Local identities in a common language: the iconography of Hellenistic funerary stelai from eastern Greek poleis

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This thesis is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

Sandra Strahlendorf, *'Local identities in a common language: the iconography of Hellenistic funerary stelai from eastern Greek poleis'*

Die Ostgriechischen Grabreliefs, a corpus covering the funerary monuments of Greek islands and large parts of modern Anatolia, was published by E. Pfuhl and H. Möbius during the 1970s and provides the most comprehensive collection of grave stelai from the eastern Greek cities during the Hellenistic period. Unlike the Archaic and Classical funerary markers from Athens the material has received little attention to this day, especially in anglophone academia.

The material is not only relevant in regard to the high number of surviving objects dating into the Hellenistic period, but also its iconographical diversity. Pfuhl and Möbius, while diligent in their efforts to provide a comprehensive corpus, chose to categorize the monuments typologically, thereby obscuring any sense of individuality that may be expressed in the way different cities represented the dead on grave monuments.

This dissertation analyses the visual language of Hellenistic funerary stelae from eastern Greek poleis, thereby challenging the notion of a uniform "eastern Greek" iconography. The thesis focuses on the combination of tradition and innovation in the pictorial language of the monuments, exploring the visual language on both supra-regional and local levels. Rather than examining individual objects, the material is analysed on a broad scale. In applying the concept of peer polity interaction as framework for its methodology, it sheds light on the complex interactions between poleis and their influence on the creation and dissemination of motifs.

By examining the funerary reliefs from Rhodes, Smyrna, Samos, Pergamon and Byzantium, as well as the adaptation of Classical sepulchral motifs into Hellenistic funerary iconography, the thesis demonstrates the diversity of the visual language in Eastern Greek cities. The thesis proposes a quantitative approach that goes beyond aesthetic evaluations and a focus on individual objects, exploring the individual visual languages of communities and their articulation of local and personal ideals in the memorialisation of the deceased.

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Introduction

'We die one way or another. That's a given.
What's not is being remembered after the fact.
To ensure that, you have to put in some effort.'[1]

Humans across time, cultures, and social classes have pursued memorialization after death. Grave markers can take the form of architectural structures, funerary 'vessels' such as sarcophagi, *cistae*, or urns, three-dimensional sculptures of humans, animals and objects, as well as columns or slabs of stones, and a combination of the various options. Generally, they carry an inscription to identify the individual, usually by name, and often a patronym or surname, as well as additional information, such as their relation to surviving family members, or the place the deceased came from. They can be simple and minimalist in design, or decorated with intricate details, engraved with epigrams and pictures, or painted instead of carved; the choice of form is certainly influenced by the financial means of the deceased or their descendants but it is influenced above all by what other people of the same social group or in the same place are doing. Families and individuals of lesser financial means could not afford expensive carved stone, and while ancient markers made with or from less permanent materials, such as paint and wood, rarely survive, it is likely that they were in use during all historical periods, as they are in some places today.[2]

Although the custom of marking graves can be observed across cultures and time periods, certain traditions regarding, for example, iconography, material, or the shape of the *sema*, are often geographically, culturally and chronologically coded by and for a specific group of people. Analysed within their socio-historical and socio-cultural context, these artefacts allow insights into the core values of a community. Those core values sometimes embrace the value that the community puts on relations with supernatural powers, but they always embrace how members of the community present themselves to one another. They may be so deeply ingrained that 'simple' iconographical shorthands (e.g., the wool basket as sign of female diligence and domesticity, or weapons for male excellence and virtue)[3] were widely used and understood within their respective communities and

[1] Chambers 2018, 315.

[2] E.g., the so-called 'Merry Cemetery' (*Cimitirul Vesel*) in Săpânța, Romania, famous for the brightly painted wooden tombstones depicting scenes from the lives of the deceased (or the cause of death in some cases), often paired with a lengthy epitaph. Morris points out, that only a small portion of Classical Athenian graves can be related to surviving monuments (Morris 1992, 135) and Estrin mentions the use of *kioniskoi* (aniconic marble columns only with an inscription of the deceased's name) as common grave markers from the end of the 4th cent. BCE on (Estrin 2023, 186). On groups of 'invisible' dead in the archaeological record see Morris 1998.

[3] 'Simple' only insofar as attributes being used so commonly that they are understood by us as symbols for generic (gendered) virtues. This does not cover any potentially additional (personal) meaning these attributes could take on in individual cases, e.g., just because the armour is not worn but only depicted on a shelf does not rule out the possibility of the deceased having fought as a soldier at some point. Conversely, just because a man is depicted in armour does not mean that he was a soldier. In both cases the armour awards the virtue of *arete* to the deceased, but the iconographical tradition on how to display it changes.

allowed for a visual vocabulary that was utilized to define and memorialize a deceased loved one. Furthermore, these core values tell us about the self-image of the people claiming them as theirs, especially in regard to (idealized) gender roles, given how moral values are often aligned along a gender binary. They may also be affected by age and class, with children following different iconographical schemata from adults, and servants and slaves depicted differently from their masters. Accordingly, funerary monuments also tie into socio-economic and socio-political differences: first, from the iconographical standpoint of intra- and inter-class hierarchies, e.g., how members of different classes were depicted and how they interacted with each other; secondly, from a more material-focused view: who could afford and access the resources for burial space, monuments of any given size, and certain honours awarded after death.

Grave monuments can also act as mirrors for societal and political changes. Through careful iconographic analysis of gestures, gazes and attributes of figures on Classical Athenian grave reliefs, Johannes Bergemann could convincingly link the change in funerary iconography during the Classical period to the new citizen-image of the emerging democratic polis.[4]

Hundreds of figural grave stelai of the Hellenistic period survive from the cities of the eastern Aegean and Asia Minor (map 1), giving insights into the 'core values' of the men, women and children who populated the Greek cities far from the mainland. These funerary monuments offer a large corpus of material to examine the presentation of social roles regarding gender, class and family in Hellenistic poleis. They are especially valuable since the production and usage of grave reliefs in Athens came to a halt in the late 4th century due to the restrictive funeral legislation imposed by Demetrios of Phaleron, and did not resume, even after he was exiled from the city in 307 BCE.[5] Similarly, there is little or no production of figural grave reliefs during the Hellenistic period on the Greek mainland, making the material from Asia Minor all the more important for an understanding of Hellenistic reliefs within a private context.[6]

In the following literature review, the need for a fresh analysis of the grave stelai to explore their iconographical characteristics should become clearer.

[4] Bergemann 1997.

[5] Smith 1991, 187; Ridgway 2000, 189; Hölscher 2006, 133–134.

[6] As Ridgway points out, Achaia was the only area of mainland Greece where the tradition of carved funerary reliefs persisted. However, the reliefs are not figural and therefore do not provide a relevant comparison for the material of this thesis. Similarly, subterranean tombs with richly painted decorations survive from Macedonia, but they are not further discussed in this thesis. Ridgway 2000, 189; Palagia 2011, 479–489; Sakellariou 1983, 176–180. For painted grave stelai of the Classical period see Posamentir 2001 and Posamentir 2006, for a detailed analysis of painted (mostly non-figural) grave stelai of Hellenistic Chersonesos cf. Posamentir 2011, and for the painted sepulchral monuments of Demetrias see Graeve 1979; Marzolff 1986; Bacchielli – Reynolds – Rees 1992; Stamatopoulou 2016.

Literature review

Bernhard Schmaltz forty years ago lamented the insufficient state of publication concerning grave reliefs of the Hellenistic period.[7] The situation has not significantly improved. Whereas the Archaic and Classical funerary monuments of Athens have not only been published in comprehensive catalogues (Conze 1893-1922, Diepolder 1931, Richter 1961, Clairmont 1993), but have also been subject to an extensive bibliography analysing different aspects like motifs, themes and format (e.g., Walters 1988, Pemberton 1989, Scholl 1996, Oakley 2009), as well as discussing interpretative approaches (Bergemann 1997, Himmelmann 1999, Estrin 2023), no such extensive study of Hellenistic grave monuments exists. The athenocentric approach of early archaeologists, and the greater inaccessibility of the Aegean islands and coast of Turkey, as well as a bias against the 'aesthetically inferior' material, hampered research concerned with non-Athenian funerary monuments.[8]

There is, however, one exception to this pattern: the work of Ernst Pfuhl. Pfuhl wrote on the grave reliefs of Alexandria and the accessories (*Beiwerk*) of Eastern Greek grave reliefs early in the 20th century,[9] and his research provided the material for the first (and still only) comprehensive corpus cataloguing grave reliefs from Eastern Greek city states. *Die ostgriechischen Grabreliefs* was published in two volumes more than three decades after Pfuhl's death in 1940, with detailed descriptions of more than 2000 funerary monuments, and photographs or drawings of the reliefs.[10] After Pfuhl's passing, it was Hans Möbius who reviewed and edited the manuscript, expanding it by more than 600 newly discovered objects unknown to Pfuhl.[11] Some reliefs have been lost or damaged since being catalogued by Pfuhl, making the corpus all the more valuable. The corpus follows a typological order, which allows for reflections on specific motifs, but it falls short of a true analysis, since the typology does not allow for a geographical separation. Instead, all reliefs are treated as equally 'Eastern Greek', ignoring local or regional iconographic trends and developments. But lumping together all funerary monuments from a geographical area that spans not only Greek

[7] Schmaltz 1983, 223.

[8] A deep-rooted problem also affecting Pfuhl's corpus where he categorizes some works as primitive, or modest. E.g., PM 467 is a "*inhaltlich interessantes, künstlerisch unbedeutendes Werk*" (p. 151), PM 352 a "*barbarische Arbeit*" (p. 126), PM 448 a "*naiv unkonventionelle wohl dörfliche Arbeit*" (p. 147), PM 1254 "*stümperhaft*" (p. 303), PM 1072 is a "*hübsche, aber unbedeutende Arbeit*" (p. 267), and PM 1583 is called "primitiv" by Pfuhl (p. 390) and a "*ungewöhnlich schlechte Arbeit*" by Horn (Horn 1972, 179).

[9] Pfuhl 1901; Pfuhl 1905. He also dedicated an article to the depictions of book scrolls on grave reliefs, Pfuhl 1908.

[10] Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, Pfuhl – Möbius 1979.

[11] Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, XII. The Herculean task of (re-)collecting all the material and getting it published, made all the more difficult by the significant number of illustrations brought together by Pfuhl that were lost during World War II, took three decades. Möbius himself did not live to see the publication of the second volume in 1979.

islands, but also large parts of modern Anatolia and the Black Sea region, obscures any sense of individuality in the way different poleis chose to represent the dead on grave monuments.

In contrast to the comprehensive intent of *Die ostgriechischen Grabreliefs*, more recent work has been more limited in scope. Several works have recorded grave reliefs from a limited geographical area: Fıratlı (1964) covered the Byzantine funerary stelai; Le Dinahet-Couilloud (1970, 1974a, 1974b 1975) the funerary monuments of the Cyclades; Fraser (1977) the Rhodian funerary monuments; and Zanker (1993), briefly, the Smyrnaean reliefs.[12] The material from other poleis has been (partially) published as part of larger and more general genre-spanning catalogues: Samos by Horn (1972) and Pergamon by Winter (1908).[13] During the 1980s, Senff (1985), Pfanner (1989) and Känel (1989) discussed and analysed individual grave reliefs, or small groups of them, in specific collections or locations, often accompanied by some general thoughts on Hellenistic grave reliefs.[14] Rystedt dedicates a chapter in her *Excursions into Greek and Roman Imagery* to Greek sculpture/gravestones summarizing the changes from Classical to Hellenistic iconography (and what may have caused them) before focussing on Smyrnaean funeral reliefs.[15] She makes some interesting points on the use of different layers within the relief to symbolize various 'spheres' (e.g., the foreground with the slave figures as representation of the *oikos*) but the discussion of the different attributes seems unfocused and at times not supported by any evidence (e.g., according to Rystedt the snakes depicted on trees are references to death and are attacking the figures of the deceased; garlands symbolizing actual honours awarded to the deceased for their (outstanding) civic duty).[16]

In his treatise on Greek grave reliefs Schmaltz included a short overview of Hellenistic grave reliefs, limited to broad strokes and without detailed analysis of motifs or the regional characteristics that can be observed in the material.[17] Schmidt has provided a more diversified discussion of typologies in different poleis during the Hellenistic period, recording specific iconographic trends and traditions, but his primary focus was on the chronology of the material and his treatment is brief and pools several cities or regions into groups.[18] Similarly brief treatments are given to Hellenistic

[12] Berges 1996 covered some grave monuments in his *Rundaltäre aus Kos und Rhodos* and Patsiada 2018 wrote on the cultic rites on Rhodes, naturally involving the funerary monuments. For an overview of additional publications presenting grave reliefs of specific islands and regions, cf. Schmaltz 1983, 223 n. 522.
[13] Horn 1972; Winter 1908. Wiegand already published some of the sculpture of Samos, covering the reliefs as well. He treated the *Totenmahlreliefs* as a separate group of material, distinct from the grave reliefs. Cf. Wiegand 1900.
[14] Senff 1985; Pfanner 1989; Känel 1989.
[15] Rystedt 2023, 119–153.
[16] Rystedt 2023, 129f, 141. This seems linked to older interpretations of so-called 'heroic' attributes, i.e., snakes, horses, dogs, as personifications of the death god and the deceased. Cf. Rhomaios 1914; Malten 1914.
[17] Schmaltz 1983.
[18] Schmidt 1991.

grave reliefs by Smith and Ridgway, with Ridgway including short excursions into the regional character of East Greek stelai, Cycladic stelai and round altars.[19]

Several authors have addressed specific motifs or themes within the corpus of Hellenistic grave reliefs, especially Fabricius, who diligently analysed the Hellenistic *Totenmahlrelief*, but also discussed the iconographic tradition of women on Rhodes and the topic of heroic honours in Hellenistic poleis in several articles.[20] Zanker considered the funerary reliefs as part of the bigger topic of civic self-representation, and Klöckner discussed the iconographic interpretations of the so-called priestesses of Demeter found in Smyrnaean reliefs.[21] Puddu presented a comparison of 'the citizen' depicted on grave stones from different cities in Hellenistic Asia Minor. In an effort to create a comparable set of objects and motifs she decided to exclude banquets, as well as women and children, focussing on the adult male citizen.[22] Most recently, Karlsson examined the emotional responses expressed in the Hellenistic stelai from Smyrna and Kyzikos.[23] Focussing on the range of emotions that could be represented within the context of funerary monuments she concludes that personal expressions of grief and affection were possible, even within the limits set for publicly visible monuments and their iconography.

