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The Posthumous Depiction of Youths in Late Hellenistic and Early Imperial Gymnasia

Summary

While the honorary practice in gymnasia has received significant attention in literature, posthumous honors and depictions of youths have not yet been studied comprehensively. The aim of this paper is to discuss this phenomenon. After a brief overview of the known repertoire of sculptural decoration in gymnasia, epigraphic evidence of posthumous honors for youths, who had trained in the gymnasium and died prematurely, is discussed. Focus is then on the identification of sculptures that, according to their context and iconography, may have served as posthumous depictions of youths, among them e.g. the statue of Kleoneikos from Eretria. It is argued that three different iconographic types were available: the naked, 'heroic' type, the himatiophoros type, and the herm.

Keywords: gymnasium; portraits; honorary statues; herms; posthumous honors

Dieser Beitrag untersucht posthume Ehrungen und Darstellungen von jungen Männern im Gymnasion, die in der Forschung bislang nicht umfassend untersucht worden sind. Nach einem Überblick über das bekannte Skulpturenrepertoire in Gymnasia werden die epigraphischen Quellen posthu-

mer Ehrungen von jungen Männern diskutiert, die im Gymnasion trainiert hatten und vorzeitig verstorben waren. Der Fokus liegt dann auf der Identifizierung von Skulpturen die, dem Kontext und der Ikonographie zufolge, als posthume Ehrungen von Jugendlichen gedient haben könnten. Darunter ist z.B. die Statue des Kleoneikos von Eretria. Es wird dargestellt, dass drei verschiedene ikonographische Typen für diese Ehrungen verwendet wurden: der nackte ‚heroische‘ Typ, der Himation-Typ und die Herme.

Keywords: Gymnasion; Porträts; Ehrenstatuen; Hermen; posthume Ehrungen

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Studying ancient sculptures as collected works integrated into architectural structures with a particular function is one of the objectives of recent research in the field of ancient Greek and Roman sculpture. Achieving an understanding of the purposes for which statues were erected in Hellenistic gymnasia has been one of the most recent results of this research.¹ Like any other civic or sacred public space in ancient Greece, gymnasia were packed with works of sculpture, which had specific purposes, closely linked with the function of the gymnasium and its various educational and cultural objectives. In the following, I will refer especially to statues erected in gymnasia after the death of the depicted person, and more specifically to statues of youths who had still been training in the gymnasium when they died prematurely. In order to understand the context in which these statues were set up, I will start with some introductory remarks about the sort of sculptures that were erected in gymnasia in general.

1 Sculptural decoration of gymnasia

From Archaic times onwards, statues of Hermes and Herakles were erected in gymnasia as cult statues and dedications. Later other gods and heroes, who embodied the ideals of youth in their myths, were added. The adjectives *ἀγώνιος* or *ἐναγώνιος*, *δρόμιος*, *παλαιστρίτης*, *ἐπιέρμιος*, *τύχων*, *ἐπινίκιος*, *λόγιος*,² reflect the cultural content that the worship of the gods acquired in the context of the educational role of gymnasia. In sculpture the above mentioned characteristics acquire visual

substance through the use of specific iconographic types and motifs. The beardless, naked representation of a youth with prominent depiction of the musculature and cauliflower ears is characteristic of the sculptural types of the Hermes/Herakles Enagonios, e.g. the Hermes of Kyrene,³ the Richelieu Hermes⁴ and the Lansdowne Herakles⁵ types, and is associated with the ideals of athleticism and physical combat.

However, it was chiefly herms that were used for religious purposes in gymnasia. Scenes depicted in Attic vase painting show cult practices involving herms, flanked by youths holding strigils, and by aryballoī as symbols of the palaestra, depicted in the background.⁶ Herms with a bearded or beardless Hermes and/or Herakles were dedicated in gymnasia by gymnasiarchs at the end of their period of office and by the youths of the gymnasia. The latter set up herms as individuals or collectively, as a thank offering to the gods and as a reminder of some victory in the gymnic contests, on the celebration of the Hermaia (or other festivals) that were generally celebrated at the end of the gymnasium year.⁷

Moreover, from the third century BCE onwards, portrait statues of rulers⁸, leitourgoi and/or other officials of the gymnasium⁹ and other benefactors,¹⁰ who were honored in life or after death for their various acts of generosity to these institutions, were set up in the gymnasia. As a special honor, rulers or benefactors could be equated with Hermes or Herakles. Imagery on the coinage and in the minor arts depicting rulers with the symbols of Hermes or Herakles may represent their statues in divine form set up in gymnasia, which functioned

1 Sculptures from Hellenistic gymnasia and their uses was the subject of my Ph.D. thesis. The thesis was completed under the supervision of Prof. Theodosia Stephanidou-Tiveriou, was submitted to the Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki in 2011 and published in 2015; Kazakidi 2015. Earlier literature on the same subject includes Delorme 1960, 362–373; von Hesberg 1995; von den Hoff 2004; Martini 2004; Trombetti 2013, 163–169; Mathys 2016.

