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Πρός μυρρίνην. Reconstructing a Fourth-Century Tumulus near the Piraeus

Giovanni Battista Lusieri's work for Lord Elgin in connection with the Parthenon is notorious, but his excavations are far less well known[1]. By and large, unfortunately, neither the locations nor the finds of his excavation work were recorded in any detail. His only published account concentrates on the broader issues of what might be found in the various Athenian cemeteries that he explored rather than on any details[2]. Nevertheless, it is clear from brief mentions in his letters and from the finds themselves that he excavated both in Athens, around the Hill of the Muses and in the Kerameikos, and out near the Piraeus. In only one case, however, do we have some sort of a description of a tomb that he found.

On 28th October 1802 Lusieri wrote to Lord Elgin in Constantinople that "since I have found a tumulus larger than that which is said to be of Antiope [opened by Fauvel in 1788], and since it has never been touched, I will excavate it as soon as I can". Philip Hunt, Lord Elgin's chaplain, who was in Athens at the time and took a great interest in furthering all of Lusieri's work for Lord Elgin, made arrangements for the excavation of this tumulus ("near the Piraeus") and wrote to Lord Elgin on 28th November 1802 that Feodor Ivanoff, known as the Calmuck, who was Elgin's figure painter and a somewhat difficult character, was to begin work there the next day[3]. When Elgin arrived in Athens in January 1803 —his embassy to Constantinople had ended and he was on his way back across the Mediterranean— he took the opportunity to visit the site of the excavation on the road out of the Piraeus. Shortly before his departure, he wrote to Lusieri that "the people of the *Diana* ought to be at the Piraeus at dawn, for the excavation of the tumulus. Theodore [Ivanoff] will show them the place." This additional manpower, however, clearly produced no quick results and Luiseri again closed down the excavation.

In February 1804, as his removals of sculpture ceased, Lusieri turned his attention back to the tumulus and on March 6th he discovered the burial, which he described in a letter to Lord Elgin of 18th May 1804:

> "In the excavation of the great tomb in the vineyards, on the way to the Piraeus, which had been very badly begun, I have found at ten feet below the general level a big vase of white marble, quite plain, seven feet in circumference and two feet three inches in height. It contains another bronze vase of good execution, 4ft. 4 in. in circumference and 1 ft. ½ in. in height. In the interior of this latter, there were some burnt bones, upon them a branch of myrtle, of gold, with flowers and buds. The exterior vase, pressed down by the enormous weight of the tomb, was broken, and the complete preservation of the interior vase was thus prevented. On the outside, and beside

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1. Williams 2002, 2009 and 2012; artistic output, Weston-Lewis 2012.
2. Lusieri 1818 (refers to urns of Pentelic marble).
3. Smith 1916, 237; Smith 1926, 253. Ivanoff proved to have no liking for excavating and did it poorly.

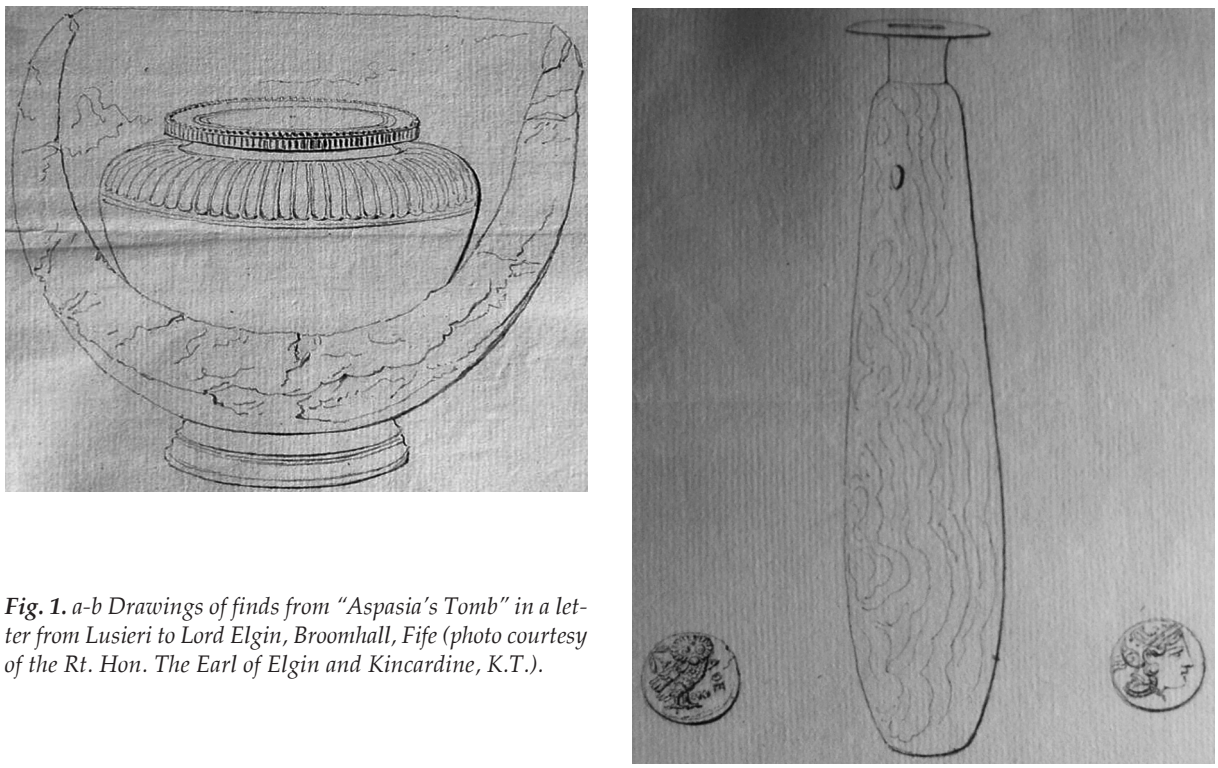

Fig. 1. *a-b Drawings of finds from "Aspasia's Tomb" in a letter from Lusieri to Lord Elgin, Broomhall, Fife (photo courtesy of the Rt. Hon. The Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, K.T.).*

> the vase, there was another, very fine indeed, of alabaster, much bigger than anything I have seen in that style with a length of 1 ft. 7 inches, and 1 ft. in circumference.... The tomb which has a height of about 80 feet, and a circumference of 250, and the form of a mound, was made with sand brought from different streams which cross the plain of Athens ... I did not think there was any interest in keeping the bones. I collected them, placed them in an antique terracotta vase, closely shut, put them back in the same place, and restored the tomb to its former state."

In the same letter, Lusieri proudly made sketches in ink of the bronze dinos in its marble vessel and the large alabastron (Fig. 1). His sensitivity to the burnt bones of the deceased is noteworthy: he bought a vase especially for the purpose of re-consigning them to the ground[4].