For the majority of Hellenistic grave reliefs no systematic analysis is available. An additional barrier is created through language: literature on grave stelai from the Eastern Greek poleis is almost exclusively published in German, owing to Ionia having become a research area predominantly covered by German-speaking excavation teams (e.g., Pergamon, Samos, Ephesus, Miletus). While more recent findings may sometimes be published in English, the majority of the older (or more general) literature is only available in German, making the foundational works essential for a detailed analysis inaccessible to anybody without the necessary language skills.

Given the typological order of Pfuhl and Möbius's corpus there is need for a deeper investigation into the characteristic funerary iconography of specific regions during the Hellenistic period if we are to move away from generalising statements about 'Eastern Greek' reliefs. The close examination of motifs and forms within different cities allows for a better understanding of the

[19] Smith 1991, 187–190; Ridgway 2000, 189–206.
[20] Fabricius 1999a, 1999b, 2009, 2010.
[21] Zanker 1995; Klöckner 2013.
[22] Puddu 2013. This selection proves problematic. Firstly, as banquets make up the majority of surviving stelai in some cities, such as Samos and Byzantion, some case studies end up with statistically insignificant object numbers (e.g., 9 reliefs with *politai* in Samos vs. 90 reliefs with banquets, Puddu 2013, 177, tbl. 3). Secondly, multi-figure compositions that include not just men, but also women and children, force Puddu to give some limited analysis of the depiction of non-citizens. There is also the issue of not being able to unequivocally being able to identify graves as having belonged to a citizen or *metic*/foreigner, as many monuments carry no inscriptions or similar distinct markers that allow for a definite categorization.
[23] Karlsson 2014.

artistic intentions in Hellenistic reliefs, not just in opposition to the ('superior') Classical Athenian grave monuments, but for their own merit.

This thesis

This thesis analyses the iconography of Hellenistic grave stelai from five Eastern Greek poleis (map 2), and the visual variety that hides behind the label "ostgriechisch". It explores the visual language of funeral monuments on a supra-regional as well as local level and examines how tradition and innovation can be linked through the usage of established iconographic motifs and forms from the Classical period. Instead of discussing Hellenistic funerary reliefs based on a selected few unique objects, I will approach the material on a broad scale, taking into account all reliefs with figural depictions from the chosen poleis, irrespective of artistic or technical quality. The focus is on how iconography changes from city to city and across regions, especially the composition of the reliefs and the framing of the images, not on stylistic analysis or chronology. A definite timeline for the development of style during the Hellenistic period is in any case difficult to establish (as discussed in more detail p.22–25) and the state of preservation of many of the reliefs used for this thesis, with a significant number being worn or (deliberately) damaged, means that a stylistic analysis, which requires the study and comparison of details such as small variations in garment folds or hand gestures, is simply not possible.

This study adopts peer polity interaction (PPI) as an interpretative framework to explore iconographic patterns, trends and developments during the Hellenistic period and gain insight into how the creation and dissemination of motifs across Greek poleis was shaped by the intricate social and cultural dynamics of the time. It builds on a body of research that has demonstrated the potential of PPI as a means of interpreting shared forms and local differentiation across the ancient Mediterranean: the volume edited by Renfrew and Cherry.[24] Almost forty years ago the contributions to this publication established the foundations of PPI by showing how horizontal interaction between political units (here: Eastern Greek poleis) that are equal and interconnected could be a driver of socio-political change. These political units, while part of a larger anthropological entity (a 'civilization') characterized by shared common features (homologies) such as political institutions, language and religious beliefs, and the use of relief grave stelai, often remain fiercely independent and competitive among each other.[25]

[24] Renfrew – Cherry 1986.

[25] Renfrew 1986, 2. Mac Sweeney convincingly argued that "inter-Ionian conflict and competition" was fundamental part of being Ionian and that the "Ionian League was a fight club." Mac Sweeney 2013, 187, 193–197.

Peer polity interaction explains uniformities, observable in common iconographic forms and (social) practices, without collapsing them into passive diffusion or accidental similarities, and it accounts for local variation as deliberate differentiation within a field of peers.

In contrast to the notion that the proliferation of Hellenistic funerary imagery can be attributed to the influence of a single dominant centre, the concept of PPI posits that the emergence of the Hellenistic visual language and iconography is the result of an intricate network of interactions between a number of urban centres. Nevertheless, the different cities themselves interact within a shared framework. The iconography known from Classical Athenian funerary stelai can be understood as a common external factor for the Hellenistic poleis: it provides Hellenistic cities with a foundational visual *koine* (or homologies) – a shared material source – through variation in relation to which they established their distinct local identities. Furthermore, it appears that the use of an elaborate visual language in funeral monuments during the Hellenistic period (with an especially high production in the 2nd century BCE) across various regions of Asia Minor correlates with the dominance of a prosperous and self-assured 'middle class'.[26] Unlike Athenian reliefs known from the Classical period, which are focused on highlighting the family unit of the deceased more than the individual, the Hellenistic reliefs from these cities shift attention to individual citizens and their contribution within the community. Like the people in Classical Athens, the citizens of Hellenistic cities sought ways of memorialisation for themselves and their families that fit into the accepted visual language of their community.

At the core of this thesis lies the question of what the material can tell us beyond labels such as "Eastern Greek" or "vaguely Classical Athenian." I investigate funerary monuments that may appear modest or unremarkable on their own, but which reveal compelling patterns when considered collectively and comparatively. To do so, I adopt a quantitative rather than a purely qualitative approach, allowing broader dynamic patterns in the funerary iconography of Asia Minor to come into focus. Rather than presenting a homologous singular Hellenistic corpus, this thesis explores the differences that can be identified within it.

Peer-polity interaction provides a productive framework for analysing these dynamics: it enables me to consider the shared cultural environment of the Greek world while still attending to the distinct identities and strategies of individual poleis. The neglect of this material - often dismissed

[26] I use the term 'middle-class' as a shorthand for the broader access to 'luxury' items such as figural gravestones, not as a precise tool to describe a particular societal class. This is due to the fact that we know little about the exact social and/or financial background of the people who purchased and commissioned gravestones, as well as their status as citizen or lack thereof. However, the increase of resources during the Hellenistic period allowed access to permanent grave markers to a broader slice of society, not just the super elite.

for lacking the stylistic refinement associated with Classical Athenian sculpture - has obscured its value, despite the fact that Eastern Greek gravestones constitute actual authentic Hellenistic objects (especially in comparatively high numbers), representing a far wider segment of society than the well-known sculptural "masterpieces." By placing this corpus within a PPI framework, the thesis establishes a foundation for future research into identity formation and self-representation in Hellenistic sepulchral imagery.

In the seminal work of Renfrew – Cherry, important mechanisms of PPI are illuminated through different perspectives on geographically and temporally separated cultures. These contributions show how polities interacted through mechanisms of competition, emulation, symbolic entrainment, and exchange, providing comparable precedents for the present study of Hellenistic funerary stelai. It is worth briefly summarising the substantive chapters of Renfrew – Cherry in order to illustrate the range of application of PPI presented in that pioneering volume.

Renfrew's opening chapter establishes the conceptual foundations of peer polity interaction by rejecting monocausal explanations of cultural similarity, such as diffusion from a dominant centre, and instead emphasising reciprocal interaction between polities of comparable scale.[27] He identifies mechanisms including structural homologies, competitive relationships, symbolic borrowing, and the transmission of innovation, which allow similarity and difference to be understood as outcomes of horizontal interaction. This framework is central to my thesis: funerary stelai, like the palaces or sanctuaries discussed by Renfrew, display both regional coherence and locally specific inflections, patterns best explained through relational rather than linear models. Shared iconographic motifs function as structural homologies within a common visual language, circulated through networks of exchange, mobility, and reputation. At the same time, these shared forms were selectively adapted to assert local distinction, producing regional preferences within a recognisable *koine*. Crucially, Renfrew's model also accommodates stability alongside rivalry, showing that the maintenance of convergent visual traditions could reinforce cooperation and a sense of regional identity as much as competitive emulation.

Snodgrass's contribution demonstrates that Greek poleis were not only shaped internally but that the rapid, widespread adoption of shared institutions (e.g., hoplite armies, law codes, sanctuaries) were driven by deliberate, conscious interaction among politically independent peers.[28] The deployment of a hoplite army, services of reputable lawmakers being requested by other cities, and

[27] Renfrew 1986.
[28] Snodgrass 1986.

dedications in panhellenic sanctuaries are highly visible and intentional acts.[29] Apart from these exchanges happening on the governmental or elite level of society, he also points out that material evidence indicates a similar exchange between craftsmen, using the dispersion of vase painting techniques and motifs as an example for a "collective taste".[30] Snodgrass' observation of displays of visual (and visible) culture as primary mechanism of PPI is directly relevant to my analysis of funerary stelai: while the spread of iconographic types and compositional strategies can be understood as the product of shared practices circulating between cities, the specific artistic choices made in each city demonstrate a form of competitive display where local distinctiveness is negotiated. In both cases, we see how a common visual language was created through deliberate interaction yet adapted locally to assert distinct civic identities.

Cherry analyses archaeological material from Bronze Age palatial centres, written documents (in Hieroglypic and Linear A), and shared material culture (e.g., pottery, peak sanctuaries) on Minoan Crete.[31] He argues that the emergence and remarkable structural homologies (in architecture, writing, etc.) observed across the island's many autonomous regional units must be explained by intensive interaction between them, rather than by diffusion or common descent. Cherry employs PPI to stress the role of mutual symbolic interchange, competitive emulation, and intermediate flows in determining the specific, shared forms that Minoan institutions took during their emergence in the Old Palace period. The emergence of a homogeneous Minoan culture through intense peer interaction is analogous to the cohesive Hellenistic cultural *koine* of my thesis, with the homologies identified by Cherry (e.g., standardised palatial design) establishing a precedent for studying the shared visual language in Hellenistic funerary iconography.

Hodges uses archaeological evidence, including grave goods, settlements, and the distribution/reform of coinage across the successive political horizons of Anglo-Saxon England, to argue that the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms developed shared organizational structures and adopted foreign concepts (e.g., from the Franks) due to their own internal interactions, which mediated and qualified the acceptance of these external influences.[32] He demonstrates how PPI not only foregrounds the systemic interactions that make socio-political transformation possible but also highlights the role of mediation between imported ideas, local agency, and material exchange as the

[29] Snodgrass 1986, 52, 54f. Dedications could be made at a polis level (e.g., treasuries, temples, memorials) as well as by individual citizens (e.g., armour, weapons). In both cases the choice of making a dedication in a panhellenic sanctuary shows the intention of communicating not just with fellow citizens (as impressive dedications could also have been made closer to home) but explicitly with other poleis and their inhabitants. Ibid, 55.
[30] Snodgrass 1986, 57.
[31] Cherry 1986.
[32] Hodges 1986.

decisive factor in shaping and stabilising political change. Hodges confirms that transformation occurs in parallel across polities, rather than diffusing linearly from a single source. This parallel adoption of external ideas (e.g., Frankish coinage) is comparable to how Hellenistic cities adopted sepulchral motifs common during the Classical period in Athenian sepulchral art and selectively altered them to fit local values and identity in the Hellenistic period.

The remaining chapters of Renfrew – Cherry follow a comparable pattern, applying the same model of peer interaction to different types of evidence. Although their material differs, these contributions underscore the same methodological point: that PPI offers a powerful way of explaining localised differences among communities that were nonetheless part of a shared cultural world. Champion – Champion drew upon archaeological evidence from settlement types, rich burials, and imports across central Europe to demonstrate that shared material culture, like uniform weapon styles and luxury foreign items, acted as focus for competitive emulation among elites, while alliances across polities drove the spread of shared political transformation.[33] Barnes employs both historical records and archaeological evidence to argue that early state formation in Japan and Korea was not a product of external dominance but of intensive peer interaction, which created shared elite material cultures and stimulated localized elaboration.[34] Freidel turns to hieroglyphs, carved monuments, murals, and ceramics to show that Classic Maya polities were bound by shared mythic charters into a peer system, where even warfare functioned as ritualized interaction that reproduced the peer structure itself.[35] Sabloff reinforces this picture through architecture, monuments, and traded goods, interpreting the Maya lowlands as a network of independent but interdependent polities, whose institutional homogeneity and ultimate collapse can best be understood through PPI.[36] Braun, in his study of the Hopewell tradition, analyses exotic raw materials, mortuary practices, and pottery to argue that symbolic standardization and redundancy emerged from continuous peer exchange, balancing cooperation and competition.[37] Bradley – Chapman use monumental architecture and prestige artefacts to show how elites in Later neolithic Britain and Ireland emulated and rivalled one another in monumental display, producing both shared repertoires and competitive differentiation.[38]

[33] Champion – Champion 1986.
[34] Barnes 1986.
[35] Freidel 1986.
[36] Braun 1986.
[37] Sabloff 1986.
[38] Bradley – Chapman 1986.

Finally, Shennan highlights the uniformity of Bell Beaker material culture of prehistoric Europe as evidence of a new prestige-based organizational system spreading through peer emulation and local status competition, even when defining discrete polities is challenging.[39]

These studies demonstrate that PPI is especially effective when applied to highly visible, symbolic material culture that operates both as a shared repertoire and as a medium for local distinction. This makes PPI directly relevant to my thesis: funerary stelai, while embedded in local burial traditions, also participated in a wider *koine* of motifs. They also highlight the importance of social and economic mechanisms, such as the mobility of craftsmen, the exchange of materials, and the competitive ethos of elites, that explain how motifs travelled and how they were reinterpreted locally. Cemeteries functioned as public stages where communities projected cultural codes, competed for visibility, and asserted local priorities. Choices about iconography, scale, and framing devices balanced participation in shared Greek imagery with expressions of regional individuality. In this way, grave stelai can be understood as part of a wider conversation marked by recurring homologies yet differentiated through distinctive civic identities. Interaction, rivalry, and emulation between poleis thus shaped both convergence and variation in sepulchral imagery, providing the model for my approach to these monuments.

Similarity alone is not sufficient evidence of interaction; channels of transmission must be considered, and the framework must be flexible enough to accommodate cooperation, stability, and convergence alongside rivalry.