2 Roscher 1965, 2367–2369; Scherer 1912; Siska 1933, 26; Wrede 1986, 17.

3 Inan 1975, 19 no. 3 pl. X. 1–2; Kazakidi 2015, 74.

4 Maderna 1988, 82–84, with literature.

5 For the Lansdowne Herakles type see mainly Kansteiner 2000, 3–24. I assume that the prototype of the Lansdowne type depicted Herakles in his capacity as *enagonios*, regardless of where it was sited (on the debate over its location see Kazakidi 2015, 82–83). This is evident from the cauliflower ears, regarded as a feature of the prototype, as well as from the fact that the head of the Lansdowne type was extensively reproduced in the form of the herm; see Kazakidi 2015, 82–83. Despite the fact that we do not know whether any of the respective prototypes was intended to be set up in a gymnasium of the classical period, we assume that classical creations, which incarnated the young, athletic nature of Hermes and

Herakles, most probably inspired Hellenistic sculptors who worked on assignments for the gymnasia, regardless of where their prototypes had been erected. In reality though, the way that gods were represented in the Hellenistic gymnasia can be deduced with certainty only in a very few cases thanks to evidence from documentary sources or due to the survival of the works themselves, Kazakidi 2015, 76–79, 80–86; von den Hoff in this volume.

6 Zanker 1965, 91–103; Hollein 1988, 84; Rückert 1998, 127.

7 Kazakidi 2015, 119–125. For herms in Gymnasia and Stadia see Cic. *Att.* 1,6,2 l. 5–7; Michalowski 1930, 143–153; Delorme 1960, 339, 364; Harrison 1965, 124; Willers 1967, 44; Wrede 1986, 34–36; Rückert 1998, 126–132.

8 See recently Kazakidi 2015, 130–141 (with earlier literature).

9 For examples see Gauthier 1985, sporadically; Gauthier 2005 and recently Kazakidi 2015, 141–153, with earlier literature; see also Pantelis Nigdelis and Nikoleta Vouronikou: “Early Evidence of the Imperial Cult from the Gymnasium of Amphipolis.” *Nikephoros* (forthcoming). – Teachers (παιδευταί) are more seldom honoured, Chaniotis 2014, 273 n. 88.

10 Kazakidi 2015, 149–150.

as counterparts of the statues of the gods of the palaestra.¹¹ Yet rulers also flaunted their power and prestige in other ways, as is attested by the fragments of the group of colossal marble statues from the gymnasium in Pergamon, where the Attalid kings were depicted in armor.¹²

It is well known that, in the Late Hellenistic period, the gymnasium became one of the most important places for honoring – whether in life or after death – the benefactors of a city. These honorific statues were for the most part made of bronze. Their symbolism peaks when these statues are associated with religious practices, in other words in cases where the honorand was deified or heroized. These honorific statues were mainly commissioned by various groups of youths and others involved in the gymnasia or – more often from the late first century BCE onwards – by the city through its collective bodies.¹³

There is also evidence of statues of athletes who had brought glory to their home cities with enviable victories in the Panhellenic games and who were then turned into ideal models of youth and vigor through their statues.¹⁴

Among the statues of gods and mythical heroes, Panhellenic victors and officials, benefactors and rulers, statues of young men too were erected in gymnasia because of their premature deaths. Since there has hitherto been no special study of this kind of posthumous honorstatues, whose presence in the gymnasia is attested in the written sources, the aim of this paper is to specifically focus on these sculptures. The relevant textual references come from the Late Hellenistic period; and there are not many of them. Yet they are of interest not only because we can use them as comparanda in our attempts to understand the content and the function of certain statues found in the gymnasia, but also because they are beautiful examples of the perceptions and beliefs of the ancients with regard to youth and death. I shall refer to three of them by way of example.

2 Posthumous honors of youths – written evidence

The most complete text of this kind is the inscribed decree from Aegiale on Amorgos of the end of the second century BCE, well known in the literature, in respect of the heroization of Aleximachos, son of Kritolaos – undoubtedly a young man of the gymnasium. This decree gives details of the activities (sacrifice, a sacrificial meal and games) that would take place after his death over two days in the city’s gymnasium and that were to be repeated every year. Aleximachos’s statue would have been set up as part of the heroization process.¹⁵

Around the same time, at the end of the second century BCE in Chios, the demos voted to erect in the gymnasium statues of the sons of the Roman benefactor Lucius Nassius, who – we are told – died young.¹⁶

Over a century later, in the early Imperial period the ephebes of Sparta set up an image of one of their number, Damokrates, in each of the two palaestrae where they exercised. In the verses that have come down to us, Damokrates is described as being “like another Hermes” (or “like a young Hermes”) – thus we are most probably dealing with a posthumous image of an adolescent.¹⁷

The erection of the statues must have been part of posthumous honors awarded to these young men, as the Aegiale decree attests. The awarding of posthumous honors to young men, which involved the public performance of blood sacrifices and gymnastic contests, is also attested in relation to gymnasia, e.g. on Kos¹⁸ and on Amorgos.¹⁹

We do not know for sure in what circumstances it was decided to award public honors to a youth who had died before or immediately after finishing his time in the gymnasium. Unfortunately, we have no information on how the young men thus honored died; if, for example, they died heroically in battle. The sources refer

11 Lehmann 1988.

12 Von den Hoff 2004; Gans 2006, 101 cat. no. 37, pl. 15. 1; Laube 2006, 80; von den Hoff and Petersen 2011, 76 cat. no. 3 (E. Seitz); Kazakidi 2015, 133–135; von den Hoff, in this volume.

13 See mainly Gauthier 2005; Kazakidi 2015, 141–147.

14 Kazakidi 2015, 153–161; Mathys 2016. Another category of statues is that of the intellectual. Apart from the statues of philosophers in Athenian gymnasia, in association with which the famous philosophical schools operated, statues of poets and historiographers are attested in gymnasia in other cities, even if we have very little information on this, Kazakidi 2015, 172–186.

15 IG XII, 7, 515; Gauthier 1980, 210–220; Helms 2003; Vössing 2004, 561–

566; Chankowski 2010, 466 cat. no. 97; Kazakidi 2015, 285–286 cat. no. 46.E1.

