A Colossal Cult Statue Group from Dobër, Albania: Visual Narratives of East and West in the Countryside of Butrint

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A group of three fragmentary marble statues of colossal scale came to light in 1913 on a low hill known as Dobër in the countryside of Butrint, Albania. A fourth statue fragment, a veiled female head dated stylistically to the late fourth or third century BCE, now in Ioannina, Greece, was said to have been found in the same area, but new archival research casts doubt on that assertion. In this study, we reassess the technical and iconographic features of these statues. We argue that the group from Dobër, which presumably stood inside a temple there, depicts the enthroned Mother of the Gods joined by two standing companions: Attis or a figure from the Trojan saga, such as Askanios, and a fragmentary and unidentifiable male figure. We propose that the group is a visual representation of the well-known literary links between the coast of Butrint and the land of Troy, and further, that it provides testimony for the privileged position that the region had with Rome during the periods of both the Macedonian Wars and the Augustan colonization. As these statues demonstrate, the area of Butrint was a crucial point of encounter between East and West and of cultural mediation for both Greeks and Romans.[1]

INTRODUCTION

This study offers a reappraisal of a group of marble statues said to have been found in the early 20th century near the Albanian village of Vagalat, about 10 km east of Butrint in the region of Chaonia in the northwestern part of ancient Epirus. The group comprises a head of a veiled goddess, a torso of an enthroned goddess, a torso of a standing male figure in Eastern costume, and the legs of another standing male figure. The reported findspot of these statue fragments is a small hill called Dobër, located north of Vagalat along a natural route that follows the river Pavla (figs. 1, 2).[2] The site was advantageously located in antiquity, accessible from Thesprotia in the south and from Molossia in the east, and it was closely linked to the other parts of Chaonia through the coastal plain of Butrint.

Today, not much is known about the archaeological remains of Dobër, and, as regards the statues, the circumstances of their discovery have largely been

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[2] Most recently on the grouping of these figures, and on their provenance from near Vagalat, see De Maria and Mercuri 2007, 150–52, with earlier bibliography.

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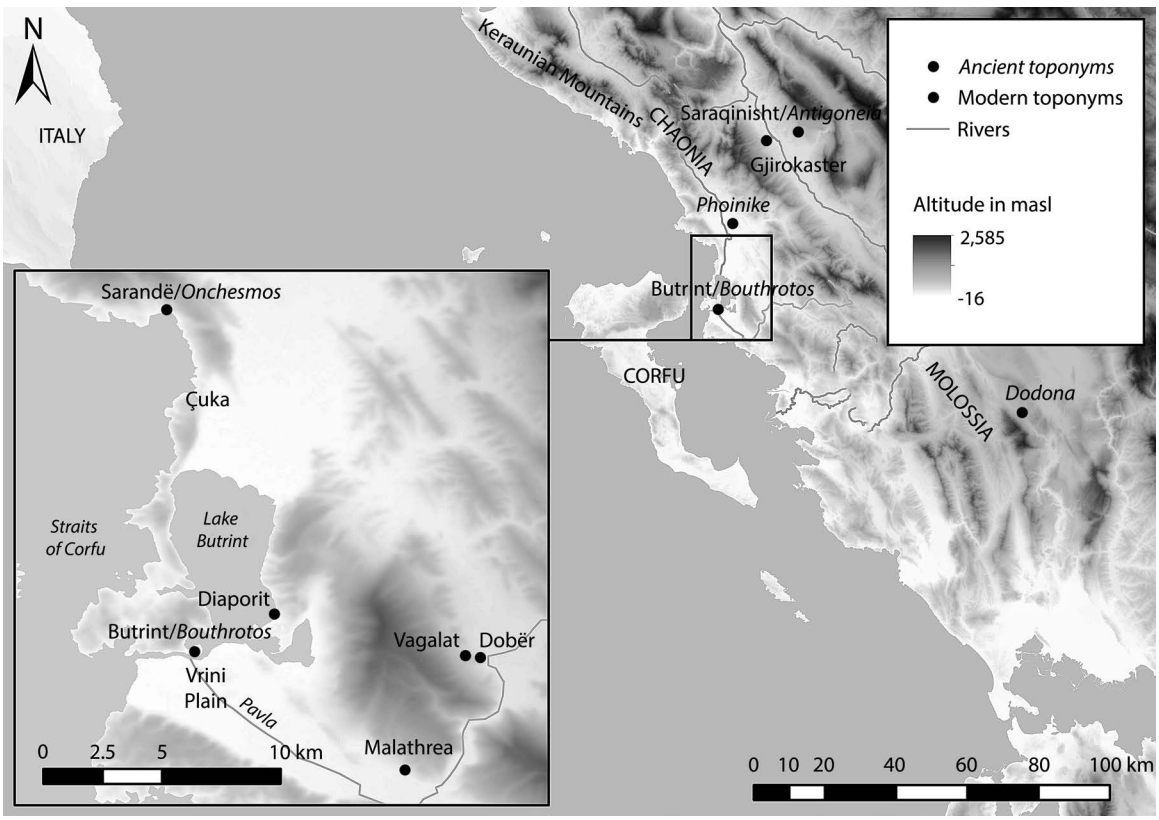

FIG. 1. Map of Epirus, showing Butrint and its environs, including the locations of Vagalat and Dobër.

lost with time. What is certain is that by the early 20th century, the two torsos, the largest and heaviest pieces of the group, rested exposed at Dobër alongside a substantial wall of ashlar construction (fig. 3; wdth. 1 m x lgth. 15 m). Stewart S. Clarke, who traveled through Epirus in 1923 and 1924 to study its monuments, was the first to associate these pieces with the ashlar wall.[3] In the following decade, Luigi Ugolini photographed the torsos on site at Dobër as well as the legs of the standing male statue.[4] During the 1960s, when a limited survey of the hill was conducted by Dhimosten Budina, the torsos and the lower legs were transported to the Archaeological Museum of Butrint, where they are presently on display.[5] The female head, kept in Ioannina, Greece, since 1915 and now exhibited in the local archaeological museum, is also reported to have come from Dobër, but its collection history raises doubts about its alleged connection with the site, as we will show.

According to Budina, the ashlar wall at Dobër was part of the circuit or retaining wall of a sacred precinct, though no architecture of a certainly religious character has yet been found there.[6] Budina documented the existing foundations at Dobër, but his work did not bring to light a specific building that could be connected to the ashlar wall or to the statues, nor did it reveal the identity of the presumed precinct's resident divinity. He dated the ashlar wall to the third century BCE based on comparisons of the construction technique with other Hellenistic monuments in the area such as the temple-treasury of the Asklepieion at Butrint and

[3] Hammond (1967, 96–97) reports on Clarke's observations. Clarke's diary (99–100, notebook no. 2, held in the archives of the British School at Athens) mentions a "building," of Greek date based on the construction technique and the absence of mortar. We thank Amalia Kakissis, archivist of the British School at Athens, who facilitated our consultation of Clarke's notebook.

[4] We are grateful to Oliver Gilkes, who brought to our attention the photographs taken by Ugolini at the time of his visit, probably in the mid 1930s, now digitized in the archive of the Butrint Foundation, University of East Anglia, Norwich (archive nos. tr763–67 and trp25819).

[5] Budina 1971, 315 (transport of statues to the Butrint Museum).

[6] Budina 1971, 314–15, followed by De Maria and Mercuri 2007, 150–52.

FIG. 2. Hill of Dobër, photograph 1965, looking west (courtesy Albanian Archaeological Institute, Tirana, and Butrint Foundation Archive; phot. no. 4636).

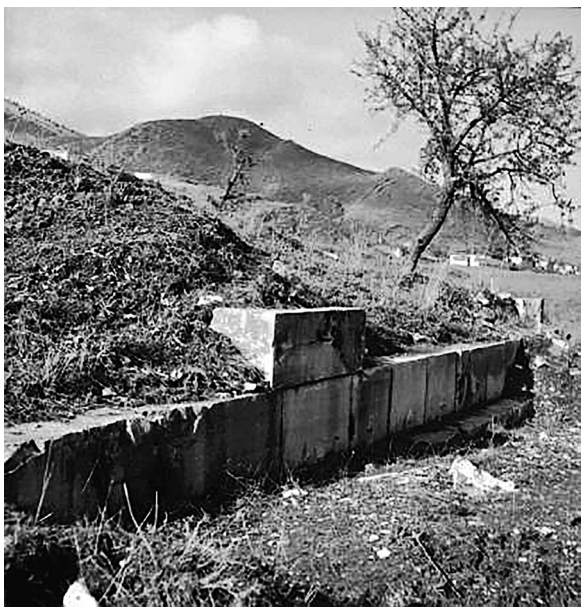

FIG. 3. Ashlar wall at Dobër, photograph 1965, looking northwest (courtesy Albanian Archaeological Institute, Tirana, and Butrint Foundation Archive; phot. no. 4634).

the treasury of Phoinike, but he did not publish stratigraphic evidence to support his conclusions.[7] Between 1984 and 1986, Dhimitër Çondi carried out excavations on a neighboring hill and encountered more architectural remains, which he identified as a Hellenistic tower, a Roman villa, and a Byzantine church. This, the most recent archaeological work at the site, attests to modest settlement in the area, at least in the later phases.[8] Today, it remains unclear how our statues are connected with the Hellenistic-looking wall; however, their colossal scale, two being nearly twice life-size, certainly implies a religious character.

In what follows, we revisit these impressive statues and offer new possibilities concerning their identifications, functions, and wider roles within the religious and political landscapes of Hellenistic and Roman Butrint. Through close study of the technical and iconographic characteristics of the sculptures and through new archival research, we argue that the statues, rare works from a region with scant surviving sculpture, commemorate a dynamic religious and political network between West and East as Butrint employed visual representation to position itself as a pivotal place in the legendary heritage of Rome. Our reappraisal begins with the sculptures themselves in order to offer the first complete discussion of the statues since their discovery more than a century ago. We then turn to interpretative scenarios in order to reconstruct the kind of contexts in which these statues would have functioned.

HEAD OF A GODDESS (STATUE NO. 1)

Description

Statue No. 1 survives as the head of a youthful female figure, once inserted into a draped torso that was either seated or standing (fig. 4).[9] The long neck, which widens as it approaches the torso, was intended for insertion into a shallow cavity immediately above the clavicles. With the head in position, the shoulders would have mitigated the elongation of the neck that is somewhat startling today. When the sternal notch is positioned directly before the onlooker, the pose of the head is turned slightly to the figure's right. The hair is arranged in an eight-lobed melon coiffure. Wavy hair radiates away from the central part, and some

[7] Budina 1971, 314–15.

[8] Çondi 1984, 1986.

[9] Ioannina, Archaeological Museum 15: Romaios 1916, 54; Vokotopoulou 1973, 91–92, pl. 37; Budina 1986, 116, 119; Krinzinger and Rakatsanis 1993–1994; Mercuri 2005, 231, 235, 237, 241, no. 6; De Maria and Mercuri 2007, 152–54, fig. 5; Zachos 2009, 90; Quantin 2011, 196–97; Soueref 2014, 63–64, no. 2.

FIG. 4. Head of a veiled goddess (Statue No. 1): *left,* front view; *right,* left side view; ht. 0.460 m x wdth. 0.275 m x depth 0.355 m, est. original ht. of figure standing 1.90–2.10 m, Parian marble. Ioannina, Archaeological Museum 15, accessioned 1915 (courtesy Ephorate of Antiquities of Ioannina; © Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports, Archaeological Receipts Fund).

strands join one another between the lobed sections. A braided lock falls down the left side of the neck. There is a short, curled lock of hair under the left ear. The hair was held in place by a metal *stephanē* that does not survive. The *stephanē* was set in a recessed band behind the forelocks and secured by pins (fig. 5). Behind the *stephanē,* a few wavy strands of hair are visible before they disappear beneath a veil drawn tightly over the back section of the head. The veil, which survives on the upper left side only, covered the backs of the ears, so that only the inner ears and earlobes were carved.

The broad face is characterized by small, slender eyes with thin upper lids. The bridge of the nose is long and straight, transitioning into the brow without a depressed space between the eyebrows, themselves barely modeled above the orbital sockets. The nostrils flare, creating faint upper nasolabial folds. The jaw is broad and fleshy; the chin, prominent; the mouth, small. The fullness of the lower lip contrasts with the thinness of its upper counterpart, which bears an exaggerated bump below the philtrum. The mouth is parted; no teeth were carved. The expression is neutral. The back of the head, roughly finished, would have been hidden from view.

Preservation and Technique

The stone, a white, medium-grained marble visually consistent with Parian *lychnites,* is moderately weathered. The right side and lower bridge of the nose have broken away. There are traces of a copper alloy in the nostrils and between the lips. A drilled channel separates the lips (wdth. 0.005 m). The ear canals were rendered by point drilling (diam. 0.008–0.009 m). Drilled dots accentuate the nostrils (diam. 0.005 m). The hair was rendered with the chisel alone.

There are two pin holes (see fig. 5[a, b]) on the upper right side of the head (diam. 0.008 m x depth 0.009 m) in alignment with one another behind the second and third lobes of the hair, respectively (counting from the figure's right to left), centered within the recessed band for the *stephanē* (wdth. 0.026–0.030 m). On the back right side of the head, an oblique joining surface was prepared behind and over the ear and along the side of the neck; this is a flat, smoothed plane where the lower part of the veil was attached. Two round dowel holes were sunk on this surface: above the right ear (diam. 0.015 m x depth 0.023 m; see fig. 5[c]), and at the mid-neck (diam. 0.013 m x depth 0.026 m; see fig. 5[d]).

