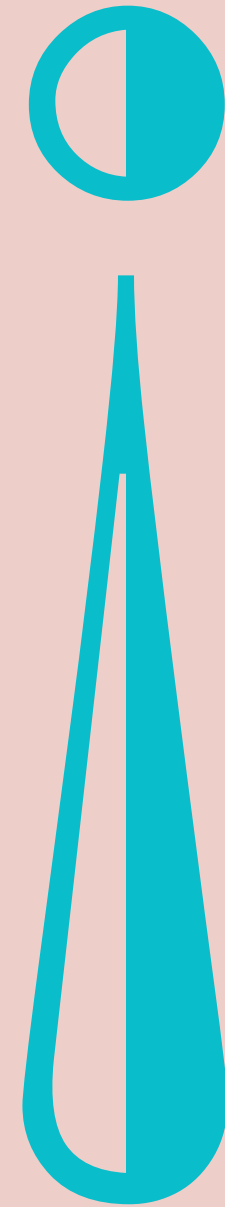




BATH TIME



BATH TIME

Body • Water • Dialogues



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
Ministry of Culture and Sports



ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MUSEUM OF
CHANIA

CHANIA 2022

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BATH TIME!

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Body • Water • Dialogues

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Presentation of the Archaeological Museum of Chania in the "Friends Room", Mucem, Marseilles.



Photo: George Anastasakis

OPENING ADDRESSES

Our relationship with the element of water is innate and existential. Water is the main constituent of the human body, the source of life and a fundamental requirement of its creation and preservation. Human contact and union with water through bathing is simultaneously life-giving and invigorating on both a physical and a metaphysical level. Despite its constantly shifting form and practice as history and culture evolve, as a universal and archetypal process, bathing inherently incorporates functional and conceptual characteristics which remain common to all and are preserved unchanged across space and time.

Through bathing, the purifying effect of water acts on body and soul alike. The physical removal of organic and inorganic impurities of all kinds assists in the preservation of bodily health, wellness and beauty; it is also, however, the foundation and prerequisite for their attainment and therapeutic rehabilitation on a mental, spiritual and moral level. The external cleansing of the body prepares for and predisposes towards internal cleansing and purification. From this perspective, it is often a requirement for the inclusion and participation of the individual in a collectivity, marking the transition from one status or human condition to another, from one stage in the cycle of life to the next. It thus assumes a ritual form, usually following a specific ceremonial within the corresponding religious or secular, social and cultural context. Birth, baptism/initiation, coming of age, marriage and death are some of these rites of passage in which purificatory bathing symbolically prepares the individual for a new place or role in society.

Bathing, therefore, as a practice and a process, contains both individual and collective references, and very often both at the same time. It may be a purely personal and private moment, in which one cares for one's body and communes with one's self-image out of sight of others. Or it may, on the contrary, be a practice performed in public, in the presence and with the participation of other people. The public bath as a physical space and as a function is an area of socialisation, contact and interaction, in which the dominant ideas and perceptions of the time, and the commonly accepted or established rules of individual and collective behaviour, are expressed and manifested. The boundaries between the private and the public sphere, the distinctions of gender, social group and class, the current moral value system and religious, philosophical and ideological beliefs about what is clean and unclean, modest and immodest, beautiful and ugly are reflected in the practice of bathing, which serves as a cultural mirror.

The tracing and highlighting of all these complex aspects of bathing culture forms the subject of the first temporary exhibition, titled *Bath Time! Body-Water-Dialogues*, to be hosted at the brand-new Archaeological Museum of Chania. The Museum recently opened its doors to the city's inhabitants and visitors,

constituting both a valuable cultural attraction and a dynamic development resource for the region. The exhibition presents, through 137 archaeological finds and contemporary artworks, historical exhibits and everyday objects, mainly drawn from the collections of the Archaeological Museum of Chania and the French Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (Mucem), alongside objects from other major museums and collections of Greece and France, the common anthropological and cultural characteristics of bathing, and their evolution among the cultures of the Mediterranean through the ages, from antiquity to the present day.

This exhibition is the second achievement to emerge from the extremely fruitful collaboration between the Mucem and the Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania of the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports, in the framework of the three-year programme agreement for cultural development between the Region of Crete and the Institut français de Grèce. It was preceded by the recent highlighting of the new Archaeological Museum of Chania in the “Friends Room” exhibition space of the Mucem, through the presentation of representative objects from its collections.

For the particularly demanding task of organising the exhibition and creating the accompanying scientific catalogue you hold in your hands, and especially for their extremely fruitful and creative collaboration, I would like to express my warmest gratitude and congratulations to the President of the Mucem Jean François Chougnet and curators Camille Faucourt of the Mucem and Florence Hudowicz of the Musée Fabre Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole, as well as the Director of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania Eleni Papadopoulou and her colleagues. Thanks are also due to all the museums, services and institutions of Greece and France that contributed decisively by making objects from their collections available for the exhibition, as well as to the Region of Crete, which undertook to provide the financial support for this extremely important endeavour.

Dr Lina Mendoni
Minister of Culture and Sports

“The happy man is he who is healthy in body, resourceful in spirit and of a well-educated nature.”

(Thales of Miletus)

In the French language, we sometimes forget that the word “hygiene” pays tribute to the Hellenistic goddess of health: Hygieia, daughter of Asklepios, the god of medicine. Bathing, a millennia-old practice, was developed in Antiquity.

The Mediterranean stands apart from the rest of the world due to the precocious and extensive creation of public and private bathing facilities. The practice of artificial baths gained momentum from Antiquity onwards, only to ebb, subject to successive waves of rejection and modification. These eddies of change are notable for the way in which they reverberate across the Mediterranean basin, as well as for the social practices and behaviours they reveal. There are many different types of bathing; each of these, or almost each, functions and is and appreciated in a different way depending on the virtues attributed to it. Whether individual or collective, public or private, sacred or profane, in salt water or fresh, bathing contains profound meanings, as does any established and organised social practice.

This exhibition on bathing, therefore, allows questions to be raised concerning the social organisation of a civilisation through a collective practice, the connection between religion, nudity and intimacy, or even hygiene, aesthetics and social gains.

The Mucem wished to question – this being one of its missions – the history of Europe and the Mediterranean. In this context, it invited Florence Hudowicz, Curator of Graphic and Decorative Arts of the Musée Fabre in Montpellier, and Camille Faucourt, Heritage Curator of the Mucem, to draw up an exhibition proposal. The two curators selected this theme, which permits the presentation not of a single vision but of multiple viewpoints and narratives, sometimes ambiguous, on this region of the world.

The present exhibition is the result of a fruitful partnership which began in 2019. It brings together the colleagues of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania and the Mucem, with the crucial support of the Region of Crete.

The first stage in our collaboration was the exhibition organised at the Mucem in the winter of 2021, presenting selected masterpieces of the Archaeological

Museum of Chania and drawing 55,000 visitors. The second stage is the “return visit” to Chania, to the brand-new Archaeological Museum of the city, giving us the opportunity to work together again, in the land of Minos and Pasiphae!

Jean François Chougnat
President of the Mucem

«L'homme heureux est celui dont le corps est sain, l'esprit cultivé, la fortune suffisante.»

(Thalès de Milet)

Dans la langue française, on oublie parfois que le mot «hygiène» rend hommage à la déesse hellénistique de la santé : Hygie, fille d'Asclépios, dieu de la Médecine. Pratique millénaire, le bain s'est développé durant l'Antiquité.

Le pourtour méditerranéen se distingue du reste du monde par la précocité et l'ampleur de la création de bains artificiels. Ces derniers y prennent ainsi un essor original dès l'Antiquité pour connaître ensuite des vagues de rejet et de modifications successives. Ces remous sont remarquables par la manière dont leurs ondes se répercutent dans le bassin méditerranéen, mais aussi par les pratiques et comportements sociétaux qu'ils révèlent. Il n'y a pas un mais plusieurs bains, si bien que chacun ou presque se pratique et s'apprécie différemment selon les vertus qu'on lui prête. Qu'il soit individuel ou collectif, public ou privé, sacré ou profane, d'eau salée ou d'eau douce, le bain possède des significations profondes, comme toute pratique sociale constituée et organisée.

Cette exposition sur le bain permet ainsi de questionner l'organisation sociale d'une civilisation par une pratique collective, le lien entre la religion, la nudité et l'intimité, ou encore l'hygiène, l'esthétique et les acquis sociaux.

Le Mucem a souhaité questionner, il s'agit d'une de ses missions, l'histoire de l'Europe et la Méditerranée, en proposant à Florence Hudowicz, Conservatrice des arts graphiques et décoratifs du musée Fabre de Montpellier et Camille Faucourt, conservatrice du patrimoine au Mucem de travailler sur une proposition d'exposition. Elles ont identifié cette thématique qui permet de présenter non pas une vision unique mais des points de vue et des récits, parfois ambigus, sur cette région du monde.

Cette exposition est le résultat d'un partenariat original, initié en 2019. Il rassemble les collègues de l'Ephorate de la Canée et du Mucem, avec le soutien déterminant de la Région Crète.

Un premier volet, organisé au Mucem à l'hiver 2021, sous forme de présentation de chefs d'œuvre choisis parmi les collections du musée archéologique avait rassemblé 55 000 visiteurs. Ce volet «retour» à La Canée dans le tout nouveau musée archéologique est l'occasion pour nous de travailler de nouveau ensemble, sur les terres de Minos et de Pasiphaé!

Jean François Chougnat
Président du Mucem

The temporary exhibition *BathTime! Body-Water-Dialogues* is the first to be held at the new Archaeological Museum of Chania in Chalepa following its inauguration, launching a new era of culture as an instrument of development and openness for Crete. We are particularly delighted because the creative collaboration of the exceptional teams of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania, the Mucem and their partners was born in the framework of the programme agreement between the Region of Crete, the Insitut français de Grèce and the Mucem for local development through culture.

The exhibition was preceded by the first stage in this partnership between the twosides of the Mediterranean, Crete and Marseille. Between October 2021 and February 2022, over 55,000 visitors to the magnificent Mucem admired up close the 13 exhibits from the collection of the Archaeological Museum of Chania which travelled to the other end of the Mediterranean to be displayed in the Friends Room, next to the major permanent and temporary exhibitions of the Museum. With its architecture, activities and overall presence from 2013 onwards, the Mucem has been changing the image that Marseille presents to the world on a daily basis.

Meanwhile, the *Bath Time!* exhibition is also the continuation of a series of other actions leading up to it. It is preceded by the ongoing studies, projects and actions for the protection and promotion of a series of monuments and ancient cities of Chania, and, of course, the construction of the new Museum through the successful synergy of the Ministry of Culture/Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania, the European Union and the Region of Crete. Above all, this first temporary exhibition at the new Archaeological Museum of Chania is a tangible promise of the continuation of this collaboration, giving Cretans and visitors to Chania the opportunity to enjoy cultural events of international scope and prestige.

The new Museum is called upon to play a developmental role, alongside the prominent Archaeological Museum of Heraklion and the Museum of Ancient Eleutherna. These are soon to be followed by the Archaeological Museums of the Mesara and Agios Nikolaos, while that of Rethymno has just entered the final planning and implementation stage. These cultural infrastructure works, together with the archaeological sites of Crete, its monuments, its areas of outstanding natural beauty and its people, all make up a globally unique cultural ecosystem whose activation reveals Crete for what it truly is: the most important and complex cultural and sightseeing destination in the Mediterranean.

Congratulations are due to all those who contributed to the realisation of this exhibition which brings the Archaeological Museum of Chania into a lively and creative dialogue with the Mucem and many other important museums of

Greece and France. Special mention must be made of the Ambassadors of the Republic of France at Athens, the Directors of the Insitut français de Grèce and the Educational Attachés with whom the Region of Crete originally signed the programme agreement for partnership in the cultural field, followed by its extension. We are also most grateful to the staff of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania, the Ministry of Culture and the Mucem, who successfully brought this complex project to fruition.

The exhibition, of course, would not have been possible had it not been preceded by the major development project of the new Archaeological Museum of Chania. The Museum, the most up-to-date cultural infrastructure work in Crete, is capable of hosting even the most demanding actions of international scope. For this project, its characteristics, its quality and the new perspectives it opens up for Crete, a very big thank you is due to all those who designed and implemented a facility of which Crete is proud.

The exhibition *Bath Time! Body-Water-Dialogues* unites the two sides of the Mediterranean, as the continuation and the result of the deep and genuine friendship and collaboration between Greece and France, demonstrating the developmental dimension of culture and connecting Chania and Marseille in the present day. It signals a brand-new period for culture in Crete, a period which we are sincerely happy to continue to shape and support together with the cultural institutions of Crete and the people who are their driving force.

Stavros Arnaoutakis
Regional Governor of Crete

Dimitris Michelogiannis
Executive Development Advisor, Region of Crete

BATH TIME!

*The first temporary exhibition at the
Archaeological Museum of Chania*

The idea of organising a temporary exhibition in Crete, and specifically in the new building of the Archaeological Museum of Chania, was born in the spring of 2019, during our meeting in Marseille with Mikael Mohamed, Head of International Relations of the Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (Mucem), Maria Kassotaki, Head of the Managing Authority of the Regional Operational Programme of the Region of Crete, and, of course, Muriel Piquet-Viaux, then Educational Attaché at the French Embassy in Greece. There, by the calm waters of the Mediterranean, the thought of holding this imaginative exhibition, on the cultural theme of bathing, in the hospitable Mediterranean city of Chania seemed a very attractive one. The idea had already been conceived and implemented by the Mucem, using the wealth of its collections on subjects of social anthropology.

There followed in-person meetings and many video conferences among the working groups of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania and the Mucem, accompanied by continuous research in Museums, Institutions and Collections in Greece and France, before we were able to finalise the list of objects we wished to include in the exhibition, and, of course, check their availability with the organisations to which they belonged.

Meanwhile, in the framework of the three-year programme agreement between the Region of Crete and the Institut français de Grèce for local development through culture, 13 representative objects from the collections of the Archaeological Museum of Chania were presented in Marseille, from 20 October 2021 to 7 February 2022, inaugurating the Mucem “La Chambre d’amis”, a special exhibition space dedicated to its “Friends”.

The *Bath Time! Body-Water-Dialogues* exhibition is effectively the second part of this collaboration and the first temporary exhibition to be hosted by the Archaeological Museum of Chania in its new building. The shaping of the museological proposal for this exhibition, based on the original idea of the Mucem team, and the selection of the exhibits was a challenge for us all. Indeed, we might say it was a huge challenge, as Crete, and of course Chania, with a millennia-old tradition of bathing practices implemented by the cultures that have flourished in this land, naturally formed a rich thematic and narrative context.

Individual or public bathing is a practice connected to human existence itself down the centuries. It remains unchanged through time and space, although with differentiations depending on the social, cultural, religious and other conditions through which are shaped perceptions and attitudes towards the concepts of clean and unclean, public and private, nude and clothed.

The *Bath Time! Body–Water–Dialogues* exhibition presents, though 137 representative ancient artefacts, artworks, historical documents and everyday objects, various aspects of the bathing habits of Mediterranean cultures through the ages. The exhibits are mainly drawn from the collections of the Archaeological Museum of Chania and the Mucem, as well as major museums, cultural bodies and institutions, and private collections in Greece and France.

Particular emphasis is placed on the creation of a coherent narrative, capable of giving a clear structure and meaning to the multifaceted assemblage of heterogeneous objects, allowing visitors to understand bathing in all its diversity from antiquity to the present. We therefore decided to organise the exhibition in thematic rather than chronological sections, according to the role and function of water and bathing in the public and the private sphere of human life.

The six thematic sections of the exhibition open with the mythological baths of the gods, continuing with bathing as a ritual practice and rite of passage through the ages, and moving on to the concept of cleanliness, beauty and hygiene. They then unfold the cultural determinant of public baths as spaces of wellness and socialisation, culminating in the socially expanded version of sea bathing and leisure. The final section of the exhibition presents the ties between Marseille and Chania through the iconic soap factories of the two Mediterranean cities. The variety of objects, combined with the printed and digital information accompanying the exhibition, provide visitors with a clear understanding of everything connected with bathing practices, acquainting them with the parameters of an important diachronic cultural practice.

The exhibition catalogue follows the narrative course of the exhibition from one thematic section to the next. It is arranged, however, in seven parts rather than six, giving more space to the fourth section in order to expand upon the function and role of public baths from Classical times to the hammams of the Mediterranean.

We are very grateful to all the institutions from Greece and France that collaborated with us and willingly loaned works from their collections to make the exhibition *Bath Time! Body–Water–Dialogues* a reality. I would particularly like to thank the authors of the texts and the catalogue entries, whose contribution resulted in the creation of a scientifically accurate and aesthetically pleasing catalogue. Special thanks are due to the Region of Crete for its unreserved and generous financial assistance and its unwavering support, once again demonstrating, in practice, the sensitivity of its people where cultural matters are concerned.

I should like to extend warm thanks to the Ministry of Culture and Sports for

agreeing to the organisation of the exhibition, and especially to my colleagues at the Directorate of Archaeological Museums, Exhibitions and Educational Programmes, for their crucial contribution and efficiency in planning a particularly complex exhibition that brings together 13 Museums, Ephorates of Antiquities, Private Collections and Societies from Greece, and six Museums, Collections and Chambers of Commerce from France.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks to Mimika Giannopoulou and Chryssa Bourbou for their tireless work and invaluable contribution to the realisation of the exhibition and the accompanying catalogue.

Dr Eleni Papadopoulou
Director, Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania

BATHS!

*The history of bathing
in the Mediterranean*

“And when the water boiled in the bright bronze, she set me in a bath, and bathed me with water from out the great cauldron, mixing it to my liking, and pouring it over my head and shoulders, till she took from my limbs soul-consuming weariness.”

Homer, *Odyssey* 10.360-10.364,
trans. A.T. Murray

The bath, the most natural meeting place of the human body and water, its main constituent, is a universal, millennia-old practice that is constantly evolving and changing depending on the time and the place in which it unfolds.

Around the Mediterranean basin, the practice of bathing is attested from as early as prehistoric times among the Greek and Egyptian elites, and was probably more widespread in the societies of the ancient world. In the West, baths and bathing, especially in sea water, were gradually abandoned or even rejected or proscribed during the medieval period, until the beginning of the European Industrial Revolution in the late 18th century, when they came back into fashion and experienced considerable development. There are many different types of bathing; each of these, depending on the virtues of purification, hygiene or serenity attributed to it, was and may still be practised and appreciated in a variety of ways. Bathing may be individual or collective, public or private, steam or immersion, sacred or profane, in salt water or fresh, hot, cold or tepid... All these often ritual aspects, whether successive or concurrent, contain, as does any social practice, profound meanings. The public bath becomes a place of exchange and social relations, while the private bath refers to the personal care of the body and reflects the social behaviours forged within that sphere.

The history of bathing in the Mediterranean, its practices, its evolution from its origins to the present day and its common characteristics in the societies of the South, is one of the many possible points of entry for the exploration of the collections of the Mucem, the Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations. The wealth of exhibits of the Mucem permits the organisation of many exhibitions on matters of social anthropology. The civilisational theme of baths and bathing was specifically chosen for the implementation of travelling exhibitions “extra muros”, titled *Bath Time!*, building a fruitful dialogue between French museum collections, primarily those of the Mucem, and foreign partner institutions.

A first successful exhibition was held in the spring of 2020 in Baden-Baden in Germany, in partnership with the town’s Staatliche Kunsthalle (State Art Gallery).

This spa town, even its name marked by the history of its thermal baths (Baden meaning “bath”), seemed a suitable environment for the realisation of an exhibition of this kind. The two curatorial teams worked together on selecting the objects with a mutual enthusiasm, raising questions including the following: how did people bathe in ancient thermae? Is it true that they detested water in the Middle Ages? Why were 19th-century European artists so fascinated by the hammam? Did bathing preserve the same values down the centuries? Do we bathe in the same way today as we did yesterday, with whom and in what type of bath? What are, in a word, the challenges of bathing today? All these reflections proved particularly fruitful, bringing together conservators, curators and art historians from different fields and cultures, and resulting in the realisation of the exhibition *Body. Gaze. Power. A Cultural History of the Bath*. As the deliberately evocative title suggests, the main focus of museological planning was the bath as a social and political space in which relationships between bodies, gazes and forms of power are specifically articulated. Following a chronological and thematic progression, the objects from the Mucem, together with other loans from French museums such as the Louvre, the Museums of the Palace of Versailles and the Trianon, and the museums of the city of Marseille, entered into conversation with contemporary artworks and installations, the area of expertise of the Baden-Baden Kunsthalle. At the same time, an original exhibition of selected works by contemporary artists took place in various parts of the town historically associated with the practice of bathing.

The second stop in the wanderings “extra muros” of the *Bath Time!* exhibition is the new Archaeological Museum of Chania, just inaugurated in 2022. For this project, the first temporary exhibition of the brand-new museum, it was a matter of finding the best possible way of adapting the theme to an island famed for its rich past, the cradle and crossroads of great civilisations, ancient and modern, that have arisen on the shores of the Mediterranean. From this perspective, the new collaborative team naturally arranged the exhibition on the basis of the successive strata of the exceptionally rich past of this region of the South Mediterranean, from antiquity to the present. Presenting a renewed selection of works from the Mucem and archaeological artefacts from the Archaeological Museum of Chania, alongside many loans from partner institutions such as the prestigious national and private collections of Athens and from France, the exhibition focusses on the major stages in the history of bathing in the Mediterranean, opening a new chapter, that of the appearance of sea bathing on the coasts of Crete. Although this text was written several months before the opening of the exhibition, the preparatory stage has already provided the opportunity, as was the case with Baden-Baden, for fruitful conversations, both

virtual and in person. There we shared museological approaches and methods which, although different to start with, became not only complementary but ultimately interwoven around one of our common fundamental principles, yesterday, today and, we hope, tomorrow: bathing.

Florence Hudowicz
Chief Heritage Curator, Musée Fabre
Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole

Camille Faucourt
Heritage Curator, Mucem

*IN THE
BEGINNING
WAS THE MYTH:
THE BATHS
OF THE GODS*



In Greek mythology lie concealed the origins of beliefs regarding the creation of natural, supernatural or cultural phenomena, archetypes of the collective unconscious that have survived through word and art, influencing the common cultural heritage of Western civilization.

In cosmological myths, and also in pre-Socratic philosophy, the element of water lies at the beginning and end of every cosmic event. Water assumes a multitude of symbolisms connected with the birth and rebirth of life, the fertility it ensures for Mother Earth, the cleansing and purification of mortals and immortals alike.

The concept of bathing in its ritual sense precedes divine hierogamies, the sacred marriages of the gods, and is an integral element of the worship of male and especially female deities. Even the first marriage, that of Father Uranus, the Sky, with the Great Mother Earth, takes place during a storm, while Zeus, the father of the gods, makes love to Hera within a golden cloud from which gold drops fall to earth, on the summit of Mount Ida (Homer, *Iliad*, 14.351). The purificatory bath following childbirth is inaugurated by the pre-Olympian Titaness Rhea, daughter of Gaia and Uranus, who washes and purifies herself in the waters of the River Lumax after the birth of Zeus. The newborn Zeus is also bathed, in the Gortynius, which is renamed the Lusius, or “Bathing River” (Pausanias, *On Arcadia* 8.2). Other gods follow suit, such as Hermes, who is bathed by the Nymphs at the Tricrena, the three sacred springs in the mountains of Pheneus in Arcadia, which may be why he is called “newly bathed” in the Homeric Hymn (*Hymn to Hermes* IV, 241). Of Apollo it is said that “the goddesses purely and cleanly bathed you in beautiful water” (*Hymn to Apollo*, 120-121) in the stream of Inopus on Delos (Callimachus, *Hymns* 4.6). The nurses of the infant Dionysus bathe him in the spring of Cissusa near Thebes (Plutarch, *Lysander* 28.4).

It is from water, seawater in fact, that the myth has Aphrodite emerge at Cythera or Cyprus. It is there, according to Homer’s description, that the Horae and the Graces bathe her and anoint her and clothe her, before delivering her to Zephyrus, who is to present her to the gods of Olympus (Homer, *Odyssey*, 8.364).

The moment before or after Aphrodite’s bath (fig. 1), with the goddess in a nude or semi-naked pose, will be immortalised for centuries in works of art. They refer back to the original statue of the goddess carved by the renowned sculptor Praxiteles for the Temple of Aphrodite at Cnidus in 340 BC.



Statuette of Aphrodite Bathing, 2nd-1st c. BC. Archaeological Museum of Rhodes, inv. no. 4685

The goddess is celebrated as the perfect model of the beauty and desire that determine human affairs in both their highest and their most mundane expression. A semi-naked version in the *Venus pudica* (modest Venus) type is depicted in the marble statuette from Chania dated to the 2nd c. BC (cat. no. 1.1). Statuettes of this type were offered by worshippers at sanctuaries or placed in homes, public buildings, fountains and groves as eloquent symbols of all that the goddess represented in the world of gods and men.

The contemporary Greek artist Pavlos Samios immortalised her in his work *Aphrodite* (cat. no. 1.2), in the type of the Venus Callipyge or Aphrodite Kallipygos (“of the beautiful buttocks”), like her famous statue at the Temple of Syracuse.

Baths of purification and rebirth accompany deities of vegetation, most of them mothers. One example is the myth of Demeter bathing in the waters of the River Ladon in order to purify herself and regain her powers after her unwilling union with Poseidon, which is why the Arcadians gave her the epithet *Lusia* (“bather”).

We also find scenes of purification in the sea and springs in myths of heroines such as Iphigeneia and Hypsipyle. The shrines of many goddesses are often found near rivers and springs, where their statues and xoana are symbolically bathed and purified in order to renew their power and cleanse them of any miasmas.

Crete, which claims to be the birthplace of the Father of the Gods, is also associated with one of the most popular origin myths through the ages: the abduction of Europa, in which the sea plays a leading role (cat. nos 1.3, 1.4).

