The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE


Founded by Edward C. Hegeler

THE ISLAND OF MELOS IN THE CYCLADES.
Where the famous "Venus of Milo" was found.

The Open Court Publishing Company
CHICAGO

Per copy, 10 cents (sixpence). Yearly, $1.00 (in the U.P.U., 5s. 6d.).

Entered as Second-Class Matter March 26, 1897, at the Post Office at Chicago, Ill. under Act of March 3, 1879.
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THE CHINESE LANGUAGE AND HOW TO LEARN IT

By SIR WALTER HILLIER, K. C. M.


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THE VENUS OF MILO.

Frontispiece to The Open Court.
MELOS (Italian Milo), one of the smallest Greek islands, would scarcely be known at all except to specialists in geography or ancient history, had not a happy accident brought to light on one of its hillsides that most beautiful torso which ever since its discovery has been known as the Venus of Milo.

Melos means apple, and the island of Melos was inhabited in ancient times by Dorians who sympathized with Sparta against Athens, and when the Athenians conquered it after a most stubborn resistance, they slaughtered the entire Dorian male population and replaced them by Athenian colonists. Since then the island remained absolutely faithful to Athens, in fact it was the last possession which still belonged to Athens when the Ionian confederacy broke up, and the friendly relations between Melos and her metropolis continued even in the period when Greece had become a Roman province.

Melos is a small island belonging to the Cyclades, being the most southern and western member of that group. It lies almost straight west from the southern tip of the Peloponnesus and in a direction south to southwest from Athens.

On this island of Melos, a peasant by the name of Yorgos Bottonis and his son Antonio, while clearing the place of stones near the ruins of an ancient theatre in the vicinity of Castro, the capital of the island, came accidentally across a small underground cave carefully covered and concealed which contained the fine marble
statue ever since known as the Venus of Milo, together with several other broken pieces of marble. This happened in February, 1820.

Rev. Oiconomos, the village priest who guided the finder in this matter, invited M. Louis Brest, the French consul of Melos, to see the statue and offered it to him (in March of the same year) for 20,000 francs. M. Brest does not seem to have been in a hurry to buy, but he claims to have written to the French minister at Constantinople. One thing is sure, no answer had come by April when His French Majesty's good ship "Chevrette" happened to cast anchor in the harbor at Melos and an ensign on board, Monsieur Dumont d'Urville, went to see the statue. The inability to sell the torso had brought the price down, and the finder was willing to sell it to the young French nobleman for only 1200 francs. M. d'Urville was more energetic than M. Brest and as soon as he reached Constantinople the French Minister at once authorized a certain Count Marcellus, a member of the French embassy, to go to Melos and procure the statue.

Count Marcellus arrived on the French vessel "Estafette" in May, but found that the statue had been sold in the meantime to a certain Nikolai Morusi for 4800 francs and had just been placed aboard a little brog bound for Constantinople, the home of the buyer. At this juncture the three Frenchmen, M. Brest, M. d'Ur-
ville and Count Marcellus, decided not to let their treasure so easily escape them, so M. Brest protested before the Turkish authorities that the bargain had been concluded, declaring that Bottonis had no right to sell his prize to any other party. They even threatened to use force and, being backed by the French mariners of the “Esta-fette,” said that under no conditions would they allow the statue to leave the harbor.

While the three Frenchmen claimed that France was entitled to have the statue for 1200 francs they were willing to pay not only 4800 francs, the price promised by Morusi, but 6000 francs. The new buyer had not yet paid and so the peasant was satisfied with the cash offered him, while the Turkish authorities did not care either way. Thus it came to pass that the valuable torso was transferred to the French warship on May 25, 1820, and after much cruising was carried to Constantinople where it was placed on another French ship, the “Lionne,” bound for France and destined to bring home the French Minister, Marquis de Rivière. The “Lionne” reached France in October, 1820, and the statue was delivered at the Louvre in February, 1821.

DUMONT D'URVILLE'S REPORT.

The most important passage of Dumont d’Urville's report about the discovery of the torso reads in an English translation thus:

“The Chevrette set sail from Toulon on April 3 (1820), in the morning, and anchored on the sixteenth in the roadstead of Milo....

“On the 19th I went to look at some antique pieces discovered at Milo a few days before our arrival. Since they seem to me worthy of attention I shall here record the result of my observation in some detail....

“About three weeks before our arrival at Milo a Greek peasant digging in his field....came across some stones of considerable size. As these stones....had a certain value this consideration encouraged him to dig still further, and so he succeeded in clearing out a sort of recess in which he found a marble statue together with two hermae and some other pieces likewise of marble.