16 I. Kios 15; Chiricat 2000, 31, cat. no. 8; Kazakidi 2015, 293 cat. no. 52.E2.

17 IG V, 1, 493, l. 3–7: “... Δαμοκράτη, νέ / ον Ἑρμείαν, υἱὸν / Διοκλῆος, ἀμφὶ / παλαιστραῖσιν στή / σαμεν ἡμετέρας...” Michalowski 1930, 145; Wrede 1981, 207; Maderna 1988, 109 n. 816; Kazakidi 2015, 229 cat. no. 18.E2.

18 Segre 1993, 86. Chankowski 2010, 453 cat. no. 38.

19 IG XII, 7, 447; Delorme 1960, 209; SEG XLVI, 1179; Sève 1996; Chankowski 2010, 466 cat. no. 97; Martzavou and Papazarkadas 2013, 190; Kazakidi 2015, 286 cat. no. 46.E3. For the interpretation of the Heroon of Calydon as a palaestra see recently Charatzopoulou 2006.

only to the virtue and discipline that characterized these teenagers in their lifetimes. Over and above their premature death, putting up the necessary money would have been a basic requirement for the creation of the statues dedicated to them, as would funding the funerary rituals, including the setting up of the statue.

The sponsors in the cases mentioned above were relatives or friends of the deceased. On Amorgos, Kritolaos gave 2000 drachmas to the demos, from the interest on which the costly celebrations of his son's heroization would be paid.²⁰ Probably something similar happened with the wealthy Roman Lucius Nassius and the statues of his prematurely deceased sons. For Damokrates of Sparta, his fellow epebes paid.²¹

The ceremonies for awarding posthumous honors to youths in the gymnasium must have been associated with the long-established tradition of burying heroes, and periodically awarding them honors in the gymnasium. As is well known, from the late Hellenistic period onwards, not only benefactors but also their descendants were buried in gymnasia as a way of honoring them.²²

Like the honorific statues of benefactors, it seems that the statues of these young men were set up in rooms with some official function and in conspicuous places in the gymnasia: those of the sons of Nassius were in the *ἀκροατήριον*²³ of the Chios gymnasium, a spot that their father, the benefactor, would have chosen himself; Aleximachos' statue probably stood at the entrance to the triclinium of the Aegiale gymnasium, as can be inferred from the inscription. The statue had to be placed in an atrium, because of the altar in front of it, which was used for carrying out blood sacrifices.²⁴

When youths were honored with burials within the gymnasia, it is reasonable to assume that monumental tombs (*ήρωα*²⁵) were erected. Tombs of this kind honoring local benefactors have been identified, for instance, in the gymnasia of Messene²⁶ and Nikopolis.²⁷

However, the erection of a statue of a youth within

the gymnasium is not necessarily an indication of his public burial there: for example, the burial of Aleximachos is not recorded in his decree. Moreover, statues of deceased youths had been erected by their relatives or friends in public places unrelated to the location of their tombs from as early as the fourth century BCE onwards, as the sources reveal.²⁸

The decree relating to Aleximachos also sheds light on a more specific function assumed by these statues in the gymnasium: during the annual ceremonies in honor of Aleximachos a ram was slaughtered and then set in front of the statue of the deceased. At the end of the gymnastic contests, with which the festivities were brought to an end, "Aleximachos" was crowned as the symbolic winner of the *pankration*. (100–103 ... *ὅτι στε|φανοῦσιν οἱ πρε[σβ]ύτεροι [κ]αὶ οἱ ἔφηβοι καὶ οἱ | [νέ]οι πάντες Ἀλεξίμαχο[ν] Κριτολάου ἀρετῆς ἔνεκα καὶ εὐταξίας ἧς | [ἔχ]ων διετέλει*): there is no doubt that the action of (annual) crowning refers in this case to the statue of Aleximachos.

3 Posthumous statues of youths – archaeological evidence

So how were these dead youths depicted in the gymnasia? As is well known, when it comes to honorific statuary, the character and deeds worthy of note of the honoree, which would be recorded in the lines of verse written on the pedestal of the statue and above all in the honorific decree inscribed close by, were indicative of the iconographic type that would be chosen to depict this person, who might be shown with further attributes or symbols.

In the decrees from Amorgos and Chios there is no hint of the iconography of the statues that were to be erected. The fact that the term *ἄγαλμα* (statue) was used in both decrees probably points to statues in marble.²⁹

20 IG XII, 7, 515 l. 8.

21 IG V, 1, 493 l. 1–10.

22 For honorary burials in polis and especially in gymnasia see Kader 1995; Ehrhardt 2008; and mainly Chiricat 2005.

23 On the interpretation of this room as an *auditorium* see Delorme 1960, 324; Nielsen 1990, 166; Hoepfner 2002, 67.

24 IG XII, 7, 515 l. 74–78: "...οἱ ἐπιμελη / [τ]αὶ τῆ νομηναία σφραξάτωσαν ἅμα τῆ ἡμέραι κριὸν ὡς βέλτιστον πρὸς / [τ]ῷ ἀγάλματι ὡς ἂν στήσῃ Κριτόλαος τοῦ υἱοῦ Ἀλεξίμαχοῦ καὶ πα[ρα] / [θέ]τωσαν παράθεσιν ἐκ πυρῶν ἡμέκτων τεσσάρων καὶ τοῦ κριοῦ τὰ κρέα / ὄλο]μελῆ ἀποζέσα-

ντες παρατιθέτωσαν τῷ ἀγάλματι καὶ τὴν παράθεσιν." – For the use of triclinia in this context, which could be either built or outdoor places, see Braune 2008, 19–23. For the term see also Vössing 2004, 561–566, especially 564 n. 1.

