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Christ before Pilate, detail from the Knole Tapestry

Gift of Robert Treat Paine, 2nd, in Memory of his Son, Walter Cabot Paine

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Charles the Bold on a field of flowers. To Touraine also a great many *mille fleurs* tapestries have been attributed, with what correctness it is difficult to determine. There is one peculiarity of the flowers in the Knole Passion which should be noted. Many of the stalks have been broken, possibly to indicate the tragic quality of the events which are taking place above them.

Of course the fact that a great many tapestries have been found in the chateaux of Touraine and that some of them bear the arms of families of that region does not necessarily mean that these tapestries were woven there. Pasquier Grenier sent tapestries to le Pui in Auvergne in 1448 or 1449.¹ About the same time he sent tapestries to Lyons. In 1446 Philip the Good ordered the tapestry of orange trees from Pasquier Grenier to be given to his sister Agnes, widow of Charles I, Duke of Bourbon.² In 1475 a set of tapestry was bought by the city of Tournai from Jehan le Bacre to be offered to Philippe de Comines, chamberlain of the king of France.³ In 1480 a verdure tapestry was sent by the city of Tournai to Monseigneur du Lude, governor of Dauphiné.⁴ In 1479 tapestries were sold by Antoine Grenier to the Cardinal Georges d'Amboise, Archbishop of Rouen.⁵ In 1504 two tapestries portraying St. Martin and St. Nicolas were sent to the church of Saint Laumer in Blois.⁶ These records are sufficient to show wide distribution of tapestries from the looms of Tournai during the fifteenth century.

Although from the evidence available a definite statement concerning the origin of the Knole Passion does not seem possible, it can be said without hesitation that it is both a splendid example of the decorative qualities of fifteenth century tapestry weaving and a remarkable document revealing and illuminating the religious thought and literature of France and Flanders during the last years of the Middle Ages.

G. T.

An Egyptian Bronze Aegis

IN April of this year the Trustees purchased out of the Adelia Cotton Williams Fund a large Egyptian bronze of unusual type. In so doing they undertook an experiment not without risk, for the object was in such a bad state of preservation due to the ravages of the so-called "bronze disease" that its quality could be little more than guessed at. It was by no means certain how far the bronze would respond to treatment, and if it did, whether it would prove to be as fine as was anticipated. The reader may judge of the success of the experiment, which is due to the skill and patience of the Museum's restorer, by comparing

the photographs taken before treatment with the others illustrating the result.

The object, bearing the Museum number 31.195 and exhibited in gallery E-5, is an aegis measuring 27.5 centimeters in height, 19.2 centimeters in width, and 29.3 centimeters from nose to end of counterpoise. It represents the head of the goddess Isis wearing the vulture headdress surmounted by the "red crown" of Lower Egypt. Beneath the head is the enlarged broad collar frequently seen on Egyptian figures, and usually terminating at either end in hawks' heads, which here appear flanking the head of the goddess. In real life such collars, which were of considerable weight, were held in place by a counterpoise hanging down the back between the shoulder-blades, and this counterpoise is here represented by a projecting member attached to the aegis by a hinge at the base of the wig behind, and originally held at right angles to it by a brace, now replaced by a modern substitute. Such objects are known to us principally through little models made as funerary amulets, and through representations of them held by certain figures of goddesses, especially Bast. The full sized examples of them are rare, and I know of none to compare with our aegis in size, completeness, or quality of workmanship. While their specific purpose is not known to me, it is probable that such bronzes were either cult objects used in the worship of the goddess, or votive offerings deposited in the temples. Their rarity is doubtless due to the fact that temple furnishings of such valuable material as bronze would generally go into the melting pot as soon as the services in the temples were discontinued. We are, unfortunately, ignorant as to the place of origin of this aegis, which was acquired by the Museum from private owners, and there is no external evidence as to its date. We may, however, tentatively place it in the Libyan Period, the Twenty-second to Twenty-fifth Dynasties, with the suggestion that it is probably to be assigned to the early part of that period. Sir Flinders Petrie in his *Amulets* (195) says that such objects range from the Twenty-second to the Twenty-sixth Dynasties, while von Bissing in his comments on plate 59 of his *Denkmäler Ägyptischer Skulptur*, footnote 8, declares that the only dated examples of bronze sculpture making use of inlaid decoration of the particular technique here represented are from the Twenty-second Dynasty.