Sometime between 1804 and 1807 Lusieri also made a wonderful watercolour of the dinos in its marble container (Fig. 2, Pl. 19)[5]. This was a period when, freed from the burden of both collecting and excavation, Luiseri was able to turn to drawing and painting, his principal task in Lord Elgin's project which comprised the recording of the ancient monuments of Greece, in particular Athens, through casts, measured drawings, and topographical views. In 1807, however, the political climate in Athens changed as the French formed an alliance with the Porte. As a result Britain declared war with Turkey and in Athens the Ottoman officials sealed Lusieri's house and sequestrated all his finds. Lusieri himself, faced with imminent arrest and imprisonment, fled Athens. It was not until 1809 that he was able to return when he found that his house had been broken into and several things stolen, as well as some items seized and dispatched north in an attempt to curry favour with Napoleon[6].

The gold myrtle branch or sprig was one of the objects stolen, but in September 1811 Lusieri reported, somewhat sarcastically, to Lord Elgin that "the

4. Lusieri's accounts (Broomhall) show digging from 26th December 1803 to 3rd April 1804, and on March 6th the payment of 20 piastres "for an antique vase in which to place the ashes found in the vase at the tumulus".

5. Edinburgh, Scottish National Gallery D NG 711 (bequeathed in 1885): Weston-Lewis 2012, cat. no. 76.

6. For this theft see the postscript to his letter, Lusieri to Lord Elgin, 10th December 1813 (Broomhall, as all other quoted letters); Smith 1916, 273 and 278.

person who stole it has had the goodness to sell it to me"[7]. The huge alabaster alabastron, however, is to be found neither among the Elgin material now in London nor in Broomhall and one must suppose it was either stolen or was one of the items shipped north. The simple, plain bronze disc that had served as lid to the dinos, clearly to be seen in Lusieri's watercolour, is similarly missing —it was, one presumes, simply stolen as a domestically useable lid and never recovered[8].

The bronze dinos was eventually shipped to Malta in March 1810 following the issuing of a final *firman* from Constantinople[9]. The heavy marble container and its fragmentary lid left on November 26th 1811. The fate of the gold myrtle sprig, however, is a little more confused. Lusieri reports that he took it to Malta on the *Hydra* on April 22nd 1811, when, accompanied by Lord Byron and his young lover Nicolo Giraud (probably the brother of Lusieri's wife), he transported a number of precious items, including the myrtle sprig[10]. The sprig would then have been kept safe with the drawings by Mr. Corner, whence it was eventually secured after Lusieri's death in 1824 by W.R. Hamilton on behalf of Lord Elgin[11]. Lusieri's comment in a later letter that he still had it with him in Athens in early September 1811 would seem to be a mistake[12]. The bronze dinos, the gold myrtle sprig, the large marble container and its broken lid were all eventually reunited in the collection of the British Museum[13].

The first record of the name of Aspasia being attached to the tomb appears in Lord Elgin's *Memorandum* of 1810[14]. This publication was largely based on an extended letter that Philip Hunt composed in 1805 while both he and Elgin were in captivity in southern France, at Pau[15]. It is often supposed that it was Elgin who decided on the name of Aspasia, but it is perhaps more likely that the idea actually came from Lusieri[16]. He was well aware of the Pausanias-like fashion of giving names, both historical and mythical, to newly discovered tombs, especially by his rival in Athens, L.-F.-S. Fauvel, and was well versed in ancient literature and history[17]. Choiseul-Gouffier, Fauvel's employer and patron, had named a tomb he found in 1787 in the Troad as that of Achilles, and Fauvel was to give names to almost all the tombs he discovered in both the Troad and in Attica[18]. We hear of the tombs of Themis-

Fig. 2. *Water-colour of bronze dinos and marble container, from "Aspasia's Tomb", G.B. Lusieri 1804-7, Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland, D NG 711 (photo courtesy of the National Gallery of Scotland).*

7. Letter, Lusieri to Elgin, 4th September 1811.

8. Weston-Lewis 2012, 200 supposes that the lid disintegrated when the vessel was opened, but Lusieri's drawing makes it clear that the lid was in good condition.

9. Smith 1916, 293-294.

10. Letter, Lusieri to Elgin, 10th December 1813; Smith 1916, 283; Muscolino 2011, 44-45.

11. Smith 1916, 289-290.

12. Letter, Lusieri to Elgin, 4th September 1811 (if he really did have it with him, it was presumably shipped out in November, with the marble container). Elgin was also deceived by this letter: Smith 1916, 288.

13. Bronze dinos: GR 1816, 0610.115. Gold sprig: GR 1960, 1101.48 (on loan, 1926-1960). Marble container: GR 1816, 0610.116. Marble lid (fragmentary): GR 1972, 0817.45. Container, lid fragments and dinos: Hawkins 1842, frontispiece.

14. Bruce 1810; Smith 1926, 254.

15. Cf. Williams 2002, 103 fn. 1.

16. As Smith 1926, 254.

17. Fauvel: Legrand 1897; Zambon 2009. For Lusieri's knowledge of antiquity, Williams 2012, 180.

18. Choisseul-Gouffier: Cavalier 2007.

tokles (1795, Piraeus), Konon (before 1806, Mounychia), Kimon (before 1802, near the Pnyx), Miltiades (1802), Antiope (December 1788), Alkmene, Hektor, Tantalos, and Perikles[19]. Lusieri's decision to produce a water-colour of the find was probably prompted by the conviction that the finds from his tumulus exceeded in importance anything that Fauvel had found in all of his imaginatively named tombs.

There is one final piece of evidence about the location of Lusieri's tumulus and that is the report published in Elgin's *Memorandum* (composed by Hunt, who had visited the tumulus, as had Elgin, and knew the topography of Athens well) for there we read that it was "on the road which leads from the Port Piraeus to the Salaminian Ferry and Eleusis"[20]. This indicates that the tomb was beside the road that passed out of the Piraeus through the Aphrodision or Eetioneian Gate westwards towards Perama and then on to Eleusis[21]. Unfortunately, we do not know how far along this road the tumulus lay/laid, but it most probably was no great distance. We might note that many simpler tombs were opened beyond the Piraeus' more northerly gate, the Asty Gate, in the early nineteenth century. Indeed, Edward Dodwell described excavating a seemingly extensive cemetery in this region and boasted of being able to open 30 tombs in one day, using a team of ten men[22].