Europa, the daughter of King Agenor of Tyre or Sidon in the best-known version, is playing with her companions and gathering flowers in a luxuriant landscape by the seashore of her country. Zeus sees her and, captivated by her beauty, transforms himself into a pure white bull in order to approach her, and lies calmly at her feet. Europa’s fear gives way to the desire to sit on the back of the archetypal symbol of strength and virility. As soon as she does so, quick as lightning he leaps up and rushes into the sea, galloping over the waves to Crete. The couple are accompanied on their journey by dolphins, Nereids, Tritons and the sea-god Poseidon. On reaching Gortyn, Europe releases her grip on the bull’s horns and dismounts, while the Horae prepare her bridal bed. The actual location of their union is contested by the Dictaeon Cave, Gortyn, where legend has it that the couple made love by the River Lethaeus, under plane trees which have remained evergreen ever since, and the Idaean Cave, on the eastern slopes of Mount Ida.

From their union are born the legendary kings Minos, Rhadamanthys and Sarpedon, at a time when Crete is ruled by Asterios or Asterion, son of Tectamus. Zeus marries Europa to Asterios to ensure that the kingship will pass to his own sons, launching a glorious era for the island.

This myth is believed to echo an earlier legend of Eastern origin, referring to the sacred marriage of the Bull God and the Mother Goddess, associated with

nature and the Earth, while it may also symbolise the Cretan voyages to the East and the cultural osmosis of the Cretans there.

The bull into which Zeus was transformed takes its place in the firmament among the signs of the zodiac, while the Phoenician princess Europa is worshipped at Gortyn by the name of Hellotis or Hellotia, in whose honour the Hellotia festival is held, a celebration of the rebirth of nature.

The symbolisms arising from this myth highlight the female principle, identified with the Earth and live-giving fertility, and the male principle, identified with the sky. In this context, the union of Zeus and Europa may be seen as a variation of the union of Sky and Earth, the name Europa being an epithet of Gaea, the Earth.

The significance of this myth and its extensions is attested by the references in ancient authors such as Homer, Hesiod, Aeschylus and later Theophrastus, Lucian and Pliny, and also in art, which depicts the various versions of the myth in all its aspects.

In Crete, the myth provides certain cities with an identity. Gortyn chooses to convey this message via the coins it issues, such as the silver staters of the 5th c. BC, with Europa seated on the back of the bull-Zeus on the obverse (cat. no. 1.5), or later coins depicting her seated among tree branches. Sybritos faithfully copies the corresponding issues in the mid-4th c. BC, while similar images on the coins of Phaistos (cat. no. 1.6) are dated to 450-350 BC.

The worship of Europa spreads throughout the rest of Greece. The River Europus springs from Mount Olympus, while the name of the Phoenician princess is used to delimit geographical territories with varying borders in each period.

The depictions of the myth in art present various differentiations from Archaic times onwards, depending on the version adopted and the messages it is intended to convey. Eloquent examples survive in the sculptural decoration of temples, such as the Treasury of the Sicyonians at Delphi and Temple Y at Selinunte (ca. 600 BC), and in vase-painting, glyptic and coroplastic, mosaics and frescoes, in many parts of the ancient Mediterranean world. Vase-painters usually depict Europa seated on the bull or even just the bull, crossing the sea accompanied by dolphins and other sea creatures (fig. 2).

This is the scene depicted on the red-figure aryballoid lekythos from a woman’s tomb in the necropolis of Kydonia (Chania), dated to 360-350 BC (cat. no. 1.4), which follows the Classical iconography of the myth.

Ovid's version of the myth (*Metamorphoses* II, 862) inspires Renaissance and later art, with Europa seated on the bull, playing on the seashore or reaching land after her "flying" journey, almost always accompanied by winged cupids symbolising her abductor's passionate desire.



Red-figure calyx krater with the Abduction of Europa, 380 BC. Museum of Cycladic Art, inv. no. KΠ0026

Wonderful depictions of such scenes are found up to the 19th century in works by Dürer, Perugino, Parmigianino, Veronese, Cellini, Rembrandt, Rubens, Titian, Moreau and other artists.

In its sculptural version, the myth takes shape in materials such as faience, for example in Jean-René Gauguin's nude Europa, sensually seated on the submissive bull (cat. no. 1.3), an iconic work of the artist with Baroque elements and vivid colours.

Through the visualisations of the Europa myth in works by 20th-century and contemporary artists, we can follow the ways in which it has developed into a universal instrument, adapting its symbolisms to the changing requirements of each era and to the history of the continent that bears her name.

Thus, in works by Vallotton, Bonnard, Masson, Picasso, Botero, Grützke, Topor, Carol Rama, Hambling, Starowieyski, Hasiór, Grzywacz and others, two different tales of the myth of Europa coexist, reflecting its different symbolic use by Eastern and Western European cultures.

The basic symbolisms remain the same, with the bull continuing to denote power, this time economic, as in the bronze bull statue at the heart of the global financial centre of Wall Street in New York, the work of Arturo di Modica (1980). It appears with the same symbolism on French national lottery tickets (cat. no. 1.7) and advertising cards (cat. no. 1.8).

In 1998 the French Post Office issued a stamp depicting the myth of Europa as part of the exhibition *Liban, l'autre rive* at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris, while in 2002 a conference titled *Figures d'Europe. Images and Myths of Europe* was organised by the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence. In 2013, the European Central Bank, needing, like ancient Gortyn, to widely communicate a common identity, printed a new series of banknotes with a portrait of Europa in the watermark. The Greek 2 euro coin depicts Europa on the reverse, bearing out the claim that our presence in history takes its energy from the roots of myth itself, and that it is due to myth that events acquire significance.

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Mimika Giannopoulou

1.1 Marble statuette of Aphrodite

City of Chania (ancient Kydonia)

Late 2nd c. BC

Ht. 54.5 cm.

Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. Α 67

The goddess is depicted in the *Venus pudica* (modest Venus) type, at the moment of leaving her bath, her himation slipping down to leave her body and upper thighs uncovered. She is attempting to conceal her sensual nakedness by drawing the knot of her himation in front of her pudenda with her left hand and covering her breasts with her right. The *Venus pudica* statue type refers to the ritual bath of the goddess in a natural setting, which is why it is rendered with this gesture of concealment from prying eyes.

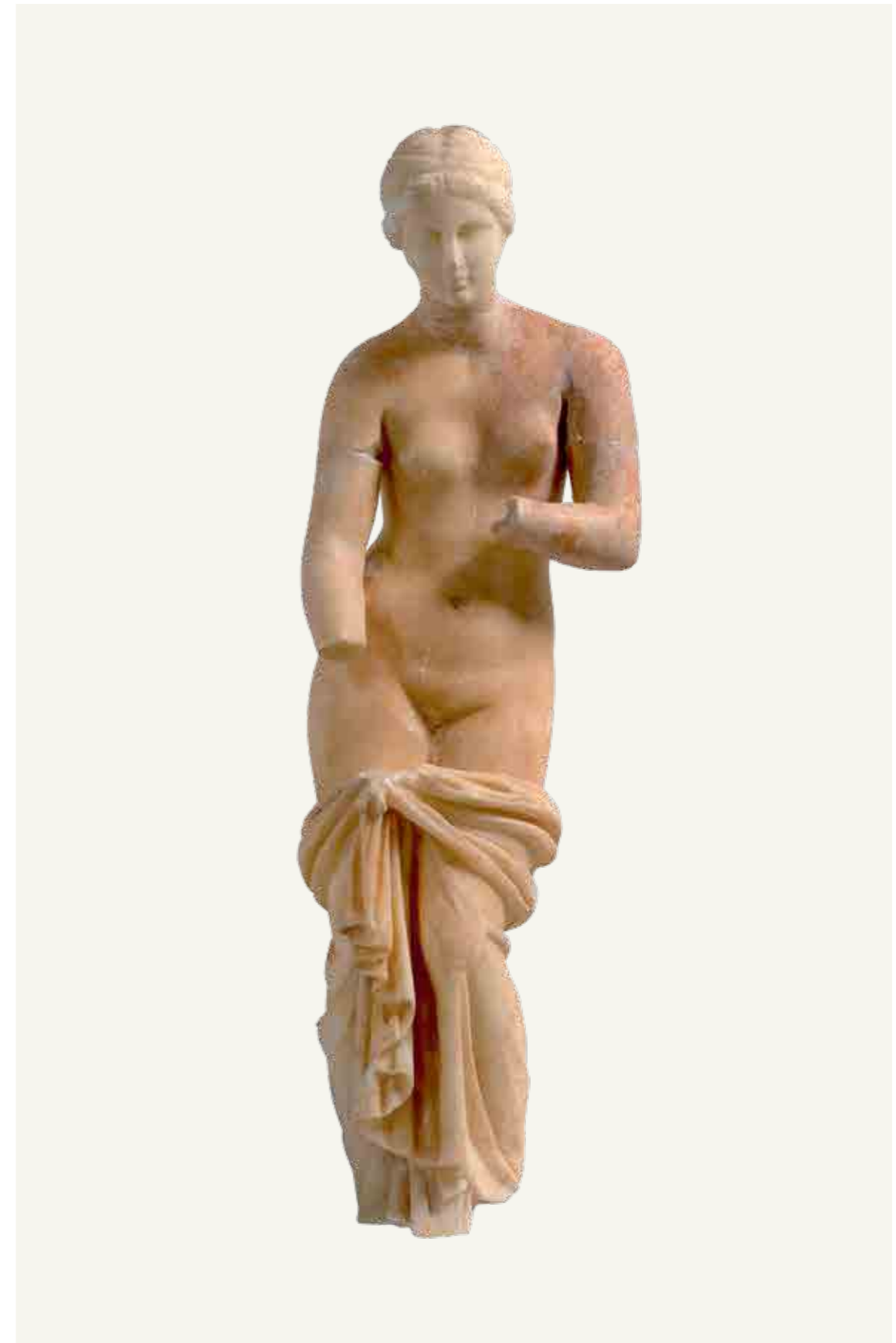
Statuettes of this kind are found as votives in temples and idyllic locations featuring abundant water, such as gardens, baths, fountains, public and private nymphaea, and gymnasia. The goddess protects water, the source of life, by her presence.

The Aphrodite of Kydonia was found in a space used for religious and athletic activities, perhaps the ancient gymnasium of the city. The presence of the goddess in gymnasia is not considered incompatible with their character, as she is the ideal type of beauty and eroticism, who guides and protects young men on their path to adulthood, marriage and sexuality.

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Katerina Tzanakaki





1.2 Pavlos Samios (1948-2021)

Aphrodite, 2013

Acrylic on canvas, 90x72 cm.

Archaeological Museum of Chania, donated by the artist

Pavlos Samios established his atelier near the National Archaeological Museum in Athens. Among the valuable museum exhibits which the artist “transported” to the Neoclassical building on Remoundou Street was the marble statue of Aphrodite. On his canvas the goddess, a variant of the Aphrodite of Syracuse (2nd c. BC) is depicted with the tools of the sculptor’s art around her and a contemporary creator next to her.

Samios had a deep, natural relationship with antiquity; it did not just provide him with popular Greek subjects. From his teacher Nikos Nikolaou he acquired a love of the ancient world, while the composer Manos Hadjidakis brought him into meaningful contact with Plato and his ideas. Plato walked around an Athens filled with statues and conceived of the world as an image. He saw beings and reality through sculpture, through the Ideas/Forms of beings that it represents. This realisation shaped Samios as an artist. Elsewhere he transposes the Venus de Milo or Titian’s famous Venus and Cupid. Here, Art is deified in the figure of Aphrodite, while the creator willingly plays the role of Cupid. The relationship is moulded by the artist, the work is completed in his hands. This is an imaginary, idealised self-portrait of Pavlos Samios and his beloved, Art.

George Mylonas

1.3 Jean-René Gauguin (1881–1961)

The Abduction of Europa, 1925

Sculpture. Earthenware. Copenhagen, Bing & Grøndahl Factory

Ht. 73 cm. W. 50 cm.

Roubaix, La Piscine-Musée d'art et d'industrie André Diligent, inv. no. 2009-56-01

Purchased with the support of the Regional Acquisition Fund for Museums in 2009

The Franco-Danish sculptor and ceramist Jean René Gauguin, the son of Paul Gauguin and his Danish wife Mette Sophie Gad, was born in Paris in 1881 and died in 1961. Raised in Copenhagen, where his family moved in 1884, he lived there all his life despite extensive travels around Europe. Although he was very successful, his career was overshadowed by his father's fame. Having begun work as a woodcarver, the artist moved on to producing ceramics in Austria in 1921, before being employed by the major Copenhagen firm Bing & Grøndahl in 1923. This was when he produced most of his work and invented a new material called "ceramic stone". He was especially interested in depicting major mythological subjects, in dynamic compositions that are not without a certain brutality, expressed in the vivid colours. Returning to the codes of 18th-century decorative porcelain, Meissen in particular, Jean-René Gauguin gives *The Abduction of Europa* a modern slant, reflecting the artistic thought of his time. He entered numerous pieces in the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts in Paris in 1925, and also worked for the Manufacture de Sèvres porcelain factory.

Florence Hudowicz





1.4 Clay red-figure Kerch Style aryballoid lekythos

City of Chania, cemetery of ancient Kydonia

360-350 BC

Ht. 22 cm. W. 10 cm.

Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. Π 6092

On the body of this vase, a funerary offering accompanying a female burial, is depicted a scene from the myth of the abduction of Europa: the maiden is seated on the back of Zeus in the form of a bull, holding his horns. Two winged cupids bearing wreaths accompany the couple, symbolising the god's unquenchable passion for the beautiful princess. Dolphins and stylised waves at the bottom of the scene indicate the sea.

According to the most prevalent version of the myth, the princess Europa was playing on the shore of Tyre or Sidon, where her father was king. Zeus saw her and, captivated by her beauty, approached her in the form of a calm, pure white bull and lay down at her feet. The unsuspecting Europa sat on his back, and the bull rose and rushed into the sea. The journey ended at Gortyn in Crete, where the couple's union resulted in the birth of the legendary kings of Crete, Minos, Sarpedon and Rhadamanthys.

The myth is believed to reflect an earlier legend of the sacred marriage between the Bull God, symbolising the strength and fertilising power of the male principle, and the Mother Goddess, associated with nature and the earth. It may also, however, hint at Cretan voyages to the East and their cultural osmosis. The discovery of the lekythos in a funerary context may also recall the journey of the deceased across the watery expanse that separates the land of the living from that of the dead.

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Δελτίο 40, *Μελέτες*, pl. 64.

Mimika Giannopoulou



1.5 Silver stater of Gortyn, 450 BC

Wt. 11.74 gr. Diam. 2.00 cm.
 Donated by the "Loutraki Casino"
 (former B. Traeger Collection)
 Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. N 2604



1.6 Silver stater of Phaistos, 450-430 BC

Wt. 11.20 gr. Diam. 2.6 cm.
 Donated by the "Loutraki Casino"
 (former B. Traeger Collection)
 Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. N 27

The iconography of coins is the visual identity of a city or a territory, using codified or plain symbols to convey the desired message through the most widespread medium of exchange available. Gortyn stakes its claim to primacy over the island via the version of the myth in which it is the location of the union of Zeus and Europa. Thus, on the silver staters of the city, Europa first appears on the obverse, seated on the back of the bull-Zeus, while on the reverse is a lion's head facing in an incuse square. On this coin there is also a dolphin on the reverse, recalling the couple's mythical journey across the sea, accompanied by dolphins, Nereids, Tritons and Poseidon.

Gortyn strengthened its position through numismatic "alliances". The first was with Phaistos in the second half of the 5th c. BC, when some coins of Phaistos also bear the abduction of Europa on the obverse and a lion's head facing in an incuse square on the reverse.

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Mimika Giannopoulou



1.7 Advertising card

Colour lithograph
 The Abduction of Europa
 [1880-1920]
 Print: D. Hutinet, 8.2x11.1 cm.
 Paris, France
 Mucem, inv. no. 1995.1.580.12



1.8 National Lottery ticket

The Abduction of Europa, 1956
 Print: Chaix, 6.4x12.9 cm.
 Paris, France
 Mucem, inv. no. 1970.83.1003

Popular imagery seized on the myth of the abduction of Europa, as we see in this colour lithograph and a French National Lottery ticket. The advertising card depicts an imposing white bull carrying Europa away across the waves, escorted by Tritons and Nereids. As described by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*, the "riding goddess" grips one of the bull's horns with her right hand while her veil billows above her. In the upper part of the scene, the constellation of Taurus, already identified by Ptolemy, is associated with the myth by Aldebaran, its most brilliant star. On the lottery ticket, Europa is holding an amphora, a symbol of her innocence, on the bull's back. She has decorated the animal's neck with a leafy garland.

Françoise Dallemagne

RITUALS:
THE FLUID
TRANSITIONS
OF LIFE



With water we arrive and with water we depart

Water, one of the four elements of nature (together with fire, air and earth) on which the whole world is ontologically founded (Aristotle, *On the Heavens* II, 13) forms the main constituent of the human body. Throughout history, one might say in every culture, water has functioned as the threshold that defines the transition from one important stage in human life to the next, through what are known as rites of passage (birth, baptism, marriage, death). Water becomes the bearer of a variety of weighty symbolisms, interwoven with the ceaseless flow of time and the need to purify body and soul.

The first bath we receive as newborns, from antiquity to today, defines and marks our arrival in the community of mortals.

It is the rite of passage through which we pass from the “timeless” period of our life to become part of the earthly world. The importance attributed to this ritual act over the millennia has been recorded in written sources since antiquity; it is also depicted in a multitude of images of gods, heroes and historical figures receiving their first bath after their birth.



The bath of the newborn Achilles. Mosaic of the 5th c. AD from the “House of Theseus” in Paphos (cyprusalive.com/el/location/pafos-mosaics)

On an ivory plaque of the 4th c. AD from Eleutherna (cat. no. 2.1), the demigod hero Achilles receives his first bath at the hands of the experienced handmaid immediately after Thetis gives birth to him. The scene of the bath of the newborn Achilles also dominates the elaborate floor mosaic of the 5th c. AD from the “House of Theseus” in Paphos, Cyprus (fig. 1), where his mother Thetis is also accompanied by his seated father Peleus.

The birth and first bath of Dionysus, depicted in various ways, is a frequent and particularly popular subject from the Classical period to Roman times.



The bath of the newborn Dionysus. Mosaic of the 4th c. AD from the “House of Aion” in Paphos, Paphos Municipality Tourist Guide (explorepafos.org)

In a mosaic of the 4th c. AD in the “House of Aion” in Paphos, the bath of the newborn god unfolds in a multifigured scene. The god Hermes holds the infant Dionysus, his head surrounded by a halo, in his lap, as the Nymphs prepare the child’s first bath (fig. 2). This scene is strongly reminiscent of the depiction in Byzantine iconography of the first bath of Christ, immediately after His birth; these stylistic similarities between the two different cultural traditions are not surprising, as the 4th century was when Christianity became widespread in Cyprus. This particular iconographic tradition continued throughout the long lifetime of Byzantine art, for example in the portable 15th-century icon *The Birth of Christ* (cat. no. 2.2); here the haloed Christ Child prepares to receive His first bath after His birth, a ritual act symbolizing the human nature of Christ.

Water, a symbol of purification and cleansing in Christianity, is the life-giving force with which God created the world (*Genesis* 1:2).

Jesus compares His word to “living water” and “a well of water springing up” which can quench man’s thirst forever (John 4:10 and 14). Clearly, from the very earliest years of its establishment and spread, Christianity placed a highly symbolic significance on the ceremonial purificatory use of water, linking it firmly to the rite of baptism. It is through water that the person baptised is cleansed of original sin, so that the believer may be reborn and enter the bosom of the Church. With its enduring power and double role, water symbolises both the death of the sinner and their resurrection; it is the source of life which heals the person being baptised both physically and spiritually, forming the threshold that leads to the new life of the Christian.

In the first centuries of Christianity, the sacrament of baptism was administered to adults and took place in rivers and springs. Christ Himself was an adult when He was baptised in the waters of the Jordan by St John the Baptist. In commemoration of this holy act, Epiphany is celebrated by Orthodox Christians with the ritual blessing of the waters each year. The scene of the Baptism of Christ is also depicted in a work (cat. no. 2.3) by Domenicos Theotocopoulos (El Greco) which is associated with the artist’s time in Venice and the influence he received from Venetian art. However, from the 6th century onwards, adult baptism was abandoned due to high child mortality, gradually being replaced by infant baptism, which became widespread in the 13th century and was performed in indoor sacred spaces using special vessels known as fonts (cat. no. 2.4).

Bathing also played a vital role in the rituals preceding the act of marriage. The bath of the bride and groom formed an essential part of the wedding ceremony and took place on the day of the wedding. This is frequently attested in the ancient Greek tragedians, for example when Jocasta says of the marriage of her son Polyneices, that “the river Ismenus had no part at your wedding in supplying the luxurious bath” (Euripides, *Phoenician Women*, 337-349). Bathing also signalled and ensured female fertility, as we see from Theophrastus’ characteristic phrase “child-begetting water” (*Historia Plantarum* IX 8, 10), and the good continuation of the male line (Hesiod, *Theogony*, 346-348).

The nuptial bath simultaneously released and purified, marking the end of the prenuptial phase of life and the start of a new life of fertility and responsibility to the community; in other words, it symbolized rebirth and the assumption of new roles, and functioned as a means of ensuring the transition to a different state of affairs.

The water for the nuptial bath was usually drawn from a specific spring in each city. In Athens, the sacred Callirrhoe spring was used for this purpose during the Classical period (Thucydides, II. 15). The water was carried in a special type of vessel, the loutrophoros (cat. no. 2.9). The ritual of the preparation of the bridal bath is a particularly popular subject in Classical vase-painting, depicted more often than the bath of the groom. The stages are usually conflated into the ceremonial water-bearing procession and the adornment of the bride, masterfully depicted on the red-figure nuptial lebes by the 5th-century artist known as the Washing Painter (cat. no. 2.10).

The tradition of the nuptial bath is so strong that it survives through the centuries and is found in many cultures. It appears with similar characteristics and practices in the Ottoman world, where it no longer takes place in the bride’s home but rather in the hammam. The establishment of these public baths not only served the purposes of communal hygiene but was also necessitated by the Muslim religion, since according to the Qur’an only running water can wash away the sins of the soul of the faithful and ensure bodily and spiritual cleanliness. This is why, when Muslims carry out their daily religious duties, they wash their face, hands and feet in running water, in a symbolic act of purification.

The bridal bath carried out in the hammam is also a rite of passage. There, the bride-to-be, accompanied only by women, relatives and friends, and bringing with her the special clothing (cat. nos 2.11-2.13) and bathing utensils, is released from her girl’s life and body, which she exposes naked for the first time; through the clearness and purity of the running water, she is prepared, physically and spiritually, for her passage into her new role, that of woman and wife.

However, bathing prepares us not only for our journey through life but also for the journey of death, the passing into the next world, the Hereafter. Washing the lifeless body with water and anointing it with herbs and perfumes is intended to purify the polluted deceased; it is a basic stage in the rites of passage of death, and a defining action allowing the soul to complete its journey and find its way to the Underworld. There are abundant examples in Homer, such as the description of the handmaids washing, anointing and adorning Hector’s body (Homer, *Iliad*, 24.580-588), and in the tragic poets, when Antigone addresses her dead, saying, “I washed and adorned you”, or when Hecuba prepares, with her aged nurse, the final bath of the dead Polyxena, “that I for the last time may wash my daughter” (Euripides, *Hecuba*, 609-614).

The physical and spiritual purification achieved by the bathing of the dead is a decisive stage in the funerary ritual and the belief in life after death.

Once the deceased is released from his sins, there follows the Prothesis (cat. no. 2.14), the laying out of the now-purified body, so that his relatives and friends can embrace him, mourn him and bid him farewell. They do not allow him to be disregarded and forgotten, but honour him in a way that celebrates his earthly existence.

At the same time, water becomes the supremely important link between earthly life and the abyss of the Underworld, as the soul is ferried across it to pass into the Hereafter. The transportation of the deceased as a journey over water, attested from Antiquity as the crossing of the River Acheron, indicates that the aquatic element is identified with the Otherworld, a commonplace in world mythology.

The cleansing/purificatory nature of ceremonies connected with water runs through the centuries and the millennia, a fundamental reference point for all cultures and religions from antiquity to the present day, as similar contemporary activities confirm.

The rituals of water define the first and last acts of care we receive in this world. They thus become the channel that brings life and eternity together, as the guarantor of continuity between the earthly sphere and creation, and prosperity after death.

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Eleni Papadopoulou



2.1 Ivory plaque

House 1, East slope of Eleutherna hill
4th c. AD
Ht. 9.6 cm. L. 39.5 cm. W. 0.8 cm.
Museum of Ancient Eleutherna, inv. no. O 1400A

The plaque is part of a group of three ivory plaques depicting scenes from the life of Achilles, the great hero of the Trojan War.

This plaque depicts three scenes. The first is Thetis giving birth to Achilles. Thetis is depicted within an architectural frame delimited by two columns, semi-recumbent on a couch, while a crouching handmaid on the left holds the infant in her arms. Between her legs is a deep basin in which the newborn hero has just been given his first bath, while on the right is a tall oenochoe.

The next scene is the baptism of Achilles in the waters of the Styx. Thetis, between two Nereids, holds him upside down by the fateful heel, which will remain mortal. The Nereid-handmaid on the right holds a large cloth in both hands to wrap the baby in after the baptism. The personified Styx is depicted in the form of a reclining woman with naked torso. Her right hand is extended to touch the infant's hands, while her bent left arm is supported on an upturned amphora from which abundant water flows.

In the last scene, Thetis, accompanied by three Nereid-handmaids, delivers Achilles to the centaur Chiron, who is to take him to Pholoe for his education.

This is a precious masterpiece produced by an urban centre of the time famed for its workshops, probably Alexandria.