Our bronze consists of three parts: aegis proper, crown, and counterpoise. The aegis itself is cast in one piece, the head and wig being hollow, and the semi-circular collar a rather thick, slightly convex plate. The upper part of the wig is decorated with inlays representing the body and wings of a vulture, the head of which originally projected above the forehead, but has been broken off and lost. The eyes and eyebrows were inlaid, but have disappeared. On the throat between the two ends of the wig are inlays representing a necklace of three strands with pendants. On

¹Soil, Eugène, *op. cit.*, p. 376.

²Soil, Eugène, *op. cit.*, p. 379.

³Soil, Eugène, *op. cit.*, p. 343.

⁴Soil, Eugène, *op. cit.*, p. 384.

⁵Laborde, le Comte de. *Les Ducs de Bourgogne*, Paris, 1849, Vol. I,

⁶Soil, Eugène, *op. cit.*, p. 249.



Fig. 1. Egyptian bronze Aegis, front after cleaning

Ca. Dynasty XXII

Adelia Cotton Williams Fund

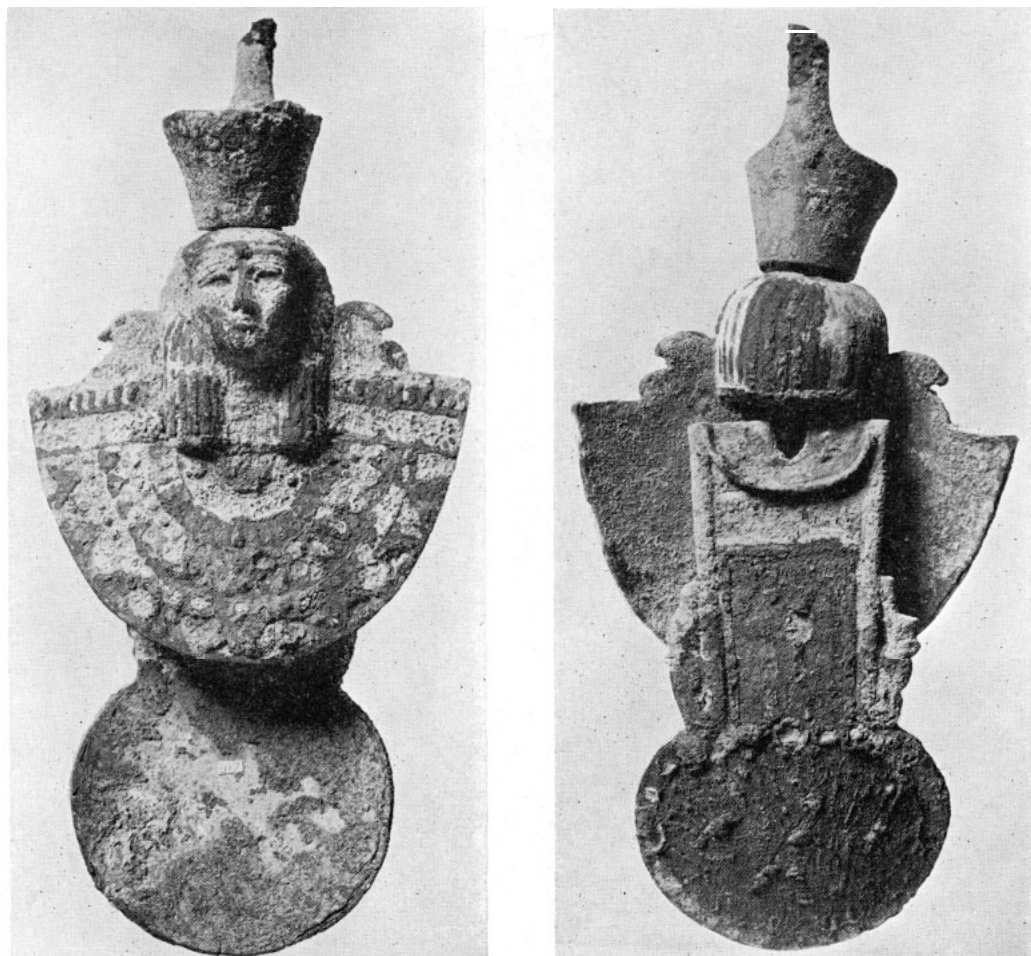


Fig. 2. Front and back view of Aegis, before cleaning

either side the hawk-headed terminals of the collar face outward and are embellished with thread-like metal inlays. The collar itself is divided into nine decorated zones, two horizontal across the top and seven curved below. All these zones were originally decorated with metal inlays, some of which have decayed, others dropped out, while a few remain intact. The material of the inlays will be discussed below; for the moment we will confine ourselves to the designs. The first horizontal zone contains uræus serpents crowned with discs, facing outward on either side of the centre. Below these is a zone of eight eight-leaved rosettes, four on either side. Immediately beneath the head in the first curved zone was an inlay representing a kneeling divinity with outspread wings and crowned with a disc of electrum. The disc only remains, the winged figure of gilded silver with incised details having become too badly decayed to be saved. The six remaining curved zones, separated by thread-like inlaid lines, contained respectively five-leaved rosettes, drop pendants, circles, small papyrus blossoms alternating with circles, another zone of

circles, and finally lotus flowers alternating with six-leaved rosettes.

The crown, which is hollow, was attached to the ægis by means of a transverse iron pin passing through a ring-like projection on top of the head. The sides of the crown and of its protruding upper member are decorated with inlaid dots surrounded by circles, except at the lower part of the back, where the figure of a hawk with drooping wings is worked out in inlaid threads (Fig. 5). Originally a curving wire projected upward and forward from the flat upper surface of the crown, but this has been broken off, as has also the tip of the upper member of the crown.