“The statue was in two pieces joined in the middle by two small

1 Published under the title “Relation d'une expédition hydrographique dans le Levant et la mer Noire de la gabarre de Sa Majesté la Chevrette, commandée par M. Gauttier, capitaine de vaisseau, dans l'année 1820,” in Annales maritimes et coloniales de Bajot, 1821, and reprinted in Archives de l'art français, publiés sous la direction de M. A. Mouthaillon, II series, Vol. II, 1863, pp. 202 ff.
iron tenons. Fearing he would lose the fruit of his toil, the Greek had the upper part and the two hermae carried away and deposited in a stable. The rest were left in the cave. I examined all very carefully, and the various pieces seemed to me in good taste, as far as my slight acquaintance with the arts permitted me to judge of them.

THE FIELD OF YORGOS BOTTOMIS.
Cross shows where the Venus was found. (From The Century Magazine, I, p. 99).

"I measured the two parts of the statue separately and found it very nearly six feet in height; it represented a nude woman whose left hand was raised and held an apple, and the right supported a garment draped in easy folds and falling carelessly from her loins to her feet. Both hands have been mutilated and are actually detached from the body. The hair is coiled in the back and held up by a bandeau. The face is very beautiful and well
preserved except that the end of the nose is injured. The only remaining foot is bare; the ears have been pierced and may have contained pendants.

"All these attributes would seem to agree well enough with the Venus of the judgment of Paris; but in that case where would be Juno, Minerva and the handsome shepherd? It is true that a foot clad in a cothurnus and a third hand were found at the same time. On the other hand the name of the Island Melos has a very close connection with the word μῆλον which means apple. Might not this similarity of the words have indicated the statue by its principal attribute?

"The two hermae were with it in the cave. Beyond this fact there is nothing remarkable about them. Their height is about three feet and a half. One is surmounted by the head of a woman or child and the other by the face of an old man with a long beard.

"The entrance to the cave was surmounted by a piece of marble four feet and a half long and about six or eight inches wide. It bore an inscription of which only the first half has been respected by Time. The rest is entirely effaced. This loss is inestimable: ... at least we might have learned on what occasion and by whom the statues had been dedicated.

"At any rate I have carefully copied the remaining characters of this inscription and I can guarantee them all except the first of which I am not sure. The space which I indicate for the defaced part has been measured in proportion to the letters which are still legible:

: AKXEOΣATIOYUPIOY . . . . . . . . . Σ.
TANTEEΞΕΔΡΑΝΚΑΙΤΟ . . . . . . . .
ΕΡΜΑΙΗΡΑΚΑΕΙ

"The pedestal of one of the hermae also bore an inscription but its characters have been so mutilated that it was impossible for me to decipher them.

"At the time of our passage to Constantinople the ambassador asked me about this statue and I told him what I thought about it, and sent to M. de Marcellus, secretary of the embassy, a copy of the inscription just given. Upon my return M. de Rivière informed me that he had acquired the statue for the museum and that it had been put on board one of the vessels at the landing. However, on our second trip to Milo in the month of September I regretted to learn that the affair was not yet ended. It seems that the peasant, tired of waiting, had decided to sell this statue for the sum
of 750 piasters, to a neighboring priest who wished to make a present to the dragoman of the Captain Pacha, and M. de Marcellus came just at the moment when it was being shipped to Constantinople. In despair at seeing this fine piece of antiquity about to escape him he made every effort to recover it, and thanks to the mediation of the primates of the island the priest finally consented, but not without reluctance, to abandon his purchase and give up the statue....

"On April 25 in the morning we doubled the promontory indicated...."

It is important to know the facts with regard to the debris

found together with the torso of the Venus of Milo, as stated by a second eye witness, the Viscount Marcellus. He wrote his reminiscences on the Venus of Milo in a book entitled Souvenirs, and the second edition of this was reviewed by Lenormant. In answer to some objections of the latter the Viscount published "a last word on the Venus of Milo."

In this he enumerates the objects brought away from the cave where the Venus had been found as follows:

"No. 1. The nude upper part of the statue.
"No. 2. The lower draped portion.
"Yorgos, their original owner....gave me at the same time

three small accessories of the statue found in a field near by.... These were:

"No. 3. The top of the hair commonly called the chignon, etc.
"No. 4. A shapeless and mutilated fore-arm.
"No. 5. Part of a hand holding an apple.

"The last two objects seemed to me to be of the same kind of marble and of a grain near enough like that of the statue, but I could not tell whether they could reasonably be assumed to belong to a Venus whose attitude I no longer remembered....

"The primates at the same time sent me the three hermae (Nos. 6, 7 and 8) which were still at Castro, and a left foot in marble (No. 9) which had been found in the neighborhood of the field of Yorgos lower down towards the valley where the burial caves are.

"They wished also to give me the inscription found in the same locality which I had already seen in their town. It is the one which commences with the Greek words: ΑΙΧΕΟΣ ΑΤΙΟΥ; but etc.

