



Mansoura University
Faculty of Tourism and Hotels

**STATUES OF SIRENS IN EGYPT; RELIGIOUS
SYMBOLISM AND ARTISTIC ICONOGRAPHY**

By

Engy Fekry Abdelshahed Abd El Malk
*Lecturer, Tourist guidance Department, Faculty of Tourism and
Hotels, Alexandria University*

*Research Journal of the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels
Mansoura University
Issue No. 16, December. 2024*

Abstract:

Siren is one of the nymphs accompanying goddess Artemis and is depicted with the upper body of a woman and often with the legs and feet of a bird. She is frequently portrayed playing a musical instrument. She is mentioned in Homer's epic, where it is known that she brings ruin to sailors with her enchanting music and sweet voice, captivating them. Furthermore, the iconography of Siren was attested in art in diverse contexts. Thus, the aim of the research is to examine the depiction of sirens throughout different historical periods, and examine how it was portrayed and the symbolic significance it carried in each period. This paper examines the religious symbolism of such creature according to the ancient Greek sources and comparing it to the religious role of *ba* bird in ancient Egypt. Moreover, the research aims to throw the light on the artworks that depicts Sirens in Egypt; namely the statue of Siren in the Egyptian Museum of Cairo (27506, 27507) and that of the Græco-Roman Museum in Alexandria (10443,10578,19253,21872,24162,23334,26003)

Keywords: Siren, Greek, myth, Egypt, statue.

Introduction:

The Sirens (Greek: Θελξιεπεια, Αγλαοφωνος, Παρθενοπη),⁽¹⁾ were mythical creatures thought to have the ability to mesmerize anyone who listened to their singing. They possessed bird-shaped bodies with the heads and voices of women.⁽²⁾ Sirens were called "*Literature goddesses*" in 7th century BC⁽³⁾ and were described as '*feathered maiden*'⁽⁴⁾

The Sirens were a trio of sisters residing on a secluded, rocky island in the sea. Homer in his *Odyssey* provided various accounts of Sirens' names and numbers, with some sources saying there were two; namely *Aglaopheme* and *Thelxiepeia*. On the other hand, other narratives listed three

(1) Homer, *Odyssey*, 12.39

(2) Neils, J.,(1995). *Les Femmes Fatales: Skylla and the Sirens in Greek Art*, in B. Cohen (ed.), *The Distaff Side: Representing the Female in Homer's "Odyssey"*, New York-Oxford

(3) Alkman, *Partheneion*, fr. 1

(4) Eurip. *Hel.* 168. This name encloses the word *parthenos*: maiden. The Sirens may have acted as guardians for the *parthenoi* who passed away before marriage. Additionally, the meadow was frequently portrayed as a common wedding bed in mythology and thus symbolized the fertility of marriage. oppenhaffen, L.,(2011). *Sirens on the roof: Identification of terracotta bird-women in Central Italy*, *Journal and volume number:IV,Oxford,p.50. Eustath. ad Hom. 1709; Virgil, Georgics. iv. 336.*

different names of Sirens; *Peisinoë*, *Aglaope*, and *Thelxiepeia*, or *Parthenope*⁽¹⁾, *Ligeia* (i. e, the shrill sounding), and *Leucosia*. They were described as daughters of different figures such as; *Phorcus*, *Achelous* and *Sterope*, *Terpsichore*, *Melpomene*, *Calliope*, or *Gaea*.⁽²⁾ The name *Achelous* was used as a surname for the Sirens, reflecting their lineage from *Achelous* and a Muse.⁽³⁾

Concerning their dwelling place, it was also located in various places such as; Cape *Pelorum*, others on the island of *Anthemusa*, and still others in the *Sirensian* islands near *Paestum* or on *Capreae*.⁽⁴⁾ A temple dedicated to them was situated near Surrentum, and Parthenope's tomb was thought to be near Neapolis where an annual torch race was held in her honor.⁽⁵⁾ Three key characteristics of the Sirens highlight their role as symbols of transition; the transition from life to the afterlife, with the Sirens guiding souls on their journey to the hereafter; the natural transition from the growth of spring to the decay of autumn; and the transition of a girl into a woman through marriage.⁽⁶⁾

The Role of Sirens in Ancient Greek Literature:

The sirens were intimately associated with senses, with their song being essential to their identity and interactions with mortals.⁽⁷⁾ They were particularly associated with sound through their enchanting melody, most famously depicted in *The Odyssey*.⁽⁸⁾ Their song was both captivating and lethal, uniquely crafted for *Odysseus* in a deeply personal manner. In addition to the inspiring beauty of the sirens' melodies, their songs gave the hearer knowledge and wisdom.⁽⁹⁾ In the 1st century BC, *Cicero* noted that the songs of sirens led the sailors know their future victories and failures.⁽¹⁰⁾

(1) Eustath. ad Hom. 1709; Virgil, *Georgics*.iv. 336.; Weickert, G.,(1909-1915). s.v. Seirenen, Roscher, W. H., *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, vol. IV, col. 604; Roberts,J.,(2007).

(2) The oxford Dictionary of Classical world,Oxford University Press, 2.; Eustath. ad Hom. 1709; ApoLL. i. 63

(3) Ov. *Met.* v. 552, xiv. 87; Apollod. i. 7. § 10.

(4) Strab. i. p.22; Eustath. ad Hom. 1709; Serv. l.c

(5) Strab. i. 23, v. 246.

(6) Opgenhaffen,L.,(2011),p.51

(7) Weickert, G.,(1909-1915), s.v. Seirenen, Roscher, W. H., *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, vol. IV, col. 603.

(8) Homer, *Od.* xii. 175

(9) Montiglio, S.,(2011). *From Villain to Hero: Odysseus in Ancient Thought*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. 171.

(10)Cicero, *On Ends*, 5.18

Sailor's journeys were related to the sirens that crossed paths with them in the sea crossings. The sirens were mythical creatures that captivated many sailors with their magical, seductive songs and melodies, drawing them in when they heard them. Despite of this charming context, the sailors were described to be killed by sirens. However, *Jason* and his Argonauts companions, such as; *Orpheus* and *Ulysses* successfully survived from the sirens encounters through different ways.⁽¹⁾

Some scholars argued that it is not merely the enchanting beauty of their song or their seductive charm that lures sailors to their fate, but also the longing for a direct link to the divine and eternal glory.⁽²⁾ These winged figures are tied to death and the underworld, as their wings allow them to move between realms and aid mortals in making that transition.⁽³⁾

According to the Greek mythology, during *Odysseus'* journey through the Mediterranean, he went to the island⁽⁴⁾ where the Sirens were seated on a picturesque shore, trying to tempt him and his crew.⁽⁵⁾ In Book 12 of *Homer's Odyssey*, the hero *Odysseus* evaded the Sirens' call with assistance from the sorceress *Circe*, who suggested that he should plug his crew's ears with wax to prevent them from hearing the Sirens.⁽⁶⁾

However, *Odysseus* was curious to hear their songs, so he ordered his crew to tie him to the mast, allowing him to listen without falling killing himself. This scene was illustrated on the Siren Vase; an Attic red-figure stamnos which dates back to the 5th century BC and is now preserved in the British Museum under the number 1843.11.3.310 (Fig.1).⁽⁷⁾

Furthermore, the Sirens are also associated with the tales of the *Argonauts* and *Persephone's* abduction. According to legend, as the Argonauts passed by, the Sirens began to sing, but their attempt failed because *Orpheus'* music overpowered theirs. As it was foretold that the Sirens would live only until someone resisted their song, they ultimately cast themselves into the sea and

(1) Apollod., *Epit.*, E.7.19.

