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Τῆς πάσης ναυτιλίας φύλαξ: Aphrodite and the Sea*

Abstract: This paper offers a collection of generally neglected Hellenistic epigrams and some literary and epigraphic evidence that attest to the worship of Aphrodite as a patron deity of navigation. The goddess' temples were often coastal not because they were places where "sacred prostitution" was practiced, but rather because of Aphrodite's association with the sea and her role as a patron of seafaring. The protection she offered was to anyone who sailed, including the navy and traders, and is attested throughout the Mediterranean, from the Archaic to the Hellenistic periods. Further, the texts examined here reveal a metaphorical link between Aphrodite's role as patron of navigation and her role as a goddess of sexuality.

Résumé : Cet article présente une série d'épigrammes hellénistiques généralement peu étudiées et quelques témoignages littéraires et épigraphiques attestant le culte d'Aphrodite en tant que protectrice de la navigation. Les temples de la déesse occupaient souvent une position littorale, non parce qu'ils étaient des lieux où la « prostitution sacrée » était pratiquée, mais plutôt en raison de l'association d'Aphrodite avec la mer et de son rôle de patronne des marins. La protection qu'elle accordait était destinée à tous les navigateurs, y compris la marine et les commerçants, et est attestée dans toute la Méditerranée, depuis la période archaïque jusqu'à la période hellénistique. De plus, les textes examinés révèlent un lien métaphorique entre les rôles d'Aphrodite comme protectrice de la navigation d'une part et comme déesse de la sexualité d'autre part.

Introduction

When Strabo reaches Korinth in his *Geography*, he says that so many men had squandered their money on the numerous *betairai* of this port that a proverb was coined: "Not for every man is the voyage to Korinth."¹ Similarly, Sappho is said to have written an invective poem against Doricho,² also known as Rhodopis,³ a *betaira* of the commercial settlement of Naukratis, on whom

* I would like to thank the *Kernos* reviewers, Dr. Pirenne-Delforge, and Dr. Sara Saba, all of whom provided comments and constructive criticism on previous drafts of this paper.

¹ Strabo, XII, 2, 36: "οὐ παντὸς ἀνδρὸς ἐς Κόρινθόν ἐσθ' ὁ πλοῦς." The Latin equivalent may be found in Horace, *Epistles* I, 17, 36: "*Non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum.*" Hesychius, *s.v.* ο 1799 attributes this proverb to Aristophanes, fr. 928 (eds. R. KASSEL, C. AUSTIN).

² Athenaios, XII, 596b-c; Herodotus, II, 135.

³ Herodotus, II, 134-135; Strabo, XVII, 1, 33.

Sappho's brother spent his whole fortune. *Hetairai* and prostitutes also plied their trade in the port of Athens, Peiraeus,⁴ and we can imagine that these colorful anecdotes attest to a more widespread phenomenon: although prostitution may have existed in many poleis, it seems to have thrived particularly in major ports.⁵

The frequent association of prostitution with major ports has given rise to another kind of claim: sanctuaries dedicated to Aphrodite in commercial posts, such as Korinth,⁶ Naukratis,⁷ and Gravisca,⁸ have been identified as centers of "sacred prostitution." So have a multitude of Aphrodite's temples in many other ports and harbors. To name a few examples, scholars have claimed that Aphrodite's temples in the Greek ports of Kythera⁹ and Lokroi,¹⁰ the promontory of Eryx,¹¹ and the Etruscan port of Pyrgi,¹² sponsored "sacred prostitution." The goddess' sanctuaries in the Cypriot cities of Paphos, Amathus, Idalion, and Salamis have also been associated with "sacred prostitution," especially by scholars who claim that this practice originated in the Near East and attribute its

⁴ Peiraeus is strongly associated with prostitution when in Aeschines, *Against Timarchos*, 40, Timarchos goes to Peiraeus to prostitute himself. Further, Aristotle, *Athenian Constitution*, 50, 2, ascribes to the five *astynomoi* of Athens and the five of Peiraeus the function of determining the hiring price of flute-girls, harp-players, and other musicians employed in private symposia and probably expected to provide sexual services as *hetairai*.

⁵ Like Peiraeus, both Korinth and Naukratis were known as emporia. Herodotus is the earliest source to name Naukratis an emporion (II, 178) and Thucydides the first to describe Korinth as an emporion (I, 12). It is likely, however, that these settlements were emporia even earlier, in the archaic period. The term emporion was used in antiquity to designate either a permanent settlement whose purpose was to facilitate cross-cultural trade, or a part of a polis, such as a harbor, that was dedicated to commercial exchange (BRESSION [1993], p. 163-226). In this paper I am concerned not only with emporia, but also more generally with harbors, ports, promontories, and coastal locations.

⁶ VAN GRONINGEN (1960); SALMON (1997); KURKE (1996); KURKE (1999); MUSTI, TORELLI (1994). For criticism of Torelli's interpretation see PIRENNE-DELFORGE (1994), p. 125, esp. notes 174 and 175. The case of the possible Korinthian sacred prostitution has been discussed more than for any other location, including also by biblical scholars because of Paul's letter to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians, 6:12-20), which some have argued alludes to such a practice. See ROSNER (1998), p. 336-351. Many have contested the occurrence of sacred prostitution in Korinth. See PIRENNE-DELFORGE (1994), p. 110-127; CONZELMANN (1967); SAFFREY (1985); CALAME (1989); BEARD, HENDERSON (1997); BUDIN (2008), p. 112-152.

⁷ ALONI (1982), p. 257-263.

⁸ TORELLI (1977), p. 428-429.

⁹ YAMAUCHI (1973), p. 219-220.

¹⁰ MUSTI (1976), p. 65-71; AMANTINI (1984), p. 39-62; REDFIELD (2003); SOURVINOU-INWOOD (1974), p. 186-198; TORELLI (1976), p. 147-156. PEMBROKE 1970, Appendix 2, p. 1269-1270, VAN COMPERNOLLE (1976), p. 329-400, and BUDIN (2008), p. 212-228 dispute that sacred prostitution was practiced at Lokroi.

¹¹ EPPERS, HEINEN (1984), p. 228; ZUCCA (1988), p. 773-776; STRONG (1997), p. 181-187; BONNET (1996), p. 116-117; VANOYEKE (1990), p. 29. BUDIN (2008), p. 184-191 questions the practice of sacred prostitution in Eryx.

¹² COLONNA (1984-5), p. 65; COLONNA (1985); SPIVEY, STODDART (1990), p. 125.

diffusion to the Greek world to the Phoenicians, who established sanctuaries of Aphrodite that sponsored “sacred prostitution,” first on Cyprus and then elsewhere.¹³ One scholar included all the sites named thus far and added to the list of sanctuaries where “sacred prostitution” took place other locations that had temples dedicated to Aphrodite such as Athens, Abydos, Samos, Ephesos,¹⁴ Knidos, Argos, Trezene, Tegea, Megalopolis, Aigeira, Melangeia, and Kalydon, without providing any references or evidence.¹⁵ The identification of Aphrodite’s temples as centers of “sacred prostitution” has not been helped by the fact that the majority of Aphrodite’s cult-sites throughout the Mediterranean were found in close proximity to the sea.¹⁶ In addition to various coastal sites mentioned above, Pausanias says that Aphrodite had temples on the coast at Epidaurus Limera,¹⁷ Tainaros,¹⁸ and Aigion,¹⁹ and at Patras four different temples dedicated to Aphrodite were situated along the sea.²⁰ In Peiraieus, the port of Attica, there may have been several sanctuaries dedicated to Aphrodite.²¹

Despite the frequency with which scholars claim that Aphrodite’s sanctuaries, either in commercial settlements or in poleis, sponsored “sacred prostitution,” there is no evidence to suggest this was the case.²² Moreover, the facile association of Aphrodite’s sanctuaries in emporia, harbors, and on the coastline with “sacred prostitution,” has obscured an important aspect of Aphrodite’s worship: Aphrodite was a patron deity of navigation and seafaring. Although

¹³ MACLACHLAN (1992), p. 145-162, argues that sacred prostitution took place in many of the sites listed above and discusses particularly the role of Cyprus in the transmission of this practice. So does YAMAUCHI (1973), p. 219-220.

