

SOME TYPOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF A SWORD FROM THE SETTLEMENT OF APHRODISIAS, ASIA MINOR, AND ITS CONNECTION WITH THE HAN DYNASTY PERIOD SWORDS

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Abstract: *The article deals with the study of a previously unnoticed and unpublished sword from the settlement of Aphrodisias, Asia Minor. The study is focused on the typological features of the sword since its archaeological context hasn't been specified. The analysis revealed that this sword can be paralleled with the Chinese two-handed long swords of the Han Dynasty. These swords can be traced also in the Parthian Empire as well, but they haven't been found in the territories which once formed the Roman Empire and previously the Hellenistic Kingdoms of the Successors of Alexander the Great. So, the sword from Aphrodisias is very rare and unique for the Roman and Hellenistic World of the time because it's probably the sole example of such Chinese long swords, dated in the Han Period, to be traced in the West end of the Silk Road.*

Keywords: *Aphrodisias, Asia Minor, sword, Chinese, Silk Road, Han Dynasty, Roman Empire, Hellenistic States, Parthian Empire, typochronological analysis.*

The present study focuses on the study of a very interesting long-sword which had been excavated in the ancient city of Aphrodisias, in Asia Minor. The sword was previously unnoticed and has not been examined thoroughly. The analysis of the sword is based on the examination of its typological criteria, such as the cross-guard, the blade and its length, which denotes it from the rest of the sword typologies found in the region during the suggested dating (3rd century BC – 3rd century AD) or more accurately during the Ancient and Medieval Period. The sword is very unique because such typologies have not been found in

the region of Asia Minor or in the Eastern Mediterranean in general, but only in the far East, region from which we traced some notable parallels that helped to identify the typology of the sword and categorize it also into a chronological frame.

Due to the lack of findings in the region of Asia Minor but also in the Eastern Mediterranean, the research of the swords dated back in the Hellenistic, Roman and even in Byzantine Period is focused mainly on the examination of the iconographical examples and depictions of swords in the Art, such as pottery, murals, mosaics, illuminated manuscripts, ivory etc. On the

other hand, the material from the Western and Central Europe, but also in the Middle East and Far East is considered more abundant and the research is oriented in the study of the archaeological material, using the iconography as a parallel to the actual swords. Recently, some notable examples have been published from the region of Asia Minor and Greece, assisting better to our knowledge of the swords during the Ancient and Medieval Eras.

According to the diary of the excavations, the sword (**fig. 1**) (inv nr: 62-250) was found in 1962 (5/08/1962), in the „Water channel House” excavations, now the „House of Kybele” (WaCh II Trench II Stratum II). It is an iron two-handed long sword, heavily encrusted and rusted. The sword terminates with two curved designs where the blade begins. The handle is round for a good grip. It was briefly re-evaluated and re-measured in 2021: Measurements: Length, 1.675 m long; blade max. 0.05 m but terminates in a point. Blade thickness, 0.01 m. Handle max. 0.075 m wide. The sword remeasured again in 2022:¹ (Blade length: c. 143 cm, Blade width: 2.7 cm, Blade depth/thickness: 1.4 cm, Handle length: 21.5 cm, Handle width: 1.3 cm, Handle depth/thickness: 1.2 cm, Hilt/guard length: 1.8 cm, Hilt/guard width: 7.5 cm, Hilt/guard depth: 0.4 cm). There is some corrosion, but the object is overall in good and stable condition and must have been conserved after discovery in 1962. The sword has a very rectangular section (i.e., it is not beveled or sharp). This may indicate that it was not feasible to use as a weapon. A ceremonial or decorative use (e.g., hung on a wall) might be better interpretations.

¹ I would like to express my gratitude to the Archaeological Museum of Aphrodisias for providing me the measurements and Mr. David Nicolle for sharing from his personal archive the photos of the sword and the handwritten note of the dimensions and information from the diary of excavations, provided by the Head of the Excavations in the site of Aphrodisias in 1961, Mr. K. Erim.

Typochronological analysis: Since there are not safe results about the dating of archaeological context, where the specimen has been found, a typological analysis of the separate parts of the sword (hilt, cross-guard, blade) can lead us to extract some results regarding the dating and the classification of the specimen.

Examining its morphology, the sword from Aphrodisias seems very similar to the Han Dynasty Period (3rd century BC – 3rd century AD) long swords, especially in shape and its cross-guard (鐔). Numerous tombs of the Han Dynasty are distributed in Hu’nan region, where thousands of weapons have been unearthed. Representative parallels of Han Dynasty long swords had been excavated in Hu’nan (**fig. 2**). The Aa, Ac, Ba and C swords appear to have similarities to the sword from Aphrodisias, especially the Ba sword because it has a similar cross-guard (剑格、鐔) (李亚 2020: 18). The Ba sword is characterized by a so-called nose-shaped cross guard, a flat handle, columnar handle, and a slender blade. But he is slightly shorter, less than one meter long (82 cm). The Aa and Ac swords are a little longer but usually bear no handguard or may have a very short handguard. The length of the sword C has been estimated to approximately 95 cm. It has a handguard, and both sides of the blade are equally suitable for slashing (李亚 2020: 23). Similar cross guards (tsuba) appear to also have the Japanese swords of that period (Feng 2020: 38).