25 For the term see recently Stéphanidou-Tiveriou 2009, 345–387.

26 Themeles 2000, 114–136; Ito 2002; Flämig 2007, 175–176 cat. no. 76.

27 Zachos 1994; Flämig 2007, 150 cat. no. 28.

28 Diog. Laert. 5.51. See Voutiras 2001, 141 n. 77, 142.

29 Tuchelt 1979, 86. For the term see recently also Kazakidi 2015, 166 n. 1163.

Though we do not know what the images of the heroized Aleximachos and the sons of Lucius looked like, we may be able to identify similar content in some other marble statues found in other gymnasia.

A statue of Kleoneikos, son of Lysander, was erected in the gymnasium in Eretria in the late first century BCE by his friend Amphikrates, son of (most probably another) Lysander (Fig. 1).³⁰ The statue and its base were found at the end of the 19th century at the northern side of the western palaestra, which was most likely the most important place of the gymnasium.³¹ The inscription says nothing about the identity of the honorand. However, according to Stefan Lehmann's interpretation of the relief scene on the base, it was a youth who trained in the palaestra, shown with his training gloves.³² Klaus Fittschen had previously proposed another interpretation of the work based on the use of marble and its iconography: he suggested that it was a young man who had fallen on the battlefield.³³ But this has been challenged recently by Elena Mango, who argues that, since the work was set up in an urban context, it could not have been a funerary monument. She interpreted it as a live "gebildeter Palaistrit", who had been honored by a friend for some victory in athletics or more generally for his exceptional achievements in the gymnasium.³⁴ Nevertheless, erecting a statue to a live *palaistrites* in a gymnasium in honor of his achievements has no parallels in the written sources. According to written sources, statues of athletes were erected in gymnasia in the Hellenistic period only for winners in Panhellenic Games.³⁵ Yet Kleoneikos was certainly not a Panhellenic champion, because in this case, his victory would have been commemorated in the inscription on the plinth and the iconography of the work would most likely have been different. However, he cannot have been an official or a

benefactor either, as in such cases the individual's rank is usually mentioned in the votive inscription that accompanies the work.³⁶ Moreover, the type of gloves depicted on the statue's plinth, which were, according to Lehmann's research, used only in training, points to a young man. The idea that someone had set up this marble statue in a private capacity might be easier to explain in the context of the tradition of awarding posthumous honors in gymnasia, as described above based on the evidence of the roughly contemporary decrees relating to the sons of Nassius on Chios and young Aleximachos on Amorgos.

Moreover, it should be noted here that the head of Kleoneikos presents an interesting technical detail, which has not been mentioned in the literature. The statue must have been crowned at regular intervals with a wreath. This is attested by an inconspicuous indentation on the back of the head, at the nape of the neck that extends to just behind the ear (Fig. 2).³⁷ There is evidence of wreaths being put on statues of the living, at least in exceptional cases. However, there are perhaps some discreet iconographical hints that this is a statue of someone who has died, possibly someone who has been elevated to the status of a hero; these hints include, as already recognized by Klaus Fittschen, the naked feet and the idealized face,³⁸ but also the hairstyle modelled on that of the Richelieu Hermes. Consequently, maybe we can posit that Kleoneikos was celebrated in rituals like those attested for the heroization of Aleximachos.

If the statue of Kleoneikos was indeed used like the statue of Aleximachos, in front of which sacrifices took place,³⁹ then we can also assume that the former was originally placed in the north stoa or rather in front of it.⁴⁰ Since the overall height of the statue including its

30 Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. nos. 244, D306, 1924; IG XII, 9, 281; Fittschen 1995, 98–108; SEG XLV, 1219; Mango 2001; Lehmann 2001; Mango 2003, 159 cat. no. S6; Kazakidi 2015, 251–252 cat. no. 30.E6/T4 with n. 1477 for a date at the end of the first century BCE.

31 Mango 2001, 280 fig. 40.3; Mango 2003, 159 cat. no. S6 who argue that the statue was set up in room F; Ackermann – Reber, in this volume. For the north side as the most prominent place of the gymnasium, see Kazakidi 2015, 197–198.

32 Lehmann 2001.

33 Fittschen 1995.

34 Mango 2001.

35 Kazakidi 2015, 153–161; Mathys 2016.

36 Gauthier 2005; Kazakidi 2015, 141–147.

37 Detailed argumentation in Kazakidi 2015, 171 pl. 14. Many late Hellenistic heads present analogous technical details; for examples see recently

Mathys 2016, fig. 4; Kazakidi 2018, 294 fig. 2, 295. The provision that some statues should be crowned at regular intervals is attested in honorary decrees already since the fourth century BCE, see for example IG XII, 4 1, 348 l. 20–23; cf. Günther 2003. The crowning of statues is also the subject of a Ph.D. thesis by Elena Gomez under the supervision of Prof. Ralf von den Hoff.

38 Fittschen 1995, 98.

39 IG XII, 7, 515 l. 74–78.

40 A possible location could be one of the plinths that were found in front of rooms E and F; cf. the plan of Ackermann and Reber in this volume, fig. 1. In gymnasia, most dedications should have been set up in the peristyle of the palaestra; see ID 1417, AI, l. 118–154. Especially honorary statues were presented *ἐν τῷ ἐπιφανεστάτῳ τόπῳ* of gymnasia, notably in the north side of the palaestra; for examples see Kazakidi 2015, 189–190.