Tombs containing bronze dinoi used as ash urns are known from a number of burials in many different regions of the Greek world and were especially common in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. In several cases in and around Athens, in Eleusis, and in northern Greece, as well as even on Sicily, the bronze dinos and its contents were similarly protected by being placed in a rectangular or circular stone box or chest[23]. The Kerameikos examples reveal the details of the Athenian custom: the ashes were carefully gathered from the pyre into a purple cloth, placed in the bronze dinos, which was then also wrapped in cloth and placed inside a stone container (or wooden chest); there were few other offerings. The Elgin bronze dinos similarly still shows very slight traces of the impression of some sort of textile having once been wrapped around it. Marble containers are very rare in the fifth century; cylindrical examples begin to occur in the fourth century B.C. The use of a dinos as a cremation urn, especially in Macedonia, seems deliberately Homeric in its symbolism. Lusieri's find from near the Piraeus is exceptional for the fourth century in that the protective marble urn has been carefully carved to suit the dinos, that it has been given a neat torus-shaped foot and is impressively large (ht. 66 cm).

It was only after the end of the First World War, when the Elgin Room was being reconstituted, that the dinos was lightly cleaned to reveal on the rim the dotted inscription "*[par] he[ra]s A[r]ge[i]as emi ton aFethlon*" —I am one of the prizes of the games for Argive Hera— thus making it all too clear that the tomb could never have been that of the famous Aspasia, second wife of Perikles[24] (Figs 3-4). The games in honour of Argive Hera are also represented by similar prize inscriptions on four other bronze vessels and a bronze tripod[25]. These range in date from about the 460s B.C. down to 430-420 B.C., the probable date of the Elgin dinos, and all, given their origin as prizes, were presumably products of an Argive workshop contracted by the san-

19. Fauvel's excavations: Beschi 1996, 2002 (esp. 71-82, tomb of Themistokles) and 2006; Zambon 2009, 167-170.

20. Bruce 1810, 30. Smith 1926, 253 fn. 3, does not give this description, based on the first-hand knowledge of both Hunt and Elgin, proper weight.

21. Road: Travlos 1988, 181, fig. 228.

22. Dodwell 1819, i, 430. Piraeus cemeteries: Garland 1987, 223-4 note to p. 169; Travlos 1988, 340-363 (fig. 440, Dodwell's view of Tomb of Themistokles); Eickstedt 1991, 138-144.

23. For this type of burial, Kurtz – Boardman 1971, 98-9 and 196. Athens: eg. *Kerameikos* XII, 69-70, pls 26, 2 and 27 (box); Liagkouras 1973-74, 32; *Kerameikos* VII, 1, 83-4 and vii, 2, 74-75 no. 264, pl. 48, 3; *Kerameikos* XII, 68-70, 83 and pl. 25; Parlama – Stampolidis 2000, no. 350. Attica: Themelis 1970, 127, pl. 91 (Liopesi); Babritsas 1970, 129, pl. 94 (Merenda). Eleusis: Whitley et al. 2005-6, 11 fig. 23. Northern Greece: eg. *ibid*, 80 (Arta). Sicily: Orsi 1906, 323 fig. 240.

24. Smith 1926, 256. The addition of "*par*" is based on the other examples; the rest of the reading is Brian Cook's – Amandry 1980, 251.

25. Amandry 2002, 29-32; Amandry 1980, 211-217 and 250-251; Amandry, 1983, 627-634.

Fig. 3. *Bronze prize-dinos, from "Aspasia's Tomb", London, British Museum, GR 1816,0610.115 (photo courtesy of the British Museum).*

Fig. 4. *Inscription on rim of bronze dinos, prize from the games at Argos, London, British Museum, GR 1816,0610.115 (photo courtesy of the British Museum).*

ctuary of Hera or the city. Indeed, the closest parallels for the carefully formed incised tongues and cast mouldings on the edge of the rim of the Elgin dinos are to be found among the other Argive prize vessels, especially the hydria in New York[26]. The similarly decorated bronze dinos from the Kerameikos and an example in the Canellopoulos Museum of unknown provenance seem to be from a different workshop, presumably Athenian[27].

Some of the Argive prize vessels led particularly chequered lives, as Pierre Amandry has charted. The hydria found in 1925 at Sinope had been won at the Games of Hera by a citizen of Phokaia but was later used in games for the Dioskouroi when it was won by a citizen of Sinope, with whom it was presumably buried[28]. That found in a house on the "Street of Abundance" in Pompeii in 1977 must have been looted from Greece, presumably from a sanctuary, in the Roman period and acquired by a Pompeian antiquities collector or connoisseur[29].

The case of the bronze tripod, however, was not explored by Amandry. It was found in the southwest corner of the main chamber of Tomb II in the great tumulus at Vergina, discovered by Manolis Andronikos in 1977[30]. This extraordinarily rich tomb was immediately identified as "Philip's Tomb", although scholarly opinion has yet perhaps to settle as to which member of the royal family of Macedon might have been buried there[31]. Andronikos recognized that the tripod was much older than the rest of the contents of the tomb and at first dated it to c. 450 B.C., but then, after Pierre Amandry's published comments[32], he accepted a date of c. 430-420 B.C. He had, however, already developed a scenario to explain its presence, one which involved reference to Herodotos' mention of Alexander I of Macedon having participated in the Olympic Games[33]. Andronikos' explanation for the presence of the tripod was, thus, that it had been won by Alexander at the Argive Games and handed down to Philip as a treasured heirloom placed in the tomb as "a fitting tribute to a worthy scion of the house."

26. New York 26.50: Amandry 2002, 29, pls 1 and 2a.

27. *Kerameikos* VII, 2, 74-75 no. 264, pl. 48, 3-5. Athens, Canellopoulos Mus. inv. no. 370: Amandry 1971, 615-617.

28. Amandry 2002, 31. Amandry's suggested restoration modified on the basis of a bronze siren kalpis in the Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University, Atlanta, inv. 2004.24.1, a prize for the games in honour of the Dioskouroi at Phokaia. I am very grateful to Dr Jasper Gaunt for this information.

29. Amandry 2002, 31-32, pl. 2b.

30. Andronikos 1984, 164-166, figs 133-134, with p. 70 fig. 31 (*in situ*); Jeffery 1990, 444, no. H, pl. 75, 1 (Johnston).

31. For the debate see Borza – Palagia 2007, 81-125; Hatzopoulos 2008, 91-118; Gill 2008, esp. 345-354; Lane Fox 2011b, 1-34.