(2) Boardman, J., (1995). *Greek sculpture : The late classical period*, London, Thames & Hudson, p.116.

(3) eskell, L.M. & R.A. Joyce. (2003). *Embodied lives. Figuring ancient Maya and Egyptian experience*, London/New York, Routledge, p. 69.

(4) As described by Homer, the Sirens' island lay between *Aeaea* and the rock of *Scylla*, close to Italy's southwestern coast.

(5) Hom., *Od.*, 12.39-54

(6) Godby, M. (2011). *Bests from the East: A Study of the Sphinx, Siren and Griffin in Greek Art*. University of Florida, p.20.

(7) Apollod., *Epit.*, E.7.19; Padgett, J. M. (2003). *The Centaur's Smile. The Human Animal in Early Greek Art*. Princeton University Art Museum.

were transformed into rocks. Some scholars associate the self-destruction of the Sirens with the tale of Orpheus and the Argonauts, while others tie it to Odysseus's story.⁽¹⁾

Later poets described the Sirens as having wings, which they supposedly asked for in order to search for *Persephone*. These wings were also said to be a punishment from Demeter for not helping Persephone or from Aphrodite for wanting to remain virgins. Ultimately, they allowed Hera to convince them to challenge the Muses, and after their defeat, they lost their wings.⁽²⁾

The Sirens and the Afterlife:

The Sirens were directly linked to the Underworld, serving Persephone and Dionysus, mourning the dead and guiding souls. It is noteworthy that the Sirens originally originated in a funerary context.⁽³⁾

Whether they are luring men to their doom with their song, being vanquished by heroes or guiding and safeguarding souls to the underworld⁽⁴⁾, Sirens have a profound relationship with death.⁽⁵⁾ To perish at the hands of the Sirens is to abandon the present in pursuit of the glory and knowledge they offer. This fate leads to a state of being suspended in time, much like how death concludes our future and solidifies our past. The Sirens are spirits of death that “*do not venture into the ordinary world to claim anyone for death; rather, a man must actively seek them and engage them in battle.*”⁽⁶⁾

The path to the underworld is generally a one-way trip, yet both Odysseus and Orpheus are able to visit and then return to the world of the living. They are the only two individuals recorded to have resisted the Sirens' song. Listening to the Sirens' song equates to facing one's own demise. They offer enticing distractions that keep men from going back home, encouraging them to forsake the lives they previously lived and become immersed in their music.⁽⁷⁾

(1) Ap. Rhod., *Argon.*, 4. 909 ff.; Abel, E. (ed.), 1885, *Orphica*, Sumptibus Fecit G. Freytag, Lipsiae, Pragae., 1288 ff

(2) Eur., *Hel.*, 167-179.

(3) opgenhaffen,L.,(2011),p.54

(4) Roncalli 199, 49-50.

(5) Eurip. *Hel.* 168

(6) Buschor, E.,(1944). *Die Musen des Jenseits*, München, passim.

(7) Eurip. *Hel.* 168.

In certain versions of the myth, the Sirens take their own lives if a man manages to resist them, as “*They were destined to live only as long as mortals who listened to their song could not resist it.*”⁽¹⁾

The Sirens played a complimentary role in leading the dead gently to their eternal resting place. Ovid speaks of their link to Persephone, yet it is their musical power that elevates them to the status of muses in the underworld.⁽²⁾

Their song not only entices men to forget the present but also inspires “*an intense love for the celestial and divine, coupled with a forgetting of mortal existence.*”⁽³⁾ This enchanting melody shifts into a sorrowful lament that provides solace to the dead as they pass from this world to the next, vowing to convey how they will be remembered.⁽⁴⁾

Apollonius of Rhodes is the first to refer to the Sirens as hybrids, claiming in the 3rd century BC that “*they were shaped partly as birds and partly as maidens to be admired*”. Later, in the late 1st century BC, Ovid provides a striking description of their appearance, depicting it as a punishment for their carelessness.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Pseudo-Hyginus, Fabulae. Translation by Grant, M. (1960). Lawrence; University of Kansas Press,125. <https://www.theoi.com/Pontios/Seirenes.html>.

(2) Vermeule, E. (1979). Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry. Berkeley: University of California Press,p.205.

(3) Pollard, J. (1964). Seers, Shrines and Sirens: The Greek Religious Revolution in the Sixth Century. Philadelphia: A. S. Barnes and Co.p.141.

(4) Tsiafakis, D.(2001). Life and Death at the Hands of a Siren. In Studia Varia from the J. Paul GettyMuseum, vol. 2,p.78.

(5) Apollonius of Rhodes, Argonautica, 4.885-921

The Siren as a Protective Creature:

The depiction of Sirens on funerary monuments and grave markers playing lyres and mourning the deceased emphasizes their role as guardian spirits⁽¹⁾, commonly depicted her with one arm resting just below her breasts, while the other hand tugs at her hair. Significance evident since at least the late 7th century.⁽²⁾

This important characteristic of the Sirens, mourning the dead was deeply rooted in Greek culture.⁽³⁾ Many objects featuring Sirens-particularly aryballoi and lekythoi-have been discovered in graves and sanctuary deposits, suggesting they may have served as protective talismans or offerings to deities.⁽⁴⁾ Small vases shaped like Sirens, such as one from 540 BC in the Walters collection (fig.2), were quite common.

Two lekythoi from 500-480 BC (fig.3) and 460-450 BC (fig.4), displayed in the British Museum and Winterthur Museum depict the Sirens. The first vase shows the siren playing a lyre in front of a man with his hands on his hips (potentially the deceased), while the other does not have human arms to hold an instrument at all.⁽⁵⁾

During the Archaic and Classical periods, it was common to incorporate protective animal figures, such as; lions and sphinxes, into funerary sculptures, and the Siren can be viewed as a continuation of such tradition.⁽⁶⁾ In the late 5th and early to mid-4th centuries BC, Sirens often appear atop grave stele, overseeing the deceased. A grave stele from 400 BC in Berlin depicts two bird-bodied Sirens facing one another, playing the lyre and flutes above the main panel (Fig.5).

On the other hand, a stela in Boston Museum shows a more upright figure of Siren. One hand is placed on her chest and the other raised to her head forming a gesture of mourning (Fig.6). This latter depiction becomes the most prevalent way to represent Sirens in a funerary context.⁽⁷⁾

The “mourning Siren” emerged as a popular motif in the mid-4th century BC, reflecting the Siren’s visual origins from the 7th century. A burial plaque dating from 625-610 BC in Boston (Fig.7) depicts a Siren positioned

(1) Eurip. Hel. 168

(2) opgenhaffen,L.,(2011),p.52.

(3) opgenhaffen,L.,(2011), p.50.

(4) Pavlou, M., (2012). Sirens at the Symposium (Louvre E667). In *Mnemosyne*, fourth series, vol. 65, phase 3, p.404.

(5) Andres,E.,(2020).A Tale of Two Sisters: Gorgons and Sirens in Ancient Greek Art and Literature, Thesis, Univeristy of Leicester,P.57.

(6) Hardy, A. (2015). *Singing Sorrow in Stone: The Mourning Siren in Greek Art*. Davis: University of California,p.27.

(7) Kecn, A. (1992). The Dynastic Tomb of Xanthos: Who Was Buried Where? *Anatolian Studies* 42, pp.53-63.

beneath a tabletop, as two women, expressing grief get a body ready for burial.