"I here repeat that with this exception I took away from Milo everything which had been taken from the ground with the Venus or near by, and I have no remembrance of having seen there, much less of having received or acquired myself, any other Greek inscription which made mention of a sculptor with a mutilated name, etc. Of course I would be eager enough with anything that might be able to throw light on the discovery, and since in my Souvenirs de l'Orient (I, p. 249) I cite an epigraph of almost no significance I would not wittingly or negligently have omitted any Greek letters near the excavation or relating to its details. Neither should it be forgotten that in fact I indicate only 'three hermae, some pedestals and other bits of marble debris' (I, p. 237) as the result of Yorgos's successive excavations; and further down (p. 48) these same hermae and other antique fragments without ever speaking of any inscription."

The inscription more completely mentioned by Dumont d'Urville has also with few insignificant variants been published by Clarac, only he adds the missing B at the beginning, reads Ι in place of Ε, and has two Σ's. It is a votive inscription which has no connection with our Venus. Being of little value, the authorities of the Louvre did not take good care of it and it is now lost. The probable meaning of the inscription is "Bakchios, (son of) Atios the subgymnasiarch (has donated) the arcade and the .... to Hermes, Heracles, ....".

These reports are important not so much for what they contain
as for what they do not contain. An inscription is copied in which Bacchus, Hermes and Heracles are mentioned but no reference is made to Agesander or Alexander of Antioch having appeared on a fragment of the pedestal. Moreover there having been found in a neighboring field three hands, there is no reason whatever that any one of them, let alone the left hand holding an apple, should have belonged to our statue. We shall have occasion to refer to these points again.

The statue has suffered many injuries. Both arms have been broken off and are now lost. So is the left foot. The tip of the

nose has been restored; but there are some scratches and cudgel marks all over the body which could not be mended without destroying the original work, viz., the general treatment of the skin.

A line in the hair of the statue shows holes which prove plainly that on top of the head there must have been a coronet, such as is commonly worn by Greek goddesses, and called by the Greeks σφαίρας, i. e., "sling," so called because with the strings attached to it it resembles a sling. It was worn especially by the mother goddess, the Queen of Heaven, Hera.

This statue of Milo represents a female body half draped, and
we may say that the artist's most obvious intention was to place
before us the ideal of womanhood. It is not a maiden, but a full-
grown woman, a wife and a mother. Since the arms have been
broken off and lost, the artist's conception with regard to her posture
can only be surmised. Her face is calm and without passion, bear-
ing an expression of queenly dignity, perhaps also of surprise, even
self-defence. The upper part of the body is naked and the falling
garment is temporarily supported by the raising of her left knee,
apparently lifted for this purpose, while her right hand appears to
have been extended to grasp it.

There is nothing frivolous about her, no coquetry, nothing am-
orous. Her eyes betray not the slightest touch of a sensual emotion,
and thereby the artist succeeded in transfiguring naked beauty by
a calm self-possessed chastity. We see before us the noblest type
of womanhood which has remained unrivaled in the art of statuary.

The consensus of art admirers, which is almost, though not quite,
universal, sees in this torso the great mother goddess, das
cwig Weibliche, idealized femininity, the goddess of beauty and
love, whom the Greeks called Aphrodite and the Romans, Venus.

It is noticeable that the ears are pierced so she must have worn
earrings, and robbers must have torn them away before the torso
was secreted in the cave. Judging from the muscles of the left
shoulder the left arm must have been raised. Sometimes it has
been claimed that the hand carrying an apple, which with other
debris was found in the neighborhood, belonged to the statue, but
this is very doubtful. Archeologists are not agreed upon this
point because the fragment is of rough workmanship and is com-
monly judged as not worthy of the torso; at best it might be re-
garded as the work of an ancient restoration. All restorers are
pretty well agreed on the right hand as having grasped for the
falling garment, preliminarily held up by the raised right knee.

The famous French painter David happened to be exiled at the
time of the discovery of the Venus of Milo, and since he took a great
interest in this wonderful piece of ancient art, he induced one of
his disciples, a certain Debay, to have his son Auguste Debay,
a young art student, make a drawing of the statue as soon as it
was put up in the Louvre. This drawing was afterwards published
by M. de Clarac in his "Notice" and we here republish it on account
of the importance it has gained as a document in the history of the
statue.

Debay's drawing shows a plinth bearing an inscription and
also exhibiting a square hole in the ground near the left foot of the
statue. The angle of vision is indicated by the line "\$\alpha\$" which shows the height from which the statue was viewed by M. Debay. The point a which corresponds to the place of the eye at a distance of the angle is indicated in the drawing by lines from a and b to the point where they meet. The distance of M. Debay's position cannot have been more than one-half the height of the whole statue.

\[\text{DRAWING OF VENUS BY DEBAY.}\]

The inscription on the pedestal of M. Debay's drawing reads: "... andros son of Menides of Antiochia on the Maiandros."

Since of the last missing letter before the A the lowest stroke of a Greek Ξ or of an Σ is discernible in the drawing, the name must have read "Alexandros" or "Agesandros." This man cannot have lived before the third century B. C. because his native city
Antioch on the Mainander was founded by Seleukos in the period of the Diadochs about 300 B. C. According to Professor Kirchhoff's view the character of the letters belongs to the first century and may in his opinion at most be dated back to the middle of the second century B. C.