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Nikolaos Chr. Stampolidis



2.2 Icon, Unknown artist

Nativity, 1st half of 15th century
Egg tempera, 52.5x40.5 cm.
Crete (?)
Byzantine and Christian Museum,
inv. no. BXM 02021

The Nativity, in the traditional icon-painting style, dominates the centre of the icon. In the background, separate miniature scenes narrate episodes taking place at different times. In the centre, the Virgin, lying on a red mattress, looks to the right. At the foot of the rock is the Christ Child lying in the manger, which is depicted as an open sarcophagus, a reference to the Passion and Burial of the Lord. Nearby, the ox and the ass, symbolic animals from the Bible, gaze upon the holy infant and warm Him with their breath.

At upper left are angels, one of whom is announcing the glad tidings to the shepherds. A young shepherd dressed in red is playing a flute under a tree. At the bottom, the pensive Joseph converses with the shepherds. On the opposite side is a bathing scene, with two women preparing to bathe the naked infant.

At top right are the Three Magi, riding uphill and pointing to the Star. Within the dome of the firmament is the inscription: *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men*. Midway down the right-hand side of the icon is a monastic building, with the haloed figure of St Nicholas on the front, identified by the inscription bearing his name. This vignette is associated with the origin or the owner/dedicator of the icon, whose faint coat of arms is visible at bottom centre. Based on stylistic criteria (academic depiction of the subject, Early Renaissance elements), the work is dated to the first half of the 15th century.

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Aikaterini Dellaporta

2.3 | Domenicos Theotocopoulos (El Greco, 1541–1614)

The Baptism of Christ, 1567-1570
Egg tempera and oil on wood, 23.6x18 cm.
Municipality of Heraklion (on long-term loan
to the Historical Museum of Crete)
Historical Museum of Crete, inv. no. AIV 0111

The work depicts the Baptism of Christ, with Jesus Himself and St John the Baptist in the foreground of a natural landscape representing the River Jordan and its surroundings. Christ, standing in the waters of the Jordan, receives baptism from St John. The detail of the Baptist pouring water on Christ from a shell or a round cup is a standard element in depictions of the subject in Venetian painting. Christ, standing in the river, turns towards the Baptist and extends His arms towards him, palms joined in prayer. To the left of Christ, in the background, is a vignette of a landscape with a city and a group of miniature figures in front of it. On the right bank of the river are three winged angels holding a crimson cloth with which to dry Christ's body, an element referring to Byzantine icon-painting and symbolising the divine presence. The colourful rendering of the textiles, combined with the lively movements and masterly execution of the figures in the composition as a whole, betray the hand of the great artist, who left an indelible mark on world art.

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Irene Foukaraki, Maria Kalamata





2.4 Clay church font

Messara, from the church of Aghios Vassilios in Kousses
Late 19th-early 20th century
Ht. 29 cm. Max. diam. 42.5 cm.
Museum of Cretan Ethnology in Vori, Pyrgiotissa, inv. no. 2987
Donated by the Church Council of Kousses

The hemispherical font is coated inside and out with clay-coloured slip, which is not preserved in places, and has incrustations, especially on the lower part.

A little above the flat base is a shallow groove running around the vessel, and above it is a zone with a wavy incision. A pair of horizontal handles are positioned almost opposite each other on the body of the vessel. Between the handles are two applied Greek crosses with arms of equal length, bearing rough but deep transverse incisions. There is a groove around the inside of the rim.

The font was placed in the church of Aghios Vassilios (St Basil). Clay fonts were made to order by local Cretan pottery workshops. They were usually small, as babies were normally baptised at a few days old due to high infant mortality.

Christoforos Vallianos, Andreas Lyritzis



2.5 Glass perfume sprinkler

City of Chania, Kastelli
12th-13th century
Ht. 13.3 cm. W. 7 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania,
inv. no. GSE 05-MISC 054

Ring-shaped perfume or holy water sprinkler. Made of blown blue glass and decorated with opaque white trail decoration in an open feather pattern. The tall tubular neck widens at the bottom, where it joins the shoulders. Two symmetrical, snaking glass handles of the same colour as the vessel are applied at the same point. There is no visible base but the sprinkler may stand on four prunts (small blobs of glass), two on each side.

Perfume sprinklers of this type were luxury objects which were used not only as personal but also as ritual vessels, with which clerics sprinkled the faithful with myrrh or holy water during religious ceremonies.

Ring-shaped perfume sprinklers were widespread in the Islamic world from the late 11th century onwards, for secular use. They were made in Syria and Egypt, from which they were probably imported to Greece.

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Giannis Fantakis, Michalis Milidakis



2.6 | Glazed terracotta holy water stoup

Saintonge, France
 17th century
 Ht. 19 cm. L. 10.2 cm. W. 6.6 cm.
 Mucem, inv. no. 1971.100.4



2.7 | Charles Nicolas Gangel (1798-1860)

The Baptism of Christ, 1852-1858
 Engraving, 42x32.7 cm.
 Metz, France
 Mucem, inv. no. 1953.86.29



2.8 | Glass pilgrim flask

Notre-Dame de La Salette, Isère, France
 Last quarter of 19th century-1st quarter of
 20th century
 Ht. 16.3 cm. W.12 cm.
 Mucem, inv. no. 1938.5.112

"That is why, at the very moment we are regenerated by the water and the Spirit, all our sins are washed away in this purificatory bath". (St Augustine, Works, Epistle 187)

Due to the purificatory properties attributed to it, water lies at the heart of Christian rituals. Holy images recall the importance of the first sacrament, baptism. In this popular print (cat. no. 2.7), the depiction of St John the Baptist with Christ on the banks of the Jordan is accompanied by the lyrics of the corresponding canticle, to be sung by the faithful to a folk tune. The religious and the profane are thus interwoven inside the home, where objects of prayer also assume a decorative function. The holy water stoup was usually placed next to the bed or under the crucifix, allowing the faithful to cross themselves with holy water during their morning and evening prayers. This rare example (cat. no. 2.6) of Saintonge pottery, discovered during underwater excavations in Port-Berteau, Charente, is appropriately decorated with the Baptism of Christ.

Besides its purificatory properties, water also assumes miraculous virtues when collected from a cult place. It is carefully preserved in purpose-made vessels which also serve as pilgrimage souvenirs. The glass flask (cat. no. 2.8) comes from the important Marian sanctuary of Notre-Dame de La Salette in Isère. On the belly is a seated, weeping female figure, representing the apparition of the Virgin Mary to two young shepherds, Mélanie Calvat and Maximin Giraud, on 19 September 1846. Authenticated in 1851, the miracle has drawn large crowds of pilgrims ever since. They make sure to drink and collect the holy water from the perpetual spring that flows from the spot where the Virgin appeared.

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Camille Faucourt

2.9 Clay Attic red-figure loutrophoros, in the manner of the Washing Painter

Athens, cemetery of the Royal Stables
415-410 BC
Ht. 51.7 cm. Rim diam. 17.9 cm. Base diam. 16 cm.
National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. A 16280

The body of the vessel bears a wedding preparation scene. The bride, in a pleated chiton (tunic) and himation (cloak), wearing earrings and crowned with a diadem, is seated on a *klismos* (chair) between women, with a casket in her lap. On the casket, which contains her jewellery or other personal items, sits a winged Cupid holding a wreath. Another wreath and a *phormiskos* (bag) hang above. The scene contains the basic elements of the wedding and life of an urban wife, whose main concerns were the continuation of the family line and looking after the house.

Loutrophoroi are believed to have been ritual wedding vessels, used to fetch water for the bridal bath from the Callirrhoe or Enneakrounos ("nine-spouted") spring and fountain house in Athens. Loutrophoroi were also set up over the tombs of those who died before marriage (Demosthenes, *Against Leochares Regarding the Estate of Archiades*, 18. Ἠαρποκρατίων, *Lexicon*, s.v. λουτροφόρος and λουτροφορεῖν. Hesychios, s.v. λουτροφόρα ἄγγη).

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Maria Chidioglou





2.10 Red-Figure Nuptial Lebes, Type 2
Attic workshop, attributed to the Washing Painter [Oakley and Sabetai]

Provenance unknown

425-420 BC

Ht. (incl. handles) 27.3 cm. Rim diam. 6 cm. Base diam. 9.8 cm.

Benaki Museum, inv. no. 31117

Depicted at the centre of side A of the nuptial lebes is the bride, sitting on a chair. Her head is tilted back, as the bride's special attendant tries to fasten a necklace around her neck. On either side stand female figures, one of whom is holding a small casket and a fillet or piece of jewellery, while another is carrying a loutrophoros-hydria decorated with ribbons. From its mouth emerge branches, rendered in added pigment, now faded.

In the main scene, drawn from the iconographic cycle of the wedding preparation, several stages are conflated: the ritual bathing of the bride in water from the sacred spring of Callirrhoe, indicated by the presence of the loutrophoros, a vessel mainly used for the processional transportation of water to the house on the day of the wedding ceremony, and the adornment of the bride-to-be with jewellery. Particular importance is given to the offering on behalf of her prospective husband of a necklace, the acceptance of which would seal the impending union. The winged deities under the handles ensure the protection of the marriage, while the sashes or ribbons held by the women on side B of the vase refer either to the bridal trousseau or to the bride's weaving skills.

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Irini Papageorgiou

2.11-13 | Hammam dress, cap and towel

Algiers, Algeria

20th century

Dress: L. 1. 29 m. W. 61.8 cm.

Cap: L. 1.045 m. W. 21.4 cm.

Towel: L. 1.20 m. W. 99 cm.

Museum, inv. no. 2006.259.1-3

In Algeria, the hammam ceremony is a purification rite indissolubly linked to marriage. It takes place two days before the wedding. The bride comes to the hammam with part of her trousseau, consisting of five essential items: the *beniqa* cap, the *foutah* dress and the *tefrichat* towel, all made of cotton, lamé, silk and pearls, a square cloth to cover her valise, and another cloth for the bucket. The valise and the copper bucket contain all the necessary toiletries: wash glove, scrubbing brush, bowl, shampoo and anything else that might be required.

Françoise Dallemagne



2.14 Clay red-figure loutrophoros-amphora by the Painter of Naples RC 132

Provenance unknown

1st quarter of 5th c. BC

Ht. 72.4 cm. Mouth diam. 25.6 cm. Base diam. 14.6 cm.

National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. A 1452

On the body of the loutrophoros is depicted a prothesis scene (laying out of the dead). The deceased man lies on the deathbed, surrounded by his family and friends. His hair is adorned with a wreath, while his jaw is tied shut with a wide band. A female figure clasps his face, while another bends over his pillow, arranging the mattress. Two more women are mourning with their hands on their heads. Behind the last woman, who is touching the shroud, yet another companion brings her hand to her head, raising the other in a gesture of farewell. On the back of the vase, a boy and two beardless men approach to take their leave of the deceased, with right hand raised, palm out, perhaps singing a funeral song.

On the neck of the vase, above the prothesis scene, are depicted three female mourners, while on the other side, above the male chorus, two more men in himatia raise their hands in the characteristic gesture of bidding farewell to the dead.

Both the subject of the loutrophoros and its open bottom show that it was made for funerary use. However, the light burning of some of the sherds of which it consists indicates that it was not actually used as a grave marker but cast into the funerary pyre, in a “ceremonial killing” that sealed the burial of the deceased.

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Christina Avronidaki



CLEAN, HEALTHY
AND BEAUTIFUL:
CULTURAL
NORMS AND
THE PRACTICE
OF BATHING



Homer calls Oceanus, the Earth-encircling river, the progenitor of all creation, giving a first cosmogonic picture of the importance of water in the ancient world (*Iliad*, 14.244-246). Indeed, it was through the experience of nature that man became aware of the life-giving power of water. Its role is directly connected with the cycle of nature and the stages of human life: birth, marriage, death.

In the individual sphere, cleaning the body with water is interwoven with wellness and beauty, the harmonisation of body and soul, important factors in the code of social acceptance and interaction.

The archaeological evidence attests to bathing customs in the societies of the prehistoric Aegean. Labyrinthine water supply and drainage networks crisscross the Minoan palaces and villas of the 2nd millennium BC. More rarely, rooms such as that in the West House in the town of Akrotiri on Thera, and also in the Palace of Knossos, are identified as lavatories and bathrooms. The fragments of a broken bathtub found near a room in the Queen's Megaron led Arthur Evans to the charming reconstruction of a private bathroom fit for a queen. The bathroom facilities of the palatial centres of Mycenae, Tiryns and especially Pylos are similar, with the fixed bathtub being the best example of the prehistoric bath. It was in a bathtub of this kind, according to Homer, that the handmaids bathed Telemachus on his visit to Pylos (*Odyssey*, 3.464-469). Similar baths are commonly found in the Creto-Mycenaean world, often in tombs, where they are reused as coffins (cat. no. 3.1).

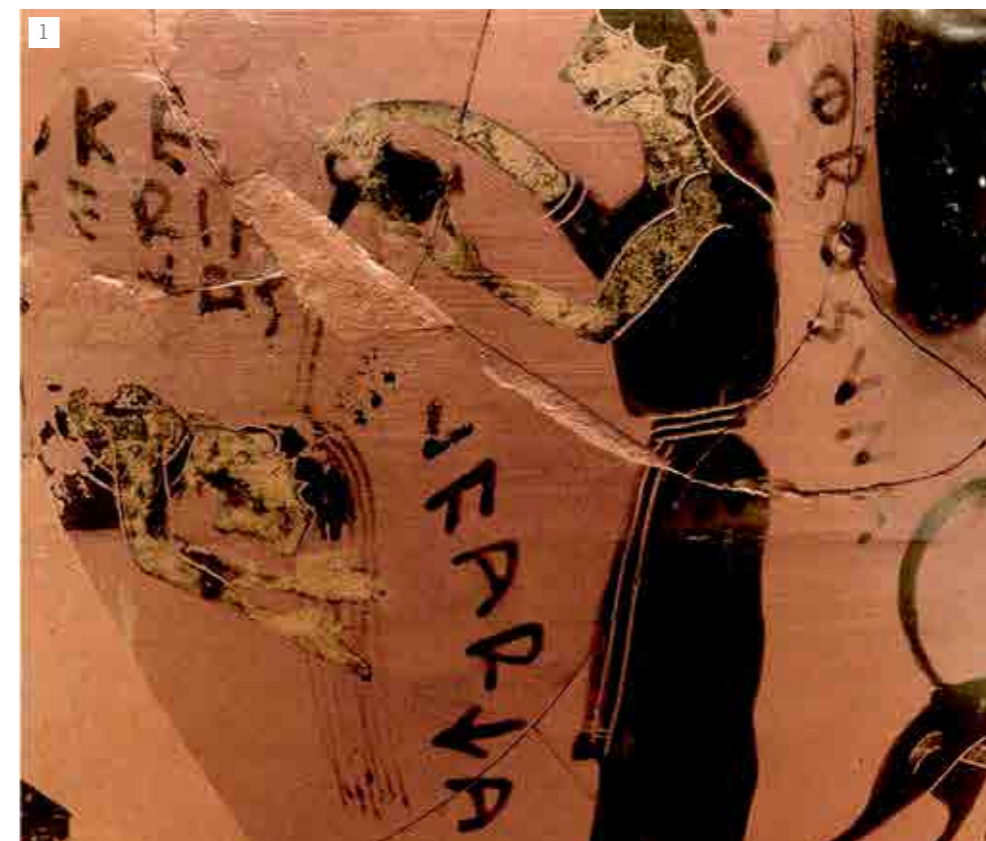
Homer provides vivid descriptions of the baths of gods and mortals, the most magnificent scene being the adornment of Hera (*Iliad*, 14.170-177). The bath of the goddess forms the first step in the mystic ritual of beautification with the aim of achieving irresistible allure, while elsewhere it is the first step in the ritual of hospitality or preparation for a journey, a banquet or a festival. The mystic practice of bathing required tripod cauldrons for heating the water. The warm bath in the *asaminthos* bathtub was accompanied by the anointment of face and body with perfumed oils. Elaborate hairstyles, jewellery and clothing completed the process of adornment. Miniature vessels, such as the small stirrup jar from the Kydonian workshop, were popular perfume containers of the period (cat. no. 3.4).

The Homeric descriptions seem to be borne out by the written testimonies of the Linear B tablets, mainly those from Knossos and Pylos. The words that appear, ke-ni-qa (hand-wash basin), a-sa-mi-to (asaminthos, bathtub), re-wo-te-re-jo (bathtubs), re-wo-to-ro-ko-wo (bath attendant) and a-re-pa-zo-o (perfume-maker),

describe not only vessels but also people who assist in the bathing process and engage in the craft of perfumery, within the context of palatial control. There are also frequent references to herbs and aromatic plants used in the preparation of scented oils and ointments (cat. no. 3.5).

The custom of the private bath presumably continued uninterrupted from the Bronze Age to the end of the Archaic period, although no archaeological evidence of this has been found in Greece. People bathed in springs and urban fountains, or at home, as depicted on the Boeotian black-figure skyphos from the Kanellopoulos Museum, with a woman bathing, stooping over a metal basin as her handmaid pours water over her (fig. 1).

From the late 5th and early 4th century BC onwards, the sources reveal that home bathing becomes more frequent. Women's baths in the private sphere of the home remain the same. Bath preparation scenes are depicted on vases intended as wedding gifts, with the brides-to-be at their toilet. Combs, tweezers, mirrors,



Detail of clay Boeotian black-figure skyphos with rare scene of a woman bathing, last quarter of 6th c. BC. Paul and Alexandra Kanellopoulos Museum, inv. no. Δ 384

perfumed oils, powders and dyes, carefully stored in luxury vessels, form the instruments of the supreme striving for beautification (cat. nos 3.6-3.8, 3.13).

Gymnasia appear during the same period: places for exercising body and soul, which include bathing facilities. Baths become public spaces, in line with the contemporary ideal of harmonious development of body and soul.

Xenophon comments: “Some rich people have private gymnasia, baths and undressing rooms, but the people have built for their own use many palaestrae (wrestling schools), undressing rooms and public baths; and the populace enjoys these more than the few and the prosperous” (*Constitution of the Athenians* II,10).

The use of thermal baths for therapeutic purposes and the first healing installations also go back to classical times. Asklepieia, under the auspices of the god of medicine Asklepius or Aesculapius, were established next to natural springs, a necessary element for the operation of the sanctuary. The Asklepieion installations operated as facilities for holistic medicine and included preparatory baths for the sick before they entered the temple. The network of Asklepieia of the Greco-Roman world included that of Lissos, at the southwest end of Chania Province (fig. 2).

During the Hellenistic period, the cosmopolitan and outward-looking lifestyle brought about corresponding changes in bathing practice. Opulent bathhouses, now social gathering-places, were established across the Mediterranean. Urban mansions, such as those of Athens, Delos and Thera, possessed a clearly delimited bathroom, as Vitruvius describes (*De architectura*, 6.7), while private bathing scenes were particularly popular in vase-painting. The bathing woman on the bronze mirror of the Hellenistic era could serve as a model for a beauty product advertising campaign across the ages (fig. 3, cat. no 3.10). The same care and attention was bestowed on beauty and bodily hygiene in Roman times.

The first thinkers of the Church, however, such as Saint Augustine (354-430), were wary of “transitory things”, of which the body was certainly one. Thermae contributed, moreover, both in the collective imagination and with regard to the new cultural standards, to the general relaxation of morals in Late Antiquity. The changing relationship with nudity introduced by Christianity increased this wariness towards the practice of collective bathing. In 12th-century Europe, the nudity and mixed bathing permitted by public bathing establishments, which combined hot baths, steam baths and various services (hostelries, depilation, coiffure, perimedical care) were thus strongly criticised.



The Asklepieion of Lissos, 3rd-2nd c. BC. Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania

However, the bath was not thrown out with the bathwater, far from it. By virtue of its purificatory properties, water has remained at the heart of religious rituals both ancient and modern. Christian baptism, even though it has evolved from full immersion to prudent sprinkling (in the Catholic Church), is a continuation of the ceremonial *mikveh* bath originally instituted by the Jewish prophet Moses. On the coasts of the southern and eastern Mediterranean, although the ablutions before prayer intrinsic to Islamic practice were performed in a fountain in the courtyard of the mosque, they justified the construction of hammams close to Muslim places of worship. In the West, too, the secular practice of bathing was elevated to a true art of living, both by the urban nobility and by the popular classes. However, the outbreaks of plague in the 16th century reversed medical views of bathing once more: it was no longer considered a bearer of cleanliness and hygiene, but a vector of virulent and deadly germs. “Avoid public baths and steam baths, I beg of you, or you will die of them,” writes Guillaume Bunel in 1513.

A cultural turning-point had been reached: public baths closed for a good two centuries, and bathing by immersion almost completely disappeared. Only a few rare medicinal baths survived. Nevertheless, this new prohibition on public baths did not affect the African and eastern shores of the Mediterranean, where, on the contrary, after a first period of strictness, bathhouse complexes continued to develop throughout the Ottoman period.

The absence of baths certainly did not mean the absence of any personal hygiene. For Europeans, immersion was replaced by the “dry bath”, in which the rare and always partial ablutions were limited to very specific areas of the body: feet, hands, mouth and private parts.

The “cleaning” of the body was effected with the aid of ointments wiped off using dry white cloths which were washed and changed every day; these cloths were called “toiles” or “toilettes” in French, whence the English “towel” and “toilet” (cat. nos 3.18-3.19).

This cleanliness ritual was completed by the application of perfumes to conceal body odour, and cosmetic powder to whiten the complexion. Toiletry accessories reflected these new habits: perfume bottles, ointment boxes, bidets, basins and small bathtubs multiplied (cat. nos 3.25-3.27). It was in the 18th century that people began to reconnect with the sometimes casual pleasures offered by nature, and that the importance of personal hygiene to the balance and general education of the individual was affirmed, particularly through the thought of the great philosophers. Mindsets evolved and water no longer seemed so disconcerting. Painters freely depicted outdoor bathing, that is to say, improvised dips in lakes and rivers, conducive to other frolics. The private bath returned. Immersions remained limited, but ablutions were henceforth a necessary part of the new hygienic lifestyle.

The industrial, philosophical and political revolutions of the 19th century culminated in the veritable triumph of the bath, both public and private. For the first time, microbiology identified the germs responsible for the transmission of infections, present in the air, in the water and on the skin. Bathing and its companion, soap, were praised for their disinfectant and hygienic virtues (cat. nos 3.20, 3.22).

Since running water could not yet be piped into the house, home bathing remained a privilege reserved for the better off. The private bathroom as we understand it did not become widespread in urban circles until the very end of the century, meaning that basins, bidets, tubs and bathtubs continued in daily use (cat. nos 3.23-3.24). Alongside these private practices, public baths, prestigious or popular, reached their peak. The latter were funded by public policies against urban insalubrity, and also against the immorality that supposedly accompanied the dirty bodies of the poorer classes.

3



Illustration of the bathing woman depicted on the bronze mirror cat. no. 3.10
Drawing: Dimitris Chourdakis

This social hierarchy of baths, which was even more marked between town and country, lasted well into the 20th century in France and Europe, before the private bathroom became generally established and public baths fell out of favour for good.

The history of our relationship to bathing and water has consequently been a turbulent one, revealing all the ambivalence of the concepts of “clean” and “dirty” in Europe. The East, on the other hand, has never abandoned the sanitary use of the hammam, from its appearance in the 7th century to the present day, despite a recent loss of interest in favour of the more modern western-style bathroom. Personal care has always been a social and civilisational construct.

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Eftychia Protopapadaki, Florence Hudowicz, Camille Faucourt



3.1 Clay bathtub larnax

City of Chania, Koubes, chamber tomb
ca. 1250 BC

L. 1.10 m. Ht. 47 cm. W. 40-52 cm.

Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. Π 6068

Bathtub (*asaminthos*) placed inside a tomb and used as a larnax for a single burial. Four handles are set around the body and two stylised octopuses decorate the exterior of each long side. The decoration of these objects with themes from the world of water is believed to indicate their original use as household bathtubs, although most of them come from funerary rather than domestic contexts. Besides bathing as part of personal hygiene, however, the presence of full-size and/or model bathtubs in Minoan tombs may mark the ritual washing of the deceased before burial.

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Eleni Papadopoulou



3.2 Bronze hydria

Provenance unknown
1400-1300 BC
Ht. 44 cm. Max. diam. 35 cm.
Archaeological Museum of
Chania, inv. no. M 12

This impressive water jar has a piriform (pear-shaped) body with rounded shoulders and a short neck ending in a wide rim. A strong strap handle joins the rim to the body, while there is a second horizontal handle low on the belly to facilitate pouring. The base is wide and ring shaped. The vessel is hammered in four separate pieces of metal that are joined with rivets. The hydria type is of Minoan origin, known from many examples from the world of the Minoan and Mycenaean palaces. These luxury vessels, emblems of high social status, are associated with the banquets of their noble owners; however, they also form part of washing equipment, as described by Homer. The ritual of bathing for reasons of hygiene and beauty acquired a ceremonial aspect in the case of washing the deceased before burial. Bronze hydriae, jugs, bowls and tripod cauldrons are often found in rich burials, indicating the wealth of their owners.

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Efychia Protopapadaki



3.3 Stone footed lamp

Konstantinos, Marika and Kyriakos Mitsotakis
Collection
1600-1450 BC
Ht. 26.9 cm. Max. diam. 14 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania, coll. no. Α 1

This lamp of brown serpentine is decorated with a relief foliate band around the rim. The deep cavity was filled with olive oil or other flammable material, such as animal fat. This type of lamp is a rare variant because, although it was meant to light a room or other space, it only has one spout: this is where the wick, usually made of flax, was placed and lit to provide illumination.

Minoan stone lamps stand out for their elaborate relief decoration. They usually come from villas or palatial centres and were a particularly popular export product. Although they were mainly intended as utilitarian vessels for everyday lighting needs, they may also have been used as votive offerings to sanctuaries or as ritual vessels, particularly in night-time ceremonies.