32. Amandry 1980, 251.

33. Herodotos v, 22; cf. Justin vii, 2, 14. Hornblower 1983, 74 uses Andronikos' first dating.

However, although Alexander I was probably permitted to take part in the Olympic Games of 504 B.C., or at the latest 500 B.C.[34], he had, of course, already died by 454 B.C. Even Alexander's ultimate successor, Perdikkas II (c. 448-413 B.C.), would surely have been too old to participate in athletic competitions in the 420s B.C. Nevertheless, it is possible that near the end of his reign he made an alliance with Argos, and one could perhaps imagine one of his entourage taking part in the games[35]. But Perdikkas would hardly have received the prize, and certainly not just the tripod without its dinos, especially one that was perhaps already damaged (it is missing the central rod from one of its legs). Although the presence of the tripod in Vergina Tomb II no doubt fits well with the Macedonian royal family's apparent pride in its Argive descent from the family of the Temenids, to which Herakles himself belonged, however invented the connection might have been to suit Alexander I's pretensions, just how the tripod came to be placed there remains problematic. Even the idea that it might have been an heirloom seems awkward, since it is the only object in the tomb that is not of the last third or so of the fourth century B.C. Rather, indeed, it would seem much more likely that the lone tripod was booty of some sort, whether from a sanctuary or a sacked city, an object that was perhaps particularly treasured as it recorded that event as well as alluding to any perceived Temenid connection. For such a scenario one might well recall Philip II's or Alexander the Great's campaigns south into Greece and imagine that this was the fashion in which the tripod entered the royal family's possession.

Bronze dinoi were also offered as prizes in games in honour of heroes and even in funerary games for mortals, including those that died in the Persian Wars[36]. We see them singly or stacked on Athenian pottery in scenes representing funerary games, especially chariot racing, and on a small number of loutrophoroi, both black-figured and red-figure, where they are surely to be connected with their function as prizes at funerary games, rather than in the washing of the dead[37]. The tondo of a lost red-figured cup of about 470 B.C., apparently signed by the painter Hegias (and recalling the Euaion Painter), shows Nike presenting a dinos very like the Lusieri dinos to a bearded athlete[38]. Subsequently such prize-dinoi were either dedicated in a sanctuary or taken to the tomb, presumably by the deceased or a later member of his family[39]. The *locus classicus* for this is perhaps Hesiod, who went to Chalkis to attend the funeral of Amphidamas and with his hymn won an "eared tripod", which he then dedicated to the Muses of Helikon[40]. On the Athenian Acropolis several fragments of Boeotian bronze prize-dinoi have been found that were dedicated there by Athenian victors —one even seems to have been used twice as a prize, recalling the Sinope hydria from the Argive Games[41].

In connection with the Vergina tripod, Amandry made the intriguing observation that the punched inscriptions on the London dinos and the Vergina tripod are "probablement de la même main"[42]. This would seem to make it possible that both the dinos and the tripod were actually made for the same games. If we are right in imagining that the tripod got into the Macedonian tomb as booty, what was

34. Cole 1981, 262-263.

35. Hornblower 1983, 78; cf. Descamps-Lequime – Charatzopoulou 2011, 282-284 (no. 158/1); and now Hatzopoulos 2011, 58 (thinks Perdikkas II competed).

36. See Amandry 1971, 605-609.

37. Chariot racing: e.g. McGowan 1995, 625 fig. 7 and 627 fig. 10; and the black-figure skyphos, Simon et al. 1997, no. 14. Dinoi on loutrophoroi (interpreted differently): Karydi 1963, 90-103, Beil. 46; Van den Driessche 1985. Cf. also Rotroff – Oakley 1992, 90-91 no. 113, pl. 36; Manakidou 1994, 53-57.

38. *ARV*^{2} 1670, add as 803, 58 bis.

39. Heroes: e.g. Herakles, Eretria: Jeffrey 1990, 88 no. 16; Amandry 1971, 617, vi. Mortals: eg. Onomastos, Kyme (Italy), Jeffery 1990, 238 and 240 no. 8; Amandry 1971, 618, xi. Persian War dead: Amandry 1971, 602-609.

40. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 654-9. Cf. Jeffery 1990, 91 and 94 no. 6.

41. Jeffery 1990, 91 and 94 no. 3 (reused no. 3c, pl. 7).

42. Amandry 2002, 30; cf. Amandry 1980, 251.

the story of Lusieri's Piraeus dinos, which is also older by perhaps as much as 100 years than the burial offerings, namely the myrtle sprig and the alabaster alabastron (see below)? It is easily assumed that such prizes were kept safe by the family over the decades, perhaps in response to needs connected with family identity and inheritance, until they were finally, and perhaps for a specific reason, placed in the tomb of the deceased. In the case of dinoi, we notice that they frequently served as the ash urn, but that the accompanying tripods were not included in the funerary offerings. Why was this? Was the tripod or stand kept for continued family use, or was it sold off? In the case of prize-dinoi that were dedicated in sanctuaries by the victors, it would seem most likely that dinos and tripod were kept together, as is indicated by Hesiod's dedication. This would tend to render it unlikely that the Vergina tripod and the London dinos were actually once part of one and the same prize, however intriguing the possibility might be.

The alabaster alabastron, found outside the marble container for the bronze dinos, was clearly extremely large and very fine (Fig. 1). That it was of alabaster rather than local marble is made clear in Lusieri's drawing in his letter, while its dimensions, 48.2 cm in height and c. 9.6 cm in diameter, must make it one of the largest ever found in Greece, twice the height of even the taller regular alabastra (20-25 cm). Its shape, with small mouth-plate and rather angular lower body, suggests that it was made in the second half of the fourth century B.C.[43]. Many smaller examples have been found in or associated with burials around Athens and elsewhere, often clustered together in the tomb: at Derveni, for example, groups were, it would seem, hung from nails in the walls of the tombs[44]. The Elgin alabastron presumably held a particularly large quantity of expensive and exotic imported perfume, some or all of which may have been used at the funeral, the remainder being then buried with the deceased.

The final object from the tomb is the gold myrtle sprig[45] (Fig. 5). It is just over 9 cm in length and is made of gold sheet with six leaves and two flowers. There are three sizes of leaf: the two larger pairs are pushed into holes in the stem, while the smallest pair is inserted into the end of the tube. Inserted beside the pair of middle-sized leaves are myrtle flowers on long wire stems. These consist of a cup with serrated top, a six-petalled flower, and a central wire that has been thickened with a sheet tube, over which has been passed a ring of twenty-four blob-ended stamens and then capped with a disc. These capping discs are decorated with an inner and an outer ring of fine spiral-beaded wire, which suggest that both rings were once filled with coloured glass enamel.

