

Rethinking the Concept of 'Healing Settlements': Water, Cults, Constructions and Contexts in the Ancient World

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Nomina Nuda Tenemus? The Epigraphical Records of Dedications in Two Healing Sanctuaries in Athens and in Oropos

Maria Elena Gorrini

Abstract: The paper examines the inventories of two Attic healing sanctuaries, the shrine of Hero Doctor in Athens and the Amphiarraion at Oropos. We analyse the nature of the dedications and comment on the ways in which this material can contribute to our understanding of the rituals performed at these sites.

Keywords: Healing heroes, Inventories, Dedications, Amphiarraion of Oropos, Hero doctor

Introduction

Since Rouse published his study of votive offerings¹ a number of further contributions have followed on dedications in Greek sanctuaries.²

This paper focuses on 22 inscriptions from two Attic healing sanctuaries: the shrine of the Hero Doctor and the Amphiarraion at Oropos. The aim of the study is to examine the votive objects themselves – almost all in precious metals, something that is rarely found in excavations but is well attested epigraphically – and to comment on what these dedications may reveal about the much-debated nature of the cult practised in honour of the healing heroes.³

The shrine dedicated to the Hero Doctor has yielded two inventory decrees⁴ from the end of the 3rd to the beginning of the 2nd c. BC. Although the location of this shrine remains to be confirmed, it was most likely situated in an area to the North-East of the Roman Agora in Athens, between the modern Plateia Ierou Lochou and Plateia Karamanou.⁵

The second sanctuary is still visible and was excavated in several campaigns by Vasileios Leonardos between 1884 and 1929,⁶ then by Markellos Mitsos in the years 1952-1954,⁷ Vasilios Petrakos published the results of

the excavations and edited the inscriptions.⁸ 20 of these will be analysed here.⁹

These texts are temple inventories most belonging to the category of the *kathairesis*, a ‘cleaning up’ involving the reduction or melting down of (smaller) dedications and/or other *kosmos* (‘cult equipment’) to make one or more larger objects.¹⁰

The structure of the texts is consistent:¹¹ after the mention of the archon and the priest, an individual proposes to clear away the mass of, possibly damaged, votives from the temple or the sacred table. A commission is then convened to supervise the operation, involving a scrupulous census of the objects due to be re-melted to create a new ex-voto for the hero. The catalogue of the objects follows, sometimes with the name of the dedicant and the weight of each piece.¹² The key significance of these documents is that they provide an accurate picture of the otherwise lost objects preserved inside of the cella.

Analysis of the texts

The first document, dated to 220/219 BC and connected with the cult of the Hero Doctor, records the granting of a request by the priest of the hero to make a new *oinochoe* from the old dedications in the shrine (IG II³ 1154 = IG II² 839).¹³ I refer to the recent English translation of this text by Stephen D. Lambert.¹⁴

As Lambert points out in his commentary:

¹ Rouse 1902.

² We may recall Aleshire 1991; Aleshire 1989; Lindenlauf 2006; Linders 1989-90; Linders and Alroth 1992; Linders and Nordquist 1987; Prêtre 2014a; Prêtre 2014b; Prêtre 2012; Prêtre 2009; ThesCRA 2004a, ThesCRA 2004b and ThesCRA 2005; Van Straten 1995. Further bibliography in Sassu 2012.

³ On healing heroes see Gorrini 2015; Kutsch 1913; Vikela 2006; on heroic cult Ekroth 2014; Ekroth 2011; Ekroth 2002.

⁴ IG II² 839 = IG II³ 1154 and IG II² 840.

⁵ Gorrini 2015: 29–34; Greco 2014: 802–804; Travlòs 1971: 573; Versakis 1910.

⁶ Leonardos wrote several reports in the Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας, from 1884 to 1921 and to 1929, and in the Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς from 1916 to 1923. Full list in Gorrini 2015: 62 note 58.

⁷ Mitsos 1952; Mitsos 1953: 119; Mitsos 1953–54.

⁸ Petrakos 1968.

⁹ IOropos. IOropos, nos. 309–328.

¹⁰ Lambert 2014. Cf. Brøns 2015: 44–45.

¹¹ Henry 1977: 70–71.

¹² On the issues concerning the weight of the objects, cf. Reger 2012: 149–151.

¹³ For examples of silver oinochoai cf. Yalouris 1980: no. 31; no. 106; no. 112; no. 117.

¹⁴ <https://www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGII31/1154> [04.12.2017]

'...it is one of the most vivid and informative documents of Attic sanctuary management, from which we learn that the decree was inscribed not, as was normal, at public expense, but at a cost of 8 ½ drachmas, to be subtracted from the proceeds of the melting down operation. It is this that explains how what is not an honorific decree came to be inscribed'.¹⁵

The person who took it upon himself to set up this stone at his own private expense and the dedicant at the head of the stone is Eukles, son of Eunomos of the deme of Kephale who is mentioned at l. 79 of the text as one of the donors.¹⁶

The inventory explicitly establishes that a wine-pourer should be fashioned from the silver coins and *typoi* stored at the shrine, as a dedication to the god. This suggests that wine must have played some role in the cult of Hero Doctor.

The objects listed, all in metal and mainly if not exclusively silver, are *typoi* (translated by Lambert as models, we return on this point *infra*) and accompanied by the name of the donor and, in some cases, the reason for the dedication (e.g. ll. 57-58 Zoilos upon his child). These include an *aspidion* dedicated by Euthion (ἀσπίδιον, ll. 62-63) together with a *typos*, several body parts (eyes ll. 66, 71,¹⁷ hand, l. 78, chest, l. 73, two thighs or thigh-bones, ll. 63-64 and l. 69), and an ἀκροστόλιον, that Lambert translates as end point, perhaps the decorative end-point of a ship.¹⁸

The list ends with the mention of a *phiale* and 18 silver drachmas (although the inventory mentions only 14 drachmas). The final dedicated *oinochoe* is in silver and amount to 183 drc. and three oboloi. The remaining two drachmas (actually three, but, as Lambert points out the discrepancy might be accounted for by rounding) will be used to create a new *typos*. The costs include a sacrifice, the melting and re-melting of the objects and the construction of the stele.¹⁹

IG II² 840, the second decree dated to the end of the 2nd c. BC, begins with the priest of the Hero Doctor in the city,²⁰ who reports that because of the time passed several objects dedicated to the god have become

useless: a *kanoun* (see *infra*), a wine pourer and two small vases and a censer (*libanotis*).