¹⁴ In modern scholarship Ephesos has been discussed as a place where sacred prostitution took place but the sanctuary in question was Artemis’ temple, not Aphrodite’s. See COBERN (1917), p. 465; KROEGER, KROEGER (1991), p. 98; GRITZ (1991), p. 40-41. BAUGH (1999) argues against the existence of sacred prostitution here.

¹⁵ TORELLI (1977), p. 428-433.

¹⁶ SCHINDLER (1998), p. 29, Appendix 1, and fig. 2.

¹⁷ Pausanias, III, 23, 10.

¹⁸ Pausanias, III, 25, 9.

¹⁹ Pausanias, VII, 24, 2.

²⁰ Pausanias, VII, 21, 10-11.

²¹ For a discussion of the possible number of sanctuaries dedicated to Aphrodite and their location see GARLAND (2001), p. 112-3, PARKER (1996), p. 238, FUNKE (1983), and PIRONI (2007), p. 245-247.

²² A few works had already questioned the practice of “sacred prostitution” in the classical world (PIRENNE-DELFORGE, [1994], p. 100-126; ODEN [1987], p. 131-153; BEARD, HENDERSON [1997], p. 480-503), before the recent publication of the most comprehensive study yet of the myth of sacred prostitution (BUDIN [2008]). The earlier studies focus primarily on Herodotus’ famous passage on Babylonian sacred prostitution (I, 199) and discuss almost exclusively literary sources, leaving aside epigraphic and archaeological material. Budin attacks the issue both from the Near Eastern and the classical perspective, and surveys archaeological, epigraphic, and literary sources. Whereas Beard and Henderson argue that the myth of “sacred prostitution” is orientalist, Budin sees the creation of this myth as a result of both ancient and modern scholars’ historiographic misinterpretation and faulty methodology.

scholars have mentioned Aphrodite's role in navigation, either in discussions of the goddess' epithets²³ or in general discussions of maritime cults,²⁴ Aphrodite's patronage on the sea deserves a more detailed treatment. In this paper, I discuss several Hellenistic epigrams, as well as some literary and epigraphic texts from other periods, which have been generally neglected in so far as they reveal Aphrodite's power to provide safe sailing. The examination of this particular collection of evidence allows me to place Aphrodite among other deities who were venerated for the protection they offered in sea-travel.²⁵ I show that Aphrodite's role as a patron deity of seafaring entailed her worship by all those who sailed, including traders and the navy, throughout the Greek world, from the archaic to the Hellenistic period. Further, Aphrodite's maritime function was not unrelated to her role as a goddess of sexuality; ancient authors often constructed metaphors out of Aphrodite's power over navigation to refer to her power over sex.

Aphrodite and the Sea

Aphrodite's power over the sea and, consequently, navigation may already be present in Hesiod's account of the goddess' birth. In the story, Aphrodite was not born instantaneously from Ouranos' severed genitals that had fallen in the sea; rather, the genitals journeyed on the sea-foam for a while before the goddess arose from the sea. She then traveled first to the island of Kythera and finally arrived in Cyprus, where she set up her abode.²⁶ If this story is an explanation of Aphrodite's various functions, as others have argued, then it must reflect Aphrodite's maritime functions.²⁷

I would like to add several Hellenistic epigrams to the archaeological and textual evidence that attests to the seaside worship of Aphrodite, in order to establish a stronger link between the goddess and the sea. These epigrams refer to coastal temples dedicated to Aphrodite²⁸ and to one of her statues, also erected on the coast,²⁹ and they indicate the extent to which Aphrodite was associated with the sea in the minds of the epigrams' authors and readers.

²³ Notably PIRENNE-DELFORGE (1994), p. 433-37 and GRAF (1985), p. 261.

²⁴ ROMERO RECIO (2000), p. 39; 70-72; 88; 92; 99; 119-121.

²⁵ As for example Poseidon, the Dioskouroi, Dionysus, Zeus, Athena, Asklepios, and Hera. See SANDBERG (1954), DETIENNE (1974), p. 239-241, VÉLISSAROPOULOS (1980), p. 86-90, and ROMERO RECIO (2000).

²⁶ Hesiod, *Theogony*, 188-195.

²⁷ PIRONTI (2007), p. 55-63; PIRENNE-DELFORGE (2007), p. 318.

²⁸ *Anthologia Palatina* IX, 143, 144, 333, and 791 (ed. BECKBY); Poseidippos, 39, 116 and 119 (ed. AUSTIN, BASTIANINI).

²⁹ *Anthologia Palatina* XVI, 249 (ed. BECKBY).

One of these epigrams is attributed to Mnasalkes, a 3rd-century BC epigrammatist from Sikyon. It reads:

Στῶμεν ἀλιρράντοιο παρὰ χθαμαλὰν χθόνα πόντου
δερχόμενοι τέμενος Κύπριδος Εἰναλίας
κράναν τ' αἰγείροιο κατὰ σκιον, ὅς ἔπο νῆμα
ξουθαὶ ἀφύσσονται χεῖλεσιν ἀλκυόνες.

Anthologia Palatina IX, 333 (ed. Beckby)

Let us stand on the low beach of the sea-washed promontory,
gazing at the sanctuary of Kypris of the Sea,
and the spring overshadowed by poplars from which
the yellow kingfishers sip with their bills the running water.

Not only does this text draw attention to the coastal location of Aphrodite's sanctuary but also calls Aphrodite Einalia (Of the Sea), an epithet that captures the intimate relationship that the goddess had with the sea. The meaning of the first line of this epigram has been contested by one scholar, who suggested that it urges the spectators not to stand on the beach but rather off shore, on their ship, in order to gaze at the sanctuary of Aphrodite of the Sea.³⁰ This is a possible interpretation, and, if accepted, it might relate to Aphrodite's role as a patron of navigation. The epigram specifies that the men on the boat should stop their voyage to look at a sanctuary of Aphrodite of the Sea. If their choice of pausing for this goddess is significant, the epigram might hint at the protection that Aphrodite offered in sailing.

Mnasalkes' epigram resembles an anonymous dedicatory one that asks the passer-by to sit by the statue of Aphrodite and pray to her. It goes on to specify that the dedicator set it up by the shore:

Δερχόμενος ξόανον καλὸν τόδε, τὰν Ἀφροδίταν
ἄνθρωψ', ἱλάσκευ πλατίον ἐζόμενος·
αἶνει δὲ Γλυκέραν Διονυσίου, ἥ μ' ἀνέθηκε
πορφυρέας ἀπαλὸν κύμα παρ' ἡϊόνος.

Anthologia Palatina XVI, 249 (ed. Beckby)

Gazing at this lovely statue, oh man,
sit near it and worship Aphrodite
and praise Glykeria, the daughter of Dionysius, who set me up
as an offering by the soft waves of the purple shore.

This dedicatory epigram again evidences the preference for setting up Aphrodite's statues or sanctuaries close to the sea. Further, there are not only linguistic similarities with Mnasalkes' epigram, such as the repetition of the word δερχόμενος, which also appears in another related epigram attributed to

³⁰ AGAR (1923), p. 84. For a commentary on this epigram see GOW, PAGE (1965), p. 410-411 and SEELBACH (1964), p. 28-31.

Anyte discussed next, but also parallels in the peaceful landscape the two epigrams describe. Here, the picture is not of an idyllic scene of kingfishers sipping water from a spring overshadowed with poplars, but of an inviting rest stop by the shore, with a beautiful statue of a beautiful goddess, and soft waves hugging the shore on which it was set up. Pointing out the softness of the waves might be especially fitting, if Aphrodite was indeed a patron goddess of navigation who provided smooth sailing, as I will show shortly.

