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Foreword

I am very proud to present this inaugural volume of *Hoplon*, a Classics journal by the Concordia Classics Student Association. The idea for this project came from our current president, Christopher Stephens, a couple of years ago. He wanted a place for Concordia Undergraduates to publish their research relating to the field of Classical Studies. At our first and seemingly only executive meeting in the fall 2016 semester, he brought it up again that he hoped to see this project come to fruition. Sadly, he did not have the time to oversee it, due to his many responsibilities. So, I told him I would take it, and here we are.

This journal is certainly not the work of a single person. In fact, it would never have existed were it not for the following people. Dr. Matthew Buell and Dr. Jane Francis are to be thanked for their assistance in setting up the foundation from which we launched this journal. A big thank you to all our authors for contributing to this first volume of *Hoplon*, I know you all must be very proud to now be published authors. I must also give a warm thank you to Alina, the artist of our beautiful cover. She took a simple idea and made it magnificent. Finally, I give my warmest thanks to the editors, Chris, Nico, and Shaun, my lads. You worked tirelessly with me to put this all together, and this journal would certainly have not been made without you.

I hope everyone reading this journal will come away with some knowledge, it is, after all, the reason why we made this. The pursuit of knowledge, of uncovering the past, has been a central tenet of Classical Studies for centuries. I am humbly grateful that this work can contribute to that.

Jonathan Roy
Editor-in-Chief

Editorial Board Biographies

Jonathan Roy

Jonathan Roy is finishing his second year at Concordia University, pursuing a Honours BA in Classical Languages & Literature. His main research focus is on Greek and Near Eastern interactions from the Bronze Age through to the Hellenistic period. He has done research under the supervision of Annette Teffeteller and has been a teaching assistant for both Matthew Buell and Renée Bouchard. Upon completion of his BA, Jonathan hopes to attend graduate school in Classics at either the University of Toronto or the University of British Columbia.

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Shaun Gravel is a fifth-year student at Concordia University in Honours in Classical Civilization with a major in History. During his undergraduate degree, he was in the Dean's list and the assistant for both Professor Alexander Dale and Professor Kathleen MacDonald. With a youthful passion for Greek literature and material culture, he aims to continue his studies at the University of Toronto and to ultimately obtain a PhD.

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Nicholas Koudounis is a Graduating student at the University of Concordia in Honors Classics. His focus is analyzing the cultural currents of the Hellenistic period with a primary focus on Ptolemaic Alexandria. He has been a teaching assistant for both Matthew Buell and Kathleen Macdonald and will pursue his Graduate studies next year at the University of Toronto.

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Christopher Stephens is a Classics student and the President of the Concordia Classics Student Association. His research focus is on the presentations of female identity, gender relations, and gendered violence in Roman love elegy. His scholarship has been presented or published at Concordia University and elsewhere. He would like to congratulate the authors published in the inaugural edition of Hoplon, and thank his colleagues for their hard work!

Exploration of Greece in the Early Iron Age and the Supposed Dark Age of Greek History

By: Alix Turner-Boyle

Abstract

This article is an investigation of the Early Iron Age of Ancient Greece (1050-700BC), also called the Dark Ages, in an attempt to discover if the Dark Ages were as dark and grim as is often referred to be. Firstly, the article will explore the division of society, social makeup and structure before and after the fall of the palatial period predating the Early Iron Age. This is to observe if there was a difference, and if so to what degree did they differ, and if there was still a certain amount of observable prosperity among the Greek who lived in the EIA. In conjunction with the latter, the status of trade, metalwork and agriculture will also be examined in order to observe to what degree the prosperity the Greeks had between the years of 1050 and 750 BC. The argument this article will promote is that despite the hardships present in the EIA, the people who lived during that period carried on a decent life and contributed to developments that would lead the way to the advancements made in the Archaic period into the Classical period.

The Dark Ages dating from around 1050-700 BC are also referred to in part as the Early Iron Age, or EIA and subsequently divided into the Protogeometric (1050BC-900BC) and the Geometric (900BC-700BC) Period. It is a time that follows the highly prosperous palace oriented civilization of the Bronze Age, dominated by the Myceneans and the Minoans. Some critics state that after the collapse of these two civilizations in the Bronze Age, the world fell into a "Dark Age" which is also known as the Early Iron Age. The reality is that the Dark Age, more precisely the century after the end of the Late Bronze Age is akin to the plague that would pave the way for the Renaissance. The structures, culture, trade, and agriculture in place by the 7th century BC is influenced through the advancements made in the Dark Ages. It can be argued that the poleis who emerged in the 7th century BC did not spontaneously rise from the ashes from the previous palaces that dotted the regions over 400 centuries before, but rather were the result of the slow rebuilding and evolution of the dominating social structures established after the collapse of the palaces. The following essay will first observe in detail the makeup of the post palatial society in addition to how the cities were divided. It will also briefly touch on evidence

of trade with other parts of the world, and advances in metalwork and maintenance of agriculture, which all stand against the belief that the Dark Ages were truly "dark."

The main argument implying that the EIA was the "Dark Age" stems from the collapse of the palatial system of the Bronze Age and the loss of literature, artisanship, depopulation and migration. There were no grand civic centers, frescoes, or grand statues in palaces for that matter. People lived in a simpler system and a system that ran on a much smaller scale. There are several theories as to why the Bronze Age came to an abrupt end, and these theories are heavily debated. In regards to this essay, the reasons why the Bronze Age ended are irrelevant. Rather, it is to focus on how society adopted to the collapse of the palace system and how they carried on afterwards.

Firstly, it is important to observe the division of society within the Early Iron Age (EIA). Donlan describes the social structure at the base of society in the EIA as being comprised of the *demos*, *laos*, and *oikos*. His assumptions are based off the writings of Homer within *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. The *demos* is described as the land from which a group of people originated. The *laos* can be considered a clan within the *demos*, comprised of *oikoi* which follow a leader at the head of the *laos*. Finally, the *oikos* is well known as the household which makes up the *laos*.[1] Donlan described that the *demos* was led by a *basileus* – chief in charge – and provided centralized direction for the *demos*. Below him were the inferior *basileis* who regulated the individual *laos*' and from which the *basileus* derived power and acknowledgement as their leader.[2] On the subject of *demos* and *basileus,* Whitley describes it as the 'Big Man system.' The collapse of the palace system left a power vacuum and turbulent time where some individuals would be able to rise to power and gain influence over certain people, thus gaining followers. Therefore, there would be an exchange of loyalty for protection.[3] This exchange was due to the

harsh nature of the time. One man could not make it out in the world alone and therefore by working together, a group and the individuals in it were strengthened. A method for the *basileus* to advertise his power was the *symposium*, which also served to strengthen bonds with fellow leaders, and entertain followers.[4] Whitley and Donlan lay groundwork for the structure of the EIA; based on their descriptions, it is evident that the Dark Ages were not in fact dark. The people of Greece were faced with a problem following the collapse of the palatial system and as a result, they adapted and created a new structure based around the independent *demos* consisted of many *oikos* which would be the basis for the independent *poleis* that arise in the 7th century.

While the latter explains the structure behind EIA society, it is important to also observe the ruling elite, which would have taken over after the palatial elite, had fallen. In this regard, Foxhall brings forth her explanation of political structures in the LBA and EIA. Foxhall describes the site of Lefkandi with evidence of four generations of elite burials, which are assumed to be the leaders of Lefkandi.[5] In addition, she hypothesizes that the second-order administrative center of Nichoria, which survived long after the palace at Pylos was destroyed, seemed to be socially, economically and politically self-contained, as well as able to survive without reliance on the palace of Pylos; in essence, the ruling elite of Nichoria were free from the shackles that limited them.[6] While they would have been able to survive without a reliance on the palace, these elites maintained certain elite status among the people of Nichoria.[7] By using the model of Nichoria, it is reasonable to assume that this transition of power from the palace to the ruling elite is similar in other EIA settlements which were administrative centers like Nichoria. Their past relation to the palace system that preceded the EIA would have given an individual, ie. the *basileus,* more authority over his followers and his *demos*. This leads to the assumption that while the palatial administration system collapsed, some elements remained

through the elites at a much simpler level that allowed them to govern the people throughout the EIA.

As a side note, while the social structure of the EIA has been discussed, another few points of importance for that period are brought up in Triantaphyllou's text. Triantaphyllou explored the remains – more precisely teeth and overall health of the remains – found within the gravesites at Pydna and Pieria. Curiously enough, there was a disproportionate ratio of female to male bodies identified [Fig 1.1].[8] In addition, there is a high frequency of female deaths in early ages. This result might be caused by complication during pregnancy, and Triantaphyllou admits that it is possible to have a high amount of infant mortality similar with all ancient civilizations.[9] Thus, two assumptions arise from these discoveries. The first is that males were possibly cremated while females were buried with their children. The second is that while the EIA maintained some definite social structure, it did still suffer from heavy mortality rates. Whether this was due to issues during pregnancy or simply improper nutrition, the graves do confirm the belief that the EIA saw a drastic reduction in population due to death. The high mortality rate could be a factor for the *basileus* to use in order to facilitate his rule over the *demos*, a type of strength in numbers argument offering support to families who did suffer losses.

After exploring the social makeup of the EIA, the layout of the cities and settlements can further be developed. It is important to note that these settlements in many cases are in their infancy and will eventually develop into the *poleis* that arose during the Late Geometric Period and the Archaic Period (c. 700 BC). In "Architecture and Social Structure in Early Iron Age Greece," Ainian describes the structure of the settlement of Oropos through clear architectural evidence; [10] for one, the presence of *periboloi*, a wall around a courtyard which is believed to serve as a means for keeping out the inundations due to the settlements proximity to marshy

areas and the Asopos river.[10] Ainian elaborates that they also served a symbolic purpose, [11] the *periboloi* divided the artisan sectors and created a link with each sector having a cult based around the craft [Fig 2.1-2.2].[11] The *periboloi*, as hypothesized by Ainian[12], was most likely to serve as a way to define the limits of the semi-autonomous households – or *oikois* – within the community. While Ainian cannot truly assess the extent of the settlement at Oropos, he can state with confidence that the city was designed according to well-defined family units which can be compared to the Homeric *oikos* in the case of Odysseus' *oikos* as described by Homer.[12] Moving to describe the EIA *agora*; Ainian describes that while the sites at Zagora and Emporio did not have institutions like the *prytaneion* or a *bouleutarion*, it did have an open space which cannot exclude the possibility of it being used for political assemblies.[13]

In summarizing the results of Ainian, it is clear that the settlements were well-organized structures, based along the ruling hierarchical structures previously discussed in the EIA. The populace of EIA settlements had well established roles (based on the evidence of craft specializations in certain rooms) in society and the layout of the individual *oikos* echoed the *oikois* of the later 7th century. Ainian even points to a possible exterior meeting space in one of the dig sites at Zagora used as a political structure alongside the houses of the ruling elites, and also for gatherings. Once again, while the layout of the settlements cannot be remotely compared to the later Archaic or Classical poleis that some of these sites would evolve into, it does prove to be enough to counter the idea that these were Greeks simply subsiding after the collapse of the palatial system. They were clearly organized and well on their way to evolve into the poleis that would come centuries later.

While the structure of both the settlements and the society within them have been described as evolving into something more, it is important to observe agriculture, trade and

metalworking. Regarding agriculture, it is important to return to the city of Nichoria, a second-order administration center to the palace of Pylos explored earlier on in the essay. Foxhall explored the floral remains at Nichoria in the EIA and the LBA and found that the same subsistence crops were being farmed through those two periods,[14] even though it had been argued that there was a decline of agriculture and a destabilized pastoral economy.[15] A simple thought behind the reason why there is evidence of the same subsistence crops being grown is the fact that small-scale farmers continued to farm what they were already accustomed to. The evidence of an increase in cattle bone remains indicated that there was less being brought to the palace as tribute or gifts.[16] In the light of this evidence, it can be safely assumed that some cities were more prosperous after the collapse of the palatial society, as was the case for Nichoria. They continued farming their regular crops and kept more for their personal reserves. While the artisans and literate scribes of the palace were gone, the populace remained to farm the land with little interest of their own in pursuing higher domains such as the greater artisan jobs present in the Bronze Age.

Concerning metalwork, it is important to turn to Snodgrass' research of Iron Age Greece and Central Europe. Snodgrass examines the presence of iron weapons in graves during the Early Iron Age. While he admits that iron weapons remains are rare in Greece during the period ranging between 1000-700BC, there are some evidence of a few iron weapons in the Agean, some of these having Near Eastern influences.[17] Barringer also mentions an iron knife found in the inhumation under the Lefkandi Heroon.[18] Overall, however, the general sentiment is that iron was not available to everyone during that period. When presented with this statement, two explanations can be derived. Firstly, metalworking in Greece had not advanced enough in the EIA (hence the term 'Early' Iron Age) in order to mass-produce their own iron weapons.

Secondly, if Greeks were unable to effectively produce iron weapons, then a plausible answer to the increase in finding iron weapons is a result of trade with the rest of the Mediterranean. By examining Ainian and his exploration of the layout of the EIA settlement, it is clear that the populace easily worked with metals, including bronze and iron.[19] While the case for advancement in metalworking during the EIA is not readily present, it is evident that there was some metalworking still performed by artisans, just as pottery was made. The presence of iron weapons of foreign origins, however, ties into the final part of this essay dealing with trade during the EIA.

It is impossible to rule out the existence of trade within the EIA settlements and deny that there were interactions between Greek settlements and foreign settlements between 1000-700 BC. Chiefly, there is the example of Lefkandi, explored by Barringer. The inhumation found under the Lefkandi Heroon was dotted with multiple valuable objects, many of which are imports from around the Mediterranean, including various jewelry and an iron knife.[20] In addition, Lefkandi is described as being the key location for 10th century Greek contacts with the Near East and west due to large evidence of Lefkandi pottery in the Levant and eastern imports across Euboea, the island on which Lefkandi was built.[21] Not only does Barringer bring forth evidence for trade being present in the EIA, Triantaphyllou also notes that the graves that they had explored were found to be quite rich, just as much as there were some that were poor.[22] This is a strong indication of contacts with foreign influences via trade. The presence of trade in the Greek Mediterranean reinforces the conception that the Early Iron Age was not as dark as it was claimed to be.