Fig. 1 Statue of Kleoneikos, from the gymnasium of Eretria; Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. no. 244.

base is about 3 m, a ladder, either portable or fixed, must have been used for the crowning. As comparison, one may cite the built ensemble of statue base, altar, and staircase that was found in situ in the Samnite palaestra of Pompeii and must have served for some kind of honorific or even cultic ceremony.⁴¹

The idealized head of Kleoneikos' statue is combined with the civic-style himation. As is well known, this form of dress and the way it is worn creates a picture that reflects the prevailing view of what constituted the appropriate appearance of ephebes being educated in the gymnasium at the time.⁴²

Other marble himatiophoroi were also set up in gymnasia to honor the dead, of course not only young men, but also, and probably even mainly, benefactors of the gymnasium. The age of those depicted is often not easy to ascertain when epigraphic evidence is lacking. The finds from the mid-first-century CE gymnasium in Messene are revealing. In the empty space behind the stoa of the gymnasium monumental tombs were built in the late Hellenistic and early Imperial period, while chambers were created on the back wall of the stoa for funerary cult purposes, where statues of mortals posthumously elevated to the status of heroes were erected. In one of these chambers, soon after the middle of the first century CE, a heroized benefactor is depicted, like Kleoneikos, in the form of a himatiophoros (Fig. 3).⁴³ Yet naked idealized types of statuary could easily be understood as embodying the heroized state of the deceased.⁴⁴ From the room in which the himatiophoros of Messene was found comes another statue of a naked youth,⁴⁵ which can also be dated to shortly after the mid-first century CE (Fig. 4).⁴⁶

The individualized features and find spot of this statue suggest that we are dealing with a depiction of a deceased mortal in the form of a god. In the adjoining chamber the heroized Dionysios Aristomenos was depicted in a similar type, as is suggested by the evidence



Fig. 2 Statue of Kleoneikos, detail of the back of the head; Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. no. 244.

of an inscribed pedestal and few sculptural fragments.⁴⁷

It is well known that contemporary research is inclined to see posthumous portrait statues, i.e. heroized depictions of mortals, generally young ones, in statues of the late Hellenistic period that preserve more or less faithfully certain types of Hermes, even when they have survived without their heads. On the basis of this generalized premise, the suggestion has been made that the mid-first-century BCE headless statue from the gymnasium of Melos in the type of the Richelieu Hermes was also a depiction of some dead ephebe in divine form.⁴⁸

There are other Late Hellenistic marble torsos and heads from gymnasia that imitate idealized models and probably depicted posthumous portraits, as their iconography suggests. These include a head from the gymnasium in Kos⁴⁹ or another showing signs of annual crowning with a wreath from Pergamon,⁵⁰ as well as the youth shown putting a wreath on his own head

41 Avagliano – Montalbano in this volume; Henzel in this volume; Trümper in this volume. See also the staircase of the base from the Heroon of Palatiano, Stéphanidou-Tiveriou 2009, 378 fig. 2; 385 pl. 4-6.

42 Zanker 1995, 221; Hallett 1998, 82 n. 54.

43 Messene, Archaeological Museum inv. no. 8650: Themeles 2001, 13, pls. 3, 4; Kazakidi 2015, 239–240 cat. no. 21.Γ6.

44 For the heroic nudity see mainly Hallett 2005; also Maderna 1988, 74–78, 112–116.

45 Messene, Archaeological Museum inv. no. 8664: Themeles 2001, 14 pl. 5; Palagia 2000, 434–436 fig. 5; Kazakidi 2015, 238–239 cat. no. 21.Γ4.

46 For the date and the statue type see Kazakidi 2015, 238–239 cat. no.

21.Γ4.

47 Themeles 2001, 15 fig. 5, 4; Kazakidi 2015, 235 cat. no. 21.E7; 240–241 cat. no. 21.Γ9.

48 Maderna 1988, 225; Kazakidi 2015, 287 cat. no. 47.Γ2.

49 Paris, Louvre inv. no. Ma 850: Kabus-Preishofen 1989, 164, 286–287 cat. no. 83 (with further literature), pl. 73, 1–2; Hamiaux 1998, 63 cat. no. 68; Kazakidi 2015, 298 cat. no. 57.Γ1.

50 Berlin, Antikensammlung SMB inv. no. P 136: von den Hoff 2004, 385 fig. 7; Gans 2006, 101–102; Kazakidi 2015, 310–311 cat. no. 60.Γ5; Mathys 2016, 138–140 (with further literature), figs. 3–4.



Fig. 3 Statue of a himatophoros, from the gymnasium in Messene; Messene, Archaeological Museum inv. no. 865c.



Fig. 4 Statue of a naked youth, from the gymnasium in Messene; Messene, Archaeological Museum inv. no. 8664.

that comes from the same gymnasium.⁵¹ The sculptures mentioned above have been identified as athletes by certain scholars – independently of one another – on the basic grounds that they had been found in gymnasia.⁵² Yet we should make a distinction, in terms of their respective roles, between statues set up in order to honor an athlete for a glorious victory in the games and those that were set up on the occasion of the death of some honored person. However, when there is no inscription, this distinction is not easily made based on iconography alone. Nevertheless, we might venture to distinguish between certain works as regards their content simply because of their iconography. The powerful marble head of the boxer from the gymnasium at Olympia of roughly the mid-third century BCE⁵³ is perhaps a good example of how we might imagine a dedication to a victorious professional athlete.⁵⁴ By contrast, the sybaritic ephebe from the gymnasium in Kos, with his downcast gaze, probably depicted a dead youth.⁵⁵

While the late Hellenistic decrees for Aleximachos and the sons of Nassius refer to statues – i.e. they were sculptures in the round⁵⁶ – the late first-century/early second-century CE verses for Damokrates were found carved on the torso of a now lost headless herm.⁵⁷ We can only imagine a beardless head for the young Damokrates. Thus, this monument is evidence of a herm being connected with a portrait head of a beardless youth.