Therefore a commission must be formed (of three men from the Council, one from the *demos*) who have to work together with the priest of the Hero to oversee the refashioning of these objects and the *typia* in the shrine. A copy of the inventory must then be placed inside the *Metroon*.²¹ The list mentions two small drinking cups, and an *oinochoe* with their weight. The weights of the other objects mentioned in the list are not provided, perhaps because this information was not included in the official copy sent to the *Metroon*.²²

Among the twenty inscriptions of the *Amphiraion* the majority date to the 4th c. BC and specifically to the period 335-322 BC, i.e. the years between the Battle of Chaironeia and the restitution of Oropos to the Athenians by Alexander the Great.²³ Five of these are unreadable because of the extremely fragmentary state of the text (numbers 316, 318, 320, 322, and 328). The objects included in the remaining texts are presented in table 1, below, in alphabetical order and in the nominative, diminutives are normally considered with the noun in normal way. The table provides the Greek, a translation (discussed *infra*), attestations and the dates of the inscriptions. There is no space within this paper for prosopographical analysis or metrological calculations based on weights.²⁴

The dedicated objects

We should note that the dedications listed in these inventories could be divided into different categories:

1. *Typoi* and *typia*
2. Anatomical votives
3. Metallic ware, for ritual uses, including sacrifices, cooking, banquet
4. Coins
5. *Alia*: tools, jewels and mirrors, clothing.

Typoi and typia

Pollitt has completed an accurate account of the meaning of the word,²⁵ assessing the sources mentioning *typoi* in contexts directly involving visual arts, starting from the problematic IG IV 102 inscription from Epidauros. Leaving aside the question of Timotheos' *typoi*, epigraphical evidence (the subject

¹⁵ Lambert 2014: 31; cf. Berti 2013 on the costs of the stelai.

¹⁶ The deme is located in the area of Keratea, see Marchiandi 2011: 626 with bibliography. Eukles is attested exclusively in this inscription.

¹⁷ Real marble eyes dedicated to the hero doctor have been found in a secondary context in the Agora I 5968; Merritt 1948. Cf. *infra*. <http://agora.ascsa.net/id/agora/object/i%205968> [04.12. 2017]

¹⁸ LSJ s.v. ἀκροστόλιον: terminal ornament of ship (cf. ἄφλαστον), crowning either the stern-post, Ptol. Alm. 8.1; or, more commonly, the stem-post itself: Callix.1, Plu. Demetr. 43.

¹⁹ Lambert 2014.

²⁰ There was another hero doctor in the Attic chora, probably: Gorrini 2015: 34.

²¹ On the *Metroon* as a civic archive, see Sickinger 1999: 105-122 with bibliography. On the history of the building, see Greco 2014: 1017-1030.

²² As it has been supposed by Sickinger 1999: 237 note 44.

²³ Knoepfler 2001: 367-389; cf. Habicht 1999: 11. See also Knoepfler 1993: 279-302; Knoepfler 1992.

²⁴ Cf. Vickers 1990 about the complexity of metrological problems in inventories, with further bibliography, and Lewis 1986.

²⁵ Pollitt 1974: 272-293, with discussion of bibliography.

Table 1. The objects recorded in the inventories

Object	Translation	Attestations	Date
ἄβαξ	Trencher	IOropos 309, l. 5 and 6	335-322 BC
αἰδοῖον	Pudenda	IOropos 324, l. 70, 71	Late 3rd c. BC
ἄκροστόλιον	<i>Acrostolium</i> (discussion <i>infra</i>)	IG II ³ 1154, l. 71	220/219 BC
ἄλεξανδρεῖαι	Alexandrian drachmas	IOropos 324, l. 97, 98	Late 3rd c. BC
ἄργυρώματα	Silver objects, mainly vessels	IOropos 324, l. 5 IOropos 325, l. 2	Late 3rd c. BC Early 2nd c. BC
ἄσπίδιον	Small shield (discussion <i>infra</i>)	IG II (3) 1154	220/219 BC
βάσις	Base (of a crater, in this case)	IOropos 325, l. 20	Early 2nd c. BC
βωμίσκος	Small altar	IOropos 325, l. 7, 22, 51	Early 2nd c. BC
δαρ-	Daric	IOropos 315, ll. 13 and 14	335-322 BC
δημητριαί	Demetrian coins (?)	IOropos 325, l. 6-7	Early 2nd c. BC
δραχμαί	Drachms	IOropos 310, l. 5	335-322 BC
ἐλαία χρυσιή	Golden olives	IOropos 325, l. 60	Early 2nd c. BC
ἐλαιρόν	Vessel (discussion <i>infra</i>)	IOropos 325, l. 52	Early 2nd c. BC
ἡδυπότις ἡδυποτίδιον	Small cup	IOropos 324, l. 72-73 IOropos 325, l. 7 IOropos 326, l. 17, 18	Late 3rd c. BC Early 2nd c. BC Mid 2nd c. BC
ἡθμοί	Strainers	IOropos 325, l. 9	Early 2nd c. BC
θερμαντήριον	Small bronze kettle or pot for boiling water	IOropos 319, l. 5	4th c. BC
θερμαστίδιον	Tongues used by smiths to take hold of hot metal	IOropos 319, l. 12	4th c. BC
θυμιατήριον	Incense - burner	IOropos 319, l. 7	4th c. BC
κάδοι	Basins/buckets (discussion <i>infra</i>)	IOropos 319, l. 8 IOropos 325, l. 17	4th c. BC Early 2nd c. BC
καλυπτήρ ἐξ ἄ[ν]αστροφίσματος	Hinged lid	IOropos 325, l. 61	Early 2nd c. BC
κανοῦν	Vessel of basket shape	IOropos 324, l. 55 IG II ² 840, l. 6, 14, 42	Late 3rd c. BC Late 2nd c. BC
κάτοπτρον	Mirror	IOropos 319, ll. 1-2	4th c. BC
κοτυλία	Small cups	IOropos 319, l. 1	4th c. BC
κρατήρ	Crater	IOropos 310, l. 11 IOropos 325, l. 19	335-322 BC Early 2nd c. BC
κρηματις ἱερά	Unknown object	IOropos 325, l. 15, 22	Early 2nd c. BC
κρηστήριον	Meat-tray	IOropos 319, l. 6, 14	4th c. BC
κρον-	Two edged axe (?)	IOropos 319, l. 9	4th c. BC
κύαθοι	Ladles	IOropos 319, l. 8 IOropos 325, l. 6, 13, 22, 33, 55, 56 IOropos 326, l. 14, 25	4th c. BC Early 2nd c. BC Mid 2nd c. BC
κώθων	<i>Kothon</i> (discussion <i>infra</i>)	IOropos 319, l. 3 IOropos 324, l. 56 IOropos 326, l. 16	4th c. BC Late 3rd c. BC Mid 2nd c. BC
λεπίδιον	Small golden plate	IOropos 325, l. 61	Early 2nd c. BC
λιβανωτής	Censer	IOropos 324, l. 73 IOropos 325, l. 13, 15, 16 IOropos 326, l. 19 IG II ² 840, l. 7, 15, 41	Late 3rd c. BC Early 2nd c. BC Mid 2nd c. BC Late 2nd c. BC
λύχνος	Lamp	IOropos 325, l. 4	Early 2nd c. BC
μασζονόμον	A sacred tray for special barley cakes	IOropos 325, l. 8, 50, 51 IOropos 26, l. 10	Early 2nd c. BC Mid 2nd c. BC