Anyte's epigram, dating probably from the late 300s or the very beginning of the 3rd century, is on a similar theme as the last two epigrams discussed. It explains that the temple is situated close to the sea because Aphrodite enjoys looking at the waves and goes further than the previous texts discussed because it specifies that another reason Aphrodite's temple is located on the shore is in order to make sailors' voyages pleasant. The idea that a voyage can be pleasant is significant, because it relates to Aphrodite's function as a maritime deity and her role in providing smooth sailing. The goddess' power over the sea is made obvious in the last lines of the epigram, which state that the goddess and the sea are locked in an intense reciprocal gaze: just as the goddess looks out at the sea because it is dear to her, the sea, trembling with fear, gazes at her statue, which is looking back at the sea:

Κύπριδος οὔτος ὁ χῶρος, ἐπεὶ φίλον ἔπλετο τήνᾳ
αἰὲν ἀπ' ἡπείρου λαμπρὸν ὄρῃν πέλαγος,
ὕφρα φίλον ναύτησι τελεῇ πλόον· ἀμφὶ δὲ πόντος
δειμαίνει λιπαρὸν δευρόμενος ξόανον.

Anthologia Palatina IX, 144 (ed. Beckby)

This is the place of Kypris, for it is dear to her to look
always from the land over on the bright sea
in order that she make the voyages of sailors pleasant.
And around the sea trembles, gazing on her polished image.

Two other epigrams written by Poseidippos mention one of Aphrodite's coastal temples, which was dedicated by Kallikrates, the commander of the Ptolemaic fleet after 279 BC.³¹ Both of these epigrams praise Kallikrates because he founded a temple dedicated to Arsinoe Kypris on Cape Zephyrion in Egypt. The Ptolemaic queen Arsinoe was often associated or identified with Aphrodite, especially after her deification, and, in the instance of Poseidippos' epigrams this is evident in the name Kypris that Arsinoe receives in both poems. The identification between the Ptolemaic queen and the goddess is

³¹ Poseidippos, 116 and 119 (ed. AUSTIN, BASTIANINI). For a commentary on these epigrams see GOW, PAGE (1965), p. 491-2. Kallikrates is known from various inscriptions that honor him for his role as a commander in the Aegean and on Cyprus, and for his role as the first priest of Alexander and the *adelphoi theoi*. See HAUBEN (1970); MOOREN (1975), p. 58-60 no. 010; CLARYSSE, VAN DER VEKEN (1983), p. 4; BING (2002/2003); AMELING (2003).

made even stronger in one of the two epigrams, which actually specifies that although Kallikrates named the recipient of the temple as Arsinoe Kypris, her name would also be known as Aphrodite on Zephyrion.³² Cape Zephyrion in Egypt is described in the same poem as being located midway between the beach of Pharos and the Canopic mouth, and the temple located here is said to be standing amidst the surrounding waters,³³ while in the second poem Arsinoe Kypris is depicted as commanding the Zephyrian shore.³⁴ This temple, therefore, can be added to the list of Aphrodite's temples located on the coast.

More importantly, both of Poseidippos' epigrams specify the reason that Kallikrates, the commander of the Ptolemaic fleet had established this temple. One calls both chaste daughters to come to the temple and all men who labor on the seas because the commander built this sanctuary as a safe harbor from all waves.³⁵ The combination of different types of worshippers, namely, chaste women and men who labor on the sea, who are supposed to come to Aphrodite's temple, is an indication of the interconnectedness of Aphrodite's roles as a patron of navigation and sex, discussed in greater detail in the next section. The other epigram begins with a call to pray at the temple of Arsinoe Kypris both when on land and on sea and ends with the reason why: this goddess will provide both smooth sailing, and in the midst of a storm, she calms the wide sea for those praying.³⁶ In other words, the commander of the fleet set up this

³² Poseidippos, 116 (ed. AUSTIN, BASTIANINI): ἐνθα με Καλλικράτης ἰδρύσατο καὶ βασιλίσσης | ἱερὸν Ἀρσινόης Κύπριδος ὠνόμασεν. | ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὴν Ζεφυρίτιν ἀκουσομένην Ἀφροδίτην | Ἑλλήνων ἀγναί, βαίνετε, θυγατέρες, (Kallikrates founded me here and named me a sanctuary to Arsinoe Kypris. Chaste daughters of Hellas, come to the one who will be called Aphrodite Zephyritis).

³³ Poseidippos, 116 (ed. AUSTIN, BASTIANINI): μέσσον ἐγὼ Φαρίης ἀκτῆς στόματός τε Κανώπου | ἐν περιφαινομένῳ κύματι χῶρον ἔχω.

³⁴ Poseidippos, 119 (ed. AUSTIN, BASTIANINI): ... ἱερὸν Ἀρσινόης | ἣν ἀνακοιρανέουσιν ἐπὶ Ζεφυρίτιδος ἀκτῆς.

³⁵ Poseidippos, 116 (ed. AUSTIN, BASTIANINI): Ἑλλήνων ἀγναί, βαίνετε, θυγατέρες | οἳ θ' ἄλλος ἐργάται ἄνδρες, ὁ γὰρ ναύαρχος ἔτευξεν | τοῦθ' ἱερὸν παντὸς κύματος εὐλόμενον.

³⁶ Poseidippos, 119 (ed. AUSTIN, BASTIANINI): τοῦτο καὶ ἐν πόντῳ καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ τῆς Φιλadelphou | Κύπριδος Ἰλάσκεσθ' ἱερὸν Ἀρσινόης /.../ ἥ δὲ καὶ εὐπλοίην δώσει καὶ χεῖματι μέσσω | τὸ πλατὺ λισσομένοις ἐκλιπαεῖ πέλαγος. BING (2002/003), p. 255-266, discusses two other poems by Poseidippos, which may also refer to the same sanctuary of Arsinoe/Aphrodite on Cape Zephyrion. A third epigram by the same author, Poseidippos, 39 (ed. AUSTIN, BASTIANINI), bears striking similarities to Poseidippos, 119 (ed. AUSTIN, BASTIANINI). It mentions the same sanctuary of Arsinoe, its establishment by Kallikrates, and specifies again that both those who are at sea or on land should pray to Arsinoe for smooth sailing (*euploia*). In this poem Arsinoe is not called Kypris, but since the same temple is in question, we can associate the epigram with Aphrodite: καὶ μέλλων ἄλα νηϊ περᾶν καὶ πείσμα καθάπτειν | χερσόθεν, Εὐπλοία χαῖρε δὸς Ἀρσινόῃ | πότιαν ἐκ νηοῦ καλέων θεόν, ἣν ὁ Βοίσκου | ναυαρχῶν Σάμιος θήκατο Καλλικράτης | ναυτίλε, σοὶ τὰ μάλιστα· κατ' εὐπλοίαν δὲ διώκει | τῆσδε θεοῦ χρῆζων πολλὰ καὶ ἄλλος ἀνὴρ· | εἵνεκα καὶ χερσαῖα καὶ εἰς ἄλα δῖαν ἀφίεις | εὐχὰς εὐρήσεις τὴν ἐπακουσομένην, "When you are about to cross the sea in a ship and fasten a cable from dry land, give a greeting to Arsinoe Euploia, summoning the revered goddess from her temple, which Samian Kallikrates, the son of Boiskos, dedicated especially for you, sailor, when he was a commander. Another man in pursuit of

temple to Arsinoe/Aphrodite because she had the ability to calm the waves so that she could help both those who were already at sea praying to her and those who prayed to her on land, presumably before they set out on their journey, so that they would have smooth sailing.