As a side note, the Lefkandi Heroon described by Barringer is also an excellent example of the advances the Greeks had made in architecture despite living in the Dark Age of their

history. It was a large apsidal building with stone foundation and a mudbrick superstructure. The large building itself contained 5 rooms and 2 entrances with a large overhanging wooden roof. To call it a simple mudbrick hut with a thatched roof would be an insult. Not only does Barringer touch on it, but several other scholars that have been sampled in this essay refer to it in their texts as well. This marks it as evidently one of the more important sites dating back to the EIA for the case against the Dark Ages.

It is clear by the exploration of the Early Iron Age in Greece throughout this essay that the Dark Ages were anything but dark. While the society of the EIA might not have been more advanced than the palatial society that preceded, it does act as a groundwork for the Greek independent poleis system to develop on further in the 7th century BC. Evidence has been brought forward, arguing the following cases: the reconstruction of the social hierarchy, evolution of the Greek EIA settlement, the presence of agriculture, metalwork and trade despite the turbulent times, which saw much of the Greek populace die or migrate to other areas. The Dark Age stands as a harsh yet necessary purging and rebuilding of Greek society – wiping out the old palatial elite system and rebuilding it into something new – which would allow the arrival of democracy, the citizen army, the poleis political structures and the voicing of a citizen's opinion, ideals which we still use in our contemporary day and age. These might have never seen the light of day would Greece have remained in its palatial society of the Bronze Age.

Figures

Fig. 1.1 - Dispersion of remains found in graves. (Triantaphyllou, 1998)

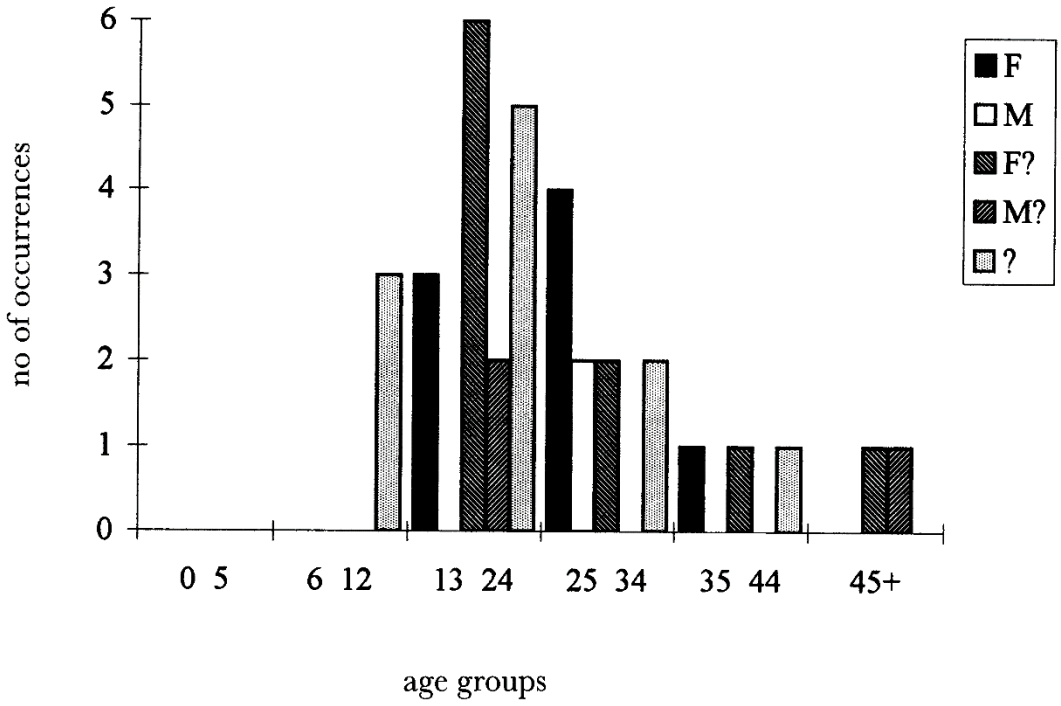
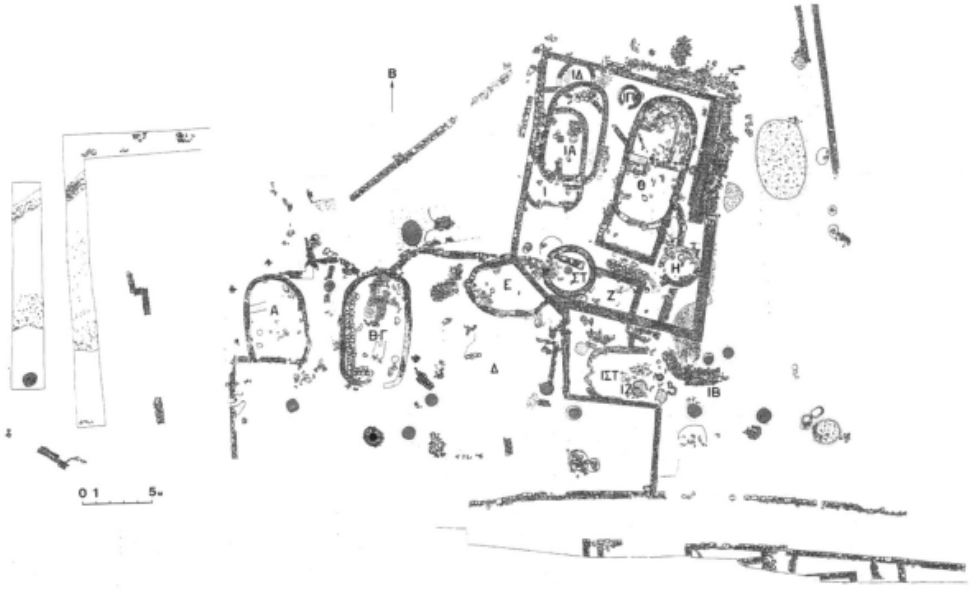


FIG. 1 Age distribution in relation to sex.

Fig. 2.1 & 2.2 - Periboloi around the structures at the settlement of Oropos.(Ainian, 2007)

Fig. 17.1 (above). Oropos, topographical plan, 2002 (drawing by A. Gounaris and N. Kalliontzis).

Fig. 17.2 (below). Oropos, plan of Central Quarter, 1999 (drawing by N. Kalliontzis).



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[2] Donlan, "The Social Groups," 304-305.
[3] James Whitley, "Social Diversity in Dark Age Greece." *The Annual of the British School at Athens*, vol., 86 1991, 348-349.
[4] Whitley, "Social Diversity," 1991, 349-350.
[5] Lin Foxhall, "Bronze to Iron: Agricultural Systems and Political Structures in Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age Greece," *The Annual of the British School at Athens,* vol., 90 1995, 246.
[6] Ibid, 247.
[7] Ibid, 248.
[8] Sevi Triantaphyllou, "An Early Iron Age Cemetery in Ancient Pydna, Pieria: What Do the Bones Tell Us?" *The Annual of the British School at Athens, vol.,* 93 1998, fig 1.1
[9] Ibid, 357.
[10] Alexander Mazarakis Ainian, "Architecture and Social Structure in Early Iron Age Greece," *British School at Athens Studies,* vol., 15 2007, 163-164.
[11] Ibid, 164 + fig. 17.1 & 17.2
[12] Ibid, 165.
[13] Ibid, 167.
[14] Foxhall, "Bronze to Iron," 244.
[15] Ibid, 244.
[16] Ibid 244-245.
[17] A. M. Snodgrass "Iron Age Greece and Central Europe," *AJA,* vol*.,* 66, No., 4 1962, 409.
[18] J. M. Barringer, *The Art and Archeology of Ancient Greece,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014) 2014, 64.
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[20] Barringer, *Art and Archeology*, 64.
[21] Ibid, 62.
[22] Triantaphyllou "An Early Iron Age Cemetery," 355.

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Depictions of the Body in Hellenistic Art

By: Gabriel Steinbach

Abstract

This article examines the process of 'Hellenisation' as seen in the art and culture of the ancient Mediterranean between 323 - 31 BCE. Although these are the traditional years ascribed to the Hellenistic period, the article aims to portray Hellenistic art as developing earlier out of the Late Classical period, making it an intentionally retrospective phenomenon. By analyzing the concepts of retrospection, verism, and exaggerated dramatization as seen in sculpture, the article attempts to provide a comprehensive definition of the term 'Hellenistic', while making direct reference to pieces of art from the time period. These include: a survey on the development of Classical Aphrodite cult statues, the Venus de Milo, royal portraiture, Polyeuktos' Demosthenes, the Terme Boxer, the Pergamon Great Altar, and the Laocoon sculptural group. By examining these works, the article argues that the process of 'Hellenisation' is derived from the cultural flourishing of Classical Greece, and is a mass-scale evocation or reinterpretation of said period.

The contemporary perception of Hellenistic art should be keeping with the notion that the Hellenistic period is a part of a continuum in Greek history and that it is in no way inferior or subpar when compared to the Classical or Archaic periods in Greek culture. In order to come to terms with Hellenistic art, a modern audience must acknowledge the tradition in which the Hellenistic develops out of, namely the Classical period. Hellenistic art is, by and large, a response to the cultural developments that occurred during the 5th and 4th centuries BCE in ancient Greece. The phenomenon of Hellenisation can be defined by the insemination and transmission of Hellenic culture across the Aegean and Mediterranean, resulting from the vast Macedonian empire established by Phillip II and further expanded by Alexander the Great.[1]The essay shall analyze the process of Hellenisation in art by showcasing material culture which illustrates the concepts of retrospection, verism, and exaggerated dramatization. These three themes are what define Hellenistic art and can be understood as an eclectic reimagining of past traditional forms in order to create something new, vital, and distinctly Hellenic.

To begin, retrospection in Hellenistic art takes on a variety of forms from visual references or analogues to exact replications. It can be defined as an intentional reflection on the past and

how it influences the present. The concept of retrospection shall be fleshed out by means of analyzing the development of Aphrodite cult statues during the Hellenistic period, starting from their Classical point of origin with Praxiteles' Aphrodite of Knidos, the Corinthian Aphrodite, and ending with the Hellenized form of the Venus de Milo. The aim of this comparison is to evoke a sense that Hellenistic art is a gradual development and not an instantaneous phenomenon, which is diametrically opposed to the Classical. Rather, it emerges from the Classical period and utilizes visual analogues which make reference to past Classical works to form a pastiche of visual culture. Thus, the development of sculpture can be thought of as a refinement of Classical forms with slight variances in physical features. In this sense, it is inextricably bound to the Classical and is not merely imitation or reproduction because the process of change in art is an organic and gradual occurrence.

Furthermore, sculptures of Aphrodite during the Hellenistic period are emblematic of this process since images of the goddess permeate the ancient world from the 5th century onward. In features, Kousser describes the Aphrodite as classical in style, erotic in nature, and formulaic in its overall appearance.[2] Indeed, Kousser notes the development of the Aphrodite statue from its classical roots and how through repetition of its physical form developed into the Venus de Milo. The repeated formula which Kousser makes reference to is derived from the model established by Praxiteles' Aphrodite of Knidos created in the 4th century BCE. The formula follows the features of a full nude goddess, with body weight distributed on one leg and the other raised and bent, forming a contrapposto stance.[3] The significance of Praxiteles' statue lies in the fact that it is the first sculptural depiction of a woman in the nude in Hellenic art, and more specifically, it captures a voyeuristic moment in which the goddess Aphrodite is preparing for a ritual bath. Moreover, another Late Classical influence that can be considered is the Aphrodite *hoplismene* type which

originates from Corinth but is also found in Capua. The basic depiction of this type is Aphrodite in the half nude, assuming a contrapposto stance, while holding a shield up in the air, which scholars believe is the goddess admiring her own reflection in a bronze shield. The *hoplismene* Aphrodite is a distinctly Corinthian context for the goddess since asides from being worshipped in relation to love and sexuality, she was: "venerated for her power to protect the city in war and ensure victory".[4] The aforementioned martial depiction of Aphrodite is less seen in the Homeric literary tradition but can correlate with her illegitimate lover Ares, who provides the vain yet beautiful goddess with a bronze shield, which she repurposes as a mirror. The *hoplismene* type casts the goddess within a martial context, representing victory and defense to the Corinthian people. The historical background for such is derived from the Persian Wars when Xerxes besieged Corinth in 480 BCE. Kousser states that the inhabitants of the city propitiated the goddess Aphrodite to invoke a *love* for battle amongst the men of Corinth in order to increase morale.[5] After their decisive victory over the Persians, they celebrated on top of the Acrocorinth. Apollonios Rhodios attests to this Aphrodite type, and provides a picturesque description of the cult image, "Gripping the swift sword of Ares; and from her shoulder to her left arm the fastening of her chiton was loosened beneath her breast, and opposite in the shield of bronze she seemed her image".[6] The image of Aphrodite *hoplismene* is also found on Corinthian coins from the time period, which suggests that she was in fact the patron goddess of the city. The significance of the *hoplismene* Aphrodite type lies in the fact that it goes on to influence later Hellenistic sculptures, notably the Nike of Samothrace and the Venus de Milo, which evoke the desirability of victory as personified through the sensuous nude body of a goddess. By analyzing and interpreting the classical tradition that Hellenistic art emerges from, now the essay shall turn to how both Aphrodite's feed into the retrospective nature of Hellenistic sculpture.

The development of Aphrodite Hellenistic sculptures are wholly engaged with their classical past. As artisans became more comfortable and technically competent at realistically rendering the nude human form, Greek society no longer saw the female nude as taboo or inappropriate. It was no longer radical like it once was when Praxiteles first revealed his Aphrodite of Knidos to the public. Societal change also prompted the creation of more statues following the seminude model such as the Crouching Venus, the Venus de Milo, and even the Nike of Samothrace. The aforementioned works exhibit an eclectic composition of sculptural features such as an early classicized head distinguished by the severe smile, and a Hellenistic lower body with deeply carved folds to create a chiaroscuro effect.[7] Fusion in style is how Hellenistic art can be considered to be engaged in retrospection, by means of eclectically showcasing various sculptural styles in one subject. Kousser furthers this point by stating that a modern audience should view Hellenistic art as deliberately retrospective, rather than skeptically questioning the statue's originality.[8] Kousser's suggestion is precisely how a modern audience should view Hellenistic art, as a cultural phenomenon that develops out of the Classical period and re-appropriates stylistic features which were considered canonical at the time.