Object	Translation	Attestations	Date
μαστός	Sacred breast shaped cup	IOropos 325, l. 11, 13, 14, 15, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 56, 57, 58, 59, 62, 65, 66, 68, 69, 70, 72 IOropos 326, l. 15, 20, 21	Early 2nd c. BC Mid 2nd c. BC
μηρο[ύς]	Thighs or thigh-bones	IG II ³ 1154, l. 63-64, 69	220/219 BC
νεικητήριον	Victory prize	IOropos 325, l. 22, 57, 63, 64, 67, 71, 72	Early 2nd c. BC
ξέστης	Pitcher	IOropos 325, l. 54	Early 2nd c. BC
ξυστήρ	Scraper	IOropos 325, l. 11, 12	Early 2nd c. BC
ὀβολοί	Obols	IOropos 328, 6	2nd / 1 st c. BC
οἰνοχόη	Wine pourer	IOropos 312, l. 3 IOropos 319, ll. 6-7 IG II ³ 1154, l. 20, 47-48, 85 IG II ² 840, l. 6-7, 14-15, 43	335-322 BC 4th c. BC 220/219 BC Late 2nd c. BC
ὄλκεϊον	Large bowl or basin	IOropos 326, l. 12	Mid 2nd c. BC
ὄξις	Vinegar cruet	IOropos 325, l. 9	Early 2nd c. BC
ὀφθαλμοί	Eyes	IG II ³ 1154, l. 66, 71 IOropos 311, l. 3 IOropos 321, ll. 5, 10, 12, 13, 17	220/219 BC 335-322 BC 4th c. BC
ὀφίδιον	Jewel or small snake (discussion <i>infra</i>)	IOropos 317, ll.3-4 IOropos 324, l. 70	335-322 BC Late 3rd c. BC
παναγρίς	Small cauldron	IOropos 319, l. 4	4th c. BC
πάρυφον	Border woven along a robe or embroidered robe	IOropos 313, l. 6 and 7 IOropos 315, l. 7	335-322 BC 335-322 BC
πέλεκυς τεκτονικός	Double axe for cutting wood	IOropos 309, l. 4	335-322 BC
πέταλα τρία ἤμισυ	Three petals ruined	IOropos 325, l. 57	Early 2nd c. BC
ποικίλον	Another colourful object	IOropos 309, l. 7	335-322 BC
ποτήρια	Drinking cups	IOropos 319, l. 2 IG II ² 840, l. 7, 15, 39, 40	4th c. BC Late 2nd c. BC
πρόσωπον/προσώπιον	Face, mask	IOropos 324, l. 68-69	Late 3rd c. BC
πτολεμαϊκά	Ptolemaic coins	IOropos 324, l. 92, 93	Late 3rd c. BC
πύραυνον	Brazier or portable stove	IOropos 312, l. 5	335-322 BC
πυρήν	Gem (?)	IOropos 325, l. 15	Early 2nd c. BC
πυρός	Wheat (? Discussion <i>infra</i>)	IOropos 323, l. 4	3rd c. BC
ραντήρις ἱερά	<i>Perirhanterion</i> , lustral basin	IOropos 325, l. 18	Early 2nd c. BC
ῥοδιακή ἱερά	Rhodian sacred lamp (?)	IOropos 325, l. 7	Early 2nd c. BC
ῥοδιακὸν μικόν	Rhodian small cup	IOropos 325, l. 6, 7	Early 2nd c. BC
Σιληνοῦ πρόσωπον	Silen's mask	IOropos 325, l. 20	Early 2nd c. BC
σκαφεῖα	Basins, sauce-boats	IOropos 319, l. 11 IOropos 324, l. 63, 64, 66, 67, 74 IOropos 325, l. 10, 14, 16, 22, 30 IOropos 326, l. 22, 23, 24	4th c. BC Late 3rd c. BC Early 2nd c. BC Mid 2nd c. BC
στατήρ	Stater	IOropos 324, l. 94	Late 3rd c. BC
στατός	Stand	IOropos 325, l. 13, 51 IOropos 326, l. 9	Early 2nd c. BC Mid 2nd c. BC
στεφαν-	Crown	IOropos 315, l. 5	335-322 BC
σφαγεῖον	Bowl for catching the blood of the victims on sacrifices	IOropos 319, l.	4th c. BC

Object	Translation	Attestations	Date
σφαγίς	Sacrificial knife	IOropos 314, l. 7	335-322 BC
τετράδραχμ-	Tetradrachms	IOropos 310, l. 7	335-322 BC
τετράχμα	Tetradrachms	IG II ³ 1154, l. 55, 68 IOropos 324, l. 77, 78, 79, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 91 IOropos 326, l. 30, 33, 34	220/219 BC Late 3rd c. BC Mid 2nd c. BC
τιτθός	Breast	IOropos 324, l. 69, 71	Late 3rd c. BC
τράπεζα ἀργυρᾶ	Silver table	IOropos 325, l. 3	Early 2nd c. BC
τριποδίσκος	Small tripod	IOropos 319, l. 10 IOropos 324, l. 64-65	4th c. BC Late 3rd c. BC
τύποι	<i>Typoi</i> (discussion <i>infra</i>)	IOropos 314, l. 6 IOropos 321, ll. 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18 IG II ³ 1154, l. 17, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 67, 69, 70, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 83, 85 IOropos 326, l. 35 IOropos 327, ll. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	335-322 BC 4th c. BC 220/19 BC Mid 2nd c. BC 3rd c. BC
ὑδρία	Hydria	IOropos 325, l. 51, 52 IOropos 326, l. 8, 9	Early 2nd c. BC Mid 2nd c. BC
φιάλη	<i>Phiale</i> , bowl	IOropos 311, ll. 2, 8 IOropos 312, l. 8 IOropos 314, l. 4 IOropos 315, l. 10 (?) IOropos 324, l. 9, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62 IOropos 325, ll. 3-4, 27, 28, 29, 59, 60 IG II ² 840, l. 7-8, 15-16, 41	335-322 BC 335-322 BC 335-322 BC 335-322 BC Late 3rd BC Early 2nd c. BC Late 2nd c. BC
φύλαξ ἀργυροῦς παρὰ τὴν ἔστίαν σύνθετος	A silver chain for the fireplace	IOropos 325, l. 8	Early 2nd c. BC
φύλλα τοῦ στεφάνου	Leaves of a crown	IOropos 325, l. 60	Early 2nd c. BC
χαλκιδικαί	Chalcidian (discussion <i>infra</i>)	IOropos 327, l. 8	2nd/1 st c. BC
χεῖρ	Hand	IOropos 324, l. 72 IG II ³ 1154, l. 78-79	Late 3rd c. BC 220/219 BC
Χρυσός	Gold (some of the golden objects are inscribed)	IOropos 324, l. 98, 99, 100, 101	Late 3rd c. BC
χύμα	Ingot, bar	IOropos 324, l. 102	Late 3rd BC
χύτρα	Pot	IOropos 319, l. 9	4th c. BC
χυτρίς / χυτρίδιον	<i>Chytris</i> (discussion <i>infra</i>)	IOropos 325, l. 12, 13-14, 44, 45, 54, 55 IOropos 326, l. 19, 27, 29	Early 2nd c. BC Mid 2nd c. BC
ψυκτήρ	Wine cooler	IOropos 310, l. 12 IOropos 319, l. 3 IOropos 325, l. 21, 29, 30	335-322 BC 4th c. BC Early 2nd c. BC
ῶτα	Ears	IOropos 311, l. 3 IOropos 321, l. 4	335-322 BC 4th c. BC