The structure of this myrtle branch is the same as that regularly used by goldsmiths to make branches for wreaths in the last third of the fourth century B.C. As a result it seems most likely that it did once actually form part of such a wreath. Myrtle wreaths have been recently studied by Bettina Tsigarida, who, in republishing the spectacular myrtle wreath formerly in the J. Paul Getty Museum (presumably of uncertain Macedonian provenance) and now in the Thessaloniki Archaeological Museum, notes some eight examples, all with branches of leaves, from secure central Macedonian contexts – Vergina Tomb II (antechamber), Sevaste, Pydna, Stavroupolis, Derveni (2), Agriosykia (near Pella), and Phoinikas (in the area of Thessaloniki)[46]. It might seem that myrtle wreaths were something of a speciality of Mace-

43. Cf. Pandermalis et al. 2004, 109 nos 24 (BL 53, fifth century) and 25 (BL 54, fourth century).

44. Alabastra: Mauermayer 1985. Kerameikos: eg. *Kerameikos* XIV, 61, no. 64. pl. 46, 6 (3rd quarter 4th cent B.C.); 84, no. 88, pl. 48, 5 (mid 4th cent B.C.); 113, no. 107, pl. 49, 6 (c. 350-340 B.C.); 114, no. 110, pl. 49, 7-8 (317-307 B.C.). Derveni: Themelis – Touratsoglou 1997, 82 profiles of B 71 and 72; A 83.1-10 and 84; B 58-78; D 33-47; E 28-30. Vergina Tomb II, antechamber (unpublished): Andronikos 1984, 77, figs 37-38 (*in situ*). For the shape cf. two alabastra from Aineia: Descamps-Lequime – Charatzopoulou 2011, 319 (no. 196/18).

45. London GR 1960, 1101.48: Smith 1926, 255 fig. 23; Higgins 1961, 106 no. 48, pl. 47a; Williams – Ogden 1994, 58-9, no. 10 (length 9.2 cm).

46. Thessaloniki MTh 24000 (ex Getty 93.AM.30): Tsigarida 2010, 305-315. Add: Thessaloniki MK 4810 (from Evropos, Kilkis): Pandermalis et al. 2004, 122, no. 2 (different type, no branches), and an unpublished example (with branches), said to be from Amphipolis, in a British private collection. Wreaths: Adam-Veleni – Tsigarida 2011, nos 3 (MD 2119; Pieria), 4 (MTh 7417; Stavroupolis), 5 (B 138; Derveni), 6 (D I; Derveni), and 7 (MTh 24000; ex Getty).

Fig. 5. *Gold myrtle branch, from "Aspasia's Tomb", London, British Museum, GR 1960, 1101.48 (photo courtesy of the British Museum).*

donian jewellers, but that is to ignore those from other areas of Greece. From an Asia Minor context come, for example, the myrtle wreaths now in Bodrum (Tomb of the Carian Princess) and in Pforzheim (Asia Minor tomb group), while that in Brooklyn is from a Black Sea collection (ex de Massonneau collection)[47]. There are indeed clear connections between the Macedonian examples and the Brooklyn piece from the Black Sea region, for it has nine "spikes" to take its branches, which are all now lost, while the East Greek wreaths in Bodrum and Pforzheim are also both very close to the Macedonian series. For this reason, it would be very interesting to know the provenance of the myrtle wreath now in Houston which is also of the same type[48]. In conclusion, therefore, the London sprig might have come from a Macedonian, an East Greek or even a Black Sea wreath, but, that said, it must be admitted that we cannot exclude Athenian manufacture. Indeed, although no gold wreaths have been preserved from Athens, they are recorded in the inventories of Athenian sanctuaries and there are representations of them on a class of fourth century black-glaze vessels[49]. Demosthenes even records the name of an Athenian jeweller who made a wreath for him, one Pammenes, the son of Pammenes, who had a workshop in the Agora[50]. Furthermore, the tall, capped tubes of the London sprig's flowers are not paralleled on any of the known myrtle wreaths from outside Athens.

The only possible parallel for a separate myrtle sprig has now been brilliantly shown by Marianna Dági to have actually been "misplaced" from the wreath found in Tomb B at Derveni in1962 on top of the great bronze krater and subsequently registered separately by the Thessaloniki Archaeological Museum[51]. One might compare a bundle of five gold ears of wheat that was found in the hand of a female skeleton in a Hellenistic tomb at Kertch or a series of stalks with three ears found in both Greece and Sicily[52]. None of these, however, has a strengthening of the gold sheet stem with a bronze core or rod like that employed in the London sprig. This rod, which passes up the stem, is at least 3 cm in length and the end has been crimped after insertion[53]. The con-

47. Bodrum: Ozet 1994, 88-96. Pforzheim: Segall 1966, pls 2 and 19; Holzach (ed.) 2007, 17 fig. 1. Brooklyn: Davidson – Oliver 1984, 35-36 - in the de Massonneau collection prior to 1922 (photograph in British Museum).

48. Hoffmann 1970, no. 212; Pandermalis et al. 2004, cat. no. 121; Tsigarida 2010, 312 (d).

49. Aleshire 1989; Harris 1995.

50. Demosthenes, *Against Meidias* xxii (522); cf. also Demosthenes, *On the Crown*. For representations on black-glaze vases see Kopcke 1964.

51. Dági forthcoming a and b. The myrtle branch was MTh 5440 b; for the wreath (B 138), Themelis – Touratsoglou 1997, 60-92. Dági's connection noted in Tsigarida 2010, 308 fn. 8. Previously compared: Williams – Ogden 1994, 58.

52. Bundle: Hermitage P 1835, 2: Peredolskaja 1964, 22 fn. 27, pl. 16, 4. Three ear type: Hoffmann – Davidson 1965, 288-294; Athens, NM chr. inv. 1546 (acquired 1968) - I am very grateful to Natacha Massar and Christina Avronidaki for my knowledge of this example.

53. Some wreaths preserve square gold rods or spikes inserted into the sheet tubes to help join sections: Derveni – Dági

version of a wreath branch into an individual re-enforced branch, one that could be held between the fingers without being crushed, must have been occasioned by a specific idea and for more sustained use than simply as an ornament for the dead[54].

How, then, can we account for this re-enforced gold myrtle branch or sprig? We know, of course, that gold myrtle wreaths mirrored actual myrtle wreaths that were worn, especially at symposia for the strong scent that they gave off, and presumably in ritual processions. Could the gold branch similarly have been intended to mirror the myrtle branch that was held by a symposiast when singing a *skolion*[55]? Our earliest group of references to this practice of singing *πρός μυρρίνην* is to be found in the comedies of Aristophanes. In his *Wasps* Bdelykleon is coaching his father, Philokleon, on how to behave at a respectable symposium[56]. He imagines that the flute-girl has played, and now it is the time *skolia dechesthai*, that is to cap *skolia*. He starts with a line from the anti-tyrannical *skolion* "the Harmodios", which is also referred to in a number of Aristophanes' other plays[57]. He goes on to try couplets that are associated with various poets, although it is likely that they were no more than roughly based on some of their lines[58]. Dikaiarchos, the fourth-century pupil of Aristotle, records that songs sung at symposia were either sung by the whole company or individually, when they would hold "a branch of laurel or myrtle in the hand in accordance with an old tradition"[59]. Plutarch, many centuries later and not from direct knowledge, amplifies this description somewhat adding that the myrtle branch was called an αἴσακος "because he that received it was obliged to sing"[60]. Finally, Athenaeus in his *Deipnosophistae* collected some 25 verses from *skolia*[61].