Centuries later, the Siren herself adopts this mourning gesture to grieve the deceased. As her appearance becomes more human, she also begins to convey human emotions like grief. In most depictions, the Siren retains her bird-like feet and lower body, along with her wings, but her torso and face grow increasingly expressive, as illustrated by a colorful, feathered grave statue from 350-300 BC in Yale's collection (fig:8).⁽¹⁾

Sirens in Art:

Sirens were frequently found in various contexts of the Greek art. For instance, Sirens were portrayed being accompanied with Odysseus, with the mast of his ship, while the bird-bodied Sirens look down at him from their coastal cliffs. The earliest example of this iconography is attested on a small globular aryballos preserved in Boston and dating back to 575 to 550 BC (Fig.9). On this vase, the Sirens appear primarily as stout birds with women's heads.⁽²⁾

Another example is an *oinochoe* from 525 to 475 BC in a private collection (Fig.10). It portrays the same scene but emphasizes the Sirens more. In this version, Sirens appear with their rams holding instruments, highlighted with additional white paint.⁽³⁾

A second narrative of the Sirens is being accompanied with small narrative elements like instruments and rocks at their feet solemnly without depicted Odysseus⁽⁴⁾ Although these details may appear decorative, they actually allude to the legends surrounding their musical talents and coastal habitat. For example, there is a *kylix* from 475 BC at the Metropolitan Museum (Fig.11) exemplifies this, depicting three Sirens seated on a rocky ledge, playing flutes, a lyre, and *kymbala*.⁽⁵⁾

Corinthian vases, in particular, feature a wealth of Siren imagery and likely contributed significantly to the popularization of a standard type of Siren. While Sirens can be found on various types of vases, they are often depicted on more intimate personal items, such as aryballoi and lekythoi.⁽⁶⁾ Instead of being a fearsome slayer of men, this Siren seems more like a warm escort, to the woman who might have possessed such item.⁽⁷⁾

(1) Hardy, A. (2015), p.21.

(2) Andres, E., (2020), P.51.

(3) Andres, E., (2020), 52.

(4) Andres, E., (2020), 52.

(5) Andres, E., (2020), 52.

(6) Andres, E., (2020), 46

(7) Andres, E., (2020), 46

The depiction of Sirens as decorative motifs on small personal items is one of their most lasting representations. A detailed plastic or mold-made lekythos from around 425–375 BC in Boston (fig:12) continues to showcase the hybrid bird-bodied, winged female. By this time, she has acquired human arms to play her lyre.

They frequently appeared in various decorative contexts, with numerous representations of Sirens shown either by themselves or in the company of griffins, panthers, sphinxes, and other real and mythical beings.⁽¹⁾ Much like the griffin and sphinx, the siren's wings are usually depicted in profile, though at times they are depicted as spread out.⁽²⁾ It also highlights that the siren, along with other hybrid creatures, were not rigid, static figures, but rather dynamic beings capable of assuming various poses. The subsequent addition of arms enables the siren to interact with its environment in new ways.⁽³⁾

An artifact from 325 BC at the Metropolitan Museum, roughly a century later, illustrates a Siren who has not evolved much beyond this avian hybrid, although she now carries gifts as well (fig.13).

Although the Sirens are renowned for their song, they are infrequently shown singing. A terracotta group (Fig.14) from 330-300 BC at the Getty Villa is distinctive for its depiction of two Sirens, either caught in the act of singing or having abruptly paused mid-melody in response to the seated figure of Orpheus. Originally painted in bright colors, the Sirens are portrayed standing on rocks, their bird-like feet gripping the stones, and their large bird tails extending below their clothing. However, their torsos and upright postures are entirely human. These sculptures likely formed part of a funerary group, indicating that they serve both narrative and protective functions.⁽⁴⁾

By the 7th century BC, the siren was frequently shown with arms.⁽⁵⁾ The two bird legs of the siren constrain the variety of poses it can assume; yet subtle differences in its physical appearance still emerge.⁽⁶⁾ In vase painting,

(1) Tsiafakis, D. (2003). *Fabulous Creatures or Demons of Death?* In Padgett, M. (ed.) *The Centaur's Smile*. Princeton: Princeton University Art Museum, p.74.

(2) Godby, M., (2011). *Beasts from the East: A Study of the Sphinx, Siren, and Griffin in Greek Art*, University of Florida, 11.

(3) Godby, M., (2011), 11.

(4) Andres, E., (2020), 53.

(5) Tsiafakis, D., (2003) "Fabulous Creatures and/or Demons of Death?", in *Centaur's Smile*, ed. J. Padgett, Princeton, 75,78.

(6) Godby, M., (2011), p.10.

the siren is typically depicted facing forward, though sometimes she is shown looking backward.⁽¹⁾

In early depictions, the siren is commonly portrayed with long hair, while those associated with myth often have shorter hair or it is styled in a bun.⁽²⁾

For example, multiple sirens are depicted in different poses, each showcasing unique stylistic variations. They are depicted not only in pairs but also individually, frequently facing a decorative element. These sirens though fundamentally similar in nature, display subtle variations in hairstyle and facial features.⁽³⁾

Sirens in Egypt:

The Sirens and the Egyptian Ba Bird:

The concept of the Sirens is commonly believed to have entered Greek culture from Egypt⁽⁴⁾, was obviously influenced by the notion of the *ba*⁽⁵⁾, or "soul bird"⁽⁶⁾ (Fig.15). We can assert that "Ba", which belong to either the physical or spiritual realm, allowed the deceased to move and traverse the realm of the deceased, and witness the deceased, who could return to the realm of the living, It is a "free spirit" that can detach from and reunite with the body at will.⁽⁷⁾

The Greeks reimagined the Egyptian *ba*-birds into a completely new character, which subsequently took on roles in decorative, funerary, and mythological settings. The appearance and funerary symbolism of the Greek siren were probably derived from Egyptian imagery

Egyptian mythology reveals similarities with Greek Siren⁽⁸⁾ and another hybrid creature.⁽⁹⁾ Egyptian art connected to death rituals and burials often includes a figure with a human head and a bird's body (fig.16), known as the

(1) Boardman, J., (2001) The History of Greek Vases, London,p.45.; Hampe, R., and Simon, E., (1981) The Birth of Greek Art from the Mycenaean to the Archaic Period, New York, 168,p.257

(2) Berlin 4532: <https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/imbrowser>

(3) Godby, M.,(2011), 11.

(4)Buschor, E.(1944).11-18.

(5)Schwarz,H., (2000).Eschatology, Cambridge, 33.

(6) Mikal J. Aasved,(1996). The Sirens and Cargo Cults, The Classical World, Vol. 89, No. 5 (May – Jun),384.

(7)Alsoorogy,H., Al Karadawi,M., (2024).Bâ as an Example of the Ancient Egypt Religious Thought in Effect on Ancient World Civilization until the Renaissance Era., Archaeological Discovery 12(01),16.

(8)Harpy. (2018). Classical art Research Center, University of Oxford, Retrieved from <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/dictionary/Dict/ASP/dictionaryBody.asp?name=Harpy.html>

(9) El-Mahdy,Ch.,(1989). Mummies, Myth and Magic in Ancient Egypt, New york, : Thames & Hudson, 13.