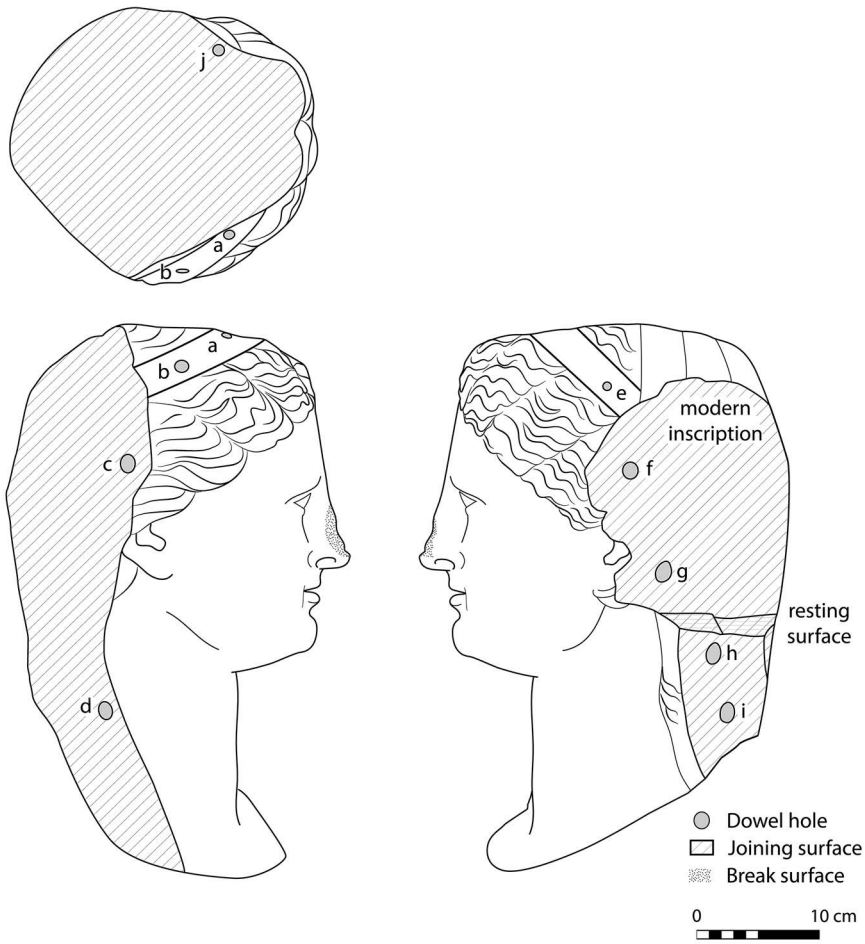

FIG. 5. Drawings of Statue No. 1, showing dowel holes and cuttings; right, left, and top views (drawings by T. Ross).

On the upper left side of the head, there is a single pin hole set within the recessed band (diam. 0.008 m x depth 0.011 m; see fig. 5[e]). A second flat, oblique joining surface for attaching the veil was prepared on the back left side of the head (see figs. 4, right; 5). A shallow ledge (max. lgth. 0.119 m x max. wdth. 0.030 m) was cut at the bottom of the join to provide a rest for the attached piece; at the center of the ledge, the surface steps down (0.005 m) toward the back. There are two round dowel holes on the joining surface: above the ear behind the eighth lobe of the hair (diam. 0.012 m x depth 0.026 m; see fig. 5[f]) and behind the ear (diam. 0.013 m x depth 0.017 m; see fig. 5[g]). Below the ledge and behind the lock of hair, two round dowel holes are aligned vertically (see fig. 5[h, i]); these are much shallower than their counterparts elsewhere on the head (diam. 0.011 m x depth 0.004 m).

Another flat, smoothed joining surface for the veil was prepared on the top of the head. A single pin hole (see fig. 5[j]) was sunk at the far left side, behind the fifth and sixth lobes of hair (diam. 0.010 m x depth 0.005 m).

Modern Inscription

A six-line graffito containing the year 1900 and, presumably, a personal name, now badly weathered, was inscribed on the left side of the head on the joining surface for the veil (see figs. 4, right; 5).

1900
Βλ̣ Κ̣ω̣σ̣τ̣ ̣λ̣ωπο̣ λ[
ΑΓΓ̣ ̣Υ̣Ε̣Α
ΙΙ[-ca.3-]ΟΝ
[-ca.3-]
Τ̣[-ca.4-]

The inscription reveals that 1900 is the latest possible year for the discovery of the head.

Date

The melon coiffure, drawn into a low bun on the back of the head, was fashionable during the late fourth and third centuries BCE and is probably our best indication for the date of the head.[10] The slender eyes, thin eyelids, fleshy jaw, blurry delineation of the features, and drilled channel between the lips further accord with a dating in the Late Classical or Hellenistic period. The separate piecing of the veil at the top and sides of the head is original and not a later repair as has been suggested.[11] This may tip the balance in favor of a date at the lower end of our range—that is, sometime in the third century BCE, when piecing became increasingly prevalent.

As Krinzinger and Rakatsanis have already pointed out, many of the features described above are shared by a female head that was acquired between 1785 and 1796 in Egypt and is now in New York.[12] The head, dated to the third century BCE on the basis of style and its proposed identification as the Ptolemaic queen Arsinoë II (ca. 316–270 BCE), is useful for comparative purposes, particularly for the triangular hairline, the very narrow eyes, and the faintly articulated upper lip. In addition, a veil once covered the back of the Egyptian head, though apparently added in stucco, not marble; there is no evidence for a *stephanē*. The Ptolemaic identification, most recently advocated by Zanker, is plausible given its place of acquisition;[13] however, its overall idealizing frame may instead favor a goddess, in which case, its dating, too, must rest primarily on stylistic grounds.

Identification

The head of Statue No. 1 represents a female figure wearing a veil and *stephanē*. These attributes, coupled with the hairstyle, recall coin portraits of the third-century BCE Ptolemaic queens Arsinoë II and Berenike II (ca. 273–221 BCE).[14] The iconographic similarities have led several scholars to conclude that Statue No. 1 depicts one of these royal women, or, more cautiously, one of these women in the guise of a goddess such as Aphrodite.[15] It is difficult, however, to recognize portrait features in the rather nonspecific face of Statue No. 1. Absent are the wide, bulging eyes and the creases of skin on the neck that characterize Ptolemaic women in their numismatic images.[16] The most decisive obstacle for a royal identification is the scant evidence for large-scale marble portraiture of Ptolemaic rulers outside Egypt. Very few portrait sculptures of Arsinoë II or Berenike II survive, and no certain marble examples have been excavated in Greece.[17] Although the epigraphic sources demonstrate that the dynasty was indeed in the habit of sending its portraiture abroad, these representations were produced in an acrolithic technique, since white marble was a rare commodity in Egypt.[18] The faces of exported Ptolemaic portraits were carved from marble as if masks, with the remaining parts of the head assembled from wood or plaster. This is decidedly not the technique used for our head, whose joining methods indicate the attachment of heavy stone pieces. Moreover, there is no historical evidence for a cult honoring Ptolemaic rulers in Epirus.[19] Serious

[10] On the chronology of the melon hairstyle, see Thompson 1952, 138–39; Ridgway 1990, 130; Stewart 1998, 278–79; Dillon 2010, 114–16. The numismatic record demonstrates that the hairstyle was particularly fashionable in the third century BCE and that it again found favor at the end of the second century BCE and later; see Gkikaki 2014, 173–204.

[11] Krinzinger and Rakatsanis (1993–1994, 357–58) considered the piecing to belong to a refurbishment of the Roman period; in agreement, Soueref 2014, 64. However, veils were often pieced, and there seems no reason for repairs on all three sides of the head.

[12] Krinzinger and Rakatsanis 1993–1994, 353. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art 2002.66 (acq. in Egypt by George Baldwin, British Consul-General, 1785–1796; museum purchase 2002); Zanker 2016, 18–19, no. 2, with earlier literature and full collection history.

[13] Zanker 2016, 18–19. The head was first identified as Arsinoë II by Kyrieleis 1975, 84–85, 93–94, 180, no. J9, pl. 78:1–4.

[14] Coin portrait iconography: Lorber 2018, 121–27 (Arsinoë II) and 176–82 (Berenike II).

[15] For identifications as Arsinoë II or Berenike II, see Soueref 2014, 63–64; tentatively, as Aphrodite-Berenike II, see Krinzinger and Rakatsanis 1993–1994; in agreement, Zachos 2009, 92.

[16] For these queens, see esp. Kyrieleis 1975, 78–102; R.R.R. Smith 1988, 91; Ridgway 1990, 130–31.

[17] Cf. the catalogue given in Kyrieleis 1975 and, specifically for colossal marble portraits of Ptolemaic rulers on Greek soil, see Palagia (2007, 237), who cites a head of Ptolemy I from Thira and a possible head of a woman, maybe Berenike II, from Tegea. A colossal head excavated in the Athenian Agora in 1935 (Athens, Agora Excavations S 551), previously identified as a Ptolemaic queen (Palagia 2007, 2013, 150–51), has been reassigned convincingly to Demeter by Stewart (2012).

[18] Palagia 2013. On the technique, see also R.R.R. Smith 1991, 206–7.

[19] Pyrrhus founded two cities to honor Ptolemaic princesses in Epirus: one called Berenike, on the peninsula of Preveza, where he also commemorated a military triumph (see Hammond 1967, 578–79), and one in Chaonia, bearing the name

doubt must, therefore, be cast on the association of Statue No. 1 with either queen. Even though the head exhibits influences from portraiture of the Ptolemaic court—as do many other contemporary sculptures over a large geographic area—these parallels do not establish sufficient evidence for a portrait. Finally, the *stephanē* excludes the identification of the head as an honorific portrait of a local personage.[20]

The idealized head must represent a goddess. Three divinities combined the veil and *stephanē*: Hera, Aphrodite, and Demeter. Of these, Hera is hardly known in Epirus, so Demeter and Aphrodite have been favored in earlier studies.[21] Without further iconographic markers or a display context, it is not possible to assign Statue No. 1 definitively to either of these goddesses, and both must remain plausible candidates. Another goddess, one who has not yet been sufficiently considered and who had great local significance in northwestern Greece, is Dione. Coinage of the Epirote *koinon* of the late third and early second centuries BCE depicts Dione wearing the veil and *stephanē* (fig. 6).[22] In addition, her hair is routinely arranged in the same melon coiffure as our marble head, often with four lobes of hair visible in the profile view. The facial features of her numismatic depictions offer further parallels. Coins show the goddess with thin eyes, a straight, classical nose, and a fleshy chin. Dione was one of the principal deities in Epirus during Hellenistic times, and in terms of iconography, chronology, and context, she provides a compelling possibility for the identification of Statue No. 1 (fig. 7).[23]

FIG. 6. Bronze coin of the *koinon* of the Epirotes (Gardner 1883, 91, no. 53); obv.: veiled head of Dione facing right; rev.: ΑΠΕΙ-ΡΩΤΑΝ, tripod in laurel wreath (scale: 2x). Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, J.M.F. May Bequest 1961, Heberden Coin Room (courtesy Ashmolean Museum).

TORSO OF AN ENTHRONED GODDESS (STATUE NO. 2)

Description

The largest figure from the group is Statue No. 2, which survives as the headless and limbless torso of a seated goddess (figs. 8–11).[24] The figure wears a chiton, girded below the breasts by a wide ribbon with raised edges (wdth. 0.040 m). The ribbon is knotted in a bow at the front; its long, twisted ends trail casually over the abdomen. The chiton is pulled taut over the breasts, contrasting with the wide loops of fabric under the girdle and the loose, richly rendered folds over the abdomen. Crisp ridges of the drapery cling transparently to the belly, exposing a depression for the navel. A heavy himation is draped over the left shoulder. The figure was inserted into a high-backed throne, separately carved and now missing.

Preservation and Technique

The stone—a white, medium-grained marble visually consistent with Parian *lychnites*—is weathered and friable. The surface finish has been erased by moderate weathering. A drill (0.008–0.010 m) was used to create channels in the bunched folds of the chiton at the sides of the torso.

The right arm was attached separately to the torso by means of a single rectangular dowel (ht. 0.048 m x wdth. 0.013 m x depth 0.040 m; see fig. 11[a]); inside,

of his wife Antigone, stepdaughter of Ptolemy I (see Hammond 1971). In both cases, we know too little to ascertain the existence of a dynastic ruler cult.

[20] Dillon 2010, 112.

[21] On the cults of female divinities in Epirus, see Tzouvara-Souli 1979. For the identification of Statue No. 1 as Demeter, see Vokotopoulou 1973, 92; Mercuri 2005, 231, 241. For the tentative identification as Aphrodite, possibly even Aphrodite-Berenike II, see Krinzinger and Rakatsanis 1993–1994.

[22] Franke 1961, pls. 34–37. Late third- and early second-century BCE coins of Athamanes in southeastern Epirus also depict the goddess in this form (Franke 1961, pl. 1; Liampi 2009, 53) as do third- through first-century BCE coins of Ambrakia in southern Epirus (Tzouvara-Souli 1992, 138). Further issues of coinage display the head of the goddess staggered behind her consort Zeus, recalling their joint worship at Dodona, the seat of the Epirote *koinon*; see Franke 1961, pls. 17–19, 32–34; Liampi 2009, 57. Dione can also combine the *stephanē* with a wreath, or wear the wreath alone.

[23] On Dione in Epirus, see esp. Tzouvara-Souli 1979, 68–80; 1993, 77–78.

[24] Butrint, Archaeological Museum 537: Evangelidis 1913a; Romaios 1916, 54; Bergemann 1998, 38–40, 152, no. 2, figs. 21a, b; Mercuri 2005, 231, 235, 237, 240–41, no. 5, fig. 5. Mentioned: Vokotopoulou 1973, 91; Soueref 2014, 64.