Subsequent scholarship has extended the model of peer polity interaction into later periods and broader contexts. Vitale has applied PPI to the Roman provincial context, examining bilateral relations, federal organisations, and civic rivalries within the empire.[40] His material base is primarily epigraphic: decrees, civic titles, honours, and the structures of provincial federations. Vitale argues that, even under the overarching power of Rome, cities continued to define themselves in relation to one another, competing for symbolic distinctions such as the title of *neokoros*, the honour of hosting festivals, or priority in imperial recognition. The value of his study lies in showing that PPI is not restricted to autonomous states but can also operate within larger hegemonic systems. For the present thesis, this is an important precedent: just as provincial cities under Rome competed through titles and honours, Hellenistic poleis under kings or leagues could use funerary iconography as a symbolic arena of distinction, marking themselves out within a shared repertoire even when operating under broader structures of power.

[39] Shennan 1986.
[40] Vitale 2024.

Lenski applies PPI to the urban fabric of Constantine's Eastern cities, showing how imperial favour, grants of civic independence, titles, and patronage linked to Christianisation, did not suppress inter-city rivalry but redirected it into new symbolic arenas such as episcopal authority and imperial recognition.[41] This application of PPI highlights how imperial vertical power and horizontal peer interaction could coexist, with imperial favour acting as a catalyst for horizontal emulation rather than uniformity.[42] Crucially, this rivalry operated across wide geographical distances, often without direct visual comparison, and was instead mediated through reputation, reports, and travelling audiences. This insight is directly relevant to Hellenistic funerary stelai: although shaped by inherited (vertical) traditions and elite fashions and tastes, they likewise functioned as sites of horizontal comparison among peers, where distinction was articulated within a shared *koine* and sustained through reputational networks rather than constant first-hand visibility.

Fourrier's study of Iron Age Cyprus brings PPI into the realm of ritual landscapes, particularly extra-urban sanctuaries, providing a more local contrast (in terms of geographical scale as well as available competition) to the Roman top-down authority over the much larger geographical area of the Empire.[43] Her material is archaeological and architectural: votive assemblages, sanctuary layouts, and monumental dedications. Like Snodgrass, she argues that sanctuaries served as arenas of shared religious practice while simultaneously offering opportunities for competitive display between communities. Importantly, she shows that extra-urban sanctuaries, even though located at the edges of urban space or in liminal settings, functioned as central stages for peer interaction, visible both to local participants and to outsiders. Fourrier's insights resonate closely with the funerary material studied here. Like sanctuaries, *necropoleis* occupy liminal yet highly visible spaces; and like sanctuaries, stelai blend conservatism (shared motifs) with innovation (local adaptations). This analogy strengthens the claim that cemeteries should be understood not only as private, personal spaces, but as civic stages of inter-polis negotiation within the Hellenistic *koine*.

Without invoking the term "peer polity interaction," Linfert demonstrated that the rise of *Prunkaltäre* in the Hellenistic period cannot be reduced to simple imitations of one exceptional example, the Great Altar of Pergamon.[44] Instead, these altars are best understood as instruments of civic self-representation, marking the foundation of new civic institutions (e.g., festivals, the awarding of *asylia*) and as acts of inter-polis competition. Their monumental scale and richly

[41] Lenski 2016.
[42] On adopting Roman culture and "becoming Roman" cf. Woolf 1998. Woolf demonstrates how Roman conquest imposed new hierarchies even as it offered new (cultural) status for elites among the people and cultures they annexed. For the coercive implementation of Roman culture across the empire see also Garnsey – Saller 2015, esp. 207–227.
[43] Fourrier 2013.
[44] Linfert 1995.

ornamented forms were designed to be visible assertions of civic prestige, materially expressing the same rivalries and alignments that structured other spheres of Hellenistic life. Linfert's work is especially relevant here because it highlights how monumental forms can circulate within a *koine* of practice while also functioning as vehicles of local distinction. In this respect, *Prunkaltäre* are directly comparable to the funerary stelai studied in this thesis. Both represent objects of symbolic display, in which established, widely legible forms were re-deployed and re-imagined by different cities to articulate their unique civic identity. Just as altars signalled participation in shared cultic practices while asserting local authority and ambition, so too did funerary monuments project both inclusion in a Hellenistic visual language and the cultivation of distinct civic profiles.

Together, these studies demonstrate the breadth and adaptability of PPI, grounding their arguments in material and institutional evidence, treating similarity and divergence as products of reciprocal peer comparison rather than unidirectional influence. The funerary stelai considered in this thesis fit squarely into this tradition. Whether an emphasis is placed on specific titles for priests or cities,[45] on renaming cities to highlights local imperial favour,[46] on monumental architecture,[47] or sanctuaries used as markers that extended the authority of urban centres,[48] PPI allows us to generate a picture of differing local identities within a shared context. Funerary stelai, highly visible markers of identity, at once shared and distinct, do the same. They offer a sepulchral counterpart to the objects and contexts highlighted by previous scholars, thereby expanding the comparative reach of PPI into the realm of commemorative practice. For my thesis, specifically, the use of PPI as a framework supports the idea that the Hellenistic poleis developed their funerary iconography based on inherited motifs (the "common language" or homologies), while mechanisms of PPI, such as competitive emulation, ensured that each city used these shared features in a unique way to create a distinct visual, local identity. This approach moves beyond generalising statements about "Eastern Greek" reliefs to illuminate the visual variety and local choices made within that overarching cultural framework.

The idea of PPI highlights a number of crucial factors in the developmental process of creating local identities within a common visual language, enabled by an environment conducive to exchange and emulation (if not imitation) between cities, operating on multiple levels, with many

[45] E.g., the awarding of the title of *metropolis*, *neokoros* or *prote* to a city (Vitale 2024, 61f; Lenski 2016, 151f), and the titles of imperial cult officials in the Roman provinces such as Asia, Bithynia, Gallia, or Pamphylia (Vitale 2024, 68f).
[46] E.g., Antaradus as Constantina or Daburiyya as Helenopolis. Lenski 2016, 155–158; 159–161.
[47] E.g., the Prunkaltäre erected in Magnesia, Klaros, and Toes. Linfert 1997, 132–137.
[48] E.g., the addition of royal Phoenician consecrations to the Apollo sanctuary at Idalion after the city's conquest by the Phoenician Kitians. Fourrier 2014, 106f.

kinds of interactions. Institutions like *syngeneia* (kinship),[49] arbitration,[50] *asylia* (refuge from prosecution),[51] and *theorodokia* (hospitality for envoys)[52] created a formalized and repeatable framework for interactions between poleis.[53] Furthermore, civic institutions,[54] festivals and *agones*,[55] trade and craft networks, military and diplomatic alliances,[56] and shared cultic frameworks[57] all created opportunities for exchange and emulation. Geographic proximity mattered, as neighbouring poleis could show more immediate stylistic commonalities, but the multi-facetted connectivity of Hellenistic networks also enabled reverberation across longer distances. I suggest that this not only led to a network of trade and diplomacy, but also encouraged the dispersion of artistic ideas and practices, which in turn resulted in the proliferation of shared iconographic motifs and stylistic features beyond regional centres.[58] At the same time, the competitive nature of the poleis and their determination to stand out against their peers led to the development of clearly distinguishable compositions and regional preferences in sepulchral imagery, using a shared visual language to create local identities through contrast. But adopting shared forms could not only mark rivalry and competition: as Fourrier has pointed out stability and convergences were important as well, serving to reinforce cooperation and regional identity.[59]

While the PPI framework provides a valuable lens for interpreting the interplay of shared conventions and local differentiation, its limitations must be acknowledged. First, peer polity interaction is most effective at explaining patterns of similarity and divergence between polities, but it often struggles to specify the mechanisms by which interaction occurred. Did a motif spread through the movement of craftsmen, the trade of marble and artistic objects, or the imitation of images seen abroad? The model highlights the relational nature of cultural forms but can leave the causal pathways underdetermined, particularly when material evidence does not allow us to trace direct channels of transmission.

[49] Cf. Jones 1999 on the diplomatic importance of kinship relations between cities.
[50] Cf. Magnetto 2018 on Hellenistic interstate arbitration.
[51] Cf. Rigsby 1996 on the history of *asylia*.
[52] Cf. Rutherford 2013, esp. 43–47 on *theoroi* during the Hellenistic period, and Perlman 2000 for the history of *theorodokia*.
[53] Cf. Ma 2003 for the application of the peer polity interaction concept to the states of the Hellenistic age.
[54] Cf. Metcalfe 2005 on regional institutions, e.g., the *panionion*.
[55] Cf. Jürgens 2017 and Nielsen 2017 on sacred mobility (pilgrimage) regarding panhellenic festivals. For an analysis of the importance of athletic triumphs and their memorialization in the Hellenistic period, see van Bremen 2007.
[56] E.g., the Ionian *koinon* or Ionian league. Cf. Hallmannsecker 2022, esp. 60–70.
[57] Cf. Kowalzig 2005 and Crielaard 2009, esp. 63–71.
[58] Ridgway 2001, 6.
[59] Fourrier 2013, 111–113.

Second, PPI tends to privilege competition and emulation as explanatory drivers, sometimes at the expense of recognising other forces such as (ritual) continuity, internal social dynamics, or cooperation. As Fourrier and Lenski have argued, the outcomes of peer interaction can be stability and convergence as much as rivalry, and funerary imagery in particular is also conditioned by deeply embedded domestic traditions of burial ritual and by intra-polis competition among elite families. PPI can illuminate the relational dimension of cultural production but it cannot alone account for the full spectrum of motivations and constraints shaping funerary practice.

Finally, PPI does not resolve the question of agency and reception. It frames polities as actors engaged in competitive or cooperative emulation, but it often obscures the choices of the individuals involved, the patrons, sculptors, or workshops, and the varied ways in which viewers may have understood these monuments. Funerary stelai were simultaneously civic/public, familial, and personal commissions. PPI highlights their role in inter-polis comparison, but it cannot capture the multiplicity of meanings such monuments carried within their local contexts by itself.

However, these limitations do not disqualify the approach but define its proper scope of application. PPI is strongest when used to frame comparative questions about shared practices and differentiated outcomes. It allows us to ask why certain motifs recur across regions, why some are locally transformed, and why others fall out of use. It is less effective at reconstructing precise channels of transmission, or at explaining the entire social life of a monument. Recognising these boundaries clarifies the contribution this thesis makes: not to solve every question about funerary commemoration, but to demonstrate how *necropoleis* functioned as a locus of inter-polis negotiation, in parallel with other arenas of peer interaction such as sanctuaries, civic monuments, and festivals. Like the sanctuaries discussed by Fourrier or the civic monuments analysed by Lenski, cemeteries were conspicuous yet liminal spaces, situated on the margins of the polis but serving as highly visible stages for public display. Funerary stelai were meant to be seen by fellow citizens as well as visiting foreigners and so functioned as civic statements in stone, projecting both participation in the Hellenistic '*koine'* and the cultivation of distinct local identity. In this sense, they are directly comparable with the elite mechanisms or monumental architecture often discussed in PPI scholarship, but with the advantage of offering a broader dataset that includes both elite and 'middle-class' patrons. Using the concept of PPI as an explanatory framework allows for the study and analysis of Hellenistic Greek funerary reliefs not just as part of a seemingly cohesive Hellenistic cultural *koine*, but as a form of civic and artistic expression that links shared (traditional) forms and values with a highly diverse and individual regional visual language, and helps us to understand how and why poleis set themselves apart from others in their funerary representation.

The thesis will show how 'inherited' motifs, known from Classical Athenian funerary stelai, were adopted and altered to fit with the values of these Hellenistic cities,[60] and therefore tell us about self-representation, gender, class and family. It is important to clarify what is meant by this 'inheritance'. Rather than envisioning Classical Attic stelai as a singular 'ancestor' in a genealogical sense, I understand them as a pool of imagery from which elements could be chosen. Their compositional logics, figure types, and iconographic motifs circulated widely through multiple channels and were subsequently embedded within the Hellenistic *koine*.[61] By the second century BCE, forms such as the maid-and-mistress motif were no longer perceived as exclusively 'Athenian', but as elements of a common Hellenic repertoire. Direct comparison with the Attic corpus is therefore not intended to argue for Athenian dominance in this later period, but to demonstrate how a set of widely legible iconographic conventions was appropriated and re-used by different poleis as part of their local identity. These Classical motifs and themes can be understood as homologies within the framework of peer polity interaction, a set of shared (visual) features that were known and commonly used in the Greek world. But conforming with the competitive nature and relationship among the different poleis, each used them in a unique way to create a distinct visual identity as part of a regional dialogue among peers.

Furthermore, I will take the stelai themselves into account as a significant part of reading the reliefs, viewing them not just as the physical backdrop carrying the figural relief, but also as the device that frames them, and presents them to the viewer in a certain (meaningful) way as a coherent unit. The functional architectural frames of the stelai are another shared feature found in all poleis (but again executed in different forms), marking the image field off from its surrounding and creating a separate space for the dead. I will, therefore, also discuss the relationship between monument/relief and viewer, and how it facilitated interaction between the living and the dead.

[60] I am talking about what can be termed a *Zeitgeist* (for a critical analysis of the use of the term see Krause 2019). *Zeitgeist*, though problematic due to its diffuse nature, is used here, in agreement with Krause, as a useful concept of "meaningful patterns that are period-specific, cross over different areas of social life, and extend across geographical contexts". The Hellenistic *Zeitgeist* here describes the loss of relative cohesiveness characteristic of the Archaic and Classical period, after the new political structure of Hellenistic kingdoms was overlaid over the independent Greek city-state. Instead of few (Greek) urban centres dictating political, social and artistic rules, a larger and more heterogenous group of cities and their elites established their own traditions, often within the context of exchange and negotiation between Greek and Eastern culture. Smith 1991, 9; Hölscher 2006, 214; Krause 2019, 5.

[61] The pathways through which Attic forms became part of the imagery were multiple. The circulation of craftsmen and workshops, with itinerant sculptors working across the Aegean, sometimes bringing models or pattern books, was a significant channel of transmission. The export of marble from Pentelikon and Paros, and the prestige associated with Attic sculptural training, further enhanced the authority of Athenian styles in wider markets. In addition, individual poleis' relationships with Athens, whether through trade, diplomacy, or cultural ties, shaped their access to and reception of Attic motifs.