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Eleni Papadopoulou



3.4 Clay miniature stirrup jar

Konstantinos, Marika and Kyriakos Mitsotakis Collection
1300-1350 BC
Ht. 6.5 cm. Base diam. 2.5 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania,
coll. no. Π 440



3.5 Clay one-handled alabastron

City of Chania, Igoumenou Gabriel St.,
Tomb 13
1300-1350 BC
Ht. 5.5 cm. Base diam. 1.9 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania,
inv. no. Π 11101

The miniature globular stirrup jar with fine decoration of arches and dots in the shoulder zone, and the miniature alabastron with its elaborate flower, are examples from the Kydonian pottery workshop, featuring its characteristic buff clay and orange paint. These elegant vases were used to store perfumed oils and ointments. The application of perfume, a particularly widespread practice in the Creto-Mycenaean world, was an essential part of the bathing ritual, as described in Homer, for the beautification of gods and mortals alike. Miniature vessels are common grave goods, their precious contents accompanying the deceased in the afterlife.

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Efthychia Protopapadaki



3.6 Marble exaleiptron

Rodovani (ancient Elyros)
Late 4th-early 3rd c. BC
Ht. 29 cm. Diam. 17.3 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. Α 1007

The exaleiptron is an elaborate vessel of enigmatic use in antiquity. The name, from the Greek verb "to anoint", generally refers to a perfume pot containing some kind of ointment, but the shape is also called a *plemochoe*, meaning a vessel for pouring. The most widely accepted hypothesis is that the exaleiptron was exclusively used by women to carry perfume, ointment, scented water, powder or cream during the daily or bridal bath and beauty routine. It may also have been used to dilute and preserve expensive perfumes with wine or oil.

Athenaeus tells us that Athenian burial rites included pouring a libation on the grave using *aponimma*, water for purifying the deceased and the "impure" mourners, and perfume from a *plemochoe*.

Many clay and marble examples of this shape have been found in West Crete, mainly in the ancient cities of the Koinon of the Oreioi or "League of the Highlanders" (Selino), where they are usually found outside tombs and associated with memorial ceremonies.

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Katerina Tzanakaki



3.7 Glass alabastron

*City of Chania (ancient Kydonia),
G. Chatzidaki St., family tomb
Late 4th-early 3rd c. BC
Ht. 11 cm. Diam. 2.9 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania,
inv. no. Γ 177*

Glass alabastron with feather pattern decoration of alternating groups of white and yellow lines.

Perfume bottles of this kind often accompanied female burials as commemorative items of everyday use. Their deposition in burial chamber A of the underground rock-cut funerary monument of the city of Chania may be due to their contents, myrrh or other substances, which may have been used to anoint the dead woman during burial.

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Katerina Tzanakaki



3.8 Glass bird-shaped unguentarium

*Kastelli, Kissamos (handed in to the Museum)
1st-2nd c. AD
Ht. 9 cm. L. 19 cm. W. 3.7 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. Γ 84*

This unguentarium (ointment vessel) is made of semi-opaque blue blown glass in the shape of a bird. It has an ovoid head with a long, pointed beak, a high cylindrical neck and an elongated ovoid body ending in a long, thin tail. The tip was broken off in antiquity to release the contents.

This type of unguentarium was designed for a single use. The cosmetics, powders or perfume were inserted through the tip of the tail, which was then sealed by reheating the glass.

Bird-shaped unguentaria are mostly found in burials and are thought to have been made in North Italian workshops.

In antiquity, unguentaria were distributed or sold in shops selling perfumes and medicinal substances. The transparent material allowed the contents to be examined, making unguentaria ideal for the storage and transport of aromatic substances.

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Katerina Tzanakaki

3.9 Bronze mirror with ivory handle

City of Chania, Igoumenou Gabriel St., Tomb 40

1420-1400 BC

Diam. 16.9 cm. L. 17.4 cm.

Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. M 1095

Circular disc with two holes in the edge for attaching the ivory handle. The once-polished metal surface would have given a satisfactory reflection. This type was introduced to the Aegean from Egypt and remained unchanged throughout the Creto-Mycenaean period. The handle consists of a shaft of circular section, terminating in a rectangular plaque to which the mirror is attached by two rivets. The whole surface of the handle was covered with relief decoration, as we see from the few remaining traces; the rounded corners represented palm leaves curving around the central decorative theme, now lost. Luxurious mirrors usually accompanied burials of aristocratic women and, more rarely, high-ranking warriors – as in the case of this particular mirror – in order to reflect the beauty of their owner into the afterlife.

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Eftychia Protopapadaki





3.10 Bronze folding mirror

City of Chania (ancient Kydonia), Giamboudaki St., family tomb

3rd c. BC

Cover diam. 15.5 cm.

Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. M 793

Mirror consisting of two detached pieces. The rivet that secured them is preserved on the cover, while the omega-shaped hinge and attachment flap are preserved on the mirror.

The main surface of the mirror bears relief concentric circles. The outer surface of the cover is adorned with a pierced sheet of hammered metal with relief decoration, affixed to the disc. In front of a pleated curtain is depicted a bathing naked female figure in the rare type of the Crouching Venus, bent over a tub. Her posture is reminiscent of sculptural works. Although the thematic cycle of Aphrodite/Venus was a particularly popular subject in the decoration of folding mirrors, this specific iconographic type is modelled on vase-painting masterpieces, such as the 5th-century lekythos by the Meidias Painter from Athens, now in Berlin.

Mirrors were an essential part of women's daily beauty routine, especially for members of the upper classes, and often accompanied them into the afterlife. In many cases they were offered as votives to sanctuaries, mainly of female divinities, associated with rites of passage or chthonic rituals. The most important metal-working workshops were those of Corinth, Athens, Chalcis and Tarentum.

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*LIMC II-1, 2: Mirrors with similar theme incised inside the cover: 994 (Nymph according to Züchner W., *Griechische Klappspiegel (JdI, ErgH 14)*, Berlin 1942, 143, Abb 68, KS59). Vases: 988, 990, 1181. Sculptures and other artefacts: 1018-1042.*

Vanna Niniou-Kindeli



3.11 Double-sided ivory comb

City of Chania (ancient Kydonia), G. Chatzidaki St., family tomb
325-275 BC

Ht. 15 cm. W. 12 cm.

Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. K 22

The comb (*cteis* in ancient Greek), single or double, like this example from which the vertical teeth are missing, has been a popular grooming implement from prehistoric times to the present day. Combs made of wood or bone, with more luxurious examples of ivory, were used as grave goods, usually accompanying female burials.

Combing, a diachronic practice necessary for hair care, was done both for reasons of hygiene (removing dirt and parasites) and to arrange the hair in a variety of styles. Well-groomed hair has always been a sign of health and beauty in both men and women, while dishevelled hair may indicate sickness or misfortune.

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Mimika Giannopoulou



3.12 Gold hair rings

Astrikas, Chania, Tomb 1

Early 8th c. BC

Diam. 2 cm.

Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. M 763

Metal spiral hair rings were used to secure the ends of locks of hair, and their presence confirms the importance of elaborate hairstyles in antiquity. Especially when made of gold or silver, they highlighted the superior social status and wealth of their owners.

Looking after one's hair was important for both women and men, as its appearance and styling were not only a sign of beauty but also marked one's social class, age and various stages of life (youth, age, ritual transitions, etc.). Women in particular took great care of their hair, washing and anointing it with perfumed oils or olive oil.

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Mimika Giannopoulou



3.13 Clay Corinthian pyxis

City of Chania (ancient Kydonia), Polyrrhenias St., Tomb A
5th c. BC
Ht. 6.5 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. Π 3982

The cylindrical body and the lid of this pyxis are decorated with black and red painted bands.

Pyxides were boxes, usually small, made of various materials and used to store jewellery or *psimythion* cosmetics. *Psimythion* was powdered white lead carbonate, a skin whitener used to make the face appear flawless. These powders were often mixed with oils to tone the skin and pigments to achieve various hues.

In Kydonia, the best-preserved pyxides of this type are usually found as funerary offerings in cist graves.

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Katerina Tzanakaki



3.14 Ivory spoon

Fylaki, Apokoronas,
tholos tomb
1375-1300 BC
L. 7.7 cm. Max. w. 1.00 cm.
Archaeological Museum of
Chania, inv. no. K 158

Miniature model of a right arm and hand, carefully carved from a hippopotamus tusk. One end terminates in a fist with a hole through the closed palm, while the other is shaped like a tiny spoon. Miniature spoon-shaped objects are rare finds in Minoan Crete and mainly come from rich grave contexts. They are usually made of valuable materials such as ivory, bronze or silver, and were intended for cosmetic and/or medical use. They are often interpreted as ear-picks, but they were probably used to apply or mix *psimythion*, powder and pigments to beautify and add colour to the face. These cosmetics were kept in small boxes called pyxides or in stone vials, in the form of powder or ointment, so these instruments were used as dosage dispensers to remove and apply them.

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Eleni Papadopoulou



3.15 Bronze tweezers

Konstantinos, Marika and Kyriakos
Mitsotakis Collection
9th-8th c. BC
L. 7.3 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania, coll. no. M 78

Metal tweezers, of very similar shape to modern ones, were probably used to remove unwanted hair or as instruments for preparing cosmetics.

Mimika Giannopoulou



3.16 Takis Katsoulidis (1933)

Woman in the Bathroom, 1982

Colour lithograph, 9/70. 48.7x62.7 cm. (print), 49.8x65.7 cm. (work)

Signed lower right: "T. Katsoulidis 82"

The National Gallery – Alexandros Soutsos Museum, Π 6719

The subject of a woman washing and reflected in a mirror, one of Takis Katsoulidis's favourite themes, often reappears in his work after his illustrations for the *Palatine Anthology* in 1979, through striking, almost monochromatic, vividly drawn lithographs, displaying a unique and particularly poetic shaping of forms.

In *Woman in the Bathroom* (1982), a bathroom interior, recognisable yet abstractly rendered, frames the central figure of the semi-naked woman like a liquid, "aquatic" environment in which the dominant blue tonality creates a sense of flowing, cleansing energy. Foregrounded and seen from the back, the female body with its sensuous curves is reflected in the mirror, where the rosy tones give the impression of flesh. Head turned to the side as she dries her hair, the woman is depicted in a beauty ritual that simultaneously provides the opportunity for inward reflection.

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Katerina Tavantzi



3.17 Bath dress in crêpe with silk and gold embroidery

Ioannina, Greece

1st quarter of 20th century

Ht. 135 cm. W. 159 cm.

Collection Europe du Musée de l'Homme, inv. no. DMH 1962.97.70

Embroidery of raw silk and gold and silver thread decorates the neckline of this bathrobe, which was worn after the hammam. The straight line and large, trapezoid set-in sleeves offer the looseness and comfort of the Ottoman kaftan or the Greek chemise. The armholes are encircled with a cover seam of silk thread. The "crêpe" texture of the garment is due to the piled cotton, which allows the absorption of the body's humidity.

Françoise Dallemagne



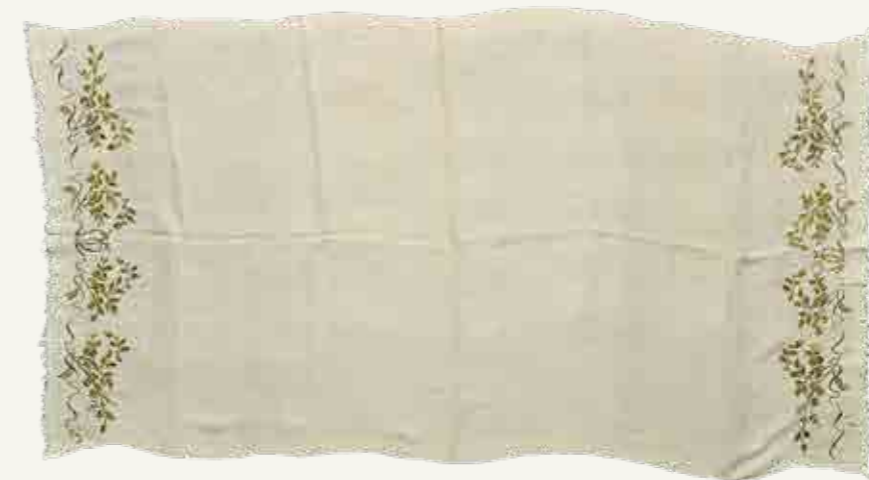
3.18 Linen hammam towel with silk and copper embroidery

Ottoman Empire

Perhaps early 20th century

L. 90 cm. W. 36 cm.

Mucem, inv. no. 2003.26.6.13



3.19 Cotton hammam towel with gold embroidery

Athens, Greece

ca. 1840

L. 148 cm. W. 81 cm.

Collection Europe du Musée de l'Homme, inv. no. DMH 1957.31.5

Bath towels are particularly elegant examples of 19th-century Ottoman embroidery. They are not just for drying oneself or lying on after bathing; they are also attestations of social practices in the context of marriage customs. Before the bath, the fabrics are put on view to display their rich embroideries and motifs, which are often floral. The bride then takes her towels to the hammam together with her other toiletry accessories.

Françoise Dallemagne



3.20 Earthenware soap box

Sarreguemines, France
Last quarter of 19th century
Ht. 9 cm. L. 15.4 cm. W. 10.5 cm.
Museum, inv. no. 1972.14.8 1-2



3.21 Earthenware soap-dish

Boch Frères Factory, Belgium
1st half of 20th century
Ht. 6.4 cm. Diam. 15.6 cm.
Museum, inv. no. 1972.14.5

In order to equip the first lavatories and bathrooms of middle-class buildings in European cities, pottery manufacturers came up with various personal toiletry vessels: soap boxes or dishes for full-sized or miniature perfumed soap bars, toothbrush holders, water jugs. So, from 1875, the Sarreguemines factory produced a range of toilet accessories with the same printed floral decoration, the *Narcisse* model, while Villeroy & Boch, still active today, launched its art deco *Boston* series, a symbol of American-style modernity.

Françoise Dallemagne



3.22 Wood and metal soap box

Patounis Soap Factory 1850
Corfu, Greece
2003
Ht. 25.5 cm. L. 45 cm. W. 30 cm.
Museum, inv. no. 2003.47.5

This wooden crate, acquired in Corfu in 2003, was used to display soaps in the shop of the Patounis family soap factory. As the black stencilling indicates, the first soap factory was established in 1850 on the island of Zakynthos by Bazakis and Patounis, two Greeks originating from Kalarrytes in Epirus. Since 2017, the soapmaking techniques used by this factory have been inscribed in the National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Greece.

Françoise Dallemagne



3.23 Glazed terracotta
washing fountain

Avignon, France
17th-18th century
Ht. 49 cm. L. 30.8 cm. W. 22cm.
Museum, inv. no. 1948.39.22.1-2



3.24 Glazed terracotta
shaving plate

France
2nd half of 19th century
Ht. 8.9 cm. L. 27.4 cm. W. 26.4 cm.
Museum, inv. no. 1956.125.6

In the rural and popular environment, washing was not simply a gesture of cleanliness but a social act par excellence. However, it was frequently difficult to pipe water into houses, and domestic toiletry equipment remained rudimentary into the first half of the 20th century, consisting of basins, jugs or terracotta vessels. One of the most emblematic accessories was the metal or terracotta shaving plate, identifiable by the cavity for the user's throat (cat. no. 3.24). Weekly or monthly beard care took place in the home or in the village café, at the barber's. Washing fountains (cat. no. 3.23) first appeared in Parisian homes in the 16th century, becoming widespread in the rest of France in the 18th century. Restricted to the better off, they ensured the storage and distribution of water for daily washing (of hands and mouth) and drinking. They served both a practical and a decorative purpose. Some examples are masterpieces of folk art, such as this rare and impressive fountain inspired by mythology: its front is adorned with Neptune with his trident, riding a dolphin and framed by fleur-de-lis coats of arms. The fountain was donated to the Musée National des Arts et Traditions Populaires in 1848 by one of its most important patrons, the banker and collector David David-Weill.

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Camille Faucourt



3.25 Blown glass perfume bottles

Souq Al Attarine, Tunis, Tunisia
2nd half of 20th century
Ht. 16 cm.
Museum, inv. no. 2003.164.2 and 4



3.26-27 Copper perfume burner and sprinkler (qumqum)

Ottoman Empire
Late 19th-early 20th century
(26) Ht. 15.8 cm. L. 17cm. W. 13 cm.
(27) Ht. 19 cm. Diam. 7 cm.
Museum, Collection Selim Bel, inv. nos 2020.6.1 and 2020.6.2.1-2

"She appeared outside the hammam, wiping her face running with rosewater, with henna-tinted fingers, red as jujubes." (Arabic poem in *Zobeida Amira. La dame de Dar el Bacha/Bournaz* Baccar, Alia-Tunis, Sahar Editions, 2007)

Perfuming the body and oiling the hair forms part of the personal care routine in the bath or hammam. Perfumed water or oil is available in delicate vials like these tiny glass bottles of blown glass from the *Souq Al Attarine*, the Perfume-makers' Market in Tunis (cat. no. 3.25). Rosewater is the most popular type of perfumed water. Mixed with beauty products used in the ritual of the hammam or after bathing, it is stored in liquid form in a sprinkler called a *qumqum*. It is also used to perfume fabrics or guests' hands when welcoming them to the home.

This copper *qumqum* (cat. no. 3.27) and burner for perfumed oils (cat. no. 3.26) belonged to Muzehher Unjuzade. She was born in 1908 in Aleppo, under Ottoman dominion, to a family originating from Istanbul. The piriform rosewater sprinkler has a long neck ending in a dolphin head.

The perfume burner, with its pinecone-like shape and instantly recognisable scent, was intended for secular use: to perfume the interior spaces of the home via combustion. Aromatic plants, incense, ambergris, sandalwood, benzoin or even mastic (lentisc gum) were placed on the hot coals. A smaller receptacle of similar shape contained these precious perfumed balls, so popular in the Ottoman Empire.

Françoise Dallemagne

BATHS IN
PUBLIC LIFE:
CLASSICAL
AND ROMAN
TIMES



Official measures were taken to ensure citizens' health and welfare in the ancient Greek world, continuing during the Roman period. Natural springs, curative and otherwise, and baths were important areas of public health. We must look back in history in order to understand the relationship between water and the rise of civilisations, water technology, and the use of water for religious and health purposes. Springs were important places for those seeking treatment, alongside sanctuaries, baths and the Roman houses of healing known by the Latin term *tabernae medicae*, in Pompeii and other cities.

Vitruvius (*De architectura* 1.2.6) stresses that sites with health-giving springs must be selected for the construction of sanctuaries, especially those of Asklepios and Hygeia, where bathing forms a vital part of the healing process. Patients, he notes, are quickly cured when they are treated with water from such springs and when they are kept out of the wind. When discussing water, baths and plumbing installations, Vitruvius also notes the dangers of lead pipes (*De architectura* 8, 6, 10-11.).

Bathing, as vase-painting scenes attest, and healing springs were particularly popular in the Greco-Roman world (cat. no. 4.1). Pliny the Elder (*Natural History* 31.8.11-12) records that the waters of Thespieae help women conceive, the water of Lake Alphius cures psoriasis, and a spring in Gaul dissolves kidney stones, as long as one immerses oneself in the waters and bathes in them. The Jews believed that water played an important role in medicine; for example, bathing in the Jordan was said to cure leprosy (II Kings 5). Some of the ancient Greek and Roman curative sulphur springs are still in use today in organized spa complexes, such as those of Aedepsus, Thermopylae, Icaria and Kythnos. Herod, the governor of Judaea in the time of Christ, sought treatment at the natural hot baths of Callirhoe near the Jordan (Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.169-176), while the Roman general Sulla resorted to the hot springs of Aedepsus to relieve his gout.

Bathhouses were built at hot springs with curative mineral waters from as early as the 5th c. BC in Greece, Asia Minor, Southern Italy and Sicily. Public baths in Classical Greece were associated with places of worship, exercise and healing, such as the Gymnasia and Asklepieia, which usually included baths (cat. no. 4.4). In the rooms of the Gymnasia, the strigil and the aryballos of perfumed oil are the essential grooming utensils for the care of athletes' bodies after strenuous exercise (cat. nos 4.5).

Greek baths (*loutra*) of the Classical and Hellenistic periods have come to light at Olympia, Gortys in Arcadia, Eretria, Oeniades in Acarnania, Soloeis near Palermo, Pompeii and elsewhere. Many Asklepieia, such as those of Epidaurus, Cos and Pergamon, gradually developed into recreational areas with large bath complexes, where bathers and patients could enjoy a wide range of treatments on payment of a special fee.

The major Roman contribution to bathing was the invention of the underfloor hypocaust for heating hot baths in the 1st c. BC. Roman Thermae included changing rooms, a hot steam room (*caldarium*), a dry sweating room (*laconicum*) and rooms with tepid water (*tepidarium*) (cat. no. 4.7). The huge quantities of water needed to supply these sometimes colossal establishments, like those of Agrippa (33 BC), Nero, Hadrian, Caracalla and Diocletian, were provided by the construction of imposing aqueducts that carried water over great distances. These Thermae boasted elaborate facilities, including expensive heating systems under the floors and in the walls, cisterns, pools, furnaces, separate rooms for women, and, of course, numerous staff, supervisors, masseurs and doctors (cat. nos 4.8-4.11).

Medically substantiated therapeutic properties were attributed to bathing, sweating and massage, leading to the addition of new health facilities, increased opulence and the enrichment of the decoration with mosaic floors and statues, while women and men were permitted to visit the Thermae together.

It has been calculated that the continuous supply of Thermae with fuel required an ox-cart of wood weighing approximately 500 kg daily. This means that heating the bathhouses of a provincial town such as Kydonia (modern Chania) or Apta (fig. 1) for a year would require a whole hectare (10,000 m²) of timber to be felled.

Vitruvius (*De architectura* 5.9-10) stresses that the site chosen for the construction of a bathhouse must face west or south. The size of the building must correspond to the number of bathers and its breadth should be a third of its length. The cistern should be placed under the window so that the shadows of those standing around it do not obstruct the light. The pillars of the hypocaust are set on a slightly sloping surface and built of eight-inch bricks to a height of two feet; on them are laid the large clay tiles with the final floor layer. The vaulted ceilings of the baths should be built of rough masonry joined with mortar. The *laconicum* (dry sweating room) and the *praefurnium* (furnace) must be connected to the hot bath. The curved dome through which the heat enters should have an aperture in the roof with a hanging bronze disc that can be raised and lowered to regulate



View of part of Roman Baths 1 of Aptera, 1st-3rd c. AD. Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania

the humidity and temperature. This also ensures the better circulation of the flame and steam under the floors of the various rooms and through the wall coverings, consisting of clay tiles with conical protrusions, known by the Latin term *tegulae mammatae*.

A relatively small bathhouse of the Late Roman period (early 5th-7th c. AD), built according to Vitruvius' rules of construction above, has come to light in the north part of the agora of ancient Messene. It was built of *spolia* (repurposed stone) from the long Hellenistic stoa, which was abandoned in the late 4th c. AD (fig. 2). This bathhouse contains all the necessary rooms for its full operation (*praefurnium*, *caldarium*, *piscina-frigidarium*, *tepidarium*). Its period of use, which continued at least until the early 7th c. AD, is based on the discovery of a follis (minted in 606/7 AD) of the Emperor Phocas (606-610 AD), on the threshold of the doorway leading from the *frigidarium* to the *tepidarium*.

Water and drainage networks presuppose cities and specialised knowledge on matters of hydrogeology and hydromechanics, associated with natural springs, dams, fountain structures, tunnels, wells, clay or metal water pipes, drains, toilets and public and private baths.



Aerial photograph of the bathhouse in the north part of the agora of ancient Messene. Early 5th-7th c. AD. Society of Messenian Archaeological Studies

The Etruscans were reputed to be experienced engineers of plumbing installations and drainage systems, which served as a model for the Romans. The Great Sewer (*Cloaca Maxima*) of Rome, initially constructed in 600 BC, was the work of Etruscan engineers, as was the first aqueduct in 312 BC.

All ancient cities maintained a system of large, built, underground sewers that traversed the whole road network. These collected sewage and the rainwater runoff from the roofs of houses and especially public buildings, including baths, and channelled it via natural flow into the closest streams and rivers. Public works such as rainwater and sewage drainage channels and ducts for urban houses and for bathhouses are attested from Archaic times and attributed to the tyrants of Syracuse, Megara, Athens and Corinth.

In the late 6th c. BC, a large sewer was constructed in the agora of Athens. A decree of 399 BC honours the "overseer of fountains" Pentheus of the deme of Alopece for his virtue and justice "in the care of fountains". The text of an agreement of responsibilities of the 3rd c. BC, between the authorities of Eretria (where an important circular bathhouse complex of the Hellenistic era has come to light)

and the contractor Chairephanes, refers to the construction of a large drainage channel that crossed the city and was intended to protect the inhabitants' health. Sextus Julius Frontinus (35-104 AD), the author of *De aquaeductu*, served in the Roman army as governor of Britain, held the office of consul three times (in 73, 97 and 100 AD), and was appointed supervisor of the aqueducts (*curator aquarum*) in Rome by the Emperor Trajan in 97 AD. The colossal bathhouse complexes needed to be supplied with huge quantities of water. Frontinus bore enormous responsibility and authority, because the citizens' health and welfare, indeed their very safety itself, depended on him. His treatise on aqueducts was the fruit of his experience acquired during his term of office in this position.

River flow works, flood defences and marsh drainage, dams and bridges, aqueducts and channels are found in the East and in Western Greece from the Bronze Age onwards.

In Archaic and Classical Greece, celebrated works included the Fountain of Theagenes in Megara, the Tunnel of Eupalinos on Samos, the Fountains of Glauce and Pirene in Corinth, the Clepsydra and the Enneakrounos Fountains in Athens, both fed by the spring of Callirrhoe, and the sacred Castalian Spring at Delphi, in whose waters bathed the oracular priestess (Pythia) and the worshippers in order to purify themselves before seeking an oracle.