Figure 1. Silver typos from Mesembria. Dimensions: 0.125x0.065m. 4th c. BC (from Ninou 1979: pl. 62 nr. 463).

of a fundamental article by Tamassia in 1961²⁶ shows that this term must be interpreted here as referring to metal reliefs of different sizes and sometimes inserted in a *pinax*, i.e. a tablet, or in a *naiskos*, in a temple-like frame (Figure 1).²⁷ Alternatively, they could have been inserted in a wall or column's niche or, again, hung up through nails to the walls.²⁸ The representations on the *typoi* are varied: from parts of the body to the depictions of the deity and/or worshippers.²⁹ Examples of Hellenistic *typoi*, in metal repoussé, have been found in Delos,³⁰ Eretria³¹ and Mesembria³² and a good comparison (in terracotta) for these types of objects is a votive *pinax* found in Odós Aristides in 1891, during building works, circa 350 m. SW from the place where the inscriptions related to the cult of the Hero Doctor were discovered. Boardman connected the *pinax*,³³ dated on stylistic grounds to 330-320 BC, with the inscriptions and hypothesised that they may have belonged to the same sanctuary. The scene, only partially preserved, depicts the donor (named Pausanias), his wife and four children. Behind them, in a window, appears the head of a horse, an element for a *Totenmahlrelief*. Terracotta

pinakes were common votive offerings, also in Athenian sanctuaries.³⁴ Their equivalents in silver or bronze or gold testify to the wealth of some donors.

Anatomical votives

It is not surprising that a good number of inscriptions indicate body parts, being inventories from healing sanctuaries. There is, however, at least one further proof of the existence of different mediums in which body parts were realised: silver, bronze, and marble. In addition to the silver dedications mentioned in the inventories (eyes, hands, legs, chest, breasts, faces, *pudenda*, ears) a further example from a secondary late Roman context is the inscribed fragment of a marble plaque with the relief of two eyes dedicated to *heros iatròs* (Figure 2),³⁵ which represents the transposition in marble of the metal *ex-voto*. The most recent work on anatomical votives is the study by Björn Forsén:³⁶ they represent diseased body parts, which have been healed or expected to be cured by a deity.³⁷ Anatomical votives were made from a variety of materials (wax, wood, silver, stone, terracotta), and those made of metal are attested as early as the 7th cent. BC (*Artemision* of Ephesos) but are predominant among the votives listed in the Attic inventories of the 3rd cent. BC. From the

²⁶ Tamassia 1961: 124–131

²⁷ Baumer 2001: 85–94 fig. 23–27 pl. 25.

²⁸ Cf. inscription IOropos 325.

²⁹ IDel 1416 A I, l. 44; 1417, B1, l. 4 ff.

³⁰ Vallois 1921: 242–269.

³¹ Reber 1983: 77–83. (4th c. BC). Cf. as well Athens, Kerameikos inv. M 362. Knigge 1980: 264–265, fig. 13.

³² Treister 2001: 96 and 195. Yalouris 1980, no. 51 and 52 (Komotini Mus. Inv. 1985 and 1589); Vavritsas 1975: 77–81.

³³ Boardman 1956: 18–25.

³⁴ Agora P 9468; P 380; Pnyx PN P–87.

³⁵ Meritt 1948: 39 no. 26.

³⁶ Forsén 1996.

³⁷ Cf. Hughes 2008 for a more complex interpretation of this type of dedications.



Figure 2. A votive marble eye dedicated to hero doctor from the Agora of Athens. I 5968. Courtesy American School of Classical Studies, Athens. Agora Excavations.

perspective of the inscriptions being examined we may confirm Forsèn's hypothesis which rejects the old view that certain deities were 'specialized' in the cure of particular diseases. Amphiaraos and the Hero Doctor heal both males and females, children and adults, and with different pathologies and problems, as is indicated by the parts of the body mentioned and the donors.

Precious metallic ware

The most common category attested in the inventories is the metallic ware used to perform rituals such as animal sacrifice, cooking of the meat, following banquets and preliminary purification rites.³⁸ To reconstruct the ritual in the Hellenistic period, at least in the *Amphiaraion*, we have the text of a sacred law,³⁹ dated between 387 and 377 BC:

'When he is present, the priest shall pray over the divine portions and place (them) on the altar; when he is not present, those who offer the sacrifice (shall do so), and at the festival, each shall pray for himself, while the priest (shall pray) over the public (victims). The skin of all victims offered in the sanctuary [shall be] sacred; each person shall be allowed to offer anything he wishes but meat shall not be carried out of the sacred precinct. Those

offering sacrifice shall give the priest the shoulder of the victims except when the festival takes place, on which occasion the priest shall receive the shoulder of each one of the public victims.'⁴⁰ (Trans. E. Lupu 2003).

According to Pausanias the ritual in his days involved the sacrifice of a pig or a piglet, for purification, and a proper sacrifice of ram, whose skin⁴¹ was necessary for the incubation rituals.

The first act of the sacrifice is obviously the killing of the animal: in fact, the presence of a *sphagis*, a sacrificial knife,⁴² and the related *sphageion*,⁴³ the bowl for catching the blood of the victims, and the possible presence of a *kron-(ta)* (the two edged axe, if the restitution is correct),⁴⁴ further testify to the blood sacrifice of animals. After the killing, the animal was skinned, cut, and then cooked. It is possible that the two sacred *xysteres* of I Oropos 325, ll. 11-12, alongside with those *xysteres* dedicated by a private citizen named Apollodotos, could be scrapers, rasps, used for this very purpose.⁴⁵ The mention of an iron *xyster* in a Delian inventory,⁴⁶ immediately after a big ἐξζαύστριον (flesh-hook for taking meat out of a pot) could provide further validity to the hypothesis.

Several objects may then be connected with the cooking process: the *statos*, and maybe the tripod, which could be simply a stand for a cauldron used to cook the meat of the victims;⁴⁷ a *pyraunon*, a cooking instrument, possibly a brazier or a portable stove;⁴⁸ a *panagris*, a small cauldron;⁴⁹ a small (bronze?) kettle or pot for boiling water (*thermanterion*, l. 5);⁵⁰ *chytrai*, pots to boil water or cook victuals (the *chytra* was an indispensable utensil, even in the poorest houses, allusions to it are innumerable in Aristophanes).⁵¹ It is less easy to

⁴⁰ Lupu 2003: 322.

⁴¹ Paus. I, 34, 3. Cf. Gorrini, 2015: 99-101; Sineux 2007: 165-172.

⁴² E. El. 811, 1142, D.H. 7.72, Polyae. 3.9.40.

⁴³ E. El. 800; Ar. Th. 754.

⁴⁴ Hsch, s.v. κροντᾶ.

⁴⁵ Nonetheless, the possibility that they were oil scrapers and used for the ritual cleaning of the body or athletic performances cannot be totally discarded.