We have no information whatever why the plinth was joined to the statue. It appears on the Debay drawing and is lost now, but it continues to be a mystery to archeologists.

If the piece of the pedestal with the inscription belonged to the statue, for which assumption, as we have seen, there is no reason whatever, the statue would be of a comparatively late date,
but we really do not know what the plinth bearing the name
"...andros" has to do with the statue.

Archeologists have discovered other heads showing a remark-
able similarity in their features to the Venus of Milo. Among them
is a head discovered in Tralles, Asia Minor, which shows almost

![HEAD OF THE VENUS OF TRALLES.](image)

the same face as the Venus of Milo. So close is the resemblance
that both seem to have been made after the same model. It may
be that one has been copied from the other or both chiseled from a
common prototype. We here reproduce the heads of both, after
half-tone pictures published by Saloman.³

³Geskel Saloman, *Die Restauration der Venus von Milo, den Manen de
Claracs gewidmet*. Stockholm, 1895. Plate IV.
The Venus of Milo is at present the pride of the Louvre at Paris, and the place where she stands on account of her presence alone may be likened to an ancient pagan chapel, comparable to the room in the Dresden gallery where the Sistine Madonna stands, the latter being a Christian counterpart of the former. There is a sacred atmosphere surrounding these images to such an extent that not infrequently visitors who enter the room are suddenly hushed. They seem to feel that they have come into the presence of some divinity which exercises its influence upon the world not by might, but by beauty, by grace and by loveliness.

THE ORIGINAL HOME OF THE APHRODITE CULT.

Though we may fairly well assume that in prehistoric ages, probably in the times of matriarchy, all nations revered a *Magna Mater*, historical development points to the Orient as the place whence the cult of Aphrodite was imported into Greece; there it found the soil prepared by the common belief in a mother goddess. The Greek Aphrodite was the Astarte of the Tyrians and the Istar of the Babylonians. The etymology of the name is doubtful. The Greeks derived the name Aphrodite from the word ἀφρός = foam, because she had risen from the foam of the sea, representing the generative principle of Uranus embracing the earth, but that derivation is as doubtful as other attempts of Greek philologists at explaining the origin of such names as Heracles, "the name of Hera," or Amazon, "the woman without breasts." or Prometheus, "the fore-thinker," etc. One modern conception would make us regard Aphrodite as an Egyptian importation and explains the name to mean Aphoradat, "the gift of Ra," the sun-god, derived from *Pha Raq Dat* with the prosthetic A; but this, like the suggested derivation of Psyche from *Pha Sákuh*, "the mummy," seems to be a mere accident of homophony. Other Greek names such as Elysion from *Aalu*, the Elysian Fields of the Egyptians, Charon from *Kere*, driver or skipper (ferryman) are better attested, but if the name of Aphrodite came from Egypt, the cult of a goddess by that name has been lost or obliterated.

THE GODDESS OF WAR.

Originally Aphrodite was the same figure as Hera or Juno, Artemis or Diana and Pallas Athene or Minerva. These female deities are differentiations of the idealized and personified activities of womanhood: Hera as the queen of heaven, the protectress of
wifehood; Diana of girlhood and virginity; Athene as the goddess of battles, as protectress of arts and sciences, as wisdom personified.

The ancient pagans were not so very unlike the Christians, e. g., Istar, like the Virgin Mary, represented at the same time eternal virginity and motherhood, and the name of the temple on the Acropolis might truly be translated "Church of the Holy Virgin," for Parthenon is derived from παρθένος, "virgin." One special function of the mother goddess was leadership in war. So Ares (or Mars) is the god of fight, of combativeness, while Athene is the teacher of the art of warfare, of generalship, of strategy in battle.

The character of Aphrodite as Venus Victrix is by no means a late Roman invention of the days of Caesar but dates back to the most ancient days of Babylonian tradition. She was from the start of history the great Magna Mater, the All-Mother, and Queen to whom the people appealed in all their needs.

A penitential psalm on the destruction of the ancient city of Erech has been preserved in a fragment which in Theodore G. Pinches's translation reads thus:

"How long, my Lady, shall the strong enemy hold thy sanctuary? There is want in Erech, thy principal city; Blood is flowing like water in E-ulbar, the house of thy oracle; He the enemy has kindled and poured out fire like hailstones on all thy lands. My Lady, sorely am I fettered by misfortune; My Lady, thou hast surrounded me, and brought me to grief. The mighty enemy has smitten me down like a single reed. Not wise myself, I cannot take counsel; I mourn day and night like the fields. I, thy servant, pray to thee."