The tomb of the Nanyue king ((南越王)) has the largest number of iron artifacts unearthed in the Nanyue Kingdom. Among them, a great variety of offensive and defensive military armaments had been found, including iron swords, spears, halberds, berylliums, armor collars and copper arrowheads. The swords are the most numerous weapons that can be found in the main room of the tomb. The longest one, the sword D143 (**fig. 3**) is about 153.6 cm long, but its cross guard seems to have less similarities with the long sword discovered in Aphrodisias, unlike

the D141 long sword, which is almost identical to the sword from Aphrodisias. The iron sword is the proof that the king of Nanyue proclaimed himself emperor. In the Han Dynasty, the sword resembled the status of its owner (李亚 2020: 46). So, the D143 sword may have a ceremonial function (何少伟 2019: 47). As a result, we can assume that the sword from the “House of Kybele” in Aphrodisias could have been used as a ceremonial object or as a medium of demonstration by its owner and not in combat. It is also doubtful if such swords had been used in the Roman Army, since this is the only two-handed long sword which had been discovered in the former vast territories where the Roman Army was present.

Another significant example (fig. 4) comes from a Han Period Tomb in Mountain Cao (曹山汉墓). This Jian (sword) is a multiple-refined steel sword with inscription, (“建初二年蜀郡西工官王愔造五十涑孙剑五十炼“铭钢剑) in Chinese (https://www.xzmuseum.com/collection_detail.aspx?id=3034). It bears inscriptions both on the blade and on the cross-guard. The engraved inscription of the blade means that the sword was made by a craftsman named Wang Yin (王愔) in an official arsenal in Shu eparchy (蜀郡西工官) in the second year of Jianchu (建初二年, 77 AD). The second inscription on the inside of the cross-guard (直千五百), mentions that the value of the sword is 1500 copper coins (Wu Zhu 五铢). Since Shu eparchy (Sichuan province now) is very far from Xuzhou (Jiangsu Province). This indicates a long-distance trade in Chinese mainland and the prosperity of handicraft industry in Sichuan (徐州博物馆 1979: 51 – 52).

Apart from the Han Dynasty, long swords can be traced in the Parthian and the Sassanid Empire. The Sassanids had contacts, either friendly or hostile, with the nomadic tribes of the Central Asia and Transoxania, China and of course Rome. As a result of these direct or indirect contacts with other cultures through warfare

or diplomatic avenues, the material culture of the Sassanid but also Roman Empire had received great influences by their neighbors.

A significant example is the late Parthian (1st – 2nd century AD) two-handed longsword (fig. 5) housed at the Iran Bastan Museum (Inventory number: 1604/18029). It has been excavated in the region of northern Iran, specifically in the Nowruz Mahalleh region, back in the late 1960. The total length of the sword is about 83 cm (Farrokh et al. 2016: 48, 50, 53).

In Hatra an archaeological zone is survived, where weapons are depicted in nearly all forms of Parthian art, such as sculpture, relief, mural painting, and graffito. The city of Hatra provides an especially rich material of figurative arts like statues of humans and gods, reliefs and mural paintings which preserve information about the weapons of the Parthian Empire in the 2nd and 3rd century AD Parthian-type long swords are prominently depicted among figures of Hatrene officers, noblemen, kings, and gods. The sword from the Bastan Museum is overall shorter than those depicted at Hatra. The Hatrene long swords are reported as being at 100 and 130 cm in overall length. These long swords are overwhelmingly narrow and flat and have a straight or pointed end of the scabbard (fig. 6). The swords and daggers in Parthian reliefs are considered to have a more ceremonial character rather than a combat purpose (Winkelmann 2009: 235 – 241).

The emergence of the Silk Road from China to the Mediterranean: The contacts between China and the Hellenistic world may trace back to the establishment of the Silk Road. From the Chinese diplomat Zhang Qian (2nd century BC) onwards, many Chinese and foreign envoys, merchants, and even monks to and from between Central China and the Western Regions (Xiyu, 西域) as far as the Mediterranean and India, brought information of Roman and Hellenistic Civilization into China. Reflections of messages and oral reports are to be found in the

early Chinese official historical books. Although the records about them are sometimes confused, ambiguous, or even anachronistic, they actually provide first-hand information about the Western Regions where Greek and Roman culture once prevailed (Yang 2014: 121).