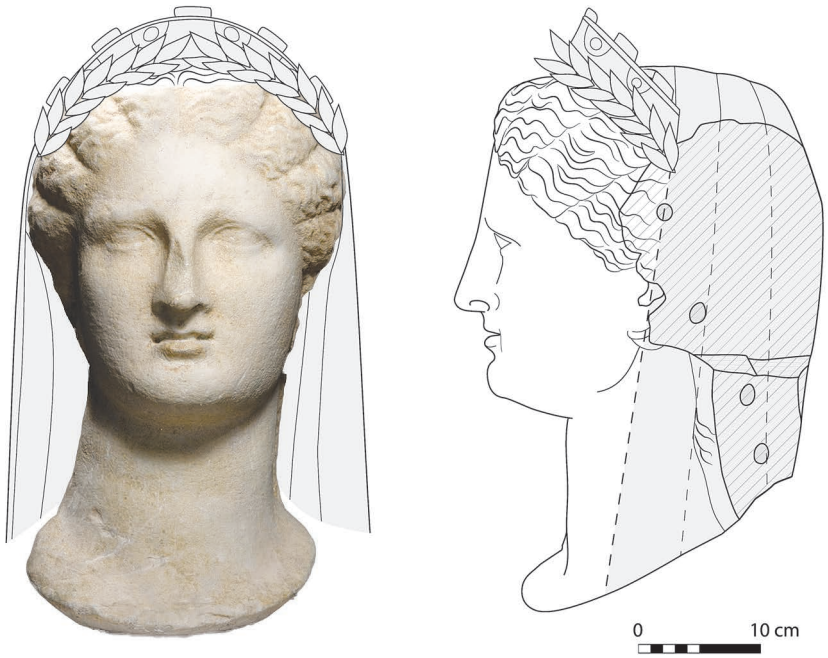

FIG. 7. Reconstruction of the head of Statue No. 1 as Dione (drawings by T. Ross).

there are remnants of a copper alloy. The lower edge of the arm rested on a shallow, triangular ledge (lgth. 0.290 m x max. depth 0.035 m) that provided further stability. The right side of the body was joined to the throne by means of two rectangular dowels positioned at the side of the thigh: upper dowel hole at waist level (ht. 0.030 m x wdth. 0.009 m x depth 0.027 m; see fig. 11[b]); lower dowel hole set near the front edge of the block (ht. 0.033 m x wdth. 0.010 m x depth 0.037 m; see fig. 11[c]). The joining surface was carefully dressed with a chisel.

The left arm and an attribute were attached to the torso by means of four dowels (see fig. 11) that are shaped differently than those on the right side. Two round dowel holes (diam. 0.027–0.028 m x depth 0.044 m; see fig. 11[d]; and diam. 0.024–0.030 m x depth 0.048 m; see fig. 11[e]), aligned with one another vertically, were used to attach the upper arm to the torso. The arm component was inserted into a shallow socket, rectangular in shape, with a smoothed joining surface. A third round dowel hole (diam. 0.022–0.026 m x depth 0.014 m; see fig. 11[f]), located above the previous join, probably secured an attribute that was supported in the crook of the arm. Toward the back, there is a fourth round dowel hole (g), smaller in diameter (diam. 0.013 m; see fig. 11[g]), with metal preserved inside. The joining method for the left arm, more elaborate than that used on the figure's right side, points to the attachment of a heavier element that required extra reinforcement.

The back of the statue was worked flat in order to be inserted into a throne. Two very shallow depressions (diam. 0.016–0.018 m x depth 0.005–0.007 m) at the upper back, aligned horizontally, have an uncertain purpose perhaps postdating the use of the sculpture. Lower on the back, along the left side of the figure, two additional depressions (diam. 0.015–0.016 m x depth 0.005–0.007 m), also of uncertain purpose.

The legs of the statue were attached separately to the front of the torso; a joining surface, prepared with careful chisel work, is preserved on the right side of the body.

The cavity for the insertion of the head and neck is poorly preserved. The back and sides of the cavity have broken away, leaving only the shallow front edge of the socket (max. preserved lgth. 0.18 m, max. preserved wdth. 0.17 m).

All together, Statue No. 2 must have been fashioned of at least six or seven separate parts: the head, the torso, the right and left arms, an attribute, the legs together, and the throne. The elaborate piecing of this statue was required because of its sheer size. Smaller blocks of marble were more easily transported to Epirus, a region that was without local access to statue-grade marble. The monolith that would have otherwise been needed (min. est. ht. 2.00 m x wdth. 1.25 m x

FIG. 8. Torso of the Mother of the Gods (Statue No. 2), front view, ht. 1.02 m x wdth. 0.69 m x depth 0.48 m, est. original ht. of figure seated 1.70–1.90 m, higher when elevated on throne, est. ht. if the figure were standing 2.40–2.60 m, Parian marble. Butrint Archaeological Museum 537 (courtesy Albanian Archaeological Institute, Tirana, and Butrint Foundation Archive; phot. no. tr765).

FIG. 9. Statue No. 2, right side view (B. Martens; courtesy Albanian Archaeological Institute, Tirana).

depth 1.25 m) would have been logistically difficult to transport, and its procurement from the quarries would have been exceedingly challenging.

Date

Technical and stylistic features are suggestive of a date in the second century BCE. Piecing was used frequently for cult statues during the Middle and Late Hellenistic periods.[25] The colossal, all-marble group excavated in 1889 at the Temple of Despoina at Lykosoura in Arcadia is one well-known, extant example, albeit considerably larger.[26] From an iconographic and

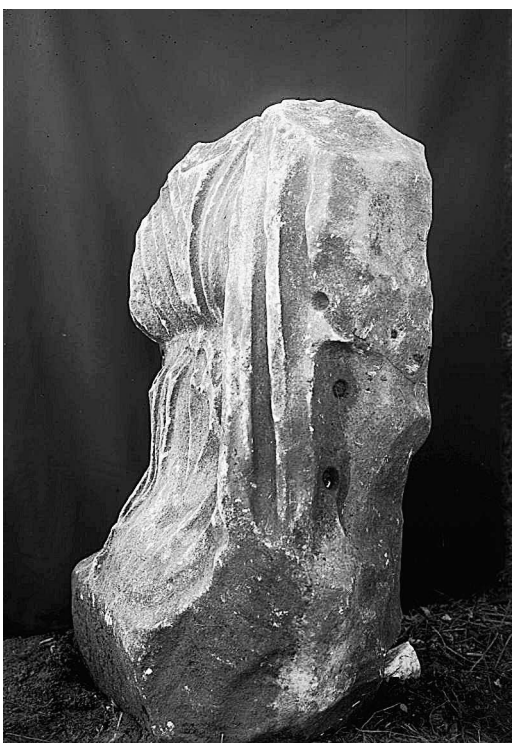

FIG. 10. Statue No. 2, left side view (courtesy Albanian Archaeological Institute, Tirana, and Butrint Foundation Archive; phot. no. tr766).

[25] R.R.R. Smith 1991, 240–41; Ridgway 2000, 230–42. Piecing was, of course, also used in the Roman Imperial period.

[26] For the group, some three times life-size, see Dickins and Kourouniotis 1906; Marcadé and Lévy 1972; Stewart 1990, 94–96, figs. 788–92; R.R.R. Smith 1991, 240–41, fig. 301.1–3; Themelis 1996; Ridgway 2000, 235–38; Kaltsas 2002, 279–81, nos. 584–91.

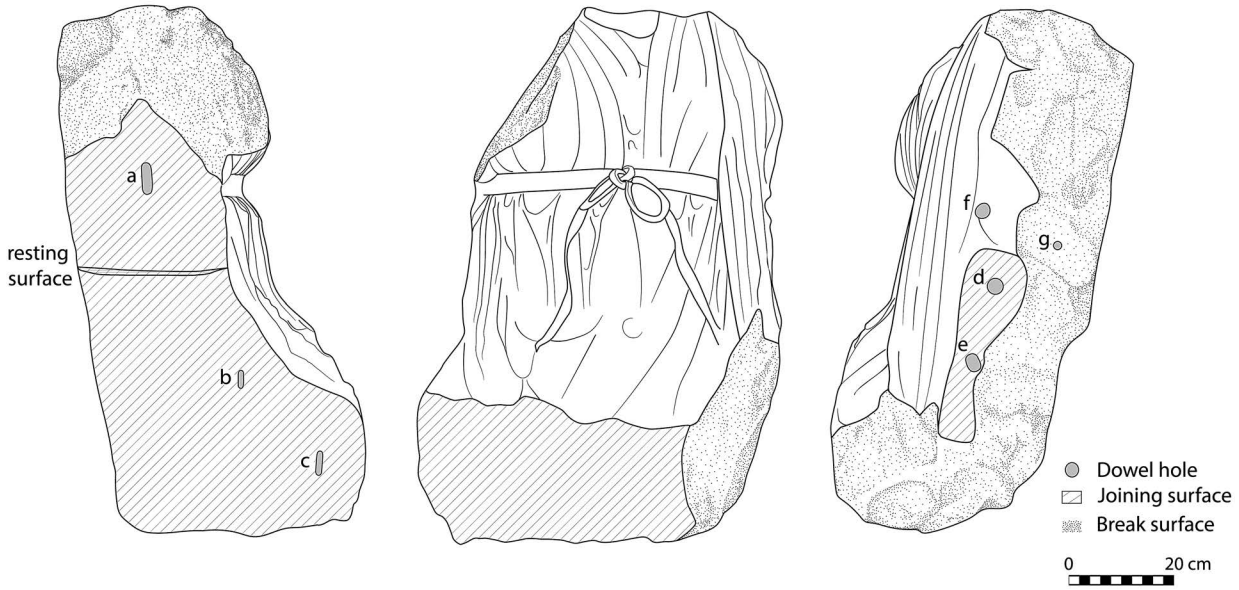

FIG. 11. Drawing of Statue No. 2, showing dowel holes and cuttings on left and right sides (drawings by T. Ross).

stylistic point of view, the high girding of the transparent chiton with a wide ribbon tied at the front of the body reflects a special Hellenistic-period interest.[27] A colossal female statue (so-called Nike) found near the Athenian Kerameikos, usually dated to the second century BCE and controversially attributed to Euboulides, provides one example (fig. 12).[28] The figure, standing and striding forward, similarly employs a ribbon to belt her chiton. Drilled holes on either side of the knot were used to attach fluttering ends of the band. The Athenian statue also serves to illustrate the subtle handling of the transparent fabric over the navel, a further detail shared with Statue No. 2.

From these necessarily brief comparisons, we can conclude that elements of Statue No. 2 are consistent with sculptural trends of the second century BCE. It is worth emphasizing, however, that without additional archaeological data from the site of Dobër itself, the proposed chronology is an interpretation based on the limited evidence available today. The historical context of the region, explored in the second part of this article, adds further to the plausibility of a second-century BCE dating.

Identification

The form of Statue No. 2—a draped goddess, seated on a throne and holding a now-missing attribute in her left arm—directs our attention to two main candidates: the Mother of the Gods and Tyche. A previous identification for the statue as Demeter can be excluded because the weighty size of the left-arm element points to an object more substantial than a torch or scepter, Demeter's usual attributes when seated.[29] Moreover, there is no indication that Statue No. 2 was veiled, as might be expected for Demeter.

First, let us consider the possibility that the statue depicts Tyche. The cult of Tyche, in her role as a civic goddess, expanded in Greece during the fourth century BCE and remained popular throughout the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Tyche was, on occasion, depicted on a throne with the horn of plenty in her left arm. For example, a votive relief found at Piraeus, dating to the last half of the fourth century BCE, shows the goddess in this form.[30] A high and narrow cornucopia is held in the left arm of the goddess, who makes a

[27] For the transparent drapery and the bowknot in Hellenistic sculpture, see Linfert 1976, 77, 88, 132, pl. 31, fig. 163, pl. 63, figs. 345–47; Ridgway 2000, 157–59.

[28] Athens, National Archaeological Museum 233 (discovered in 1837): Ridgway 2000, 158–59; Kaltsas 2002, 282, no. 593.

[29] For the identification as Demeter, see Mercuri 2005, 240; De Maria and Mercuri 2007, 152. For comparison to the seated Demeter from Lykosoura, see Bergemann 1998, 40, 152. For the iconography of seated Demeter, see *LIMC* 4:858–60, 866–69, nos. 121–57, 252–92, s.v. "Demeter" (L. Beschi).

[30] Athens, National Archaeological Museum 2853, acq. date n/a: Svoronos 1903–1912, pl. 176; Bemmann 1994, 217–18, no. B 17; A.C. Smith 2011, 121–22, 144–45, no. R 11, fig. 11.2.

FIG. 12. Colossal female head and torso found near the Kerameikos in Athens, probably second century BCE, ht. 1.35 m, Pentelic marble. Athens, National Archaeological Museum 233 (© Bildarchiv Foto Marburg).

libation with her outstretched right hand. Tyche wears a chiton with a himation draped over her left shoulder. While the iconographic model depicted on the Attic relief is a suitable match for Statue No. 2, the motif was a rare one.[31] With exception of the widespread Antioch model, of which Statue No. 2 is certainly not a version, Tyche was typically shown as a standing figure.[32]

More likely, it seems, the Mother of the Gods is represented. The iconographic model used for the Mother of the Gods was repeated in its basic form over a wide geographic and temporal span.[33] The usual schema echoes the statue of the goddess that stood in the Metroön in the Athenian Agora, a work carved by the fifth-century BCE sculptor Agorakritos of Paros.[34] Some 135 reliefs and statuettes of the Mother of the Gods have been found during the excavations of the Athenian Agora.[35] Although these vary in the details, they provide the broad contours of Agorakritos' creation. The goddess is seated on a high-backed throne with a footstool and holds a tympanum in her left arm. The right hand offers a libation. A small lion rests in her lap or at her side. The Athenian model summarized here was embraced widely throughout the Mediterranean basin for representations of the goddess, and it is one that would fit Statue No. 2.