As Venus Victrix, the warlike goddess akin to the Greek Pallas Athene, Istar appears to Assurbanipal in a vision, recorded in a cuneiform inscription of the annals of this powerful Assyrian king, and refers to the invasion of Tiumman, King of Elam. The passage reads in H. Fox Talbot's translation thus:

"In the month Ab, the month of the heliacal rising of Sagittarius, in the festival of the great Queen [Ishtar] daughter of Bel. I [Assurbanipal, King of Assyria,] was staying at Arbela, the city most beloved by her, to be present at her high worship. "There they brought me news of the invasion of the Elamite, who was coming against the will of the gods. Thus:

5 Literally, "I do not take counsel, myself I am not wise."
"'Tiumman has said solemnly, and Ishtar has repeated to us the tenor of his words; thus: "I will not pour out another libation until I have gone and fought with him.'"

"Concerning this threat which Tiumman had spoken, I prayed to the great Ishtar. I approached to her presence, I bowed down at her feet, I besought her divinity to come and save me. Thus:

"'O goddess of Arbel, I am Assurbanipal, King of Assyria, the creature of thy hands, [chosen by thee and] thy father [Assur] to restore the temples of Assyria, and to complete the holy cities of Akkad. I have to honor thee, and I have gone to worship thee. But he Tiumman, King of Elam, never worships the gods....

[Here some words are lost.]

"'O thou Queen of queens, Goddess of war, Lady of battles, Queen of the gods, who in the presence of Assur thy father speakest always in my favor, causing the hearts of Assur and Marduk to love me.... Lo! now, Tiumman King of Elam who has sinned against Assur thy father, and has scorned the divinity of Marduk thy brother, while I Assurbanipal have been rejoicing their hearts. He has collected his soldiers, amassed his army, and has drawn his sword to invade Assyria. O thou archer of the gods, come like a [thunderstorm].... in the midst of the battle, destroy him, and crush him with a fiery bolt from heaven!"

"Ishtar heard my prayer. 'Fear not!' she replied, and caused my heart to rejoice. 'According to thy prayer thy eyes shall see the judgment. For I will have mercy on thee!'"

* * *

"In the night-time of that night in which I had prayed to her, a certain seer lay down and had a dream. In the midst of the night Ishtar appeared to him, and he related the vision to me, thus:

"'Ishtar who dwells in Arbel came unto me begirt right and left with flames, holding her bow in her hand, and riding in her open chariot as if going to the battle. And thou didst stand before her. She addressed thee as a mother would her child. She smiled upon thee, she Ishtar, the highest of the gods, and gave thee a command. Thus: "take [this bow]," she said, "go with it to battle! Wherever thy camp shall stand, I will come."

"'Then thou didst say to her, thus: 'O Queen of the goddesses, wherever thou goest let me go with thee!' Then she made answer to thee: thus: "I will protect thee! and I will march with thee at the time of the feast of Nebo. Meanwhile eat food, drink wine, make music, and glorify my divinity, until I shall come and this vision shall be fulfilled."
"‘Thy heart’s desire shall be accomplished. Thy face shall not grow pale with fear: thy feet shall not be arrested: thou shalt not even scratch thy skin in the battle. In her benevolence she defends thee, and she is wrath with all thy foes. Before her a fire is blown fiercely, to destroy thy enemies.’"

Mr. Talbot makes the following editorial comment on the historical event connected with Assurbanipal’s narrative:

"The promises which the goddess Ishtar made to the king in this vision of the month Ab were fulfilled. In the following month (Elul) Assurbanipal took the field against Tiumman, and his army speedily achieved a brilliant victory. Tiumman was slain, and his head was sent to Nineveh. There is a bas-relief in the British Museum representing a man driving a rapid car, and holding in his hand the head of a warrior, with this inscription, Kakkadu Tiumman, ‘The head of Tiumman.’"

That Ishtar was connected with the underworld and could save the dead is established by that remarkable poem the “Descent of Ishtar” (published with explanations in The Open Court, Vol. XV, pp. 357 ff., June, 1901).

As a résumé we state that the cult of Ishtar, Astarte, Aphrodite, Venus, or (as she is called among the Northern Germanic tribes) Frigga, was upon the whole, so far as the original documents show, pure and elevating. We need not doubt that there were abuses and excesses, yet we measure the height of mountains at their summits, not in their depression or at the bottom of their gorges, and so we ought to form our estimate of pagan religions not by the superstitions of their uncultured adherents, but by the highest ideals which their best representatives have attained.

THE PORTRAYAL OF VENUS.

At the dawn of the historic age the oldest Greek statues and paintings of Venus show her fully dressed and draped, and not before the fourth century in the times of the highest development of art do the Greek artists dare to represent her first as half draped, and then in entire nudity.

This general statement of the development of art does not refer to the prehistoric period.

It is possible, even probable, that the naked form of Venus, of the goddess of womanhood, appeared first in prehistoric Babylon, but we may fairly well assume that even the artists of the stone age took up this all-absorbing subject, and if this be the case we may be justified in calling the torso of a naked female figure discov-
ered in Brassempouy a Venus, so far the oldest Venus that has come down to us.