Turning to the Venus de Milo, this sculpture can be considered a fully realized or ripened Hellenistic work of art. It was created approximately between c. 150-50 BCE and was discovered on the Greek island of Milos in the Cyclades. Scholars believe that the significance of this sculpture is that it differed from its classical predecessors by means of function, meaning that it not only served a religious dedicative purpose but was also displayed as a monument in a public setting within the gymnasium on Milos.[9] It also exhibits the stylistic eclecticism that was mentioned earlier while following the Aphrodite sculptural formula, featuring a classicized face with slightly recessed almond-shaped eyes and an overall calm expression, while standing in a relaxed

contrapposto stance. The Hellenistic features are comparable to the Crouching Aphrodite, with a fleshy, soft, upper body that appears pliable to the touch and a furled mantle wrapped around the hips that is distinguished by its diagonal, deep undercutting folds in order to create a chiaroscuro effect. The torsion of the chest twists towards the left and encourages the viewer to walk around the sculpture, defining it as a freestanding sculpture in the round. By merging these stylistic features together, the Venus de Milo commands the gravitas of the Classical past while simultaneously evoking the sensuality and dynamism of the Hellenistic present.[10] Moreover, Kousser and Furtwängler believe that the Venus was originally holding an apple which was mounted with dowels to a plinth. Due to the loss of the arms, the only material culture that suggests this is a chiseled piece of marble that resembles an apple. Reconstructions also depict the arm movement as being a visual reference to the *hoplismene* Aphrodite, holding an apple rather than a shield. The theory was originally purported by Furtwängler, but Kousser develops this notion even further by stating that the apple would function on several levels. Firstly, 'melos' in Greek literally translates to apple and secondly, it could be a mythological reference, alluding to her victory in the Judgment of Paris.[11] An apple in the goddesses' hand would have the implications of sexual desire and marriage. The implications correlate well with not only the goddess, but its public setting within the community of the gymnasium and the male youths who were coming of age. Within this context, Kousser alludes that perhaps the monument suggested to male youths nearing the age of marriage that, like Paris, the pursuit of love was a fulfilling venture. In this sense, the statue embodies the concept of individual fulfillment through love.[12] It provides the sculpture with a philosophical undertone that operates on multiple levels. Firstly, that the Judgment of Paris was a choice between which prize was *better*, and not necessarily who was more beautiful, since the participants are all goddesses and equally beautiful in their own divine respects. Thus, it leaves the

viewer to question which prize was truly better. Secondly, the statue relates to Hellenic history in the sense that the Macedonian occupation of Greece left Greek citizens with a limited amount of autonomy. The once independent poleis were then subject to the yoke of Macedonian hegemony, a culture that was considered non-Hellenic and, in essence, foreign by ancient Greeks. Perhaps individual fulfillment through love was a means in which Greeks could assert their independence by emphasizing personal choice in marriage.[13] Indeed, this association with Hellenic history and the amount of autonomy that Greeks had at this point, under the rule of the Macedonians and followed by the Romans, provides the statue with another layer of retrospection, namely the former cultural and political dominance the Greeks had during the Classical period. Lastly, the gymnasium setting would have been fitting for this statue since the main activities of the gymnasium were based on a classical curriculum and students would have been studying the canon of Greek culture. The students reenacted and reinterpreted the practices and texts of earlier times, creating a linear vision of Hellenic culture.[14] Contemporaries would have also been readily aware of the retrospective nature of the Venus de Milo, suggesting that visual references to past traditions were intentional decisions. Concluding with the analysis of Hellenistic Aphrodite sculptures, now the essay shall turn to the origins of veristic sculpture and hyper-realism.

Similarly, the development of verism originates in Hellenistic sculpture, although some art historians tend to credit this technical innovation to Roman busts. It is, in fact, first seen and developed by Greek sculptors in the Hellenistic cultural capitals of Pergamon, Alexandria, Antioch, and Pella. The sculptural development of verism coincides with the emergence of the philosophical concept of physiognomy, which is the ancient notion that a subject's external appearance reflects the internal character or personality of that subject.[15] The first incarnation of this phenomenon can be linked to the tradition of royal portraiture amongst the Diadochi, the

generals of Alexander who became Hellenistic dynasts following the death of Alexander. Many of the kings stylized their portraits after Alexander's in order to create a sense of visual assimilation, in other words, a type of Alexandrian model in order to legitimize their own self-proclaimed ascension to the throne.[16] Royal portraiture it is not truly veristic since the Diadochi were stylizing their portraits after Alexander as a means of validation, rendering the phenomenon as blatant propaganda. An example of this would be the characteristic features of Alexander's wavy hair brushed up at the center, known as an *anastole*, in combination with deeply carved and heavy lidded eyes. The effect of these combined elements creates the characterization of a leonine or heroic king in the visage of Alexander.[17] These physical features can be found on all portraits of the Diadochi and serve as the first example of verism and physiognomy in sculpture. The essay shall now turn to illustrate these concepts by means of analyzing Polyeuktos' Demosthenes and the Terme Boxer.

The artistic concepts of verism and physiognomy can be extrapolated from the Hellenistic works of Polyeuktos' Demosthenes and the Terme Boxer. Both works exemplify a maturation in the aforementioned concepts, artisans began to stray away from idealistic depictions and reserve the style for solely representing deities and mythological figures. Real life subjects are captured veristically, with a focus on hyper-realistic depiction of the subject with "warts and all".[18] Beginning with Polyeuktos' Demosthenes, this bronze original, created in c. 280 BCE, is a portrait of the Athenian orator and statesman, chronicled in history for his adamantine resolve against the Macedonian occupation of Athens. It is said that Demosthenes committed suicide by drinking hemlock after being exiled as a display of his regret for allowing the Macedonians to place a yoke upon Athens. Demosthenes believed that his polis was the sole exemplar of independence and democracy, rendering Athens the chief polis within the Aegean. Despite the statesman's

nationalistic fervor, it was the introspective resolve that Polyeuktos sought to capture in form; in a sense physiognomy, in relation to art, is the attempt at capturing a subject's essence through physical replication. Considering the biographical history of Demosthenes, Polyeuktos captures the stern seriousness of the orator's personality by means of depicting him as a thin elderly man, with a strong brow and pensive gaze that suggests a life harrowed by thought.[19] These hyper realistic features do not serve the function of idealizing Demosthenes as a hero but rather portray him as one who has led an introspective life of hardship and absolute resolve. In this sense, Demosthenes is veristically portrayed as a martyr of Hellenic democracy. The sculpture is also retrospective since it portrays an astute statesman who sought to uphold the longevity of Hellenic democracy and by extension Athenian supremacy. Thus, the sculpture stands as a commemorative reminder of Athenian democracy before the Macedonian conquest. What is most stunning about this sculpture is the fact that Polyuektos had never met Demosthenes, yet it still exhibits hyper realistic physical features which capture the orator's personality. Turning to the Terme Boxer, the sculpture exhibits a similar focus on veristic depiction, except it is in direct response to its classical heritage.

Similarly, the Terme Boxer, a bronze original, created between c. 150-100 BCE, is a veristic depiction of a boxer who appears to be no longer in his prime, and bears the marks of a long career in boxing. The sculpture stands as an example of refined Hellenistic realism; with the boxer's bruises and cuts technically illustrated by means of patina and applying inlaid copper to the gashes on his body, emphasizing the rawness of the pugilist's flesh.[20]In addition, the boxer's physicality is characterized by cauliflower ears, an over developed back, bulging upper arms, and an abused face.[21] The expression on the boxer's face is that of terror or helplessness and adds to the overall enigma of this figure. Arenas suggests that the boxer is experiencing an existential crisis

or more specifically, "the disintegration of the self in the face of failure"[22], which very well might be the case, since the image of this boxer is one who has grown old and weary of blood sport. The boxer can be interpreted as contemplatively sitting in defeat or resting after emerging victorious in a series of brutal fights. The physiognomic features of this sculpture imply both, adding to the mystique behind the boxer.[23] This depiction of an athlete stands diametrically opposed to that of athletes from the Classical period like the Diskobolos. There is no idealism found in the Terme Boxer, only a man who has grown old and exhausted of the brutality involved with boxing. Conversely, the Diskobolos is a depiction of a young, idealized athlete preparing to launch a discus into the sky. The sculptural focus is placed upon his bulging muscles and god-like physicality. There is no physical flaw or perplexity to be found in this subject. The Terme Boxer is the antithesis of the idealized athlete, which may be derived from the simple differentiation that the pugilist fights for a living, whereas the classical athlete is a product of the gymnasium, a privileged institution for aristocrats. In this sense, the Terme Boxer takes on an additional layer of verism relating to the historical context of boxing as a sport in antiquity. He is as, Arenas puts it,a portrait of boxing as a sport in its totality,[24] which is precisely what this degree of verism and physiognomy is capable of achieving; depicting not only a realistic image of the subject's physicality but representing a place in time which that subject was a part of. Concluding with verism and physiognomy, the essay shall now turn to exaggerated dramatization as represented by the Laocoon sculptural group and the Pergamon Great Altar of Zeus.

The concept of exaggerated dramatization is a unique development in Hellenistic art and can be defined by dramatic contrasts, exaggerated contorted forms, and an acute sense of pathos and poignancy.[25] Pollitt, a voice of authority pertaining to the study of Hellenistic art, generally refers to this phenomenon as baroque, but the term feels anachronistic and unfitting since it has

the inherent implication of being distastefully ornate. Exaggerated dramatization is a stylistic development that occurs during the High Hellenistic period ranging between c. 250-150 BCE. A prime example of this concept can be found in both Laocoon and the Pergamon Altar, specifically the relief depicting Athena and Alkyoneus. Both sculptures are characterized by melodramatic pathos and erratic movement caused by extreme pain. Fittingly, both sculptures feature Athena summoning snakes of wrath upon her foes, notably the Trojan high priest Laocoon and the titan Alkyoneus. The Pergamon Altar is a depiction of a Titanomachy, whereas Laocoon is a depiction from the Trojan Cycle. Both sculptures exhibit facial contortion, physical struggle, and erratic movement to the extent that it appears that the sculptor caught a picturesque moment in mythology. The Pergamon Altar also exhibits deeply carved folds which create a chiaroscuro effect. These deep folds are characteristic of Hellenistic sculpture and can be considered a visual reference to the Pergamon Great Altar relief. Moreover, the significance of these sculptures lies in the fact that they represent a fully realized form of Hellenistic art that makes reference to its classical heritage while simultaneously being different in style.[26] The technical virtuosity and attention to drama and emotion are what delineate these sculptures from any other Hellenistic form of art.

The reception of Hellenistic art from the stance of a modern audience should be viewed with the awareness that Hellenistic art is not merely replication or imitation, but a gradual process which retrospectively draws canonical techniques and models from the Classical period. The concepts of retrospection, verism, and exaggerated dramatization are precisely what distinguish this period from the Classical, in so far, that they coincide with the gradual development of new artistic techniques and aesthetic tastes. Hellenistic art can also be understood as a direct result of the cultural flourishing during the Classical period, and is, by and large, a reinterpretation and innovation upon previously established models. Kousser exemplifies this notion in the following

excerpt, "These retrospective gestures were clearly intentional, the product not simply of continuing tradition, but instead of a calculated evocation, above all of Classical Athens in order to assume its mantle".[27] The evocation of the past in order to establish a new cultural capital was what the cities of Pergamon, Rhodes, Antioch, Alexandria, and Pella were attempting to achieve. This is precisely why a modern audience must understand the tradition in which Hellenistic art emerges from since it is inextricably involved with it.

[1]Mark D. Fullerton, *Greek Sculpture*, (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 270-271.
[2]Rachel M. Kousser, *Hellenistic and Roman Ideal Sculpture*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), 18.
[3]Kousser,*Hellenistic and Roman Ideal Sculpture*, 19-20.
[4]*Ibid*, 26.
[5]*Ibid*, 26.
[6]*Ibid*, 25.
[7]Rachel M.Kousser, "Creating the Past: The Venus de Milo and the Hellenistic Reception of Classical Greece," *American Journal of Archaeology* 109, no. 2 (2005): 238.
[8]Kousser, "Creating the Past: The Venus de Milo," 238.
[9]Kousser, *Hellenistic and Roman Ideal Sculpture*, 30.
[10]*Ibid*, 31.
[11]Kousser, "Creating the Past: The Venus de Milo," 234-236.
[12]Kousser, *Hellenistic and Roman Ideal Sculpture*, 32.
[13]Kousser, "Creating the Past: The Venus de Milo", 241.
[14]Kousser, *Hellenistic and Roman Ideal Sculpture*, 40.
[15]Fullerton, *Greek Sculpture*, 280.
[16]*Ibid,* 280-281.
[17]Laurie Schneider Adams, *Art Across Time: Second Edition*, (New York: McGraw Hill, 2002), 185.
[18]Fullterton, *Greek Sculpture*, 281.
[19]Adams, *Art Across Time: Second Edition*, 186.
[20]Amelia Arenas, "The Boxer,"*Arion: A Journal of the Humanities and Classics* 7, no. 1 (1999): 122.
[21]Barbara Hughes Fowler, *The Hellenistic Aesthetic*, (Madison: Wisconsin University Press, 1989), 34.
[22]Arenas, "The Boxer", 123.
[23]*Ibid,* 121.
[24]*Ibid*, 124.
[25]Fowler, *The Hellenistic Aesthetic*, 32.
[26]Fullerton, *Greek Sculpture,* 300-303.
[27]Kousser, *Hellenistic and Roman Ideal Sculpture*, 41.

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The Ancient Arms Race in the Hellenistic Period

By: Giulia Heinritzi

Abstract

During the reign of Philip II, an ancient arms race was created through his military reforms which enabled the Macedonians to defeat their enemies, the Greeks. This ancient arms race continued throughout the Hellenistic period and was magnified by the conflicts between the Seleucid, Antigonid and Ptolemaic empires, as well as through the increasing exposure to foreign military technology due to the expansion of Macedonian power. This competition between the various Hellenistic armies can be seen through the developments within the Macedonian infantry division, as well as the cavalry units, the use of elephants, the development of warships, and the increasing reliance on engineers to further military technology –such as the use of the catapult. However, the military developments within these Macedonian kingdoms proved to be insufficient when faced with the Roman legion. This was mainly due to the superior formation of the Roman legion compared to the Macedonian phalanx.