Ba bird.⁽¹⁾ This figure is depicted as residing in the tomb of the deceased and has a strong association with the sarcophagus.⁽²⁾

In the Old Kingdom, the Ba concept was attested in ancient Egyptian Religion. By the New Kingdom, the bird was represented as a human-headed bird (Fig:17) with and sometimes it had arms.⁽³⁾ The Egyptian ba-birds were depicted as both male and female, a trait that may have influenced Greek artists. A beard was used to signify a male siren. When depicted as female, the siren's flesh is often shown in a white hue. But the Greek siren is typically considered female, although its gender was not always the same.⁽⁴⁾

In Egyptian art from the late dynasties, the Ba bird is portrayed with the body of a bird and the head of a human, resembling the deceased in both gender and appearance.⁽⁵⁾ It seems to descend through the tomb shaft to the burial chamber, hovering above or close to the image of the deceased, and at times, it rests in their arms or clings to the mummy's breast (fig.18). The Ba bird's wings (fig:19) are prominently featured in its iconography, allowing the hybrid to fly around the burial chamber and hover in different positions near the deceased. Furthermore, the Ba is later illustrated with arms and hands, which can express a protective gesture towards the deceased.⁽⁶⁾

The Ba bird was unique to Egyptian religion and strongly tied to death rituals and rites.⁽⁷⁾ It is widely accepted that the Egyptian Ba soul served likely as the inspiration for the Greek Siren and harpy, with the goal of connecting these Greek and Egyptian hybrid figures. Despite the evident similarities in appearance between the Ba and its Greek counterparts, the Siren and Harpy, no direct evidence has been found to substantiate this theory. According to Vermeule, it can notice similarities between the mythical hybrids, particularly in their representations of a human head paired with a bird's body, along with their significant associations with death.⁽⁸⁾

(1) Macdonald, P.S.,(2007). History of the Concept of Mind: The Heterodox and Occult Tradition, Vol. II, New York. 14 - 15.

(2) El-Mahdy,Ch.,(1989), 13.

(3) Zabkar, L., (1968). A Study of the Ba Concept in Ancient Egyptian Texts. SAOC 34,137. Uchicago.edu. Retrieved from <https://oi.uchicago.edu/research/publications/saoc/saoc-34-studyba-concept-ancient-egyptian-texts>

(4) Tsiafakis, D., (2003),75.

(5) Cooney, J.D (1968).« Siren and Ba, Birds of a Feather », BCMA 55, No. 8.,266-267.

(6) Murray,M.A., (1972), the splendor that was Egypt, london,sidwick&Jackson, 130

(7) Meskell, L.M. & R.A. Joyce. (2003). Embodied lives. Figuring ancient Maya and Egyptian experience, 69

(8)Vermeule,E.,(1979).Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and poetry, Los Angeles, university of California press,

By the 7th century BC the siren is frequently shown with arms, much like the Egyptian ba-birds, allowing them to hold objects, instruments, and even carry the deceased.⁽¹⁾ The siren is also portrayed with a spiral-shaped lock of "hair" atop its head, a characteristic that originates from Egypt. There are obvious connections between the Sirens (as otherworldly spirits) and death; however, the hybrid creature of Greek mythology cannot be “characterized as the spirit of a dead man in the same way that its Egyptian equivalent, the Ba bird, can.” Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the Siren and the Ba, sharing very similar appearances, both have strong associations with death and the afterlife.⁽²⁾

The notion that both creatures have bird-like traits seems to facilitate their movement between the earthly realm and the afterlife, as well as between cemeteries and tombs. Their mythological status enables them to traverse this boundary, while their human facial features provide a humanizing aspect that further links them to the souls they embody or the mourning women they resemble. Although a clear connection has yet to be established between the Ba bird and the Greek Siren, it is evident that they share characteristics that strengthen their association with the -deceased.⁽³⁾

In Egyptian art, the *ba*-bird in a funerary context is portrayed either standing over or soaring above the deceased. The Egyptian *ba* resembles the Greek siren in appearance, but their roles differ. The siren appeared on vases from the fifth century BC, often depicted standing atop the grave mound and on grave stelai, acts as a guardian of the tomb. The *ba*-bird is not considered a protective figure, and it is typically translated as the spirit, becoming particularly significant after the death of the body. However, unlike the Greek psyche, the *ba*, which also departs from the body of the deceased, must reunite with the body each night to maintain the unity of the deceased. Therefore, the *ba* is not a protector of the deceased body, as the siren is, but instead preserves the link between the body and the world of the living.

In the Saqiya Tomb, the *ba*-bird (fig:20)⁽⁴⁾ acts as a protector of the deceased. The *ba*-bird on the sarcophagus facade adopts the Egyptian form but fulfills a protective function akin to that of a Greek siren. Therefore, the

(1) Tsiafakis, D., (2003) "Fabulous Creatures and/or Demons of Death?", in Centaur's Smile, ed. J. Padgett, Princeton, p.75,78.

(2) Irving, P.M.,(1990).Metamorphosis in Greek Myths, Oxford, Clarendon paperbacks, 114.

(3) Oldfield,A.,(2004). The Sound of Sirens : Siren Stelae in Classical Attic Cemeteries, Victoria University of Wellington, 35; Venit ,S.,(2002).Mounmental tombs of Ancient Alexandria; the theatre of the dead,Cambridge,106-107.

(4)I Thank Prof. Sara kitat who kindly provided me with this figure.

Sāqiya ba-bird symbolically takes on the role of a Greek siren, while being portrayed in an Egyptian style, with the nemes headcloth and sitting on papyrus ⁽¹⁾.

Statues of Sirens in Egypt:

Inventory number: Egyptian Museum, Cairo (CG. 27506)

Place of Discovery: Sarapeum at Saqqara

Material: yellowish limestone

Dimensions: 1.36 cm in height, the restored height is 36 cm

Date: Late Ptolemaic period evidenced by the hairstyle of the statue

Description: This statue (Fig:21) ⁽²⁾ portrays a siren in a human upper body with a bird legs. Despite being significantly broken and restored, enough of the original sculpture remains to illustrate that the Siren is shown standing with her right leg crossed in front of her left. She holds a lyre against her left side and plays it with her right hand, with her head tilted to the right. The lyre is secured by a strap around her waist, while a chain decorated with various small ornaments drapes over her left shoulder and under her right arm. She also wears earrings and a necklace. ⁽³⁾

Her hair is loosely styled to each side of her forehead and gathered in a knot on top of her head. The lyre, of which only the body is intact (the horns and crosspiece, which were attached. separately, are missing), has a back shaped like a tortoise shell, a bridge at the front, and remnants of numerous strings. There are holes on each side of the face for inserting the horns. The Siren's right arm has been affixed separately. The areas of the sculpture that are well preserved have a smooth and hard surface. There are few traces of paint remaining, aside from a dark hue on the chain around the left shoulder. Late Ptolemaic period Preservation Status: The arms and wings are missing, and the back is severely damaged.

The tail, lower legs, and plinth have been restored using limestone, while the tip of the nose has been repaired with plaster. The head is attached to the body with plaster. The lyre, although being partly ruined, has been positioned correctly and fastened securely with iron attachments. ⁽⁴⁾

(1) Borowik, M., (2020). Funerary practices in ancient Alexandria in the Graeco-Roman Period (332 BC–AD 642). Examples for syncretism in Alexandrian tombs and necropolises, Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw, 94.

(2) I Thank Prof. Sara Kitat who kindly provided me with this figure.

(3) Edgar, C., (1903). Catalogue Général Des Antiquités Égyptiennes Du Musée Du Caire: Greek Sculpture. Nos 27425-27630, Imprimerie de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, le caire, 28.; Maspero, G., (1883). Guide du visiteur musée de Boulaq..382

(4) Maspero, G., (1883), no.5569.: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6305105w/f400.image.r=5569#>

The Passion of the funeral singer can be noticed from the pose of the body and the movement of the head which is thrown backwards.⁽¹⁾

Inventory number: Egyptian Museum, Cairo (CG. 27507)

Place of Discovery: situated in the dromos of the Sarapeion at Saqqara.