There is another mid-first century CE monument that may depict a dead youth in the form of a herm, notably on the relief of Doras from Perinthos, an unfortunate young *palaistrites* (Fig. 5).⁵⁸ A herm with a beardless head in the center of the scene is surrounded by the triumphal symbols of the palaestra and verses in which Doras introduces himself in the first person. Several facts suggest that this herm does not depict Hermes or Herakles but embodies the deceased himself: the prominent

place the herm occupies in the composition; the content of the verses surrounding it, in which the deceased is compared with Herakles (l. 2: “... ἄξιον Ἡρακλέους”, i.e. worthy of Herakles), and described as a hero himself (l. 13–14: “... ἡρώων οὐδενὶ λειπόμενος”, i.e. who lacks nothing of the hero or who is in no way inferior to the heroes); and the fact that the figure of the dead youth is otherwise absent from the scene. In this case, the verses, written in the first person, are spoken by the herm itself, which depicts Doras, in other words the deceased, as a hero. The relief plaque must have been part of the revetment of a built monument, perhaps a heroon in a gymnasium.⁵⁹

Though they have been published for many years, the two above mentioned monuments have not hitherto been used in the debate over the interpretation of herms with beardless, youthful heads. Some of these heads, dating from the mid-second century BCE onwards, display individualized features and cauliflower ears. Generally speaking, they have survived without their inscribed pedestals. Consequently, this has presented scholars with a dilemma: are they busts of mortals – as, for example, Kazimierz Michalowski, Jean Marcadé and others have maintained⁶⁰ – or of Hermes adopting the features of his worshippers, as Henning Wrede finally deduced in his study on herms, taking into account the corresponding suggestion by Paul Zanker about the depictions of herms in fifth-century BCE vase painting.⁶¹

Examples of Hellenistic herms depicting young, beardless heads and preserving their inscriptions substantiate the identification with Hermes, e.g. the well-known relief depiction of the himatiophoros herm of Hermes Tychon,⁶² as well as an intact mid-second-century BCE herm from the gymnasium of Tinos with a swollen right ear (i.e. the so-called ‘cauliflower’ ear of a pugilist), only recently documented in literature.⁶³ But

51 Izmir, Archaeological Museum inv. no. 571; von den Hoff 2004, 385 n. 87 fig. 6; Gans 2006, 104 cat. no. 39; Kazakidi 2015, 311 cat. no. 60.Γ6; Mathys 2016, 140 fig. 5.

52 Hübner 1986, 13; Gans 2006, 105; cf. Heilmeyer 1997, 74.

53 Geominy 2007, 71 fig. 92 a–c (with earlier literature); Kazakidi 2015, 226–227 cat. no. 13.Γ1.

54 On the function of this statue as a dedication of a victorious athlete, see Kazakidi 2015, 159.

55 Berlin, Antikensammlung SMB inv. no. P 136; von den Hoff 2004, 385 fig. 7; Gans 2006, 101–102; Kazakidi 2015, 310–311 cat. no. 60.Γ5; Mathys 2016, 138–140 (with further literature), figs. 3, 4.4.

56 IG XII, 7, 515 l. 78; I. Kos 15, l. 12–13.

57 IG V, 1, 493, l. 3–7.

58 Thessaloniki, Archaeological Museum inv. no. 944; Adam-Velene, Tsankarake, and Chatzenikolaou 2016, cat. no. 19 (N. Kazakidi); Kazakidi 2017.

59 See Kazakidi 2017, 284–285, for further argumentation.

60 Michalowski 1932, 35; Marcadé 1953, 311; Marcadé 1969, 274; Pfuhl and Möbius 1977, 46.

61 Zanker 1965, 95, 99; Pfuhl and Möbius 1977, 46; Wrede 1986, 71–72; Harrison 1965, 125.

62 Berlin, Antikensammlung SMB inv. no. Sk 1936; Wrede 1986, 17; Megow 1997.

63 See Kazakidi 2015, 282 cat. no. 40.E1/Γ1.



Fig. 5 Relief of Doras from Perinthos, Thessaloniki, Archaeological Museum inv. no. 944.

when and in what circumstances was the herm first combined with a youthful, beardless portrait head, as happened around the middle of the first century CE in the depictions of Damokrates and Doras?

As is well known, herms bearing portrait busts, for the most part historic depictions of important intellectuals, are known from the mid-first century BCE.⁶⁴ As Klaus Fittschen noted recently, mass production of these works must have begun in Athens in the neo-Attic workshops and the aim was, above all, to supply the Italian market with sculptures for private villas.⁶⁵

But when it comes to the herms of the heroized youths of the gymnasium we shall have to turn, for lack of earlier inscriptions, to the iconography of the works themselves. In the Hellenistic period, beardless heads on herms were generally works created using a certain amount of artistic license, adopting the basic iconography of the athlete, developed as early as the Classical period, while at the same time following contemporary trends in individual portrait busts. The late fourth-/early third-century BCE examples are characterized by idealization and a lack of individual features.⁶⁶ However, it was not long before individualized features began to

prevail, giving each head its own character; this is obvious from the heads of the second century BCE, such as those from the gymnasium of Melos.⁶⁷ Even more forceful depiction of physiognomy is found in late Hellenistic heads, such as those from the gymnasium of Delos (Fig. 6)⁶⁸ and Amphipolis (Fig. 7).⁶⁹