It is commonly agreed upon that the Hellenistic period began with Alexander the Great's campaign to invade and obtain control of the Persian Empire, which subsequently impacted the Mediterranean world and changed world history.[1] As a result this new period that was ushered in –the Hellenistic period– prompted an ancient arms race due to the increased exposure of foreign and competing military technology brought on by the expansion of the Greek world. That being said, if the argument is that the Hellenistic period ushered in an ancient arms race, then the Hellenistic period did not begin during Alexander's campaigns, but rather with Philip II's military reforms.[2] Thus, the beginning of the essay will focus on Philip II's military reforms to understand how Alexander the Great was able to conquer Persia and territory as far East as India. It will then look at the development of military technology during the Hellenistic period as a consequence of Alexander's expansion of the Greek world such as the developments in the infantry division and cavalry units within Hellenistic armies, as well as their use of elephants, ships and their increasing reliance on engineers to advance military technology. Lastly it will look at a reason behind the success of the Roman army against the formidable Greek forces.

Philip II set the stage for Macedonia to become a powerful contender on the world stage, as well as for Alexander the Great to begin his campaign and expansion of the Greek world into

the East due to his military reforms. Prior to Philip II, Macedonia had been a relatively weak territory. By looking at King Perdiccas III's reign of Macedonia, particularly his expedition into Lyncus against Arrhabaeus, Thucydides writes that the Macedonian army fled under cover of darkness because they were scared of fighting the Illyrians.[3] This is not a kingdom that has the potential to dominate its enemy, nor can it aspire to obtain any greater success or create a name for itself if its soldiers run in fear or if the structure and capabilities of its army is no better or worse than its opponents. The Macedonian army prior to Philip II consisted of an infantry comprised of farmers and shepherds, and a cavalry unit containing aristocrats.[4] There was no true efficiency or training involved in the Macedonian army compared to the Greek forces which the Macedonians had to contend with. The Greeks were using a highly efficient and organized military formation referred to as phalanx fighting. The soldiers were placed into a formation that created a row of soldiers 16 rows deep, and its primary tactic was to apply pressure to its enemy by pushing against each other and thrusting their spears all while protecting their fellow soldiers in this tight formation.[5] These hoplites wore helmets, greaves, a corslet, spear and short sword as well as a round shield called a *hoplon*. The battle depended on maintaining this phalanx formation, and the armies fought with sword and spear until an opening appeared in one of the forces' phalanxes and were subsequently defeated.[6] However, soldiers had to provide for their own equipment, thus not all soldiers were equipped with the same quality or amount of armour which wealthier individuals could purchase.[7] This created a citizen army for the Greek poleis who were then called upon when needed –therefore no training was involved. This formation was highly effective, however its drawback was that the soldiers were armed heavily so movement was slow and a flat terrain was essential for the phalanx formation –this formation needed to stay close set otherwise the enemy could easily pick off the heavily-clad soldiers who

separated from the group thereby exposing the rest of the soldiers to attack. Furthermore, it was also vulnerable in its rear and flank to attacks by cavalry or light armed troops. On the other hand, if both military units fought with an identical weapon system this formation was very effective in battle.[8] As a result, Philip II instituted a number of reforms in order to overcome the efficient military techniques of the Greek *poleis* by exploiting its vulnerabilities to establish Macedonia as a leader of the Greek world. One of the first reforms he introduced were smaller and lighter shields to be able to hold the *sarissa* with both hands. The *sarissa* – another reform, was a 14-16 cubit long pole which projected at least 10 cubits past the body of the hoplite or 15-18 feet long in today's units.[9] When the Macedonians were in the phalanx formation, the spears of the hoplites extended much farther outwards in fact the first five rows could project their spears beyond the front line.[10] This was crucial in overcoming the typical Greek army because the *sarissa* is much longer than the traditional spear used by Greek hoplites. Therefore, in battle, the Greek hoplites had to position themselves closer to the Macedonians, giving the Macedonians the upper hand. The men farther back in the phalanx held their spears vertically and thus were capable of deflecting any projectiles.[11] In order to do so, extensive training was involved with the *sarissa.* This is particularly seen at the defeat of Clitus and Glaucias; Alexander the Great commanded his heavily armed infantrymen to position their spears vertically and closely locked together, then they immediately swerved them from right to left.[12] There was a great deal of skill and discipline involved in the Macedonian army compared to the army of King Perdiccas III – a prior king of Macedonia. In fact, the phalanx was quite flexible in that it was capable of forming various formations such as a square formation, rectangular formation, a solid column, or a wedge and oblique formation.[13] Additionally, Philip II adopted and adapted the *peltasts* which are of Thracian origin.[14] This is another instance in which Philip

II competed with rivalling military technology by including foreign components to improve his hoplite phalanx. The *peltasts* were classified as light infantry – they carried a small shield, and wore a small amount of armour, but under Philip II, they carried a long thrusting spear.[15] They were able to retreat quickly and keep fighting as they did since they held relatively light armour, and were capable of fighting on rugged terrain – thus creating another advantage for the Macedonian army in light of the heavily-clad Greek army.[16] Moreover, he reformed the cavalry unit so his army would now use shock tactics – he equipped his cavalry unit with the *sarissa,* which, as previously demonstrated, became important in deflecting projectiles and defending the flanks of the phalanx. This was a crucial development as the previous Greek phalanx was vulnerable at the flanks and rear.[17] They also held the task of searching and exploiting any weaknesses that developed in the defence of the enemy.[18] During the time of Alexander the Great, Arrian wrote that these Companions – Alexander's elite heavy cavalry unit – developed a wedge formation to cut through the enemy. This manoeuver allowed the heavy cavalry to quickly escape if the need would arise. This particular formation may have been adopted from the Scythians – thus showing that eastern influences were beginning to be adopted by the Macedonians in order to improve their military.[19] Light cavalry was also adopted into the army and these members usually came from client kingdoms such as Thrace. Eventually, horse archers from the Eurasian steppes were implemented into the Macedonian army by Alexander as his empire expanded further into the East.[20] However, Philip II's most important military reform was the creation of the *pezhetairoi* – otherwise known as the Foot Companions. This is but one type of heavy infantry in the Macedonian army – the other being the *hypaspists,* or Shield Bearers. This new infantry class created a bond between the king and his soldiers, and allowed for bravery in battle to be compensated with distinctions and promotion. This position involved

pay, possibly a land grant, as well as training and equipment provided by the state from royal revenues.[21] Thus, the commoners in the army did not have to worry about their farms when they were away because they now had the finances to hire someone to look after it and need not worry about purchasing equipment. After these reforms, the Macedonian forces were all trained, unlike the Macedonian forces prior to these reforms and the contemporary forces of the Greek *poleis* in which soldiers only gained military experience when they were called to fight. In addition, not only did Philip II create an army utilizing shock and missile formations working in concert, but he also increased the distance a Macedonian army could travel.[22] Philip II used horses and camels – the camels being adopted from the Persian army – to travel faster and on rougher terrain.[23] This allowed Alexander the Great to travel quickly throughout the Persian empire as he could collect resources along the campaign route rather than have an extensive baggage train of wagons being pulled by oxen which had a slower pace than that of a soldier – only distancing two miles per hour and only able to work five hours a day.[24] With these changes, Alexander's army could travel at least 13 miles a day, and cavalry units could cover 40 miles a day.[25]

As a result, the Macedonian army comprised of loyal, trained, and armed men committed to their king unlike the citizen soldiers of the Greek *poleis*. Soldiers in the Greek *poleis* had to provide for their own armour, received no training, and since they were only called upon to protect their land when needed, had no loyalty towards their commanders. Such issues can be seen at Mantinea where King Agis of Sparta realized that his officers – Aristocles and Hipponoidas – did not obey his orders.[26] Thus, Philip II's reforms were enacted to compete against the military of the Greek *poleis* which enabled him to conquer the Greek mainland and land him a seat on the Delphic Amphictyony and receive the title of hegemon in the League of Corinth.[27] These military reforms are what enabled Alexander to campaign against the Persians

and conquer territory in the East as far as the kingdom of Porus in modern India. Through Philip's domination over Greece, Alexander had access to the soldiers of the Greek forces and was able to march out with some 34,500 men against the Persians.[28] Furthermore, Philip II created an army that was disciplined and reliable and used cavalry to provide protection for the hoplites and attack enemy forces while searching for weaknesses in their defence all the while including foreign military elements such as the *peltasts* to improve the Macedonian forces.[29] These were decisive elements in Alexander's future victories and were what allowed Alexander to defeat the Persians – the Persians consisting of "unarticulated heavy infantry spearmen protecting light infantry archers, chariots and cavalry" compared to the Macedonians.[30] Although Alexander's success was in part credited to Philip II's ingenuity, Alexander's military ingenuity was also a factor that aided in his success: incorporating Eurasian horse archers in his cavalry unit, adopting the Scythian cavalry formation, and using new and improved siege tactics. For instance, at the siege of Tyre c. 332 B.C., Alexander ordered his army to construct a causeway to besiege and attack Tyre which was surrounded by the sea. This is quite an impressive feat of engineering – he needed something to overcome Tyre's natural siege defences, and so he ingeniously utilized the resources which were available to him. Even though the waters were not so deep, it would still have taken quite a bit of manpower. [31]

After Alexander's death, with an unlimited amount of wealth that flowed into Alexander's empire due to the looting of Persian treasuries like at Persepolis, the threat of invasion due to the ambitions of Alexander's successors, the increased numbers of displaced individuals, and the incorporation of technology from foreign military customs, the ancient arms race from the Hellenistic period onwards intensified at a rapid pace.[32] The Hellenistic armies of the Successors – the Antigonids, Seleucids, and Ptolemy's – incorporated the same fighting style

as the Macedonian template of the hoplite phalanx within their armies.[33] However, as the occurrence of war increased, the Successors began incorporating new military techniques and technology into their armies as a way of differentiating themselves from their competitors in an attempt to overcome them or gain an advantage. For example, in the infantry units, a new kind of infantryman appeared in these Hellenistic armies: the *thureophoros*. They fought with swords or javelins using an oval shield – a *thureos*. It was then adopted by Hellenistic armies and incorporated into the phalanx formation. This type of shield was possibly introduced by the Gauls during their invasions of Asia Minor and Greece, and due to the types of weapons they carried, the *thureophoros* were quite versatile in battle.[34] This is an example of Macedonian armies incorporating Celtic innovations and adopting them for their own purposes, thus creating a new type of light infantryman. Not only are there innovations in the infantry class, but there are also foreign incorporations in the cavalry units to improve and compete with other Hellenistic armies using the same style and formation of fighting. During this period, a heavy cavalry unit called the cataphracts became incorporated into Hellenistic armies. The horses of the cataphracts were mightier and bigger than those from the Greek world because they came from the Iranian regions of Alexander's empire. The first instance of their use in these Hellenistic armies is in the Seleucid kingdom under Antiochus III whose son commanded these heavily armed horsemen at the battle of Panium in 200 B.C., where he defeated the Aitolian cavalry of Ptolemy V.[35] Thus, the Seleucid kingdom was taking advantage of the many ethnicities found within their eastern kingdom and using some of these foreign military components in their army. The Seleucids also adopted the use of the chain mail which was a Celtic invention and was excellent in defence because it was as flexible as leather and as resilient as an iron plate.[36] Therefore, the Seleucid kingdom was integrating into their armies an aspect of Celtic military which was one of the most

prominent military opponents of this kingdom as well as one of the principal groups that were hired by the Seleucids after the invasion of the Gauls in 278 B.C.[37] In the armies of Antigonos, Monophthalmos and his son Demetrios Polorketes – founder of the Antigonid dynasty and two of the Successors based in Asia Minor and briefly in Macedonia – frequently used the Tarentines who were a light cavalry force who carried a sword and shield as well as a javelin, and originated in southern Italy. Considering that the Antigonids were concerned with maintaining Macedonian dominance in the Aegean area, it comes to no surprise that Italian influences made its way into the neighbouring Antigonid dynasty.[38] Not only are Italian influences seen in the cavalry of Antigonus' army, but Iranian influences as well. During the campaigns between Eumenes and Antigonus, such as on the eve of the battle at Gabiene c. 316 B.C., Antigonus sent out Median lancers and cavalry in addition to Tarentines to intercept Eumenes' elephants and seize his baggage train.[39] Thus, the Antigonids were incorporating the fighting style of neighbouring troops, since Media was a territory next to their own kingdom, into their armies to further advance their military skill and technology. In this battle, the incorporation of elephants as weapons of war in Hellenistic forces can be seen as well. Elephants were first encountered by Alexander's army when they meet the Indian army of Porus, and because the Greeks had not encountered elephants previously, their inexperience in facing these strange new creatures caused heavy casualties amongst the Macedonian troops. Therefore, they were very useful in their shock value. Although elephants had a tendency of running amok when wounded or frightened, Alexander realized their advantages and began to incorporate them into his army. He realized the size of elephants and the fear they inspired were useful shock tactics against enemies who had never dealt with them. For example, a crew could be placed on top of the animal through small wooden towers thus creating a new missile element in Hellenistic armies.[40] As

elephants became increasingly used in the armies of the Successors – Indian elephants being used in the Seleucid empire and smaller African elephants in Ptolemy's army – new methods for dealing with these animals were created. For example the elephants of Polyperchon – the regent of Macedonia c. 319 B.C. – panicked when they stepped on planks which had nails pushed through them. This anti-elephant measure was then improved by Ptolemy at the battle of Gaza in 312 B.C. by attaching a series of spikes to chains which would easily be moved to where an elephant was located.[41] At the battle of Raphia in 217 B.C., Ptolemy's elephant crew were then equipped with a *sarissa* to poke the enemy, while Antiochus III's crew might have had two men holding *sarissai* as well as two archers. These towers could also hold many missile weapons.[42] Because elephants were easily frightened, at the battle of Magnesia in 190 B.C., Antiochus III provided a guard of 40 men, usually archers or slingers to defend them. Furthermore, pairs of these elephants and their guards were placed in between blocks of the pike phalanx to add to the flexibility and protection of the phalanx.[43] Although elephants were great additions to the armies, as demonstrated above, there certainly were disadvantages in using them. Once panicking, they could easily bring destruction within its own army, and eventually varies strategies were created to deal with elephants. Other military technology such as siege machines were also needed to compete against other Hellenistic armies. Prior to the Hellenistic period, a catapult was powered by a composite bow, but this was improved by Philip II. He created the torsion catapult which used vertical torsion springs of corded human hair or animal sinew so that once the bow was fully drawn back, the springs would be coiled tighter and stronger, resulting in a greater striking force.[44] During the siege of Tyre c. 332 B.C., Alexander the Great deployed a new type of siege machinery which was a stone thrower – a *petrobolos.* This enabled the besieger to breach the fortification walls or destroy buildings within the walls rather than to