The emergence of the Silk Road from China to the Mediterranean was linked with the legendary trip of a Chinese envoy, Zhang Qian (张骞), in the Western Regions (Xiyu, 西域) outside of the domain of China by that time. He was sent by the Emperor Han Wudi (汉武帝) to search for the Dayuezhi people (大月氏) in order to unite them against a common enemy, Xiongnu (匈奴). He departed from the capital of Han China, Chang'an (长安) in 139 BC and returned in 126 BC. Unfortunately, he could not fulfill his mission because the Dayuezhi had lost interest in revenge on the Xiongnu. However, he entered Central Asia as far as Bactria and first brought back information on the areas and countries he visited or heard of (Yang 2014: 121 – 122).

Most of all the documentary information on the Hellenistic Civilization comes from the chapters about the Western Regions in the „Early Four Historical Books“ (‘前四史‘). They reflect the various relations between China and the western peoples and countries and Chinese knowledge of the Western Regions in the Han Dynasty, and even beyond. The periods from the 2nd century BC to the early 3rd century AD roughly coincide with the Hellenistic age and the coexistence of Parthian and Kushan Roman empires in Eurasia. All the latter three could be assumed to be the successors of or influenced by Hellenistic Civilization in different degrees. The long and frequent contact between China and them naturally helped to further the understanding of Chinese people of the Western Regions, the former Hellenistic world (Yang 2014: 122).

Sino-Hellenistic/Roman relations: The conquests of Alexander the Great contributed majorly for the two worlds, the East, and the West to be approached and by the 3rd century

BC, the establish of a great network of routes, usually refer to as the „Silk Road“ had begun. In the 1st century BC, we have the first accounts of Roman historians mentioning the silk trade with the Chinese people. The Chinese are referred by the Greeks and Romans as „Seres“ and the „Silk People“. It was the explorations and conquests from both East and West that gave the Silk Road its special place in history (Ptol. 1940: 11,11. 15,1).

Furthermore, coins and artifacts even from the Hellenistic Period can be traced in China and its neighbors. Another way by which Hellenistic information was introduced to China is the various historical legacies such as the Buddhist sculptures with Gandharan style, the coins with Hellenistic elements, and other works of art with Greek motifs. As far as the mainstream of Chinese cultural tradition is concerned, their influence is not too deep and extensive but actually long and significant. When Alexander entered India in 327 BC, Buddhism had not yet spread to Northwest India. Thus, the Greco-Macedonians could not have encountered Buddhism at that time. It was in the reign of King Asoka (270/269 – 232 BC or 260 – 218 BC) of the Mauryan Dynasty that those Greeks remaining in India began to have real contact with Buddhism (Burstein 1985: 67 – 68).

Asoka was a celebrated Dharmaraja (a king who was the protector of Buddhism and its worshippers) in the history of Buddhism. He tried to introduce Buddhism to the Greeks in the northwest of India (including present Kandahar in Afghanistan) with his Rock Edicts in Greek. In the 2nd century BC, Bactrian Greeks intruded into India and became the masters of Northwest India. Because the Sunga Dynasty of India conducted a policy of persecuting Buddhists, the kingdoms founded by the Greeks from Bactria became the asylums of Buddhists (Marshall 1960: 42). With the spread of Buddhism in northwest India, some Greeks, even the Indo-Greek kings like Menander, converted to Buddhism. On the

one hand directed by the anthropomorphism of Greek religion, on the other hand inspired by their god Apollo, those Indo-Greek engravers who were Buddhists or hired by Buddhists created the image of Buddha with the statues of Greek mythological figures as the models. So, the Greek god Apollo was transformed into the Buddha of Buddhism. Besides, the Greek hero Heracles was adopted by Buddhism and was transformed into Vajrapani (the protector and guide of the Buddha). The style of Greek clothing, the transformed Corinthian capitals, the acanthus ornament, the honeysuckle motif, the bead-linked decorations, and the grape motif were absorbed into Gandharan art (Holt 1999: 177).

Thus, the eastward spread of Buddhist art facilitated the spread of Hellenistic elements contained within it into China. From the Tarim Basin, the Gandharan Buddhist art started its course of incitation. Nowadays we can still see and discern the transformation of the image of Buddha eastward from Kizil Grottos in Qiuci (龟兹) of Xinjiang Province, Dunhuang (敦煌), and Maijishan (麦积山) Grottos in Gansu Province, Yungang (云冈) Grottos in Shan-xi (山西) Province to Longmen (龙门) Grottos in Henan (河南) Province. Other Buddhist sculptures also probably show Hellenistic influences, such as the naked figures in the frescos of Qiuci Grottos, the images of Ritian (日天, Aditya) and Yuetian (月天, Chandra) which look like the Greek Helios and Artemis, the Feitian (飞天) (apsaras, flying celestial figures) probably inspired to some extent by the flying Nike appearing in the Hellenistic age (fig. 7). It is especially worth noting that the Ionic and Doric column orders have been found in the Dunhuang Grottos (fig. 8) (Xing 2003: 15 – 48; Holt 2005: 162).