The deep dowel holes and recessed joining surface at the left arm suggest the presence of a large and weighty attribute, probably a tympanum. In fact, other statues of the Mother of the Gods demonstrate that the attachment of the tympanum-bearing arm was necessarily a special consideration for sculptors. A Hellenistic-period statue from Pergamon (discussed below), for example, has a concave joining surface at the left side, carefully textured for gluing the tympanum.[36] In addition to the complex joining system, the posture of Statue No. 2 also provides evidence for this attribute. Specifically, the left shoulder is held back while the right shoulder leans forward (see fig. 10). This pose redistributes the figure's weight in order to support more comfortably the heavy tympanum cradled in the left arm. The sculptor also reduced the left breast, pushing it, as it were, farther into the body. The optical distortion helped to further convey the slight torsion of the upper body.

Finally, it remains to be considered if the sensual costume of Statue No. 2 is appropriate for a representation of the Mother of the Gods. The Pergamon Altar, constructed and carved in the first half of the second century BCE, is a monumental and securely dated example of an eroticized Mother of the Gods. The high-relief frieze depicts the goddess on a lion entering battle against the Giants.[37] As is the case with the Butrint statue, she wears a close-fitting chiton, tied below the breasts with the ends of the cord trailing over the abdomen. The chiton of the Pergamene

[31] The list of other images of a seated Tyche is brief; see, e.g., Palagia 1994, 66–67; Stewart 2013, 635–40, no. 15, fig. 20.

[32] On the Tyche of Antioch, see Meyer 2006.

[33] Naumann-Steckner 1983.

[34] Despinis 1971, 111–23; 2005.

[35] Lawton 2017, 1.

[36] Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung AvP VII 45 (preserved ht. of statue 1.51 m; excavated at Pergamon in 1879): Winter 1908, 69–71, no. 45, pl. 12; Naumann-Steckner 1983, 359, no. 554, pl. 41, nos. 1, 2; Kruip 2011; Picón and Hemingway 2016, 156–57, no. 64 (M. Kruip); Schwarzmaier and Scholl 2019, 210–11, no. 109.

[37] See, e.g., R.R.R. Smith 1991, 163, fig. 195.

representation has, however, slipped from the shoulder, creating a revealing neckline that is reminiscent of images of Aphrodite. A terracotta statuette of the Mother of the Gods, likewise seated on a lion and wearing a transparent chiton, was excavated in 1935 from Late Hellenistic fill in a cistern southwest of the Athenian Agora.[38] The terracotta statuette shows that the sensual image presented on the Pergamon Altar had a wide diffusion in the Eastern Mediterranean during the Hellenistic age.

Pergamon offers another example that demonstrates that the high-girt, transparent chiton was considered appropriate and recognizable for the Mother of the Gods. A statuette in Berlin probably dates to the second century BCE and is identifiable as the Mother of the Gods based on the lion and the tympanum (fig. 13).[39] In addition, Winter interpreted two pin holes at the back left side of the throne of the Berlin statuette as attachment points for another figure.[40] If this was their function, Attis would be the obvious candidate, though no traces of such a figure survive. As with the goddess on the Pergamon Altar, the girdle is knotted at the front of the torso. The composition of the statuette's himation is also important. The mantle sags suggestively between the legs when passing over the lap, drawing the viewer's gaze to the pubic region. The oblique joining surface at the front of Statue No. 2 permits an analogous reconstruction of the mantle. In sum, an expressive sexuality was uniquely present in Hellenistic-period representations of the Mother of the Gods. The Pergamene figures add further evidence for the second-century BCE chronology proposed above.

FIG. 13. Statuette of the Mother of the Gods, found at Pergamon, probably second century BCE, ht. 0.25 m, marble. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung AvP VII 241 (I. Geske; © Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin–Preussischer Kulturbesitz).

TORSO OF A STANDING YOUTH (STATUE NO. 3)

Description

Statue No. 3 survives as a torso missing its head, arms, and lower legs with the knees (fig. 14).[41] The draped male figure stands with the left leg engaged. The right thigh is outthrust. The joining surface at the right shoulder demonstrates that the upper arm was held down but away from the body, as if the forearm were outstretched or elevated to the side. The upper left arm was held down and kept closer to the torso.

The figure wears a mantle over the back, fastened at the right shoulder. The thick fabric of the mantle falls behind in heavy, summary folds. A wide belt (wdth. ca. 0.040 m), wrapped around the body more than once, secures a sleeved tunic. Folds of the tunic are bunched around the belt reflecting the loose nature of the garment. Three registers of drapery are arranged over the lower torso and hips. There is little sense of movement in the clutter of wide, rounded folds of drapery that hang still. At the lower left side of the drapery, there are traces of a decorative, woven border; the embellishment comprises three parallel, horizontal lines. The right thigh, now broken away, was draped. The figure cradled a thin object in the crook of his left arm that is now missing.

[38] Athens, Agora Excavations T 915: Thompson 1966, 3–7, 16–17, no. 1, pl. 1.

[39] Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung AvP VII 241, acq. date n/a: Winter 1908, 213, no. 241.

[40] Winter 1908, 213.

[41] Butrint, Archaeological Museum 535: Evangelidis 1913a; Romaios 1916, 54; Bergemann 1998, 30, 32–34, 36, 152, no. 1, figs. 19a–c; Mercuri 2005, 231, 235, 237, 240, no. 4, fig. 4; De Maria and Mercuri 2007, 150–59, fig. 4. Mentioned: Vokotopoulou 1973, 91; Soueref 2014, 64.

FIG. 14. Torso of Attis or Askanios (Statue No. 3): *left*, front view; *right*, left side view; ht. 1.22 m x wdth. 0.77 m x depth 0.45–0.55 m, est. original ht. of figure 2.20–2.30 m, Pentelic marble. Butrint Archaeological Museum 535 (courtesy Albanian Archaeological Institute, Tirana, and Butrint Foundation Archive; *left*, phot. no. tr763; *right*, tr764).

Preservation and Technique

The statue was carved from a white, fine-grained, very micaceous marble, which we have visually identified as Pentelic.[42] The foliation of the stone runs from top to bottom and is deeply eroded at the silvery-green mica veins, particularly on the left side of the body and on the back. This weathering gives the false impression, in photographs, of a carved, textured surface.

Faint traces of the rasp are visible on the mantle over the back. There is reserved drill work in the drapery, which was carved primarily with chisels. The right arm was attached by means of a large dowel (lgth. 0.032 m x wdth. 0.018 m x depth 0.041 m); a fragmentary joining surface is preserved, flat and smoothed. The orientation of the dowel, forming an acute angle with the side of the torso, indicates that the upper arm was held slightly away from the body, perhaps because the forearm was outstretched or elevated. A large dowel hole, partially broken away, was used for the attachment of the left arm (lgth. 0.030 m x wdth. 0.021 m x depth 0.007 m); no joining surface for the arm is preserved. On the side of the upper left arm, there is a small, round dowel hole (diam. 0.013 m x depth 0.030 m); a concave joining surface (wdth. 0.039 m) demonstrates an attachment point for a thin attribute that was held in the crook of the arm (see fig. 14, right). The head and neck, which do not survive, were made separately and inserted into a deep cavity (wdth. 0.250 m x depth 0.210 m x ht. at back 0.124 m); the shape of the cavity points to a large, bulbous tenon, deeper at the back.

Date

Statue No. 3 dates to the Hellenistic or Roman period. The heavy weathering and the absence of a head prevent a more refined chronology.

Identification

Statue No. 3 has been identified previously as Artemis because it resembles the colossal statue of that goddess from the precinct of Despoina at Lykosoura (fig. 15), which was described by Pausanias

[42] Pentelic marble was used abundantly at neighboring Butrint during Roman Imperial times; see Gaggadis-Robin et al. 2012. Moreover, Attic workshops seem to have been favored there; see Hansen 2013, 105–6, 117.

(8.37.3–7).[43] Specifically, the multiple registers of drapery on the torso, present also on the Lykosouran statue, seemed to offer a persuasive bit of iconographic evidence. However, in their reconstruction of the Artemis from Lykosoura, Dickins and Kourouniotes determined the existence of two garments: a smoothly finished chiton and a roughly textured animal skin.[44] They argued that the Artemis wore the usual Doric chiton and that the double folds below the belt in fact belong to a pelt. This arrangement accords with Pausanias' description that Artemis wore a deerskin. By contrast, there is no evidence for separate surface finishes on the drapery of Statue No. 3. In fact, the traces of a decorative border on the lowermost garment prove an elaborate woven material and certainly not the skin of an animal.

Study of archival documentation, coupled with careful autopsy, demonstrates that Statue No. 3 wears not the belted chiton and deerskin of the Lykosouran Artemis but instead a costume of Eastern origins. Crucial evidence was discovered in a photograph taken by Luigi Ugolini in the 1930s while the statue was still on-site at Dobër (see fig. 14, left). The photograph preserves a portion of the right thigh before it broke away. The now-missing fragment of the leg, which has so far gone unnoticed, had folds of fabric around it. This can only be one item of clothing: the *anaxyrides*, the trousers worn in Greek art by figures of Eastern descent, including Trojans, Amazons, and Persians. The presence of the *anaxyrides* excludes Artemis and argues decisively for a figure of non-Greek heritage.[45]

The other components of the costume of Statue No. 3 are not identifiable with certainty because today's weathered and colorless surface hinders a complete view of the drapery. The most satisfactory explanation, albeit unusual, is that a single, sleeved tunic is worn over the upper body (excluding the mantle over the back). It seems that this tunic was belted three times: first, beneath the fabric at the mid abdomen with a *kolpos* hanging over the waist; second, beneath the fabric at the hips with another *kolpos* hanging over the upper thighs; and finally, the belt that is visible below the chest. This elaborate arrangement could imply that the figure is a youth, the extra fabric being necessary to permit lengthening of the garment as the boy grew taller.[46] Alternatively, it could more simply demonstrate a rich abundance of fabric. The double *kolpos* is rare, but one probable example can be observed on an Apulian red-figure volute krater of the late fourth century BCE, attributed to the Darius Painter.[47] The vase depicts Achilles about to sacrifice a young Trojan captive at the tomb of Patroklos. Behind him, three other Trojan youths await the same fate, seated with hands bound behind their backs. The middle prisoner wears

FIG. 15. Colossal statue of Artemis, carved by Damophon of Messene in the second century BCE for the Temple of Despoina at Lykosoura, marble. Lykosoura Archaeological Museum (© Bildarchiv Foto Marburg).

[43] For the identification of Statue No. 2 as Artemis, see Bergemann 1998, 34, 36, 152; Mercuri 2005, 231, 240; De Maria and Mercuri 2007, 152, 154. The head of the Lykosouran Artemis, excavated with the group in 1889, is Athens, National Archaeological Museum 1735: Kaltsas 2002, 279, no. 585 (with the earlier literature). The body is kept on site in the archaeological museum. On the Lykosoura group, see supra n. 26.

[44] Dickins and Kourouniotis 1906, 378–79; confirmed by Marcadé and Lévy 1972, 991.

[45] For the *anaxyrides* as emphatically non-Greek, see M.C. Miller 1997, 184–86.

[46] Harrison 1982, 41, discussing a single long *kolpos*.

[47] Naples, National Archaeological Museum 81393 (acq. before 1860): Trendall and Cambitoglou 1982, 495, no. 39. For the composition of the drapery, cf. also Cumont 1896–1899, 2:521, g, fig. 483; Reinach 1906, 140, no. 6, s.v. "Mithras."

an elaborately woven, short-sleeved costume with a *kolpos* both at the lower abdomen and at the hips.

A reappraisal of the costume leads us to propose that Statue No. 3 represents a divine figure of Eastern descent such as Attis, or a hero of the Trojan saga such as Askanios (see under "Trojan Connections," below).[48] The dowel hole and concave joining surface on the upper left arm of Statue No. 3 could have served for the attachment of a narrow *pedum* (shepherd's crook) held in the arm. Both Attis and Askanios commonly carried the pastoral tool.

LEGS OF A STANDING MALE FIGURE (STATUE NO. 4)

Description

The lower legs of Statue No. 4 belong to a standing figure of colossal scale (fig. 16).[49] Weight is placed on the right leg. A heavy himation is draped around the legs. Folds fall from the upper left leg to the right ankle, emphasizing the flexed left knee. The right ankle is partially preserved and not covered by drapery; this detail indicates that a chiton was not worn beneath; therefore, our subject is male. Drapery seems to have fallen along the left side of the body.

FIG. 16. Legs of a colossal male statue (Statue No. 4), front view, ht. ca. 0.95 m x wdth. 0.57 m x depth 0.44 m, est. original ht. of figure 2.30–2.60 m, marble. Butrint Archaeological Museum (courtesy Albanian Archaeological Institute, Tirana, and Butrint Foundation Archive; phot. no. tr767).

Preservation and Technique

The fragment of Statue No. 4 is so heavily encrusted that it was not possible to study the surface of the stone.[50] The legs are severely weathered, and the ridges of the drapery are chipped throughout. There are lateral breaks on each side of the figure.

Date

Statue No. 4 presumably dates to the Hellenistic or Roman period.