It is certainly remarkable how frequently art has succeeded in presenting beauty in perfect nudity without any impropriety and has endowed it with divine dignity. The greatest artists, Praxiteles, Scopas, the sculptor of the Venus of Milo, and in Christian art Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian and many others bear out the statement, that nakedness is not improper in itself, and that the

show of an intention to excite sensuality alone gives offence. In the classical age, both opposites, intentional display and prudery are foreign to the conception of Aphrodite. Only with the decay of Greek art an ostentatious show of prudery appears in the so-called Venus of Medici; and an undignified sensuality develops further during the final days of paganism, especially in the so-called Venus Kalypgos, in this way justifying to some extent the harsh opinion of Christian pietists who have vitiated our notion of Greek deities down to the present day.
HYMNS TO VENUS.

The worship of Aphrodite in the days of classical paganism is best characterized by two hymns, attributed to Homer, but it must be understood that this whole class of poetry constitutes Homeric apocrypha of a comparatively late date. We here quote them in a versified translation of our own.

“My verse shall praise thee goddess fair and mighty,
Great Queen of Cyprus, glorious Aphrodite
Who unto mortals love’s sweet gift bestowest
And in the charm of richest beauty glowest.
Thou holdest in thy hand the magic flower
Whose spell subjects us to thy gentle power.
Hail gracious lady, soother of all woes,
Who conquerest by pleasing smiles thy foes.
As we thy beauty worship and admire
Inspire my song with thy celestial fire.
So shall my muse forever honor thee
And her whom thou commendest unto me.”

“The venerable Lady I adore,
Queen Aphrodite, owner of the shore
Of seagirt Cyprus. Thither Zephyr’s breeze
Had wafted her as babe with gentle ease.
While yet unborn, in briny foam lay she
Floating on billows of the surging sea,
Whence she came forth. The Seasons young and fair
With gold embroidered bridles guided her.
They took her to their arms and they caressed
The little maid and had her beauty dressed
In garments of Ambrosian fabric wrought.
And then a crown of golden weight they brought.
Three-handled, which above her head they placed.
Her soft white neck with carcanets was graced.
The strands of which her silver breast adorn
In such a way as by the Seasons worn
At dances in sylvesterian resort
Or in Olympus at their father’s court.
They carried up the babe so fair and wee
To the immortals who in ecstacy
Began at once to hug and fondle her
And kiss her hands. All vowed that they would wear
The sacred flower of this divine fair maid
At Hymen’s feast in festival parade.
Yea such a charm the Gods e’en never saw:
They gazed and wondered and they stood in awe.
O goddess, dark-browed, sweet of voice,
In thee my song shall glory to rejoice!
On us poor mortals here on earth below
Life's palm and heaven's happiness bestow.
Praised be forever thy divinity,
And the fair sex which representeth thee."

THE CAUSE OF DETERIORATION.

The myths which connected Aphrodite in one place with Adonis, in others with Mars, Hephaestos, Anchises and other gods or mortals, were originally several different developments of the same fundamental idea, the love story of the goddess of love, and when in the days of a more international communication these myths were told in different shapes in all localities, they in their combination served greatly to undermine the respect for the goddess and to degrade the conception of her even as early as in the time when the Homeric epics were composed. Nevertheless, since the sarcasm remained limited for a long time to the circle of heretics and scoffers, the noble conception of Aphrodite was preserved down to the latest days of paganism. In the face of these contradictory conceptions of the goddess, her devotees came to distinguish between Venus Urania, the Heavenly Venus and Venus Vulgaris or Pandemos, as a representative of the brute sexual instinct.

In other words Venus was originally the mother of mankind. She was at once the Queen of Heaven, or Juno, the Magna Mater or Venus Genetrix, the educator and teacher or Pallas Athene, the eternal virgin or Diana, and this truth had better be stated in the reverse that the original mother of mankind differentiated in the course of history into these several activities of motherhood, as Juno, Venus, Diana or Athene, which divinities were again reunited in Christianity as Mary, the Queen of Heaven, the Mother of God, the Mother as a guide in life and the Eternal Virgin.

In the early imperial time of Rome, the authority of Venus was greatly promoted by being the tutelary deity of Caesar, who through the similarity of his name "Julius" with "Julus," the son of Aeneas, was encouraged to derive his legendary pedigree from Aeneas, the mythical founder of the Latin race, the reputed son of Anchises and Aphrodite.

With the rise of Christianity the worship of Venus naturally deteriorated very rapidly and the fathers of the church referring to all the different versions of her love affairs maligned her in the eyes of the world by identifying the Venus Urania with the Venus Vulgaris, and their views have contributed a good deal to disfiguring her picture in later centuries.
In the times of Caesar she was still the great goddess, whose domain was not limited to beauty and love or even to the procreation of life in which capacity she was called Venus Genetrix, but she was also Venus Victrix, or the goddess who in battle assures victory. Yea, more than all this, she was the goddess of life and immortality connected with the Chthonian gods—the powers of death in the underworld. Her emblem, the pomegranate, is also found in the hands of Persephone, indicating a kinship between Aphrodite and the daughter of Demeter.