Material: soft white limestone

Description: The statue of Siren is depicted with wings raised, with visible traces of hair trailing down its back. There are also remnants of an object, most likely holding a musical instrument,⁽²⁾ positioned near the top of the left wing. The statue is in poor condition; the head and upper torso are entirely missing, and the rest of the sculpture is significantly eroded.⁽³⁾

Inventory Number: Græco-Roman Museum, Alexandria, no.21872.

Place of Discovery: Hadra Cemetery

Material: Terracotta figurine

Dimensions: H: 28.9 cm.

Date: First half of the second century

Description: Likely originates from an Alexandrian burial dating to the first half of the second century. High-quality, dense marl clay exhibits a pink to brick-red hue and a mica-rich texture. This piece (Fig:22) was created by using a double mold, un modeled on the back, hollow interior, open underside, featuring a circular vent at the back. Remnants of lime wash and pink paint are visible. The base is damaged and has been repaired; the upper part of the right wing is broken off and missing but has since been reconstructed.⁽⁴⁾

A siren standing frontally with large wings and bird-shaped feet. The body is finely sculpted; her right-hand rests on her right breast, while her left hand is raised to her head in a gesture of grief. The small oval face is tilted upward, with her gaze fixed on the distance, above the viewer's head. Almond shaped eyes beneath arched eyebrows, a relatively broad and long nose, a wide mouth, and a rounded chin. Two engraved shapes of Venus are depicted on the neck, and long, wavy hair cascades over the shoulders.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Karl Baedeker, K., (1895). Egypt: handbook for Travellers, Vol.I, Lower Egypt and the peninsula of Sinai, Baedeker, 110.

(2) It was often depicted with arms to hold musical instruments and carry the dead. See: Luker, M. (2004). The Rutledge Dictionary of Gods and Goddesses Devil and Demons. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203643518>

(3) Edgar, C., (1903), 28; Baedeker, K., (1895), 110.

(4) Török, L., (1995). Hellenistic and Roman Terracottas from Egypt, 105.

(5) Török, L., (1995), p.105.

Inventory number: Græco-Roman Museum, Alexandria, 24162.

Place of Discovery: Hadra Cemetery (Ezbet el makhlouf)

Material: dark terracotta

Dimension: 12cm H

Date: the first half of the second century BC

Description: This statuette (fig:23) of a siren portrays a hybrid creature with a lower part of a bird and bird wings. Traces of red color are found on one of her wings and her legs. The right arm as well as the head of the statue are missing.⁽¹⁾ A restored statuette (Fig: 23) of a siren with a lyre, legs of an eagle, elegantly poised with outstretched wings, standing gracefully on a semi-circular base. The colors are vibrant, featuring bold shades of blue, white, and crimson.⁽²⁾ The lyre was supported sideways by the left arm while the right arm, which is missing the hand, is crossed over the chest as if it touches the strings of the instrument; but, given the distance between what remains of the lyre and the right arm, it hints to us that the arm couldn't reach the strings of the lyre.

A piece of folded scarf can be seen at the bottom of the left wing, supposedly to support the lyre. The other part of the scarf crossed the back and covers the right arm and fall down along the right wing. The polychromic is still preserved well in some parts. Blue color can be found on the thigh, tail, outline and lower half of the wings.

A white or pinkish-white covers the bust, the upper part of the wings with the lyre and the border of the scarf. A bright red covers the base with convex surface, the lower part of the legs and the paws. The left wing and part of the base have been glued back together. The figure is composed with supreme elegance. The symmetrically open stiff position of the wings admirably accompanies the attitude of the body with the pose of the legs. The modeling of the feathers, the body (particularly in the bust), and the drapery are very perfectly sculptured.⁽³⁾

(1) Riad,H., Shehata,Y., and el-Gheriani,Y.,; rev. by Daoud Abdo Daoud.,(1960). Alexandria : an archaeological guide to the city and the Graeco-Roman Museum, Cairo : Balagh Press,103.

(2) Room 18 (A) Case H: 3rd shelf: Riad,H., Shehata,Y., and el-Gheriani,Y.,; rev. by Daoud Abdo Daoud.,(1960),172.

(3) Adriani, A.(1940).,Annuaire du musée gréco-romain, 1935-1939, Alexandrie,101-102.

Inventory number: Græco-Roman Museum, Alexandria (no. 23334).

Place of Discovery: Hadra (Ezbet el makhlouf 1935)

Material: Limestone

Dimensions: H. 11.5 cm.

Description: A headless siren statue (Fig:24) is in frontal pose; the legs, are covered with feathers. The half-open wings emerged from the back and sides in a resting altitude. The left arm is folded up on the chest. The body is elongated and graceful, with finely crafted, sensual transitions across the planes of the thighs, abdomen, and belly, along with full breasts and slender arm.⁽¹⁾

Inventory number: Græco-Roman Museum, Alexandria,10443.

Place of Discovery: El Shatby Necropolis.⁽²⁾

Material: Limestone.

Dimensions: H. 56 cm.

Date: Hellenistic period.

Description: A headless siren statue (Fig:25) is in frontal pose; the legs, which are missing, were not covered with feathers. The half-open wings emerged from the back and sides in a resting altitude. The left arm is raised high above his head. The right arm is folded up on the chest, which is beat up. This statue is similar to the siren statue preserved in Louvre Museum.

Inventory number: Græco-Roman Museum, Alexandria,10578.

Place of Discovery: El Shatby Necropolis.⁽³⁾

Material: Limestone.

Dimensions: H. 16 cm.

Date: Hellenistic period.

Description: A funerary siren (Fig:26) placing one hand on her chest and the other on her hair embodies two classic gestures of grief and lamentation. This Siren statue is perfectly identical to the one no 10443; the legs are not positioned beside each other, the left leg is tilted to the forward, and the body somewhat inclined towards the right side.

(1) Breccia,E.V.,(1932). Le musée Gréco-Romain, 1925-1931 (Bergamo: Instituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche,26.

(2) Breccia,E.V., (1912). Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée d'Alexandrie, Nos. 1-624: La Necropoli di Sciatbi, volume primo (Testo), Le Caire,23.

(3) Breccia,E.V., (1912),23.

Inventory number: Græco-Roman Museum, Alexandria,19253.⁽¹⁾

Place of Discovery: El Shatby Necropolis.⁽²⁾

Material: Limestone.

Dimensions: H. 12 cm.

Date: Hellenistic period.

Description: Fragment of a Siren (Fig:27), very similar to the one no 10578; only the position of the legs is reversed, the right being somewhat more advanced than the left. The upper part of the body, from the belly up, as well as the feet are missing.⁽³⁾

Inventory number: Græco-Roman Museum, Alexandria,26003.

Place of Discovery: Ras el-Soda excavation

Material: limestone

Dimensions: 0.065cm H

Description: A torso of a naked woman (Fig:28), the protruding part that remains below the right hip and the widening of the bust at the base suggests that the statuette represented a being half human and half animal (Mermaid?) rather than a naked Aphrodite.⁽⁴⁾

In addition to the previous examples Breccia mentioned other examples siren statue was found in the Hellenistic necropolis of Ibrahimia (fig.29). The surviving part is 13 cm tall, missing its upper body, and it has a bird's feet. It was richly painted in red and blue.⁽⁵⁾

Headless siren (Fig:30) statue with bird's feet, raising the left arm over her head; the right arm is up beat the chest and has both wings and only one item is missing This statue is part from the Sieglin collection.⁽⁶⁾

Conclusion:

Upon completing the research study and within the boundaries of the theoretical and field framework, the researcher concluded with the following results:

- The Sirens were regarded as goddesses of music, performing as singers and mourners at funerals. These two key traits of the Sirens, mourning the dead and making music were deeply ingrained in Greek culture and considered significant symbols of civilization.⁽⁷⁾

(1) Breccia,E.V., (1912), 25.