Identification

An identification for this fragmentary statue is not possible. The scale of the sculpture seems too large for an honorific portrait, and it is further unlikely that an emperor or other member of the imperial family would have worn the himation.[51] It seems most reasonable that a god is depicted. Himation-clad gods include Asklepios, Zeus, and Poseidon, among others.

DISCOVERY IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

The modern discovery of the four sculptures occurred earlier than is acknowledged in the reports and scholarly literature (see "Introduction," above). In 1913, shortly after the Greek conquest of Ioannina and the brief acquisition of the strip of Albania south of the Keraunian Mountains by the Greek state, the provisional local government (the Γενική Διοικήσις των εν Ηπείρω υπό του Ελληνικού στρατού κατεχομένων χωρών) was promptly provided with an archaeologist, detached from his normal service at Sparta, to survey and document the remains and monuments of the newly incorporated territory. This was Demetrios Evangelidis, himself originally from northern Epirus, who, from 25 June to 7 August 1913, meticulously surveyed the archaeological sites in an area stretching

[48] For the iconography of Attis, see *LIMC* 3:22–44, s.v. "Attis" (M.J. Vermaseren and M.B. De Boer). For the use of the same Eastern attire for the representation of Trojans (e.g., depictions of Paris in Attic red-figure vases), see Roller 1994, 251–52; 1999, 168 n. 92.

[49] Butrint, Archaeological Museum, inv. no. unk.: Evangelidis 1913a; Romaios 1916, 54.

[50] At present, the statue is on display outdoors behind the Butrint Museum, placed upside down and set into the ground.

[51] The typical height for honorific statuary in the Greek East seems to have been about 2.00–2.20 m, though larger statues approaching 2.40 m are known; see R.R.R. Smith 2006, 29–30.

from Sarandë (ancient Onchesmos) to Himarë along the coast, inland to Korça, passing by Phoinike, Gjirokaster, and Saraqinisht/Germa (ancient Antigoneia) (see fig. 1).[52] Only the energy and determination of a young, local archaeologist, together with the strong political aim of proving the Greekness of the area in the face of Albanian nationalism, could lead to the achievement of this extraordinary task at a time of almost uninterrupted warfare. The end of the Balkan Wars had, in fact, not brought to an end the resurgence of both Albanian and Greek territorial ambitions in this deeply contested area, and fighting continued at least until the foundation of the Republic of North Epirus in 1914 and its collapse in the same year.

A report by Evangelidis on the state of the antiquities of Epirus was partially published in the periodical *Νέος Ελληνομνήμων*.[53] It contained a description of the various archaeological sites and Byzantine monuments of the surveyed area and stressed the need for excavations at targeted sites such as Phoinike and its surroundings and at Saraqinisht/Germa, later identified as ancient Antigoneia. By the end of the summer of 1913, Evangelidis had nevertheless found time to open trenches at these locations, and he published a brief account of his activities in the *Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς*. Here he reported, in particular:[54]

> South of Phoinike, near the village of Vangelata [i.e., Vagalat], two headless and limbless marble statues were found, probably of a Roman emperor or a general, along with his wife, and the lower part of a Roman stone statue.

This is the earliest account that associates Statues Nos. 2, 3, and 4 with the village of Vagalat, but it does not mention the hill of Dobër and its impressive ashlar walls that are referenced in later literature. That Evangelidis did not discuss any built remains might be because of the brevity of the report and because, in his description of the antiquities of Epirus, he generally preferred to highlight the finds rather than their contexts. The account of Evangelidis is not a good reason, we believe, to disassociate the sculptures from the enclosure at Dobër, next to which they were still lying in the 1960s because their heavy weight made their transport difficult.

Particularly notable is the absence of any mention of the head of Statue No. 1, which surely would have been worthy of description on account of its high quality and size. It seems likely that the head had not yet come to the attention of the authorities. A series of letters kept in the Historical Archive of the Greek Archaeological Service in Athens records a partial history of this piece.[55] The head was surrendered to Evangelidis in February 1914 by one Zisis Grabbaris, who had allegedly found it in his field near the village of Vagalat. In particular, a letter written by Grabbaris in January 1915, still claiming compensation for the piece one year after handing it over to the authorities, mentions that two large "Roman" torsos had been previously found in the same field.[56] The torsos are clearly those already mentioned by Evangelidis in the report of 1913. While the fragments of the other statues remained on-site because of the difficulty of their transport, the head, of more manageable size and exceptional quality, was taken to Ioannina and inventoried, together with antiquities from other parts of Epirus, on 11 August 1915, by Konstantinos Romaios, who had assumed the office of Ephor for Antiquities in place of Evangelidis. The same inventory, preserving both the provenance of the head from Vagalat and its association with the two large torsos, was later published as follows:[57]

> The primary antiquity is a marble head, a good copy of the type of a fourth-century BCE girl, coming from the village of Vangelata [i.e., Vagalat], eight hours south of Delvino. The head was inserted [into a body], and, because

[52] On the life of Evangelidis, see Leukoma 1937, 15; on his activity in northern Epirus and the administrative structure temporarily put in place, see Evangelidis 1913b, 277–78.

[53] Evangelidis 1913b.

[54] Evangelidis 1913a, 235: "Καὶ πρὸς νότον μὲν τῆς Φοινίκης παρὰ τὸ χωρίον Βαγγαλιάτες ἀνευρέθησαν δύο ἀκέφαλα καὶ ἠχρωτηριασμένα μαρμάρινα ἀγάλματα, Ῥωμαίου πιθανῶς αὐτοκράτορος ἢ στρατηγοῦ μετὰ τῆς γυναικός, καὶ τό κάτω ἥμισυ λιθίνου" (our translation).

[55] We express our warmest thanks to Athina Chatzidimitriou, who kindly granted access to the archival material, and to Anastasia Gadolou for facilitating our research.

[56] Letter in the archive sent by Grabbaris to the General Diecesis of Epirus, dated 23 January 1915.

[57] Romaios 1916, 54: "Το κυριώτερον αρχαίον είναι μαρμαρίνη κεφαλή, καλόν αντίγραφον τύπου του 4ου αιώνος κόρης, προερχομένη εκ του χωρίου των Βαγγελάτων 8 ώρας Ν του Δελβίνου. Η κεφαλή ήτο ένθετος και επειδή εν τω αυτώ τόπω ευρέθησαν και δύο η τρεις κορμοί γυναικείων αγαλμάτων αφεθέντες εκεί δια την δυσκολίαν της μεταφοράς είναι πιθανόν, ότι εις εκ των κορμών τούτων θα ανήκη εις την κεφαλήν" (our translation).

> it was found in the same area as two or three bodies of female statues, being left there because of the difficulty of transport, it is probable that one of these bodies will belong to the head.

This sequence of events does not contradict the observation by Budina that the head was found "before the liberation, in the villa of Dobër, near Vagalat," assuming that he meant the liberation of Albania from the Greeks.[58] It does not explain, however, why the modern graffito preserved on the head of Statue No. 1 records the date of 1900—more than a decade before the discovery of Statues Nos. 2, 3, and 4, and the recorded correspondence between Evangelidis and Grabbaris. The graffito suggests that the head had been found earlier and kept by the family of Grabbaris for some time before being turned over to Evangelidis. Local residents are known to have found and collected antiquities, particularly marble sculptures, as demonstrated by finds from Phoinike. There, three female heads, said to have been found near the theatre in 1959, were only published in 1971 and 1986 when they were eventually handed over to the archaeological service.[59] Similar circumstances seem to be attested also at Vagalat where, in addition to Statue No. 1, Budina reported that at least two other marble heads "whose fate could not be ascertained" had been found by villagers in the late 1940s.[60]

While many questions remain open, it is certain that our statue fragments were all inventoried from the same area and not far from the monumental remains of the Hellenistic enclosure wall. Rather than excavating these fragments during his 1913 campaigns in and around Phoinike, Evangelidis merely recorded sculptures that had already been made known at Dobër.

A HELLENISTIC GODDESS

The head of Statue No. 1, because of its scale, technique, iconography, and probable date, cannot belong with Statues Nos. 2, 3, or 4. The head is far too small to warrant an association with the torso of seated Statue No. 2. The ratio of the head to the body would be about 1:9 or 1:10, too jarring for naturalistic proportions. The situation is the same with the lower body of Statue No. 4, which is at a much larger scale than the head and, at any rate, represents a male figure. The head would fit better the dimensions of Statue No. 3 (1:8 ratio for the head to the body), as suggested by De Maria and Mercuri; however, the iconography—a veiled, female head on the body of a male figure in oriental dress—clearly contradicts such a hypothesis.[61] Moreover, the deep, bulbous socket at the neck of Statue No. 3 does not match the tenon of the head, and the figures are carved from different marble. Finally, the earlier chronology of the head, perhaps dated to the late fourth or third century BCE, sets it apart from the other pieces of statuary found at Dobër.

If our chronology for the head of Statue No. 1 is to be accepted, it would seem to be among the earliest works of monumental sculpture from Epirus and most likely, because of its size, the only fragment of a cult statue known from the region for this period. Epirus is generally poor in figural sculpture, and also it is puzzling that the head should come from a site where no major settlements of the fourth or third centuries BCE are attested or known. For this reason, Budina proposed an original provenance from Phoinike, where other female marble heads of the third century BCE had been found and where the existence of a sculptural workshop has since been postulated.[62] Our head is, however, much larger than the marble heads found at Phoinike and certainly belonged to a more substantial monument.[63]

In the early Hellenistic period, not many cities of northern Epirus were prosperous enough to commission a large-scale statue carved from imported marble. Therefore, two scenarios seem reasonable: (1) near Butrint, the closest settlement to the site at Dobër, there was a substantial Hellenistic monument with imported statuary to which the head belonged; or (2) the head was brought to Vagalat from a different site, such as Phoinike, Antigoneia, or even the nearby sanctuary of Dodona. If the head belonged to a statue of Dione, as has been suggested above, it would find a comfortable home at any of these sites, as Dione was the main goddess of the Epirote pantheon and the *synnaos* of Zeus at Dodona from at least the end of the

[58] Budina 1986, 116.

[59] Budina 1971, 298; 1986, 116; Mercuri 2005, 230.

[60] Budina 1971, 314.

[61] De Maria and Mercuri 2007.

[62] Budina 1986, 116. On the existence of a local sculptural workshop, see Mercuri 2005, 233–37. Given the very few surviving sculptures from the area and the lack of local marble sources, a local workshop seems highly improbable. More likely, the region's statuary was imported.

[63] Mercuri 2005, 238–39, no. 1; 241, no. 6; 243, no. 10.

fifth century BCE.[64] Later, Dione came to represent, with or without Zeus, the whole Epirote community on bronze coinage of the Epirote League (see fig. 6).[65] While most of these speculations must remain working hypotheses, the existence of such an exceptional statue enriches greatly our knowledge of Hellenistic Epirus.

THE MOTHER OF THE GODS AND HER CONSORT?

There can be little doubt that Statues Nos. 2, 3, and 4 formed a monumental group for a cult setting (fig. 17). Their colossal size alone demonstrates that the pieces are compatible and that they did not move far from their place of discovery or original display. The enthroned goddess (Statue No. 2), as the primary cult figure, was slightly larger in scale than her standing companion (Statue No. 3); the size difference would have been mitigated by the seated position. The smaller size of the male figure may have been appropriate, given his probable young age. Iconography similarly affirms a relationship between Statues Nos. 2 and 3. Both figures, as we have argued above, represent Easterners, probably the Mother of the Gods together with Attis or a figure from the Trojan saga. Unfortunately, we are as yet unable to identify the second male figure represented by Statue No. 4.

Pergamene Connections

How are we to understand the presence of a colossal image of the Mother of the Gods and, therefore, of a cult of the same goddess in the environs of Butrint during the Hellenistic period? The cult of the Mother had arrived in Greece from Anatolia by the end of the seventh century BCE, but it did not become a widespread and recognizable phenomenon until the fifth and fourth centuries BCE.[66] One of the best known sanctuaries of the Mother was in the Athenian Agora, where the cult was, for the first time, given a conspicuous presence in civic life and became associated with the running of the state.[67] The statue by Agorakritos in the Metroön there became the standard Greek iconographic type of the Mother of the Gods that was propagated throughout much of the Greek world.[68]

In northern Greece, the cult of the Mother seems to have enjoyed great success beginning in the Late Classical and Early Hellenistic periods, when sanctuaries of the goddess were established in the heart of the Macedonian capitals at Pella and Aigai and in the newly founded city of Demetrias in Thessaly.[69] In these cities, her worship was characterized by a metropolitan and royal imprint, especially noticeable at Demetrias, where roof tiles of the Metroön were stamped with the letters "BA," perhaps an abbreviation for *basileos* or *basilikes*, thereby indicating a royal intervention.[70]

In Epirus, attestations of the cult of the Mother are surprisingly absent, and the presence of such monumental evidence as a colossal cult statue near Butrint appears exceptional in various respects. If we accept that the ashlar wall at Dobër belongs to a sacred precinct with which Statue No. 2 was associated, then we would be in the presence of an extra-urban cult place that exploited a low hill in an otherwise rather flat landscape. This elevated position outside the city, quite different from other contemporary Greek Metroa, recalls the more remote and often mountainous locations of the Hellenistic cults of the Mother in Asia Minor. The size of the representation from Dobër is, in fact, broadly comparable to the second-century BCE statue of the goddess from Pergamon (fig. 18) and to a later reiteration of the Pergamene statue from the Temple of the Magna Mater on the Palatine in Rome.[71] A closer look at the contemporary development of the cult in Asia Minor, and specifically at Pergamon, might suggest the kind of context that we should reconstruct in the territory of Butrint for the statue from Dobër.