It is important to note, in connection with Poseidippos' 3rd-century epigram that specifies that Arsinoe/Aphrodite gives smooth sailing (*euploia*), that one of Aphrodite's cultic epithets was "Euploia" (Smooth-Sailing). This epithet is attested already from the early 4th century in Peiraieus³⁷ and Knidos,³⁸ and later in Olbia,³⁹ Mylasa,⁴⁰ Kilikia,⁴¹ and Delos.⁴² The goddess was also called "Galeanaia" (Calmer) in two other epigrams, indicating Aphrodite's ability to calm the seas.⁴³ Other cult epithets point to Aphrodite's dual role as a protector of navigation and harbors, and they are attested from different periods and places along the Mediterranean coast:⁴⁴ in an archaic inscription from Aigina⁴⁵ and a later one from Korinth⁴⁶ the goddess was worshipped as "Epilimenia" (On the Harbor); she was also named "Pontia" (Of the Sea)⁴⁷ in Kos,⁴⁸

smooth passage often addresses a demand to this goddess, because whether you are heading for dry land or setting out upon the divine sea you will find her receptive to your prayers."

³⁷ Pausanias, I, 1, 3, recounts the story of Konon who introduced the cult of Aphrodite Euploia to Athens in 394 BC. A later inscription of 97/6 BC (*IG* II², 2872) also attests to the worship of Aphrodite Euploia in Peiraieus. See also the discussion on Aphrodite's temples in Peiraieus in GARLAND (2001), p. 112-113, PARKER (1996), p. 238 n. 73, and PIRONTI (2007), p. 245-247.

³⁸ Pausanias, I, 1, 3, says that it was Konon who introduced the cult of Aphrodite Euploia to Athens borrowing it from Knidos. See also MIRANDA (1989), p. 133-137.

³⁹ *IosPE* I², 168. This inscription dates likely from the 1st century AD.

⁴⁰ HAUETTE-BESNAULT, DUBOIS (1881), p. 108 and *MDAI(A)* 15 (1890), p. 261-262, no. 15. These inscriptions date possibly from 76 BC.

⁴¹ *CIG* 4443. Possibly dated to 19/8 BC.

⁴² *ID* 2132. This inscription is dated to after 166 BC.

⁴³ *Anthologia Palatina* X, 21 (ed. BECKBY) and Callimachos, fr. 5 (ed. PFEIFFER). The former epigram is quoted in full and discussed below. It calls Aphrodite by the appellation Galeanaia. The latter is an epigram that records the dedication of a nautilus-shell in Arsinoe/Aphrodite's temple at Cape Zephyrion, the same temple that Poseidippos' epigrams refer to. The shell describes in first-person that as a ναυτίλος it sailed on the sea if there was wind, and if Galeanaia prevailed then it rowed with his feet. For these actions the nautilus then asserts that he deserves his name. Ναυτίλος also means sailor, and thus the shellfish compares his sailing on the sea to that of a sailor. Galeanaia was also a Nereid, but it is possible that in this poem the word describes Aphrodite since the shell is traveling to Aphrodite's temple and since Aphrodite is called Galeanaia in other epigrams. For a discussion of this poem see GUTZWILLER (1992).

⁴⁴ PIRENNE-DELFORGE (1994), p. 433-437 discusses briefly these cults.

⁴⁵ WOLTERS (1925), p. 46-49. This anchor is dated to the beginning of the 5th century BC.

⁴⁶ *SEG* 23, 170. This inscription dates from the Roman imperial period and is thus much later than the inscription from Aigina.

⁴⁷ GRAF (1985), p. 261 has collected all of the occurrences of this epithet for Aphrodite.

⁴⁸ In Kos the cult in question is one dedicated to Aphrodite Pandamos and Pontia. There are two inscriptions that provide evidence for the existence of this cult, and they involve the sale of the priesthood: *Iscr. di Cos* ED 178 (196/5 BC) and OBBINK-PARKER (late 2nd century BC), which

Nisyros,⁴⁹ Erythrai,⁵⁰ Olbia,⁵¹ Teiristasis in Thrace,⁵² Histria,⁵³ and Kyzikos;⁵⁴ finally, Pausanias mentions that in Hermione the goddess was called with the double epithet “Pontia kai Limenia” (Of the Sea and Harbor).⁵⁵ The epigraphic evidence that attests to the cults of maritime Aphrodite, therefore, confirms what the Hellenistic epigrams suggest, namely, that Aphrodite’s temples were located close to the sea and that the goddess was responsible for providing smooth sailing, and dates this aspect of Aphrodite’s worship earlier, to the beginning of the 5th century.

Another Hellenistic hymn, recently dated to the 3rd century BC, like Poseidippos’ epigrams, also honors Aphrodite/Arsinoe for her power over the sea.⁵⁶ Barbantani argues that praising the deified queen for this power was part and parcel of Ptolemaic propaganda aimed at reminding the reader of Ptolemaic naval power. Such an appraisal certainly fits with Kallikrates’ dedication of the temple of Aphrodite/Arsinoe: as a naval commander of the Ptolemaic fleet, Kallikrates honored with the establishment of this sanctuary both his patron the queen and also her divine persona, Aphrodite, who offered protection on sea. It is quite likely that the fleet commander of the Ptolemies chose this goddess who had the ability to calm the sea and offer safety while sailing, either to ensure a naval victory or to thank her for one. Similarly, Konon dedicated a temple to Aphrodite Euploia after his victory over the Spartan warships of Knidos in 394 BC, pointing out the importance of this goddess in naval actions.⁵⁷

Although much later, the two inscriptions from Kos that provide evidence to show that Aphrodite was worshipped as Pontia on this island, also draw a connection between Aphrodite of the Sea (Pontia) and naval actions.⁵⁸ This cult was dedicated to Aphrodite Pandamos and Pontia, and despite the two

is the same as *SEG* 50, 766. Both inscriptions make it clear that the temple of Aphrodite on Kos was close to the sea (OBBINK-PARKER, l. 44 and *Isr. di Cos* ED 178, b. 1-5). For other publications of these two inscriptions see ROBERT, ROBERT (1940), p. 217, n. 89; *Clara Rodos* 9 (1938), p. 147; SHERWIN-WHITE (1978), p. 304 and 320; MAIURI (1925), p. 173, no. 475.

⁴⁹ *WZ Halle* 16, 384, 26. From the 3rd century BC.

⁵⁰ *IE* 213a (1st cent. BC).

⁵¹ *I. Olbia* 68 (3rd century BC).

⁵² *MDAI(A)* 9 (1884), p. 75 n. 8. This inscription has not been dated satisfactorily.

⁵³ *SEG* 24, 1133 (2nd century BC).

⁵⁴ HASLUCK (1910), p. 236 (1st century BC).

⁵⁵ Pausanias, II, 34, 11.

⁵⁶ BARBANTANI (2005), p. 144-152. Col. II, 14 and III, 2.

⁵⁷ Pausanias, I, 1, 3. *Cf.* above n. 37.