**THE DATE OF THE STATUE.**

After these general comments, we return to the most classical, the most Greek, and even at present the most cherished representation of Aphrodite, the Venus of Milo. Of all the statues of classical antiquity it is the greatest favorite, not only among the public but also among art critics, and it is strange that the statue has acquired this popularity, for it is by no means without faults in technique nor has it been made by any one of the famous artists. The sculptor is either not known at all or, if the pedestal actually belonged to the statue, he was a man unknown to fame, and it seems difficult to point out the reasons which give to this most badly wrecked piece of marble its peculiar charm.

We can not help thinking that the artist worked after a living model and followed details pretty faithfully. In fact this may be the main secret of the charm of the torso, for on account of this reality there is a personal element in the statue, and we can almost read the character of the woman who stood as a model. We see at once an absence of any and every lascivious trait quite common to other Venus statues of a later period. There is not that sentimental moistness in her eye, τὸ ἵψον, as the Greeks called it, and there is a remarkable unconscionessness in her face which in spite of the nudity of the statue shows a natural purity.

We may assume that the artist belonged to the famous school of Rhodes or to the group of those artists who made Pergamum famous with their work. But no statement can be made with certainty. Upon archeological grounds we can not place the date of the statue earlier than about 400 B. C., nor later than the first part of the second century B. C., and this opinion is mainly based upon the excellent workmanship, the peculiar warmth of the skin as well as the classical simplicity of the statue as a whole. It appears that this valuable piece of art is worthy of a Phidias, a Praxiteles, a Lysippos, or a Scopas.
If we consider the dominating motive of the statue we must grant that it neither belongs to very oldest times in which Venus was fully dressed, nor to the latest in which nudity had almost become the most characteristic feature of the deity of love. It takes its place in the midst of Greek art developments when the first
attempt was made to show the bodily forms, and this is done in such a way as not to go to the extreme of a complete denudation but only suggests it—as it were with a protest on her part. For the motion in the picture plainly indicates that the knee is raised to retard the falling of the garment so as to give the right arm a moment's time to grasp it and to hold it up. It is more than merely probable that the left arm was raised toward an unexpected intruder in warning not to approach. There is no fear in the expression of the face, no fright, no anticipation of danger. The whole attitude makes us suspect that the missing left hand was raised with a forbidding gesture, laying down the command, Ne prorsum! Ne plus ultra! Noli me tangere!

RESTORATIONS.

Many attempts have been made to restore the torso of the Venus of Milo, and we here reproduce a number of them, but none of them have proved successful. It almost seems, as the German poet Heinrich Heine somewhere says, that the Venus of Milo, in her helpless condition with her arms broken off appeals more to our sympathy than in her original condition of glory when she received the homage of faithful worshipers, and it is true the very torso is beautiful in its present dilapidated state. Broken by fanatics of a hostile faith, she represents the natural beauty of Greek religion at its best in all its dignity and beauty. The hordes of bigoted monks vented their hatred with especial wrath against the goddess of love and also against her son, Eros, as may be seen from a torso of this god represented in his daintiest youthfulness. Here too the marks of the clubs of a furious mob are visible, showing the same spirit as in the treatment of the Venus of Milo.

Those restorers of the Venus of Milo who reject the genuineness of the right hand holding an apple enjoy the greatest liberty in restoration, and we find some of them representing our Venus as holding a shield on her knee and writing upon it. Others place a mirror in her right hand, still others who claim that there is no necessity of interpreting the statue to be a Venus, believe her to be a Victory, or Nike, and make her throw wreaths.

Hasse and Henke have treated the problem of restoring the torso from the standpoint of anatomy, and claim rightly that the left hand should be raised higher than other restorers have proposed.

Overbeck says: "It seems permissible to doubt the originality of this composition, and to refer it back to an older original which
we can no longer determine, as the common prototype of the statue of Milo and of other similar statues. For this reason there would be no objection to let our statue have originated during the period of imitation. Although I deem the dependence of the statue upon an older original assured, I am disinclined to deny a certain degree of originality, but in those very features which I deem to be original are the very marks of a late revision."
Conze compares our Venus of Milo with the style of the Pergamene sculptures, and in his essay on the results of the excavation at Pergamum, page 71, he calls attention to the fact that the treatment of the flesh and the sketchy method of the treatment of the hair seems to him a characteristic performance of a later period, calling attention to the similarity of a piece of Pergamene sculpture with the head of the Venus of Milo.

Furtwängler places the Pergamene sculpture in the third century and the Venus of Milo in the second century B.C. His restoration, according to which the goddess rests her left arm on a column and holds an apple in her hand, has for a long time been considered the most probable, and yet even this can scarcely be regarded as satisfactory.

Mr. Geskel Saloman, a Swedish archeologist, also places a column at her left side and uses it to let her hand rest on it. In consideration of some ancient descriptions of a dramatic ceremony performed at Corinth he places a dove on her right hand. The idea is that having received the apple as the prize of beauty she sends out the dove to her worshipers in order to announce her triumph and inform them that they may celebrate the victory.