The selection of case-study poleis (Rhodes, Smyrna, Samos, Pergamon, Byzantion; map 2) in this thesis has been guided not only by the availability of well-documented funerary corpora but also by considerations of comparability within a peer polity framework. The aim is to analyse communities that were of broadly similar scale and standing, part of networks of trade, festivals, and political interaction, and whose funerary monuments can therefore be meaningfully read against one another as expressions of inter-polis negotiation of identity. Rhodes, Samos, Smyrna, and Byzantion fit these criteria: each was a prominent polis within the Hellenistic Aegean world, producing substantial corpora of stelai that display both shared conventions and distinctive local adaptations. And while the corpus of funerary stelai surviving from Pergamon is comparatively small, its inclusion is justified by the city's symbolic weight as a leading Hellenistic polis, demonstrating that even limited material evidence offers valuable insight into how a major cultural centre participated in and responded to the broader funerary *koine*. This balance of commonality and divergence makes the chosen poleis well suited for testing the mechanisms of peer polity interaction. Additionally, all five cities occupied key points in the Aegean maritime network: Byzantion controlled the Bosporus and access to the Black Sea, Smyrna was located at the Gulf of Smyrna, with access to the inland via the Hermos river, Samos and Rhodes both had important trade ports connecting Asia Minor with the Greek islands and the Ptolemaic empire. Pergamon, while not located directly at the coast, had access to the Mediterranean through its harbour Elaia. This shared geography tied the cities to similar economic roles within the (maritime) trade network of the Hellenistic period. They also shared overlapping political histories with military alliances against common enemies (e.g., Pergamon and Rhodes siding with Rome during the Roman-Seleucid War) and occasionally competing for the same spheres of influence (e.g., Smyrna trying to appeal to Rome in 197 BCE). Underpinning these ties was a broadly shared Greek cultural and religious framework, including (Greek) Ionian heritage (kinship), comparable civic (cultural) institutions (e.g., gymnasia, theatres, stadiums), and common mythic and cultic traditions, which created a coherent field of interaction well suited to comparative analysis.

By contrast, cities such as Cyzicus and Ephesus, though undoubtedly important, present challenges for a PPI-driven comparison. Cyzicus, while historically significant and a direct neighbour to Byzantion, suffers from the fragmentary state and uneven publication of its funerary material, which prevents a systematic typological and iconographic analysis that could be directly aligned with the other case studies. The inclusion of Cyzicus would not have altered the conclusions of this thesis, since its stelai display distinct iconographic patterns (e.g., *Stockwerkstelen*, banquet scenes with multiple attendees) that do not overlap with the repertoire of nearby Byzantion. While its proximity makes Cyzicus an interesting case and the corpus certainly merits a fresh, comprehensive study in its own right, its exclusion here does not affect the comparative dynamics explored in this

study. Ephesus was not included because, despite its geographical proximity to Smyrna, the number of surviving stelai is small and does not provide sufficient statistical evidence for a strong comparative argument.[62] Moreover, unlike Pergamon, where even a modest corpus can be contextualised within a coherent dynastic programme, Ephesus was not a royal capital in the Hellenistic period but a polis marked by shifting leadership until the Treaty of Apameia (map 3) integrated it into the Attalid Empire.[63] Its later prominence as a major (independent) metropolis and administrative centre belongs primarily to the Roman period, making it an outlier in scale and status within the Hellenistic peer group considered here.

The case studies chosen here thus constitute a balanced peer group: cities engaged in the same communicative sphere, connected by trade routes, festival circuits, and craft networks, and producing funerary corpora that are both comparable as well as sufficiently distinct to illustrate the dynamics of competition, emulation, and shared practice. By focusing on this set of poleis, the thesis is able to foreground the dynamics of peer-level interaction rather than the asymmetries of a hierarchical centre-periphery relationship, while also ensuring that the analysis rests on robust and well-published material corpora. By identifying the unique imagery of five cities (Rhodes, Smyrna, Samos, Pergamon, Byzantion) I demonstrate that broad categories such as '*ostgriechisch*' oversimplify the complexity and variety of local traditions, and mask iconographical developments, big and small. Aesthetic judgements and prejudice against 'provincial' funerary art, and common minor objects versus sculptural *Meisterwerke*,[64] erase the rich opportunities to study the distinct customs of communities that create their own visual language to express and depict their representation of personal ideals and moral leitmotifs in the memorialization of the dead. A quantitative approach forces a level of abstraction with regard to the appearance of the individual monuments, focusing instead of larger patterns that can be traced within or across the different (peer) poleis.

This thesis moves from the shared to the particular: Chapters 1 and 2 examine the regional frameworks and common visual homologies that unite these poleis within a broader Hellenistic *koine*, while Chapter 3 turns to the distinct ways each city adapted this shared repertoire to articulate its own civic identity.

[62] Pfuhl–Möbius list 47 stelai indexed under 'Ephesos', of which only 21 are dated to the Hellenistic period (one is Classical, 15 Roman Imperial; 6 are of unclear provenance and 4 are not illustrated by a photography). Excavations in Ephesus have focused on the Roman period not the area outside the city walls were *necropoleis* would have been located, with later marsh formation creating additional technical and financial challenges. Höcker 2006.

[63] Scherrer 2006.

[64] Celani 2005, 305.

Chapter 1 focuses on different modes of interactions, not just between living and dead, but also between the figures populating the reliefs, and the figures and a viewer. I explore how the dead are treated in literary sources and funerary epigrams, before tying in the interaction facilitated through the reliefs. Chapter 2 opens with an overview of the legislation surrounding death and burial, setting out what was common to all the cities under investigation and so setting the scene for the following exploration of the different ways in which stelai physically frame the inherent liminality of death. It then explores the way in which frame design affects the perception and interpretation of the relief and therefore of the deceased depicted. These first two chapters also highlight certain overarching trends regarding iconographical themes, relief compositions and stele layout that can be found in cities across the Hellenistic world (such as the tendency to depict figures frontally rather than in profile). Chapter 3 presents extended case studies, analysing grave reliefs from the five poleis to establish and interpret the distinct imagery developed in different 'Eastern Greek' cities. These case studies will show the variety in the imagery of the poleis by covering the range of motifs (broad in Rhodes, very narrow in Samos), and details in the adaptation of motifs and types (scholarly banquets in Byzantion, displays of wealth and abundance on the *Totenmahlreliefs* in Samos) as well as idiosyncrasies unique to one polis (embracing figures in Rhodes, the omnipresent use of honorary wreaths in Smyrna). A conclusion summarizes the insights gained in this thesis and gives some perspective on possible further research on the topic of Hellenistic grave stelai.

In an effort to make the thesis more readable, maps, figures and plates have been allocated to a second volume. Plates illustrate all reliefs used for the analysis of this thesis and are sorted by polis. Figures illustrate objects not part of the corpus of Hellenistic grave reliefs (e.g., vases, Classical reliefs etc.).

Problems of Hellenistic art

When working with material from the Hellenistic period, one encounters a set of well-known problems, as Ridgway has pointed out in her comprehensive work on Hellenistic sculpture:[65] differences regarding the precise beginning and end of the Hellenistic period,[66] bias against an era that for a long time was seen as representative for 'baroque', 'decline', 'decadence' and 'imitators',[67]

[65] Cf. Ridgway 2000, 2001 (esp. 3–11), 2002. For a critical examination of the study of Hellenistic sculpture and the problematic attempt to neatly categorize objects cf. Celani 2005.

[66] E.g., Ridgway counts from 331 BCE (Battle of Gaugamela) to 31 BCE (Battle of Actium) while Hölscher sets the beginning at the ascension of Alexander the Great to the throne (336 BCE). Ridgway 2001, 3; Hölscher 2007, 95. This thesis follows Hölscher.

[67] Ridgway 2001, 4. The devaluation of Hellenistic (or simply 'non-Classical') art can be traced back to Winckelmann, who wrote in reference to and in agreement with Pliny (*HN* 34, 52), that art in Greece declined after the 121st Olympics (c. 300 BCE), with only a short revival between the 145th (c. 200 BCE) and 155th (c. 160 BCE) Olympics, finding refuge solely at the courts of the Diadochi. Winckelmann 1764, 214, 357–58; 1791, 50–

the decentralised character of the Hellenistic world,[68] the issues of originals and copies,[69] and the eclectic nature of Hellenistic art, with recourses to old motifs and compositions from earlier periods and combining them with newer styles and movements.[70]

Inconsistent definitions of artistic divisions (i.e., Early, Middle, Late Hellenistic) among scholars result from the fact of a chronology much more precarious than that of previous periods, caused by the dispersion of artistic development across several influential political centres (e.g., Pergamon with its extensive construction programme of monumental buildings such as the Great Altar), a lack of securely dated historical events and objects, and a very limited number of primary (literary) sources.[71] Iconographically, no unified development of style can be observed; depending on motif and preference, artists could draw from a large catalogue of styles, including Archaic and Classical, and apply them.[72] The situation is further complicated by the numerous copies surviving from the Roman period. Firstly, it creates a set of works that were appreciated by Romans and matched their tastes, narrowing the themes and numbers of works known through reproductions by ignoring objects that were of little or no interest to them. Secondly, it is often unclear how much of any given 'copy' is 'authentic' and based on an earlier original, what parts might have been altered to match Roman tastes and what sculpture might be the interpretation of a Greek object done by a Roman sculptor.[73] It might be impossible to distinguish with certainty between a Roman copy and a Greek original, or a sculpture created in a Hellenistic style.[74]

The number of 'authentic' Hellenistic sculptures that can be dated with certainty is small, given the dispersion of find spots, the use of antique sculpture (especially reliefs) as spolia in more modern construction, the lack of proper records of early archaeological excavations and the number of objects that were privately sold or auctioned (sometimes after being illegally moved abroad and/or looted in their country of origin) without information about their provenance or original context.[75]

52; Bieber 1961, 3; Schmaltz 1983, 50–53. For the etymology of the term 'baroque' and the evolution of its meaning cf. Hills 2011.

[68] The geographical borders of the Hellenistic world expanded significantly due to the imperialism of Alexander the Great, which led to the rise of new urban centres (including the capitals of the Diadochi kingdoms) that challenged the dominance of the old mainland Greek cities with their traditional elites. Hölscher 2006, 214. On the issues and inconsistencies with perceiving 'antiquity' as a homogenous cultural region with clear geographical and chronological boundaries, and a linear development of (cultural) identities see Hampl 1975.

[69] Ridgway 2001, 4.

[70] Hölscher 2006, 216.

[71] Breuer 1995, 33; Ridgway 2001, 5–7, Hölscher 2006, 214.

[72] Smith 1991, 17; Ridgway 2001, 7; Hölscher 2007, 123f.

[73] For a critical view on the tradition of *Kopienkritik* see Habetzeder 2012.

[74] Ridgway 2001, 4, 8f.

[75] Smith 1991, 18. For an analysis of the consequences of (illegal) art trade cf. Lazrus – Barker 2012.

As Ridgway has highlighted, the few dated monuments have been "bound to acquire excessive importance as beacons of style", serving as "forerunners or consequences" of the specific style they embody, i.e., a stylistic hallmark for the whole Hellenistic period, not (just) part of a regional artistic evolution.[76]

Instead of trying to identify such 'hallmarks' or focussing on individual objects, I have chosen to study objects within a localized context, while respecting the broader framework of the Hellenistic period. Focussing on outstanding examples of art and elevating them to representatives of a specific style or a specific time period can lead to a warped sense of what art of said style or period *should* look like, often linked to aesthetically pleasing, well preserved objects of high quality. It can create hierarchies in which some objects are valued more than others due to being similar or closer to those 'representative objects', while everyday objects or objects produced on a larger scale are disregarded as 'lesser'.

The framework of peer polity interaction and the material used for this thesis allow for a different approach. The questions asked are less concerned with style and chronology, but instead with framing iconographic choice as a function of social environment. Hellenistic grave reliefs have been found in large numbers and across a large area, making them important 'authentic' material even if less interesting or appealing from an aesthetic or technical point of view. Crucially, they allow the study of regional variation within the supra-regional genre of Greek funerary monuments, painting a more detailed 'small' picture against the oftentimes too generalizing big picture of what is commonly understood as 'Hellenistic' or '*ostgriechisch*'.

As mentioned above, the intention of this thesis is not to create a 'style handbook' with a comprehensive list of stylistic forms and attributes that could be used as a geographical or chronological guide to Hellenistic (or Eastern Greek) funerary art. This thesis is not concerned with assigning specific dates to reliefs (or reviewing the differences in dates provided by other scholars). For my purpose I generally follow the dates given by Pfuhl and Möbius.[77]

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[76] Ridgway 2001, 10; Celani 2005, 302f.

[77] A glimpse into the disparities of dates given by different scholars can be found in the appendix. For the most part the discrepancies in dating come down to slight differences in opinion whether a relief should be dated into one or the other century (e.g., PM 439 dated by Pfuhl into the early 2nd century BCE and into the 1st century BCE by Laurenzi), or concern time spans that both fall into the Hellenistic period (e.g., PM 191 dated late Hellenistic by Pfuhl and late 3rd/early 2nd century BCE by Fıratlı). Karlsson states that the majority of the stelai from Smyrna and Kyzikus can be dated to the 2nd century BCE with some confidence. Karlsson 2014, 19. Large inconsistencies exist particularly between Fıratlı (whose monograph on Byzantine stelai was published 24 years after Pfuhl's death) and Pfuhl, with Fıratlı dating many Byzantine reliefs into the 2nd or 1st century BCE categorized as Roman Imperial by Pfuhl. Fabricius voices her disagreement with Fıratlı's dating and declares the majority of the reliefs Roman Imperial as well, while also stating that "*die zeitliche Abgrenzung beider Gruppen voneinander jedoch nur ungefähr sein [kann] und folglich in mancher Hinsicht willkürlich ausfallen [muss]*". Fabricius 1999a, 225. Given that art historical periods do rarely involve the sudden change from one artistic

What matters for this thesis is not the precise dating of a relief, but that the relief comes from a particular city and belongs broadly to the Hellenistic period. The art of (allegedly precise) dating material culture is deeply rooted in German Archaeology, but for the most part it changes nothing about how an image can be understood if its creation is moved a decade (or indeed several) on the timeline.[78] Smith wrote pointedly: "Most Hellenistic sculpture can be situated in time and place only very broadly. This does not greatly matter. The interest in these statues lies in what they represent and what they express, not in their year of manufacture."[79] This is a deliberate recognition of the difficulty of dating Hellenistic objects.[80]

Problems of the dataset

There are unique challenges when working with data collected more than a century ago, then edited and published decades later, including inconsistencies, vague (or highly subjective) language, as well as the general problem of continuity and traceability: towns, streets and districts have been renamed, named places grow or shrink, buildings are torn down, and governments change.[81] Pfuhl mentions provenance when he had access to information about a stele's original findspot (or the general place of origin), usually retrieved from the inventory information of the museum or collection where the stele was housed. He follows the protocols of the collections, museums or institutions in which the reliefs were stored at the time he catalogued them (updated by Möbius during his revision of the material), many of which received the reliefs after they were discovered as spolia or bought the pieces from unknown sources without any information about where they were originally found.[82]

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tradition to another, there is significant overlap in transition phases, i.e. for many objects it is unclear if they should be dated into the early or middle 1st century BCE (making them Hellenistic) or the late 1st century BCE/early 1st century CE (making them Roman Imperial). I have decided to include the reliefs from Pfuhl – Möbius that they dated Hellenistic, as well as the reliefs from Fıratlı that were not added to the PM catalogue (s. appendix) dated Hellenistic by Fıratlı and 2nd/1st century BCE or 1st century CE by Möbius.

