SVENSKA INSTITUTEN I ATHEN OCH ROM
INSTITUTUM ATHENIENSE ATQUE INSTITUTUM ROMANUM REGNI SUECIAE

Opuscula

Annual of the Swedish Institutes at Athens and Rome

5
2012

STOCKHOLM

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Published with the aid and of a grant from the Swedish Research Council
The English text was revised by Ms Catherine Parnell, Athens, and Dr Carole Gillis, Lund

Contributions to *Opuscula* should be sent to the Secretary of the Editorial Committee (address above) before November 1 every year. Contributors are requested to include an abstract summarizing the main points and principal conclusions of their article.
For style of references to be adopted, see www.ecsi.se/guide-contributors. All articles are sent to referees for peer review.
Books for review should be sent to the Secretary of the Editorial Committee (address above).

ISSN 2000-0898
ISBN 978-91-977798-4-5

Production and graphic design by eddy.se ab, Visby 2012
Printed by Elanders Sverige AB, Mölnlycke 2012

Aspects of ancient Greek cult. Context, ritual and iconography (Aarhus Studies in Mediterranean Antiquity, ASMA, 8), eds. Jesper Tae Jensen, George Hinge, Peter Schultz and Bronwen Wickkiser, Aarhus 2009. 245 pp. ISBN 978-87 7934-253-8.

This book brings together the papers from a conference which took place at the Centre for the Study of Antiquity and the Department of Classical Archaeology at the University of Aarhus in 2004. The aim of the event was twofold: on the one hand, to establish a network of young scholars working on ancient Greek cult, and on the other, to let them discuss their ideas under the guidance of Richard Hamilton, a seasoned scholar, and subsequently develop them into articles.

The scope of the volume is presented by one of the organizers, Jesper Tae Jensen, in a short preface. Then follows eight articles, seven of which were presented at the conference. The book is concluded with an index and a list of the contributors. The articles span a wide field including archaeology, philology, architecture, history, musicology and religion with the specific aim of combining the study of material culture with ancient texts and inscriptions.

The first paper, by Lisbeth Bredholt Christensen, explores the definition of the term "cult" within various branches of scholarship, in particular in relation to concepts like "religion" and "ritual", stressing the great distinctions in the uses of the modern terminology. Within the study of religion "cult" has been either of very little interest or considered as "ritual lived" and discussed primarily within particular religions from an emic perspective with no attempt at applying an analytic apparatus. This is contrary to "ritual", which is treated as a category where different kinds can be discerned such as transitory rituals, prayer, sacrifice, etc., clearly an etic approach. Sociology (at least in the anglophone sphere) instead uses cult for the experience of private religions, often contrasted with how institutionalized and mainstream religion is practised. In prehistoric archaeology and Classical archaeology and history, on the other hand, cult is a central concept. In the study of prehistory, the preference for the terms cult, rituals and religious practice instead of religion can be explained by the nature of the archaeological evidence, which does not allow for the reconstructions of belief, the core of religion. Among classicists the situation is partly the inverse, as cult is used as a synonym for religion rather than for ritual, an effect of the prominence of the written evidence, which facilitates the interpretation of the archaeological material. This paper cautions an unreflected use of terms, but there are certainly further distinctions between the terminologies in different languages that should be addressed as well.

Richard Hamilton analyses the relationship between altars, animals and baskets (*kistai*) on Attic votive reliefs from the Classical period by applying a statistical method, a chi-square test. The evidence consists of 224 reliefs dedicated to Zeus, Apollo, Artemis, Athena, the Nymphs, Asklepios and the banqueting hero, presented in a catalogue in an appendix. Several interesting observations are made. Of particular importance is the relation between altar and *kiste*, two elements that have to be taken as having different connotations in the reliefs. Altars more frequently occur with animals than with baskets, refuting van Straten's proposal that the *kiste* holds sacrificial cakes. There is also a variation between the deities, and in reliefs for the Nymphs, altars may have had a different meaning than to suggest animal sacrifice. A closer investigation of the *kistai* shows them to be more strongly associated with children and family groups, in particular women, than with the sacrifice of animals or vegetal offerings, a conclusion backed up by a brief detour into Attic vase painting.

Statistics are rarely used in this way on ancient evidence, which makes the paper interesting, in particular, as pointed out by Hamilton, as such an approach demands both a precise description of one's thesis and a consideration of the converse of the same thesis. On the other hand, the relationships revealed cannot be explained by this method.