A monumental statue of the Mother of the Gods made sense in the second-century BCE capital of the Attalids because Pergamon was an important center of the Mother's worship and was especially instrumental in the importation of the cult of the goddess to Rome in 205 BCE. The transfer of the cult of Magna Mater

[64] Quantin 2008.

[65] Franke 1961, pls. 34–37.

[66] Roller 1999, 148.

[67] Thompson and Wycherley 1972, 29–38; S.G. Miller 1995, 142–45.

[68] Supra n. 34.

[69] Pella: Lilimbaki-Akamati 2000. Aigai: Drougou 1993, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998.

[70] Batziou-Efstathiou 2002, 30–31.

[71] For the statue from Pergamon, see supra n. 36. For the statue from the Palatine (ht. 1.67 m; Rome, Museo Palatino 425523; discovered in 1872), see Rosa 1873, 78; Gasparri and Tomei 2014, 318–19, no. 125 (G. Scarpati), citing the earlier literature.

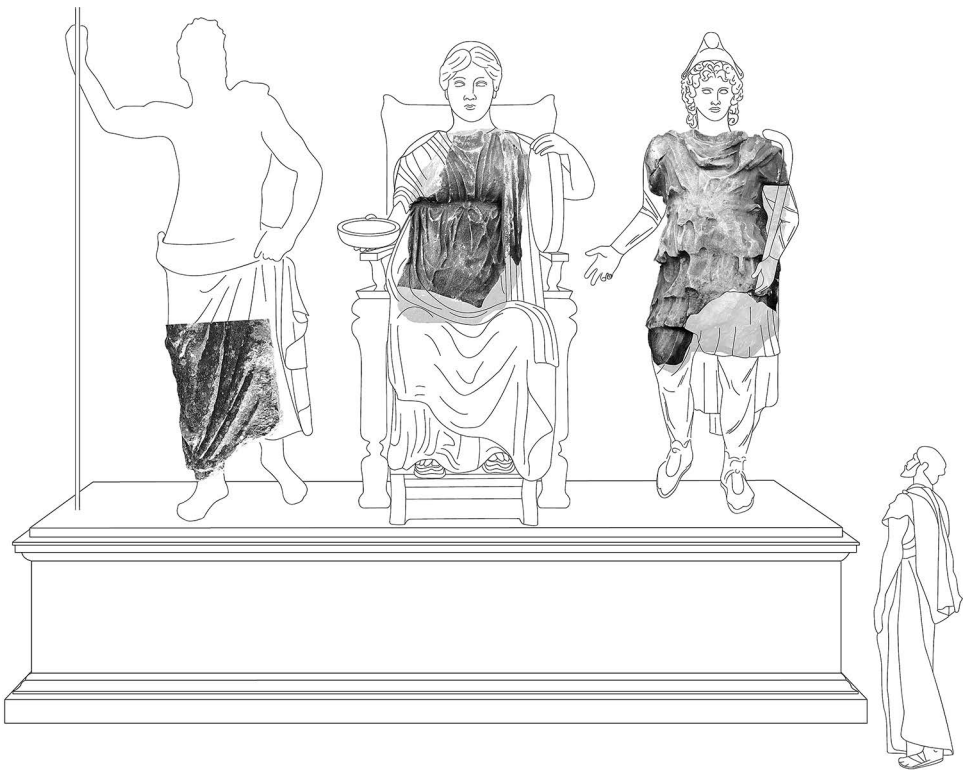

FIG. 17. Proposed reconstruction of the cult group from Dobër (drawing by T. Ross; scale figure after Stewart 2016, fig. 34).

from Asia Minor to Rome, through its aniconic representation, a sacred stone, after the consultation of the Sibylline books, was a defining episode in the history of republican Rome.[72] Although sources are in disagreement on whether the cult came from Pessinous or Pergamon, it is clear that the possible sites either fell under Attalid control or would not have been accessible to the Romans without the mediation of the Attalid king.[73] In fact, Livy (29.11.5–6) reports that the Romans were directed by the oracle of Delphi to seek the help of Attalos I, to whom they sent ambassadors and who actually negotiated the transfer of the cult for them. Ultimately, the Romans most likely received the goddess from Pessinous, directly from the hands of Attalos, who had been tied by links of *amicitia* with Rome from around 209 BCE, during the period of the First Macedonian War (214–205 BCE).[74] The transfer of the cult of the Mother, who was known in Rome as the Magna Mater Idaea—that is, the goddess of Mount Ida near Troy—was a fundamental moment in the foreign policy of the Romans and one that reinforced their growing interest in Asia Minor as the seat of their Trojan heritage.[75] Troy, the birthplace of their mythical ancestor Aeneas, and Mount Ida, the site to which Aeneas and his companions retreated after the fall of their city before commencing travel to Italy under the auspices of the Magna Mater Idaea, were both Pergamene territories under the Attalids. The popularity and prominence of the goddess in Rome is

[72] For an overview of the evidence, see Burton 1996; Roller 1999, 263–71.

[73] Pessinous: App., *Hann.* 7.9.56; Cic., *Har. resp.* 13.28; Diod. Sic. 34.33.1–3; Herodian 1.11.1–2; Livy, 29.10.6; Strabo 12.5.3; Val. Max. 8.15.3. Pergamon: Varro, *Ling.* 6.15. Troy: Ov., *Fast.* 4.263–64.

[74] See, in particular, Gruen 1990, 29–31; 1992, 10–19; Roller 1999, 269–70. The mediation of Attalos is particularly likely given that the cult place at Pessinous, whence the aniconic representation of the goddess sent to Rome was said to come, was neither famous nor accessible to the Romans at the end of the third century BCE.

[75] The mythical link between Rome and Troy and the departure of Aeneas from Mount Ida were much earlier than the Augustan propaganda and probably dated as early as the fifth century BCE; see Gruen 1990, 11–12.

FIG. 18. Statue of the Mother of the Gods, discovered at Pergamon in 1879, ht. 1.51 m, marble. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung AvP VII 45 (© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Antikensammlung; phot. courtesy Universität zu Köln, Archäologisches Institut, CoDArchLab, 104078_FA-SPerg000280-01_Gisela Geng).

attested by the various reconstructions of her temple on the Palatine and by the evidence of uninterrupted cult activity preserved in votive deposits dating from the second century BCE onward.[76] It is therefore understandable that the erection of a monumental statue of the Mother in Pergamon at roughly the same time as the successful importation of the cult in Rome would have reinforced the central roles of both Attalos and the city of Pergamon in the geography of the cult. But what about Butrint, where the cult of the Mother is not previously attested?

[76] D'Alessio 2009; Pensabene and Coletti 2017.

A Cult of the Mother at Butrint?

The site of Butrint, situated along the Adriatic coast of Epirus, was in the heart of a region that had been imbued with "wandering Trojan myths and topography" from at least the mid fifth century BCE.[77] Euripides' *Andromache* (lines 1240–50) references the legend of Helenus, brother of Hector and heir of Neoptolemus, who settled in Epirus after fleeing Troy.[78] Pausanias (5.22.2–4) describes a monument of Achaean and Trojan heroes dedicated by the Apollonians in Olympia, probably in the second half of the fifth century BCE.[79] The foundation of Butrint was traditionally ascribed to Helenus, so it is perhaps not surprising that Virgil made it the seat of the Trojan exiles, where Aeneas saw a copy of Troy's citadel, the great Pergama, and two rivers of Trojan appellation, the Xanthos and Simoeis.[80] Closer in time to the probable date of Statue No. 2, the Hellenistic toponymy of the area must have encouraged such later associations: a people named the Pergamioi, most likely after the citadel of Troy, lived in or around Butrint by the end of the third century BCE,[81] and Dionysius of Halicarnassos (1.51)

[77] Lane-Fox 2018, l.

[78] See Moscati Castelnuovo 1986 on the origin of the legend reported by Euripides and some possible reasons for its promotion in the latter half of the fifth century BCE.

[79] The monument of the Apollonians can be reconstructed on the basis of Pausanias' description and several extant epigraphic fragments. It consisted of two groups of heroes, Achaeans and Trojans, separated by Zeus, Hemera, and Thetis; a copy was probably displayed in Apollonia, judging from a fragment of compatible inscription bearing the name Aeneas; see Cabanes 1993.

[80] The earliest testimony on Helenus' foundation of Butrint is that of Teucer of Cyzicus, from the first century BCE (*FGrH* 274), but historians believe the tradition derived from Hellanicus (fifth century BCE). Here, Helenus and his fellow Trojans stopped during their westward journey and prepared to sacrifice a bull, but the animal escaped, swam across the gulf, and died on reaching land. Helenus acknowledged the event as an omen, and he founded the city Bouthrotos, named after the bull, at the site of the bull's death; see Lepore 1962, 86, Moscati Castelnuovo 1986, 419–21. For the Virgilian account of Butrint as a miniature Troy, see *Aen.* 3.333–36: "By the death of Neoptolemus a portion of the realm passed as his due to Helenus, who called the plains Chaonian from Chaon of Troy, and placed on the heights a Pergamus, this Ilian citadel," and *Aen.* 3.349–51, where Aeneas says: "I advance, and recognize a little Troy, with a copy of great Pergamus, and a dry brook that takes its named from Xanthus, and embrace the portals of a Scaean gate" (trans. Fairclough).

[81] Robert (1940) convincingly demonstrated this on the ba-

writes that "the presence of the Trojans at Butrint is proved by a hill called Troy, where they encamped at that time."[82] A much later, but surprisingly independent, lemma of Stephanus Byzantius (s.v. "Τροία") confirms that Troy is a "polis in Cestrine of Chaonia" and lends support for locating the place-name in the region of Butrint.[83]

As we have seen above, the Romans were consciously promoting their Trojan past during the late third century BCE, most vividly demonstrated by their importation of Magna Mater Idaea in 205 BCE. At the same time, the Romans were increasing their cooperation with Pergamon, a Greek state of high repute, and specifically with Attalos I, a champion of Hellenic ideals. It was during this period that the Epirotes, and in particular the Chaonians, abruptly assumed a central role in international politics. In the same year that Magna Mater entered Rome, the Epirotes, "weary of the protracted war," brought together the Romans and Philip V at Phoinike, where they agreed to end the First Macedonian War, a conflict that had engaged, in varying measure, a large part of the Greek world (Livy 29.12.8–9). Among the Epirotes, the Chaonians must have been primary advocates for the peace treaty since Phoinike was their capital city. Their role in this matter is perhaps surprising because the Epirotes had barely been touched by the war, and Epirote troops are not known to have participated in military action. Moreover, the Epirote attitude of neutrality and nonbelligerence during the course of the war has suggested to most historians that, although officially allied with the Macedonians, they unofficially enjoyed the protection of the Romans.[84] It is possible that the Epirotes of Chaonia, where the other Troy and the Pergamioi were located, were key in establishing the peace because they enjoyed a special kinship (*syngeneia*) with the Romans, similar to that established among Ilion/Troy, Pergamon, and Rome from around 205 BCE.[85] A reference to this kinship might be echoed in Livy: while discussing the Treaty of Phoinike, he includes among the allies (*adscripti*) of the Romans the very distant Ilians and Attalos I, who by that time had become inseparably linked with Rome's past.[86] Their supposed Trojan ancestry may have allowed the Epirotes of Chaonia both to navigate the difficult years of the Macedonian War without becoming involved militarily and also to be deemed the most appropriate ambassadors for negotiating the peace with the Romans.

One possible explanation, then, for the presence of a colossal statue of the Mother of the Gods at Butrint is that the local "little Troy" (Troia parva: Verg., *Aen.* 3.349), in order to maintain the protection and support of the Romans in the years following the Roman conquest of Macedonia and Epirus, embraced the cult that most inspired and helped Aeneas' mission to the west. Butrint was, in fact, chosen as the center of a small independent state that was firmly under the control of the Romans, namely the *koinon* of the Prasaboi founded in 163 or 157 BCE.[87] The presence, for the first time in the history of the settlement, of an autonomous resident community, might, in those

sis of an Epirote decree mentioning the ethnic Pergamioi. Varro most likely refers to the same area when questioning the landowners of Epirus, including Atticus, about "the shepherds from Pergamis" (Varro, *Rust.* 2.2.1).

[82] The source for Dionysius is most likely Varro. Varro knew Epirus well and traveled the land possibly at the time of the civil wars; in fact, Servius' scholium to Verg., *Aen.* 3.349, reads: "Varro says that he was in Epirus and that all places that the poet recalls to have seen, are called with the same names; therefore it appears that these things are not made up. The same Varro reports also that Troy of Epirus was named Buthrotos by Aeneas or by his companions, where the Trojan fleet is said to have awaited Aeneas, and his comrades had built a camp on the hills, which are called Trojan hills since that time." We thank Maria Bazzani for this translation.

[83] The Cestrine was traditionally the region of Epirus opposite Corcyra. According to Hecataeus (in Thuc. 1.46.4), it belonged to the Chaones (Cabanes 1976, 115).

[84] Cabanes 1976, 254–61. Large parts of the coast, especially harbors such as Apollonia, Dyrrachium, and Oricum, were already part of the Roman protectorate at least from the end of the third century BCE.

[85] Kinship, or *syngeneia*, was one of the most traditional means of Hellenistic diplomacy according to current historical thought. *Syngeneia* originally referred to Hellenistic *poleis* who considered themselves related because of a common, often mythological, ancestry (see, e.g., Ma 2003). The Romans used links of *syngeneia* as a means to integrate themselves into the preexisting political and cultural networks of the Hellenistic Mediterranean.

[86] Gruen 1990, 32, contra previous scholars who presented the unexpected presence of Ilion and Attalos as an interpolation of the text of Livy.