[78] Clairmont 1993, 12.

[79] Smith 1991, 18.

[80] Möbius himself notes the difficulty of dating Hellenistic grave reliefs, while also 'correcting' many of Pfuhl's dates, most commonly to raise a date from the 2nd century BCE to the 3rd century BCE. Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, XV, 42–44.

[81] E.g., the term 'Vilâyet': used in the catalogue entry for PM 1866, it describes an administrative unit of the Ottoman Empire. During the decades Pfuhl spent collecting the material for his corpus the Ottoman Empire fell, with violent confrontations leading to the loss of not only human lives but also the destruction of many ancient buildings and objects. In the data of this thesis this can be seen most clearly in the number of reliefs that were destroyed during the burning of Smyrna in 1922, when the conflict between Greece and Turkey led to the massacre of the Greek and Armenian population (as well as refugees that had fled to the port city) and the burning of the Greek and Armenian quarters. On the burning of Smyrna cf. Horton 1926, Housepian 1966, Milton 2009, Ureneck 2015. Fraser also notes the problems created by changes in nomenclature. Fraser 1977, 1.

[82] E.g., PM 112 "*angeblich aus Smyrna-Bahribaba*," PM 2270 "*nach unsicheren Angaben aus Kyzikos* ," PM 1332 "*angeblich aus Pergamon*," PM 48 "*angeblich von Samos*", PM 854 came to France around 1730 and was gifted

In case of questionable information regarding an object's provenance Pfuhl clearly communicates those caveats.[83] It has not been practical to verify the current whereabouts of the reliefs nor carry out further research on individual provenances.

Some information about the context of the grave markers is irretrievably lost. However, there needs to be a distinction between the absence of precise provenance (which may still safely allow for the attribution to a city) and the absence of any indication of provenance at all (making even attribution to a city potentially problematic) – a distinction made very clearly by Pfuhl and Möbius. Of the over 2400 objects indexed in the corpus, more than 1700 are listed as "*Herkunft unbekannt*" (provenance unknown), a factor that cannot be attributed to a failure on the parts of Pfuhl and Möbius.[84] Many stelai were simply bought by archaeologists, excavators or interested laymen from local sellers (who may or may not have provided truthful accounts about their discovery and legality) and could end up in private collections, as donations to academic institutions or museums, or even incorporated into the mansions of their new owners, far from their country of origin.[85] Pfuhl often used his extensive knowledge and familiarity with the material, which he worked on during his entire life to attribute reliefs based on stylistic characteristics, either to the general Eastern Greek corpus "*dem Stil/Typ nach sicher ostgriechisch*" or to a specific polis with reservations such as "*wohl*", "*wahrscheinlich*" or "*sicherlich*". Since the corpus, there has been no major systematic publication of new material, with only occasional (re)publications of individual reliefs.[86]

While these challenges should not be understated, it is important to note a) that some 700 reliefs do have a recorded provenance; and b) that the attributions made by Pfuhl and Möbius continue to be accepted by scholars. As Celani wrote, "the lack of material with which archaeologists have to deal could be transformed into opportunities, if only the latent and senseless frustration of not being able to study what is not there were to disappear".[87] Moreover, the quantitative approach taken in this thesis not only allows me to trace patterns on a supra-regional and a local level, but is

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to the German Fürst von Fürstenberg between 1893-1895, Senff 6,2 "*Über Herkunft und Ankauf der Reliefs fehlen leider sämtliche Unterlagen*." (Senff 1985, 81).

[83] E.g. PM 1427 "*Angeblich aus Kyzikos (ohne Gewähr)*" or PM 1801 "*Im Museumsinventar ohne Provenienz, aber dem Stil nach gewiß ostgriechisch*". Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 339, 434.

[84] E.g., PM 147, 322, 533, 820, 1497, 1936; the list can be extended.

[85] Cf. Senff 1985, 81f, who discusses three grave reliefs that were brought to the country estate Ketteringham Hall near Norwich and built into the wall separating the domestic wing and driveway. No information about the provenance or purchase of the reliefs survives; they were not included in A. Michaelis *Ancient Marbles in Great Britain* (Cambridge 1882) but the wall they were immured in was built in 1899, which allows for the assumption that they perhaps arrived in Ketteringham Hall between 1882 and 1899. Additionally, as Turner points out, modern displays of funerary reliefs within museums present a specifically curated view on these objects, removing them from their former context, with many (especially those of lesser quality or less well preserved) being made inaccessible to the public and even researchers by being locked away in storerooms, Turner 2009, 6.

[86] I.a., Yaylalı 1989; Corsten 1990; Naumann-Stecker 1990; Meriç 1993.

[87] Celani 2005, 301.

designed to minimise the impact of any doubt cast on individual reliefs by framing them within a larger group. Most of the reliefs discussed in this thesis have been attributed to a specific polis based on provenance, with only a small number being attributed by style. Distinct shared features of the former group, such as format, size, material, motifs, as well as regional iconographic features (e.g., the "*Demoskranz*" of Smyrna) can allow for the inclusion of reliefs that have been attributed by style if they share said features.[88] This thesis makes no attempt to attribute the reliefs catalogued as "provenance unknown" by Pfuhl and Möbius to a specific city but uses the material with a listed provenance for the analysis.

From the comprehensive corpus of Pfuhl and Möbius, the poleis chosen for particular study are Byzantion (141 reliefs), Rhodes (85 reliefs), Samos (119 reliefs) and Smyrna (123 reliefs), which were chosen based on their having the highest number of surviving grave reliefs attributed to them. Given the length restrictions of the thesis only one further polis could be added. The options were Kyzikos, with 99 reliefs (of which only 42 are categorized as Hellenistic by Pfuhl–Möbius and can be attributed with certainty to the polis) and a close neighbour to Byzantion, or Pergamon, with 34 reliefs. Pergamon was chosen, due to its status as royal capital with a significant political reach beyond its walls, and its distinctive iconography, despite its relative low number of reliefs. I do, however, include various brief observations on the material from Kyzikos in the chapter on Byzantion.

All reliefs attributed to the poleis discussed are listed in the appendix, sorted by location. The lists provide provenance, dates (by Pfuhl–Möbius and other authors if applicable) and concordances. The addition of measurements and surviving inscriptions would have been desirable but was not possible due to the word limitation. To ensure that the iconographical analysis of the reliefs is verifiable only reliefs illustrated by a photograph in Pfuhl–Möbius are taken into account. Reliefs illustrated only by sketches or descriptions are listed, but of no further consideration for this thesis as there is no way to independently verify their appearance. Reliefs dated earlier or later than the Hellenistic period are listed for the sake of completeness.

[88] An opinion shared with Karlsson 2014, 17.

1. Meeting the dead

Funerary stelai were the major object of focus for interaction between living and dead. Cemeteries and burial sites are, by nature, liminal spaces: the living visit to put family and friends to rest, to mark their places of interment, and to remember them. Communities across time and cultures have developed complex mourning and memorialization rituals involving visits to the grave, often on specific days during the year.

Protestants in Germany mark the last Sunday of the liturgical year as *Totensonntag*, traditionally linked to judgment day and the eschaton, but since the 19th century focused on commemoration of the dead.[89] It is common to visit graves of family members and friends, which are decorated with flowers, wreaths and candles. During the annual Chinese Qingming festival (also known as Tomb-Sweeping Day), families visit the graves of their loved ones, sweep them, clear them of weeds and make offerings, such as food, flowers and money, but also gifts specific to the individual deceased. The food is not left at the tombs but taken back home and viewed as particularly auspicious, thought to have been to another realm and returned.[90] Other examples include the Mexican *Día de Muertos*, the Japanese *Obon* festival, and the Serbian *Pobusani ponedeonik*.[91] Many of these festivities include offerings for the dead and the maintenance of the tombs, while paying respect to one's ancestors.

To better understand how the ancient Greeks interacted with graves and approached the dead, it is important to look beyond the funeral monuments themselves. Just as I will examine funeral laws as a ways of framing the dead in the next chapter, I will use evidence from ancient literature and grave epigrams to explore how and why interaction between the living and dead was facilitated, especially regarding offerings for the dead. This will act as the base for understanding the iconography of the grave reliefs from the five poleis as I examine how the relief-figures were arranged within the image field for different motifs, and how that influenced their interaction with each other and with the viewer.

[89] Roman Catholics, as well as some Lutherans and Anglicans memorialize the dead on *Allerseelen* (November 2). *Evangelisches Gottesdienstbuch* (Berlin 2000), p. 484; *RGG* V (1913) 1299 s. *Totenfest* (D. Clemen).
[90] Traditional Chinese Festivals: http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/Festivals/78319.htm (accessed 17 August 2023); Yang 1961, 40.
[91] *Día de Muertos*: Andrade 2007, esp. 50, 60, 65f, 74; Brandes 1998; https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/indigenous-festivity-dedicated-to-the-dead-00054 (accessed 17 August 2023). Obon: Ashikaga 1950; Smith 1974, esp. 98–101. *Pobusani ponedeonik*: https://lepaisrecna.mondo.rs/Lifestyle/Price-iz-Srbije/a21150/verski-kalendar-pobusani-ponedeljak-obicaji.html (accessed 17 August 2023); https://www.opanak.rs/pobusani-ponedeljak/ (accessed 17 August 2023).

We will see that interaction with the dead is an important homological topic across the Greek world and not an isolated or unusual custom, and how text, image and the physical act of placing offering at the grave allowed for a direct, personal connection between dead and living.

1.1 Ghosts and the dead in ancient literature

The topic of interaction between living and the dead has received relatively little attention in academic writing, and most publications centre on literary sources rather than material culture. The most recent and comprehensive discussion of the topic, by Sarah Iles Johnston, covers the history of narratives dealing with the dead as well as rituals and ancient magic to either cooperate with or ward them off.[92] Surviving literary sources dealing with interactions between the living and the dead can provide only a limited contribution. Speeches and philosophical dialogues deal in broad generalisations, as they were delivered in context where there was no need to provide detailed information to audiences intimately familiar with ancient burial customs. In contrast, plays and epics are heavily idealised and almost always mythical; even prose narratives that claim to be true deal with exceptional events and people. This means we may gain a *general* sense of cultural views of the dead by synthesising these texts, but no access to individual lived experience.

Literary sources from antiquity give evidence of continuous visits to the tombs after the burial rites were executed: Isaeus and Plato indicate that it was normative for on-going rites to be performed at the graves of deceased family members, especially at the tomb of one's parents. The numerous references to 'customary rites' or 'annual rites' in the court speeches of Isaeus are unsurprising, given the importance of remembering/caring for the dead with regard to rights of inheritance.[93] While the speeches do not specify in detail, libations and sacrifices are mentioned.[94] Similarly, in his speech against Macartatus, Demosthenes touches on the subject of offerings for the dead on specific days according to 'established custom', performed by their relatives.[95]

References to memorial practices can also be found in other prose texts: Herodotus specifically names the *Genesia*, the annual festival of the dead, where children honoured their parents, and Plato

[92] Cf. Iles Johnston 1999. The second and third part of her book deal with the 'restless dead', i.e., those who died violently and/or before their time, and the relation between the gods and the dead, respectively. Dingwall gives several examples of ancient texts that mention spirits or tell ghost stories (cf. Dingwall 1930), and Dodds compared ancient supernatural phenomena, such as clairvoyance, with their modern counterparts, while also touching on related topics, such as haunted houses (cf. Dodds 1971). Nilsson 1963, 174–191.

[93] Customary rites: Isae. 1.10, 6.65, 7.31, 9.7; annual rites: Isae. 2.46. Honouring one's parents (and their graves) was such an essential aspect of Athenian society, that failure to do so could render a man unfit for public office. Part of the *dokimasia* in Athens, the process of assessing the competence of a citizen to hold a public office, was the verification of the candidates' respectful treatment of their parents and the ongoing rites being performed at their graves. Arist. *Ath. Pol*. 55.1–3; Xen. *Mem*. 2.2.13–14; Garland 1985, 104.

[94] Isae. 6.51, 6.65, 7.30.