The counterpoise is of greater pictorial interest than the ægis itself and equally striking in its decorative effect. As previously stated, it was attached to the main member by a hinge and by a brace fastened to rings at the base of the ægis and on the under side of the counterpoise. In addition to these provisions for maintaining it in position the counterpoise is provided with a heavy metal tongue (seen at the top in Fig. 3) so placed as to fit



Fig. 3. Counterpoise of the Aegis, after cleaning
Adelia Cotton Williams Fund



Fig. 4. The Aegis reassembled, after cleaning

inside the head of the ægis and prevent the counterpoise from dropping to a vertical position on its hinge should the brace be removed. The counterpoise is of similar shape to those in actual use with real collars, the so-called "menat" form. The upper portion is flanked by pendent uræus serpents whose bodies and hoods are decorated with inlays, that on the left wearing the "white crown" of Upper Egypt and that on the right the "red crown" of Lower Egypt. In the space framed by these serpents is a scene depicting the goddess Isis wearing the "red crown" and giving the breast to the smaller figure of a king who wears the double crown of Egypt and carries a lotus flower in his left hand. To the right is a hieroglyphic inscription reading, "Speech of Isis, [I] give all life, stability, well-being [forev]er." The scene is contained within a kiosk supported by two columns with bud capitals, above which is a cornice decorated with the winged disc and surmounted by a row of uræus serpents. The lower part of the counterpoise is of approximately circular form and is surrounded by a bordering pattern in which three vertical lines alternate with circles. Within this border is a field with inlays representing a clump of



Fig. 5. Detail of back of crown

papyrus reeds realistically rendered. In the centre of the field is a hawk wearing the double crown and standing on the conventionalized representation of a palace, the whole indicating the Horus name of a king, but without the hieroglyphs which would identify him. At either side of this central motif, and facing inward, are hieroglyphs representing the goddesses of south and north, Nekhbet the vulture on the left, and Buto the serpent on the right. The symbolism, so general in Egyptian decorative designs, is interesting; while the upper zone represents the king receiving life and other benefits from the divine source, flanked by the crowned serpents which indicate royal power over the two divisions of the kingdom, the lower zone symbolizes the king, indicated by the Horus hawk and the two goddesses, the first two elements in the royal titulary, in the midst of the papyrus thicket which signifies Egypt. The whole is a most happy example of the decorative symbolism of which the Egyptians were such masters.