(2) Breccia,E.V., (1912), 23.

(3) Breccia,E.V., (1912),25.

(4) Adrini,A.,(1952). *Annuaire du musée gréco-romain, 1940-1950*, Alexandrie,40.

(5)Breccia,E.V., (1912),41.

(6) Breccia,E.V., (1912),24.

(7) Opgenhaffen,L.,(2011),50

- However, it should be concluded that the function and context of the Greek Siren and the Egyptian ba bird were obviously different. While the ba-bird was guiding the soul to the body of the deceased, the siren was cursing the sailors with their songs to death. In other words, the ba was symbol of revival while the siren was the curse of death.
- A study of artifacts, housed in the Egyptian and Roman Museums, with registration numbers listed in the archaeological record series under specific serial numbers, CG 27506, CG27507,23334,24162,21872,10443,10578,19253,26003.
- **The placement of the Siren statues offers additional insight into their religious symbolism and significance, as follows:** Siren appeared in the position of a mourner, one of her forms, and images of her in this pose spread across cemeteries in Greece, on funeral coffins, and on the borders of tombs. A number of statues of Sirens have been discovered in Greek cemeteries. She was buried next to the deceased to protect them in the afterlife. Siren figures were commonly interred alongside the deceased on the Greek mainland and in Asia Minor. The tombs of Myrina, dating from the third century BC to the first century AD, contained numerous Sirens alongside figures of the chthonic Eros.⁽¹⁾ The use of this figure in funerary contexts spread to Egypt, possibly brought by the Greeks who settled there. This is supported by the discovery of statues of Siren the mourner in Hellenistic tombs, such as those in the Shatby, Al-Hadra, and Ibrahimiya cemeteries in Alexandria. It is likely that these statues originated in Greece and were brought to Egypt by the Greeks during their settlement, or they may have been of Alexandrian manufacture. Some of these statues are undated (Figs.24,28,29,30), but based on their discovery in Hellenistic tombs; it is believed they date back to the Hellenistic and Greek periods, although some tombs, such as those in Al-Hadra, continued to be used during the Roman era.

(1) Thompson,D.,(1934).Terra-cottas From Myrina in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston,No.12.; ollard-Besques,S.,(1963),Les terres cuites grecques,Coll. «L'œil du connaisseur », Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 49,74-76,pl.92.

- **In terms of their representation, the Sirens are depicted as follows:** Siren figures crafted from limestone⁽¹⁾(Figs:24,25,27) and baked clay⁽²⁾(Figs:22,23,24) have been documented in the necropolis of Alexandria. A finely crafted terracotta figure (Fig.23) of a lyre-playing Siren was found among the debris in one of the tomb chambers of the Hadra (Ezbet el Makhlouf) cemetery. This piece, along with other terracottas from the first half of the second century BC shares stylistic similarities with the Hadra discovery and differs from the Siren types found in Myrina.⁽³⁾(Fig.22) Shares stylistic similarities with the Hadra discovery.⁽⁴⁾
- The formal depiction of the Siren is widely recognized from numerous Hellenistic and Roman sites. It is depicted in both limestone and terracotta in Alexandria. The grandest of all Greco-Egyptian Sirens is the large statue holding a lyre, located in Cairo, which was discovered in the Serapeum of Sakkara (fig.21). However, this type is not exclusive to Egypt; similar figures are common in Greece and are frequently found in regions around the Black Sea and Asia Minor. All these Sirens share the same general characteristics. The stance changes only in terms of the hand placement. Occasionally, as observed in the specimens from Shatby, the right hand is positioned on the chest (figs.25,26), while the left arm is lifted. In a few specimens from Hadra, this gesture is modified, with the right arm being raised instead (figs.22,23). This gesture implies that the Siren is singing to the melody of the lyre. In other cases, the gestures typically appear to convey mourning (fig.22). A Sirens statues pulling their hairs. Examples from Hadra (figs.22,23), Ibrahemeyia (fig.29), and Shatby(figs.25,26,329), this gesture is accompanied by the act of beating the breast.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Breccia, EV., (1912),, Tav. XXXIV, 39; Adriani, A., (1952), 102.

(2) Adriani, A, (1940). Annuaire du musée gréco-romain, 1935-1939, Alexandrie, PL. XXXV, 2; Breccia, EV., (1932). Le musée Gréco-Romain, 1925-1931 (Bergamo: Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche, PL. XVI, fig. 65

(3) Adriani, A, (1940). 101, PL. XXXIX/1, 5.

(4) Breccia, EV., (1934),, Terrecotte figurate greche e greco-egizie del Museo di Alessandria, Volume 2 of Monuments de l'Égypte gréco-romaine, Ist. Ital. d'Arti Graf., PL, U/1.; Besques 1963, 74.

(5) Westholm, A., (1936). The Temples of Soli: Studies on Cypriote Art During Hellenistic and Roman Periods, The Swedish Cyprus expedition, [Akad. avh. Sthlms högsk.], Stockholm, 202.

REFERENCES:

Ancient Sources:

- Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica*. Translation by Seaton, R. C., 1912. London: William Heinemann Ltd.
- Cicero, *On Ends*. Translation by Rackham, H., 1914. Cambridge: Harvard University Press
- Homer. *The Odyssey* with an English Translation by A.T. Murray, PH.D. in two volumes. Cambridge, MA., Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann, Ltd. 1919.
- Strabo, *Geography*. Translation by Jones, H. L. 1924. Cambridge: Harvard University Press

- Foreign references:

- Adriani, A, (1940). *Annuaire du musée gréco-romain*, 1935-1939, Alexandrie.
- Adrini,A.,(1952). *Annuaire du musée gréco-romain*, 1940-1950, Alexandrie.
- Abel, E. (ed.),(1885). *Orphica*, Sumptibus Fecit G. Freytag, Lipsiae, Praga.
- Alsorogy,H., Al Karadawi,M., (2024).*Bâ as an Example of the Ancient Egypt Religious Thought in Effect on Ancient World Civilization until the Renaissance Era*,Archaeological Discovery, 12(1), 15-45.
- Andres,E.,(2020).*A tale of Two Sisters: Gorgons and Sirens in Ancient Greek Art and Literature*, Thesis, Univeristy of Leicester.
- Bailleul-LeSuer,R.,(2012). "*Birds in Death and the Afterlife " In Between Heaven and Earth: Birds in Ancient Egypt*, edited by Bailleul-Lesure. Rozenn. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago,65-70.
- Baedeker, K., (1895). *Egypt: handbook for Travellers*, Vol.I, Lower Egypt and the peninsula of Sinai, Baedeker.
- Breccia,E.V., (1912). *Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée d'Alexandrie*, Nos. 1-624: La Necropoli di Sciatbi, volume primo (Testo), Le Caire.