In the Hellenistic period, examples of aqueducts, drains, fountains and water supply systems for buildings including bathhouses multiplied. Galen paid particular attention to hygiene in advanced age in his treatise *On Hygiene*, specifically in the chapter on "On old age". He recommends that the elderly consume red wine for preference, and light foods such as tender fish but no bread made of fine wheat flour. They should eat figs and plums, olive oil, celery and honey. They should also have warm baths and massages, and engage in exercise and physical activity at regular intervals. Doctors make the same recommendations today, and not only for the elderly.

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Petros Themelis

4.1 Clay Attic red-figure pelike in the style of the Nikoxenos Painter

Provenance unknown

Late 5th c. BC

Ht. 24.5 cm. Base diam. 13.5 cm.

National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. A 1425

On one side of the vase a woman is depicted bathing in an imposing fountain structure. The Greek cities, in response to the ever growing population, met the mounting need for running water by the construction, mainly by tyrants, of buildings of this kind, as a part of aqueducts. In fact, to some fountains that are more closely associated with nymphs have been attributed magical and protective properties.

The woman depicted here, comb in hand, has been tending to her long hair, a symbol of femininity and eroticism, like her ample breasts. Young maidens at fountains, carefree and therefore provocative, who fall prey to men, are a commonplace in vase-painting. The removal of the girl's clothing suggests that she is divested of the protection offered by the home, while the lurking danger is depicted on the other side, where a male warrior lies in wait.

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Efi Oikonomou





4.2 Clay female figurine bearing a hydria

Kastellos in Vrysses, Kydonia
4th c. BC
Ht. 25 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. Π 8894

The figurine represents a female figure wearing a floor-length chiton and himation, standing on a stepped base. She is supporting a hydria (water jar) on her head with her right hand.

Figurines of women bearing hydriae depict both worshippers and mythical divinities such as fountain nymphs. This particular figurine was found in the excavation of an open-air sanctuary, which was probably dedicated to Demeter and Kore. The site where the sanctuary was founded in antiquity was chosen due to the spring water rising among the rocks in the area. The deeper meaning behind the offering of such figurines may lie in the vital role played by water in human life, and its symbolic use in cult and ceremonies such as the nuptial bath. Ceremonial processions of hydria-bearers usually included both girls and women.

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Katerina Tzanakaki



4.3 Clay hydria-kalpis

City of Chania (ancient Kydonia), Giamboudaki and Xanthoudidou St., cist grave
Late 4th-early 3rd c. BC
Ht. 30.5 cm. W. 25.5 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. Π 6077

The three-handled hydria was the vessel most commonly used to carry, store and serve water. The hydria-kalpis type was also used as a ritual vessel, a ballot box or in a funerary context.

This hydria-kalpis from Chania accompanied a female burial in a cist grave and contained the bones of a small child (an *enchytrismos*, or jar burial). A wreath of gilt bronze and clay leaves found near the hydria may originally have been placed on top of it.

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Katerina Tzanakaki



4.4 Clay Attic red-figure kylix signed by the potter Pamphaios

Acraephium, Boeotia, "Karditsa" site
500-490 BC
Ht. 12 cm. Diam. 29.5 cm.
National Archaeological Museum, inv. no. A 1409 (CC 1156)

On the tondo of the vessel a nude athlete is engaged in washing himself. He has plunged his hands and arms into a large basin (a *cheironipton*, or hand basin), which he supports on his thighs with the aid of a staff conceivably propped against the unpainted edge of the tondo. This way of supporting the vessel, which suggests that it must have been light, as well as the shape itself, leave no doubt that it should have been a bronze one. On the basin there is a nonsense inscription in black paint. On the black background of the tondo the potter's signature is written in purple letters (ΠΑΜΦΑΙΟΣ ΕΠΟΙΕΣΕΝ: "Pamphaios epoiesen", meaning "Pamphaios made [this]").

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Maria Tolia-Christakou



4.5 Bronze strigil

City of Chania (ancient Kydonia),
Polyrrhenias St., Tomb A
5th c. BC
L. 27.5 cm. W. 2.5 cm.
Archaeological Museum of
Chania, inv. no. M 294.

Bronze strigils with looped handle and triangular leaf-shaped blade were grooming implements. They were used during bathing to scrape dirt, sweat and dust off the skin. They were widely used by athletes after exercising, to clean their bodies of the oils they were anointed with and dust. Strigils, bronze or iron, often accompany male burials.

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Katerina Tzanakaki



4.6 Alabastron

Tsivourakis Donation
4th c. BC
Ht. 10.4 cm. Diam. 4.5 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. A 1012

The alabastron is a small, elongated vessel with a narrow mouth. It is made of calcite, a soft mineral from the wider area of the Middle East, Egypt and Mesopotamia, suitable for carving into decorative objects. The shape is also found in clay and glass.

In Classical times, alabasters were often offered as grave goods accompanying female burials, since their contents, perfumed oils, were used by women both in daily life and in funerary rites, as we see from scenes depicted in ancient art.

Katerina Tzanakaki



4.7 Flemish School

Bathing Scene, 17th century

Oil on panel, 55x81cm.

Donated by the University

The National Gallery – Alexandros Soutsos Museum, inv. no. Π. 190

This oil painting comes from the first “core” of works donated to the newly established National Gallery in 1900. In the acquisition record it is titled *Balaneion* (Baths) and attributed to Rubens. It was subsequently attributed to Cornelis Holsteyn (1618–1658), while in the catalogue of the exhibition *150 Years of the Technical University of Athens. Western European Paintings from the Collections of the National Technical University of Athens* it is recorded as the work of an Unknown Flemish painter of the 17th century. Today it is referred to by the general term “Flemish School”.

Although the work is medium-sized, it depicts a multi-figured composition of nude figures, male and female, in a “Roman-type” bath. Besides attempting to render the nude human body in various familiar poses, the painting also contains a wealth of anecdotal details. The figures converse or act in the scene with everyday, unaffected movements. Objects such as mirrors, basins and vessels, their textures skilfully rendered, works of art and the detailed depiction of the architectural space all lend greater verisimilitude to the scene. The depiction of statues and the painting of the Judgement of Paris in the background also provides an opportunity to include “paintings within a painting”, a favourite artistic game of painters which allows them to show off different facets of their talent simultaneously.

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Efi Agathonikou



4.8 Terracotta single-spouted lamp

*City of Chania (ancient Kydonia), Dikastirion Square, underground rock-cut tomb
1st c. AD
L. 11.6 cm. Diam. 8.8 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. Π 11562*

The relief scene decorating the hollow disc of the lamp is surrounded by a fine incised circle. A standing, winged female figure in three-quarter profile to the right, holding a vessel, is bending slightly forward to pour a ritual libation. The figure, wearing a pleated floor-length chiton and himation, with her hair in a “melon” hairstyle drawn into a bun, is identified as Psyche. The scene is probably a symbolic gesture of purification, a theme consistent with the presence of the lamp in a funerary context.

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Sophia Preve



4.9 Terracotta two-spouted lamp

*Aptera, West Cemetery, Funerary Monument 2
100-150 AD
Ht. 8.1 cm. L. 11.8 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. Π 10940*

Two-spouted lamp of “Cretan type” with characteristic impressed, incised and relief decoration. “Cretan-type” lamps, mould-made in various sizes, were produced on the island between the 1st and 2nd c. AD. Their typical decorative features – stylised floral motifs, ivy leaves or heart-shaped leaves alternating with relief knobs and vertical incisions – are clearly influenced by Hellenistic lamps from Asia Minor workshops (Ephesus, Cnidus, Pergamon) and metal originals.

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Katerina Tzanakaki



4.10 Clay basket-shaped situla (bucket)

*Aptera, Roman house
3rd-4th c. AD
Ht. 37.6 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania,
inv. no. Π 9176*

This basket-shaped *situla* (bucket) with external horizontal relief ribs was found in the empty cistern of the atrium of the Roman house. It must have fallen in when the cistern was still full of water, a common “accident” in many wells and cisterns.

The *situla* was used to draw and store water, and also to transport wine and measure liquids. From the 4th century BC onwards, exquisite examples of the type are found in metal. The original models would have been the woven baskets depicted in Attic vase-painting scenes set in the women’s quarters.

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Vanna Niniou-Kindeli



4.11 Clay heating pipes (tubuli)

*City of Chania (ancient Kydonia), Mitropoleos Square
1st half of 2nd c. AD
Max. L. 25 cm. Max. diam. 8.5-12.9 cm.
Archaeological Museum of Chania, inv. no. Π 12811 α-στ*

Partially preserved cylindrical clay pipes (*tubuli*), which were fitted into each other. They were discovered in the hypocaust of a Roman bath, which had rooms with opulent mosaic floors. They were obviously placed upright behind the covering of the walls, in order to allow the circulation of hot air and ensure better heating of the rooms. The existence of public bath installations, combined with the luxury villas found in the centre of Chania, are strong evidence of the prosperity of Roman-era Kydonia and the role the baths played in the life of the city through the ages.

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Eftychia Protopapadaki

THE WORLD
OF THE
HAMMAM



*The hammam, حَمَّام *, from yesterday to today* (*“hot water” in Arabic)

In the southern and eastern Mediterranean, in the lands where the Ottoman Empire chiefly held sway, the hammam, the “mute physician of the body” and also of the soul, proved versatile in adapting to the multidimensional bathing practices. Together with the mosque and the bazaar, it was one of the social institutions of Islam, which displayed an often refined architecture, especially in the eastern part of the empire (cat. no. 5.3). A social space, structured in such a way that men and women could frequent it without ever meeting, it held a less central position than the café but nevertheless a dynamic one (cat. no. 5.10). In the countries of the Maghreb (Northwest Africa), it survived as a social institution throughout the colonial period and retained its role until recently. “If Muslim society managed to persist down so many centuries, this may be due to the hammam,” wrote the Tunisian sociologist Abdelwahab Bouhdiba, in a slightly provocative tone, in 1979.

Although the hammam is no longer as widespread in certain countries such as Egypt and Tunisia, due to competition from the private bathroom and sometimes also because of its ill repute, it is still extremely popular in the Maghreb, the Mashriq (the eastern Arab world) and Turkey, particularly for rituals and ablutions. Thus the hammam accompanies every stage of life, for the cleansing of the body in both a literal and a symbolic sense: before prayer (the faithful usually visit the hammam on Thursday, before Friday prayer, at different times for men and women), after menstruation and sexual relations, for the ceremony of the bridal bath or for the *jmeya* massage following childbirth, before Eid al-Adha (the *Feast of the Sacrifice*), etc. There is always a strict separation of the sexes, the morning often being dedicated to men and the afternoon to women. Thus, the hammam is an “ambiguous” space between the sacred and the profane.

However, people also visit the hammam for the sense of well-being it offers: men to relax after work, and women to develop social bonds. Omar Carlier refers to the hammam as “the women’s café, their gazette” (cat. no. 5.11).

For some, indeed, the nudity inside the hammam erases all differences, physical or social, and loosens tongues. After sweating, rinsing, exfoliation, depilation, *ghassoul* (saponiferous clay), massage with perfumed oils and the application of henna to

the hair, the palms of the hands or the soles of the feet, women amuse themselves, chat and exchange information, remaking the world within the protective womb that the hammam represents for them (cat. nos 5.12, 5.17, 5.18).

Hammams were also established in many European countries due to the influx of migrants from the Maghreb, replacing the “Turkish baths” or “Moorish baths” as they were called in the colonial context, and sometimes even the old French public baths known as *bains-douches*. Thus *hammam-douches* spread through the popular quarters of Paris and Marseille, combining the functions of the bath and the hammam. Feeling nostalgic, these populations perpetuated in their reinvented hammams the ritual and hygienic practices of their homeland, ensuring the preservation of social activities and bonds within the hammam.

In recent decades, more and more Western visitors have also been attracted to the hammam, fascinated by its practices and wishing to care for their bodies while unconsciously reviving the traditions of the medieval hot baths.

Luxury establishments are flourishing, offering sauna, spa or hammam services for the well-being of hyperactive urban populations or, in some countries, to tourists in quest of “exoticism” and “oriental ritual”.

The hammam in Orientalism

From the “turqueries” imitating aspects of Turkish culture at the court of Versailles to Victor Hugo’s *Les Orientales*, from the *Lettres persanes* (Persian Letters) of Montesquieu to Goethe’s *West-Eastern Divan*, the East fed the imagination of the Western European urban class of the Enlightenment. Through the diplomatic reports and tales of Western travellers, the Ottoman Empire was approached from the angle of a more familiar otherness, without, however, moving past the tendency of depicting it via established stereotypes. From the late 18th century onwards, this relationship changed: Napoleon’s Egyptian Campaign and the French conquest of Algeria continued to draw scholars, artists and writers from the whole of Europe to the southern shores of the Mediterranean, while the Greek War of Independence in particular attracted the sympathy of Romantic artists.

As we know, the place of women in this oriental myth, misunderstood behind the concealing veil, gave free rein to the imagination of artists – often male – who, trapped in their narrow conventionality, perhaps turned a blind eye to the desire for female emancipation which was gradually taking shape in their familiar world.

Le Bain turc (*The Turkish Bath*), the masterpiece by the French painter Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867), condenses all the basic codes of Orientalism. The location – hammam, Turkish or Moorish bath – is, together with the harem, the favourite backdrop of Orientalist painters. The latter, if they had crossed the Mediterranean, as Gérôme and many others did, would have had the opportunity to try the hammam for themselves, during the men’s opening hours, and reproduce its ornamentation (cat. nos 5.8, 5.9). In any case, the hammam, unlike the mythical harem, renders nudity plausible. The artists use the same stratagem as that of representing ancient myths. As Henri Matisse (1869-1954) remarked with disarming honesty, “I paint odalisques in order to paint the nude”.

In these works we find languid women offering their generous forms in a soft light under pointed arches. The whiteness of their naked bodies, which, however, are not obscene, stands out against the background of colourful geometric patterns (cat. nos 5.6, 5.7). The refined precision of this decor affirms the taste of certain late-19th-century painters for the decorative arts and abstraction. Theodore Ralli (Istanbul 1852–Lausanne 1909), having studied in Paris under the Academic painter Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904) and travelled to Egypt several times, became one of the principal Greek exponents of Orientalist painting (cat. no. 5.5).

The world wars and successive decolonisations seem to have long put an end to Orientalism and its exhausted clichés. Edward Said’s seminal work *Orientalism*, published in 1978, gave rise to a multitude of critical studies on the subject. As far as artists were concerned, many, such as Picasso, reworked and subverted the theme of the Turkish bath and odalisques, often in the style of Ingres, ultimately making it part of the universal heritage, all exoticism defused. In the countries of the Mediterranean and the East, the question of reappropriation does not arise, but the hammam becomes, particularly through photography and film, a place that attracts interest due to the space it creates for people, who are now active participants rather than simple objects of desire.

The Ottoman baths of Chania

Over the six centuries of Ottoman presence in Greece, many aspects of the landscape and daily life acquired “Ottoman” characteristics. The new architectural style was marked by the construction of public buildings; although these mainly served religious and economic activities, some, like the hammams, also supported customary habits of hygiene and enjoyment. At a time when Europe did not have the best relationship with water and personal hygiene, hammams were important places of social activity, where the religious aspect (according to the Qur’an,

only running water has purificatory properties) was combined with cleanliness and an atmosphere of relaxation.

Crete, the last great Ottoman conquest in Greek territory, was an administrative region with its own distinctive features. Chania fell in 1645, following a short siege, and the Ottoman presence played a vital part in shaping the architectural character of the city. It has left a strong mark even today, as urban or public buildings and places of worship preserve an “Eastern flavour”. These include the hammams, which, in this corner of the Ottoman Empire, too, continued the philosophy (purification, health, enjoyment) and the architectural layout of the Roman and Byzantine bathing tradition. The hammam was, moreover, the public meeting-place par excellence, free of religious or social distinctions.

Chania had at least three hammams. They may even have been the first public works to be constructed in the city during this period, in accordance with Ottoman building practice in every newly conquered land.



View of the interior of the hammam on the corner of Zambeliou and Douka Streets. City of Chania. Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania

In the heart of what is now the Old Town of Chania, the hammams preserved on Halidon, Katre and the corner of Zambeliou and Douka Streets are typical bathhouses (figs 1, 2). Smaller private hammams have also been found in houses and country villas. The three public baths included the usual main rooms and auxiliary areas, suitably arranged to welcome patrons (undressing room) and allow them to adapt to the heat (warm room), offering personal hygiene, beautification and wellness services (hot room), and providing moments of relaxation. The hammam on Halidon Street was built on the site of the Venetian nunnery of the Franciscan Order of St Clare. It was a double bathhouse, meaning that it had separate sections for men and women; it is mainly the men's section that survives today. After the war and up to 1994 a bell foundry was housed in the preserved part of the hammam.



The hammam on Katre Street. City of Chania. Ephorate of Antiquities of Chania

Today, the hammam on Halidon Street is a shop, part of the hammam on the corner of Zambeliou and Douka Streets is a restaurant, while that on Katre Street hosts cultural events. Although no trace of their original use remains, as monuments they retain their distinctive place in the architectural fabric of the town and “enter into dialogue” with the modern wellness facilities which, in imitation of the old baths, continue to offer the ritual of personal care and relaxation.

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Françoise Dallemagne, Florence Hudowicz, Chryssa Bourbou



5.1 Limestone bath sign statuette (*mascaron*)

Provence

Late 13th-early 14th c.

Ht. 43 cm. W. 39 cm. Diam. 33 cm.

Musée d'histoire de Marseille, inv. no. 1983.7.130

Two nude figures are half-immersed in a narrow wooden tub with iron hoops. The figure on the right (a woman?) is turning towards her companion, who appears to be holding, and perhaps rubbing, her left arm. It is easy to recognise an intimate bathing scene, the interpretation of which has been widely discussed. It might be the story of Bathsheba, which is frequently depicted in medieval art, but it is more likely to be a secular scene, embellished with a touch of eroticism. Bathing establishments, known as *étuves*, were very common in medieval France. Marseille, whose long tradition of public baths goes back to the 2nd c. BC, had two attested establishments in the late 12th century, in what is now the 2nd district (*arrondissement*). These establishments were important places of hygiene and socialising. They generally combined a room for hot baths, containing a communal basin and individual tubs, with a dry heat or steam room. They might also provide their clientele with other services, including various personal care treatments (depilation, massage, hairdressing) and hostelry services. Although there were separate attendance times for men and women, many of these baths were essentially brothels. Naked bodies, free morals... This sexual licence, denounced by the Church, together with the fear of major epidemics, finally led to the systematic abolition of public baths in the 16th century. It would take them three centuries to regain the same popularity.

Camille Faucourt



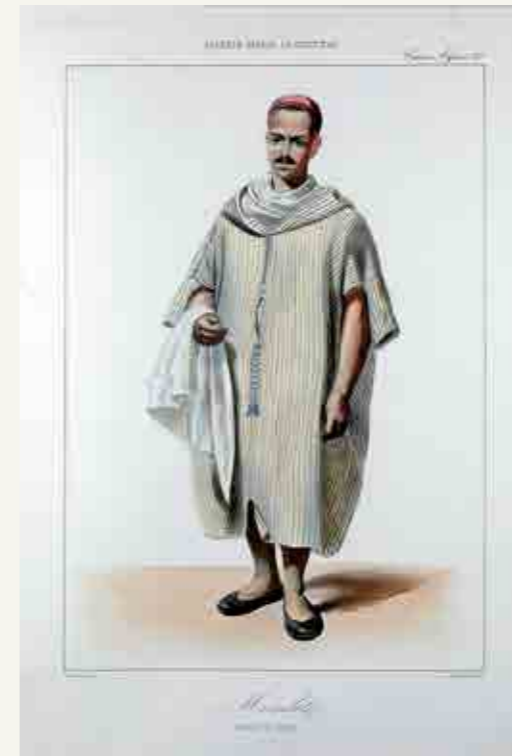
5.2 Copperplate engraving

*A Frenchman's Wife
going to the Baths, 1714
P. Simonneau (engraver)
Plate from Recueil de cent
estampes représentant
les diverses nations du
Levant tirées d'après nature
Paris, France
23.5x32.4 cm.
Collections CCIAMP*



5.3 Lithograph

*Algiers, Bathhouse, 1835
Émile Aubert Lessore (1805-1876) and William Wyld (1806-1889) (authors)
Plate from Voyage pittoresque dans la régence d'Alger, pendant l'année
1833
Paris, France
53x35 cm.
Collections CCIAMP*



5.4 Lithograph

*Mozabite (Bath Attendant) -
Algerian Costumes, 1842-1843
Benjamin Roubaud (1811-1847)
Paris, France
24x34 cm.
Collections CCIAMP*

Westerners were intrigued by Eastern bathing usages and customs from very early on. Indeed, the hammam retained its popularity uninterrupted from the Middle Ages to modern times, as opposed to immersive bathing in Europe. In 1707 and 1708, Monsieur de Ferriol, the ambassador of Louis XIV to the Sublime Porte, supplemented his collection of portraits of inhabitants of the Levant with images of veiled women in their best attire (cat. no. 5.2), visiting the hammam for their daily ablutions. In the series *Algerian Costumes (Costumes algériens)* by illustrator Benjamin Roubaud, published almost a century later, an Algerian bath attendant is depicted wearing a long, striped tunic and holding a towel (cat. no. 5.4). The interior architecture of hammams also attracted the attention of artists such as Emile Aubert Lessore and William Wyld, who travelled to the recently conquered Algeria in 1833 and provided a faithful (cat. no. 5.3) and “picturesque” description of the French-held country.

Camille Faucourt



5.5 Theodore Ralli (Theodoros Rallis) (1852-1909)

The Pool, 1898 or before
Oil on wood, 36x27 cm.
Private Collection

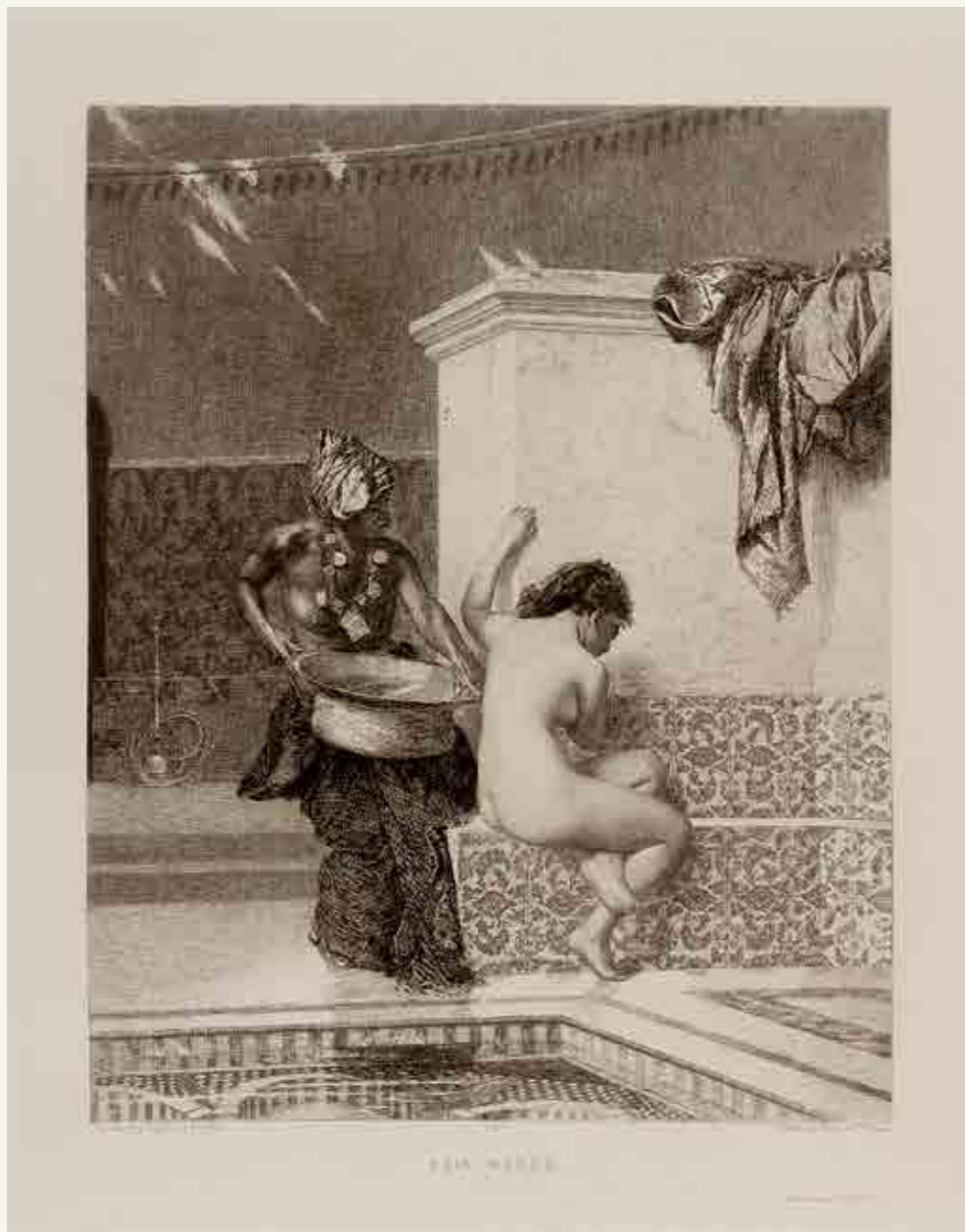
The hammam, like the harem, subjects popular with Orientalist painters and their audience, are usually imaginary scenes staged in the artist's studio. They preserve the myth of the "sensual East", here visualised as women's private moments.