come into contact with the defenders on the wall. These stone throwers could accommodate the weight of a 4.4kg to 65.5 kg stone ball.[45] These were then further developed by Demetrios Poliorketes during his siege of Rhodes c.305 B.C.[46] where he constructed a mobile *heliopolis,* or "city taker," which was 120 feet high, weighed 360,000 lb and was invented by the Athenian Epimarchos.[47] It was then fitted with iron plates to counter Rhodian catapults, and its 9 levels was fitted with various heavy and light stone-throwing and arrow-shooting catapults –the largest stone-throwing catapults being capable of throwing stones weighing over 170 lb.[48] The improvements made by Demetrios and his engineers on the siege machine since the time of Alexander the Great were of such lengths that it was possible to attack the massive fortifications of Rhodes. There were other inventions that were designed for warfare but were never fully realized. For example, Ctesibius designed a catapult with bronze springs that would not slacken like the sinew or hair in torsion catapults –however this was too expensive and never developed. He also designed a catapult that was operated by compressed-air-powered springs. Demetrius of Alexandria created a repeating catapult which would only hit the same target rather than the arrows dispersing and hitting many targets.[49] These new war machines were also used directly on the battlefield. In 207 B.C., Machanidas the Spartan stationed bolt-shooters on the battlefield.[50] As a result, because artillery and siege machines became more sophisticated, systems of defence also had to improve. To counteract the *heliopolis* besieging Rhodes, the military engineer of Rhodes, Diognetos, ordered all the "water, excrement and filth" from private and public sources be brought and poured in front of the fortification wall.[51] This created a swamp, causing the *heliopolis* to get stuck while it was moving and forced Demetrios to retreat. Furthermore, fortifications became more elaborate: larger towers were built, circuit walls were replaced by outworks with thicker and higher walls to resist heavy artillery and to support

defensive catapults, and vulnerable crenelated parapets were also replaced by a solid screen wall.[52] To overcome these new fortifications, during the siege of Syracuse c. 213-211 B.C., the Romans invented the *sambuca.* These were ladders which had a penthouse attached to the top and were placed in between two quinqueremes. These ladders were taller than the fortification walls and once they were secured to the top of these fortifications, the soldiers could climb up and invade the city.[53] To defend against this new siege machine, Archimedes – the chief military engineer of Syracuse – had to devise a number of ways to fend off such attacks. He constructed catapults that could be adjusted to throw darts and stones far or near when required. He also pierced the fortification walls with numerous loopholes which were very tiny, but large enough for arrows, crossbows, and scorpions to be fired through. Furthermore, he installed engines on the battlements that could swing over the fortifications and drop heavy boulders onto these *sambucae* and break those siege engines as well as the ships it rested on.[54] Archimedes also created large grappling hooks which pulled Roman vessels out of the water and dropped them back down.[55] Development in this ancient military industry was on-going, and military engineers consequently became very important in warfare. Specialized military engineers would travel with the armies and were responsible for the construction and transportation of these machines, which is what Demetrios did during the siege of Salamis c. 306 B.C.[56] They became so important that during the siege of Rhodes, the Rhodians captured a convoy of Demetrios' ships which contained eleven renowned engineers who specialized in missiles and catapults.[57] Nevertheless, mercenaries were also important in these Hellenistic armies because armies had to be large enough to mount these expeditions and meet the increasing demand of soldiers needed to man these gigantic siege machines.[58] For example, the *heliopolis* that Demetrios constructed housed over 200 combatants and required 3,000 laborers to move. Even ships became massive

feats of engineering. Archimedes, commissioned by Hieron II of Syracuse, constructed a giant grain ship which used enough timber to build sixty quadriremes. There was room for a gymnasium, a promenade, a library, and it also included "eight towers for artillery and a parapet for a catapult that could hurl 180 lb. stones or a bolt 18 feet long" with an effective range of 600 feet.[59] Ptolemy IV created a ship that required 4,000 oarsmen – 40 men per oar, and could carry 3,200 infantry.[60] Luckily for Hellenistic armies, there was no shortage of mercenaries as many soldiers had been displaced since the time of Alexander the Great due to the constant warfare this period experienced. Armies became so tremendous in this period that, due to longer spears, less body armor, the use of elephants, mercenary armies, siege machines and artillery, the death toll numbered in the upper thousands. At the battle of Raphia c. 217 B.C., it is estimated that between Ptolemy and Antiochus 15,000 soldiers died compared to the 1000 soldiers that died at both the battle of Marathon and Plataea c. 490 B.C.[61] The armies of the Hellenistic period were huge and incorporated many ethnicities which can be seen through the incorporation of foreign military tactics, and the competition between the Successor kingdoms aided in the development of these Hellenistic armies by furthering the science of warfare and creating bigger and better war machines. However, the specialization and gigantism that developed in this period was not enough when faced with the Roman legion.

The basic formation used by Hellenistic armies was the Macedonian phalanx formation improved by Philip II. The Macedonian army charged with a formation 16 rows deep, the first five rows projecting their *sarrisai* in front, while the other soldiers held their *sarissai* vertically for deflecting objects launched by the opposing forces. These rear ranks also pressed forward into the front ranks using the weight of their bodies, creating a forceful charge while rendering the first few ranks incapable of turning around. If the phalanx remained in this position – unless

it encountered any obstacles in its path such as depressions or boulders which the phalanx would have to separate to avoid – then this formation was difficult to confront since an opposing soldier would have to face 10 spears by himself.[62] The Roman legion was much more versatile however. The Roman legion was organized into centuries of 80 to 100 men, every two centuries being paired into a maniple which was the main tactical unit of the Roman army. Within the legion were javelin-armed skirmishers and cavalry for scouting. Furthermore, the legion retained a checkerboard formation allowing more room between combatants. The first and second lines of the Roman army consisted of 10 maniples across containing *bastati* and *principes* which held an oval shield called a *scutum*, two *pila* – spears – and their principal weapon the *gladius* which is a short sword used for stabbing in close quarters. While charging an enemy, each rank would move closer to the row at the front while throwing their *pila* until the whole maniple was set closer together. While the enemy was distracted by the spears raining down, the front ranks would charge with their sword piercing the groin, sides, and vitals of the enemy, or cutting the tendons of their knees or ankles. Thus, fighting consisted of pockets of single combat rather than the mass movement of the phalanx which attempt to push its way through the enemy.[63] Thus, the Roman legion was much quicker and versatile on obstructed terrain than the bulky phalanx formation of the Macedonians. Although the Greeks during the Hellenistic period were capable inventors and were capable of adapting foreign military techniques into their armies, they never had to update the phalanx formation because the armies they were fighting all used the same formation and both sides opted to fight on rather flat and even terrain. Although this formation exploited the weaknesses of the Greek *poleis* and then the Persian army, it was not capable of exploiting the weaknesses of the Roman army. The Greeks became inflexible in their tactics and did not adapt to their new situation. This can be clearly seen at the battle of Cynoscephalae c.

197 B.C. during the Second Macedonian War.[64] The Roman army, commanded by Flamininus, met the army of Philip V of Macedonia on the opposite side of a ridge. The Macedonian army was crossing the ridge to engage the Romans on flat terrain, but the Roman army scrambled up the hill and attacked the Macedonian army before it could enter into its phalanx formation. Consequently, the Macedonians suffered such a great amount of losses that they sued for peace.[65] By using the phalanx formation, the Macedonian army was not capable of battling on uneven and rough terrain as it required the soldiers to fight in a cohesive unit, unlike the Roman formation which allowed their soldiers to fight with more flexibility as they fought individually and were capable of fighting on rough and uneven terrain giving the Roman legions the upper hand. This, along with external and internal issues, slowly brought an end to the Hellenistic period and the kingdoms of the Successors as they were unable to compete with the military tactics of the Roman legion. Ultimately in 30 B.C. the last of the Successor kingdoms fell to the Romans.

Under the military reforms of Philip II, Macedonia became a contender on the world stage and a kingdom to be feared. They were able to dominate the Greek mainland, and subsequently the Near East under the military command of Alexander the Great through the use of the *sarissa,* the Thracian cavalry, the *peltasts,* and later on adopting the Scythian cavalry formation and horse archers from the Eurasian steppes to enhance the Macedonian military and expose the weaknesses of the Greek and Persian forces. These reforms also allowed the Macedonian army to travel faster by incorporating camels from the Persians. As the Greeks expanded into this new world, the successors of Alexander – namely the Antigonid, Seleucid and Ptolemaic kingdoms – incorporated the military tactics of the foreigners within their kingdoms as a way of differentiating their military forces from the other Successor armies. The Seleucids incorporated the chain mail from the Gauls and adopted the use of the cataphracts – a heavy

cavalry unit originally from the Iranian regions of their kingdom. The Seleucids also extensively adopted the use of Asian elephants as weapons of war as the King of Porus had done when he encountered Alexander the Great. The Antigonids created the *thureophoros,* inspired by the Gauls who often invaded their territory. With the tremendous amount of wealth and desire for Alexander's empire, weapons of war constructed by engineers such as siege machines like the *heliopolis* of Dememtrios, and defense weaponry like the crane created by Archimedes that could drop 180 lb. worth of stone onto ships, had become grand and highly specialized. Even though the Greeks became increasingly adept at creating new technology for warfare, they did not think to improve their fighting style. They did add soldiers who could be swift and agile in battle such as the *peltasts* or the *theureophoros,* but they relied too heavily on the bulky phalanx formation and on these cumbersome weapons of war. They depended too heavily on a system of fighting that, although might have been the best fighting style during the time of Philip II and Alexander the Great, was replaced by the more efficient and quick army of the Romans. The Romans simply had a better fighting style than the Greeks, just as the Macedonians had the better fighting style than the Greek *poleis* and the Persian army.

[1] Austin 2006, 1; Hamilton 1999, 163
[2] Bugh 2006, 265
[3] Thucydides, 4.124.1, 4.125.1
[4] Hamilton 1999, 168
[5] Bugh 2006, 266; Raaflaub 1999, 133; Everson 2004, 71
[6] Raaflaub 1999, 132-33; Carey, Allfree, and Cairns 2005, 39-40, 42
[7] Raaflaub 1999, 135
[8] Everson 2004, 71
[9] Polybius, 18.29; Bugh 2006, 270
[10] Polybius, 18.29
[11] Hamilton 1999, 170
[12] Arrian, 1.6.1-3
[13] Carey, Allfree, and Cairns 2005, 67
[14] Bugh 2006, 270
[15] Thucydides, 4.32; Bugh 2006, 270
[16] Thucydides, 4. 33
[17] Hamilton 1999, 170
[18] Carey, Allfree, and Cairns 2005, 65
[19] Ibid, 65-66
[20] Ibid, 66
[21] Hamilton 1999, 171
[22] Carey, Allfree, and Cairns 2005, 65 and 67
[23] Ibid, 67
[24] Plutarch, 15; Hanson 2004, 175; Rawlings 2007, 75
[25] Carey, Allfree, and Cairns 2005, 67-68
[26] Thucydides, 5.72
[27] Hamilton 1999, 172
[28] Diodorus, 17.17.3-4
[29] Hamilton 1999, 172
[30] Carey, Allfree, and Cairns 2005, 42
[31] Arrian, 2.24.4
[32] Plutarch, 37
[33] Anglim et al. 2005, 37
[34] Hamilton 1999, 170; Everson 2004, 216; Bugh 2006, 270
[35] Polybius, 16.18; Hamilton 1999, 172
[36] Everson 2004, 210
[37] Hamilton 1999, 182
[38] Ibid, 175
[39] Diodorus, 19.29.2
[40] Carey, Allfree, and Cairns 2005, 86
[41] Everson 2004, 204
[42] Ibid, 205
[43] Everson 2004, 205
[44] Bugh 2006, 281
[45] Hamilton 1999, 182

[46] Shipley 2000, xxvi
[47] Hamilton 1999, 185
[48] Ibid, 184-185
[49] Everson 2004, 208
[50] Ibid, 208
[51] Vitruvius, 10.16.7
[52] Hamilton 1999, 186
[53] Polybius, 8.6
[54] Ibid, 8.7
[55] Everson 2004, 208
[56] Chaniotis 2005, 99
[57] Bugh 1996, 285
[58] Chaniotis 2005, 80
[59] Hamilton 1999, 176-177
[60] Hanson 2004, 200
[61] Ibid, 201
[62] Polybius, 18.30
[63] Carey, Allfree, and Cairns 2005, 43-44
[64] Shipley 2000, xxviii
[65] Hamilton 1999, 184

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Akhenaten: A Machiavellian Prince

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Abstract

This essay will be investigating whether Akhenaten, the 18th Dynasty Egyptian King, truly founded a monotheistic religion that worshipped the sun god Aten, or created a cult to centralize and strengthen his rule over Egypt. This essay will argue that Akhenaten did not create a genuine monotheistic religion, but created a cult to strengthen his power over Egypt. The author's arguments are rooted in the non-monotheistic nature of the Cult of Aten, the non-originality of Atenism' iconography, and the superior status and power that was held by Akhenaten and the royal family in the doctrines of Atenism.

It has been claimed by scholars like Sigmund Freud that Akhenaten had founded the world's first monotheistic religion, however, he may have been a Machiavellian prince, interested in centralizing and strengthening his kingship over Egypt. Akhenaten, as the evidence suggests, seems to be leaning more towards Machiavellianism than religiously inclined. Machiavellianism denotes the employment of cunning and duplicity in statecraft to further one's political power. The non-originality and non-monotheistic essence of the cult of Aten, the supremacy of Akhenaten in Atenism, and the prominence of certain iconography and themes in art, emphasises the Machiavellian nature of Akhenaten's rule. Akhenaten's new cult exclusively worshiped the sun god Aten, who was depicted solely as a sun-disc. The cult of Aten was a culmination of Eighteenth Dynasty syncretism of various Egyptian traditions and religious iconography, with the purpose to diminish the power of the priesthood. The king became the sole intermediator between Aten and the secular world, as Akhenaten's emphasis on the divinity of the king was unparalleled in Ancient Egypt. The iconography of the sun-disc and the focus on the royal family in art highlights Akhenaten's political motivations.

Before discussing how Akhenaten mostly built the cult of Aten on growing trends, it is important to discuss the changes in Egyptian religion during the Eighteenth Dynasty. The cult of Aten denied the plurality of the gods, the traditional Egyptian mythology concerning the Afterlife, and the anthropomorphic representation of divinity.[1] These rejections represented a significant break from traditional Egyptian religion that was strictly polytheistic. Traditional Egyptian religion

believed in the assistance of sacred animals, cult-statues, the deification of dead men for assistance in the afterlife, and anthropomorphic deities. The cult of Aten demanded the exclusive worship of Aten, Aten was depicted solely as a sun-disc, and the king judged who was worthy of an afterlife.[2] Akhenaten, therefore, broke away significantly from traditional religion. The evidence, however, suggests that the cult of Aten was neither entirely original nor monotheistic, but rather a result of growing syncretism and Akhenaten's Machiavellian ambitions.