The introduction into China of the image of Heracles experienced a long process. His image had been brought to central Asia and India by the Greeks. An inscription honoring him, and his bronze statue has been discovered in the Gymnasium of Ai Khanoum in the sculptures of

Gandharan art, he is generally naked, and has a vajra pestle instead of a wood club (fig. 9). In some samples, he wears a lion-head helmet, one of his iconological features. Such an image was transmitted to China. On a piece of fresco of Qiuci dated to 500 AD, he is confused with the cowman Ananda with his original club (fig. 10). In Maijishan Grottos, his image appears as one of the Heavenly Kings or a Vajrapani (the protector and guide of the Buddha, 护法金刚). He wears armor from head to foot, one foot standing on a little daemon, with a club in his left hand (fig. 11). From some tombs of the Sui and Tang Dynasty, he seems to become a terra-cotta or tri-colored glazed pottery warrior guarding the dead (fig. 12). Some scholars have done systematic and deep research on this subject (Kuhrt & Sherwin-White 1987: 153, Plate VIII; Han & Zhu 1990: 206 – 208, 334 – 341; Fan et al 2011: 96, pl. 30, 31, 38, fig. 34).

Information about Hellenistic coins also was brought into China first by Zhang Qian. In his report to Emperor Han Wudi, he mentions markets and trade in Daxia and Anxi and that the local peoples from Dayuan to Anxi were very skillful at trade and haggled over very tiny fractions of money („善市贾, 争分铢“). He especially described the coins of Anxi: „made of silver with the face of the reigning king on the obverse. When the king died, the coin had to be changed immediately, and the face of the new king would appear on the new coin.“ (fig. 13). The similarities between these coins and those of Hellenistic kingdoms are noteworthy: first, the coins were mainly made of silver; second, they had the head portrait of the king on it; third, every king issued his own coins. A head portrait of a king was normal in the Hellenistic coins. These coins circulated not only in the areas under Greek control but also in neighboring countries, such as Parthia (Anxi), Dayuan and Kangju (both in Sogdiana), even Dayuezhi and Daxia (both in Bactria), and later the Kushan Empire (Central Asia and India). But these countries also

imitated Greek-styled coins depending on their need and tradition (Yang 2013: 125).

The ancient Chinese Empire of the Qin and Han dynasties did not share a common border with the Roman Empire. However, sources from both ancient empires record increasing commercial and diplomatic interchange. According to Dueck, the Romans reached as far as China, establishing contacts with the „local“ people. The Romans traded with the Chinese and had reciprocal contacts with the court there as early as the time of Augustus (Dueck 2012: 62).

Ancient Chinese historiographical texts, it seems, only began to refer to the Roman Empire in the distant West in the 1st century AD. Diplomatic contacts between the major powers along the „Silk Road“ trade system are well attested and include both Chinese and Roman contacts with representatives of various intermediate countries. The record of foreign envoys to Augustus includes a group of Chinese is documented by a Roman author, Florus (2nd century AD), who notes the arrival at the court of Augustus of envoys of the „Seres“ (McLaughlin 2010: 111 – 140).

According to ancient Chinese texts, the earliest Roman „embassy“, probably merchants, to visit China only arrived in 166 AD and came from the South, via the Red Sea and Indian Ocean maritime route. For instance, The geographer Marinus of Tyre. Referred to a 1st century AD account by an unknown merchant from Roman Macedonia, named both Maës and Titianus, who had used information provided by his agents to note travel times and distances along the route which led from a commercial station in the Pamirs (the „Stone Tower“) to „Sera“, the capital of the Seres (McLaughlin 2010: 126 – 128).

The Parthian Empire stood in between these two great empires and had direct contacts with both. As a result, during peace times Parthia offered opportunities for individuals from both ends of the Eurasian continent to meet, as there is no evidence to suggest a total and per-

manent blockade of the land route through Parthia for Roman merchants. The Sasanian Empire was founded in the former lands of the Parthian Empire. Most of the Parthian kings liked to call themselves philhellene („the friends of Greeks“), and they received almost all the Hellenistic legacy in their lands. The Sasanian Empire bordered on the Eastern Roman Empire in its west and was probably influenced by the Roman art style although politically they were enemies for a long time (Ferguson 1978: 581 – 603).

In recent years, several cultural relics with exotic features were unearthed in China. Most of them were from the tombs of the Southern and Northern Dynasties (南北朝, 420 – 589 AD), and some of the masters of these tombs were Zoroastrians who came from the Western Regions or Chinese high officials. Some of these relics might contain a little Hellenistic and classical information. However, it is not apparent because the dates of these relics were long after the Hellenistic period, and they were produced mainly in the Western Regions, which were ruled by the Sasanian Empire (224 – 651 AD).