⁴⁶ IG XI, 2 199, l. 84. 273 BC.

⁴⁷ Lupu 2003: 328-329 note 37.

⁴⁸ The *pyraunon* was a sort of portable cooking hearth, in which charcoal was inserted. An example of this type of vessel has been found in Mytilini, Makris Gialos, and it has been dated to the Hellenistic period: the vessel survives in fragments and has been reunited from the recovered pieces. It consists of an almost circular tray with a scaled fringe and an opening on both sides. The opening is placed at the centre and ends on a high cylindrical base decorated with a relief ring. On half of the circular tray is supported a small semi-circular part with an opening that supported the cooking vessel. The charcoal was stowed inside the tray. Mytilini, Museum Inv. No. 18236. Αρχοντίδου and Αχειλαρά 2002: 39-42. Another *pyraunon* was dedicated in Athens IG II² 1472, l. 30, dated to 319/318 BC.

⁴⁹ Cf. IG IV, 1588.18 (Aegina), Poll. 10.165.

⁵⁰ Poll. 6.89, 10.66. Cf. Stamires 1958.

⁵¹ Ar. Ach. 1175; Eq. 745, 1173; Ec. 845, 1092; Ra. 505; V. 828, 938; Pax. 802. Cf. Prêtre 1997a: 677 and IG XI, 2, 111 (Delos). Cf. Bonati

³⁸ Cf. Treister 2001: 196-207. Cf. Gill 1986 for the relations between fictile and silver vases.

³⁹ Lupu 2003: 219-226; Sineux 2007: 138-140.

understand the dedication of a silver chain for the fireplace: the name of the dedicant is not provided and in the absence of the specification of 'sacred' in the record it seems that this may have been a private dedication as a thanksgiving for what may be termed 'a domestic accident'. The *thermastidion*, tongs used by smiths to take hold of hot metal,⁵² may belong to the same context. In the absence of any *comparanda* from other inventories, however, the interpretation of these last two cases must remain a speculative assumption.

The inscriptions mention several vessels and objects connected with the final part of the ritual, the banquet. Some were private dedications; some were dedicated by the clergy (with the specification *hieròs*). A passage of Athenaeus is especially eloquent on this point:⁵³ 'And on the tripod was placed a bronze wine cooler, and a *kados* (bucket) and a silver *skaphion* holding two *kotylae* (one pint) and a *kyathos*, and the *oinochoe* was of bronze'.⁵⁴

I focus on the vessels marked as *hieros* in the inventories, in attestation of their liturgical use. The *libanotis* (censer) indicates the use of incense in the rituals,⁵⁵ part of which must have been performed in the night (a Rhodian sacred lamp and several nozzle lamps dedicated from private individuals point as well in this direction).⁵⁶ One of the sacred censers mentioned had an Eros on the lid (IOropos 325, l. 15).⁵⁷ The presence of a *maszonomon* attests the practice of donating a specific kind of barley cake to Amphiaraos:⁵⁸ these special trays are mentioned several times, also as private donations, evidently because the practise of making specific cakes for Amphiaraos on certain occasions must have been very common.⁵⁹ Another vessel dedicated was the sacred *kanoun* (a basket form) which is iconographically well attested and which contained either fruits or breads or the instruments for the sacrifice.⁶⁰ The *phiale* occupies a special place in these inventories:⁶¹ in one case (IOropos 315, l. 10) it is qualified as *aktinotos*, i.e. decorated with rays.⁶² On the ground with the comparison with Delos,⁶³ I believe that a good example of what this object could have looked like can be found in the Morgantina

silver objects, such as the *phiale mesomphalos* whose inner surface is occupied by twelve embossed, gilded, pointed rays⁶⁴ (diameter: 14.8 cm, weight: 104 g, height: 2.3 cm).⁶⁵ *Phialai*, in gold or silver, were shallow bowls for libations but, as Sassu pointed out in reference to the *Heraion* at Samos,⁶⁶ they represented the attempt to concentrate precious metal in sacred areas, to thesaurize it by dedicating it in sanctuaries. The metal ingots attested in the inventories point in the same direction (see *infra*). The *rantris* is a sacred utensil,⁶⁷ a whisk for sprinkling water at sacrifices or a vessel for lustral water: in other healing sanctuaries, the presence of *perirhanteria* as well as of utensils for sprinkling water is well attested.⁶⁸ Several small altars (*bomiskoi*) and a silver table,⁶⁹ complete the picture of the sacred metallic furniture of the *Amphiaraion*: all the small altars are private dedications.

To the banquet itself belong the *statos*, a support, the *chytris*,⁷⁰ and the *psychter* or wine cooler (a crater is not expressly attested as *hieros* in the inventories examined but recorded several times as a private ex-voto, including its basis and its decoration), the *hydria*, the *kyathos* and the *skaphion*. The *kyathos* was a ladle, for drawing wine out of the crater:⁷¹ although the word *kyathos* may sometimes indicate a silver cup, I believe that in all of these inscriptions it should be translated as ladle, on the ground of many contemporary comparisons archaeologically attested (Figure 3).⁷² The *skaphion* (decorated with an Eros, in one case, and an Anteros, in a second case) were probably small shallow vessels without a handle, a sort of basin or concave vessel in the form of a boat, such as the modern sauceboat, used either in baths or as a drinking cup.⁷³ The *skaphe* is a

2016: 197–201.

⁵² Hsch., s.v. θερμαστρίς or θέρμαστρίς. Cf. Stamires 1958.

⁵³ Ath. 4. 142 D. Cf. Gulletta 1991: 299–310.

⁵⁴ Birch and Walters 1905: 150–151.

⁵⁵ Massar 2008: 192–195.

⁵⁶ On the rituals involving incubation and dreams cf. von Ehrenheim 2015. On the meaning of votive lamps see Prêtre 2014a: 549. For examples of bronze lamps cf. Yalouris 1980: 185 no. 166.

⁵⁷ Cf. von Bothmer 1985: 7 on a lid from the Morgantina treasure depicting an Eros.

⁵⁸ IOropos: 242 note 6. Cf. Ath. 11, 783 E.

⁵⁹ Cf. the special cakes mentioned in the Sacred Law of *Asclepius* at Zea: IG II² 4862, or those for *Artemis* in Munichia (Viscardi 2010: 34).

⁶⁰ Schelp 1975.

⁶¹ Silver *phialai*: Strong 1966: 97–101 and pll. 15 A; 16 A and 16 B.

⁶² Lushey 1939: 26–27.

⁶³ IDelos 104 (12), l. 23, dated to 353/2–352/1 BC, IDelos 104 (16), l. 3, dated to 434–315 BC, which sometimes could have been a cup also adorned with a nut-shaped boss (cf. McCabe 1990: no. 19, l. 31).

⁶⁴ Guzzo 2003: 45–94, 58 no. 9 and fig. 32.