The way that the iconography of the figured scenes on Athenian pottery appears to be socially coded encourages a careful examination of even the smallest details in the anticipation that they might help to broaden our understanding of sympotic activities, provided we remain aware, on the one hand, of the likelihood of their semantic polyvalence and, on the other, of the unlikelihood that images on vases are ever exact records of moments in Athenian life. In the preserved representations of symposia on red-figured pottery we see a number of actions and gestures, some of which we may interpret in the context of our discussion of singing and the use of the myrtle branch. Among these we find a symposiast singing to a lyre or *auloi*, when he often puts his hand behind his head as he tilts his head back and lets the song flow out, and, exceptionally, a symposiast holding a myrtle branch as he sings unaccompanied.

The earliest example of a symposiast holding a myrtle branch, the αἴσακος, is on a cup dating to around 500 B.C., which belongs to Beazley's Proto-Panaetian Group and is thus closely related to the late works of Euphronios and to early Onesimos[62]. Here, on the exterior, we find four male symposiasts, one of whom is begins to sing as he holds the myrtle

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forthcoming a and b; Thessaloniki MTh 24000 (ex Getty), Tsigarida 2010, 306 and 309; Brooklyn – only the "spikes" to hold branches remain, Davidson – Oliver 1984, 35-6 (*pace* Tsigarida 2010, 311-312, b).

54. Higgins 1961, 106, suggested a hair ornament.

55. *Skolia*: Bowra 1961, 373-397; van der Valk 1974, 1-20; Campbell 1985, 220-1; Collins 2004, 84-134; Yatromanolakis 2009, 271-275.

56. Aristophanes, *Wasps* 1219-1249.

57. Aristophanes, *Acharnians* (980 and 1093), *Lysistrata* (632), and the *Storks* fr. 430; Antiphanes fr. 85, 5 (K); Athenaeus 695a-b.

58. Cf. van der Valk 1974, 7-8. For the supposed recitation of tragedians see Collins 2004, 91-92; and Vetta 1983, 119-131.

59. Dikaiarchos frr. 88-89 (Wehrli): Collins 2004, 86-88. The inclusion of laurel is probably a transposition from rhapsodic performance (cf. schol. Aristophanes, *Clouds* 1364; Collins 2004, 88-89), but it remains possible that other branches were used, cf. below fn. 66.

60. Plutarch, *Quaestiones Convivales* i,1,5. Pollux's account (vi, 108) only adds that the myrtle was normally passed to the right, the normal direction for everything at the symposium.

61. Athenaeus 694c – 695f; Page 1962, 472-481, nos 884-916; West 1993, 177-179, nos 884-913.

62. Munich 2636: *ARV*^{2} 316-317, 16; Hartwig 1893, 128-131, pl. 15, 1; Immerwahr 1990, 84 no. 502; Csapo – Miller 1991, 381 no. 4.

Fig. 6. *Red-figured cup, interior, symposiast, attributed to the Brygos Painter, Florence Archaeological Museum, inv. 3949 (photo courtesy of the Museo Archeologico, Firenze).*

branch and his neighbour stops playing the *auloi*. This youthful symposiast with the myrtle sings *k*[*alo*]*s ei*, which is presumably the beginning of a *skolion*. The bearded symposiast on the other side of the cup is also given a word from a song, *egei*[*re...*?], perhaps the beginning of the previous verse or *skolion* that is being capped by the youth.

On the interior of a slightly later cup, dating to c. 490-480 B.C., attributed to the Brygos Painter, we see a youth reclining on a couch, his shoes, walking stick and bread-basket around him, as he holds a black skyphos in his left hand and a branch of myrtle out in his right[63] (Fig. 6). His mouth is open, his head back, and the words "*pile kai*" pour forth (*pile* is for *phile*, perhaps his speech is slurred with drink): in his *skolion* he is exhorting his friend or lover[64].

Finally, on a cup attributed to the Tarquinia Painter, perhaps of c. 470-460 B.C., a symposium is depicted on both sides of the exterior[65]. There are four couples, men with naked *hetairai*. On the right of one side a man holds up a branch as he opens his mouth to sing. On the right of the other side a man puts his right hand behind his head as he tilts it back in a singing pose seen on several other vases. He is not holding a branch, but his accompanying *hetaira* is doing this duty for him. Here again we are surely seeing the representation of the singing of *skolia* in connection with the myrtle branch, although none of the words have been given.

There do not seem to be any later Athenian examples, but Aristophanes makes it clear that the tradition survived into the fourth century. Indeed, such symposiasts with myrtle branches are to be found on fourth-century pottery from both Boeotia and southern Italy (Lucanian, Apulian and Campanian), thus indicating that the custom continued and was, of course, more widely spread than just Athens[66]. The myrtle branch, however, is not to be found in sixth-century representations of the symposium, whether Athenian, Corinthian, Lakonian or East Greek. This might well indicate that the custom of taking up the myrtle and singing *skolia* had not yet become formalized and that it was in reality only developed at the very end of the sixth century, perhaps even encouraged by Hipparchos, as part of his cultural drive that saw foreign poets, like Anakreon, come to Athens.

Maurice Bowra's detailed review of the preserved *skolia* revealed their highly political nature[67]. Whether one agrees with his particular attributions to anti-tyrannical or pro-Alcmeonid lobbies, sympotic *skolia* were surely just the sort of context in which contemporary familial and political rivalries might have been played out. The four stanzas preserved by Athenaeus reinforce the indications in

63. Florence 3949: *ARV*^{2} 376, 90; *CVA* 3, pl. 91, 1 (A. Magi); Immerwahr 1990, 88 no. 549. Snatches of songs: Hartwig 1893, 255-258; Beazley 1927, 348-349; Lissarrague 1990, 128-135; Csapo – Miller 1991, 381-382. For a new extended song on a cup attributed to the Brygos Painter, Gaunt 2014.

64. Mis-writing: Cambitoglou 1968, 11; Immerwahr 1990, 88.

65. Basel Kä 415: *ARV*^{2} 868, 45; *CVA* 2, pls 28-29 (V. Slehoferova) – the branches look like ivy, but this would make little sense, unless ivy branches could be substitutes for myrtle.