[87] This was part of the settlement following the defeat of Perseus and the downsizing of the territory of neighboring Phoinike. On the history of the region in the second century BCE, see Cabanes 1976 and, more recently, on Butrint, see Melfi 2012. For the chronology of the foundation of the *koinon*, see Cabanes 1987.

years, have encouraged the external commission of a monumental cult statue.[88]

A Work by Damophon?

The material of the enthroned goddess from Dobër (Statue No. 2), visually identified as Parian marble, confirms an external commission, and certain features of the statue correspond with known works by the second-century BCE sculptor Damophon of Messene.[89] One striking technical detail of Statue No. 2 is the presence of deep, round dowel holes at the left side of the torso (see figs. 10, 11), used for the insertion of long metal rods to attach the arm. Damophon frequently employed this method of piecing. For example, his statue of the enthroned Demeter at Lykosoura (fig. 19) has comparable dowel holes at the right arm, and, as with Statue No. 2, the attachment points are set within a recessed surface. Another similarity between these statues may exist in the method used to attach the legs. Marcadé and Lévy suggested that the thighs of the enthroned Demeter were attached separately by means a vertical joining surface that does not survive and that the knees and lower legs were then attached as yet another element.[90] The carefully worked joining surface at the front of Statue No. 2, used for the separate piecing of the thighs and legs, recalls such a method.

Statue No. 2 also shares stylistic characteristics with works by Damophon, though defining a specific style for the artist is difficult since he worked in a range of them. He is known, however, to have carved figures with transparent-looking drapery. For example, a female akroterion that once adorned the Temple of Despoina at Lykosoura exhibits a comparable treatment of the drapery over the chest and abdomen, though it wears the peplos and is vigorously in motion.[91] On the akroterion and on Statue No. 2, the drapery is pulled taught over understated breasts, is girt high, and falls in loose, transparent swirls over the abdomen. In both instances, the high girding of the garment gives the impression of a short chest, contrasting with an elongated abdomen that swells prominently below the navel, which is marked by a broad dep ression. Transparent drapery can also be found over the abdomen of the seated Demeter from the Despoina temple. Particularly notable is the use of a wide ribbon with raised border to gird the garments of both the Demeter and Statue No. 2.[92] While a head would provide the most persuasive evidence for an attribution to Damophon,

FIG. 19. Colossal statue of Demeter, carved by Damophon of Messene in the second century BCE for the Temple of Despoina at Lykosoura, marble. Lykosoura Archaeological Museum (© Bildarchiv Foto Marburg).

[88] In the Archaic and Classical periods, Butrint was considered part of the Peireia, the mainland territory belonging to the island of Corfu, somehow disjointed from the inland Epirotic communities. Incorporated into the territory of Phoinike thereafter, it must have first been part of the Molossian state and, later, of the federal state of the Epirotes. The place name "Buthrotos" and the ethnic "Buthrotios" are documented for the first time in inscriptions from the site dated after the foundation of the *koinon*; see Melfi 2012, 24–25.

[89] On Damophon as sculptor, see esp. Themelis 1996.

[90] Marcadé and Lévy 1972, 970.

[91] Megalopolis, Archaeological Museum (excavated at Lykosoura in the 19th century): Themelis 1994, 20, pl. 15c, d; Themelis 1996, 164, fig. 121. Ridgway (2000, 238–39) is more skeptical about its attribution to Damophon.

[92] The ribbon is now much restored on the Demeter; its original lower edge is preserved at the figure's left side.

the suite of technical and stylistic evidence is, at least, reminiscent of his surviving oeuvre.

Damophon had, in fact, already carved a statue of the Mother of the Gods in Parian marble for his mother-city Messene (Paus. 4.31.6) and was certainly active along the Adriatic coast of Greece, where he made statues for the islands of Lefkada, Kephalonia, and probably Corfu in the 160s BCE.[93] At Butrint, a fragmentary monumental statue base bearing his name was found in the 1930s during the Italian excavations and attests to the presence of the sculptor at the site.[94] The statues commissioned from Damophon by the various communities around the coast of Epirus and Acarnania, an area strongly committed to Rome in the second century BCE, appear to have been aimed at connecting the local religious heritage with that of Rome and, ultimately, at uniting further the east and the west coasts of the Adriatic.[95] For example, the Leukadians, on becoming an independent community under the Romans around 167 BCE, commissioned from Damophon a statue of Aphrodite to be placed in the harbor sanctuary of Aphrodite Aineias, which was founded, according to tradition, by the Trojans fleeing Troy with Aeneas (Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom* 1.50.3–4).[96] Similarly, Kephalonia, after having surrendered to the Romans in 189 BCE, had a statue made by Damophon for the main sanctuary of the island, probably that of Zeus Aine(s)ios, whose epithet might similarly derive from the travels of Aeneas in the area.[97] It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that the colossal statue of the Mother of the Gods found near Butrint could belong to this string of Damophonian commissions. The famed sculptor worked in the area between the 160s and the 150s BCE, and he appears to have been deemed most able to represent the ancestral connections between Greek cults and the myths of the foundation of Rome. In the region of Butrint, the use of a divine statue to foster a Hellenistic-styled kinship with the Romans would also be entirely compatible with the religious policy that had inspired the sculptural commissions on the neighboring islands of Kephalonia and Lefkada.

Attis as Consort?

Statue No. 3, wearing a back-mantle, elaborate tunic, and the *anaxyrides*, undoubtedly represents an Eastern figure. The obvious interpretation of Statue No. 3, if we accept the identification of Statue No. 2 as the Mother of the Gods, would be Attis, the companion of the goddess in her Hellenized form. The image of Attis seems to have been created by Greek artists around the fourth century BCE, and his iconography was based on models developed for representations of other Easterners, such as Trojans and Amazons.[98] Notably, he does not appear in Phrygian monuments dedicated to the Mother. As a freestanding member of a cult group, he seems to be attested only in mid second-century BCE Pergamon. Here, a life-sized marble statue of Attis wearing attire similar to Statue No. 3 was found very near the above mentioned statue of the Mother of the Gods (fig. 20).[99] Owing to their compositional and technical characteristics, namely the size and the fact

[93] Messene, Archaeological Museum 6658, excavated north of the gymnasium in 1995, has been identified as Damophon's statue of the Mother of the Gods, but the identification and attribution are doubtful; see Themelis 2015, 142, fig. 161; 2019, 545. The statues made by the sculptor for Lefkada and Kephalonia are known from a long decree only partially published (Lefkada: *SEG* 51.466 = *IG* 9 1² 4 1475; Kranioi [Kephalonia]: *SEG* 51.467 = *IG* 9 1² 4 1583), while the commission for Corfu is mentioned by Themelis as contained in the unpublished part of the inscription (Themelis 2019, 541).

[94] An unpublished note by Luigi Morricone, kept in the Archive of the Archaeological Mission in Albania (at Rome), preserves an important inscription on a statue base, the dimensions of which might be approximately reconstructed as 60 x 50 cm. The inscription preserves the name of the sculptor on one line and the ethnic on the other and can be reconstructed on the basis of the available space and the known comparisons as Δαμο[φῶν Φιλίππου καὶ ὁι υἱοί] (Damo[phon son of Philippos and his sons]) or Δαμο[φῶν Φιλίππου καὶ Ξενόφιλος Δαμοφῶντος] | Μεσσ[άνιοι ανέθηκαν τῶι θεῶι] or Μεσσ[άνιοι ποιῆσαν τὸ ἄγαλμα τοῦ θεοῦ] (Damo[phon son of Philippos and Xenophilos son of Damophon] | Mess[enians dedicated (it) to the god], or | Mess[enians made the statue of the god]); our translation. The date can be safely placed around the mid second century BCE; see Melfi 2016, 85–87.

[95] For reconstruction of the activities of Damophon along the coasts of Epirus and Acarnania, see Melfi 2016.

[96] Melfi 2016, 90–97. The iconography of the statue is preserved in coins of the island minted after 167 BCE (Gardner 1883, 179–80, nos. 78–103).

[97] Melfi 2016, 98–102. The statue might be that reproduced in bronze coins minted in Kranioi (Kephalonia) under C. Proculeios (Burnett et al. 1992, 271–72, nos. 1360–61).

[98] Roller 1994.

[99] Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung AvP VII 116 (preserved ht. of statue: 1.50 m; discovered at Pergamon 1878–1880): Winter 1908, 133–34, no. 116, pl. 27; Naumann-Steckner 1983, 249–50; R.R.R. Smith 1991, 156, fig. 186; Kruip 2011; Picón and Hemingway 2016, 158–59, no. 65.

that they are both conceived to be viewed frontally with their back against a wall, and on the basis of their findspots, the two statues are most probably to be associated (see fig. 18). It has therefore been proposed that they were displayed together in the main urban sanctuary of the goddess at Pergamon called the Megalesion.[100] The cult group at Pergamon seems unique in its combination of the classicizing image of the Mother, based on the traditional model of Agorakritos, with that of her attendant in the characteristic costume of an oriental shepherd as developed by Greek artists. The group reveals how the city of Pergamon, while traditionally closer to the Anatolian cult of the Mother still practiced in its extra-urban sanctuaries,[101] had become the center of a Hellenized version of the cult, the same one that was ultimately accepted into Rome. It is not unlikely that the Attalid capital claimed such a central role only after its crucial involvement in the importation of the cult of the Mother to Rome. The Pergamene rulers might have aimed to highlight, in the language of classical Greek art, understood by most, the city's special relation with the patron goddess of the Romans, the one that was mostly associated with the safety of the Roman state.[102]

The similarities between the cult group at Dobër and the statues of Pergamon are substantial—particularly, it seems, in the choice of iconography and subject and, most of all, in the type of context. The interpretation of Statue No. 3 as Attis, and of Statue No. 2 as the Mother of the Gods, provides one explanation for the group in view of the political landscape of Greece in the early to mid second century BCE, when both the Pergamenes and the Epirotes around Butrint were exploiting their cultural and religious connections with

FIG. 20. Statue of Attis, discovered at Pergamon 1878–1880, ht. 1.50 m, marble. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung AvP VII 116 (©Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Antikensammlung; phot. courtesy Universität zu Köln, Archäologisches Institut CoDArchLab, 2155_FA-SPerg000264-01_Gisela Geng).

Rome. We have tried to demonstrate above how the area around Butrint, inhabited by Pergamioi and associated by ancient sources with the Trojan Pergama, actively fostered a special connection with Aeneas and his descendants for political reasons. The hypothesis that near Butrint the cult of the Mother, the patron goddess of Aeneas, adopted the format of the cult group at Pergamon would provide further legitimization to this connection by choosing the precise iconographies used in the Attalid capital and therefore accepting the central role of Pergamon in the diffusion

[100] For the association of the two Pergamene statues, we follow Kruip 2011, who suggests they have the same date but two different stylistic registers, a more classicizing one for the Mother and a more Hellenistic one for Attis. This rules out the different chronology suggested by Geominy for the two statues: mid third century BCE for the Cybele and mid second for Attis (Geominy 2007, 44–46, 53–54). For the findspot of the statue of Cybele in the area southeast of the city, next to the south tower of the Attalid walls, see Ohlemutz 1968, 184–85; Roller 1999, 206–7. The statue of Attis was found within a relatively short distance, on the Altar Terrace; see Kruip 2011, 226.

[101] E.g., the shrines at Mamurt Kale and Kapikaya; see Roller 1999, 207–9. Recently on the early involvement of Attalos I at Mamurt Kale, see Bielfeldt 2019, 178–96.

[102] For the special role of Magna Mater as a state goddess in Rome, see Roller 1999, 275–78.

of the Metroic cult as understood by the Romans. This reconstruction can only stand, however, if we accept that the two torsos are contemporary. The use of different marble for these statues, Parian for the Mother of the Gods and Pentelic for the standing male figure, could, on the one hand, be explained by the restricted availability of resources in the region. On the other hand, the different materials may suggest separate commissions and, therefore, a sculptural monument that evolved over time. We explore the latter possibility in the next section.

AN AUGUSTAN ADDITION?

The marble used for Statue No. 3, obviously Pentelic based on its abundant micaceous bands, may suggest that it was added at a later date. For such a scenario, we could direct our attention to Augustan times, when the colony of Butrint (originally founded by Caesar) was refounded and during which there was a marked increase in imported Pentelic sculpture from Attica.[103] At this time, the city of Butrint began to indulge in the public display of high-quality marble statuary, both divine and honorific, to such an extent as to be characterized by one scholar as "an avid commissioner of sculpture" that sought to "project a more cosmopolitan image of itself, as a city with empire-wide links."[104]

If Statue No. 3 was a later addition of the Roman period, then an identification as Attis seems less satisfactory. By the time of Caesar, Butrint was a Roman colony, strongly aligned with the capital because of historical and administrative links. In contemporary Rome, there was no special interest in the association of Attis with the official cult of the Mother until at least the reign of Emperor Claudius.[105] The Magna Mater seems to have completed her long journey to Rome without her companion, and, although archaeological finds might hint at the worship of Attis in the city as early as the second century BCE, the evidence is uneven. The material record is confined to terracotta figurines, most of which were found in deposits belonging to the first phase of the Mother's temple on the Palatine, dated between the inauguration of her temple in 191 BCE and its reconstruction after a fire in 111 BCE.[106] Among these figurines, Attis appears as a Phrygian boy, seated, dancing, playing the syrinx, or standing with his clothes pulled back to reveal his belly and genitalia. These new, Roman image types are far removed from the dignified oriental shepherd that was preferred in the Greek East.[107] Moreover, Attis was deliberately excluded from all official Roman aspects of the Metroic cult in both the surviving epigraphic and literary records, and we are without a cult image of Attis as companion of the Mother among her sanctuaries in Rome or Italy. In the case of the terracotta figurines from the Palatine, these might be considered objects of personal, not state, veneration.

