟΠΙΛΛΟΧΩΛΟΣ, is used by Herodotus (Histories 4.8), which can also denote the feedback of a horse.

(53) Metzler p. 114 reckons with the possibility that they are self-portraits of the Greek sculptors.

(54) A step further in individualization is represented by the warrior in a krater in New York (Pfauhl, Malerei und Zeichnung fig. 496; Richter and Hall, op. cit. supra note 30, pl. II), c. 460 BC. Pfauhl (520) speaks of "his Ancestor an physischer und psychischer bildhauerkunst". Apart from the beard and the hair, there is nothing to suggest that the man is not a Greek, perhaps a mythological figure.

(55) According to Schaefer, op. cit. supra note 33, note 88 he must be a barbarian. Instead of portraiture in the strict sense, a 'bananas' interpretation of our heads might perhaps be considered, i.e. that the artist when doing these sculptures had his fellow Workers (Greek or Persian) in mind and therefore felt free to include realistic traits.

(56) e.g. Metzler figs. 1-4, 7-11, 25-28. On a Parthenon amorph by the Berlin painter (CVA Castle Ashby pl. 173, 181; ARV 408.1) the last of four runners has a realistically rendered profile and is partially visible, whereas the others are more or less normally profiled profiles. According to Beazley, the scene represents a diadochokratia, where an earlier man could have a chance (J.D. Beazley, The development of Attic blackfigure, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1951, p. 93). An exception to this rule is the runner on a fragment of another Panathenian amphora, mentioned in note 40 supra. (CVA Tübingen 2, pl. 43-2; he has a hooked nose but is not bald-headed. Unfortunately, in this case we do not know if his physiognomy differed from that of his fellows.

(57) As is well known, in Egyptian art foreigners are often given physiognomies that clearly distinguish them from Egyptians. Good examples occur on painted ostraka, e.g. B. Peterson, Zeichnungen aus einer Tolstomadi, Stockholm 1973 (Bulletin of the Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities 78, 1973), nos. 78, 124. As in Greek art, the variation within the convention in these cases often gives a false impression of portraiture.

DEUX REMARQUES À PROPOS DE L'ART OURARTIEN DU VIIÈME SIÈCLE AV. J.‑C.

L. Byvanck-Quarles van Ufford

1. Bijou en or de la Collection Mildenberg

Un joli petit bijou en or, représentant deux paires de lions accouplées, a figuré en 1983 et en 1984 à six expositions de la Collection-Mildenberg en Allemagne (Fig.1) (1). Dès que j'ai connu le catalogue --c'était au printemps de 1984-- le bijou qui me charmait, m'a incité à visiter l'exposition de Freibourg; pour diverses raisons, cette intention ne s'est pas réalisée. Si j'ose quand-même faire quelques remarques à l'égard de ce petit chef-d'œuvre, ce n'est qu'en partant de la reproduction (2).

En me souvenant du beau Congrès d'Archéologie d'Ankara, en 1973, sous la présidence qualifiée d'Ekrem Akurgal, j'ai choisi ce sujet pour le 'Livre d'Amis' en son hommage, sachant que l'art ourartien est un de ses thèmes favoris. J'espère que ma contribution, si brève et modeste qu'elle soit, fera preuve de mon appréciation de son oeuvre scientifique.

Les quatre lions du bijou, parfaitement identiques, reposent sur une mince plaque d'or qui leur sert de base. Une quadruple perforation longitudinale montre que l'ornement a été créé pour être suspendu à une chaînette. Philippe Verdier, l'auteur de la description dans le catalogue, a comparé à ce propos le pendentif qui décrit le collier du dieu recevant l'hommage du roi Warpalawas, représentation bien connue du relief rupestre d'Ivriz (3). Pourtant, la quadruple perforation longitudinale paraît mieux destinée à un pendant d'oreille qu'à un pendentif de collier qui ne permet pas de voir le groupe de face!

Malgré des dimensions minuscules —hauteur: 2 cm; longueur: 3.1 cm; longueur: 2.9 cm — l'effet du bijou rivalise avec des œuvres d'une taille plus imposante. Les proportions bien équilibrées et les détails, élaborés avec une précision suprême, permettent une comparaison avec des sculptures d'un style correspondant. En fait, M. Verdier a proposé d'une