The hours of indolence and euphoria after bathing were a favourite theme of Theodore Ralli, the most consistent Greek exponent of Orientalism, who lived in Paris. From the 1880s onwards, and especially after 1900, he depicted them in many compositions, usually single-figure scenes, in which he included typical Eastern objects and props. In this work, however, which was exhibited in Cairo in 1898, he paints three young women with milk-white skin, their hair up in a bun, enjoying a carefree bath in the plain room of a public bathhouse, in an atmosphere of easy familiarity. The polygonal blue-green tiles, the archway on the right opening onto a wooden staircase, the handmade carpet on which is seated –in a pose not devoid of a certain narcissistic affectation– the bather wrapped in a length of ivory gauze, are all references to the East. The rendering is subtle, while the voyeuristic approach, no matter how covert and restrained, remains obvious.

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Maria Katsanaki



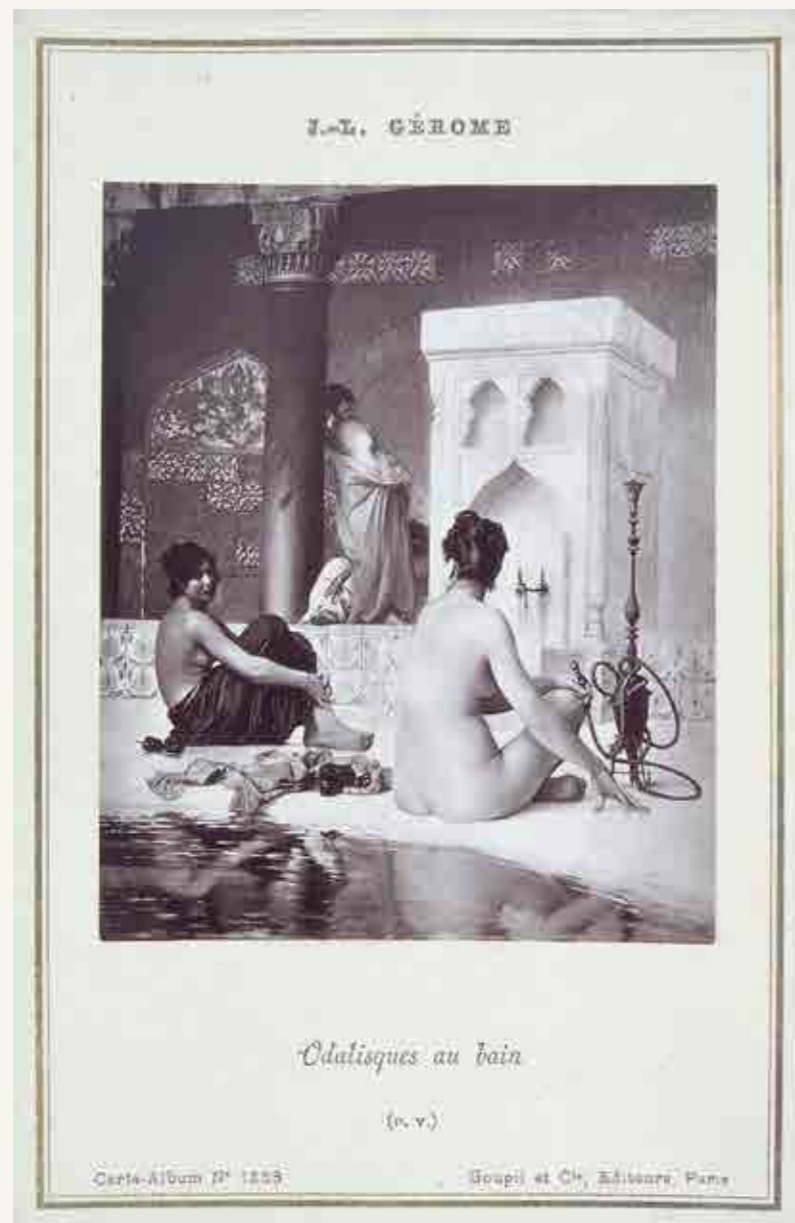
5.6 | **Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904)**

Bain maure (Moorish Bath), 1878
Photogravure
Ht. 55.3 cm. W. 36.2 cm.
Musée Goupil, ville de Bordeaux,
inv. no. 94.I.2.1013



5.7 | **Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904)**

Bain maure (Moorish Bath), 1874
Country engraving
Ht. 59.6 cm. W. 43.3 cm.
Musée Goupil, ville de Bordeaux,
inv. no. 93.I.2.177



5.8 | Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904)

Odalisques au bain (Odalisques at the Baths), 1881
 Photograph
 Ht. 16.4 cm. W. 10.8 cm.
 Musée Goupil, ville de Bordeaux,
 inv. no. 97.II.2.14



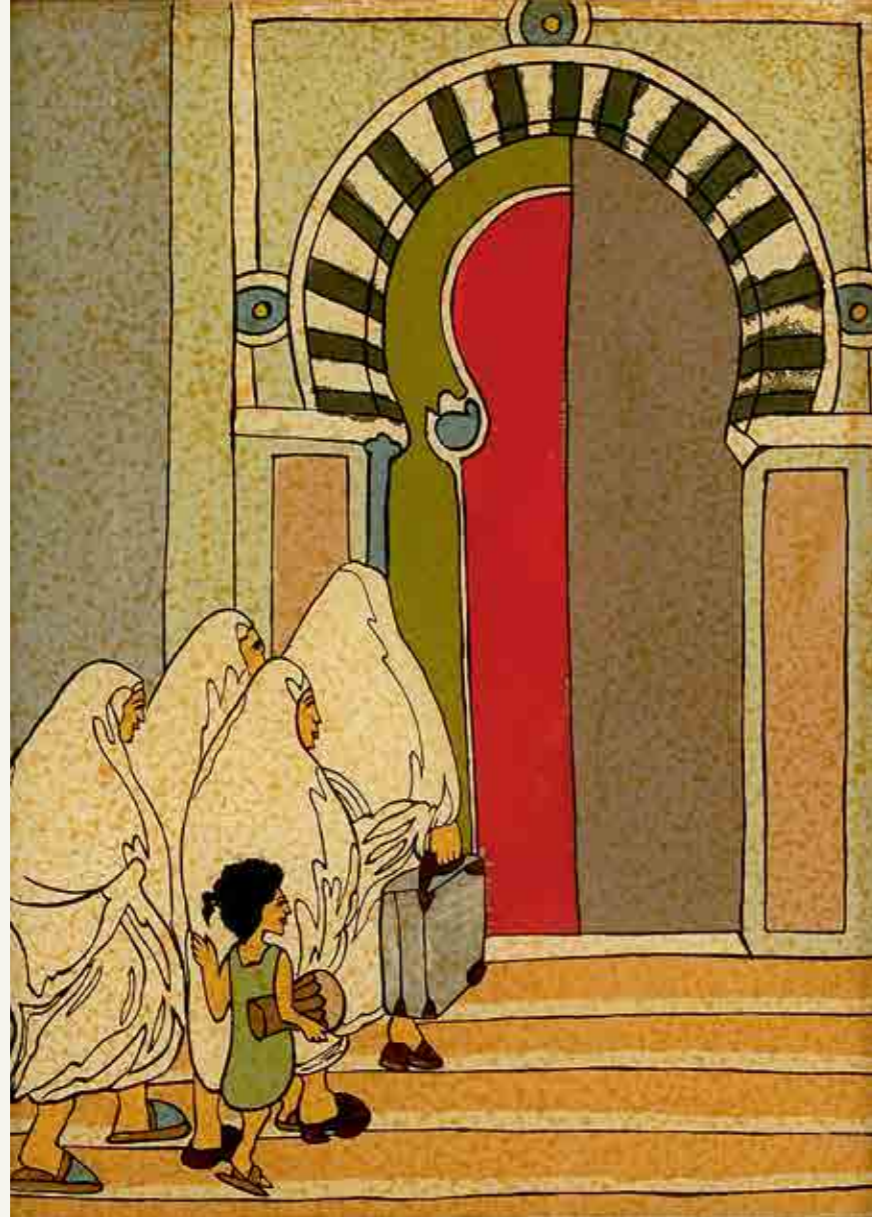
5.9 | Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904)

Femmes turques au bain (Turkish Women at the Baths), 1877
 Photograph
 Ht. 16.5 cm. W. 10.8 cm.
 Musée Goupil, ville de Bordeaux,
 inv. no. 97.II.2.13

Jean-Léon Gérôme (Vesoul 1824-Paris 1904), a major figure of the Academic art tradition and Orientalism during the Second French Empire, produced a series of scenes set in Turkish baths in the early 1870s. In line with his internationally admired style, he painted the interior decor of hammams with great refinement. His sources of inspiration vary: from photographs and souvenirs such as the faience tiles he brought back from his travels in the East, to his personal experiences of Turkish baths, particularly in Istanbul. The scenes he sets in these dimly lit interiors, however, are purely imaginary, and he takes evident pleasure, especially with regard to the titillating depiction and staging of female bodies, in fulfilling the fantasies of his target clientele.

Gérôme's success was ensured by the early use of engraving and photographic reproduction, thanks to which his work enjoyed an unprecedented dissemination and commercialisation. He signed an exclusive contract for his output with the Goupil engraving house in Bordeaux, marrying the owner's daughter in 1863. The Goupil reproductions presented here are based on famous paintings by Gérôme: *Moorish Bath (Bain maure)*, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, inv. no. 24.217) for photogravure cat. no. 5.6 and *After the Bath (Après le bain)*, Shafik Gabr private collection) for photogravure cat. no. 5.8.

Florence Hudowicz



5.10 Reverse glass painting

Hammam Entrance, Nasser Ellefi
 Tunisia
 2nd half of 20th century
 Ht. 28.6 cm. W. 21.5 cm.
 Mucem, inv. no. 2005.70.5



5.11 Reverse glass painting

Hammam Scene, Nasser Ellefi
 Tunisia
 2nd half of 20th century
 Ht. 28.3 cm. W. 21.5 cm.
 Mucem, inv. no. 2005.70.6

In the Maghreb (Northwest Africa), the hammam remains an important social space where women and children meet, at different times to men, in order to bathe and engage in personal and beauty care. The first reverse glass painting (a technique in which the image is painted in reverse on the back of the glass) depicts the hammam entrance, a protective, womblike space for the women who enter there, far from the eyes of men (cat. no. 5.10). In the second image, the women have undressed and removed their clogs (*qabqab*), and are busying themselves with their toilet (cat. no. 5.11). They wash, scrub, rinse and massage themselves with various bathing utensils and implements such as bowls, buckets and loofahs.

Françoise Dallemagne

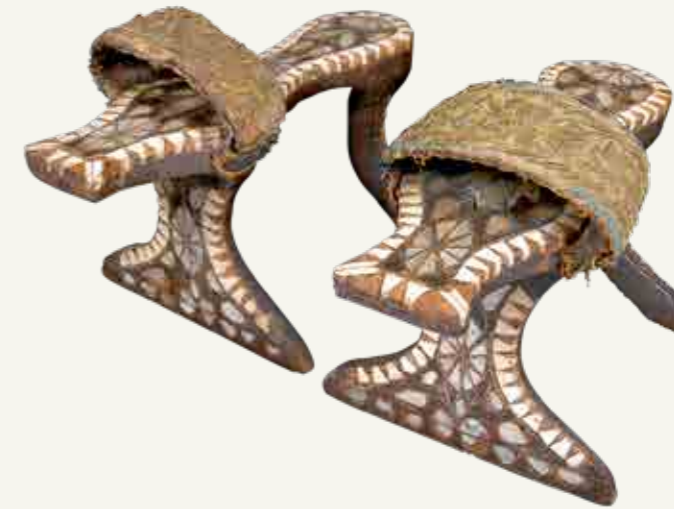


5.12 Silk and satin hammam cap (*beniqa*)

Algeria
ca. 1938
L. 92 cm. W. 19.5 cm.
Museum, inv. no. 2003.8.54

The cap was worn by women on leaving the hammam, after applying henna to their hair. The dyed hair was divided into two tresses and wrapped in the two long strips of the first cotton cap, which was designed to absorb the henna. Thus protected, the hair was rolled up on top of the head. The first cap was covered with a second, silkier cap, which was usually more richly embroidered. It formed part of the attire of the well-dressed woman, adorned with jewellery, on leaving the bath.

Françoise Dallemagne



5.13 Wooden hammam clogs (*nalin*) with mother-of-pearl, leather and gold thread

Ottoman Algeria
19th century
Ht. 16 cm. L. 23 cm. W. 23 cm.
Museum, inv. no. 2002.76.1.1-2

A pair of richly decorated wooden clogs, each with two high heels set into the slotted sole. The sole and heels are inlaid with mother-of-pearl, ivory (or horn?) and silver in a geometrical pattern, with a gold-embroidered leather strap. Clogs of this type were widespread throughout the Ottoman territories, from the Maghreb to Syria. They were worn by men, women and children in the hammam, to avoid stepping in the soap and dirty water on the floor. Moreover, the height of the heels and the richness of the ornamentation indicated the owner's social status. These clogs were also an important part of the trousseau of the bride-to-be, presented to her by the family of the groom.

Camille Faucourt, Françoise Dallemagne



5.14 Bohemian crystal and terracotta hookah

*Tophane, Istanbul, Ottoman Empire
19th century
Ht. 42.8 cm. W. 16 cm.
Mucem, inv. no. 2006.4.1.1-3*

The hammam was a place for both men and women to socialise, drinking coffee together and enjoying the pleasures of tobacco. This small hookah for women, from Tophane, is a precious and complex object consisting of a Bohemian crystal vase with Kashmiri motifs, a metal gilt stem with a classical acanthus-leaf design, and a terracotta bowl. The small crystal receptacle, which has the same decorative motifs as the vase, was placed next to the hookah, to receive the mouthpiece of the hose after use. This hookah was made in Bohemia, in what is now the Czech Republic.

Camille Faucourt, Françoise Dallemagne



5.15 Silver kohl flask (mekhila)

*Algeria
Last quarter of 19th century
Ht. 11 cm.
Dépôt de Montpellier Méditerranée
Métropole au Mucem,
inv. no. 2013.15.2*



5.16 Copper and red wax kohl flask (djulbedan)

*Prizren, Kosovo
20th century
Ht. 9.28 cm. W. 3.03 cm.
Mucem, Collection Europe
du Musée de l'Homme,
inv. no. DMH1964.78.1989*

After bathing and perfuming the body and hair, eye makeup was also applied in the hammam, using kohl (a cosmetic made by grinding the mineral stibnite). The kohl was stored in a special flask and applied with a kohl stick (*merwed*). It was made according to various “recipes” involving sulphide of antimony or copper sulphate, lampblack, alum, copper carbonate and cloves. Kohl was used to make the eyes appear larger by darkening the edges of the eyelids and the eyelashes, while it also had ophthalmological properties.

This Algerian kohl flask (*mekhila*) of chased silver, topped with a small rooster decorated with a coral bead, is of similar shape to the flask from Kosovo (*djulbedan*), made of brass inlaid with red wax and surmounted with a Turkish crescent.

Françoise Dallemagne



5.17 | **Silver hammam bowl**

Algeria
19th century
Ht. 16.7 cm. Diam. 18.1 cm.
Mucem, inv. no. 2002.77.3



5.18 | **Brass hammam bucket (thassa)**

Algeria
2nd half of 19th century
Ht. 27 cm. Diam. 40 cm.
Mucem, inv. no. 2013.10.45



5.19 | **Copper hammam bucket (thassa)**

Algeria
19th century
Ht. 23.5 cm. Diam. 25 cm.
Mucem, inv. no. 2003.31.1



5.20 | **Brass hammam scoop (tasa)**

[Tunisia]
1st half of 20th century
Ht. 9 cm. L. 42 cm.
Mucem, inv. no. 2015.16.23

The utensils that bathers take into the hammam are varied, but most, like buckets and *tasa* bowls, are used for scooping up water and rinsing oneself off. These receptacles may be made of wood, copper, zinc or chased silver. They are more or less elaborately worked and decorated, thereby indicating their owner's social status. Some of these utensils also serve to carry the necessary toiletries (soap, wash glove, sponge, hairpins, etc.). After rinsing the body, the *tasa* bowl is used to mix henna with water to dye the hair and tattoo the skin. Today, these bowls have been replaced by small plastic basins provided by the hammam.

Françoise Dallemagne

“INVENTING”
THE
BEACH



Sea bathing and seaside tourism in Europe and Greece

“If one were to ask what is the most original creation of the 19th century, the answer might be: the sea. That blue-green water, its waves smiling or raging, those golden strands, those grey or yellow rocks, all existed a hundred years ago, but no one looked at them.”

Rémy de Gourmont, *La beauté de la Mer*, 1903

The sea was long perceived as an inhospitable and dangerous element; it was therefore late in finding a place in the European collective imagination. Prior to the 19th century, people viewed the sea with distrust and, above all, did not swim in its waters with the ease we do today (cat. no. 6.1).

The sea change in the perception of this “non-place” began in 18th-century England, where doctors rediscovered the benefits of cold water for the health, invigoration and healing of the body. This new habit of sea bathing, exclusively for therapeutic purposes but still marginal, would soon acquire imitators on the Continent.

The development of the railway, which made the coasts far more accessible, is closely linked to that of the first French seaside resorts such as Dieppe, Boulogne-sur-mer, Arcachon and Granville (fig. 1). Their most famous regular visitors included Queen Hortense de Beauharnais and later Napoleon III, who daringly immersed themselves in the waters of the Atlantic, battling the billows at close quarters, usually furtively... and fully clothed. However, it is to the many anonymous bathers on the beaches of Spain and Western France in the 1830s that the true origins of sea bathing must be attributed.

A new turning-point came in the second half of the 19th century, when the sea, in the imagination of the elites, ceased to be hostile and became a source of “luxury, calm and voluptuousness”. Seasonal migrants abandoned the Atlantic for the Mediterranean, less familiar and developed but more clement: thus was born the “Côte d’Azur”, as it was first named in a 1887 tour guide. The Riviera was originally a winter resort. From Hyères to Menton, without forgetting Cannes, Monte Carlo and Nice, the more fortunate came here to experience a cosmopolitan *villeggiatura*, constructing sumptuous or ultra-modern villas with lush tropical gardens, such as the *Villa Kérylos* in Nice or the *Villa Noailles* in Hyères, and installing themselves in the newly upgraded resort towns. This new model, that of the cosmopolitan “winter town”, mainly frequented by British visitors in

search of health and comfort, rapidly multiplied, with the creation of resorts in Italy, the French colonies of Algeria and Tunisia, Egypt, Cyprus and Malta, as well as the Greek islands from the Aegean to the Ionian Sea, including the mythical Corfu (cat. no. 6.13).

However, while people enjoyed bathing all around the Mediterranean coasts, modesty was the rule under all circumstances. Until the 1930s, there was no question of revealing one’s body in public.



Advertising poster for the Méditerranée Express luxury train, ca. 1890.
Lithograph, Mucem, inv. no. 1961.18.59

Bathing costumes, cotton or woollen, participated in this beachgoers' game of covering and uncovering (cat. no. 6.14). The first two-piece bathing suit, which covered the navel, was invented in 1932 (cat. nos 6.15, 6.16). The famous bikini, however, would not make its appearance until the late 1940s, soon spreading across Europe (cat. no. 6.17). It is striking to note how the conquest of the beach and the redefinition of the body went hand-in-hand in this slow cultural revolution.

Apart from the liberation of the body, the postwar era also promoted the democratisation of seaside leisure activities, particularly at Mediterranean destinations. In France, the adoption of the 1936 law on paid holiday leave was a decisive development, endorsed by the famous Route Nationale 7 or "Route du Soleil" (Route of the Sun), the highway leading to *La Grande Bleue*. The Riviera, formerly a winter resort, became a summer getaway destination for the general public. Tanning was now fashionable, and bathing meant relaxation: the cold Atlantic rollers could not compete with the warm, calm waters of the Mediterranean, or "sunbathing" on the beach, which did not even require immersion. The expression "sun and sea" was now the hallmark of the Mediterranean summer.

When and how did seaside tourism place Greece at the top of the list of favourite international tourist destinations?

At the end of the 19th century, after the revival of the Olympic Games in Athens (1896), the city had acquired significant tourism infrastructure but the rest of the country lagged far behind. Local travellers stayed at inns, while Europeans used the few hotels managed by foreigners. Travelling was still a cultural experience in the tradition of the Grand Tour of the British aristocracy. However, as the influx of foreign visitors increased, in the early 20th century the Greek state decided to take serious steps to improve the organisation of the country's tourism.

The first public service for the promotion of Greek tourism, the Bureau of Foreigners and Exhibitions, was established by Eleftherios Venizelos in 1914 in order to promote the country's cultural heritage and natural landscape, and also to organise the Greek spa towns. In the first decades of the 20th century, Greek spa towns (Loutraki, Aedipsos) were modernised; for foreign travellers, tourism was associated with antiquities, while for locals it was identified with spa resorts. Efforts to discover "new" areas for tourist development, primarily by the sea, go back to the 1930s. The Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO), founded in 1929, and important artists of the time (Nelly's, Spyros Vassiliou, Dimitris Morettis), were to play a vital role in the creation of these landscapes, with seaside imagery gradually predominating. As Adrian Lahoud aptly says, "The very history of tourism is imbricated with the history of the Mediterranean itself", as the

Mediterranean is the perfect scene for the reproduction of a new commercial leisure and entertainment model.

In the 1950s, the GNTO launched an ambitious state plan for the tourist development of the country. The Xenia Project involved the construction of state-run hotels –many of them by the seaside– and associated infrastructure such as tourist pavilions and organised beaches for swimming and camping. Particular emphasis was placed on the organisation of the beaches: between 1960-1980, the GNTO constructed or funded the implementation of more than 60 organised beaches. The project was directed at Greek and foreign visitors from all walks of life, its primary mission being the international promotion of the monuments and natural beauty of Greece, the development of seaside tourism and the establishment of new inland destinations.

The Xenia Hotels, designed according to the principles of Modernism, reflected the distinctive gaze of contemporary architects such as Aris Konstantinidis and their vision for the promotion of Greek tourism. The hotels became an important architectural landmark among postwar public buildings.

One of the cities included in the project was Chania. In the 1960s, Chania was a favourite celebrity destination –Aristotle Onassis and Maria Callas were regulars at the chic Asteria restaurant outside the city– and the permanent home of artists such as John Craxton and Dorothy Andrews. Crete and Chania had a unique tourism product to offer, but there was little in the way of suitable infrastructure. The Chania Xenia Hotel was built in 1965 on the San Salvatore Bastion of the Venetian fortifications, and continued in operation up to the early 1990s (cat. no. 6.6). It was demolished in 2007, freeing the monument from an incompatible choice. Located along the north coastal front of the city, the hotel had an unobstructed view of the endless blue sea, with an underground passageway leading to the seaside swimming pool. Depending on the trends of the time, from bathing at "Honolulu" to today's busy organised beaches, the coasts of Chania, both within the city and outside it, continue to serve as a reference point for the culture of sea bathing for locals and tourists alike (fig. 2).

Alongside the infrastructure projects, in the 1960s Greece organised its tourist promotion using posters and advertising brochures, often the work of famous artists (Nelly's, Yiannis Moralis, Panayiotis Tetsis, Michalis Katsourakis) (cat. no. 6.8).

Foreign visitors now discovered the new, modern and cosmopolitan face of the country, the innocence of the Greek summer on magical beaches. The posters of the period 1950-1970 borrowed from cinematic stereotypes the image of a carefree summer: lone travellers, couples and groups of friends enjoying perfect moments by the sea. International productions and co-productions by Greek and foreign filmmakers promoted the landscape of Greece as the ultimate exotic leisure destination, a unique natural and cultural experience. The city and region of Chania won international recognition thanks to the film *Zorba the Greek* (1964), directed by Michael Cacoyannis with music by Mikis Theodorakis. Some of the scenes were shot on the beach of Stavros, a few kilometres from the town centre. The film may have been black-and-white, but the image of Greece travelled around the world filled with colour. Against the background of the mountains and the calm cove, Anthony Quinn as Zorbas danced his famous syrtaki and made viewers dream of carefree moments in a welcoming Greece, under the blazing sun and beside the azure sea.

From the first decades of the 20th century onwards, tourists sought a new aesthetic experience in the harmonious lines of the seaside landscape. The charter flight era, launched in the 1960s, led to the internationalisation of destinations and the rapid growth of Mediterranean tourism. To meet the demands of mass tourism, huge concrete hotels, rental accommodation and leisure facilities were constructed. The coasts of France, Spain, Italy, Greece and the Maghreb were developed into bland uniformity, while inland and seaside landscapes were rendered unrecognisable.



The bathing beach at Koum-Kapi. City of Chania. ca. 1900. Manolis Manousakas Private Collection

Meanwhile, the Mediterranean model was exported across the world. The Mediterranean is still the global tourism champion, with almost 300 million international tourist arrivals annually, an all-time record! Today, broader efforts are being made to turn the mass tourist back into a self-aware traveller, someone who creates experiences rather than greedily consuming impressions. In Greece, these efforts are reflected in the attempt to redirect tourist advertising away from the “easy” image of a country where the visitor will find only sun, sea and ancient monuments.