Bronwen Wickkiser's contribution examines the relation between the establishment of Asklepios in Athens and the plague, as the introduction of the god is usually taken to be a response to the local healing gods' incapacity to help. The only source telling us about the introduction of the cult is the Telemachos monument, which, however, does not state why the god was established in Athens, nor does it refer to the plague. The problem is that the plague broke out already in 430 BC, and the cult was imported in 420, an important point stressed by the author. Wickkiser argues that there is no compelling evidence showing that the Peloponnesian war hindered the importation of the cult from Epidauros, as there were other important cult places of Asklepios from where he could have been taken. Moreover, there is no tradition of Asklepios being a plague-curing deity, nor that he ended the plague in Athens. Instead, a number of factors may have lain behind the importation of Asklepios as late as 420, most of all his general concern for health and the curing of chronic illnesses rather than fatal ones, a trait suitable in a climate of general worries about health raised by the plague. Political and military concerns, in particular engendered by the Peloponnesian war, would also have played a prominent role.

The next two papers deal explicitly with the Athenian Asklepieion, in particular the structure usually interpreted as the altar of this sanctuary. Vanda Papaefthymiou presents the results from the investigations of the altar in 2001. The exploration of the earth-filled interior of this structure showed that it was constructed almost directly on the bare rock. Under and around the altar were discovered nine rock-cut, earth-

filled pits, rectangular or oval, between 50–30 cm deep, interpreted as having been used for planting trees in the period before the installation of the Asklepieion, perhaps as part of a sacred grove. The pottery recovered dates mainly to the second half of the 5th century BC, suggesting that the pits must have been filled in when the altar was first constructed after the end of the 5th century. Important for the history of the altar structure is also a fragment of the cassette ceiling from the Erechtheion found in one of the pits. This fragment must presumably have arrived here after Sulla's invasion of Athens, when the Erechtheion was burnt, dating the present structure to the Roman period, perhaps Augustan, a date supported by the shape of the cuttings for the dowels and pour channels for lead. As the altar was rebuilt in the Roman period, it might originally have stood in the western part of the sanctuary, later to be moved east, and can therefore not settle the issue of whether the earliest Asklepieion was founded on the west or the east terrace, though Papaefthymiou finds it more likely that the Roman altar was constructed on the same spot site as the original one.

Unfortunately the new excavations did not seem to offer any evidence, for example, animal bones, ash or charcoal, that would support the structure's actual use as an altar, a circumstance which is important for the following paper, by Michaelis Lefantzis and Jesper Tae Jensen, which deals with the layout and placement of the original Asklepieion on the south slope of the Acropolis. The authors argue that the cult place established by Telemachos in 420 BC was located on the east terrace, thereby substantiating a suggestion previously forwarded by a number of scholars. The structure usually considered as being the main altar of the sanctuary, re-investigated by Papaefthymiou, had four phases: it was constructed in 418/7 to 416/5 BC and reconstructed twice in the 4th century. A careful and detailed discussion of the 15 extant blocks of this structure leads the authors to argue that, at least in its second phase (ending ca 360–350 BC), this was not an altar but a small building, entered from the west by a pair of doors. The corners were formed by wooden posts and the walls, presumably of wood as well, rested on blocks of Acropolis limestone. A stele was placed in the northwestern corner of the foundation. Fig. 8 (p. 101), essential for understanding the complex history of the structure, should definitely have been larger, allowing the reader to better follow the details of the argument. The extant peribolos must originally have delimited a smaller precinct, entered from the north-east corner, and did not include the so-called "sacred pit". This construction is still to be considered as part of the sanctuary from the beginning, however, due to its inner diameter being identical with one of the basic modules used in the design of the Asklepieion.

The authors' careful re-examination of the primary evidence certainly offers new data as to the architectural development of the Asklepieion, but one would have liked to have some of the arguments further developed here, for example, the use of the structure previously considered to be the altar. Furthermore, to claim that the "sacred pit" must have belonged to the early Asklepieion due to the deity's chthonic character (p. 111) is a statement which needs to be substantiated, as it is far from generally accepted.

The longest contribution to the volume (almost 70 pages), by Peter Schultz, discusses the portraits of Philip II and his family executed by Leochares and displayed in the Philippeion at Olympia after the Macedonian victory at Chaironeia. The larger issue is the origin of divine or heroic royal iconography in the Hellenistic period, here investigated from the point of view how Leochares' Argead portraits, may have inspired such a manner of representation. Schultz focuses on the questions of patronage, composition and appearance of the group and the symbolic and practical function of the tholos.

A detailed examination of the statue base in the Philippeion by autopsy reveals that it must have been erected at the same time as the tholos itself, due to similar tooling and identical marble and clamps in both the base and the building. There is no evidence for adjustments or later additions supporting the notion of two phases, one being Philip's and the other, Alexander's. It is most likely that Philip ordered the monument and that it was finished before the 111th Olympic Games in 336 BC and the king's death the same year. From the study of the base and the cuttings for the plinths, it is demonstrated that Philip was placed in the centre with Alexander and his mother/Philip's wife, Olympias, on his right side, and his parents Amyntas and Eurydike on the left side. The appearance of the statues is harder to determine, but Schultz argues that they clearly must have been divinizing or at least heroic, perhaps even modelled on the east pediment of the Temple of Zeus. Judging by the cuttings, the material cannot have been gold and ivory, as stated by Pausanias, but stone, possibly gilded. The placement of the statues within the tholos further enhanced their particular status, especially as the shape of the building is that of a *theatron*, a place for spectacle and display, in analogy with other round buildings housing statues of gods or heroes or being used for performances in sanctuaries.