[95] Dem. 43.66–7.

prescribes modest funeral rites as best for parents, with diligent yearly attentions and rites to ensure continuous honour and memory.[96] Some wills detailed the implementation of a trust that would ensure the continuous performance of memorial rites. Diogenes Laertius records the will of Epicurus, which specifies, among other things, that his memorial trust should pay for the "customary celebration of my [Epicurus'] birthday on the tenth day of Gamelion in each year." Similar stipulations are also known from an epigraphic source: *IG* XII,3 330 records the will of Epiktete, in which the deceased decrees the foundation of a trust which will sponsor yearly sacrifices and offerings to the Muses, as well as to the 'heroes', Epiktete and her husband Phoinix.[97] In addition to these private rites, annual public celebrations and offerings for the war dead are recorded by Thucydides and Plutarch.[98]

The prose examples make broad statements emphasising the importance of respect and proper care for the dead, whether on a small, private level for one's relatives, or publicly for those who died defending their city or country. In the Homeric epics, as well as the comedies and tragedies of the 6th and 5th century we can trace the same concern for appropriate burial rites but expressed through specific interactions. There is, however, a shift from epic to drama in what the dead (or ghosts) are considered to be capable of. Homer depicts the dead as helpless echoes, lacking wit and recognizing their own relatives only after they have drunk blood as part of an invocation. When Achilles tries to embrace Patroclus' ghost, it vanishes underground "like vapour", and Odysseus finds himself unable to touch his mother Anticlea's ghost, as she "flitted from [his] embrace as it were a dream or phantom."[99] Only the seer Teiresias retains some sense of self in death, but he, too, requires strengthening before Odysseus can consult him.[100] It is also Teiresias who tells Odysseus that the only way the ghosts of other dead will recognize him is by drinking from the sacrificial blood, which proves true, as Anticlea, Agamemnon and Elpenor all come to their senses after doing so.[101]

[96] Hdt. 4.26.1–2; Pl. *Leg*. 4.717d–718a. Cf. Jacoby 1944.
[97] Diog. Laert. 10.15–22; IG XII,3 330.
[98] Thuc. 3.58.4 refers to soldiers killed by the Persians, Plut. *Arist*. 21.2–5 to the Greeks fallen at Plataia. Additionally, Thuc. 2.34.1–7 records the public burial rites for Athenian soldiers who fell in battle, without mentioning consecutive performance of annual offerings (which does not mean they did not take place).
[99] *Il*. 23.94–107; *Od*. 11.206–224.
[100] *Od*. 10.490–495, 11.95–99. The directions for the summoning ritual of the dead are given to Odysseus by Circe: *Od*. 10.517–537.
[101] Anticlea: *Od*. 11.141–154, Agamemnon: *Od*. 11.390, Elpenor: *Od*. 11.66–78. Pindar mentions in one of his *Olympian Odes*, that the deceased "partakes in splendid blood sacrifices," as his well-attended tomb is located near the altar of the river god Alphaeus. Pind. *Ol*. 1.90–93

The primary concern of Homeric ghosts is a proper burial. Even in this mythical context the importance of proper funeral practices is emphasised by the (ghosts of) epic characters. Patroclus asks Achilles to perform funerary rites for him, as he cannot enter Hades before his remains are laid to rest; Elpenor urges Odysseus to return to Circe's island and to not leave him unburied; and Amphimedon tells Agamemnon, that the bodies of the slain suitors are still lying were they were killed by Odysseus, with their next of kin unaware of their demise.[102] Nevertheless, there does not seem much these restless ghosts can do about their situation. Elpenor warns that it might provoke the anger of the gods if Odysseus does not honour him with a wake and a burial,[103] which Iles Johnston interprets as the ability of the dead to compel the gods to act in their interest. She also sees this in the last words of the dying Hector to Achilles, after the latter states that he will not return the body of his slain enemy to the Trojans, but will leave him for the dogs and the birds: "I know you [for] what you are, and was sure that I should not move you, for your heart is hard as iron; look to it that I bring not heaven's anger upon you on the day when Paris and Phoebus Apollo, valiant though you be, shall slay you at the Scaean gates."[104] But whether the dead were thought to have the power to compel the gods, or whether mistreatment of the dead invoked divine wrath in a more general sense due to incorrect, if not outright sinful, behaviour, remains unclear.[105]

This helplessness of the dead changes as we move towards the Classical period, with literary sources, drama as well as prose, ascribing to them a degree of agency: when called upon to help the living they may withhold their cooperation or may cause harm to those that have wronged them. In both Aeschylus' *Choephoroi* and Sophocles' *Electra* Clytemnestra is plagued by nightmares which are (supposedly) caused by her late husband Agamemnon, who was killed upon his return from Troy by Aegisthus, the lover of his cheating wife. To appease the angry spirit, the queen sends libations to be offered at Agamemnon's tomb.[106] The focus and significance placed on the funeral rites in both tales is striking, demonstrating that proper care for the dead was neither restricted to the realisation of a burial, nor did it stop with the interment. Further examples can be found in Classical prose narratives. Herodotus gives account of the tyrant Periander, who conjured up the ghost of his late wife Melissa to ask her about the location of a lost deposit. Melissa refuses to

[102] Patroclus to Achilles: *Il*. 23.65–76, Elpenor to Odysseus: *Od*. 11.66–78, Amphimedon to Agamemnon: *Od*. 24.180–190.
[103] *Od*. 11.72–73.
[104] *Il*. 22.358–360 (translation by Samuel Butler (1898) p. 554, adapted). Iles Johnston 1999, 10.
[105] Offending the gods and breaking the 'unspoken' rules of nature and society always carried great repercussions. Iles Johnston herself mentions the fates of "exceptional sinners against the gods": Tityus, Tantalus, Sisyphus, Niobe and Prometheus. All were punished severely for their transgressions, either during their lifetime or by suffering in the underworld. Johnston 1999, 12f. Since respect for the dead was held in such high regard, consciously deciding to disregard the correct code of conduct may have caused divine offence.
[106] Aesch. *Ch.* 523–550; Soph. *El.* 407–427, 459–460.

cooperate, declaring that she was left freezing and naked in Hades, as her garments had not been burned during her burial and therefore were of no use to her. Periander summons the women of Corinth to the temple of Hera, where he orders them to be stripped of their fine dresses and subsequently burns the garments for his wife. Afterwards, satisfied and appeased, Melissa willingly shares the whereabouts of the lost treasure.[107] 'Real' ghost stories only start to come up in Roman literature.[108] A haunted house story survives in a letter of Pliny the Younger, who tells the tale of a restless ghost terrorizing the occupants of a mansion in Athens with noises of rattling chains and his terrifying apparition – until the philosopher Athenodorus purchased the property and followed the spectre, who led him to the place where his remains had been buried without ceremony; once proper funeral rites were performed, the haunting stopped.[109]

However, plays most frequently depict the dead interacting with the living. As Iles Johnston points out, "nowhere do we meet the dead more often than in the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides," with ghosts opening the plays and several deceased individuals returning from the underworld in flesh or spirit.[110] We learn about the offerings that are made to summon the dead, when Queen Atossa invokes the ghost of her late husband, King Darius in Aeschylus' *Persians*: libations of milk, spring water, honey and wine are poured out on the tomb, with olives and flower garlands being added as well, while the chorus sings hymns.[111] When the ghost appears, he tells us that the gods of the underworld do not let people visit the mortal realm easily and that he is pressed for time before he has to return, asking the chorus to hurry along and not waste time with long-winded words.[112] Darius seems unaware of what has happened since his death, requiring to be filled in about Xerxes' failed invasion of Greece, before he can speak a warning about the fruitlessness of any future military endeavours and advising his wife to return to the palace, as Xerxes is about

[107] Hdt. 5.92G. Melissa might also have been uncooperative since it was Periander himself who murdered her and defiled her corpse. Hdt. 3.50, 5.92G.3.
[108] Nilsson 1940, 112.
[109] Plin. *Ep.* 7.27. He also adds other supernatural events that allegedly happened to some of his slaves. In Lucian we meet Eucrates, who claims to have encountered hundreds of spirits and to have learned how to exorcise them with a spell and a magic ring; Pausanias mentions that at Marathon one can hear neighing horses and battle noises at night, and Cassius Dio tells the story of Caracalla summoning spirits (including those of his father and Commodus) in an unsuccessful bid to cure visions in which he was pursued by his late father and brother (both killed by Caracalla according to Dio). While Caracalla manages to summon some spirits, they refuse to give him advice regarding a remedy for the visions. Dio mentions that the gods don't care either, despite Caracalla's numerous sacrifices, deeming his actions too damnable for redemption through offerings. Luc. *Philops.* 16–40; Paus. 1.32.4; Cass. Dio 78.15.
[110] Iles Johnston 1999, 23. The ghost of Polydorus introduces Euripides' Hecuba (Eur. *Hec*. 1–58) and the ghost of Achilles seems to open the lost play Polyxena by Sophocles (Soph. fr. 523). Clytemnestra's ghost rallies the furies to avenge her death and punish Orestes for killing his own mother (Aesch. *Eum*. 94–139), and Alcestis is returned to her mourning husband Admetus after Heracles fights Death to bring her back (Eur. *Alc*. 1121–1142).
[111] Aesch. *Pers*. 607–622.
[112] Aesch. *Pers*. 681–693, 697–699.

to return and in need of her support and counsel.[113] Milk, water, honey and wine are mentioned numerous times in plays and epics as drink offerings to the dead, with additional gifts being made most often in form of locks of hair, but also flowers, (honey) cakes, myrtle, and barley.[114] Electra's comment at Agamemnon's tomb that she will bring offerings on her wedding day may suggest that it was customary to visit the grave of relatives, especially parents, on special occasions thereby having them participate in the festivities.[115] Additionally, Menander wrote a comedy titled *Phasma*, which survives only in fragments, and at least two additional classical plays by Philemon and Theagnetus carried the same title.[116]

Plutarch and Plato both criticise those who take advantage of gullible or anxious individuals by selling them spells and suspicious cures to free them of their (supernaturally caused) misfortune, ailment or pollution.[117] And while belief in ghosts is derided by these authors, inscriptions from Selinus and Cyrene recording sacred laws, offer advice on how to get rid of avenging spirits (*elasteroi*) or supernatural visitants, proving that there was need for an official solution for hauntings.[118] In both cases the ghosts are appeased by receiving offerings, in the case of Cyrene after being transferred to (or trapped in) a figurine, which is treated with the same hospitality as a mortal guest would have been.[119] The ghosts of the deceased also seem instrumental in the carrying out of curses inscribed on ancient curse tablets (*katadesmoi*), which were most commonly deposited in or near graves, especially of those who died violently or young. It is unclear whether these ghosts were meant as mere messengers who carried the curses to the gods, or if they themselves 'worked the magic' and fulfilled the assignment of the tablets.[120]

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[113] Aesch. *Pers*. 709–738, 787–791, 795–842.

[114] Aesch. *Cho*. 4–7 (hair), 22–23 (libations), 87–92 (libations), 147–151 (libations), 168 (hair); Ar. *Lys*. 599–604 (honey-cakes, flowers, ribbons); Eur. *El*. 509–516 (wine, myrtle, blood, sacrificial sheep, hair); Eur. *Hec*. 527–541 (blood); Eur. *IT* 157–174 (milk, wine, honey; with the explicit mention that no hair should be given); Eur. *Or*. 94–96 (libations, hair), 106–115 (milk and honey mix, wine, hair); Soph. *El*. 51–54 (libations, hair), 407 (libations), 448–452 (hair), 893–901 (milk, flowers, hair); *Od*. 11.26–28 (honey, milk, wine, water, barley).
It can be assumed that more personalized offerings were made as well, specific to the individual dead, such as the pipe-player Charmus, an avid seafood-lover in life, who received fish as food offerings from his friend Technon, according to Clearchus. Ath. *Deipnosophistae* 8.344c.

[115] Aesch. *Cho*. 483–488.

[116] Iles Johnston 1999, 28. Although the alleged apparition in Menander's play turns out to be an illegitimate child of the protagonist's mother, who was raised by the neighbours.

[117] Plut. *Mor. De superst*. 165d–166c; Pl. *Leg*. 909a–d, 933a–b; Pl. *Rep*. 364b–365a.

[118] Cyrene: Rhodes – Osborne *GHI* I 97, Selinous: Rhodes – Osborne *GHI* II 115.

[119] Iles Johnston 1999, 58f. Plutarch mentions (somewhat dismissively) that according to legend Apollo had to make libations and perform ceremonies matching those of mortals who seek to appease vengeful spirits, in an effort to lay Phyto's ghost to rest. Plut. *Mor. De def. or.* 418b–c.

[120] Gager 1992, 18–20; Iles Johnston 1999, 71f.

In summary, while literary sources offer some consistent general points, such as the importance of the correct funeral rights and proper care for the dead, they do not tell us a huge amount about actual experiences and do not allow detailed reconstruction of the interactions between living and dead in the lived reality of antiquity. This is especially true when working in more specific geographical or chronological contexts. The ancient audience knew what was meant, so there was no need to explain details of common customs. The focus in the texts is on action, even in this very imprecise way, rather than the meaning for the people involved. The spirits in epic prose reinforce the focus on ritual which continues to inform prose and drama even as the literary ghosts gain greater agency in later plays. The ghosts of Greek theatre may have more character, but they share the same concern about being treated properly after death as the epic heroes. While the epics and plays tell stories of exceptional characters who are, by their very nature, larger than life, they follow the behavioural norms expected of Greek citizens to some extent, acting as role models for correct social behaviour.

Naturally, we need to allow for some leeway regarding the epic and mythical nature of literary sources: it is hard to imagine that citizens who went out to their family's tomb on a festival day to perform the customary rites expected their grandmothers to rise from the ground to have a chat or provide counsel. Hence, the texts may not tell us about what the rites involved in detail, but we learn of the custom of visiting the graves of loved ones (especially shortly after their death, when grief was still fresh, and possibly on the occasion of important life events, such as weddings) as well as of the practice of laying down different offerings for the dead and the form these gifts took.

1.2 Hellenistic grave epigrams

Several thousand epigrams survive from antiquity, many of them epitaphs inscribed into the surface of grave monuments.[121] As already mentioned, tombstones are rarely found in situ as part of their original funerary context, having often been reused as building blocks or moved into public or private collections (possibly after being sold on the art market).[122] Collected, transcribed and commented on in an ever-expanding number of volumes "known to initiates by obscure acronyms like ICUR or IG II/III²"[123] they are far removed from their original context, perception, and function, including the emotional response they sparked by being read.[124]

[121] Bodel 2001, 4, 30.
[122] Morris 1992, 135, 156; Hölscher 2006, 129, 133.
[123] Morris 1992, 156.
[124] Bodel 2001, 16f.