⁵⁸ Whereas *Isr. di Cos* ED 178 was published early on as a complete text, the second inscription had been published only in parts until PARKER, OBBINK (2000) published the whole text together with an excellent commentary. The text also appeared in *SEG* 50, 766. See also PARKER (2002) for a discussion of these two inscriptions. Here I cite the OBBINK – PARKER version as it was published in PARKER, OBBINK (2000).

different cult-epithets there was only one priestess serving the cult. According to the two inscriptions, the temple was located on the coast⁵⁹ and one of the documents mentions shipyards being next to the sanctuary.⁶⁰ Even more significant is that each of the two inscriptions mentions groups of people who were required to make a sacrifice or a payment to Aphrodite. Among many others, such as freed men and women who got married, those serving in warships had to sacrifice to Aphrodite Pontia when they completed their voyage;⁶¹ fishermen and ship owners who sail around the country were also expected to give her a monetary offering annually, calculated per ship;⁶² and traders, as well as ship owners, had to perform sacrifices.⁶³ What is striking is the specification that these groups of people, all of whom sailed habitually, were expected to sacrifice to this goddess. Thus, a direct link was established between the goddess and people whose profession required sailing, such as the navy, traders, ship-owners, and fishermen. No doubt this was because of Aphrodite's powers over navigation and sailing, which were never distinct from her political dimension as her double cult on Kos, where she was worshipped both as Pandamos and Pontia, demonstrates. Nor were these roles separate from Aphrodite's function as a goddess of sex.⁶⁴

Further evidence for Aphrodite's role as a patron of navigation can be seen in various dedicatory epigrams and anecdotal stories in Pausanias and Plutarch, which draw attention to the fact that, as a patron god of sailing, Aphrodite was not only honored by the navy and naval officers such as Konon and Kallikrates,⁶⁵ but also worshipped by traders, as the inscription from Kos suggests.⁶⁶ One anonymous dedicatory epigram calls Aphrodite the guardian of all navigation and suggests that the goddess was honored both for her power of providing a safe journey but also for the profits that traders earned through her patronage:

⁵⁹ OBBINK-PARKER l. 44 and *Iscr. di Cos* ED 178, b. 1-5.

⁶⁰ *Iscr. di Cos* ED 178, b. 1-5.

⁶¹ OBBINK-PARKER, l. 5-6: τοὶ στρατευόμενοι ἐν ταῖς μακραῖς ναυσὶν ἐ[πεῖ] | κα καταλύοντι τὸν πλοῦν θύοντω τῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ τῇ Ποντίᾳ.

⁶² OBBINK-PARKER, l. 27-29: διδόντω δὲ ἐς ἀπαρχὰν καὶ τοὶ | ἄλιεῖς τοὶ ὀρμόμενοι ἐκ τῆς πόλεως καὶ τοὶ ναύκλαροι τοὶ πλέοντες | περὶ τὰν χώραν καθ' ἕκαστον πλοῖον τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ δραχμὰς πέντε.

⁶³ *Iscr. di Cos* ED 178, a. 21-23: ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἀκολούθως τοῖς | προκεκυρωμένοις συντελώντι τὰς θυσίας τοὶ τε ἔμποροι καὶ τοὶ ὀρμόμενοι ἐκ τῆς πόλεως.

⁶⁴ PARKER (2002), PIRONTI (2007), p. 270-271, and PIRENNE-DELFORGE (2007), p. 316-318 discuss these connections.

⁶⁵ We can add Themistokles to this list. Like his two successors, Themistokles dedicated a temple to Aphrodite to celebrate the Athenian naval victory in Salamis, according to Ammonios of Lamptrai, 361 F 5 (ed. JACOBY). Whether true or not, this statement contributes to our understanding of Aphrodite's patronage of sailing and thereby naval actions.

⁶⁶ *Iscr. di Cos* ED 178, a. 21-3.

τὸ ξόανον τὸ περισσὸν Ἀεξιμένης Ἀφροδίτῃ
 εἵσατο, τῆς πάσης ναυτιλίας φύλακι.
 χαίρ' ὦ πότνια Κύπρι, διδοῦσα δὲ κέρδεα, πλοῦτον
 ἄρμενον, εἰδήσεις ναῦς ὅτι κοινότατον.

Anthologia Palatina IX, 601 (ed. Beckby)

Aeximenes erected this refined statue
 to Aphrodite, the guardian of all navigation.
 Hail, oh mistress Kypri, if you give profits and desirable wealth,
 you shall learn that the ship is most common.

The poem makes it clear that if Aphrodite made rich the person, presumably a trader, who dedicated a statue to her, he would then share his profits with her, perhaps in the form of another offering. The last line of the poem is the promise that the trader would consider Aphrodite a shareholder of his ship, and by implication of the profits earned from its cargo.

Other evidence, besides epigrams, also supports the idea that traders venerated Aphrodite, whom they considered vital to their success in their trading trips, both in sailing and monetarily. Inscriptions attest to the fact that traders gave dedications to the goddess to thank her for her help both in navigation and trade. For example, thirteen boat-owners (ναύκληροι) offered a dedication to Aphrodite in Messene on Sicily⁶⁷ and on Delos, Damon, a trader from Askalon, offered a dedication to Aphrodite Ourania for saving him from pirates.⁶⁸ In 4th-century Halikarnassos a certain trader called Phaeinos dedicated a statue to Aphrodite for the help she gave him when she accompanied him on his sea-voyage:

Ἀφροδίτῃ | Φάεινος | Ζηνοδώρου
 [Φαῖνο]ς σοι τόδε, Κύπρι, καλὸν καλῇ εἶσεν ἄγαλ[μα]
 [πλήρ]εσιν ἐξ ἔργων χερσὶν ἀπαρξάμενος
 [ἧ γὰρ] ἐπεὶ ποτὲ νιμὲ γαν ἔμπορον εἰς ἄλλα ἔβησα[ς]
 [ἐ]ξ ὁσίων ὅστιος δῶμα συνέσχεν ἀνήρ.

SEG 28, 838

Phaeinos, son of Zenodoros, to Aphrodite.

Phainos dedicated this beautiful statue to you, beautiful Kypri, bringing the first offerings from his work in his full hands. For since you embarked on sea with him as a trader, this honest man kept his honest riches.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ *IG* XIV, 401. The inscription is of unknown date. The heading under which the dedications were listed has been reconstructed to Ναύκληροι.

⁶⁸ *ID* 2305. This inscription probably dates from the middle of the 2nd cent. BC, and given that the trader was from Askalon, he was probably a Phoenician. There is also a bilingual inscription in Phoenician and Greek, dating to 325-300 BC (*SEG* 36, 798), which records the dedication of a monument to honor Aphrodite made by the king of the Sidonians on behalf of those sailing (ὅπερ τῶν πλεόντων). In the Phoenician text the goddess named is Astarte. See also PARKER (2002), p. 147-150.

⁶⁹ In translating this last line, I follow VEYNE (1965), p. 945 n. 1, who cites parallels.

This epigram, written in verse, relates Aphrodite's patronage of traders who travel on sea with her patronage of their profits. Aphrodite here is said to have traveled with the trader on his sea-journey, perhaps so that she could protect him while sailing, and also to have contributed to his profits. It is perhaps because of this latter favor that Phaeinos gave the first offerings from his work to Aphrodite: he dedicated a statue to his patron goddess. This dedication complements the anonymous epigram quoted above, which accompanied another dedication of a statue to Aphrodite offered to exact the promise that the goddess would help the trader make profits, from which the trader might give her another offering.

Plutarch recounts an anecdote, which preserves the tradition that Aphrodite was both a patron of navigation, and, in the case where traders were involved, a bringer of profits. Other scholars have discussed this story, as well as the one about the trader Herostratus, presented next, in the context of pointing out Aphrodite's maritime character.⁷⁰ These two anecdotes are important also because they reveal that Aphrodite's maritime function meant that she was a patron deity of traders, and thus, also of their profits. Plutarch's story goes that Aphrodite advised Dexikreon, a Samian boat owner about to sail to Cyprus, to take potable water on board. The boat was immobilized as no wind blew and everyone grew thirsty. Dexikreon was able to sell the water at a high price and in order to thank Aphrodite he dedicated a statue of the goddess in his home of Samos.⁷¹ Aphrodite, therefore, ensured that the traders would have enough water on board so as not to suffer from thirst, and she also helped Dexikreon earn money. Plutarch could not quite believe that the goddess' purpose in telling Dexikreon to load water on board was to help him earn money, but as, we have seen, there is both epigrammatic and epigraphic evidence to show that Aphrodite did help traders make profits. He adds, therefore, that the goddess did not wish to make one man rich, but rather to save many through one, falling back on what must have been Aphrodite's well-known role as a patron of navigation.⁷²

Whether Aphrodite's purpose was noble – and her motives were not always as noble as Plutarch would have liked – or not, it is uncontroversial that the evidence examined thus far does point to a relation between Aphrodite and traders. Such a link is expected, given her role in protecting all those who sail; just as her help in naval victories is explicitly related to her patronage of navigation, her help in earning profits is also a corollary of this same role. A patron-client relationship between Aphrodite and traders is also described in a

⁷⁰ PIRENNE-DELFORGE (1994), p. 434-437. PARKER (2002), p. 151-152 takes up this issue, although he does not use these texts in his analysis, and PIRENNE-DELFORGE (2007), p. 318 reprises this topic.