A typical example is the gilded silver ewer from the tomb of Lixian (李贤) in the Guyuan district (固原), Ningxia (宁夏) Province (**fig. 14**) (As to the preliminary report, see Ningxia Museum 1985). Lixian was born in 502 AD and died in 569 AD. He had served three dynasties (the North Wei, 北魏, West Wei, 西魏, and North Zhou, 北周). Depending on the style of the ewer, it might date from the period of the Sasanian Empire. What interests us most is the motif on the belly of the ewer. What can be sure at first sight is that the three pairs of figures of young handsome men and beautiful women look like Greeks who display classical features including clothing like peploi, chitons, and chlamys, dynamic poses, Greek-like straight noses, and naked or half naked bodies. However, it is hard to be certain of their identities. The Chinese scholar Luo Feng quoted in his article the idea of the celebrated Russian archaeologist B. L. Marshak

that the three scenes consisting of the three pairs of figures represented the story of Troy. One of them shows Paris, the prince of Troy, handing something like a golden apple to Aphrodite; another, Helen's seduction by Paris and the scene of their boarding; the last, Helen reencountering her former husband, Menelaus, king of Sparta after the war (Luo 2000).

Additionally, a scene from the story of the Trojan horse also appears on a carved stone plaque from the Gandhara region (**fig. 15**). The Chinese scholar Wu Chao argues that the main characters on the ewer should be Romans, and the group of pictures shows the scenes of deep-in-love youths who had spent a lovely night, and said farewell to each other in the early morning, then the young man departed. He states that it was the Romans who inherited the Greek tradition that the mothers saw their sons off and so did the wives their husbands. It can also be regarded as another explanation for it (Wu 1985).

Conclusions: The Roman Empire has faced countless opponents during its long-lasting lifespan. It was inevitable to receive many influences from its neighbors but also from cultures that were thousands of kilometers away from the borders of the Empire. These influences are reflected in the material culture of the Roman Empire and of course in weaponry. The various types of weapons which originated in the far East could be reached to the territories of the Empire either with direct or with indirect contacts. The role of the mediator often played the Parthian and later the Sassanid Empire with whom the Roman Empire had fought numerous battles, but also exchanged diplomatic gifts. In addition, new battle tactics and weaponry reached the Roman regions via the nomadic people of the Eurasian steppes, who fought against the Roman Army at the frontiers (*limes*) or served in the regiments of the army as mercenaries.

From the analysis above, we may safely conclude that some information about the Hellenistic world and the Roman East was spread into

China, despite the difficulty to reconstruct the exact course in the present state. Although, the Hellenistic kingdoms disappeared in Eurasia, the influences of Hellenistic culture still played important roles in the interactions between Chinese and Western civilizations through the Silk Road.

Of course, the people, who traveled through the Silk Road, hurried and threatened by perils of every sort, with various goals, aims and missions, should not be overlooked. As spokesmen, they had provided either directly or indirectly the material to the authors of Chinese Historical books. Envoys like Zhang Qian, Wen Zhong, and GanYing (Yang 2013, 121 – 143) went into far and unknown lands and brought back more detailed and reliable material. Zhang Qian not only was the first person who had been sent on a diplomatic mission to the Western regions and visited the world outside China, but also the first who brought back information about the Hellenistic world. Chinese silk, iron wares (complex wares of steel and iron, including the method of steel making), leather wares, even methods of almond and peach cultivation, items and knowledges which soon adopted by the Romans when they conquered the Greek East.

Meanwhile, those foreigners who came to China as ambassadors, traders also brought in not only the tributes and goods but also exotic cultures. The generals in charge of the Western Regions, such as Ban Chao and Ban Yong, kept direct contacts with these countries West of the Pamirs as far as the Mediterranean so that they could update the knowledge about these areas in due time. Without them, we would not have known so much about the Kushan, Parthian, and Roman Empires. Moreover, the function of the officials who went to India and the foreign Buddhists who came to China were very important for the spread of Buddhism as well as Greco-Buddhist Gandhara art into China. However, it is worth noticing that all the interactions between China and the Western countries entirely relied on the establishment of the Silk Road,

which is both the result and the bridge of these exchanges.

To conclude, the sword from Aphrodisias could be assumed that was a diplomatic gift or a commodity from the lands of the far East, taking into consideration its ceremonial function. We can make the hypothesis that, since any sword of this typology hasn't been found in the territories that once formed the Roman Empire, the sword may have not been used widely in the ranks of the Roman Army as a combat weapon, but we might deal with a sole example, which a person of a higher status could acquire. In the sword from Aphrodisias are embodied the long-lasting contacts, either direct or indirect, between the Asia Minor and the far East, being probably the sole example of such an „exotic“ weapon reached to the lands of the West, which might not have been manufactured in the region of the Eastern Mediterranean, rather in the land of the Parthian Empire or in China.