Trojan Connections

Considering the cultural and historical background of Butrint, another candidate for the identification of Statue No. 3 could be a Trojan. The Eastern attire—sleeved tunic, *anaxyrides*, and mantle—had been used from the Classical period onward for the representation of Trojans, among other Easterners. The costume was common for depictions of Paris on Attic red-figure vases, for example.[108] In Epirus itself, the iconography is attested on an exceptional fourth-century BCE bronze mirror case depicting Anchises as a Phrygian shepherd courting Aphrodite, said to have been found near the modern village of Paramythia, near Igoumenitsa (fig. 21).[109]

While it is therefore understandable that, in a culturally Greek area, the Eastern attire of Statue No. 3 would have been deemed appropriate for all Trojans also in later periods, the question remains which Trojan might

[103] The colony of Butrint, founded by Antony for Caesar in 44 BCE, was refounded by Augustus between 31 and 27 BCE (Hansen 2007, 48). On Pentelic marble at Butrint, see supra n. 42.

[104] Hansen 2013. Cf. also Hansen 2007, 48–49; Pojani 2007, 62–65.

[105] Showerman 1900; Lancellotti 2002, 81–84; infra n. 107.

[106] Lancellotti 2002, 77.

[107] The evidence from the Palatine is collected in Vermaseren 1977, nos. 13–199. According to Roller (1999, 275), the statuettes are evidence for the official association of the cult of Attis with that of the Mother in Rome from its inception; Thomas (1984, 1506) maintains that the statuettes do not attest to the cult of Attis and that Attis was virtually unknown in Rome in Republican times. An alternative is proposed by Lancellotti (2002), who suggests that the statuettes and cult of Attis are a private phenomenon coexisting with the public rites for the Mother promoted by the Senate.

[108] Roller 1994, 251; 1999, 168 n. 92. A query of the Beazley Archive Pottery Database (www.beazley.ox.ac.uk) returned at least ten specimens with only slight differences in the choice of garments.

[109] London, British Museum 1904,0702.1, acq. 1904: C. Smith 1904; Swaddling 1979.

be represented here. It is difficult to reconstruct Statue No. 3 as Aeneas, even though he would loom large for an Augustan-period depiction in an Augustan colony. Aeneas appears never to have been represented in Phrygian attire in Greek vase painting or sculpture. He instead appears almost exclusively as a heroic Greek warrior.[110]

The only Trojan who is consistently represented in the guise of an Easterner in art of the Augustan age, including in monumental sculpture, is Iulos-Askanios, the young son of Aeneas and mythical ancestor of the *gens Iulia*. The most famous statue of Askanios, fleeing from Troy together with his family, was prominently displayed in the western exedra of the Forum of Augustus in Rome.[111] Although this statue group no longer survives, it is generally agreed that it depicted the boy Askanios wearing Phrygian dress, trailing his cuirassed father Aeneas who carries Anchises *capite velato* (with veiled head) on his shoulders. The image type can be reconstructed through a number of roughly contemporary representations in a variety of media, including wall paintings, mosaics, gems, coins, and sculptures (e.g., fig. 22).[112] Time and again, Askanios is depicted as a mix between an Eastern prince and a Phrygian shepherd: a youthful figure wearing a long-sleeved belted tunic, a cloak, and oriental trousers and grasping a *pedum*—strikingly similar to the clothing and probable attribute of Statue No. 3. Askanios appears in the same guise in other, mostly later, narrative scenes, such as those on reliefs illustrating the sacrifice of the sow in Lavinium, or the wedding of Aeneas and Lavinia where he stands next to his father.[113]

It is important to point out that by contrast with other Trojan figures such as Paris and Anchises, Askanios appears in oriental dress for the first time in the Augustan period. Before that, on Attic vases for example, he is represented as any other boy, following his heroic father while fleeing Troy.[114] The introduction of Askanios' oriental attire seems to follow the description of the character as laid out in the *Aeneid* and might be considered a visual translation of the Augustan-period epic. Most critically for the purposes of our investigation, if we follow Virgil's narration, it is at Butrint that Askanios is given his oriental clothes. Here, after Aeneas receives from Helenus yet another long prophecy on his successful journey westward, and before he finally crosses the Adriatic (*Aen.*, 3.374–462), Andromache offers Askanios a cloak and other embroidered garments from Troy (*Aen.*, 3.483–489):[115]

> She brings for Askanios garments decorated with a thread of gold and a Phrygian chlamys (and she does not yield to Helenus in honoring the Trojans) and loads him with woven gifts, while saying the following: accept these gifts too, my boy, as souvenirs for you of my handiwork and as witness of the long love of Andromache, wife of Hector. Take the final gifts of your people, o you, lone surviving image to me of my Astyanax.

FIG. 21. Mirror case depicting Aphrodite and Anchises, discovered ca. 1792 near Paramythia, Greece, probably 350–320 BCE, ht. 0.15 m, bronze. London, British Museum 1904,0702.1; acq. 1904 (© Trustees of the British Museum).

[110] *LIMC* 1:381–96, nos. 11–176, s.v. "Aineias" (F. Canciani).

[111] Ov., *Fast.* 5.563–66; *CIL* 6 40931.

[112] For a complete treatment of the iconography and its reconstruction, see Spannagel 1999. The best-preserved examples in monumental sculpture are those from the portico of Augusta Emerita in Spain (Balty 2013, 306–8 with previous bibliography) and the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias (R.R.R. Smith 2013, 204–6).

[113] For Askanios in Eastern attire in narrative scenes with his father, see *LIMC* 2:860–963, nos. 14–16, s.v. "Askanios" (E. Paribeni); Rose 2011, 285.

[114] E.g., the famous hydria by the Kleophrades Painter in the Naples National Museum (inv. no. 81699; acq. 1797); see Cerchiai 2006.

[115] Trans. M. Melfi, adapted from Heyworth and Morwood 2017.

FIG. 22. Relief from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias depicting Aeneas, Askanios, and Anchises, ht. 1.73 m, marble. Aphrodisias excavations, found in 1980, inv. 80-140 (G. Petruccioli; courtesy New York University Excavations at Aphrodisias).

Therefore, according to Virgil, Butrint is the place where Askanios, the ancestor of the *gens Iulia*, the last of the Greeks and the first of the Romans, is invested with a specific role of preservation of the Trojan heritage by receiving from the hands of Hector's wife richly embroidered oriental clothes brought directly from Troy.[116] This important bestowal of Trojan heritage created, through Askanios, an indissoluble link between Greek ancestors and their Roman descendants.[117] It is tempting to envision Statue No. 3 as a commemoration of the occasion at Butrint when Askanios, forefather of the Romans, received the gift of Trojan garments as described by Virgil.

Such a statue would have been appropriately displayed in the cult place of the Mother. The goddess was, in fact, a most fitting companion for the Trojan prince because she was directly responsible for the safe escape of Aeneas, Askanios, and Anchises, and she similarly traveled from the East to the West. Statue No. 3 would be, in this interpretation, an important addition to the cult aimed at reinforcing the common identity of the colonists by evoking their ancestral past and by highlighting the central role of Butrint in the foundation of Rome. The commemoration of such a monument may even appear on certain issues of coins struck at Butrint during the Augustan *restitutio* (refoundation) of the colony in, or soon after, 27 BCE.[118] These coins bear on the reverse an enigmatic figure that, if interpreted as wearing a Phrygian hat, would provide a plausible representation of a statue of a Trojan (see the discussion in the appx.). It would not be unusual for public dedications to feature prominently on coins at Butrint, as is the case of the Augustan aqueduct, a monument that characterizes the numismatic identity of the colony until at least the 60s CE.[119] Representations of important local statues were, of course, regularly adapted for the coinage of cities throughout the Mediterranean basin.

A PLACE OF ENCOUNTER

While renewed study of the sculptures from Dobër has provided more questions than answers, it has offered a window into the forces at play in this westernmost part of the Greek mainland and the one most directly in contact with Rome and the western Mediterranean basin. The site, located in the countryside of Butrint, was endowed with extraordinary colossal statues made of imported marble by highly skilled carvers. One of these sculptures most probably represents the Mother of the Gods (Statue No. 2) and could find its raison d'être in reinforcing and promoting the alleged ancestral links between Rome and the coast of Butrint in the years following the First Macedonian War. The figure in oriental costume (Statue No. 3), whose identity as Attis or a Trojan must remain an open question, provides an undeniable reference to the world of the East, as seen by Greek or Hellenized

[116] On the direct connection of the clothes with Troy, see Seider 2013, 88–89; Heyworth and Morwood 2017, 206–7 (commentary to vv. 483–89).

[117] On the Greek perception of the Trojans as part of their very own heroic past, and the role of Trojan ancestry in the construction of a Greek identity for Rome (against the common assumption that the Trojans were foreigners and enemies of the Greeks) see, among others, Erskine 2001.

[118] The *duoviri* attested on the coin, Quintus Naevius Sura and Aulus Hirtuleius Niger, are the first magistrates of the refounded colony; on the chronology of the Augustan magistrates at Butrint, see Hansen 2011, 92–94, table 6.1.

[119] Burnett et al. 1992, nos. 1381, 1388, 1400, 1402, 1404, 1405, 1407, 1409.

populations. Another colossal statue, attested only by part of its lower body (Statue No. 4), must somehow belong with the group by virtue of its size and find location. It demonstrates the existence of a representation of a male divinity whose identity we are not able to reconstruct. Finally, the high-quality female head (Statue No. 1) seems to have a separate provenance and can be excluded from the group on the basis of its chronology and scale.

More broadly, these sculptures contribute greatly to our understanding of the religious complexity of this part of the Greek world, which grew in importance at the turn of the third century BCE, when Rome expanded its interests eastward. These statues reflect how cultural and religious policies could be conveyed in artistic form and manipulated to respond to mutual strategic concerns such as the protection of the sea routes between Italy and the East and the safeguard of important land passages toward the interior of the Greek continent. They confirm that the coastal strip where the colony of Butrint was to be founded under Caesar, and refounded under Augustus, was a crucial point of encounter between East and West and a cultural reference for both Greeks and Romans: an extraordinary physical place where the Romans met their Greek ancestors, and the Greeks met their Roman descendants.

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Appendix: A Coin of Augustus Struck at Butrint

SAM MOORHEAD

In 2001, excavations conducted by the Butrint Foundation at the villa of Diaporit, northwest of Butrint, on the east bank of Lake Butrint (see fig. 1), turned up a small copper-alloy coin of Augustus (fig. 23a). The coin is a Roman provincial piece, struck at the mint at Butrint.

DESCRIPTION

AE; 17 mm; 3.38 g; die axis 12
Obverse: [C.] A. B[VT] [EX D D] (Colonia Augusta Buthrotum, ex Decreto Decurionum); bare head of Augustus facing to right.
Reverse: [Q. NAEVI SVRA. A. HIRTVL. NIGER.]; IIVIR(lig.) B (in left field) (Quintus Naevius Sura [and] Aulus Hirtuleius Niger, Duoviri Buthroti); figure in military or Eastern dress, walking right, holding an uncertain object in left hand, and possibly a sword (downwards) or *pedum* in right hand; on head, a helmet or a Phrygian hat.

DISCUSSION

This coin has been published preliminarily but without detailed discussion.[120] The general type was already known by three specimens now located in Paris, Athens, and Turin.[121] Burnett et al. describe the figure as possibly being the *genius* of the colony.[122] This probably follows Grant's description of the figure as the city *genius* of Buthrotum, denoted by the letter "B" in the reverse field, pouring a libation from a cup in his left hand.[123] Imhoof-Bloomer had earlier speculated that the figure held a down-turned sword ("epée blaisée") in his right hand and possibly an eagle in his left.[124]

The coin from Diaporit, although not as well preserved as the specimen in Paris (see fig. 23b), appears to have a better-formed reverse type, possibly being from an earlier die in the series. The Diaporit coin does appear to show a man in military dress or, perhaps, in Eastern garments. It is quite possible that he is helmeted, but the headdress also has the appearance

[120] Moorhead et al. 2007, 93, no. SF 0054.
[121] Burnett et al. 1992, 1, 277, no. 1380.
[122] Burnett et al. 1992, 277.
[123] Grant 1946, 271.
[124] Imhoof-Bloomer 1883, 138, no. 27.

FIG. 23. Two bronze coins of Butrint, both with obv.: Augustus, C. A. BVT EX D D (Colonia Augusta Buthrotum, ex Decreto Decurionum); rev: figure in military or Eastern dress, Q. NAEVI SVRA. A. HIRTVL. NIGER. IIVIR B (Quintus Naevius Sura [and] Aulus Hirtuleius Niger, Duoviri Buthroti) (scale: 2x): *a*, Archaeological Museum of Butrint, excavated 2001 (courtesy Butrint Foundation); *b*, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des monnaies, médailles et antiques, ark:/12148/btv1b8573150d (public domain, Roman Provincial Coinage Online, https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coins/1/1380).

of a Phrygian hat. If it is indeed Phrygian-type headgear, then an identification of the figure as Askanios is plausible. While the figure seems to hold a sword, or possibly a *pedum,* in his lowered right hand, it is more difficult to make out a cup in the raised left hand. It is possible that the larger object in the left hand is instead a small statuette, which raises the possibility of the *palladium* that Aeneas brought from Troy to Lavinium. A reconsideration of the coin in Paris allows the possibility that the object in the left hand of the figure on that coin might also be a stylized version of a statuette. Therefore, although speculative, it is certainly worth suggesting that the coin found at Diaporit represents a Trojan, such as Askanios.

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