The relation between music and cult is the focus of Tore Tvarnø Lind's paper, dealing with the limits of our abilities to understand music in the ancient Greek world and how these obstacles may be overcome. Starting from his work on Byzantine and Post-Byzantine music, the author discusses the advantages of applying an ethnomusicological approach. The physical evidence for ancient music is marginal and even the music theories found in philosophical and literary writings may give only a partial idea of the practical and aural reality or

how the audience experienced it. The study of ancient Greek music requires interdisciplinary and creative approaches, including reconstructions, and the field of ethnomusicology can be most helpful here regarding how to conceive the setting, forms and conceptualizations of music in antiquity. In the case of religion, music is an important element in creating the cultic context and serves as a mediator between mortals and immortals, as well as expressing inner and spiritual sensations. Lind stresses that reconstructions are always interpretations influenced by contemporary music, in particular what is called "World Music" today, and that they also echo the trends of the period when the recordings were made, a reconstruction from the 1970s would sound different from one made in 2004. He advocates an increased awareness of the impact of the present on such attempts. Though this paper offers many interesting thoughts, it deals more with methods of accessing ancient Greek music than with its relation to cult.

The final contribution, by George Hinge, explores the *partheneions* of Alkman and Pindar, arguing that the personal names included are to be taken as generic role names or "cultic personae" and that the poets did not have specific living girls in mind. He suggests that the choral lyrics were not composed to be performed at a single occasion only, but were re-performed in connection with certain festivals linked to particular kinship groups, who rehearsed and performed these traditional compositions generation after generation down to the Hellenistic period. The transmission of Alkman's poetry within a cultic context in Sparta led to these works being almost unknown outside this region before the 3rd or 2nd century BC, when collected by Alexandrian philologists. It would have been interesting if the relevance of the cultic context for the preservation of the choral lyrics had been further explored.

A general trait of the papers in the volume is that they are quite short (apart from Schultz), which does not have to be a problem, but in several cases this brevity results in the arguments not being fully developed or the main support of the discussion not being presented here, but referred to as published elsewhere or forthcoming. This is unfortunate, as it is stated in the preface that the contributors could choose the length of their papers themselves.

As in all conference volumes, there is the risk of the contributions being too disparate and not adhering to a unified theme, and this is the case also with this book. The topics given in the title—context, ritual and iconography—actually cover almost any aspect of Greek cult: however, the cultic angle of some of the papers could certainly have been made stronger. Although the individual papers are often interesting and offer new insights, in particular the new empirical evidence presented from the Asklepieion at Athens and the Philippeion at Olympia, a more co-ordinated approach would have been welcome, both when choosing and editing the contributions. A case in point is the small structure in the eastern part of the Asklepieion which in one paper is presented unequivocally as an altar, while in the following text re-interpreted as a small building (or shrine?), without either of the contributions acknowledging the completely opposite interpretation presented by the other. Here some editing would have been welcome. The illustrations are also problematic, in particular the maps and some of the plans, which unfortunately are too small and unclear.

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A. Powell & S. Hodkinson (eds.), *Sparta. The body politic* (Study of Sparta), The Classical Press of Wales: Oxford 2010. viii + 348 pp., 5 figs. ISBN 978-1-905125-26-5.

For anyone who is interested in Sparta and current research on the Lakedaimonian state, this book is a must-have. The present publication forms the seventh volume of collected papers from the International Sparta Seminar, presented at the Celtic Conference of 2006 held at the University of Wales Lampeter (now University of Wales, Trinity Saint David). Eight distinguished scholars dealt with various expressions as well as impressions of Spartan politics. Topics varied from Spartan nudity to British perceptions of Sparta and Nazi Germany. Certainly, each of the eight individual studies in this volume can stand on its own, but the "Introduction" does not shed enough light on the common theme or the aims of the publication as a whole. As for the editorial details, each chapter concludes with notes and a bibliography; the volume as a whole ends with a general index.

To facilitate for readers who wish to locate their respective fields of interest, a short account of each chapter will follow.

Chapter 1. Nicholas Rider, "Elements of the Spartan bestiary in the Archaic and Classical periods" (pp. 1–84). Rider explores the link between human communities and particular animals by investigating the presence of Spartan personal names composed of names of animals. He also examines the presence of animals in Spartan vase painting as well as in literary sources. Although the investigated area was not a large producer of inscriptions, the use of whatever is left could have contributed to this survey of personal names. Rider's chapter is divided into three main parts. The first part deals with personal names referring to animals. In this section, Rider divides the animals into groups of domestic and carnivorous animals, birds, flying insects and snakes. Each individual spe-