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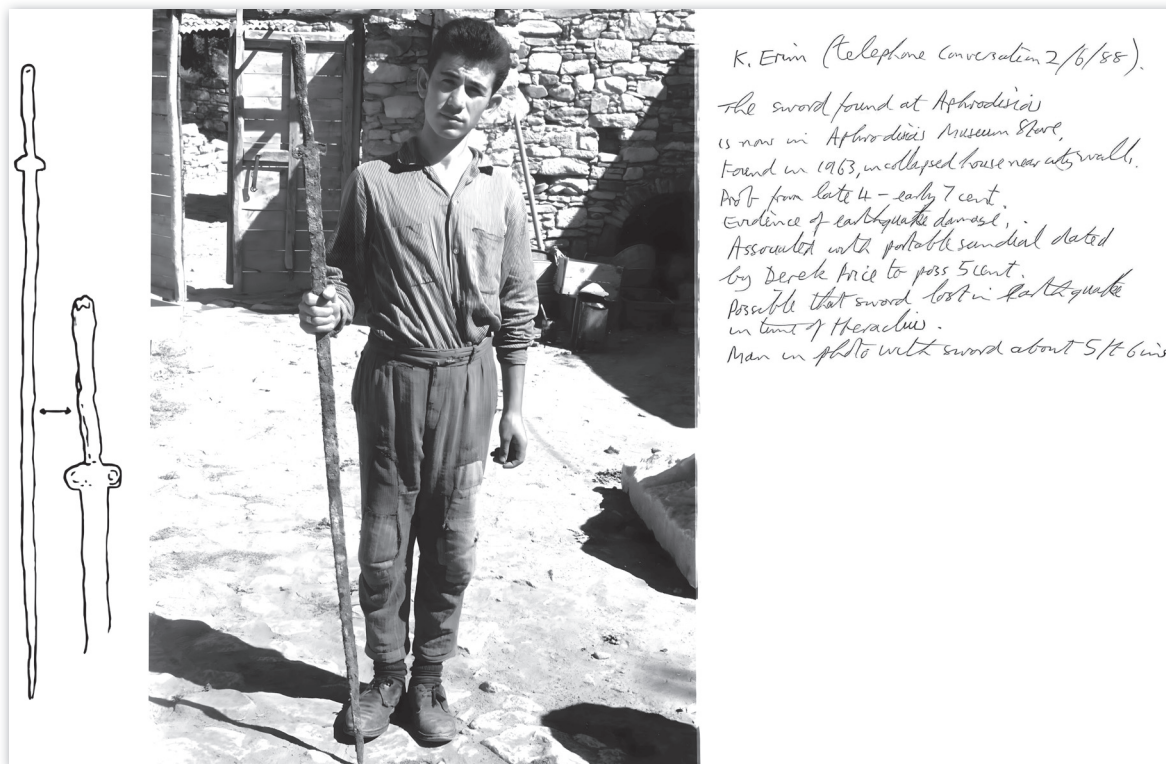


Fig. 1. Aphrodisias sword (Nicolle 1992: Romano-Byzantine Armies 4th – 9th centuries Osprey extraditions from the series Men at Arms, II)

A 型			B 型				C 型	
Aa 型	Ab 型		Ac 型	Ba 型	Bb 型	Bc 型		Bd 型
	I 式	II 式						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

表 2- 11 铁质长剑

Fig. 2. A catalog of the excavated swords from Hunan (李亚 2020, 23)



图一 玉衣左侧铁剑 (自上而下: D89、D90、D91、D141、D143)

Fig. 3. Swords from Emperor's Nanyue tomb (何少伟 2019, 46)



Fig. 4. Han Dynasty Jian from Xuzhou Museum in Tongshan County, Xuzhou City (https://www.xzmuseum.com/collection_detail.aspx?id=3034 (Inventory number: 133))

Fig. 5. Late Parthian longsword,
Iran Bastan Museum,
(Inventory number: 1604/18029)
(Farrokh 2016, 49, fig. 21)