Gravestones and their inscriptions do not only speak of the dead, but also for them, conveying information about the deceased to visitors or passers-by, making the (invisible) absent dead present through commemoration.[125]

Many epitaphs only give limited insight into the life of the deceased, recording name, patronym (or andronym) and origin (or Attic deme), with women more often designated as wives or mothers than as daughters.[126] As with votive reliefs, inscription provide basic information about the dead/receiving deity, commissioner/dedicator, and in case of the votives about the reason for the dedication.[127] In some cases the age at the time of death is recorded as well, particularly in cases of very early deaths, cutting short all potential of a life, or deaths in old age after a long life well lived.[128] Longer epitaphs expanding on biographical detail or civic accomplishment became more common in the Hellenistic period, sometimes in elaborate poetic form.[129] Nevertheless, very long inscribed grave poems remain rare and only in exceptional instances do the inscriptions directly reference the imagery that may be part of the grave monument.[130] A notable example is the grave stele of Menophila (found in Sardes), where the inscription explains that the unusual alpha-sign next to her figure on the relief marks her as the only child of her parents.[131] Within the dataset of this thesis, most reliefs are only inscribed with the name of the deceased and a patronym or andronym, often combined with the salutation *chaire*. Just ten reliefs carry a surviving funerary poem: eight from Smyrna, and one each from Rhodes and Samos.[132] Eight lament the death of children or unmarried individuals (PM 392 (pl. 40), 569 (pl. 50), 640 (pl. 52), 766 (pl. 56), 858 (pl. 59), 865 (pl. 14), 1102

[125] Bodel 2001, 39; Bruss 2005, 26; Karlsson 2014, 41f; Jones 2015, 818f, 821f; Turner 2015, 146f; Estrin 2023, 12, 40–58.
[126] Hausmann 1960, 24f; Peek 1960, 32; Morris 1992, 157; Tsagalis 2008, 314, Estrin 2023, 7.
[127] Peek 1960, 6; Männlein-Robert 2007, 37; Tueller 2008, 2.
[128] Tsagalis 2008, 314; Palagia 2016, 374. The analysis of Hopkins regarding using age-at-death records for claims about mortality in ancient Rome has shown that any data derived from these inscriptions is highly biased. There is no equal geographical or social distribution of inscribed epitaphs, as not every individual was memorialized by one. Hopkins 1966: Morris 1992, 158f; Bodel 2001, 35.
[129] Peek 1960, 31; Breuer 1995, 50; Bruss 2005, 55. For a discussion of Archaic and Classical funerary epigrams cf. Gonzáles 2019. From the sepulchral tradition of grave epitaphs came the genre of Hellenistic literary epigrams, a form of intellectual texts that were composed and sometimes recited as entertainment and collected in poetry books and later anthologies. Some collections may have included transcriptions of actual inscribed epigrams. Gutzwiller 1998, ix–x; Männlein-Robert 2007, 37; Tueller 2008, 57. Gutzwiller's *Garlands* (1998) still provides a comprehensive analysis of Hellenistic literary epigrams, epigrammatists such as Nossis and Posidippus, and the anthologies by Antipater of Sidon and Meleager, which cannot be discussed as part of this thesis, since literary epigrams are inspired by real funerary inscriptions, but function within a very different context. Cf. also Bing – Bruss 2007, Fain 2010, Cairns 2016.
[130] For an exceptional example see *CEG* 596. This differs from the ekphratic texts of literary epigrams. For an analysis cf. Männlein-Robert 2007.
[131] PM 418 (Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, 141, pl. 69); cf. Engelen 2003 for an interpretation of the epigram.
[132] Smyrna: PM 392 (GVI 1512), 569 (GVI 874), 640 (GVI 768), 766 (GVI 1179), 858 (GVI 1540), 878 (GVI 1315), 1102 (GVI 701); Rhodes: PM 865 (GVI 1625); Samos: PM 1821 (GVI 1154). Very short and for a man of undetermined age: 1488 (GVI 1710), also from Smyrna.

(pl. 66), 1821 (pl. 100)) and two adult individuals with surviving family members.[133] It seems clear that these epitaphs mark either particularly tragic deaths of children or unmarried individuals, or notable deaths in old age leaving a (male) descendant. This theme can be observed throughout the history of funeral poems: Peek's *Grabgedichte* has many examples of inscriptions mentioning that the deceased is survived by their parents (GG 152), that they never were able to get married (GG 30, 148, 158) or that Hades (GG 159) or the Moires (GG 157) stole them before they could reach adulthood, often combined with expressions of deep grief and longing by their parents (GG 111, 112, 118, 126).

Concerning the wider content of Hellenistic epigrams, the individual fate became more important and was highlighted to generate pity for the deceased or sympathy with the mourning bereaved in passers-by, which, according to Estrin, would legitimize the private, subjective experience of pain of the bereaved, and acknowledge it in a material, socially recognizable form (i.e., the grave monument) marking the dead as someone worth grieving by the community.[134] Demands to stop or mourn the deceased directly addressed to the passer-by are common during the Classical period, with the viewer being one of several 'characters' that can appear in funerary inscriptions, alongside the inscribed object itself (*sema*), the deceased, and the person who buried the dead and erected the tombstone.[135] However, these demands soften at the end of the Classical period, with a tendency to ask the reader, usually identified as *xenos*, only to 'see' (e.g. PM 878 (pl. 61)) the gravesite, with the speaker and addressee of inscriptions becoming less clearly distinguished in the formulations.[136]

Nevertheless, it can be assumed that the inscription on a stele was meant to be read by an external viewer, enabling them to identify whose grave they were encountering. While not all graves carried epigrams or reliefs, and not all epigrams gave particular instructions, they all interacted with their readers, making them aware of the life that was lost and mourned at this place. The inscription may have only conveyed the name of the deceased, but together with the grave monument it was inscribed on, they allowed the dead to be 'seen' and remembered when interacted with by family members, friends, or passing strangers. For a passer-by a long, more descriptive inscription, highlighting the particularly tragic nature of a death, may be reason to stop and read about the

[133] PM 863 (pl. 102): man survived by wife and son; PM 878 (pl. 61): couple survived by son.
[134] Estrin 2016, 211; cf. also Peek 1960, 38f; Breuer 1995, 50; Bruss 2005, 55; Estrin 2023, 6f. This is especially explicit in epigrams that invite passers-by to pause and pity or mourn the deceased (e.g. CEG 28). Tueller 2008, 41.
[135] Tueller 2008, 12–56; Bruss 2010, 120; Estrin 2023, 12. Inscriptions could also ask to be read out loud. Bodel 2001, 16, 18. Tueller points out an interesting problem of the epigrams with time: the inscription will always need to be addressed to a future reader. This means that what can be said about the present is limited to "things that are permanently true", meaning the location of the reader (at the grave) and the time (present). Tueller 2008, 36f, 41.
[136] Tueller 2008, 39, 44, 60.

details of the deceased, especially when combined with a relief providing additional visual input causing a more emotional response. Unlike epic stories epigrams can give us information about the regular dead who lived regular lives by naming them, additional family members and sometimes their age, profession or circumstances of death. But epigrams are not for the dead and, I would argue, not (necessarily) for the bereaved either. They address an audience unfamiliar with the dead, introducing them and conveying the impact their death had on surviving family members who are left longing and in pain, unable to see their children grow up or to live a long life at the side of their spouse, thereby reinforcing a sense of personal relationship and empathy with the family of the deceased.

Epigrams thus decontextualise the dead by focusing on what characterised them when they were still alive (age, participation in competitions, children left orphaned etc.) and shift the conversation to the still living bereaved who will have to come to terms with their loss. The actual dead person in their post-mortem state is not part of this conversation. The grave, most often with an undetermined voice was able to address the reader and engage with them directly through the epigram, speaking of the dead (or for them), but very rarely as them.[137] Additionally, just like the literary sources, epigrams do not tell us where we should locate the dead within the ancient Greek universe. They have left the mortal realm, they do not enter the realm of gods, and most of them are not elevated to heroes. The exploration of literary sources showed us common themes regarding the importance of proper burial, and funerary epigrams illustrated the shared practice of memorializing the names of the dead, but there are limits to what can be learned about the dead and their interaction with the living. All these sources are unquestionably useful for the bigger picture, but they do not tell us about the kind of relationship that existed between dead and living on the common level, outside of the context of epics and drama. This leaves questions unanswered that I believe can be tackled using archaeological material and iconographical analysis.

1.3 Gifts for the dead

After exploring how the living encounter the dead in literature and through epigrams, I turn to material culture and what continuous visits to the grave and gifts presented to the dead may tell us about the relationship between living and dead. Little evidence remains of the libations offered to the dead. Even if the offerings themselves no longer survive, we know that some vases placed on

[137] Cf. Tueller 2008, 19f, 33f, figs. 3, 4, 9, 10 for speakers and addressees in sepulchral epigrams before the Hellenistic period.

graves had a perforated or broken bottom, allowing drink offerings to flow directly into the ground, with the vessel sometimes also functioning as *sema*.[138]

An early, but still relevant, overview of burial rites and death cult by Rohde noted that the dead received offerings like gods and heroes because they were perceived as "invisible powers" who should be propitiated or their wrath averted, as they are easily irritated but also capable of granting blessings for childbirth and farming.[139] According to Rohde the cult for the dead was a demonstration of respect towards one's ancestors, a sign of piety and evidence of familial solidarity, with every soul being deserving of care delivered by their descendants.[140] He was supported by Stengel, who described the proximity of cult for the chthonic divinities and cult for the dead, noting that the souls of ancestors are "nourished" by offerings and, unlike the gods, would starve without them.[141] Stengel's focus was on the shift from the early bloody sacrifices at the tomb, still partially present in the Homeric epics, to the drink offerings of the Classical period. He closes with the remark that the loss of fearful dread of the dead allowed the deceased to be integrated into the realm of the living, with collective meals (*deipna*) and cemeteries becoming "cheerful spaces", inviting visitors to stop at the stelai and remember the dead.[142] Harrison also discussed rituals for the dead, mostly within the context of Athenian festivals, such as the *Anthesteria*, and the nature and origin of sacrifices.[143] Unlike her predecessors, Harrison did not rely primarily on literary sources but used a broad selection of archaeological material (such as vase paintings and reliefs) trying to reconstruct the origin of Greek religion through the analysis of known rituals.[144] Nilsson claimed that only heroes returned as ghosts, stating that during the Classical period there was no regular ancestor cult, but merely sporadic visits to the grave to perform sacrifices and offerings.[145] Burkert treats the cult of the dead only briefly in the greater context of death, afterlife, heroes and chthonic gods, without exploring the reasons for continuous cultic acts or the nature of offerings.[146]

[138] Nilsson 1963, 176f, Pl. 52, Ill. 2, 4; Burkert 1977, 299; Kurtz – Boardman 1971, 205f.
[139] Rohde 1898, Vol. I, 246f.
[140] Rohde 1898, Vol. I, 249–254.
[141] Stengel 1895, 414f.
[142] Stengel 1910, 126–145, esp. 142–145.
[143] Harrison 1903, 40–46, 63–75.
[144] Harrison 1927 analyses the 'hero-feast' and the 'heroic dead' (307–316), yearly sacrifices to the heroes (375–376), and 'hero tombs'/mounds (401–405).
[145] Nilsson 1963, 179–181, 183. Regarding Hellenistic death cult he simply notes, that it was "*gepflegt*", following the same interpretation as Pfuhl with grave reliefs depicting the *Totenmahl* as proof that feasts took place at the tomb. Nilsson 1950, 222.
[146] Burkert 1977, 298–300. In *Homo Necans* he draws connections between the cult of the dead and hunting cults stemming from the Palaeolithic Age. For him, death rites and rites for killing after a successful hunt have permeated each other, going so far as to call the dead a 'surrogate' for the prey, and the *Totenmahl* a ritualised version of the feast after the hunt. Burkert 1972, 60–69.

While Kurtz – Boardman (1971) and Garland (1985) provide invaluable insights into Greek burial practices, their focus lies less on (continuous) interaction between living and dead than on the process of interment and the surrounding rituals. After Stengel no one until Iles Johnston (1999) picked up the discussion of this marginalized topic.

In regards to how often graves were visited, while at Athens the *Genesia* seems to have been the primary memorial day observed by the whole city, there is evidence for other regular and irregular visits to the grave.[147] The scenes imagined on white funerary lekythoi suggest that the graves were decorated (at least during the big festivals), with ribbons and garlands wound around the stelai which had been brought in by visitors in large baskets.[148] It can be assumed that the tombs were cleaned thoroughly before being adorned, possibly even being anointed with oil.[149] Visitation scenes on lekythoi also record gifts in the form of vases, garlands, wreaths, *kalathoi*, and musical instruments being placed on the tomb (fig. 1–5), and also the act of pouring libations for the dead (fig. 6–8).[150]

Libations are the offering most prominently featured in the literary and iconographical evidence. Sepulchral libations are an obvious reference to, or echo of, the libations made for the gods, either to ask for divine help for future endeavours, or to give thanks for a granted divine favour.[151] The libation can be viewed as part of a contract (or cooperation), a return for a service rendered or expected; a fragment of a play ascribed to Aristophanes notes that drink and food is offered to the dead, like gods, in hope of them sending up "what's good".[152] But if the support of the immortals is not guaranteed, what can the dead send from the underworld in return for the offerings? Burkert suggests that "the expectations of reciprocity come about against 'unclear' partners (gods, heroes,

[147] Hsch. s.v. γενέσια. Monthly and annual visits, although in the case of the latter it is unclear if they happened on the day of death, the day of the burial or the anniversary of the deceased's birthday: Garland 1985, 104f. Photios also names the *Nemeseia* as a festival held in honour of the dead. Phot. s.v. Νεμέσια. For a short discussion of *Genesia*, *Nekusia* and *Nemeseia* cf. Stengel 1910, 163–165, as well as Rohde 1898, Vol. I, 235f, n. 1. For a general discussion of the *Genesia* cf. Jacoby 1944.

[148] *CVA* 209239, 209240, 212365, 212364. Plut. *Tim*. 26 (tombs are wreathed with parsley); Ar. *Eccl*. 1030–1035 (garlands of wax, flowers for tombs).

[149] There is no contemporary evidence for the regular anointing of private tombstones with oil. Plut. *Arist*. 21.2–5 describes the anointing of the monument at the annual Memorial Day for the fallen at Plataia, which is mentioned by Nilsson, who claims that the anointing of stelai was an "*allgemeine Sitte*" but provides no examples or evidence beyond the Plataian tradition (Nilsson 1963, 191). Lucian makes a derisive comment on the anointing of grave stelai (*Merc. Cond.* 28) and the owner of a grave in Rome (probably Imperial) explicitly asks visitor to not bestow the grave with oil/perfume (*myra*) or garlands, as it is just a stone, and any expenses spend on it would be wasted (*Epigr.Gr*. 646b). None of these instances provide convincing evidence for a common practice of anointing private funeral monuments in the Classical or Hellenistic period.

[150] A few vases show rabbits or hares being brought to the grave; those could be interpreted as pets (e.g., *CVA* 214321, 209275, 216378).

[151] On libations cf. Simon 2004, 237–253; Gaifman 2018.