- Breccia, EV., (1932). *Le musée Gréco-Romain*, Bergamo: Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche.
- Breccia, EV., (1934)., *Terrecotte figurate greche e greco-egizie del Museo di Alessandria*, Vol.2 of monuments de l' Egypte greco-romaine , Ist. Ital. d'Arti Graf., PL, U/1.; Besques 1963.
- Boardman, J., (1995). *Greek sculpture: The late classical period*, London, Thames & Hudson.
- Boardman, J., (2001) *The History of Greek Vases*, London.
- Besques, S., (1963), *Les terres cuites grecques*, Coll. «L'œil du connaisseur», Paris, Presses Universitaires de France.
- Buschor, E., (1944), *Die Musen des Jenseits, München*, passim.
- Cooney, J. D., (1968). « Siren and Ba, Birds of a Feather », *BCMA* 55, No. 8.
- Edgar, C. C., (1903). *Catalogue Général Des Antiquités Égyptiennes Du Musée Du Caire: Greek Sculpture. Nos 27425-27630*, Imprimerie de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, le caire.
- El-Mahdy, Ch., (1989). *Mummies, Myth and Magic in Ancient Egypt*, New York, :Thames & Hudson.
- Godby, M., (2011). *Beasts from the East: A Study of the Sphinx, Siren, and Griffin in Greek Art*, university of florida.
- Hampe, R., and Simon, E., (1981) *The Birth of Greek Art from the Mycenaean to the Archaic Period*, New York.
- Hardy, A. P. (2015). *Singing Sorrow in Stone: The Mourning Siren in Greek Art*. Davis: University of California.
- Harpy. (2018). *Classical art Research Center*, University of Oxford, Retrieved from <https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/dictionary/Dict/ASP/dictionaryBody.asp?name=Harpy.html>
- Irving, P. M., (1990). *Metamorphosis in Greek Myths*, Oxford, Clarendon paperbacks.
- Kecn, A. (1992). The Dynastic Tomb of Xanthos: Who Was Buried Where? *Anatolian Studies* 42, 53-63. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3642950>

- Luker, M. (2004). *The Rutledge Dictionary of Gods and Goddesses Devil and Demons*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203643518>
- ,Macdonald, P.S.,(2007). *History of the Concept of Mind: The Heterodox and Occult Tradition*, Vol. II, New York.
- Maspero,G.,(1883). *Guide du visiteur musée de Boulaq*.
- Meskell, L.M. & R.A. Joyce. (2003). *Embodied lives. Figuring ancient Maya and Egyptian experience*.
- Murray,M.A., (1972), *The splendor that was Egypt*, london,sidwick&Jackson
- Montiglio, S.,(2011). *From Villain to Hero: Odysseus in Ancient Thought*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Mikal J. Aasved,(1996). *The Sirens and Cargo Cults*, the Classical World, Vol. 89, No. 5 (May – Jun). 383-392.
- Neils, J., 1995, *Les Femmes Fatales: Skylla and the Sirens in Greek Art*, in B. Cohen (ed.), *The Distaff Side: Representing the Female in Homer's "Odyssey"*, New York-Oxford.
- Oldfield,A., (2004). *The Sound of Sirens : Siren Stelae in Classical Attic Cemeteries*, Victoria University of Wellington.
- Opgenhaffen,L.,(2011). *Sirens on the roof: Identification of terracotta bird-women in Central Italy*, Journal and volume number:IV, Oxford
- Padgett, J. M. (2003). The Centaur's Smile. *The Human Animal in Early Greek Art*. Princeton University Art Museum.
- Pavlou, M. (2012). Sirens at the Symposium (Louvre E667). In *Mnemosyne*, fourth series, vol. 65.
- Pollard, J. (1964). *Seers, Shrines and Sirens: The Greek Religious Revolution in the Sixth Century*. Philadelphia: A. S. Barnes and
- Pseudo-Hyginus, *Fabulae*. Translation by Grant, M. 1960. Lawrence; University of Kansas Press. <https://www.theoi.com/Pontios/Seirenes.html>
- Roberts,J.,(2007). *The oxford Dictionary of Classical world*,Oxford University Press Weickert, G., 1909-1915, s.v. Seirenen, Roscher, W. H., *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, vol. IV.

- Riad,H., Shehata,Y., and el-Gheriani,Y.,; rev. by Daoud Abdo Daoud.,(1960). *Alexandria : an archaeological guide to the city and the Graeco-Roman Museum*, Cairo : Balagh Press
- Schwarz,H., (2000).*Eschatology*, Cambridge.
- Venit,S.,(2002).*Mounmental tombs of Ancient Alexandria; the theatre of the dead*,Cambridge.
- Tsiafakis, D. (2001). *Life and Death at the Hands of a Siren*. In *Studia Varia from the J. Paul GettyMuseum*, vol. 2.
- Tsiafakis, D. (2003). *Fabulous Creatures or Demons of Death?* In Padgett, M. (ed.)*The Centaur's Smile*. Princeton: Princeton University Art Museum.
- Tsiafakis, D., (2003) "*Fabulous Creatures and/or Demons of Death?*", in *Centaur's Smile*, ed. J. Padgett, Princeton, 73-104
- Torok,L.,(1995).**Hellenistic and Roman terracottas from Egypt**.
- Thompson,D.,(1934).*Terra-cottas From Myrina in the Museum of Fine Arts*, Boston,No.12.
- Vermeule,E., (1979),*Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and poetry*, Los Angeles,university of California press.
- Weickert, G., 1909-1915, s.v. Seirenen, Roscher, W. H., *Ausfürliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, vol. IV.
- Zabkar, L., (1968). A Study of the Ba Concept in Ancient Egyptian Texts. *SAOC* 34.137. Uchicago.edu. Retrieved from <https://oi.uchicago.edu/research/publications/saoc/saoc-34-studyba-concept-ancient-egyptian-texts>.

Figures



Fig.1.The Siren Vase, Attic red figure stamnos, 475 BC, From Vulci, now in London, British Museum, Inv. GR 1843.11- 3.31, vase E440

After: Homer, no. 184;

https://research.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?images=true&objectId=399666&partId=1)

Accessed January 23, 2023 10:28 AM



Fig.2 Terracotta Vase in the Form of a Siren, 540 BC, Walters Art Museum, (No. 48.2020)

After :<https://art.thewalters.org/detail/15911/vase-in-the-form-of-a-siren>,

Accessed January 23, 2023 12:00 PM



Fig.3 Black-figure oil flask, 500-480 BC, No. 1920,0315.1, British Museum

After: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1920-0315-1
Accessed January 23, 2023 8:28 AM



Fig:4 Red-figure oil flask, 460-450 BC, Winterthur.

After: Andres, E(2020) A Tale of Two Sisters: Gorgons and Sirens in Ancient Greek Art and Literature, Thesis, Univeristy of Leicester, fig.46
<https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk>
Accessed January 23, 2023 10: AM



Fig:5 Marble grave relief of woman with a female servant, 400BC, Altes Museum Berlin. SK 755.

After: <https://slideplayer.com/slide/11426732/>,
Accessed January 22, 2023 11:28AM



Fig:6 Grave stele of a Young Woman, 355-345 BC, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

After: <https://collections.mfa.org/download/151071>,
Accessed January 15, 2023 11:30 AM



Fig:7 Classical Attic Tombstone represented Sirens and mourning women, Piraeus museum
After: Andres, E(2020),228.

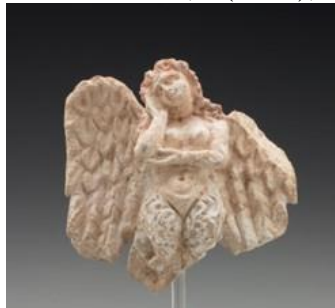


Fig:8 statue of a Mourning Siren, 350-300 BC. Yale University Art Gallery,
2001.28.11.
After: <https://artgallery.yale.edu/collections/objects/77886>,
Accessed January 5, 2023 9:28 AM



Fig:9 Oil flask (aryballos) with Odysseus confronted by Sirens, 575–550 B.C. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

After: <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/180727>,
Accessed January 3, 2023 8:29 AM



Fig:10 Attic Black-figure oinochoe, 525-475 BC, private collection
(Callimanopulos Collection, New York)

After: <https://www.theoi.com/Gallery/O21.5.html>,
Accessed January 22, 2023 11:28 AM



Fig:11 Black-figure Kylix, 475 BC, New York, Metropolitan Museum of
Art, no. 1957.57.12.5.