During the Eighteenth Dynasty, both syncretism of various religious practices and the push for the supremacy of a single solar deity were in full progress. The rise of a sun-cult even began as far back as the Old Kingdom. The Pyramid Texts show that there was a growing relationship between Horus and the kingship. Horus was commonly associated with the sun.[3] There was even a short-lived emergence of a cult that worshipped the sun god Ra. The iconography of the sun-disc was even evident at Heliopolis prior to its use as the sole representation of Aten, as a symbol associated with Ra.[4] Akhenaten both synchronized and adopted these trends with the cult of Aten. The Theban god Amen had already been the elevated to a supreme status prior to Akhenaten's reign, which was vigorously defended by Amen's priesthood. Ra was frequently combined with Amen as Amen-Ra, the supreme god of Upper and Lower Egypt.[5]

Atenism was a culmination of religious beliefs and iconography that emphasised the supremacy of a single solar deity. The syncretism of religious beliefs of the Eighteenth Dynasty culminated in Akhenaten's concept of a single and supreme solar divinity with a direct connection to kingship. Amen had been elevated to supreme status and was personally connected to Egyptian kingship. Amen's supreme status was not the only quality that Akhenaten adopted for Aten, as the 'great hymns' from the tomb of Ay at Amarna explain that Aten adsorbed the status of Amen as the 'hidden one'. Aten, like Amen, could not be seen in plain sight. Akhenaten had even been originally named Amenhotep IV, which means 'Amen is pleased'. Aten also absorbed Ra's solar nature. Aten

was instead represented as the visible power of the sun, and not the invisible power of the sun like Ra.[6]

Akhenaten adopted the iconography of the sun-disc as the sole representation of Aten, breaking from traditional anthropomorphized deities. A relief from the tomb of Akhenaten's vizier Ramose shows Aten as a sun-disc projecting the rays of the sun on the royal pair.[7] Aten was always depicted as a sun-disc, which had always been associated with the sun god Ra. Akhenaten simply took a symbol that was already established in Egyptian religion and adapted it into his new cult. The cult of Aten was thus not original, but the result of different trends that had been in progress during Eighteenth dynasty. However, the non-originality of the cult of Aten does not answer if the cult was monotheistic or not.

The absolute nature of Aten was different from traditional Egyptian religion. The 'great hymns' from the tomb of Ay express that Aten is the sole creator and sustainer of the world.[8] The core of Aten's theology was the concept that the daily motion of sun assured the existence of the world. Because light required daily regeneration in the darkness, Aten renewed his creation every morning and during the night brought life in the realm of the dead.[9] However, the absolute nature of Aten is not an indicator of monotheism. Akhenaten's originality is found in portraying the rays of the sun into a physical truth, providing mankind with an immediate relationship with the divine.[10] Akhenaten did not tolerate the worship of the traditional Egyptian pantheon for most of his reign, however, he did not deny the existence of other deities.[11] Early in Akhenaten's reign, even with the supremacy of Aten stressed, he retained Re, Harakhte, and Shu as lesser solar deities. He would later discard them for the monolatrist worship of Aten.[12] Atenism thus cannot be a monotheistic religion as the deity merely absorbed qualities of both Amen and Ra. Akheanten simply drew from tradition Egyptian religion and iconography to create his new cult.[13] The reason Akhenaten discarded traditional Egyptian religion for the cult of Aten was truly Machiavellian, as he wanted to strengthen

his power in Egypt by eliminating the power of the traditional priesthood, and to create a state religion focused on the king and the royal family.

Akhenaten's creation of the cult of Aten was an attempt to reassert the supremacy of the king and to eliminate the power of the traditional priesthood, specifically the priesthood of Amen-Ra. The priesthood of Amen-Ra was said to have exerted immense power during the Eighteenth Dynasty. Tuthmosis IV and Amenhotep III even attempted to curb the priesthood's power.[14] The elimination of the worship of Amen-Ra and redirection of religion to a single supreme deity would have effectively ended the priesthood's competition with the king and the royal family. Diminishing the power of the priesthood can be seen as basic political maneuvering, however the extent of Akhenaten's reforms shows an aggressive and powerful form of political opportunism. Akhenaten ensured that Atenism and the royal family were indistinguishable by emphasising unprecedentedly the divinity of king.

Atenism is a cult without any holy texts except for a few significant hymns that have remained. There was no word of god, which is hallmark of modern monotheistic religions, as Aten only communicated through the rays of the sun and the king. There was no need for an extensive priesthood or scripture. Aten's will was conveyed by the king to his subjects through restrictive iconography, and certain formulations of texts.[15] Stele A found south of Tuna el-Gebel demonstrates this new form of religious communication. The royal couple, flanked by their two eldest daughters, are worshipping Aten, who is a radiant sun-disc bestowing its grace on the royal family. Hieroglyphic inscriptions engraved into eight vertical columns and twenty-five horizontal lines comprised of a royal proclamation.[16] The stele expresses how through restricted iconography and a framed text, Akhenaten conveyed the doctrine of Atenism that in turn was his will.

The king was made the human manifestation of Aten on earth, as he was made the only source of religious knowledge and divine grace on earth. Representations of Akhenaten's divinity

are best shown in Amarna (Akhetaten), Akhenaten's new capital, where the cult of Aten was centred. Garden shrines were used to worship the royal family. Additionally, chapels dedicated to Aten are found in many private Amarna homes. Stelae from the shrines found in chapels and smaller temples at Amarna depict the royal family being bestowed by Aten's rays.[17] It seems that the royal family and Aten were indistinguishable. Since Akhenaten was the manifestation of the Aten on earth, Akhenaten thus had unprecedented power as he was the earthly incarnation of the exclusive absolute god, and presents the essence of Akhenaten's Machiavellian rule, the unparalleled emphasis on the divinity of kingship.

The concept of divine kingship was not foreign to the ancient Egyptians. However, Akhenaten amplified the relationship between the divine and the kingship, and the divinity of the king. Aten had no cult image and only appeared in heaven. He was thus not visible to anyone on earth. It was necessary to make contact with Aten through the king as he was the sole intermediary.[18] The notion of the king being the sole intermediary was unprecedented. No longer could someone contact the divine realm through cult statues or through the priesthood. The king is the only person on earth who had a personal relationship with the heavens, and he executed the will of Aten as he was his earthly incarnation. Akhenaten went even further by declaring that both Aten and the king were creator-gods.[19] The king's exclusive prominence in the cult of Aten is why the royal family are depicted as the sole benefactors of Aten's grace.[20] Akhenaten was depicted with this autocratic divine power since he was sole intermediator between Aten and mankind, and the manifestation of the Aten on earth. The evidence for Akhenaten's political opportunism is found in the iconography at Amarna.

Akhenaten's Machiavellianism is centred at his capital at Amarna. A relief from a rock tomb from Amarna portrays Akhenaten and Nefertiti with their three eldest daughters on the royal balcony, being blessed with Aten's grace and bestowing gifts to devotees.[21] This depiction affirms that

Akhenaten is the intermediator between Aten and mankind as the devotees are shown revering him and the royal family. Gifts are given by the royal family as a reward for the devotees' faith. Aten is depicted with the *uraeus* and its rays are holding the *ankh*, demonstrating Aten's immediate connection with kingship. These royal symbols along with Akhenaten being the largest character expresses that Akhenaten is the divine manifestation of Aten on earth. Akhenaten, thus, exerted both religious and political responsibilities, which grants him divine autocratic power, hence why the devotees are worshipping Akhenaten. Said depiction perfectly demonstrates political propaganda and Machiavellian politics, as Akhenaten is trying to reinforce his absolute political and religious power.

Innovations in art regarding the depictions of the king, the royal family, and religious iconography, highlights Akhenaten's Machiavellian rule. Part of the above discussion has been touched upon while explaining the adoption of sun-disc as the sole representation of Aten, and the adoption of the *uraeus* and *ankh* in Aten's iconography. In terms of discussing Akhenaten's political opportunism, it is important to examine further the iconography of Aten and its connection with the king and the royal family. However, a discussion on the depictions of Akhenaten and the royal family outside of religious art is equally important. The changes in the depictions of the king and the royal family emphasize Akhenaten's political opportunistic ambitions.

The sun-disc was the central symbol of Atenism. Its universality was integral to Akhenaten's political ambitions. The sun-disc represented Aten's principal qualities of universality, the dependence of life on the sun, transcendence, and absolute power.[22] The qualities of universality and absolute power of the sun-disc parallel Akhenaten's political ambitions. Akhenaten, as stated before, centralized political and religious authority to the king which gave him unprecedented power.[23] A relief from the tomb of Meryre II at Amarna shows Akhenaten receiving delegates from Nubia and Kush, while receiving devotees during festive games.[24] The sun-disc and Akhenaten are

the most prominent figures in the relief and this displays the universality and unconditional power of Akhenaten.

An artistic revolution occurred during Akhenaten's reign. The king was traditionally not shown intimately with his family. Akhenaten broke with tradition and was frequently portrayed intimately with his family.[25] A relief from Amarna depicts an intimate scene between Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and their three eldest daughters, being blessed by Aten.[26] This is incredibly important and relevant when discussing Akhenaten's political intentions. As mentioned in the previous argument about Akhenaten's emphasis on divinity of the king, the royal family was at the core of this concept. The royal family were the sole benefactors of Aten's grace, and they were worshipped in private and public shrines. The royal family was also integral to Akhenaten's plan as they were central to the cult of Aten. Art was a means for Akhenaten to stress the connection between himself and the royal family with Aten.

Akhenaten was a Machiavellian sovereign, who through the creation of a monolatrist cult that was dedicated to the sun god Aten, attempted to strengthen his power over Egypt. Atenism was not a monotheistic religion, but a culmination of Eighteenth Dynasty trends of syncretism of different religious traditions. There is also no evidence for the denial of the existence of other deities. Akhenaten political opportunism is made clear in the central role of the king and the royal family in the cult of Aten. Akhenaten unprecedentedly emphasised the divinity of the king and the prominence of the royal family. Innovations in iconography such as the exclusive representation of Aten as a sun-disc, and the representation of the king being intimate with the royal family, represent the importance of the royal family in the cult of Aten's theology, and Akhenaten's political ambitions for absolute power.

[1] Redford 1980, 28.
[2] David 2002, 229-231.
[3] David 2002, 96.
[4] Redford 1980, 23.
[5] Asante and Ismail 2009, 297-298.
[6] Asante and Ismail 2009, 301.
[7] Aldred 1988, 91.
[8] Redford 1980, 24.
[9] Hornung 1992, 47.
[10] Asante and Ismail 2009, 302.
[11] David 2002, 229.
[12] David 2002, 229-231.
[13] Asante and Ismail 2009, 301-303.
[14] David 2002, 244.
[15] Hornung 1992, 48.
[16] Aldred 1988, 44.
[17] David 2002, 222.
[18] David 2002, 244.
[19] Aldred 1988, 261-262.
[20] David 2002, 236.
[21] Aldred 1988, 1 and 313.
[22] Redford 1980, 24.
[23] David 2002, 229-231.
[24] Aldred 1988, 280.
[25] Fazzini 1973, 302.
[26] Aldred 1988, 212-213.

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Mortal Rulers and Divine Kings:
Reflections on the Nature of Ruler Cults

By: Marco Scoppa

Abstract

This paper seeks to explore the deification process in Hellenistic culture, by focusing on some of the underlying cultural notions which made this practice possible. Greek philosophy was written by aristocratic members of society and was aimed at the aristocracy, but did not appeal to non-elites. The Hellenist conquest of the East helped popularize the granting of divine honours to rulers, which was formerly a rare practice. Emerging from the growing popularity of divine honours was the emergence of the ruler cult in the Hellenistic world, participation in which was more open and appealing to both elites and non-elites. Participation in the cults of rulers such as Demetrius and Antigonus may have offered many a vicarious sense of agency.

To speak about a Hellenistic period, or about a Hellenistic society, as if one was denoting a unified, clearly delineated concept, is somewhat problematic. The Hellenic conquest of the Near East did not result in a homogenized civilization, unified under the hegemony of Greek and Macedonian political rule. What we call the Hellenistic world was rather a constellation of very diverse traditions and cultures, with their own characteristics, and which had already undergone some degree of syncretism under the previous empires which had more or less united the various people under one political authority.

Still, when it comes to Hellenistic religion in Greece, neater demarcating lines can be drawn between the situation before and after the conquest of the Persian Empire. Religion was influenced by the cultural opening to the East, now a subject, rather than a potential invader (in both cultural and political terms), and by the changed socio-political context. Divine honours granted to rulers were rare in Classical Greece, and their appearance denotes a major change within the dynamics of Greek society. While these customs were common in Near Eastern cultures as well as in Greek Sicily, where deification of mortals had been practiced at the very least since Pythagoras' time, Greece had not been granting divine honours to any living ruler for many centuries.[1] This changed with the advent of the Macedonians.

While on one hand the granting of divine honours to living mortals might have not disturbed some, others might have seen it as a sign of decay of religious and political institutions. Some might have even seen ruler cults as a genuine religious observance of a higher power as it manifested itself

through a mortal. Hence, the situation is rather complex. To arrive at hasty conclusions regarding the matter risks compromising our understanding of Hellenistic culture. Religion offered to many what philosophy could offer only to the few. Ritual, in using its own "language", communicated to all who were willing to listen to it its message. The same cannot be said for most philosophical schools, which were thought, meant and created for the ruling classes.