⁷¹ Plutarch, *Moralia*, 303c-d.

⁷² Plutarch, *Moralia*, 303c-d.

story by Polycharmos, quoted in Athenaios, about the trader Herostratos, who sailed to Naukratis via Paphos in Cyprus, where he bought a statuette of Aphrodite from the goddess' temple.⁷³ This transaction proved to be fortuitous, for when the ship was caught in a storm, the sailors turned for safety to Aphrodite's statue and the goddess then performed a miracle and saved the crew. She caused her own statue to sprout with myrtle branches and these in turn produced an aroma that soothed the sailors' seasickness, helping them to make it to the shore.⁷⁴ Upon his safe arrival in the famous commercial settlement of Naukratis, Herostratos promptly dedicated the Cypriot statuette at the temple of Aphrodite, which was the first temple built there.⁷⁵

Is it a coincidence that the statuette of the goddess that saved the crew was purchased from the sanctuary of the goddess on Cyprus? Or that Dexikreon was about to sail to Cyprus when the goddess saved him? No doubt the choice of the locations that appear in these stories may be simply due to the fact that all three – Samos, Naukratis, and Cyprus – were important commercial hubs on maritime trade routes. Given the close ties that Aphrodite has with Cyprus, however, it might be significant that the island appears in both accounts, especially since one of the foundation legends for the goddess' temple in Paphos involves Aphrodite and sailing. After the fall of Troy, Agapenor, the king of the Arkadians, was on his way back home when his fleet was caught in a storm that eventually led them to Cyprus. There he founded Paphos and the famous temple of Aphrodite.⁷⁶ Although the story simply explains the foundation of the temple of Aphrodite at Paphos, it is tempting to speculate that perhaps Agapenor chose Aphrodite over all the other gods because Aphrodite somehow saved the sailors when they were caught in the storm, given the anecdotes mentioned thus far that refer to Aphrodite's role in navigation.

There is also some archaeological evidence from commercial settlements, earlier in date than most of the sources considered thus far, which might support Aphrodite's connection with traders through her role in providing safe sailing. In Aigina, an early 5th-century archaic votive anchor was dedicated to Aphrodite Epilimenia,⁷⁷ and approximately a dozen votive anchors, also from the archaic period but this time without dedicatory inscriptions, were excavated from a sanctuary identified as belonging to Aphrodite in the commercial settlement of Gravisca.⁷⁸ Votive anchors, along with other ship parts or models

⁷³ Polycharmos, *apud* Athenaios, XV, 675f-676c.

⁷⁴ Polycharmos, *apud* Athenaios, XV, 675f-676c.

⁷⁵ GARDNER (1888), p. 33-34 and 37.

⁷⁶ Pausanias, VIII, 5, 2.

⁷⁷ WELTER (1938), p. 489f. and 497 fig. 11.

⁷⁸ TORELLI (1977), p. 435. The identification of this temple as belonging to Aphrodite was recently challenged by HAACK (2007), p. 29-40. She argues that the cult-space identified as Aphrodite's temple was actually dedicated to Hera. Her identification of the temple is part of a

of ships are common dedications throughout coastal sites in the Mediterranean,⁷⁹ and they were offered to various divinities probably in order to seek safe traveling or to thank a god for it.⁸⁰ That the goddess could have been among the gods who received such offerings should be expected, given her importance as a patron deity of navigation for Greeks, whether they were traders, sailors, or part of the navy.

The goddess' early importance in sailing is also evident in one of Solon's poems, which demonstrates that the goddess' patronage on the sea was part of her cult from the archaic period onwards. This fragment preserves a prayer that Solon made to Aphrodite when he was about to sail away from Cyprus, after re-founding the city of Soloi there:

νῦν δὲ (φησί) σὺ μὲν Σολίοισι πολλὸν χρόνον ἐνθάδ' ἀνάσσω
 τήνδε πόλιν ναίοις καὶ γένος ὑμέτερον·
 αὐτὰρ ἐμὲ ξὺν νηϊ θοῇ κλεινῆς ἀπὸ νήσου
 ἀσκηθῆι πέμποι Κύπρις ἰοστέφανος·
 οἰκισμῶι δ' ἐπὶ τῷδε χάριν καὶ κῦδος ὀπάζοι
 ἐσθλὸν καὶ νόστον πατρίδ' ἐς ἡμετέραν.

Solon, fr. 19 (ed. West)

Now, (they say), "May you and your descendants
 dwell long here ruling over this town, Soloi;
 As for me, may violet-crowned Kypris send me unharmed

larger argument that it was not Phokaiaians who founded this commercial settlement but rather Samians. Her argument is based on the fact that many more dedicatory inscriptions to Hera (43) were discovered than to Aphrodite (6). As she points out, however, the inscriptions naming Hera were found scattered throughout the sanctuary, whereas the majority of Aphrodite's inscriptions were discovered in one single cult-area. These inscriptions could be related to a structure next to the one they were discovered in, thus allowing for the possibility that the cult-place now identified as Aphrodite's actually belonged to Hera. Most of the argumentation also hinges on the fact that the votive offerings excavated from this contested space were just as appropriate as offerings to Hera as they were to Aphrodite. It seems that there is no decisive evidence yet as to the identification of this sanctuary. For this reason, I present the evidence provided by the stone anchors at Gravisca with some reservations, although I hope to have shown that the link between Aphrodite and traders is strong, given the other epigrams, inscriptions, and literary texts that I have discussed.

⁷⁹ GIANFROTTA (1975), p. 311-3, especially 313-314; GIANFROTTA (1977), p. 285-292. See also ROMERO RECIO (2000), p. 2-18, who discusses other divinities that received boats and models or drawings of boats as dedications.

⁸⁰ Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautica* I, 955-960, describes the dedication of the Argo's anchor at the temple of Athena at Kyzikos, while Arrian, *Periplus Ponti Euxini*, 9, 1-2, saw it at Rhea's sanctuary in Phasis. In Metapontum marble and stone anchors, dating from the 7th and 6th centuries BC, have been connected to the worship of Apollo Archegetes (ADAMESTEANU [1971], p. 163-177, especially 172). In Delos numerous anchors are recorded on the temple inventories (DEONNA [1938], p. 197-198). Models of anchors were also dedicated in Thasos, perhaps to Poseidon (BON, SEYRIG [1929], p. 348). One votive anchor was dedicated to Zeus Meilichios (IACOPI [1952], p. 167-168). Models and drawings of boats were also dedicated to Hera, especially in her sanctuary on Samos. See DE POLIGNAC (1997), p. 113-122, esp. 115 and fig. 1 p. 114, for the distribution of boat models, and KYRIELEIS (1980), p. 89-94.

from this famous isle in my swift ship
and with this town here founded, may she send with me
favor, fame, and a safe journey back to my fatherland.”

In his address to the king of Soloi, Philokypros, Solon does not pray to Aphrodite simply because she is so closely associated with Cyprus, as her name in this poem, *Kypris*, shows; rather, he invokes her because she can offer him a safe journey back to Athens. Aphrodite's role as a protector of sailors, therefore, was present in her worship from as early as some of our earliest written sources.