⁶⁵ The dedicated *phialai* were placed apparently on the wooden *tryphaktos* of the temple (ἐπι τοῦ τρυφάκτου). Architectural evidence has proven the existence of such parapet walls between the columns in the cella of the temple. There is no archaeological evidence, however, of the existence of a barrier in front of the cult statue. The *tryphaktos* in the *Amphiaraion* most probably refers to the screen walls in the intercolumniations that prevented an all too direct spatial communication between the aisles of the temple building (Mylonopoulos 2011: 271).

⁶⁶ Sassu 2014b: 350.

⁶⁷ Yalouris 1980: 163 no. 125.

⁶⁸ Melfi 2007: 28–29.

⁶⁹ Prêtre 2104b.

⁷⁰ Cf. IG XI, 2 .110.25 (Delos, 3rd c. BC); Erasistr. ap. Gal.11.215; a *chytridion*, attested as well in the inventories, must have looked like its clay version, i.e. a round-bottomed, lidless, one-handled cooking pot that was a standard item of the classical kitchen. Cf. Jordan and Rotroff 1999: 147–154.

⁷¹ Anacr. 63.5, Pl.Com.176, Archipp. 21, X. Cyr.1.3.9, PEleph.5.3 (3rd c. BC).

⁷² A good example of a contemporary silver ladle is from Kavalla, now at Baltimore Walters Art Gallery cat. no. 57.909; Reeder 1988: 124–125 no. 42, l. 8. Another example is from Morgantina: Guzzo 2003: 57–58 no. 8. Figures 27–31. L. 24.7cm; diam. of bowl 5.5cm; wt. 119g. Cf. Guzzo 2006: 82 and Strong 1966: 115–116 pl. 34.

⁷³ Smith 1890, s.v. *skaphion*: 'a shallow vessel without a handle, so called because it was shaped something like a boat, used as a drinking cup (Plaut. *Stich.* 4.5, 11); sometimes earthenware, sometimes metal; e.g. of brass (Lucr. 6.1045) or silver (Athen. 4. p. 142 D; Cic. *Ver.* 4.1.

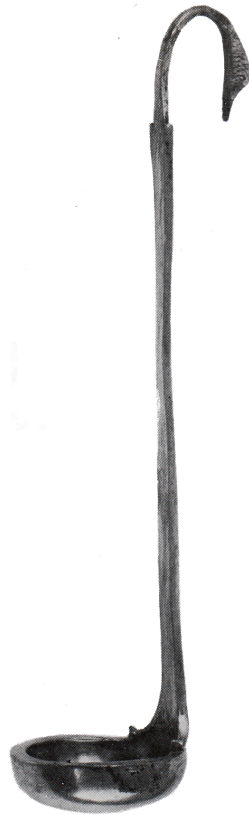


Figure 3. Silver *kyathos* with a flat handle ending in a goose-head. Length 0.265m. Derveni, Grave B. Second half of the 4th c. BC. (from Ninou 1979: pl. 28).

general term used for vessels of varied importance: basins, troughs, washing tubs.⁷⁴ The maidens referred to as the Skaphephoroi in the Panathenaic festival carried these flat dishes or trays, and the *skaphion* is identified with the *kalpion*⁷⁵ for drinking water. The fact that meat was consumed in the banquets is certified by the recorded presence of the *kresterion*, a meat-tray, attested in several other Attic inventories.⁷⁶

The functions of the *olkeion*, the *kados*, the *mastos*, and the *krematis* are less certain. The *olkeion* is a big-bellied vessel, a large bowl or basin for washing cups.⁷⁷ The *kados* was used primarily to store and transport wine, as well as to draw well water. The sources also mention *κάδος* / *cadus* in connection with other contents such as foodstuffs, sauces and ointments, or as a 'basin' in the context of the bath.⁷⁸ Finally, the word is attested in Greek medical literature, but only with the meaning

'bucket' or 'basin' for water, though a *κάδιον* containing a salve appears in a papyrus from the Roman period.⁷⁹ The *kados* seems not only to have been used for storing wine in the cellars but also for serving at banquets: the frequency of the word's occurrences in the inventories may suggest its use in the banquets.⁸⁰ The meaning of the sacred *krematis* remains obscure.

The first datum to highlight about the *mastoi* is their enormous number: the first inventory of about the mid-2nd c. BC includes 159 vases; four of these are repeated in the second. All objects in these inventories are identified, either as 'sacred' (*hieros*) or by a personal name, and provided with a weight.⁸¹ A *mastos* is a vessel shaped like a woman's breast, after the first mythical dedication made by Helen to Athena at Lindos on Rhodes which had the 'measure of her own breast'.⁸² In its purest form, this shape had neither handles nor a flattened surface on which it could have stood, but perfectly represented an idealized woman's breast with a button for the nipple at the bottom that would nestle between the fingers when held. Pollux lists the *μαστός* among the cups for drinking and, according to Athenaeus,⁸³ the Paphians call a cup (*ποτήριον*) a *μαστός*. As Reger has highlighted, of the 159 recorded 56 weighed exactly 100 dr. A further 19 weighed between 97.5 and 110 dr; the next lighter *mastos* weighed 86.5 dr and the next heavier 133.5 dr. This clustering requires some explanation, which Reger identifies in the six entries in the inventory which qualify the person dedicating a *mastos* as the *epimeletes*, stating 'It therefore seems likely that the *epimeletes* was required to dedicate a *mastos* weighing 100 dr at the end of his term of office',⁸⁴ and providing further proof on the analogy with other cases.⁸⁵ This persuasive interpretation would also explain why most of the donors of this cup are men.

There are other metallic vessels attested in the inventories as dedications of private donors and connected to the banquet. These include the *oinochoai*, wine pourers,⁸⁶ the *kotylia*, cups,⁸⁷ the *poteria*,⁸⁸ small cups, and the above-mentioned *chytrai*. Although there is no need to consider these at length – they are well known in literary, archaeological, iconographical and epigraphical sources⁸⁹ –, several other objects do merit further discussion.

7, 37–Z1). It was used also for dipping and pouring water over the body in the bath (Athen. 11. p. 501 E; Plaut. *Pers.* 1.3, 43).

⁷⁴ Poll. 10. 77.

⁷⁵ Birch 1873: 176.

⁷⁶ I.Eleusis 156; IG II² 1543; IG II² 1541; I.Eleusis 140; IG II² 1416; IG II² 1424a.

⁷⁷ SIG 869.16 (Eleusis), Plb. 30.26.1. LSJ s.v. Ath. 11. 462 e.

⁷⁸ Ar. Av 1032, Eccl. 1002. Birch and Walters 1905: 165. Bonati 2016: 59–85.

⁷⁹ Anacr. 17, Archil. 4, Hdt. 3.20, S. Fr. 534.3; Ar. Ach. 549.

⁸⁰ <http://www.papirologia.unipr.it/CPGM/glossary/cards/lexicalia/KADOS.pdf>. Ath. 11. 472 e–f. Yalouris 1980: 159 no. 116 for example.

⁸¹ On the weight see Keil 1890: 595–620.

⁸² 'mammae suae mensura', Plin. *nat.* 33.81.

⁸³ Ath. 11. 487 B.

⁸⁴ Reger 2012: 154–155.

⁸⁵ Reger 2012: 155.