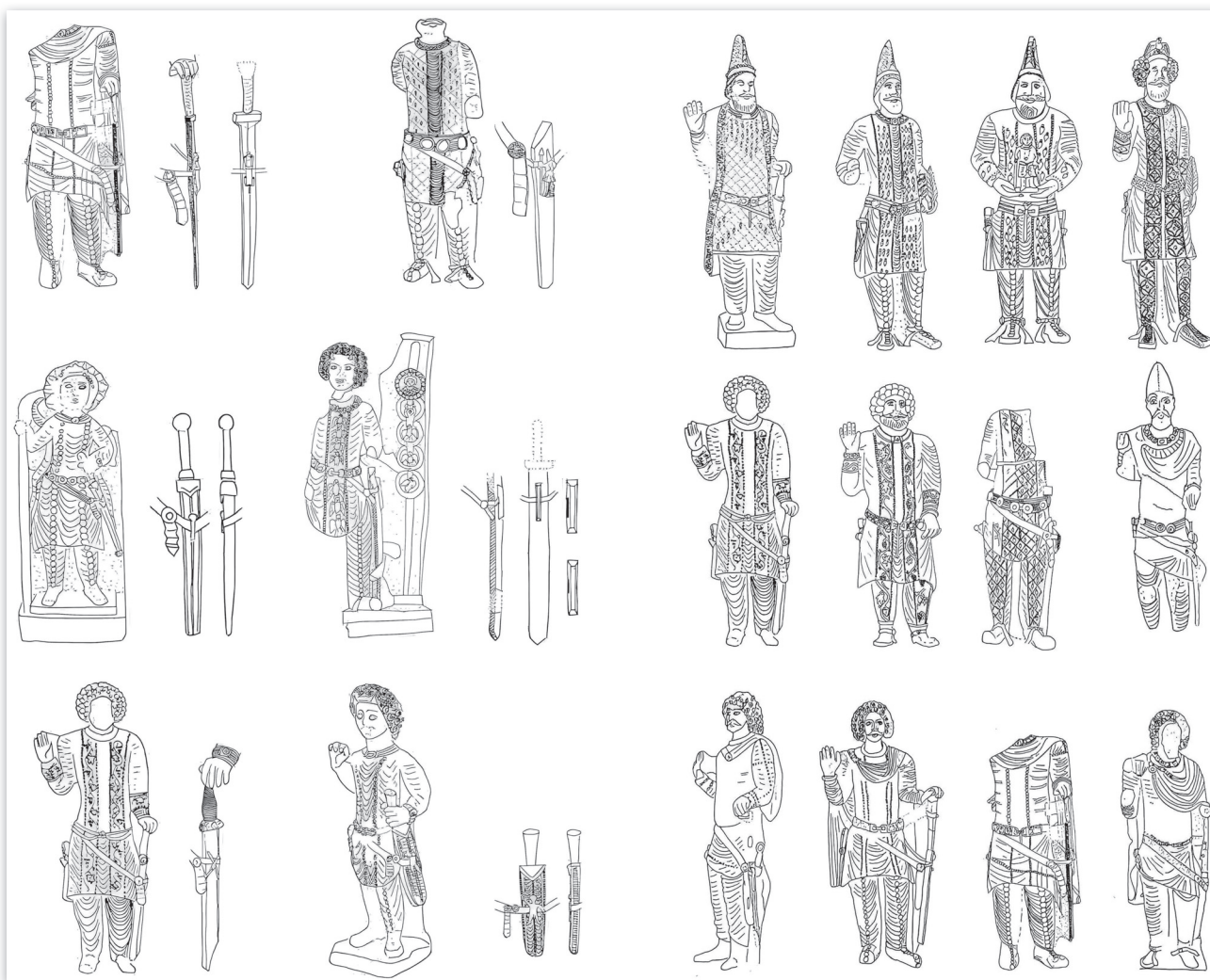


Fig. 6. Long swords depicted in Hatrene figures (Winkelman 2009, 352 fig. 68 and 354 fig. 70)



1



2

Fig. 7. 1. Feitian (飞天) (apsara) flying over Buddha, from Cave no. 272, Bei Liang Period (北凉, 397 – 439 AD), Dunhuang Grottoes, China. 樊锦诗等 2011: Pl. 132. 2. Feitian, flying celestial figures holding palmettes, Bei Qi Period (551 – 577 AD) (Wikipedia)