Goddess of navigation, goddess of sex

One of the most interesting aspects of Aphrodite's maritime powers is the fact that they are never separated from her capacity as a deity of sex. Some of the sources discussed thus far do, in fact, relate Aphrodite's role as a goddess of navigation to her role as a goddess of sexuality, and more specifically, of sexual maturation. The inscriptions from Kos, for example, clarify that it is not just people who sail, such as men on naval ships, fishermen, traders, or ship-owners, who have to perform sacrifices to the goddess, but also, significantly, all women who marry.⁸¹ Similarly, Poseidippos' epigram calls to the temple of Arsinoe *Kypris* not only men who labor on the sea, but also the chaste daughters of Greeks,⁸² and the recently discovered Hellenistic hymn to Aphrodite/Arsinoe honors the goddess not only for her capacity as a mistress of the sea but also because she was a goddess of legitimate wedlock.⁸³ The connection between Aphrodite's powers over both sex and the sea is also evident in an anecdote that Plutarch recounts, although this time it is not women who must worship the goddess during these transitional periods, but rather a man. To explain Aphrodite's epithet, *Epitragia*, Plutarch says that Theseus was ordered by the god at Delphi to take Aphrodite with him as his *καθηγεμών* (guide) and *συνέμπορος* (fellow-traveler) for his sailing trip to Crete, when he escorted the youths of Athens doomed to be fodder for the minotaur. Theseus obeyed the oracle but as he sacrificed a she-goat to Aphrodite, significantly facing the sea (*πρὸς θάλασσην*), the she-goat turned into a he-goat.⁸⁴ This episode has been interpreted as a foreshadowing of Theseus' own sexual maturation under the goddess' patronage, but the fact that the hero had to perform a sacrifice to Aphrodite before he undertook a journey on the sea must

⁸¹ *Iscr. di Cos* ED 178, a. 15-21.

⁸² Poseidippos, 116 (ed. AUSTIN, BASTIANINI).

⁸³ BARBANTANI (2005), p. 141-43. Col. III 5 and 11, and IV 6 and 8.

⁸⁴ Plutarch, *Theseus*, 18.

also relate to the goddess' role as a patron of navigation.⁸⁵ The sacrifices performed at Aphrodite's sanctuaries both by women who marry and men who complete sea-voyages establish the same link between sailing and sexuality that Plutarch does in his story.

Further evidence of the connection between Aphrodite's powers over sailing and sex is the fact that the image of the "sea of love" appears frequently in sources from the archaic period onwards.⁸⁶ The lover is often depicted as a sailor, shipwrecked when s/he is unsuccessful, or tossing on a sea of love. One might expect, therefore, that as the patron deity of smooth sailing, Aphrodite might be called upon to help those who are in the midst of a metaphorical storm in their love life, or those who seek successful sexual encounters, either heterosexual or homosexual, at the onset of marriage, within it, or outside of it. There are several sources that make Aphrodite's role as a patroness of navigation explicit and combine it with her role as the deity of sex.⁸⁷ For example, one 1st-century BC epigram by Antipater of Thessaloniki specifically relates the coastal site of the goddess' sanctuary to her capacity to protect sailors, and obviously plays with the notion that Aphrodite has both roles:

λιτός τοι δόμος οὔτος ἐπεὶ παρὰ κύματι πηγῶ
 ἵδρυμαι νοτερῆς δεσπότις ἡϊόνος,
 ἀλλὰ φίλος· πόντῳ γάρ ἐπὶ πλατὺ δειμαίνοντι
 χαίρω καὶ ναύταις εἰς ἐμὲ σφζομένοις.
 ἱλάσκευ τὴν Κύπριν· ἐγὼ δέ σοι ἢ ἐν ἔρωτι
 οὔριος ἢ χαροπῶ πνεύσομαι ἐν πελάγει.

Anthologia Palatina IX, 143 (ed. Beckby)

Simple is this dwelling of mine, beside the big waves
 I am enthroned, the mistress of the sea-bathed beach,
 but it is dear to me; for I delight in the vast and terrible sea
 and in the sailors who come to me to be saved.
 Pray to Kypri! And I, either in love
 or on the gray sea, will blow as a propitious gale.

⁸⁵ For an analysis of this anecdote see PIRENNE-DELFORGE (1994), p. 35-40, 386 and PIRONTI (2007), p. 192-206, esp. p. 197-201.

⁸⁶ The passages range from Theognis (e.g. 113-14, 457-60, 575-76, 963-70, 1271-74, 1261-62) and Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 413-415, 315, 470 to the Hellenistic epigrams discussed here. See also the discussions of the sea of love image and references to more passages in KAHLMEYER (1934), p. 22-26 and GUTZWILLER (1992), p. 198-202.

⁸⁷ Callimachus, fr. 5 (ed. PFEIFFER), that records a dedication of a seashell (a nautilus) by Selenaiia has also been interpreted as referring both to Aphrodite's power over sailing and her power over sexuality. In this case, the dedication is a prayer by a bride (Selenaiia) who wishes to receive a safe journey in marriage, symbolized by a seashell that describes itself in the poem as travelling on sea and whose name, nautilus, also means sailor. See GUTZWILLER (1992), p. 198-209.

This epigram borrows from the one by Anyte quoted above,⁸⁸ which follows Antipater's epigram in the *Anthologia Palatina*. Both poems speak of a sanctuary of Aphrodite located next to the sea; both say that it is dear to the goddess to look at the sea; and both mention sailors who either come to be saved or whose voyages are pleasant. Antipater's epigram allows Aphrodite to speak in her own voice. The goddess says that her temple is located on the shore so that she can delight in the vast and terrible sea and in the sailors who come to her in order to be saved. More importantly, the poem ends when the goddess explains that she will either favor one's love or blow as a propitious gale during one's sea-voyage. With these last two lines, the metaphorical link between seafaring and sexuality already alluded to in Poseidippos, the inscriptions from Kos, and the Hellenistic hymn to Arsinoe/Aphrodite, is established.

Other dedicatory poems combine the goddess' two roles by comparing sailing on rough seas to the toils and turmoil of love. In one instance, an anonymous author begs the goddess who saves those at sea to save him as he was shipwrecked on land, presumably because of a love affair that did not turn out as desired.⁸⁹ An epigram by Meleager, probably written in the early years of the 1st century BC, uses the metaphor of the sea of love and relates it to Aphrodite's guidance to safe harbor. The author calls her the ship-owner (ναυκλήρος) of his ship and Eros the guardian of the helm, who holds with his hand the rudder of his soul, as he is storm-tossed at sea.⁹⁰ Philodemus, the 1st-century BC Epicurian philosopher and epigrammatist, wrote another poem, which in essence is a married man's lament because his wife banned him for some reason from the bedroom.⁹¹ This epigram is framed as a prayer to Aphrodite: the man describes himself as tossing on Aphrodite's sea, showing the goddess' power over it, and asks the goddess to guide him to his lover, Naias, since his wife is refusing him:

Κύπρι γαληνάη, φιλονόμφει, Κύπρι δικαίων
σύμμαχε, Κύπρι Πόθων μῆτερ ἀελλοπόδων,

⁸⁸ *Anthologia Palatina* IX, 144 (ed. BECKBY).

⁸⁹ *Anthologia Palatina* V, 11 (ed. BECKBY): εἰ τοὺς ἐν πελάγει σώζεις, Κύπρι, καὶ ἐν γῇ ναυαγόν, φίλῃ, σῶσον ἀπολλύμενον ("Kypri, since you save those at sea, save me, too, Beloved, ship-wrecked on land I am perishing"). In another epigram, *Anthologia Palatina* V, 232 (ed. BECKBY), a lover describes himself as quivering with passion while his soul is drowned (πνιγομένης) in a sea of love (κόρατι Κυπριδίῳ), and asks to be saved since he is shipwrecked (ναυηγός) and to be accepted into his lover's harbors (λιμένες). The poem, by Macedonius, a consul in the reign of Justinian, does not call on Aphrodite, but she is indirectly mentioned with the appearance of the word Κυπριδίῳ. For a discussion of the metaphorical interpretation of λιμήν as female genitalia see below. *Anthologia Palatina* XII, 167 (ed. BECKBY), is similar. It describes a man swept by the winds, by Desire's gale, and sweet-teared Eros, as he sails on the sea of Kypri, praying that his lover will receive him into his harbor (the word used here is ὄρμος).