Hero and ruler cults are crucial for understanding the appeal of the new religious movements and their magnetism on the common people. As propagandistic tools by either the ruler being celebrated, or by a city trying to win a monarch's friendship, ruler cults are generally initiated by the elite in power, although not necessarily. However, to say that the population believed the ruler as an individual was a divinity, after being brainwashed by political propaganda turned into religious practice, would be an oversimplification of a rather complex understanding of the world and of the powers which dominated it, as Shipley has justly noted.[2]

Instead, one must bear in mind that Hellenistic culture is one which eventually gave birth to ideas such as the one expressed in the late Hellenistic *Corpus Hermeticum,* where the man-god division is blurred to the point the following statement, which could have been seen as heretical in previous periods (and certainly subsequent ones as well), can be read in the text: "If we dared to say the truth, the man who is truly man is above the gods, or, at the very least, their power is equal".[3]

Philosophy

It has been suggested by Corrington that while Skeptics and Cynics could be seen as popularized philosophies, Stoicism and Epicureanism appealed more to the middle and higher classes of society.[4] While this view could be argued, one can still note that the study of philosophy was generally reserved to those with the means to do so, as it had always been. Cynics and Skeptics, in being often labeled as street philosophers, could have attracted individuals from the lower classes, unlike teachers who were paid to educate and tutor privately. Yet, Cynic and Skeptic stances were

probably not as popular as many new religious movements, due to their radical stance on the nature of the world, their rejection of the social world in the first case, and the disbelief in any absolute truth in the second. Similarly, the distant and uninterested divinities of which Lucretius sings in *De Rerum Natura*, were not attractive to the needy populace, for whom his honey coated truth must have certainly tasted rather sour. To them, the hope of help, healing or salvation through the action of a higher power, was certainly stronger than the idea of hardly attainable idealistic state of *ataraxia:* the tranquillity and peace of mind resulting from the rejection of passions. The inherent elitist nature of the teaching and spreading of philosophical ideas was already present in Classical philosophy. Indeed, the themes, arguments, and general outlook of both Plato and Aristotle are certainly originated from, and were directed at, the people from the upper milieu of Greek society.

As the setting of most of Plato's dialogues reveals, Socrates' discussions were generally held in front of the Athenian citizens. While not strictly aristocratic, these were the rulers of a city where the citizenship formed a fraction of the whole population. One of the main preoccupations of this social group was politics. While sophists and teachers of rhetoric instructed others on how to win an argument by manipulation of concepts and language, Socrates and Plato developed a philosophy whose power was in its own conception of the good and the right. In other words, the philosophical school, which was going to be known as Platonist or Academic, endowed its adherents with moral outlooks through which living a political life acquired a higher meaning.

In the *Republic*, Plato says that the city is to be ruled by a philosopher king, who, after having broken through the many illusions the material world presents to human beings, is to be forced to rule.[5] The personal quest for truth, when successful, is to be offered to the city in order to increase the common well being, and in order to serve "the good", the archetypal good – or God, if one was to correlate the perfect good with a manifestation of the divine. The reincarnation of the souls, and the better treatment of the virtuous is further incentive for constructive political action professed by the

Platonist school.

Aristotle's *Politics* is another example of how Classical philosophy tended to merge personal interests with those of the *polis.* The state must reflect the proper *telos* of Man - thus "the best regime, one who is going to undertake the investigation appropriate to it must necessarily discuss first what the most choice worthy way of life is,"[6] a claim restated again when the author writes "that the same way of life must be necessarily be the best both for each human being individually and for cities and human beings in common".[7] For Aristotle, the personal way of life is intertwined with that of the state, personal and public are one the expression of the other, and there is little difference between the two because the good of the individual is the same as that of the group. Man is, after all, a *political animal*, a *polis* creature. His end, from the perspective taken in the discussion of politics, is that of reaching happiness through an equilibrium with the larger social body.

Stoicism partakes in this notion of Aristotle's, as much as it is closely related to the views of Plato. In reading the second century CE text *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, one notices how ideas on duty coexisted, or strived to coexist, with a need for righteousness and need for balance between the individual, society, and the cosmos. Epicureanism, on the other hand, is much less concerned with politics and duty. The former is indeed seen as standing in the way for the reaching of quietness and satisfaction. The distant Epicurean gods described by Lucretius, as remote and inaccessible as the new monarchs, do not care about humans. Those who seek the quietude of the senses in Epicurus' garden, do not need to be too worried about them either.

What these schools have in common is a focus on the individual's needs for well being, and on how to have these needs are to coexist with the requests from the social world. While the type philosophy that developed in Classical Athens, such as Platonism, stressed the importance of participating in the life of the *polis*, Stoicism already sees this public political activity as a duty one must perform. By contrast, Epicureanism limits the participation in public affairs which it labels as

unhealthy.[8] In each case we are dealing with concerns of the higher classes of the ancient world, who could, eventually, behave as stoic or epicurean philosophy dictated. The fact that Perseus, the favourite of Zeno, had been a slave, is not a sign that philosophy has been spreading among the lower strata of society.[9] It is going to take some century before Greek philosophy and ideals of equality are going to merge. Still, this is going to happen when Plotinus' ideas are going to be taken by St. Augustine, whose philosophical system is a synthesis of Neo-Platonism and Christianity.

The two classical schools embodied by Plato and Aristotle reflect a cohesive and holistic philosophical system, in which personal and public are one – indeed, they reflect the social structure of the classical *polis*, before the major macro-political changes resulting from Alexander's conquests in the East. The two later ones, Stoicism and Epicureanism, are reactions to the changed Hellenistic environment, one in which the power of most individuals to effect consistent and considerable changes within their city and towards other cities had declined. The new equilibrium created by the presence of larger state entities, such as the Ptolemaic and Seleucid kingdoms, pushed the power of the citizens as individuals into the background, creating a new dynamic, one in which even those who ruled cities did not have much power in a world of absolute, divine monarchs.

Cults of Divine Rulers

An interesting insight into the rationale behind deified humans is however given by Homer in the Odyssey, book XI, when Odysseus meets Heracles' shade: "I was aware of powerful Herakles; his image, that is, but he himself among the immortal gods enjoys their festivals, married to sweet-stepping Hebe…"[10] The idea that the divine hero could be at the same time with the gods, and in the world of shadows, is somewhat unintuitive. How can he be, in the same moment, in a place of darkness and in a place of joy and light? Are these two Herakles' the same person, or does Herakles have two souls? Which one, then, is the "real Herakles"?

Homer may be implying that Herakles possessed both human and divine natures. While his

human part descended into the Hades, his immortal self joined the Olympians. The poet thus gives an important insight into ancient Greek understanding of both life after death, and life after death for deified heroes. While a follower of Herakles' cult would be asking for the help and support of the Herakles in heaven, Odysseus' experience with the dead puts him in front of a human Herakles, one which complains about his miseries and labours, seemingly oblivious to his second self banqueting with Hebe. This human Herakles who we find among the dead is rather distressing:

> Resourceful Odysseus, unhappy man, are you too leading some wretched destiny such as I too pursued when I went still in the sunlight? For I was son of Kronian Zeus, but I had an endless spell of misery. I was made bondman to one who was far worse than I, and he loaded my difficult labors on me.[11]

The troubled and unhappy Herakles is certainly a shadow of his other self among the gods. Its fatalistic outlook on the "wretched destiny" and his misery caused by Eurystheus seem more akin to a human than to a divine being.

Some Greeks might have understood the deification of rulers in a similar way. Corrington notes that given the new political situation, "the result was a belief in a power on Earth corresponding to that in the Heavens, embodied in a powerful ruler, whose control seemed scarcely less cosmic than that of a God. Indeed, the respect for the power embodied in an individual person was perhaps greater than respect for the person who had it."[12]

This makes sense for certainly the cults were commenced as tributes to a ruler's power or to his success, rather than to his good looks, or any other personal characteristic detached from his institutional figure. Although these characteristics could be mentioned as he was eulogized, the focal point of ruler cults was his power to impact people's lives, and to change them radically and possibly unpredictably. This type of power was similar to that which the temperamental and unstable Olympians demonstrated in myth. In addition to political motivations, through public ritual many among the people might have tried to appease this divine entity within the king - to attract him on their side, in

ways that had been thought to entice divine beings since time immemorial.

That the king was thought to contain some elements of the divine is clear from the following hymn in honour of Demetrius:

> How the greatest and dearest of the gods have come to the city! For the hour has brought together Demeter and Demetrius, she comes to celebrate the solemn mysteries of her Daughter […] Hail son of the most powerful god Poseidon and Aphrodite! For the other gods are either far away, or they do not have ears, or they do not exist, or do not take any notice of us, but you we can see present here; you are not made of wood and stone, you are real.[13]

While from a literal reading one might deduce a disbelief in the Olympian gods taking form in Hellenistic Athens, a more careful approach might suggest a different process taking place. Demetrius is being compared to Demeter at first, certainly as a game on homonymy, but most probably also an allusion to Demetrius as a bringer of a new season within the political life of the city, following the expulsion of Demetrius of Phaleron in 307 BCE While the other gods had not listened to the prayers of the people, this son of Poseidon and Aphrodite had. Indeed, it is his being human and thus "real", a material, sensible object with a discernible will, to elevate him above the distant gods, who, we are told, might as well be nonexistent. There is a slight tone of Epicurean philosophy, or of a worldview akin to it, discernible at two points in the hymn. While the characterization of the gods as distant and deaf immediately evoke Lucretius' indifferent divinities, the concrete nature of the king, his solid material mass, might also recall a materialist perspective. Still, the divinity within the man is more akin to Platonism, where the good acting through the philosopher is somewhat similar to the idea of a divinity acting through the ruler.

Although public rituals and sacrifices are a very important part of ruler cults, private ones were present and widespread as well. Hieron's cult in Syracuse is thought to have originated as a spontaneous, household cult, where adherents prayed for his protection.[14] While the hypothesis of some sort of flattery cannot be ruled out *a priori*, one should not erase the possibility that what Ernesto De Martino called *il pensiero magico* was at work here.[15] In other words, as much as in De Martino's

contemporary Southern Italy people enacted private "magical" rituals in order to influence the fortune of people, so too ancient Greek Sicilians might have been striving to manipulate the ruler's Tyche and through it his environment and circumstances. That their wishes towards him were usually positive, rather than malicious, is demonstrated by the little altars which people had made for Hieron in Syracuse[16] - they believed he was the one who could save them from the enemies of their city. In front of the uncontrollable events of history, the inhabitants of the *polis* turned towards the only entity which could, in some way, act as a firm, solid, reliable base. The fact that these little cults eventually became official,[17] is remarkable but not utterly surprising.

Ruler cults offered to the common people the illusion of having a say in the events of history. By influencing the ruler's fortune or Tyche, which, as Aalders points out, was seen as a fluctuating and unstable presence in people's lives, and could suddenly turn against its favourites, take them down, or even cause their death.[18] Tyche's actions were thought to originate from a form of envy, and its malicious action is described as akin to that of the evil eye[19] - and as the evil eye, people must have tried to control it and channel its power through a ritual. By influencing the city's fortune through the ruler, people might have believed they had a greater influence on world events, as some of their ancestors might have had during the past, when policy decided by a *polis* had a much stronger impact on the external world. In a world of kings and empires, a culture accustomed to a more direct influence on history through individual action needed to channel this need. Ruler cults might have served to fulfill this need for some individuals, who could thus believe they had impacted history vicariously.

Religions are condensed expressions of the socio-political order of any given culture. In other words, they contain within them the basic outlines and structures of culture, which are encoded in both myth and ritual. Some people from the upper classes, who could read and learn through the study of philosophy, might have understood that the ruler cults to which they probably participated were part of a state ritual which had its own practical justification.

The fact that Greek religion already included examples of deified human beings reflects a cultural notion in which the line that divides human and divine existence is one which is somewhat blurred and can, in certain circumstances, be surpassed. The early examples of this custom can be traced to the heroes to whom special cults were reserved. Although clear proof of the historical existence of heroes such as Odysseus or a Theseus, the mystification and elevation into the archetypal world of historical humans is not an isolated phenomenon.[20]

In analyzing the reaction which the Athenian population had to the new cults of Demetrius and Antigonus, Shipley suggests that these cults should be seen as civic rituals, not as expressions of religious feeling.[21] Although this might be true, one cannot completely eliminate the possibility for some subsequent rationalization, or rather, mystification, of the ruler cult even in Greece. While in the Near East and Egypt ruler cults merged in an already present tradition, in Greece these were much more sparse and rare. Shipley notes that the existence of hero cults, as well as the divine status of Lycurgus in Sparta, should be regarded as proof that Greeks already had within their culture the seeds for Hellenistic ruler cults. However, this statement is somewhat problematic and incomplete. Hero cults were indeed an echo of the divine status given to archaic rulers or warriors, and Lycurgus was certainly one of them. Still, one can see a progressive loosening of this practice by the time Solon gave Athens its constitution, for he was never given divine status. Neither Pericles was granted the honour. That Lycurgus was deified is rather testimony to the unique culture which had developed in Sparta, a culture with its own very peculiar traits.

While on the one hand the deification of the Antigonids could be viewed as a smart, pragmatic move by the Athenian elite, the popular participation in this and in other cults cannot be understood as a mere collective strategy enacted by the whole population in unison in order to gain the favours of these men through plain flattery. Instead, it seems likely that the powerful men evoked genuine reactions by some in the population who might have seen them as the vessels through which a higher

power exerted its will on the world. As much as Hegel saw Napoleon as *Geist* riding on a horse, some might have reacted in a similar way in light of the power these individual had to change the world. That Alexander came to believe, or made people believe that he was the son of Zeus, can be seen either as a megalomaniacal statement, as a bright political move in light of the social structure of Eastern cultures, or as a realization of his own power to influence history. If Zeus was the ruler of the Gods, Alexander may have been presenting himself as Zeus' emissary on Earth with an unlimited power over his subjects.

In light of this, one can see why ruler cults, but even more cults of divine men, became so prominent and popular in Hellenistic times. To be worshipped was not so much the human being, the recipient of power, but rather the power itself contained within the individual. The appeal of potential help in daily needs from such an entity had its attraction. Among the common people, neither philosophers, nor candidate philosopher kings were able to satisfy the ritualistic need which was fulfilled by the presence and existence of a divine ruler. The succumbing of Demetrius of Phaleron to Demetrius Poliorcetes, and the latter's initial popularity illustrates this peculiar phenomenon fairly well. While philosophy was primarily a matter of the elite, religion spoke to all through myth and ritual. For many, to whom the doors of knowledge of dialectic and sophisticated rhetoric were closed, ruler cults offered a vicarious experience of power through the cult figure.