⁸⁶ Strong 1966: 116 and pl. 34 and 35 A.

⁸⁷ Cf. Guzzo 2006: 88–89 nos. 32–40.

⁸⁸ Cf. Guzzo 2006: 212 nos. 299–300.

⁸⁹ Cf. Scheibler 2004, *passim*, for their ceramic equivalent. Cf. Williams and Ogden 1994, 30–31 for the artisans and Williams 1998, 99–105 for identification of goldsmiths' workshops and their organization.

The word *abax* does not seem to carry any architectural meaning:⁹⁰ it rather describes a table, or a plate or trencher. This term occurs in three other texts, two from Delos (ID 2154, dated to 106/5 BC and in a very fragmentary state, and IG XI, 2, 145, l. 58, an inventory dated to 302 BC) and a third inscription of the 2nd c. AD from the temple of Hekate at Lagina.⁹¹ The *helairon* is a vessel which was probably connected with the oil,⁹² a series of *hedypotidia* were cups, probably of Rhodian manufacture⁹³ such as the Rhodian small cups,⁹⁴ which are also attested; the *hethmoi* were silver wine-strainers,⁹⁵ and the *oxis* was a vinegar-cruet, originally earthen, but since Aristophanes' times is attested in bronze and, ⁹⁶ later, in silver.⁹⁷ The *kothon* is equally well known and was a drinking vessel.⁹⁸ Its key characteristics are a convex profile, a low ring foot, and various types of handles: the vessel can be lidded or lidless. Lastly, the *xestes* can be translated a *sextarius*, either a pitcher or even a cup containing two *kotylai*, i.e. 0, 54 l.

Coins

Money had to be paid in the *thesauros* of the sanctuaries,⁹⁹ possibly as fees to pay for the animal sacrifice (a kind of sacrificial tariff),¹⁰⁰ together with incubation fees and,¹⁰¹ lastly, as a thanks for the healing. Attested finds range from Daric to Ptolemaic coins, passing through Attic *drachmai*, *tetradrachmai* and staters. The daric, *dareikós statér*, was an Achaemenid gold coin of ca. 8.4 gr,¹⁰² which was introduced by Darius I toward the end of the 6th c. BC. Eventually, because of the dominant position of the *dareikós* as the single most regularly issued gold coin of its time, the term became a synonym among the Greeks for any gold coin (as with the stater issued by Philip, the *dareikoi Philíppeioi*).¹⁰³ In consideration of the date of the inscription the term is perhaps to be interpreted simply as 'gold coin'. Next to the Daric coins, the inventories mention several *tetradrachmai*,¹⁰⁴

staters, Ptolemaic coins (Ptolemaic tetradrachms and Alexandrian drachms, *obeloi*), a dubious Demetrian coin (?) and some Chalcidian examples, either drachms, or vessels (on ground of the comparison with IG II² 1643 and IDelos 12).¹⁰⁵ The presence of a *chyma*, an ingot, could indicate that these sanctuaries may have worked also as deposits for precious metals.¹⁰⁶

Alia

A few terms escape any categorization. This is the case for some ornaments, such as leaves of a crown, golden olives and another golden *lepidion*,¹⁰⁷ a 'shell, pod, metal plate', perhaps belonging to some jewel. Two hinged lids may belong to the *mundus muliebris* as the mirrors and,¹⁰⁸ more uncertainly, the *πυρήν*, the 'core', derived from *πυρός* (wheat or wheat grain).¹⁰⁹ The study of the Delos inventories seems to indicate, in one case, that *pyrenia* may belong to a jewel parure dedicated in the *Eileithyaion*: *πυρήνια χρυσά καί ένδεσμίδες και τύποι και κάρδια καί αλλά χρυσία*, in the inventory XI 2, 161B (l. 116) dated to 281 BC.¹¹⁰ A second inventory, IG XI 2, 203B (l. 85) dated to 255 BC, mentions again *pyrenia* as components of a jewel parure, *άνειρμένα έπί λίνου*, 'hanged up on a wire'. Although the wire is not mentioned in the first inscription Prêtre has convincingly demonstrated that the context points to the same object, namely a beaded necklace composed by *pyrenia* (a word that indicates a series of grains of small size).¹¹¹ Inscription IOropos no. 323, now lost and possibly dating to the second half of the 3rd c. BC, refers to an ambiguous *τῶι πυρῶι* which could be either wheat or, on the ground of the comparison with the previous inventories, a part of a necklace. Joubin pointed out that the decree must have been composed by two parts,¹¹² and, if the word *πυρῶι* refers to wheat, that this is a reference to a bloodless offer to the temple made by some individuals or a reference to the fabrication of several sacred objects, to be done with the income of the sale of wheat. Given the evidence of the Delian inventories, however, we cannot exclude that this is a reference to a bead of a necklace. The Silen's mask mentioned in IOropos 325 finds its archaeological equivalent in an ornamental golden Silenic mask from Palaikastro, Karditsa, dated to the 3rd c. BC.¹¹³

The text of the inscription IOropos no. 313 mentions (ll. 6 and 7) a *paryphon*, either a border woven along a

⁹⁰ Ginouvès 1992: 84 note 210.

⁹¹ Diehl and Cousin 1887: 156–158, no. 63. McCabe 1990, no. 62. Gulletta 1992: 53–55 with discussion.

⁹² Radici Colace 2005: 58–59.

⁹³ LSJ, s.v. ἡδυπότις: something that makes drink taste pleasant, name of a cup. Cf. IG XII 2 110.26 (Delos, 3rd c. BC), SIG 2 588.7 (Delos, 2nd c. BC), Semus ap. Ath. 11.469c. Cf. Birch 1872: 108.

⁹⁴ IOropos: 243 note 6.

⁹⁵ Birch 1872: 175: modern colander, flat round vessel with a long handle, mostly in bronze. Ath. 11. 469 c. Strainers examples in silver can be seen in Hill 1948: 454; in Guzzo 2006: 83 and in Yalouris 1980: 167 no. 130. Cf. Reger 2012: 156–158.

⁹⁶ Ar. Pl. 812.

⁹⁷ Sopat. apud Ath., 230 E.

⁹⁸ See Scheibler 2004:107 for the discussion about the *kothon*. Ath. 11 483 b.

⁹⁹ IOropos: 236.

¹⁰⁰ Lupu 2003: 330.

¹⁰¹ Lupu 2003: 332. Cf. also Lupu 2005: 219–226.

¹⁰² M. Alram, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/daric> [07.12.2017], with bibliography. Cf. Guzzo, Spatafora and Vassallo 2010.

¹⁰³ Melville Jones 1979: 25–36.

¹⁰⁴ Knoepfler 1987.

¹⁰⁵ Ath. 11. 502 b.

¹⁰⁶ Sassu 2014.

¹⁰⁷ LSJ s.v. λεπιδιον. Examples of crowns and olives can be found in Williams and Ogdén 1994: 165 no. 105; 180–181 no. 115.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Prêtre 2012: 135–136.

¹⁰⁹ Chantraine 1974, s.v. πυρός.

¹¹⁰ Prêtre 1997b: 372–173. Prêtre 2012: 200–201.