Perhaps, with the albeit later examples of Damokrates and Doras in mind, which are backed up by inscriptions, we might wonder whether some of these late Hellenistic works may indeed depict specific *palaistrites* – just as Casimir Michalowski once asked himself regarding the herms from the gymnasium of Delos,⁷⁰ or as we might suggest for those from the gymnasia of Melos⁷¹ and of Amphipolis.⁷² Moreover, the contemporary use of statuary types of Hermes in the posthumous depictions of young men, which can be observed, according to Caterina Maderna, from as early as the mid-first century BCE onwards, represents a similar phenomenon.⁷³

Thus, as stated above, even if linking the herm with a youthful portrait bust is only attested epigraphically from around the middle of the first century CE onwards, heads with individualized features can perhaps point to

64 Raubitschek 1949; Harrison 1965, 127; Richter 1965, 116 no. 10.

65 Fittschen 2008, 330.

66 Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. no. 1629; Kazakidi 2015, 111 n. 725, pl. 5.1–4; Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. nos. 313 and 317; Petrakos 1999, 283–284 figs. 193 and 198α; Rhamnous, Archaeological Museum inv. no. 2257; Petrakos 1999, 197. 198β; Eretria, Archaeological Museum inv. no. 341; Gard 1974, 50–51, pl. 11. 1–4; Volos, Archaeological Museum inv. nos. BE 8684 and A 533; Kazakidi 2015, 111 n. 724.

67 Paris, Louvre Museum inv. nos MA 404 and 403; Hamiaux 1998, 48–49 nos. 58–59; Kazakidi 2015, 288–289 cat. nos. 47.Γ4, pl. 11. 1–2 and 47.Γ5, pls. 10. 3 and 11. 3–4.

68 Delos, Archaeological Museum inv. no. A 5923; Marcadé 1969, pl. XVI; Kazakidi 2015, 275–276 cat. no. 39.Γ1, pl. 6. 1–3; Inv. no. A 5925; Michalowski 1930, 135 pl. IV; Kazakidi 2015, 276 cat. no. 39.Γ2, pl. 6. 4–6; Inv. no. 7395; Michalowski 1930, 135 pl. V; Kazakidi 2015, 276–277

cat. no. 39.Γ3, pls. 8. 1 and 9. 1–2; Inv. no. A 3862; Michalowski 1932, 55 pl. 39; Kazakidi 2015, 277 cat. no. 39.Γ4, pls. 8. 4 and 10. 4; Inv. no. A 7394; Michalowski 1930, 138 pl. VI; Kazakidi 2015, 277 cat. no. 39.Γ5, pls. 8. 3 and 10. 1–2; Inv. no. A 7397; Michalowski 1930, 139 pl. VII; Kazakidi 2015, 278 cat. no. 39.Γ6, pls. 8. 2 and 9. 3–4; Inv. no. A5637; Marcadé 1953, 512, figs. 15, 17; Marcadé 1969, pl. XV.

69 Amphipolis, Archaeological Museum inv. nos. A 117 and A 548; Kazakidi 2015, 262–263 cat. nos. 37.Γ2 and 37.Γ4.

70 Michalowski 1932, 35.

71 Paris, Louvre Museum inv. nos MA 404 and 403; Hamiaux 1998, 48–49 nos. 58–59; Kazakidi 2015, nos. 47.Γ4, pl. 11. 1–2 and 47.Γ5, pls. 10. 3 and 11. 3–4.

72 Amphipolis, Archaeological Museum inv. nos. A 117 and A 548; Kazakidi 2015, 262–263 cat. nos. 37.Γ2 and 37.Γ4.

73 Maderna 1988, 104, 112–116.

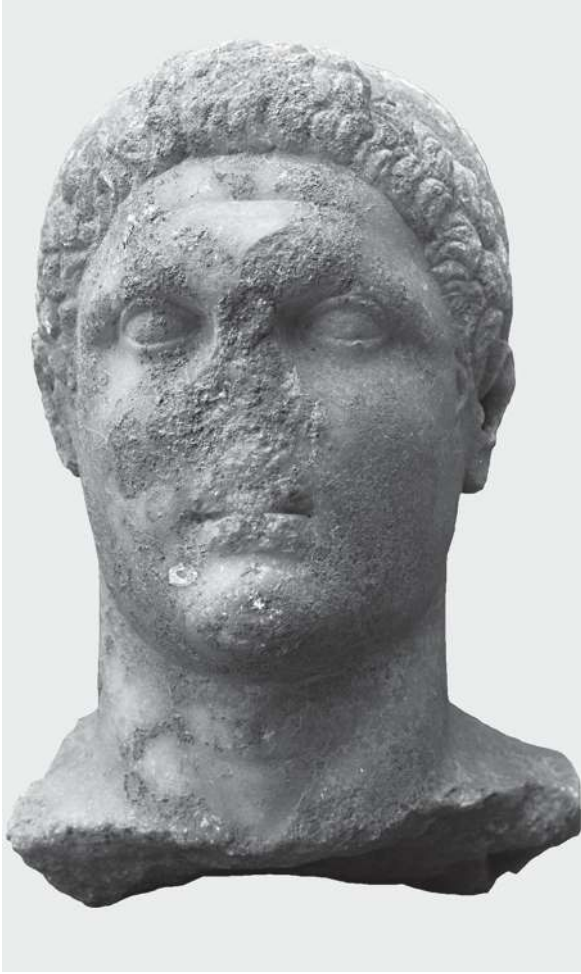


Fig. 6 Head from the gymnasium of Delos; Delos, Archaeological Museum inv. no. A 7397.