[1] Serrati 2008, 81-82.
[2] Shipley, *The Greek World after Alexander* (New York: Routledge, 2000).
[3] *Corpus Hermeticum* 2001, Bk. X, 24.
[4] Corrington 1986, 104.
[5] Plato 1991, Bk. 6, 498d.
[6] Aristotle 1985, 1323al 12-16.
[7] Ibid. 1325bl 29-31.
[8] Dorandi 1999,
[9] Ibid, 39.
[10] Homer 1977, 601-604.
[11] Homer 1977, 617-622.
[12] Corrington, 70.
[13]Austin 1989, 35; 64-65.
[14] Serrati 2008, 91.
[15] Ernesto De Martino 1971,
[16] Serrati, 91.
[17] Ibid.
[18] G.J.D. Aalders, 5
[19] Ibid.
[20] Mircea Eliade recounts, in his *Myth of the Ethernal Return,* how several Romanian folk legends about dragon slayers and heroes had at their origin warriors who had fought against the Turks.
[21] Shipley, 162.

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Women and the *Polis*: Degrees of Secluded Lifestyles in Athenian Society as Depicted in Red- and Black-Figure Attic Vases

By: Maya Harrington

Abstract

Research regarding the place of women in ancient Athenian society has shifted in recent years from the opinion of very secluded lifestyles to ones of more importance and involvement in the polis. In this paper the degrees of seclusion of different factions of women are explored, using evidence depicted on red- and black-figure Attic vessels. The case for less-secluded lifestyles is made using several vessels and supporting research, specifically the differences between the circumstances of Athenian housewives and hetairai*, high-class prostitutes, who were granted exposure to cultural and political discussion and debate in the male-only* symposia*.*

The lives of women in ancient Greece is a contested topic, with the arguments surrounding the degree of seclusion to which they were subjected. Art recovered from between 600 BCE and 301 BCE (the Archaic period to the early Hellenistic period) can provide some insight into the social dynamics of the Greek *polis* and the roles played by women. Through analyzation of several Attic black- and red-figure vases and supporting research, This paper will argue that the earlier scholarly perception of the very isolated and male-dominated lives lead by women in ancient Greece is perhaps an inaccurate depiction of the reality. According to various literature and historical objects from ancient Greece, the general attitude towards women was one of caution and anxiety, due to their apparent emotional and volatile natures, and their beauty purportedly having the ability to send men to their deaths.[1] In myth, destruction and chaos is often wrought by their allure. Perhaps this wariness of the power of women can be attributed to the motivation behind their apparent suppression in ancient Greek society. With regards to exploring this topic through the lens of Attic vase-paintings, an important factor comes to the front: the ambiguity of scenes depicted on Attic vases makes exact interpretation extremely difficult if not entirely impossible,[2] but it is possible to glean non-exclusionary elements in the lives and societal roles of women in the *oikos* and thus the *polis*. As Sheramy D. Bundrick notes:

"...a more fruitful interpretive strategy is to treat a scene as if it were a text, to decipher a painter's pictorial language while recognizing the image for the construction it is."[3]

When considering the scenes found on the red- and black-figure vase paintings, there are different factors to take into account in order to more accurately determine the intended audience to which the artist was appealing. Ambiguity attests to a few different circumstantial explanations, the first being that perhaps the painter was simply a businessman, attempting to appeal to as broad a market as possible in order to garner the greatest attention.[4] As many Attic vessels have been recovered far from the home that the style belongs to, an artist did not know where his goods might be shipped and so he had to account for many possible markets, and, consequently, cultural interests.[5] As an example: one artist, referred to as the Harrow Painter, employed the use of vague imagery in order to allow the images to evoke in the viewer the sentiments and values which they wanted to see.[6] The misinterpretation that the ambiguity may present, based on the distances the vases travelled, is one factor in the shift in style and choice of depiction of Attic vases, however it is not the only one.

The Peloponnesian War signalled socio-cultural shifts which manifested themselves in the imagery of vase paintings.[7] Changes in the daily life of Athenians helped to foster a growing recognition of the importance of the roles played by women as mothers and wives, and by the late 5th century BCE, Attic vase paintings were filled with women and feminine scenes.[8] Important to these changes in Athenian society was the implementation of democracy, which further established the cruciality of the role of the woman in the *oikos*. She was not a citizen in the sense of political endeavours, but her part in society as householder was integral to the maintenance of the *polis*.[9]

The success of the *oikos* was the backbone of the *polis*, and the depiction of these scenes on Attic vases reinforce that ideal. Without women, a society cannot grow, and they also played integral roles in civic religious rites.[10] The duties of the women in the household did not only extend to menial tasks such as housekeeping, but also to managerial duties of handling the finances and expenses of the household.[11] In a play entitled *Melanippe the Wise*, author Euripides writes: "Women manage homes and preserve the goods which are brought from abroad/Houses where there is no wife is neither orderly nor prosperous."[12] Women took care of the private life, while men handled the public.

Bundrick examines the use of ambiguity in the decoration of an Attic red-figure hydria (470 BCE), attributed to the Harrow Painter. Depicted on the vessel is a woman, seated, and three men (one old, one adolescent, and one child-like).[13] The contestation of the vessel falls upon the argument of the identity of the woman; some say she is a *hetaira,* others say she is a housewife. There are convincing arguments for both. Firstly, the majority of scholars who have examined the vessel seem to agree that the woman is, in fact, a prostitute, a *hetaira*.[14] This conclusion is made based on the fact that the oldest man is carrying a pouch that contains money, thus suggesting that the building behind the woman a brothel.[15] Here, Bundrick makes the clarification that the woman would most likely have been referred to with the term *pornai* (low-class prostitute), as opposed to the more reputable *hetaira*.[16]

The opposition to this interpretation, although apparently the minority, puts forth an arguably more convincing case. As argued by both Bundrick and scholar Eva Keuls, the woman in the scene could easily be seen as a wife, and the three men her husband and two sons.[1718]Evidence for this is provided by the architecture of the building, which may be a house

with a porch-like area (*pastas*) and courtyard in which women sometimes performed household tasks. In the instance of a husband providing his wife with a sack of money, this could indicate a recognition of her duties as finance manager, and a show of respect and trust in her competency in that position.[19] If this scene is indeed the one proposed by the minority of observers, it reinforces the importance to the institution of marriage to the *polis*. Marriage was seen as a partnership, with the roles of the man and the woman in different realms of society: the private and the public.[20]

In democratic Athens, women were not "citizens" but were spoken of using the term *astai*, to the male *astoi*, meaning roughly "member of the community".[21] The realms of men and women were different, but were equally important, and Bundrick suggests that the use of the term "separated" as opposed to "secluded" may more accurately describe the situation. This sentiment is echoed by Eva C. Keuls who deems Athenian society as a "... division of the sexes".[22] According to Marylin Katz, disagreement on the level of seclusion experienced by women was put forth most notably in 19th and 20th century historical investigation, as previously-upheld sociological theories and patriarchal ideals were challenged by feminism.[23] New research suggests that the seclusion was not actually so extreme. Sue Blundell and Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz discuss this theme in detail in their article "Women's Bonds, Women's Pots: Adornment Scenes in Attic Vase-Painting". They note that the communal life of women with other women is an extremely popular scene found on Attic vases.[24] However, Blundell and Rabinowitz suggest that the rate of occurrence of this scene is not an accurate measure of how often women actually got to enjoy the company of one another.[25] Artists may have put so many figures on the vases to fill up the available space: "...most artists would have shied away from the idea of depicting a single red figure against a large area of black "empty space," even if such

solitude was a realistic feature of most women's lives."[26] Katz's paper is in slight opposition to this, stating that although women may have been confined to their houses, the company of female friends was permitted.[27] Blundell and Rabinowitz specify their argument in stating that the occurrence of gatherings of women found on Attic vases is inaccurate as women most likely gathered only for special occasions, such as wedding preparation, another popular theme found on the vases.[28] All of this roundabout reasoning arrives at the question of the habits of the painters of these scenes. Artists of vessel paintings were known for depicting everyday life, and so it is difficult to assign the representation of the lives of women as the exception to these creative habits. The evidence suggests an ideology put forth by male painters, as most (if not all) the painters were male.[29] And depictions of women showed them principally as objects of the "male gaze".[30]

The ideology in question reinforces the status of women as beautiful houseware, their rightful position in the mind of the men of Athens. Blundell and Rabinowitz discuss the condition of women on the vases as primarily in seated or "static" positions as a further representation of their proper place in society. Paraphrasing author Sian Lewis, the seemingly un-busy lives of women were most likely not accurate depictions, but an aspiration with different values for men and women.[31] For women the aspiration was to attain the social position of not needing to do housework, which was imbibed with glamour. For men, the inactivity of the women of his household reflected his ability to be a good provider.[32]

The importance of the marital relationship calls for the definition of qualities that keep them running smoothly. One such quality mentioned by Bundrick, in his examination of the Harrow Painter *hydria,* is sexual desirability. Ideals of an Athenian woman are laced with

subtleties. She must be beautiful and sensual, but always with the air of modesty and desirability. Her sexuality is kept in check by her marital status.[33] The sexual freedom granted to men (i.e. the company of *hetairai* in *symposia*) is not also awarded to women. Another example of sexuality kept in check is presented by Keuls in an exploration of the imagery on Attic vases of Dionysian cult religious and ritual practices. The maenads (female followers of Dionysus) and satyrs are followers of the cult dressed in costume for the rituals.[34] Rituals involve the incessant sexual pursuit of the maenads by the satyrs, and the mythological imagery accompanying ritual imagery reinforces the "sexual antagonization" which is central to the cult.[35] However, the sexual repression of women is clear in the fact that the antagonization is one-sided; the male participants of these relationships are the only perpetrators, the females act only in self-defense, and are often seen even being taken advantage of.[36] Male dominance over women represented through sexual scenes is also found in examples of heterosexual encounters versus homosexual encounters between men. Men are shown to be over women in these scenes, dominating them, however with male-to-male encounters, the individuals are shown as equal, facing each other on a common plane.[37] This is another allusion to the place of women in the Athenian social scene.

In reference to the alluring quality of women discussed above, the representation of women on Attic vessels does not contradict. Women are depicted in drapery that gives away every detail of their voluptuous bodies beneath, although they are not pictured nude (except in the case of the *hetairai*).[38] [39] On one *epinetron*, examples of this depiction of women is clear. The scene represents females in preparation for a wedding, which Blundell and Rabinowitz interpreted from other examples as the single most defining moment of an Athenian woman's life.[40] Here the suggestion of life defined by men is made apparent, the most important moment of a woman's life occurs when she is absorbed through civil ceremony into the already-defined

life of a man.[41] In the scene, a representation of Eros is depicted, giving way to important speculation on the sexuality of women.[42] There are only women in this scene, but the presence of Eros and the relaxed poses of the women is used as a device to allude to sensuality and desire, while also maintaining the modesty so highly valued.[43] Imagery of Eros in the company of women is also supported by discussion of a red-figure bell krater (430-420 BCE[44]), depicting two women in the process of depilation in the presence of Eros, who even aids one of the women performing pubic depilation.[45] This is clearly a sexual scene, as Eros is illustrated touching the pubic area of one of the women, aiding her in the depilation process.[46] In the cases of the presence of Eros, the theme could be alluding to either sexuality between women, or it could simply be a projection of the male artist. Discussion on homosexuality between women is briefly mentioned by Katz, who suggests that seclusion of women lead to both homosexuality and prostitution.[47]

Hetairai hold an interesting position in Athenian society. Identifiable by their nudity, and various accessories such as thigh-bands and breast cross-cords.[48] According to Katz, they are "emancipated women"[49], free from the "seclusion" endured by housewives. The *hetairai* are the only women allowed in the symposia and therefore exposed to intelligent discussion of cultural matters. The education that they receive as a result of keeping male company may have facilitated a different type of interaction between *hetairai* and men compared to the interactions between men and wives.[50] Love and respect are noted by Katz as unusual sentiments afforded to *hetairai* by men.[51] Positive imagery of *hetairai* on Attic vases reinforces this suggestion. On the Dionysian vases examined by Keuls, *hetairai* are depicted (and identified by their non-specific features, meaning average and not attributable to a specific person or group of people) in encounters with the satyrs without the violence and antagonization suffered by the maenads.

Some are even shown in scenes of tender embrace.[52] All of this information offers a look at this particular faction of Athenian women in a different light. *Hetairai* enjoyed a freedom, education, and respect that housewives were perhaps not a part of. However, because the discussion is focused on the representation *women* of the Attic vases, it is important not to discount the experiences of the *hetairai.*

An examination of scholarly research and a selection of Attic black- and red-figure pottery proposes that the seclusion of women in Athenian society was less severe than previous research on the topic had ascertained. The case of the *hetairai* is a curious one and perhaps difficult to relate directly to the circumstances of all Athenian women, but is none the less an important factor to consider. Evidence for the respect and importance placed on the institution of marriage, and democracy's role in recognizing the importance of women as wives and mothers is abundant, and further supports a more skeptical view of the degree of seclusion Athenian women endured. In the end, we are left with the fact that any interpretation of the lives of women relies on accounts and paintings that were created by men in male-dominated society. The story that is being told through this artwork remains a male representation of the lives of women, perhaps tinged by ideals, suppression, and misunderstanding.

[1] For example, the myth of Helen of Troy and the disaster wrought there; legal documents, literature, etc. recovered from the age of the *oikos* evidences this wariness of women (Barringer 2014, 240).
[2] Bundrick 2012, 11.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Bundrick 2012, 13.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Bundrick, 2012, 14-15.
[7] Barringer 2014, 258.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid, 183.
[10] Ibid, 240.
[11] Bundrick 2012, 16.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid, 11.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid, 12.
[16] Ibid, 13.
[17] Bundrick 2012, 15.
[18] Keuls 1993, 260.
[19] Bundrick 2012, 16.
[20] Ibid, 20.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Keuls 1984, 288.
[23] Katz 1992, 72.
[24] Blundell & Rabinowitz 2008, 118.
[25] Ibid, 119.
[26] Ibid, 120.
[27] Katz 1992, 72.
[28] Blundell & Rabinowitz 2008, 120.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid, 118.
[31] Ibid, 122.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Bundrick 2012, 20.
[34] Keuls 1984, 289.
[35] Ibid, 290.
[36] Ibid, 292.
[37] Shapiro 1981, 137.
[38] And that of the case of the nude Kassandra on the hydria by Kleophrades Painter. This instance of nudity is highly unusual, but illustrates her vulnerability. (Barringer 2014, 189).
[39] Barringer 2014, 258.
[40] Blundell & Rabinowitz 2008, 118.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.
[44] The krater is attributed to the Dinos painter by the author, A. Paul.
[45] Paul 1994, 63.
[46] Ibid, 62.
[47] Katz 1992, 72.
[48] Paul 1994, 61.
[49] Ibid, 73.
[50] Katz 1992, 73.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Keuls 1984, 290.

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