66. Boeotian: Kabeiran skyphos, once Berlin 3286 – Boardman 1998, fig. 507. South Italian: eg. Hurschmann 1985, nos A 54, pl. 15 (Apulian), K 22 pl. 2, 1 (Campanian), L 5, pl. 5, 2 (Lucanian); and add New York, White – Bothmer 1990, 180-182, no. 128 (Apulian). Bowra 1961, 397, implausibly suggests that the custom waned in the fourth century.

67. Bowra 1961, 373-397: the approach criticised by van der Valk (1974, 1 and *passim*), but Collins (2004, 106-107 and 111-112) more accepting.

Aristophanes' plays that "the Harmodios" was the most celebrated of all the Attic *skolia*[68]. This clear dominance invites further investigation.

The context for the assassination of Hipparchos by Harmodios and Aristogeiton is given by our ancient sources as the preparations for the Panathenaic procession down in the Agora area[69]. There are disagreements, however, as to who was actually tyrant (Hippias or Hipparchos), which of the Peisistratids was the target (Hippias, Hipparchos or even Thessalos), and what had really motivated their attempt (anti-tyrannical feeling or a love-quarrel and a family slight). Julia Shear has recently attempted to reconcile some of these conflicts in our sources by opposing a cult version of the Tyrannicide story with variants promulgated during the fifth century by several important families, an idea that chimes well with Bowra's reading of several of the *skolia*[70]. She sees an official version eventually winning out in the fourth century B.C., as the result of the distance in time and the repeated cult activities sponsored by the city.

Shear's careful reconstruction is persuasive, but there is one difficult element that she does not examine in detail and it is particularly relevant here: the carrying of weapons by Harmodios and Aristogeiton. Although Thucydides' version has the assassination take place on the occasion of the Panathenaia because, he reports, members of the procession were allowed to carry arms (shields and spears), the author of the *Athenaion Politeia* explicitly denies this, stating that the bearing of arms was only instituted later, by the democracy[71]. But swords or daggers they did have, presumably hidden in the folds of their *himatia*, as the story reported in the *Athenaion Politeia* (but rejected) would suggest. The *skolia*, however, seem to begin with the idea of the two assassins holding both swords and myrtle branches before their attempt on the life of the tyrant. Indeed, the opening line is still regularly translated to suggest that the swords were hidden by the myrtle, despite the objections of some scholars[72]. Although branches were frequently carried in all manner of processions, in the case of the Panathenaia it would appear that only the *thallophoroi* carried branches (and, for Athena, they would surely have been of olive not myrtle). Furthermore, these *thallophoroi* seem to have been all mature men like Aristogeiton, men who had been winners of the *Euandria* competition, not youths like Harmodios[73]. Finally, it should be noted that none of the known representations of the duo show them with myrtle branches, whether on Athenian pottery, in marble sculpture or on coins —they are uniformly equipped with sword in one hand and scabbard in the other[74].

So what lies behind the juxtaposition of the myrtle branch and the sword, and what does the line really mean? Gérard Lambin suggested that this combination was a matter of sexual punning or *double entendre*, with *myrtos* being the female genitalia and *xiphos* the penis[75]. This may well have added spice to the first line and been suitable to the sexually charged atmosphere of the symposium, but it does not explain the presence of the myrtle branch. In

68. Page 1962, 474-475, nos 893-896, and 479, no. 911; note that Bdelykleon's line is not included (cf. van der Valk 1974, 8). The attribution to Kallistratos (cf. Hesychius *a* 7317 Latte) is unsound, cf. van der Valk 1974, 8 fn. 32.

69. Thucydides vi, 56-9; *Athenaion Politeia* 18; Herodotos v, 55. See Brunnsåker 1971; Taylor 1991.

70. Shear 2012a, 27-55 and 2012b, 107-119. Cf. also Jacoby 1949, 152-166, esp. 163.

71. Thucydides vi, 58, 2; cf. Hornblower 2008, 451, "probably a later patriotic fiction to excuse the non-resistance of the Athenians to tyranny".

72. Athenaeus 695a-b, nos xi-xiii; Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* 632. Collins 2004, 112, still translates as a "sword in a myrtle branch". Objectors: J. A. Davison, "Archilochus Fr. 2 Diehl", *CR* 10, 1960, 2 fn. 2 ("*en*" taken as "along with", following T. B. L Webster); Bowra 1961, 392 note 1; Ehrenberg 1956, 61-66 (a wreath).

73. On *thallophoroi* and the *Euandria*: Parke 1977, 44; Neils 1994, 151-160; Boegehold 1996, 97-103. Red-figure amphora of Panathenaic shape (British Museum GR 1998, 0121.1) with two bearded men with branches, presumably members of the *Euandria* readying themselves for the Panathenaic procession, Williams 1998. Literary sources: Berger – Gisler-Huwiler 1996, 196.

74. Brunnsåker 1971, 99-116, pls 23-24; Neer 2002, 173-179; Schmidt 2009, 221-230. For a possible representation of the earlier Tyrannicide group, Williams 2005, 282-283, with 279 figs 14-15.

75. Lambin 1979, 542-551; Lambin 1992, 260-271 and 273-285 (esp. 280-285); cf. Collins 2004, 125-126.

fact, the line of the *skolion* is very simple: the singer envisages himself as a Tyrannicide, so that his myrtle branch turns into his sword, as he enthusiastically celebrates their act of defiance. The idea that all Athenians needed to become Harmodios and Aristogeiton is something that can be seen at several significant points in the fifth century: in 490 B.C. at the time of the battle of Marathon in Miltiades' speech in the face of the Persian threat, in 479 B.C. with the replacement of the statues in the Agora after their looting (by which time offerings were being made to them at the Panathenaic festival)[76], and in 410/9 B.C. after the expulsion of the Thirty as seen in the decree of Demophontos and through the popularity of the image on vases, especially its use as Athena's shield device on Panathenaic prize-amphorae[77]. Furthermore, in the fourth century the power of the image and the heroization of the pair will have continued to be important in the face of the threat to liberty from Macedon, a reflection of which is to be found in the law (perhaps of 336/5 B.C.) against slandering the Tyrannicides[78]. As to the possible wider importance of the image of Harmodios and Aristogeiton, it is intriguing to note a dedication in c. 460-450 B.C. in the sanctuary at Gela of one of the founding heroes, Antiphamos of Rhodes. It is a large red-figure skyphos showing the assassination of Hipparchos (both Harmodios and Hipparchos are named) —was it intended to reinforce a request to the hero for regime change[79]?