Fig:12 Oil flask with figure of a Siren, late 5th–early 4th century B.C.,
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.No. 01.8101

After: <https://collections.mfa.org/download/154025>,
Accessed January 8, 2023 6:00 AM



Fig:13 Terracotta kylix, late 4th century BC, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, No. 1989.11.12

After: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/255915>, Accessed January 22, 2023 11:28 AM.



Fig:14 The Sirens, J. Paul Getty Museum

After: <https://www.getty.edu/publications/terraccottas/catalogue/1/>, Accessed January 11, 2023 11:30 AM.



Fig.(15): Small statuettes in the form of a bird with human head representing the ba, Late Period, Dynasties 25–30, ca, 750–350 bc, Dendera.

After: Bailleul-LeSuer, R.,(2012). "Birds in Death and the afterlife " In *Between Heaven and Earth: Birds in Ancient Egypt*, edited by Bailleul-Lesure. Rozenn. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 201, Fig.32.

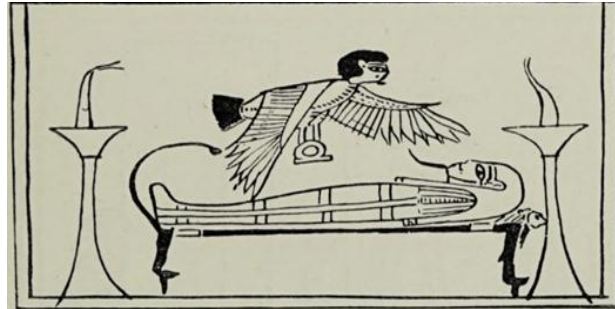


Fig:16 Mummified scribe Ani with his Ba, Book of the dead, 19th dynasty

After: El-Mahdy,Ch.,(1989),13.



Fig:17 Bearded siren. Plate, ca. 580–570 BC. Diam. 25 cm, Louvre
After: Elhelw, R.,(2020). The human –headed bird figure in painting
from the bronze age to the early twentieth Century,JAARS,
vol.1,186,Fig.2.



Fig:18 Ba bird hovers over deceased on Sarcophagus of Tash Penkhonsu
Ekhmeem, Egypt, Late Ptolemaic Period, c. 150BC
After: Oldfield,A.,(2004). The Sound of Sirens: Siren Stelae in Classical
Attic Cemeteries, Victoria University of Wellington, Fig.27.

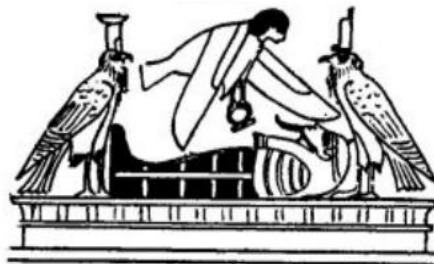


Fig:19 The soul of the deceased in the form of a human-headed bird is seen
hovering over the dead body.
After: Budge, W.,(1895),PL.VIII, p.278



Fig:20 The Facade of the Sarcophagus with depicted on it ba bird, The Saqiya Tomb, Western Necropolis, Alexandria.

After: Taken by prof. Sara kitat; Borowik, M., (2020). Funerary practices in ancient Alexandria in the Graeco-Roman Period (332 BC–AD 642). Examples for syncretism in Alexandrian tombs and necropolises, Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw, fig.94



Fig:21 "Lyre playing" Siren statue, Limestone, Egyptian Museum, Cairo.
Taken by prof. Sara kitat



Fig:22 Statue of the Mourning Siren, Græco-Roman Museum, Alexandria.
After: Torok, L., (1995), Pl. X



Fig:23 Siren statuette, Terracotta, Græco-Roman museum, Alexandria
After: Adriani, A (1940), PL. XXXV, 2.

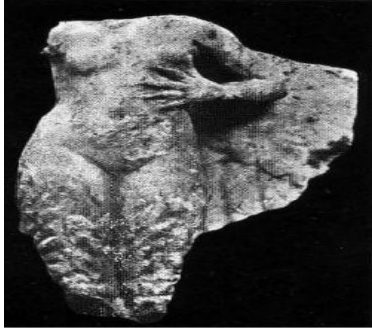


Fig:24 Headless siren statue, Limestone, Græco-Roman Museum, Alexandria.

After: Breccia,E.,(1932),Pl.XVI,fig.65; Ann, de Musee Greco-Romain 1925-1931, Pl. XVI/65.



Fig:26 Siren, Græco-Roman Museum, Alexandria

After: Breccia,E., (1912), Tav. XXXIV, 39.



Fig: 26 The mourning Siren

After: Breccia,E.,(1912),Tav., Tav.XXXIV40

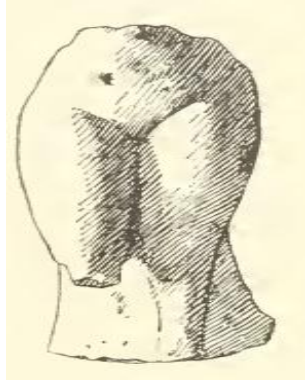


Fig:27 Fragment of a statue Siren
After: : Breccia,E.,(1912), fig.24



Fig:28 A torso of Siren
After: Adini,A., (1952), PL. XXIII 4.

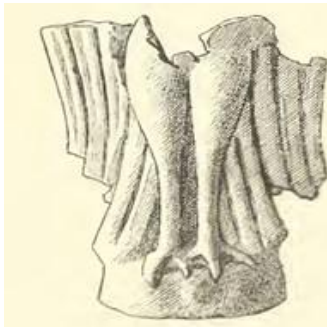


Fig:29 statue of siren, Hellenistic necropolis of Ibrahimia.
After: : Breccia,E.,(1912),fig.23.



Fig:30 Siren statue is part from the Sieglin collection
After: : Breccia,E.,(1912),Tav. XXXIV, 41.

المخلص :

تماثيل السيرينات في مصر ؛ الرمزية الدينية والتصوير الفنى.

سيرين هي إحدى الحوريات التي تتبع الالهة ارتيميس وتمثل بهيئة النصف لامرأة والسفلى لطائر وساق وقدم طائر. غالباً تصور وهي تعزف على إحدى الآلات الموسيقية تم ذكرها في ملحمة هوميروس، حيث من المعروف أنها تجلب الدمار للبحارة بموسيقتها الساحرة وصوتها العذب، فتأسرهم. يوثق هذا البحث تصوير سيرين في الفن في سياقات مختلفة ، ومن ثم فإن هدف البحث هو دراسة تصوير سيرين خلال الفترات التاريخية المختلفة، ودراسة كيفية تصويرها والأهمية الرمزية في الفترات التاريخية المختلفة. يتناول هذا البحث الرمزية الدينية لها وفقاً للمصادر اليونانية القديمة ومقارنتها بالدور الديني لطائر البيا في مصر القديمة. كما يهدف البحث إلى تسليط الضوء على القطع الفنية " تماثيلها" التي تصور السيرينات في مصر؛ في المتحف المصرى بالقاهرة (٢٧٥٠٦، ٢٧٥٠٧) وأيضاً المتحف اليونانى الرومانى بالاسكندرية (٢٦٠٠٣، ٢٣٣٣٤، ٢٤١٦٢، ٢١٨٧٢، ١٩٢٥٣، ١٠٥٧٨، ١٠٤٤٣).

الكلمات الدالة: سيرين ، يونانى ، أسطورة ، مصر ، تماثيل .