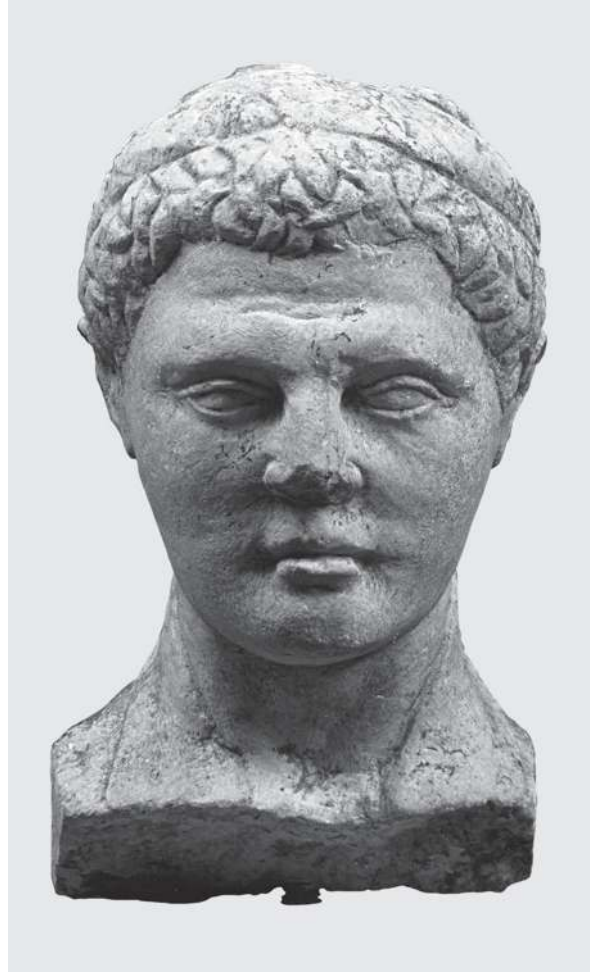


Fig. 7 Head from the gymnasium of Amphipolis, Archaeological Museum inv. no. A 548.

a somewhat earlier date for the concept of this kind of depiction of a youth in divine form in the type *par excellence* of Hermes ἐναγώνιος, the *herm*. In this case, in the context of posthumous rituals, these particular herms would probably have had a similar purpose to that of the honorific posthumous statues of young men known to us from inscriptions, such as the decree relating to Aleximachos. In other words, they were posthumous portraits that preserved, thanks to their iconography, the divine influence of the presence of the god Hermes. Even though, in fact, some individual features are recognizable in these portraits, as noted above, nevertheless the main objective in making them must not have been to depict the realistic physiognomy of the youth concerned. Moreover, we must take into account the conditions in which these works were created: i.e.

they would have been made after the deceased had been buried. Thus, they were more likely images of the heroized state of the subject, whose human dimension had ceased to exist. And indeed on the basis of everything that has been demonstrated above, I think it is reasonable to suggest that the link between the *herm* and the youthful portrait bust emerged in the context of the tradition of awarding posthumous honors to ephebes associated with the gymnasium.

4 Conclusion

Thus, in creating posthumous depictions in the gymnasium, a practice that is well attested thanks to the corresponding decrees from the end of the second century

BCE, it was the type of the himatiophoros, various types of the god Hermes in the round and the herm that were used. We cannot be certain as to when the godlike types were first employed, perhaps at some point well into the first century BCE. Similarly, we are not in a position to know what criteria were employed to select the iconographic type used to depict the deceased on any given occasion.

The death of a young man, and in particular before he had managed to complete his ephebate or soon after completion thereof, was handled with sensitivity by the society of the time, as a host of moving Hellenistic epigrams reveal.⁷⁴ And as emerges from the decree for Aleximachos, setting up statues of prematurely deceased young men in the gymnasium became part of the periodically celebrated public cult of the dead in accordance with contemporary attitudes to the hereafter. In this context, the posthumous statues ensured, above all, that the memory of the deceased was preserved. Moreover, in addition to the honorific reference to the person depicted, they also served another specific purpose: they suggested the presence of the youth himself at the funerary sacrifices and during the funeral banquet. Indeed, with its crowning, the statue took on a leading role as the symbolic winner of the gymnic contests. The deceased was

raised to the sphere of the heroes through the veil of ceremonial practices and public awarding of honors that endowed the statue with a heroic aura. These heroic honors earned by the deceased would have been eternally echoed in the verses on the statue's pedestal, and perhaps by a decree set up next to the statue, but also by the statue itself through his depiction in divine form.

The statues of the sons of Nassius, of Aleximachos, Damokrates, and Kleoneikos functioned primarily as forceful expressions of the perception of the immortality of youth, which even the advent of death could not extinguish. The repeated ritual celebrations in which the statues played the lead role ensured that the deaths of these young men continued to be remembered. These statues were erected not in the cemetery, a place cut off from everyday life, but in the gymnasium, the beating heart of young men's everyday lives, and they were put not only among their former companions, but in the company of the statues of gods and benefactors. Thus, the statuary forms acquired life and a heroic air, and served as a consolation and even exoneration for a society that was unable to protect its young members. On a collective level, these works also functioned as symbols of the immortality of youth; a response to the awe inspired by death.

⁷⁴ For examples see Peek 1955, 104, 305, 615, 2081; IG XII, 6, 740; IG XII, 6, 1253; IG XII, 7, 115; IG XII, 7, 447; SEG 49, 361; CIG 2240; VÉrilhac 1982.

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