Valentine Veit attempts to construct his restoration out of the data furnished by the torso itself and seems to come nearest to the truth. He assumes that the goddess in the act of undressing for a bath finds herself surprised by an intruder. There is no fear or alarm in her attitude, but a self-poised dignity. She grasps with her right hand for the falling garment which she attempts to support with her left knee and raises her left hand to stop the intruder. We regret that we have not seen either a picture or a statue of this restoration, but we are deeply impressed that this idea is most probably correct.

The latest restoration comes from Francisca Paloma Del Mar (Frank Paloma) who places a child on the left arm of the goddess, and this view is defended in a special pamphlet by Alexander del Mar.⁷

Mr. Del Mar brings out the idea that the reverence in which the great mother goddess was held among the pagans was substantially not different in piety from Christian Madonna worship, and this view is brought out in the painting by the artist Frank Paloma here reproduced. Mr. Del Mar thinks that the pagan

goddess served the inhabitants of Melos as a Christian Virgin. He says:

"What more natural than for the pious islanders of Melos, terrified by the harsh edicts of Theodosius, to simply burn the pedestal
and inscription belonging to their pagan goddess, and continue to worship under another name the same embodiment of that holy sentiment of love and maternity which they had hitherto been accustomed to adore."

Mr. Del Mar relies on the testimony of Count Marcellus who finally concluded the bargain in the name of the French government and quotes him as saying in his Souvenirs de l'Orient, 1, 255: "It can be demonstrated that the statue represented the Panagia or Holy Virgin, of the little Greek chapel whose ruins I saw at Milo."

It seems to us that the statue can not have carried a child in her left arm because the marble would show more traces of roughness where the mother must have touched the babe, even when we make allowance for a polishing in the restored portions, and we would suggest further that the child would be held farther down on the lower arm, not on the wrist. When a mother carries a child, her upper and lower arms are naturally at right angles, and the position of having them at a very acute angle appears quite artificial.

Other objections to Mr. Del Mar's restoration are the all too
Christian attributes of the haloes placed upon the heads of mother and child and the apple of empire in the infant's hand.

Without entering into details we leave it to the taste of the reader whether he would select any of these restorations as a pos-

**THE VENUS HEAD IN THE MUSEUM OF BARDOS.**

sible solution of the problem; we prefer to admire the torso as it appears now; for after all the broken torso still remains dearer to us in its wonderful and appealing beauty than any of the restorations. We ourselves believe that modern man will come to the conclusion to see in this image in its present shape a noble martyr of
THE VENUS OF MILO.

ancient paganism. Even the original statue itself in all its perfection, if it could be restored to us as it came fresh from the artist's workshop, could not replace the torso as we know it now.

This is the reason why we do not take a great interest in the various restorations of the Venus of Milo, and therefore are not inclined to undertake a close study or to enter into an elaborate recapitulation of these laudable attempts. We can only say that none of them seems to solve the problem.

RECENT DISCOVERIES.

Of Venus statues discovered in recent times we will mention two more, the Venus of Pandemia and the Venus head of Bardos.

ATHENE.

Discovered with the Venus and now in the Museum of Bardos.

The former was made of Parian marble and found in a shipwreck near the coast of Pandemia in the year 1884, together with the coins of the time of Lysimachos. The latter stands near a small pillar over which her garment is hung. She is represented at the moment when her hands tie a long ribbon around her head to hold up her curly hair, which falls back behind her ears. Fürtwangler and Salomon Reinach have devoted much attention to the statue, the latter in his Répertoire de la statuaire grecque et romaine, and both praise highly the beauty of the goddess.
The head of the goddess Venus now preserved in the museum at Bardos near Tunis has been recently discovered by sponge divers off the African coast in a wrecked ship, where it must have lain over two thousand years. It had probably been ordered by lovers of art living in Africa and never reached its place of destination. The shells which cover part of the bust have happily not attacked the features of the goddess and so the beauty of the face is left unmarred.

* * *

The temples of Aphrodite lie in ruins, and her worship is abandoned; but the ideal of womanhood which she represented has remained to this day, and will remain so long as mankind will continue to exist on earth. The artist of the statue of Milo has left us an unsurpassed interpretation of this ideal which even in its mutilated condition is noble and beautiful. At the same time nature does not cease to actualize the type in every living woman that has been born into the world. Each one of them with all her individual traits, her preferences and even her feminine faults is a specimen of the eternal ideal of womanhood—the divinity of love, of grace, of charm, of beauty, a source of inspiration and also of receptiveness as well as of physical and intellectual creativeness.

The ancient paganism has passed away and will never come back, but because its superstitions are gone we need no longer scorn its gods. We can recognize their grandeur, their nobility, their beauty, yea their truth; and if we contemplate the representation of their ideals in Greek art, we must own that the Venus of Milo is not the least among them.