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Camille Faucourt, Chryssa Bourbou



6.1 Paul Cézanne (1839-1906)

The Bathers, 1896-1898

Colour lithograph, 41x51 cm. (print), 48x63.5 cm. (work)

Signed lower right: "P. Cézanne"

The National Gallery – Alexandros Soutsos Museum, inv. no. Π 2368

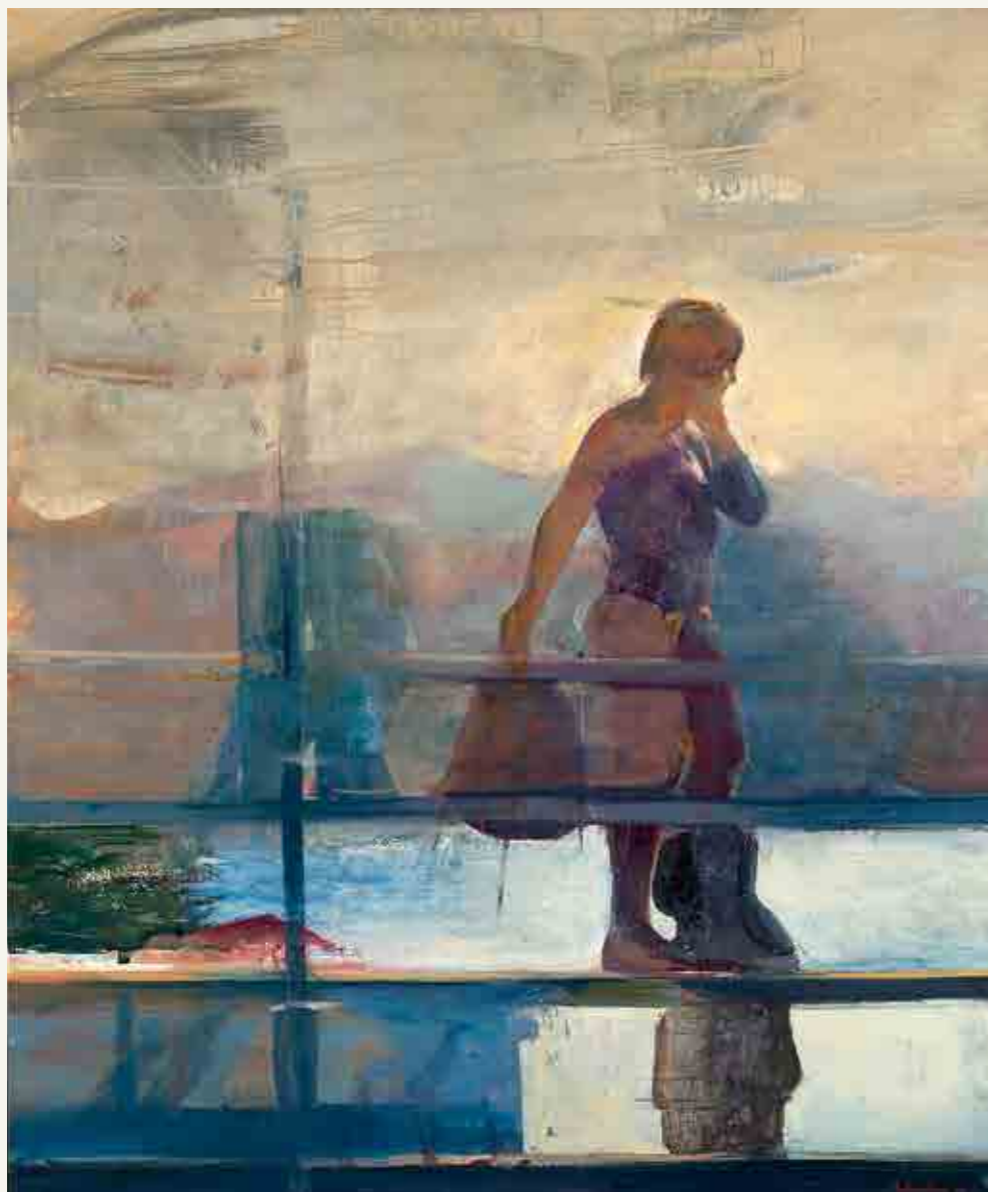
The subject of *Bathers at Rest* had preoccupied Cézanne since the mid-1870s, when the painting by that title (1876-1877, oil on canvas, 79x97 cm., The Barnes Foundation, Merion, Pennsylvania) was probably shown at the third Impressionist exhibition in Paris in 1877. Twenty years later, the artist was to reuse the same composition in two colour lithographs (Conisbee, 248), revealing a strong emotional bond with this scene set in the Aix-en-Provence of his youth.

A group of youths are sunning themselves on a riverbank after their swim, with Mont Sainte-Victoire in the background. Around the sturdy, monumental figure of the standing boy in the centre is arranged a solid composition in which features of the landscape and nude bodies are rendered with the same linear ruggedness and a dense chromatic shaping of the same tonal values, creating a cohesive whole. It is an idyllic world, made up of nostalgic reminiscences which have given physical reality a dreamlike dimension, that of the vigour and carefreeness of a golden youth focused on its body and on the enjoyment of contact with nature.

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Katerina Tavantzi



6.2 Dimitris Andreadakis (1964)

Figures against the Light I, 2007
Oil on canvas, 150x123 cm.
Collection of the Artist



6.3 Dimitris Andreadakis (1964)

Figures against the Light II, 2007
Oil on canvas, 150x120 cm.
Collection of the Artist

Dimitris Andreadakis's paintings of "Figures against the Light" (cat. nos 6.2, 6.3), both created in 2007 in the same size, style and technique, are his most fully finished artistic creations in a series of works, all dating from the first decade of the present century, depicting Bathers in a variety of ways.

Focusing on bodies or faces, rendered partially or in full, in different poses and postures, usually dominating the composition but occasionally fading into the background, Andreadakis's Bathers as a whole occupy an important place both in his repertoire and more broadly in the evolution of his personal artistic language.

The Bathers series was begun in watercolour and completed – in the two works on display – in oils. The flowing watercolours, similar in nature to a sketch or study, are finished here with the robustness of oils. However, the artist has retained the more translucent watercolour effect in these works, too, skilfully working with successive fine layers of oils to produce a glaze, thereby giving his large, hefty compositions an expressive freedom.

The two works may – or rather, must – be seen as a "pair", complementary in every sense. They depict beach scenes, with a basic human figure in the centre, the sea behind it and the sun in the background. The bright light allows the artist to utilise a large part of his palette, playing with hues and tonalities. At the same time, the human figures are immersed in the solvent light and almost dematerialised by its catalytic power – especially in version cat. no. 6.3 – ultimately acquiring an almost spiritual and metaphysical substance.

Here Andreadakis's Bathers – female bodies, a favourite subject in his work as a whole – are central to the painterly shaping of his work, in which the human figure dominates. Already purified by their bath or in anticipation of this multi-layered ritual, even though it is not consciously conceived of as such by modern swimmers on cosmopolitan beaches, they become the centre of their physical world – "man is the measure of all things" as Protagoras says – as well as its interlocutors.

"Figures against the Light" (cat. nos 6.2, 6.3) by Dimitris Andreadakis, fully finished works in every sense, technically and aesthetically, are among his finest paintings, depicting the landscape and the human figure, the two main subjects of his art, in complete harmony and synergy, transforming the physical experience of bathing into meaning and feeling.

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Thodoris Koutsogiannis



6.4-7 Four colour postcards

Xenia Hotel, Chania

1980s

14.5x10 cm.

Historical Archive of Crete

Seaside tourism increased significantly in the postwar period, forming Greece's "heavy industry". The tourist development of the country was promoted via a series of state actions such as the Xenia Hotels Project. The Chania Xenia Hotel with its swimming pool was constructed in 1965 literally next to the sea, on the north coastal front of the city. It continued in operation until the early 1990s. It was demolished in 2007, freeing the monument on which it was built – the San Salvatore Bastion of the Venetian fortifications – from an incompatible choice.

Chryssa Bourbou



6.8 Advertising tourist poster

January 1962
70x99 cm.
No 4 (20,000 copies). Design and Artistic Composition: Michalis Katzourakis. Photography: Nikolaos Tombazis. Offset Printing: Vassilis Papachryssanthou. Published by: Greek National Tourism Organisation
Lefteris Lambrakis Private Collection



6.9 Advertising tourist poster, Elli Beach (Rhodes)

January 1976
70x100 cm.
No 32. Design and Composition: Katerina Vittou, Photography: Nikos Mavrogenis – Nikos Kontos. Offset Printing: Oikonomou Printing House. Published by: Greek National Tourism Organisation
Lefteris Lambrakis Private Collection

The first dated poster of the Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO, 1929) is a photograph by the famous Greek photographer Nelly's (Elli Seraidari) that captures the sunlit Parthenon. Gradually, from the mid-1930s and especially in the postwar period, the tourist posters printed by the GNTO to promote the country's emerging tourism highlighted the elements of Greek authenticity (antiquities and beautiful natural landscapes), filtered through the image of sun and sea.

Up to the late 1970s, Greek tourist posters were produced by well-known artists who created a refreshed, abstract advertising language and established the country's tourist product internationally. In July 1962, Michalis Katzourakis won first prize in the International Tourist Poster Exhibition of Livorno, Italy (cat. no. 6.9) with the poster "Ring Stone", while Freddie Carabott won second prize with "Hellas, Island Reflection". The co-founders of the famous "K+K - Athens Advertising Centre" were competing against Pablo Picasso, who also won an award for his poster "Côte d'Azur".



6.10 Advertising tourist poster, Wonderful Greece Cyclades-Koufonisia

2000
70x99 cm.
Photography: Ioulia Klimi. Offset Printing: Ch. I. Papadopoulos S.A. Published by: Ministry of Tourism - Greek National Tourism Organisation
Lefteris Lambrakis Private Collection



6.11 Advertising tourist poster, Loggas Beach (Corfu)

June 2009
70x99 cm.
No 4. Photography: Ioulia Klimi. Design and Arrangement: M. Mitzithropoulos. Offset Printing: Ch. I. Papadopoulos S.A. Published by: Greek National Tourism Organisation
Lefteris Lambrakis Private Collection

Tourist posters were designed to attract foreign visitors with recognisable symbols, the single word "Greece" and, from the 1950s onwards, a brief advertising slogan (cat. nos 6.9, 6.11). By the last decades of the 20th century, however, the posters seemed to have lost their inspiration and originality, being limited to a basic, if not clichéd, repertoire. In effect, poster advertising was abandoned in the early 21st century, when the dissemination of information via the Internet dramatically changed ways of communicating, in the tourism sector as elsewhere.

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Chryssa Bourbou



6.12 Maria Filopoulou (1964)

Ancient Pool, Pamukkale I, 2013 -2014
 Oil on canvas, 135x200 cm.
 Private Collection

Although her art is identified with the sea and bathers, Maria Filopoulou began her career with subjects that had nothing to do with water: her tiny house in Paris, the painting studio of her teacher Leonardo Cremonini at the École des Beaux-Arts in the City of Light, and the banana greenhouses of Attica dominate her first works. Until, on a visit to ancient Hierapolis in Turkey, modern-day Pamukkale, she was confronted with an amazing, revelatory sight. An ancient pool, crowned with oleander, with bathers floating above fragments of columns. It was a “immersion” in water and its purificatory power, which restored to her the cellular memory common to all the peoples of the Mediterranean.

Filopoulou’s bathers delight in the same liquid element that gave birth to the goddess Aphrodite, was ruled by Poseidon with the Nereids, Naiads and Sirens, was blessed by the first Christians, and has played a key part in our own Greek tradition and also in that of “others”. That water which covers a millennia-long history, connects the shores of distant lands and comes down to us today, tenderly embracing our skin and reminding us that we are afloat in a life-giving sea, the Mediterranean.

Margarita Pournara



6.13 Henry Chevalier (1886-1945)

Les bains Matarès à Alger (The Matarès Baths in Algiers), 1925
 Oil on cardboard, 51x64.3 cm.
 Dépôt de Montpellier Méditerranée Métropole au Mucem

This work depicts the passion of the Europeans of Algeria for the pleasures of the beach in the early 20th century. The Matarès Baths were free public facilities on the beaches of Bab-el-Oued in Algiers. They were frequented by the neighbourhood working classes, unlike the adjacent Padovani baths, which had an entrance fee. The wooden bathing huts in the background were used for undressing and offered protection from the heat. It was on this beach of white sand that generations of inhabitants of Algiers learned to “swim and watch their clothing”, a popular expression meaning to bathe while keeping an eye on one’s garments left on the beach.

Françoise Dallemagne



6.14 Men's cotton bathing costume with bone buttons

France
ca. 1900
L. 88 cm. W. 64 cm.
Mucem, inv. no. 1969.60.4



6.15 Men's wool jersey bathing costume

France
1st quarter of 20th century
L. 77.6 cm. W. 46 cm.
Mucem, inv. no. 1987.28.35

The increasing popularity of sea bathing in the 20th century went hand-in-hand with a liberation of the body that was echoed in swimwear. The first woollen costumes worn by bathers in Europe, from the 1850s onwards, consisted of long bathrobes, with trousers for men and long petticoats for women. After 1900 they became lighter, leaving the arms bare, as well as the legs from the knees down (cat. no. 6.14). They were made of wool jersey, in dark colours or striped. The period of social and cultural affluence between the wars, especially the Roaring Twenties, formed a decisive stage in this process of bodily liberation. Bathing costumes became shorter and tighter, while the upper part was brightly striped (cat. nos 6.15, 6.16). On the beach, now a place of leisure and relaxation, people showed off their bodies, flirted and... sunbathed. In 1932, the fashion designer Jacques Heim (1899-1967) went a step further, unveiling his "Atome" two-piece costume.



6.16 Men's cotton twill bathing costume

France
ca. 1930
L. 73 cm. W. 39.5 cm.
Mucem, inv. no. 1990.23.2



6.17 Cotton and synthetic bikini

France
1950s
L. 25/19 cm. W. 35 cm.
Mucem, inv. no. 2018.65.9.1-2

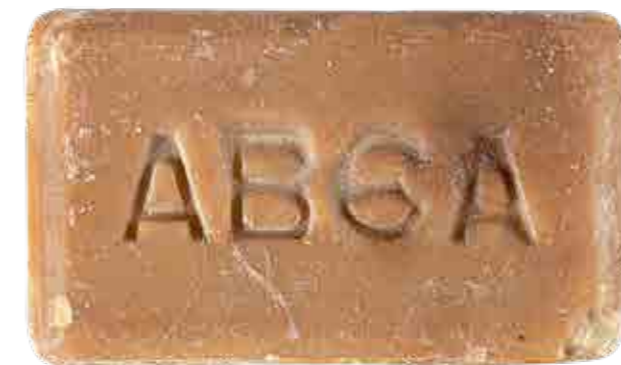
However, it was soon dethroned by the bikini, presented for the first time on 5 July 1946 by Louis Réard (1897-1984) at the Molitor swimming pool in Paris. Despite the scandal with which it was met and the instant banning of the "diabolical" costume from the beaches, the cult scene of Ursula Andress meeting Sean Connery in *Dr. No* (1962) succeeded in imposing the bikini forever, both in our imaginations and in globalised collective practices (cat. no. 6.17).

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Camille Faucourt

THE
HISTORY
OF SOAP:
FROM
MARSEILLE
TO CHANIA



Although the ancient author Pliny the Elder reports that the Gauls were already using a paste on their hair called *sapo*, made of beech ash and goat tallow, the Greco-Roman world neither invented soap nor used it. It was the Arab civilisation which developed the technique of making hard soap based on carbonate-rich plant ash, first in the Middle East (Damascus or Aleppo?) and then in the Machrek (the eastern Arab world) and the Maghreb (Northwest Africa), before the Arab conquest of Spain. Soap-making was later established on the Italian peninsula.

Until the 8th century, animal fats remained the principal ingredient of soap. Gradually, however, they were replaced by olive oil, which became over the centuries the main constituent of washing products. Olive oil produces better results in soap-making because it contains more stearic acid and is solid at room temperature.

Marseille played a major role in the history of soap in the Mediterranean. In the 13th century, small workshops sprang up in the city, making soap with the hot process. They used olive oil from Provence mixed with alkaline ash made from glasswort (*Salicornia europaea*) from the marshes of Languedoc and the Camargue. Marseille soap became renowned in the 16th century, when French entrepreneurs employed specialist soap-makers from Italy and Spain. The master soap-makers preferred second and third-pressing rather than virgin olive oil. The Mediterranean coasts provided them with the necessary products: olive oil – the most sought-after being that of Crete and Southern Italy – natural ash from Syria, lye (caustic soda) from Sicily and Sardinia, barilla halophytes (salt-tolerant plants) from Alicante and Cartagena in Spain, natron (mineral soda) from the lakes of Egypt.

With these materials the artisans of Marseille produced “marbled” soap coloured light and vivid blue, white soap and “reboiled” soap. They also added their own innovations to the production process, notably the “large boiler with liquidation” process, which they hoped would ensure their success (cat. no. 7.1). Protected by practices which had to remain secret and strict regulations, the soaps of Marseille became quality products, dependable and highly appreciated by the merchants and consumers of Continental Europe and the French Antilles. Increasing demand generated important import and export flows by land and sea (cat. no. 7.6).

Thus Marseille dominated the French soap-making industry, with 65 factories in 1789. The city and its soap were now one (cat. no. 7.4).

In the early 19th century and during the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815), the Royal Navy interrupted French trade in the Western Mediterranean, meaning that the natural caustic soda necessary for soap production was no longer imported from either Spain or Sicily. The time was right to change the process by extracting soda from sea salt, a recent invention of the chemist Nicolas Leblanc. However, the lack of potash (potassium carbonate) made the soap brittle, which the buyers did not appreciate. This defect was remedied by adding a certain proportion of seed oil, while the steep price of olive oil due to supply difficulties also encouraged the quest for new solutions. In 1815, the new soap was much sought-after. Ten years later, all the soap-makers had adopted artificial soda, and consequently imported seed oils: sesame oil from the Levant, palm kernel oil from Island of Gorée in Senegal, coconut oil from Mauritius. The ammonia-soda process invented by the Belgian chemist Ernest Solvay speeded up the various adaptations. Its use resulted in the triumph of the unicoloured “Extra pure” Marseille soap with 72% vegetable oils, essentially coconut and palm kernel oil instead of olive oil. In 1863 there were 52 soap factories in Marseille, increasing to 85 in 1885.

In the early 20th century, the reputation of Marseille soap was well established both in France and abroad. In 1922 Marseille had 129 soap factories producing their own soap, still using the hot process. However, only a handful of brands were known at national level; these included “The Cat”, “The Bee”, “the Tower”, “The Good Mother” “The Horseshoe” and “The Wheel”. Producers continued to offer their products, in the form of cubes weighing from 200 gr. to 1 kg., without improving their presentation and packaging (cat. nos 7.5, 7.7, 7.14).

After the Second World War, the soap factories closed down one by one, due to the new washing practices (electric washing machines required sophisticated chemical detergents) and personal hygiene habits (with the consumption of synthetic products from America), and also due to the ageing manufacturing facilities and the lack of international competitiveness. Sales have since decreased dramatically, as most people prefer to buy coloured and perfumed soap bars for personal care, and powder or liquid detergents for their laundry.

Over the centuries, Marseille, a city founded by the Phocaeans in 600 BC, kept its ties with Greece alive through soap-making. The fertile land of Crete was already exporting its excellent product: olive oil, the raw material of preference for soap production in the factories of Provence and especially Marseille. In Crete itself, soap-making to cover domestic needs was a simple process: old olive oil was mixed with fat, ashes and potassium carbonate.

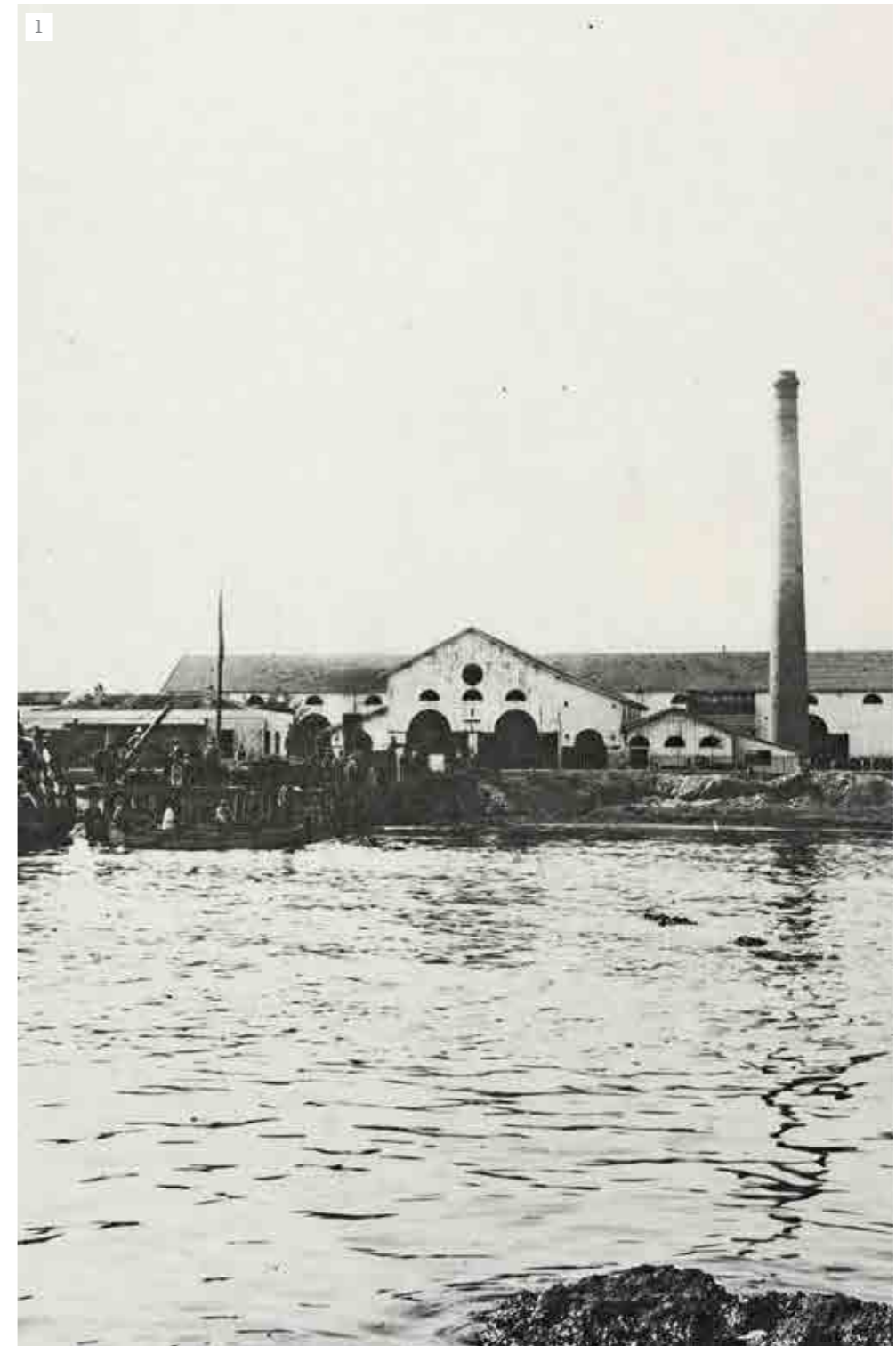
Technological developments in soap-making, especially those used in the factories of Southern France, would not leave Crete unaffected.

The poor-quality soda from Egypt and Syria was replaced by better-quality supplies from Sicily and Spain, while the new methods implemented significantly improved the hitherto thick, oily soap. In the mid-18th century there were 40 soap factories in Chania, Rethymno and Heraklion. Cretan soap was exported to Mediterranean markets and acquired a good reputation, attracting traders and investors from Western Europe.

A period of turbulence and uprisings on the island was succeeded by relative calm following the Pact of Chalepa (1878), creating suitable conditions for investment. This historical juncture was exploited by the Frenchman Jules Deiss, who was granted permission to build an olive pomace oil factory outside the city of Chania in 1889 (cat. no. 7.15, fig.1). Marseille, the largest commercial port in Europe, was already the foremost exporter of soap around the world. Chania, for its part, would supply plentiful olive oil of excellent quality for soap production in the new investor's existing factories.

The ingenious Deiss, born near Strasbourg in 1842, was a tireless researcher –he was a chemistry graduate– and an active entrepreneur and politician (cat. no. 7.16). He served as mayor of Salon-de-Provence (1882-1884) before becoming president of the General Council of Bouches-du-Rhône (1885-1886). He was the “owner-manager” of a factory producing olive oil and soap in the Lurian area of Salon. An innovator, he installed various systems, later imitated by other soap-makers, to cut production costs. He was also interested in perfecting the process of oil extraction from olive pomace (the solid residue of olive oil production). Over time, he opened four olive oil factories in Provence and Languedoc, and established and managed olive pomace oil factories in Marseille, Tortosa in Spain and Sousse in Tunisia, before founding his factory in Chania. The latter was the first of its kind in Greece and one of the largest in the Mediterranean, laying solid foundations for the modernisation of industrial production and the economic development of the town.

In 1894, estimating that the political situation on the island was not stabilising, Deiss ceded the majority of the shares in the factory to *Sahel Tunisien*, a subsidiary of his business group. This move did not signal any changes in the operation of the factory, which continued production seamlessly. The critical developments that followed the Union of Crete with Greece (1913), and the wider instability in the Mediterranean due to the outbreak of the First World War (1914), concerned



AVEA in the early 20th century. City of Chania. Photograph by Pericles Diamantopoulos. Archive of “Chrysostomos” Literary Society

the French management of *Sahel Tunisien*, which investigated the possibility of selling the factory to local businessmen. In 1916, with the personal intervention of Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos, the factory was incorporated under the official title of “Anatoli” Industries S.A. (Anonymos Viomichaniki Etairia “Anatoli”, still known today as AVEA) and passed into the hands of Chania entrepreneurs. Kyriakos Naxakis took over the technical management while Petros Markantonakis was responsible for the financial management (cat. nos 7.17-7.18).

In the years that followed, AVEA expanded its facilities (adding a soap-making unit in 1918 and an olive-oil processing unit in 1920), increased its share capital and played an important social role, providing work to the local population and the refugees from Asia Minor who arrived in the city in 1922 (cat. nos 7.19-7.23).

Although the factory nearly burned down twice in the interwar period (1926, 1928), the company remained one of the few profitable enterprises during the economic crisis of 1930, providing an important incentive for the development of other industrial units in the city. However, it did not escape the bombings of 1941, and the factory ceased operation during the Occupation. After 1945 came a period of major upheavals that affected the future of the company. Just as changing laundry and personal care practices took their toll on the Marseille factories, the consumption of AVEA soap dropped significantly (cat. nos 7.28-7.29). In the final decades of the 20th century, the various factory operations were moved to new facilities outside the city.