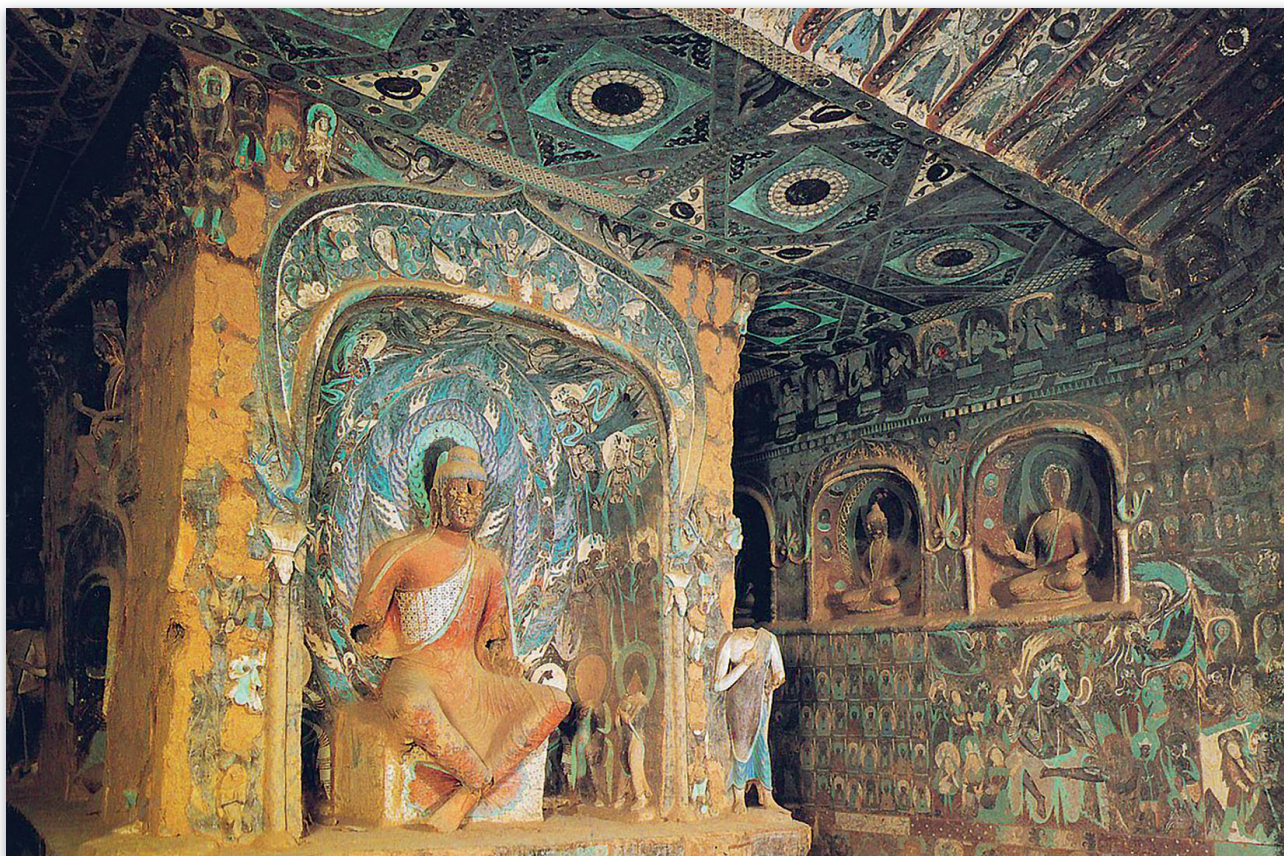


Fig. 8. *The Doric Order in cave no. 254, Bei Wei Period (北魏, 386 – 534 AD), Dunhuang Grottoes, China (Wikipedia)*



Fig. 9. *Heracles-Vajrapani in Ghandara Art (the 2nd century AD) (Wikipedia)*



Fig. 10. *Cowman Ananda with club like Heracles in the one piece of frescoes of Qiuci Grottes, China. 406 – 425 AD. Museum of Asian Art, Berlin (Wikipedia)*



Fig. 11. *Heracles-Vajrapani in Maijishan Grottoes, China. Bei Zhou (北周, 557 – 581 AD) (Wikipedia)*



Fig. 12. *Tri-color Warrior Pottery, Tang Dynasty (唐代, 618 – 907 AD) (Wikipedia)*



Fig. 13. Hellenistic coins circulated in Parthia, China, India (Wikipedia): 1. The coin of Parthian King Mithridates I; 2. The coin of Soter Megas (ca. 80 – 100 AD); 3. The coin of Indo-Scythian king Azes II; 4. The coin of Greco-Bactrian king Eucratides



Fig. 14. Gilded Silver Ewer, the sixth century. By courtesy of Guyuan Museum, China; The figures and scenes on the belly of the Ewer (Wikipedia)



Fig. 15. Panel showing perhaps a theme from a Trojan cycle, Gandhara School (2nd – 3rd century AD) (British Museum image id:00100175001, <https://www.bmimages.com/preview.asp?image=00100175001>)

НЯКОИ ТИПОЛОГИЧНИ АСПЕКТИ НА МЕЧ ОТ СЕЛИЩЕТО АФРОДИСИАС, МАЛА АЗИЯ, И ВРЪЗКАТА МУ С МЕЧОВЕТЕ ОТ ПЕРИОДА НА ДИНАСТИЯТА ХАН

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Резюме: *Статията се занимава с изследване на незабелязан досега и непубликуван меч от селището Афродизиас, Мала Азия. Изследването е фокусирано върху типологичните особености на меча, тъй като археологическият му контекст не е уточнен. Анализът разкри, че този меч може да бъде съпоставим с китайските двуръчни дълги мечове от династията Хан. Тези мечове могат да бъдат проследени и в Партската империя, но не са открити в териториите, които някога са формирали Римската империя и преди това – елинистическите царства на наследниците на Александър Велики. И така, мечът от Афродизиас е много рядък и уникален за римския и елинистическия свят от онова време, защото вероятно е единственият пример за такива китайски дълги мечове, датирани от периода Хан, които могат да бъдат проследени в западния край на Пътя на коприната.*

Ключови думи: *Афродизиас, Мала Азия, меч, Китай, Пътят на коприната, династия Хан, Римска империя, елинистически държави, Партска империя, типохронологичен анализ.*