The technique and the materials employed are of considerable interest. The head of the ægis and the crown were cast hollow, presumably by the *cire perdue* method, and were found filled with a fine-grained pale yellow sandy substance, the original core of the casting. The counterpoise, being flat, required no such treatment. These castings were cut to receive the inlays, which were of at least three different substances. The eight, six, and five-leaved rosettes, the disc on the head of the kneeling winged figure, and possibly the little circles and discs in various parts of the ægis, were of electrum. The color of this alloy varied from a golden yellow to a silver white, and the pieces seem to have been used without any attempt to match colors, both white and yellow petals being found in the same rosette. The winged figure, as already noted, was of silver covered with gold leaf, but was found so badly oxidized that it could not be preserved. The eyes and eyebrows are missing and there is no evidence to show what they were made of. All the other inlays appear to have been of a single metal which has suffered very unevenly from decay. For the most part they appear as a dirty yellowish-white substance at first taken for decayed faience or paste, but which proved by test to be a decomposed metal with a large copper content. Fortunately a number of the long strips of inlay in the headdress show us what this whitish substance originally was, for they are in part decayed in this manner and in part perfectly preserved in metallic form. These metallic parts, when cleaned and burnished, are of a bright yellow color similar in tone to some of the electrum inlays. The color of the background, the cast bronze mass, is somewhat different, being of a more coppery tone, and a comparison of the two colors raises an interesting question.¹ What was the

appearance of this object when it left the hands of its maker? Was the whole left bright and burnished in its natural colors, relying for the effectiveness of the designs on the rather slight difference in tone between inlays and background, or was the bronze artificially dulled or darkened so that the designs might be more clearly visible by contrast? I cannot answer the question with any degree of assurance, for this type of damascened metal work is rare, and no clear evidence is as yet forthcoming on this point. I can only suggest that Egyptian decorative art is usually given to rather strong contrasts, and that it would seem to me out of character for Egyptian craftsmen to make a design which would not be clearly visible in any but the most favorable light. It would have been quite easy for the makers to treat the bronze in one of a number of ways to darken its surface, or its peculiar composition may well have caused it to darken naturally on exposure to light and air. The burnishing of the inlays would then give the necessary contrast.

DOWS DUNHAM.

The Collection of Mr. John T. Spaulding

THOSE who left Boston during the summer have escaped one penalty that they might have had to pay. Mr. John T. Spaulding's collection, advertised as on exhibition only until October 15, is now still on view in the Evans Wing and will remain hung as it is at least until the end of the year. Mr. Spaulding has not lent the whole of his collection, which includes pictures, I remember, by Goya, by Raeburn and John and Orpen, by Luks and Hopper and Dickinson, but only those by French painters from Chardin's time down. With the exception of the *Cigar Makers* by the Spaniard Canals, all the pictures exhibited were painted by Frenchmen or upon French soil. There are forty of them, but they form an intimate collection, with no picture much larger than a version of Van Gogh's famous *La Berceuse* or more spectacular than Vlaminck's *Winter*. There is not a single abstract composition. All of them represent direct reactions to the common things of life.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who has kindly had them analyzed for us. The result of this analysis is as follows:—

Fragment from casting:	Copper	69.35%
	Lead	22.18
	Tin	1.80
	Manganese	Trace
	Sulphide	Present
	Oxide	Present

The sulphide is probably lead sulphide and there is evidence of the presence of a small amount of copper oxide. Owing to the presence of these impurities the analysis only totals a little over 93%, the remainder being estimated as sulphide and oxide.

Fragment of inlay:	Copper	86%
	Tin	14

Owing to the smallness of the sample it was impossible to test for anything more than the two principal constituents and the values reported may well be in error as much as 3% to 5%.

In general terms the ægis is not a typical bronze but a copper-lead alloy, while the inlay is a true bronze. The scarcity of analyses of well dated Egyptian bronzes is such that I am unable to find a parallel to the metal of the ægis itself. In Appendix III of A. Lucas' *Ancient Egyptian Materials*, the author gives analyses of twelve bronzes, of which four contain lead, and only one of these (D) more of this metal than tin, namely 8.5% and 3.5% respectively. The examples given by Lucas are all previous to the Nineteenth Dynasty; analyses of some later bronzes are given in the Appendix to Chapter VIII of Woolley and Randall-Maclver's *Karanôg, The Romano-Nubian Cemetery*.

¹A fragment of well preserved inlay invisible beneath the crown has been removed, together with a sample of the cast metal from the ægis itself, and these have been submitted to Professor L. F. Hamilton of the