Today, few soap factories are left in Marseille, while of the original factory founded by Deiss only the distinctive smokestacks remain. Nevertheless, cubes of Marseille soap are still one of the most recognisable symbols of the city, and the traces of the history of AVEA, going back over a century, are indelibly stamped on the memories and the coastline of the Nea Chora neighbourhood of Chania. The history of soap does not stop here, and consumers in the search of natural products are once more appreciating the most famous commodities of the Mediterranean: olive oil and soap.

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Patrick Boulanger, Chryssa Bourbou





7.1 *Le Kabyle soap*

Emile Galinier Factory

Marseille, France

20th century

Ht. 8.2 cm. L. 8.2 cm. W. 7.9 cm.

Mucem, inv. no. 2002.154.1

The legendary Marseille soap, like that of Aleppo, is a guarantee of perfect cleaning of clothes and body alike. This particular soap, stamped with the words *Le Kabyle*, was produced by the Emile Galinier Factory, which was founded in Marseille in the 19th century and continued to trade under the same name until the late 1950s. This cube weighing 600 gr. was produced by cutting large 35-kilo slabs into thick cubes. On one side it bears the stamp “72% olive oil”, a mark of quality and tradition for Marseille soap. It certifies that this cube consists of the perfect blend of olive oil and potassium carbonate, as established by the royal decree of Louis XIV in 1688, at the initiative of Jean-Baptiste Colbert, the Controller-General of Finances of the Kingdom of France. On the other three sides, the soap bears the bust of a Kabyle (a Berber from Kabylia in North Africa) wearing the characteristic turban. Marseille was, in effect, as Albert Londres, writes, the “Gateway to the South”. While many of the city’s soap factories competed in the inventiveness of the names they gave to their soaps (*The Bee, The Good Mother, The Holy Family, The Cat*, etc.), the Galinier Factory chose the image of the Kabyle, referring to the Algerian region of Kabylia, a French colony since 1830, and to its numerous nationals who worked in the olive oil and soap factories of Marseille. An enamelled metal advertising sign for *Le Kabyle* soap was exhibited at the Ai Wei Wei retrospective exhibition at the Mucem in 2018. The Chinese artist created two cubes of Marseille soap measuring a metre a side, with the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen carved on one, and the 1791 Declaration of the Rights of Woman and of the Female Citizen, by Olympe de Gouges, on the other. In the text accompanying the installation, the artist asked the following question: “Written on soap, these [declarations] may disappear with use, since symbolically soap is the object that cleans. But can it wash consciences clean?”

Françoise Dallemagne



7.2 *Souvenir box with soap and snow globe*

La Compagnie de Provence

Marseille, France

2000-2005

Ht. 9.5 cm. L. 24.2 cm. W. 21 cm.

Mucem, inv. no. 2005.250.1.1-4

This gift or souvenir box sums up the marketing strategy of the Compagnie de Provence, a Marseille soap-making company. The packaging combines modernity (the liquid soap pump dispenser) with uniqueness (the snow globe with the landmark Cathedral of Notre-Dame de la Garde which dominates the city skyline) and tradition (the cube of Marseille soap, a traditional artisanal product stamped with the guarantee that it consists of 72% olive oil).

For the inhabitants of Marseille, *Notre Dame de la Garde*, “Our Lady of the Guard”, also known as *La Bonne Mère*, “The Good Mother”, is the patron saint of the city.

Françoise Dallemagne



7.3 Enamelled metal advertising sign

La Coquille, Savon pur
 Marseille France
 1st half of 20th century
 Ht. 43.3 cm. W. 29.8 cm.
 Mucem, inv. no. 1990.1.152.1

The enamelled metal plaque, more durable than the poster, was a popular choice in the early days of advertising. This advertisement extols the Marseille soap brand *La Coquille* (“The Scallop Shell”), produced by one of the city’s many soap factories in the early 20th century. For Christians, the scallop shell is a symbol of rebirth and resurrection, referring to the ritual use of water and its purity during the sacrament of baptism. Taken up by the *La Coquille* brand, it refers more specifically to St James the Great, buried at Santiago de Compostela, and the pilgrim’s way leading from Italy to his tomb, passing through Marseille.

Françoise Dallemagne



7.4 Advertising poster Savon de la Bonne Mère (“The Good Mother Soap”)

Anonymous, ca. 1895
 Paper, colour lithograph,
 157.5x111.5 cm.
 France
 Collections CCIAMP, inv. no. QAF 29



7.5 Advertising poster Le Chat (“The Cat”) soap

J. Callao, ca. 1910
 Paper, colour lithograph, 153.5x113 cm.
 France
 Collections CCIAMP, inv. no. QAF 1890

From the late 19th century onwards, large colour lithographs appeared on the walls of towns and villages. They depicted housewives scrubbing and wringing out their laundry, with cubes of soap with the inscription *de Marseille* prominently displayed nearby. These posters, most of them anonymous but sometimes signed by reputed artists, presented images, such as animals and plants, that were easily memorised by prospective buyers. “The Cat” soap factory, established in 1887, was the best-known Marseille brand, undertaking to supply customers on the five continents (cat. no. 7.5). To avoid imitations, the founder C. Ferrier decided to place the head of his feline mascot in an octagonal frame. The producer of “The Bee” soap, founded in 1750, was also one of the oldest soap factories in Marseille. Auzolle, known for having created the first cinema poster for the Lumière brothers in 1896, created the visual identity of the brand: the nectar-collecting insect (cat. no. 7.7).

Targeting specific consumers, poster designers presented nannies washing babies, soldiers concerned with the cleanliness of their uniforms, priests and other figures. The C. Morel factory, established in 1860, did not hesitate to appropriate the image of the Virgin, “The Good Mother” of the inhabitants of Marseille, patron saint of sailors and soap-makers (cat. no. 7.4).

Patrick Boulanger



7.6 Advertising poster
Mikado toilet soap

Anonymous, ca. 1910
Paper, colour lithograph, 159x116.5 cm.
France
Collections CCIAMP, inv. no. QAF 1839



7.7 Advertising poster
L'Abeille ("The Bee") soap

M. Auzolle, ca. 1920
Paper, colour lithograph, 152.5x99 cm.
France
Collections CCIAMP, inv. no. QAF 60

In order to promote the Marseille soap dispatched around the world, the packaging of the *Mikado* toilet soap produced by F. Eydoux depicted a geisha discovering, by the light of a lantern, the contents of a crate from Europe. This Japanese-inspired poster was also intended to address a new clientele of young girls and French gentlemen, who were not permitted to wear perfume (cat. no. 7.6).

The advertisements of the past, mirrors of the beginnings of European consumer society, bear witness to the era of the washerwoman, before the arrival of electric washing machines and dryers. The posters presented here come from the remarkable collection of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Aix-Marseille Provence (CCIAMP, founded in 1599), which comprises over 5,000 advertisements related to commercial activities.

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Patrick Boulanger



7.8 Advertising poster
Le Chapeau ("The Hat") soap

F. Tamagno, ca. 1897
Paper, colour lithograph, 128x95.5 cm.
France
Collections CCIAMP, inv. no. QAF 798

The Italian artist Tamagno created the poster for *Le Chapeau* ("The Hat"), a company founded in 1873 by the Ghilini brothers. A young woman doing her washing is accompanied by a little girl who is playing with half-cubes of soap from a box with the inscription "Marseille-BonnevEine Soap Factories". The jug indicates that running water had not yet reached the region.

Patrick Boulanger



7.9 Advertising poster
Fer à cheval
("The Horseshoe") soap

Anonymous, ca.1900
Paper, colour lithograph, 138.5x109 cm.
France
Collections CCIAMP, inv. no. QAF 350

The *Fer à cheval* ("The Horseshoe") company, founded in 1856, still exists in Marseille. In this poster, the eye is drawn to the smiling face of the housewife scrubbing her linen on a washboard: thanks to her soap, she saves money and her demanding task is made easier. When promoting soap, advertisers preferred images of women going about their daily lives to those of femmes fatales.

Patrick Boulanger



7.10 Advertising poster
Le Rationnel ("The Rational") soap

Anonymous, ca. 1900
Paper, colour lithograph, 142.5x105 cm.
France
Collections CCIAMP, inv. no. QAF 2587

"The Rational" soap was produced by the Allatini family from Thessaloniki who, having bought up various brands, produced their own soap in Marseille from 1900 to 1913. "The Rational" was a luxury soap for fine clothes or delicate fabrics, with "76% olive oil and alkali" rather than 72% like most Marseille soap.

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Patrick Boulangier



7.11 Advertising poster
Le Naturel ("The Natural") soap

Anonymous, ca. 1905
Paper, colour lithograph, 157.5x116 cm.
France
Collections CCIAMP, inv. no. QAF 347

The company *A. Rostand & Fils*, which produced "The Natural" soap, was established in the 18th century. The renown of its soap was perpetuated by its mascot, a little girl hurrying to deliver her orders, accompanied by the proverb *Chassez le naturel, il revient au galop* ("the leopard cannot change its spots": it is difficult to hide one's true nature because it always comes to the surface).

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Patrick Boulangier



7.12 Advertising poster
La Roue ("The Wheel") soap

C. Riom, ca. 1930
Paper, colour lithograph, 136x95 cm.
France
Collections CCIAMP, inv. no. QAF 862

The *Durthaller* soap factory had two iconic brands, "The Wheel" and "The Parrot" (*Le Perroquet*), which competed with their rivals such as "The Tower" (*La Tour*). The poster by Riom depicts a barefoot countrywoman seated on a wooden wheel, admiring a one-kilo cube of soap: "The best/The most economical".

Patrick Boulangier



7.13 Advertising poster
Hercule ("Hercules") soap

L. Capiello, ca. 1935
Paper, colour lithograph, 156x116.5 cm.
France
Collections CCIAMP, inv. no. QAF 5

The *Etablissements Verminck*, established in 1855, acquired a soap factory in the early 1920s. There they produced the "Hercules" brand, an "extra pure soap" without silicates or added corrosives, recommended for both personal care and bathing. Capiello, who gave new life to the advertiser's art with his sense of motion, chose to replace the mythical hero with a housewife wringing out an immaculate sheet.

Patrick Boulangier

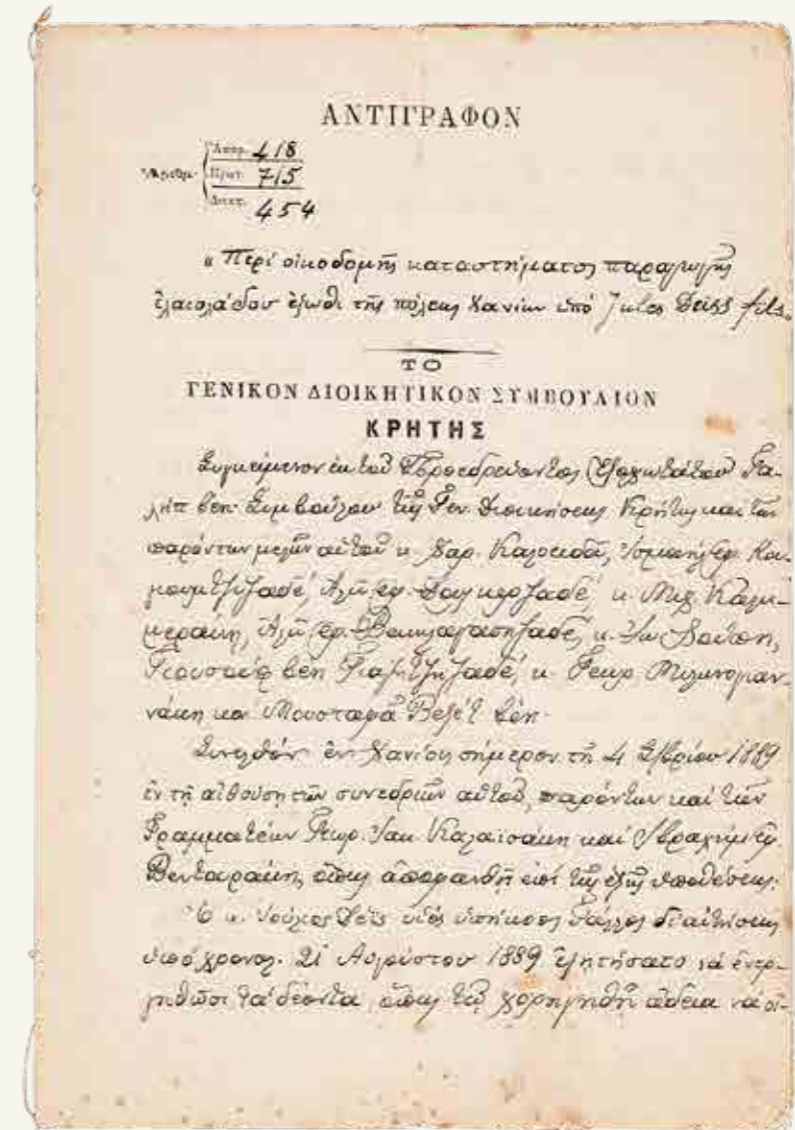


7.14 Advertising poster
La Tour ("The Tower") soap

A. Puech, ca. 1950
Paper, colour lithograph, 157.5x115 cm.
France
Collections CCIAMP, inv. no. QAF 844

The Savonneries de la Méditerranée (Mediterranean Soap Factories) had incorporated the Etablissements Rocca, Tassy & de Roux, the largest company for the production of oils and vegetable fats in France. In this advertising poster, Puech promotes "The Tower" using a chess piece. Despite the invasion of synthetic detergents, advertisers continued to promote the intrinsic natural qualities of soap.

Patrick Boulanger



7.15 Permit allowing Jules Deiss to build a factory

1889
Ht. 30 cm. W. 21 cm.
AVEA Archive

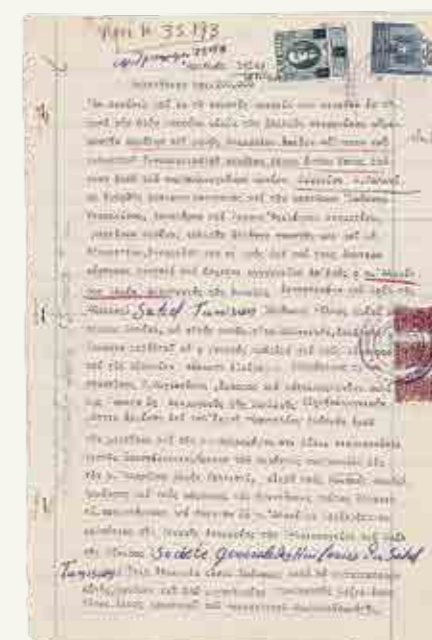


7.16 Portrait of Jules Deiss

Unknown artist
 Early 20th century
 Oil on canvas, 118x90 cm.
 AVEA Archive

The first page of the building permit (also translated into French) states that on 4 September 1899, permission is granted “For the construction of an olive-oil-production manufactory outside the city of Chania by Jules Deiss fils” (cat. no. 7.15). The factory Deiss founded was the first of its kind in Greece and one of the largest in the Mediterranean. Using his own patented method for processing olive pomace, he exported the olive pomace oil to France for the production of Marseille soap.

Chryssa Bourbou

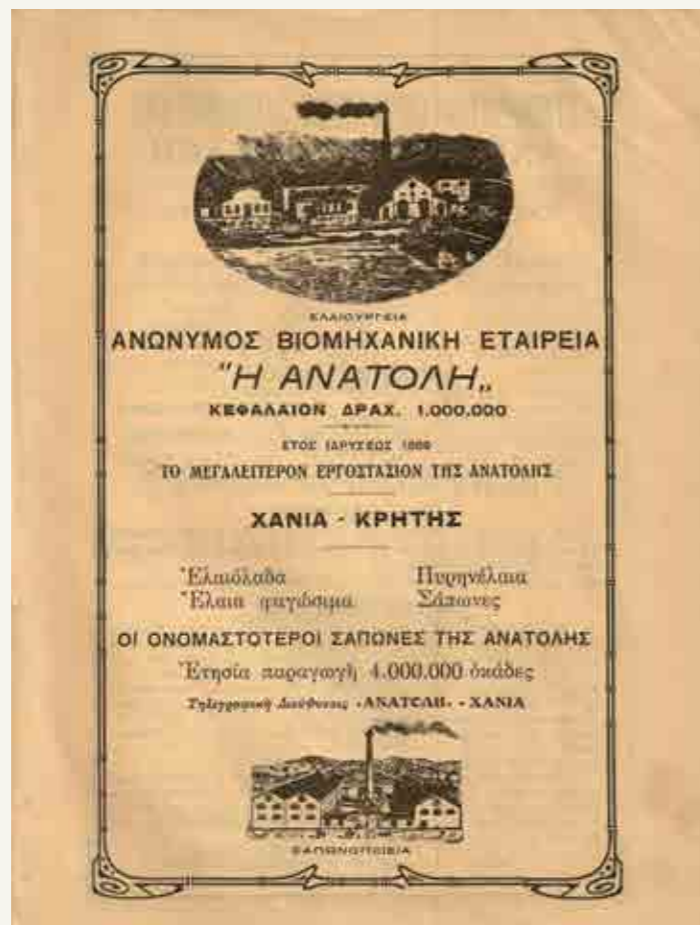


7.17-18 Factory sale agreement and copy of sale contract between Sahel Tunisien and Chania entrepreneurs

1916
 (17, 18) Ht. 30 cm. W. 21 cm.
 AVEA Archive

In 1894 the factory was managed by Sahel Tunisien, a subsidiary of the Deiss Group. The signing of the agreement (here we see the first page in French, cat. no. 7.17) was followed by the contract of sale. The transfer of ownership of the factory from Sahel Tunisien to entrepreneurs from Chania was completed on 10 November 1916 (cat. no. 7.18). A year later, the decree dated 11 February 1917 was published in the *Gazette of the Provisional Government of the Kingdom of Greece*, approving the incorporation of Anatoli Industries Society Anonymus, with an initial share capital of 400,000 drachmas.

Chryssa Bourbou



7.19 Paper advertising poster for AVEA

ca. 1920
Ht. 30 cm. W. 21 cm.
Manolis Manousakas Private Collection

By the early 20th century, AVEA had a share capital of 1,000,000 drachmas and had expanded its activities to include soap and olive oil production.

Chryssa Bourbou



7.20 Factory minute book

1924-1930
Ht. 30 cm. W. 20 cm.
AVEA Archive

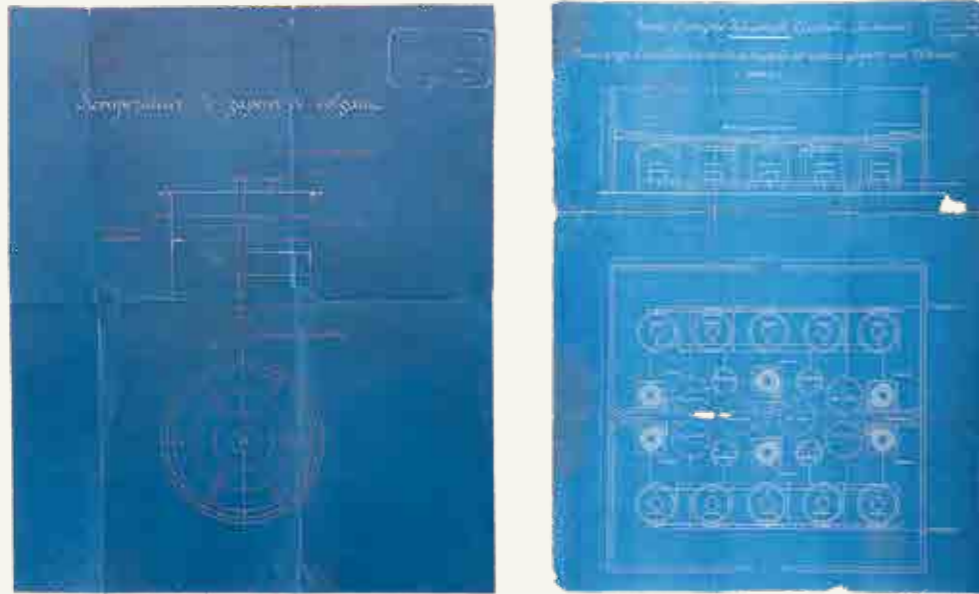


7.21 Factory articles of association

1928
Ht. 20 cm. W. 14.5 cm.
AVEA Archive

The minute book of the meetings of the AVEA Board of Directors (cat. no. 7.20) is an important source of information on the course of the company, particularly during difficult times like the economic crisis of 1930. The 1928 articles of association are an equally illuminating testimony on the operation of the factory (cat. no. 7.21).

Chryssa Bourbou



7.22-23 Blueprints

1924
 (22) Ht. 50 cm. W. 40 cm. (23) Ht. 80 cm. W. 58 cm.
 AVEA Archive

Blueprints (white plans on a blue background) were used from the mid-19th century onwards to depict the technical and structural details of buildings and machines. These plans for the AVEA factory set out the structural details of a machine (cat. no. 7.22) and the proposed equipment for processing 100 tonnes of olive pomace in a 24-hour period (cat. no. 7.23).

Chryssa Bourbou



7.24 Soap scraper of iron, wood and leather

1st half of 20th century
 L. 1 m. Max. diam. 23 cm.
 Odysseas Pitidis Private Collection



7.25 Soap cutter of iron and wood

1st half of 20th century
 L. 93 cm. Max. diam. 23 cm.
 Odysseas Pitidis Private Collection

In pre-industrial soap factories, saponification took place in large heated boilers. The liquid contents of the boiler were poured into wooden forms ("tambakades" in Greek) to solidify, in special drying rooms. The scraper (cat. no. 7.24) was used to spread the soap evenly in the drying rooms, while the solidified mass was divided using the cutter (cat. no. 7.25).

Chryssa Bourbou



7.26 Wooden mallet

1st half of 20th century
 L. 42 cm. W. 7 cm.
 AVEA Archive



7.27 (a-e) Wooden soap stamps

1st half of 20th century
 (a) L. 16.5 cm. Max. diam. 9 cm. (b) L. 17 cm. Max. diam. 8 cm.
 (c) L. 17 cm. Max. diam. 7.5 cm. (d) L. 15 cm. Max. diam. 4.5 cm.
 (e) L. 17 cm. Max. diam. 4.5 cm.
 AVEA Archive/Odysseas Pitidis Private Collection

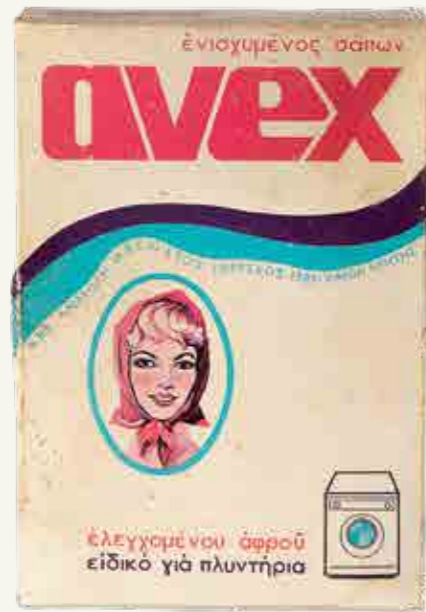


7.28 (a-c) Soap cube ("tambakas") ca. 1950, soap bar, ca. 1960 and bar of "Looky Look" baby soap, ca. 1970.

(a) Ht. 6.5 cm. W. 7 cm. (b) Ht. 5 cm. W. 8 cm. (c) Ht. 8.5 cm. W. 5.5 cm.
 Odysseas Pitidis Private Collection

Soap was originally impressed using a stamp, usually of hard wood, bearing the name of the factory in relief or negative lettering (cat. no. 7.27-7.28). The stamp was pressed into the bars of soap with the aid of the wooden mallet (cat. no. 7.26).

Chryssa Bourbou



7.29 Box of washing machine detergent (soap powder)

ca. 1960
Ht. 33 cm. W. 15 cm.
AVEA Archive

After 1945, the washing machine began to replace traditional washing by hand. In the mid-20th century, liquid detergents and washing powder were extremely popular, and the use of soap gradually declined. This preference for more modern detergents led AVEA to produce soap powder with “low sudsing – specially for washing machines”.

Chryssa Bourbou



7.30 Iron manual soap press

ca. 1st half of 20th century
Ht. 1.5 m. L. 66 cm. Wt. ca. 100 kg.
AVEA Archive

Over time, soap factory equipment was modernised and soap was stamped using a manual or mechanical press.

Chryssa Bourbou



7.31 Steam pump

ca. 1st half of 20th century
Ht. 50 cm. L. 97 cm. Wt. ca. 100 kg.
AVEA Archive

Steam pumps contributed significantly to the modernisation of soap factory equipment. Pumps of this type helped to draw up large quantities of olive oil, water and lye to fill the boiler in which saponification took place.

Chryssa Bourbou



7.32 Wooden advertising sign for AVEA soap

ca. 1950
Ht. 18 cm. W. 90 cm.
AVEA Archive

AVEA soaps were advertised from the early 20th century onwards as “The most famous soaps of the East”. This 1950s advertising sign continues to extol the quality of olive-oil-based soap.

Chryssa Bourbou



APHRODITE RISING

Angelos Sikelianos, Selected Poems:
Translated by Edmund Keeley & Philip Sherrard

In the blessed rose light of dawn, look how I rise,
my arms held high.
The sea's godlike calm bids me to ascend
into the blue air.

O but the sudden breaths of earth, filling my breasts, rousing me
from head to foot.
O Zeus, the sea is heavy, and my loosened hair drags me
down like a stone.

Nymphs of the breeze. Hurry; Cymothoe, Grauce, come grip me
under my arms.*
I didn't not think I'd find myself so suddenly caught up
in the sun's embrace.

THE PUBLICATION **BATH TIME! BODY
WATER DIALOGUES** ACCOMPANIES THE
EXHIBITION OF THE SAME NAME HELD
AT THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF
CHANIA. PRINTED AT THE G. KOSTOPOULOS
LITHOGRAPHY WORKSHOP ON BURGO
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