⁹⁰ *Anthologia Palatina* XII, 157 (ed. BECKBY).

⁹¹ See SIDER (1997), p. 91-92. This poem is the same as *Anthologia Palatina* X, 21.

Κύπρι, τὸν ἡμίσπαστον ἀπὸ κροκέων ἐμὲ παστῶν,
 τὸν χιόσι ψυχὴν Κελτίσι νειφόμενον,
 Κύπρι, τὸν ἡσύχιόν με, τὸν οὐδενὶ κοῦφα λαλεῦντα,
 τὸν σέο πορφυρέῳ κλυζόμενον πέλᾳγει,
 Κύπρι φίλορμίστειρα, φιλόργιε, σῶξέ με, Κύπρι,
 Ναϊακοὺς ἤδη, δεσπότη, πρὸς λιμένας.

Philodemos 8 (ed. Sider)

Kypris the Calmer, lover of bridegrooms, Kypris,
 ally of the just, Kypris, mother of the storm-footed Desires,
 Kypris, save me, a man half torn away from my saffron bridal bed,
 me, the one who now has a chilled soul from the snows of Gaul,
 Kypris, me the peaceful one, who utters no stupid words to anyone,
 who now is tossed on your purple sea,
 Kypris, lover of harborage and lover of your rites, save me
 Kypris, mistress, and bring me to the Naiadic harbors.

This incantation, with its repetition of Kypris, Aphrodite's name, clearly refers to Aphrodite's multiple roles: not only is she the goddess of weddings, desire, and sex, but also one who guides ships to ports. The word λιμὴν in the last line of the poem is particularly interesting: it was probably used here metaphorically to indicate the female genitalia.⁹² The goddess' role as a patron of navigation, therefore, is inextricably linked with her function as a goddess of sex. Just as Aphrodite directs ships safely to harbors, so too, she guides men to their lovers' genitalia. It is for this reason that the man of Philodemos' poem prays to Aphrodite: when he experiences his wife's chilled attitude he turns to the goddess so that she can grant him success in his quest for sex with another woman (Naias), in the same way that he would have turned to Aphrodite for help, had he been sailing on the sea so that she would ensure a smooth sailing to shore.

A similar conflation of Aphrodite's two roles occurs in the last epigram I present here, which is also the latest in time, dated to sometime in the 1st century AD. The author is the Roman Gaetulicus, who is sometimes identified with Cn. Cornelius Lentulus.⁹³ The prayer of this poem asks Aphrodite, described as a guardian of the shore, to be favorable both to the dedicator's love for a woman and his trip across the Ionian Sea to her:

ἀγχιάλου ῥηγμῖνος ἐπίσκοπε, σοὶ τάδε πέμπω
 ψαιστία, καὶ λιτῆς δῶρα θυπολήης·
 αὔριον Ἰονίου γὰρ ἐπὶ πλατὺ κῦμα περὴσω
 σπείδων ἡμετέρης κόλπον ἐς Εἰδοθέης·
 οὐριος ἄλλ' ἐπίλαμψον ἐμῷ καὶ ἔρωτι καὶ ἰστῷ

⁹² For example, Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*, 1208, uses it in this way, as does Empedocles, fr. 98, 9 (eds. DIELS, KRANTZ).

⁹³ For a discussion of this possible identification see PAGE (1981), p. 50-51.

δεσπότι καὶ θαλάμων, Κύπρι, καὶ ἡόνων.

Gaetulicus (ed. Page)

Guardian of the surf-beaten shore, I send you
these little cakes and gifts of a simple sacrifice.
For tomorrow I shall cross the vast Ionian wave,
hastening to the bay of my Eidothea.
Shine favorable both on my love and on my bark,
Kypri, queen of the bedroom and the shore.

In this epigram Aphrodite is again associated with the shore, following many of the epigrams discussed here. This poem also has many linguistic similarities to Antipater's epigram, quoted above:⁹⁴ the adjective πλατύ is used to describe the sea in Antipater and waves in Gaetulicus; the phrase οὖριος ... ἔρωτι recalls Antipater's ἐν ἔρωτι οὖριος; and, Gaetulicus' δεσπότι ... ἡόνων mirrors Antipater's δεσπότις ἡόνος. Perhaps Gaetulicus is only following a tradition set by the earlier epigrammatists, but his poem does contain all of the elements that contribute to our understanding of Aphrodite's patronage of navigation. Her temple is situated on the shore, she looks over the sea, she receives offerings so that she can provide safe travelling, and, finally, she is the mistress of both sex and the sea. The subject of this poem, as that of several others already presented, is clearly love, and more specifically, sexual love as the double entendre of words such as κόλπος (both a bay and a womb or vagina) implies.

Sailing is used as a metaphor for love in all these epigrams: Aphrodite guided men and women's sexual maturation or sexual adventures, whether these were legitimate or not, as she would if they had been traveling on sea. The interplay between love and the metaphor of sailing, however, works precisely because Aphrodite is the patron of both sex and seafaring. We have still to understand how such a connection between these two functions was made in the complex field of Aphrodite's prerogatives, although some proposals have appeared to explain the connections between all of the goddess' different spheres of influence.⁹⁵

Conclusion

The texts examined in this paper show the strong link between the coastal location of Aphrodite's sanctuaries, her epithets Euploia, Pontia, Limenia, and Epilimenia, and the goddess' maritime roles, which seem to be part of her worship from the archaic to the Hellenistic period and beyond. Aphrodite was a deity who had power over the sea and provided safe sailing to all those who sailed. In this group were included the navy and naval officers, ship-owners,

⁹⁴ *Antologia Palatina* IX, 143 (ed. BECKBY).

⁹⁵ PIRENNE-DELFORGE (1994); PIRONTI (2005).

traders, and anyone else whose profession involved sailing. She offered success in naval battles and trading ventures, guaranteeing victory to fleets and many profits to merchants. Yet, she was never stripped of her powers in the realm of sex; rather, the evidence presented here suggests that Aphrodite remained the goddess of sexuality and that her patronage of seafaring was always related in the minds of the ancient Greeks to her role in sexual encounters. In the context of coastal commercial settlements, which by definition presupposed sea-travel, Aphrodite's worship should be expected because the goddess was a patron deity of navigation and not just because of the prostitutes who may have worked at these sites. The voyage to Korinth, therefore, may not have been for every man, but every sailor who had Aphrodite's protection could at least hope to undertake such a trip safely and profitably.

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List of abbreviations

- Clara Rhodos* *Clara Rhodos. Studi e materiali pubblicati a cura dell'Istituto storico-archeologico di Rodi*, 10 vols., Rhodes, 1928-1941.
- ID* *Inscriptions de Délos*, 7 vols., Paris, 1926-1972.
- IE* H. ENGELMANN, R. MERKELBACH (eds.), *Die Inschriften von Erythrai und Klazomenai*, Bonn, 1972-74.
- IosPE* B. LATYSEW (ed.), *Inscriptiones antiquae orae septentrionalis Ponti Euxini graecae et latinae*, Petersburg, 1885/1916.
- Iscr. di Cos* M. SEGRE, *Iscrizioni di Cos*, Rome, 1993 (*Monografie della Scuola Archeologica di Atene e della missioni italiane in Oriente*, 6).
- I.Olbia* T.N. KNIPOVICH, E.I. LEVI, *Inscriptiones Olbiae (1917-1965)*, Leningrad, 1968.
- WZ Halle* *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg*.

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