¹¹¹ Williams and Ogdén 1994: 168 no. 106; 182 no. 17; 188 no. 121; 191 no. 123.

¹¹² Joubin 1891.

¹¹³ Ninou 1979: 35 no. 18. (0.019m h.).

robe or an embroidered robe (a similar term, *paryphé*, occurs in other Attic inscriptions, such as the textile dedications from Brauron).¹¹⁴ If this translation is correct, it would be one of the rare testimonies of textile dedications in the sanctuary of a male deity.¹¹⁵ *Paryphé*, in the other cases where the word is used,¹¹⁶ is the term for a clump of drapery clasped by *korai* in the front of their skirts. Therefore, the Oropian *paryphon* (also attested in inscription no. 315) could be part of a chiton, and, if our hypothesis is correct, the donor could have been a woman: Brøns has demonstrated that in most cases, particularly in the areas of Brauron, Tanagra and Thebes (all very close to Oropos), women were the primary providers of garments recorded in these texts.¹¹⁷ Unfortunately, the very fragmentary state of the inscription did not preserve the donor's name but, from the other inventories, it seems that garments in the *Amphiaraion* did not play an important role in any ritual but were merely expression of piety and/or a display of wealth, such as in the *Asklepieion* of Athens.¹¹⁸ We cannot exclude the possibility, suggested by the healing connotation of the god and the presence of Aphrodite as *symbomos theos* in the altar of the sanctuary,¹¹⁹ that the dedication of embroidered textiles was related to the stages of the female ritual cycle (such as the first menstruation or during a pregnancy) even though the literary record clearly suggests that Artemis was the prime recipient for such textile offerings.¹²⁰

The word *aspidion* (IOropos no. 317) is extremely ambiguous. Although this could be a miniature shield,¹²¹ it seems more likely, given the comparison with the Delian inventories and the fact that the donor is a woman, that this should be translated here as medallion or medal.¹²²

The term *ophidion* is equally uncertain. Although it could refer to a small snake statue,¹²³ given the role of snakes in the Oropos sanctuary,¹²⁴ it may well refer to a common bracelet type, which had snakehead terminals, and it has been described simply as ὄφις, ὀφίδιον or δρακόντιον, all of which refer to snakes.¹²⁵

The *akrostolion* is clearly from a group other than the *mundus muliebris*. This may be a model of a boat-prow,¹²⁶ or a similarly shaped vase,¹²⁷ and was perhaps dedicated as a miniature war spoil or as a thanksgiving for survival after a shipwreck. The isolated *pelekys tektonikos* must have been a double-headed axe used for cutting wood,¹²⁸ perhaps an ex-voto from a carpenter having survived a work accident. It is not possible to speculate upon the identity of the *niketerion*, the prize of victory: the *Amphiaraia megala* were performed for the first time in 329/8 BC and they included a gymnastic competition, a horse race and a chariot race alongside a procession in honour of the god.¹²⁹

Conclusions

Through the analysis of the inventories of these two sanctuaries, it now seems clear that the ritual use of water as well as incense fumigations are attested. Sacred banquets may have followed the sacrifices or may have occurred during specific times, as indicated by the evidence for wine attested by the number of wine cups and many other banquet vessels recorded, and the practise of eating special barley cakes. At Oropos, the recorded objects imply a blood sacrifice, the skinning of animals and the consumption of meat. The presence of lamps may indicate that some rituals happened during the night: small wonder, in consideration of the practise of the *enkoimesis* attested in Oropos. We have also seen how the enormous number of *mastoi* may be linked to a specific duty of the *epimeletai* at the end of their service. Among the votives, *typoi* and anatomical ex-votos are well documented and align Oropos and the shrine of Hero Doctor with the other healing sanctuaries. We have noticed that many votives belong to the *mundus muliebris*; if this interpretation is correct it suggests that women played a significant role in cult practice.

Therefore, the objects catalogued help to throw a new light on the ritual, without being ritual objects *per se*, each dedication belonging to a specific, different, peculiar reason. Quoting Clarisse Prêtre:

‘... on pourrait conclure qu'il n'y a pas d'objet rituel dans les inventaires et que les objets rituels les plus obviés qu'on peut avoir à Délos se trouvaient être ces grandes stèles qu'on exposait dans le sanctuaire: objets rituels puisqu'on les déposait chaque année

¹¹⁴Brøns 2016, ch. 2 and IG II² 1514, 1515 and 1516.

¹¹⁵Brøns 2015: 43–83.

¹¹⁶Bieber 1928: 93.

¹¹⁷Brøns 2015: 69–70.

¹¹⁸Aleshire 1989: 159; Brøns 2015: 58. IG II² 1533.

¹¹⁹Gorrini 2015: 82.

¹²⁰Brøns 2015: 74, with discussion of the sources.

¹²¹Prêtre 2012: 62–67. Cf. Yalouris 1980: 152–153: four miniature terracotta shields from the Tomb of the Erotes in Eretria and Ninou 1979: no. 180 pl. 28 (miniature Macedonian shield of gilded silver. Dm. 0.036m. From Derveni, Grave A, second half of the 4th c. BC).

¹²²Prêtre 2012: 62–67.

¹²³Cf. IG XI, 2: 161, 162, 203 and 223 (Delos); two inscriptions from the Athenian Asklepieion (Aleshire 1989: 127, III and 177, IV), IG II² 1472, IG II² 1533 and IG II² 1534.

¹²⁴Cf. Archinos relief: Renberg 2017: 273–274 with further literature.

¹²⁵Prêtre 2012: 106–108. Additional discussion of the significance of the snake in Ogden 2013. Examples of snake bracelets in Yalouris 1980: 136 no. 66.

¹²⁶Samos, Heraion, wooden model of ship: inv. no. H 93, 94, 95 (Kyrieleis 1993). Prêtre 1997a: 675.

¹²⁷Samos, Heraion, wooden model of ship: inv. no. H 93, 94, 95 (Kyrieleis 1993). For an example of an earthen vase shaped in form of an akrostolion cf. Ambrosini 2010: 73–115.

¹²⁸Ginouvé 1985: 68. Pelekys is attested as a dedication also in an inventory from *Athena Aphaia*, Aegina, dated to 430–404 BC, IG I 3 1456, and in a Delian inventory, IG XI, 2 199, dated to 273 BC.

¹²⁹Gorrini 2015: 77; Sineux 2007: 102; IOropos, no. 298 and 520. Knoepfler 1993 supposes also a music performance in connection with the presence of the theatre.

après la rédaction des comptes et des inventaires, objets rituels parce que leur rôle dépassait celui de simples archives de l'intendance sacrée en manifestant l'immanence divine par l'opulence des offrandes qu'on y décrivait, objets rituels parce qu'ainsi, elles contribuaient à assurer la pérennité des cultes'.¹³⁰

Lastly, in terms of economics, we should remember that these dedications do not just represent devotional objects but constitute the fulfilling of economic obligations toward the sanctuaries: sites which become the place for the preservation of precious metals and, ultimately, the reserves of the *polis* itself.¹³¹

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