To return, finally, to the London myrtle sprig, if it is in some way the transformation into gold of a real sympotic myrtle branch, an αἴσακος, under what circumstances was it made and then placed in the tomb on the road leading westwards out of the Piraeus? If it was converted from a complete wreath, as seems most likely, had the deceased owned such a wreath in his life-time, an award from the city or a prize in a competition? Such wreaths might be dedicated in a temple or retained; in this case, the owner would seem to have retained just a small branch, dedicating the rest. The addition of the bronze rod, however, indicates a change in use and significance. Was this done by the deceased simply to celebrate his prowess at capping *skolia*, or was it done by someone else who offered it as a prize in some sort of a *skolion* competition[80]? Or might, rather, a myrtle sprig itself now carry such a strong democratic charge through its connection with the Tyrannicide *skolia* that this golden example was created for the deceased because he, like the Tyrannicides, had striven or fought in some way to restore democracy to Athens?

Although we may be sure it was not Aspasia's tomb that Lusieri excavated in 1804, there seems no way now to identify the deceased with any measure of confidence, as is sadly the case with any burial that contains no direct epigraphic evidence. Nevertheless, the size of the tumulus (c. 24.4 m high and c. 76.25 m in circumference), the size of the alabaster alabastron once filled with perfumed oil, the finely wrought antique bronze prize-dinos with its special marble container and the exceptional gold myrtle sprig all clearly combine to indicate that the deceased was a member of the wealthy élite and seemingly the scion of an old and important Athenian family with a special connection to the Piraeus, who died in the last quarter of the fourth century B.C.

It is intriguing to note that the family of Konon Anaphlystios fits this sort of profile rather well. This distinguished family could already boast athletic prowess in the earlier fifth century and in the fourth the award of gold wreaths by the city and a grand house in the Piraeus[81]. Indeed, Konon (II), following his victory at sea over the Spartans off Knidos in 394/3 B.C., was celebrated with a statue in the Agora

76. Shear 2012b.

77. Shear 2012b, 109-111.

78. Shear 2012a, 37 and 40-41. Demophantos: Teegarden 2012, 457-9. Law: Hypereides, *Against Philippides* fr. 21, 3; for an earlier date than is traditional, MacDowell 1978, 127.

79. Beazley 1948; also notes a fragment in Agrigento (S 159) that may have shown the same scene and thus perhaps held a similar message.

80. Cf. Klearchos fr. 63 (Wehrli): Collins 2004, 132. Note the variety of prizes (eg. cakes and kisses) for *kottabos*, Athenaeus 666d-e, 666f; 667e; 668c and d; Csapo – Miller 1991, 379-381.

81. Davies 1971, 506-512: 507 (athletic victory of Timotheos I); 508-509 (gold crowns dedicated by Konon II); 509-510 (grand Piraeus house – probably that of Konon III); Harris 1995, 231-233.

that bore the "unique" inscription "since Konon freed the allies of Athens"[82]. At this time he paid for a temple of Aphrodite Euploia in the Piraeus, a temple which seems to have been just inside the Piraeus' western gate, the Aphrodision or Eetioneian Gate, from which the road ran west towards Perama[83]. Konon (II) died in 389 B.C. and was buried on the road to the Academy[84], but his grandson, Konon (III), had his residence in the Piraeus[85]. Indeed, he was to be general for the Piraeus both in 334/3 B.C. and 333/2 B.C., and was frequently a trierarch in the 320s B.C. Immediately after the restoration of the democracy in 318 B.C., Konon (III) was voted a gold wreath by the Athenian *demos* —an extraordinary honour, since in the previous year he had been a member of Phokion's political circle, and one that suggests he may have played some particular role in that restoration[86]. Konon's wreath had been dedicated on the Acropolis by 315/4 B.C., probably soon after his death[87]. Could, then, this Piraeus tomb really have been that of Konon (III): the bronze dinos a prize won by his grand-father[88] and the gold myrtle sprig a remarkable, democratically-charged sympotic symbol kept back from his honorary wreath? The extra-large alabaster alabastron, the marble container for the dinos and the large tumulus were presumably the provisions of his family, perhaps indeed of his probable son-in-law, Demetrios (I) of Phaleron[89]?

82. Demosthenes xx, 69; cf. also Pausanias viii, 52, 4 – "restored injured Greece".

83. Pausanias i, 1, 3. For location, Garland 1987,150 and 154, with figs 1 (p. 8) and 27 (p. 149).

84. Tombs of Konon (II) and his son Timotheos (II): Pausanias i, 29, 15; tomb monument of Timotheos (II), Meritt 1961, 267 no. 89. Cf. also their statues on the Acropolis, Pausanias i, 24, 3; Harris 1995, 232.

85. Konon III: Davies 1971, 511-512, and for house, 509.

86. Habicht 1997, 49.

87. Harris 1995, 233, with 190-191 no. 420. Konon II received a gold wreath for his military achievements (probably in 394 B.C.), but it only appears in Erechtheion inventories in 371 B.C., see Harris 1995, 215 no. 59, with 231-232.

88. There is no preserved evidence that Konon II won any athletic victories, but he would have been the right age for the Argive Games in which the dinos was a prize, having been born by 444 B.C. (Davies 1971, 507).

89. Demetrios (I) Phalereus: Davies 1971, 107-109, with the idea that a daughter of Konon (III) married into the *oikos* of Demeterios; Habicht 1997, 53-66.

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Περίληψη

Προς μυρρίνην. Ανασυνθέτοντας έναν ταφικό τύμβο του 4ου αι. π.Χ. κοντά στον Πειραιά

Dyfri Williams

Το παρόν άρθρο ενώνει το περιεχόμενο ενός τάφου, που ανοίχθηκε από τον G. B. Lusieri το 1802/3 κοντά στον Πειραιά. Περιγράφονται οι συνθήκες ανεύρεσης και η συνακόλουθη ιστορία των ευρημάτων του. Ο μπρούντζινος λέβης, έπαθλο στους αγώνες προς τιμή της Ήρας στο Άργος, παρουσιάζεται σε σχέση με άλλα παρόμοια έπαθλα και τη διάδοσή τους. Το χρυσό κλαδί μυρτιάς συγκρίνεται με άλλα χρυσά κλαδιά μυρτιάς και προτείνεται ότι, μολονότι προερχόταν αρχικά από ένα στεφάνι, στο τέλος μετατράπηκε σε ξεχωριστό αντικείμενο που εξυπηρετούσε έναν ιδιαίτερο σκοπό. Αυτό μάς οδηγεί σε δύο θέματα και στην πραγμάτευσή τους, στο κράτημα ενός κλαδιού μυρτιάς κατά την εκτέλεση των «σκολίων» στα συμπόσια και στους τυραννοκτόνους Αρμόδιο και Αριστογείτονα.

Στο τέλος, προτείνεται, με βάση τα ευρήματα και τις μεταξύ τους σχέσεις, ότι ο νεκρός ανήκε πιθανόν στην οικογένεια του Κόνωνα, και ότι ίσως ήταν ο Κόνων Γ΄.