[152] *Ar. Fr.* 504 Kassel-Austin (trans.: *Aristophanes. Fragments. Edited and translated by Jeffrey Henderson* (Cambridge, MA 2008)).

or the dead) [as] a function of religious tradition to teach, and to practice, giving as a 'nice' strategy which in the long run is better than petty cheating and ruthless exploitation."[153] Basically, he suggests the aim was to give *something* (be it part of a meal, some money during the visit to a temple or a portion of successfully hunted game), even if a return was uncertain or the thanks for success based on an optimistic interpretation of mere coincidence. Iles Johnston similarly proposes that there are two reasons to make offerings to the dead: one being the fear of being haunted in some form by an angry ghost, and the other affection towards the deceased. She also points out that the line separating gift-giving out of affection and out of fear of potential harm is thin, and grave offerings may be motivated by both simultaneously.[154] Given that the dead, like the gods, are beings removed from the realm of the living, with desires and needs that must be met, it would appear wise to try not to offend them by withholding gifts that they may regard as something that is fundamentally theirs. The emotional component should not be underestimated: flowers and candles are brought to graves in modern times. They are part of the grieving process as well as tokens that create a connection to a lost loved one, offered without any fear of being harmed by their ghost if those gifts are withheld.[155] There is no reason to believe that offerings to the dead in antiquity were not motivated by the wish to pay respect to ancestors and to 'give' them something regarded valuable or pleasant.[156]

Such grave offerings are visually made perpetual on several grave stelai from Asia Minor (three from Smyrna, one from Rhodes). PM 804 (pl. 56) shows a toddler in the main relief, and a row of offerings carved into the stone at the bottom, rendering them as if they had been placed on the pedestal of the *naiskos* frame. The offerings consist of a rattle, three knucklebones and a ball – fitting gifts for a small child. Stele PM 539 (pl. 48) also features a selection of objects beneath the figural relief which depicts a couple. From left to right, we can identify a book scroll leaning on a small chest, a box (possibly a *polyptychon*/writing tablet), a cylindrical *cista*, a hat and a *kalathos*.[157] The objects correspond to the attributes usually placed on shelves behind the figures and also match the gender of the two deceased, with the scroll and writing tablet being placed beneath the man, and the hat and wool basket beneath the woman. PM 178 (pl. 36) features a second depressed

[153] Burkert 1987, 48f.
[154] Iles Johnston 1999, 38.
[155] Cf. Köstlin 1992, Smith 1999, Everett 2000 and Aka 2010 for notes on modern roadside monuments/shrines for victims of traffic accidents and the objects 'offered' there, often in addition to gifts being placed on the graves of the victims.
[156] This responsibility of taking care and paying respect is evident in various grave epigrams that either mention the care (including proper funeral rites and the erection of a grave monument) of children for their deceased parents (Peek *GVI* 679, 1314, 1391) or dismay about the future absence of care in cases of children dying before their parents (Peek *GVI* 920, 1068, 1118 (CEG 2 557), 1155, 1680).
[157] Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, 164.

image field beneath the main relief of a young man, depicting two vessels (perhaps alabastra) flanking a shield or bowl. Lastly, PM 2318 (pl. 28) from Rhodes, a *naiskos* frame without surviving figures depicts several objects in flat relief on the outside of the small sides. On the right an amphora, a basin or basket with lidded bottles and a wide vessel; on the left a plate with three fishes, a round cake and a *kalathos*.

The offerings for the toddler appear especially emotionally touching; we can assume that the parents did not fear their child's return as a vengeful spirit and may look to literary sources for the significance of these carved offerings. If Periander's wife Melissa had need for clothing in the underworld, maybe the parents wanted to make sure that their little boy had his favourite toys with him. Similarly, the objects on PM 178 allude to the *palaestra/gymnasium* where the young man presumably spent some time during his education and training, as well as the military service that he will never complete.[158] The selection of PM 539 is the most stereotypical and the same attributes are commonly found arranged on shelves within the relief field on other stelai. Children and adolescents, however, usually hold such attributes themselves or have servants carry them. Having the attributes of the toddler and the young man occupy spaces at the bottom of the stelai is unusual and causes these stelai to stand out among the corpus. The objects on the left side of PM 2318 fit easily within the literary and iconographical evidence we have encountered so far: food could be offered to the dead, and *kalathoi* appear as part of grave reliefs as well as in scenes on white lekythoi. However, the objects on the right are more uncommon. Amphoras were used in many situations and might reference the use of vessels as grave markers as well as a personal connection to the trade of a deceased or their success in a competition, where prizes could include amphoras filled with olive oil. The basket or basin might be reference to a cult object with the bottles inside carrying offerings or other ritualistic tools. Completely unclear is the nature and use of the vessel at the bottom, which cannot be further identified. Without additional information or evidence, it may not be possible to interpret the objects beyond generic associations. Nonetheless, they fit into the small group of stelai that seem to depict gifts for the dead visually. Placed separately from the figures yet part of the funeral monument they are marked as fully part of neither the realm of the dead nor that of the living, rather occupying a liminal space between the worlds.

[158] In a similar vein of 'lost opportunities', there is an uneasy relationship between burial and wedding rites that becomes evident in funeral monuments and inscriptions for young unwed or newlywed women. They highlight how the father or guardian (who might have already found them a fitting spouse) was robbed of the chance to perform wedding rites for them, instead being forced to carry out funeral rites to guide them to Hades (Hades referring to either the place or its ruler, who is often understood to be their new 'groom'). Meister 2020, 55–57. Cf. Peek *GVI* 683, 1238, 1989, as well as the scene of Hecuba mourning the death of Astyanax: "I put upon you the glory of Phrygian robes, things you should have worn at your marriage to some preeminent Asian princess." (Eur. *Tr*. 1219–1221) For maidens on Attic grave reliefs cf. Margariti 2018.

Semata are created by and for the living, and they serve a purpose beyond signifying the physical space of where a body was laid to rest, with the continuously made offerings for the dead evidence of an ongoing significant relationship between living and dead, familiar as well as foreign. Arrington has argued for the inclusion of touch into the study of funerary monuments and burial practice.[159] I would argue that touch and visibility were not only important aspects for the use of physical grave markers and objects buried with the corpse, but also the offerings placed on the grave and recognized by others. Arrington briefly mentions mediating objects that were used as grave offerings (aryballoi, lekythoi, strigils) inside the grave and linked back to the objects held by figures on grave reliefs, and Estrin exemplifies this for the grave of Eupheros, who is shown with a strigil on his funerary relief, and was also buried with a pair of strigils.[160] Touch should also inform our understanding of the deeply emotional and personal sense of longing for a lost loved one which can be seen in the continuous visits to their gravesite, bringing gifts that would have been appreciated by the dead, and may even have been connected to a tactile experience in life. The preparation, serving and sharing of a favoured meal for a husband, the toys gifted to and used by a small child, or the hat a wife wore when leaving the house: all these items would have been touched by the deceased as well as the living and are brought to the grave in remembrance of cherished loved ones. Offerings were also seen by passers-by, bearing witness to the ongoing love and care of the bereaved and through this emotional connection, making the dead maybe more approachable for an unfamiliar passer-by who may be moved by this show of affection. Just as an inscribed name or the figural depiction of the deceased makes them less anonymous and more present to a viewer, so do grave offering show they continue to be loved and missed.

While the examples of funerary stelai with carved grave gifts cannot be read as unequivocal evidence for a general custom of placing (personalized) offerings on the foot of graves in all poleis, they demonstrate that the practice was at least known in Smyrna and Rhodes, where this was an accepted element on publicly accessible monuments. It clearly illustrates the engagement and deeply personal connection of the living with the deceased through offerings and gifts at the tomb, making it easy to imagine that additional 'traditional' (real) grave offerings, like lekythoi, garlands and wreaths, were also placed on and around the funerary monuments, maybe even including personal gifts such as the little boy's actual toys.

But figures on grave reliefs are never explicitly placed within a funerary setting without their context on a grave stele. There are no unambiguous signifiers for dead individuals, and even scenes such as the *Totenmahl* are linked to the funerary context only by association with the heroic topic of the

[159] Arrington 2018.
[160] Arrington 2018, 13, 21; Estrin 2023, esp. 22–39.

banquet and its chthonic character, not by any exclusive iconographical relationship of the theme to the realm of death. After all, gods and living people are commonly depicted feasting in the same way. It is therefore necessary to look more closely at the compositions chosen to (re)present the protagonists of the stelai and their interaction with the viewer and each other, to better understand the dialogue between living and dead.

1.4 Interaction in death: a compositional analysis of Hellenistic funerary stelai

There is an interesting tension between individual and shared features within the figural composition of grave reliefs. While each of the cities discussed in this thesis displays preferences for certain themes and motifs – such as banquet scenes in Samos, equestrians in Pergamon, or the so-called Demeter priestesses in Smyrna – the overall arrangement and composition of figures and motifs remain consistent. The funeral imagery of Classical Athens can be understood as providing resource for the shared visual language of the Hellenistic poleis, a canon of visual features, such as themes and pictorial elements, that was commonly known throughout the Greek world and could be drawn from. For the following discussion of the different compositions the reliefs are divided typologically, not geographically, with the table below providing an overview of the distribution of motifs across the different poleis. This analysis explores how grave reliefs were utilized to allow for an embodied encounter with the dead: a conversation 'face to face'. Before undertaking a comparison of poleis, it is necessary to establish the visual homologies they employ. The following overview of figural depictions functions as a guide to the visual language available within these peer polities, allowing for close analysis of compositions and motifs specific to each polis and more detailed comparison in later chapters.

The compositional patterns discussed below must be understood within the dynamics of peer polity interaction outlined in the introduction. While the recurrence of certain types (e.g., standing, banquet, *dexiosis*) reflects shared homologies rooted in the Classical visual *koine*, their persistence does not automatically signal direct exchange or competitive emulation. Channels of transmission were multiple and often indirect: mobility of artists and ideas, pattern-books, (reputational) networks, and the cultural and social weight of funerary ritual shaped how iconographies circulated. At the same time, the specific ways in which individual poleis combined, modified, or resisted established figure types were embedded within a field of horizontal comparison, where visual choices could articulate local identity as much through adherence to tradition as through innovation.

The viewer's encounter with these reliefs should therefore be read not only at the level of interpersonal interaction between living and dead, but also as part of a wider inter-polis discourse in which communities positioned themselves within a shared but flexible Hellenistic repertoire that could be re-negotiated to express different preferences, tastes and identities.

The modes of viewer engagement that recur across the stelai, i.e., frontal gazes, outward-facing body orientation, and visual permeability between the depicted scene and the onlooker's space, should also be situated within the broader dynamics of PPI. Cemeteries functioned not only as private spaces of mourning but as civic stages visible to citizens, travellers, and neighbouring communities. By projecting certain ways of encountering the dead, poleis articulated culturally legible identities within a shared Hellenistic funerary *koine*. The decision to favour viewer-oriented compositions, to invite face-to-face confrontation in standing portraits, or to maintain more inward-facing intimacy in *dexiosis* scenes, thus participated in a regional discourse about how the community represented virtue, status, and memory. In this sense, the viewer is not only an individual mourner but also a participant in an inter-polis field of comparison, where modes of seeing and being seen contributed to the negotiation of civic identity.

While PPI offers a productive comparative frame for understanding shared compositional imageries across the Hellenistic poleis, its explanatory reach is necessarily limited when applied to the micro-scale of individual relief compositions. Many features analysed here may stem, or be partially influenced, as much by workshop conventions, craft habitus, or a conservative approach to sepulchral iconographic tradition as by inter-polis dynamics. Moreover, similarity in composition does not in itself indicate active emulation or competitive signalling; it can equally reflect parallel solutions to shared representational problems, the inflexibility of long-standing visual traditions, or the constraints of artisanal training. Recognising these limits prevents over-attributing agency to horizontal interaction and clarifies that PPI is best understood as a framework for analysing broader patterns of homology and differentiation among peers rather than as a mechanism that accounts for every formal choice within individual monuments.

Analysing the variations of compositions used to arrange the figures on funeral reliefs inevitably leads to iconographic overlap: *dexiosis* scenes can involve standing and seated figures, and women in banquet scenes are usually depicted seated. In the interest of clarity, the reliefs have been categorized by their superordinated theme, i.e., any relief depicting a *dexiosis* is included as part of the group of '*dexiosis* reliefs' and not added to the group of seated or standing figures. No distinction is made between toddlers and adolescents: instead, all categorized and counted as pre-adults.

		Byzantion	Pergamon	Rhodes	Samos	Smyrna	Total
Dexiosis		18º	1	13	5	10	47
Embrace		–	–	5	–	–	5
Equestrian		4*	18	1	4	8	35
Standing figure/s							
Man (single)		12	–	6	1	16	35
Woman (single)		8	–	3◊	3†	16	30
Pre-adult	♂	5	1	13	3	8	30
	♀	3	–	2	2	5	12
Multiple figures		5	–	1	1	25	32
Seated figure/s							
Man		3	1	3	–	2	9
Woman		6	1	13	14†	4	38
Pre-adult (all ♂)		–	–	3	1	2	6
Combination: standing & sitting figures							
Adults		4	2	3	–	14	23
Pre-adult (all ♂)		–	–	–	–	2	2
Banquet scene		58* º	4	14◊	77•	5	157
Unclear fragments		12	5	3	8	5	34
Other		5	1	3	1	1	11

Table 1: Distribution of motifs on the reliefs from the five poleis discussed in this thesis.

º	F 191a carries two separate reliefs, one depicting a dexiosis (F 191a-1) and one depicting a banquet scene (F 191a-2)
*	F 213 carries two separate reliefs, one depicting a banquet scene (F 213a) and one of an equestrian (F 213b)
◊	PM 421 carries two separate reliefs, one of a standing woman (PM 421a) and one of a male banqueteer (PM 421b)
†	PM 453 carries two reliefs (one on each side): a standing woman (PM 453a) and a seated woman (PM 453b)
•	25 of which are fragments clearly identifiable as banquet scenes

1.4.1 Standing figures

The most commonly chosen composition is the frontal standing figure, often used for single figures and couples, but rarely for more than two figures. There are almost equal numbers of male and female figures, as well as children and adolescents. Apart from the protagonist/s the reliefs typically include one or more miniature figures, marked as slaves by their size and conduct, who match the gender of the figure they are assigned to. Clad in short *chiton*s these miniature slaves carry objects for their masters or are shown in mourning gestures.

The single standing figure is the composition most directly confronting the onlooker with the body positioned offering a frontal view (usually in a more or less pronounced contrapposto), and the gaze directed outwards. The standing figures appear to interact with the viewer outside the relief more than with what is depicted 'inside' through the positioning of their heads and bodies, even when the relief scene includes other figures. The depiction of the full-frontal face is rare (e.g., PM

223 (pl. 127)), with the heads of the figures usually in three-quarter view and tilted to one side, even if their gaze is not directed towards a specific person or object (e.g., PM 376 (pl. 39)). This might be understood as aesthetic choice, with the three-quarter view perhaps deemed more attractive than a full-frontal face,[161] or because the three-quarter face keeps the figure in a different realm than the onlooker (although less firm than the profile), whereas the frontal face puts viewer and depicted into more direct interaction, perhaps even the same space.[162]

In 'couple portraits' the poses become more varied: while there are examples of either one or both figures gazing straight forward (PM 543 (pl. 48), 603 (pl. 130)), or both looking into the same direction (PM 564 (pl. 50)), the majority of the reliefs show them tilting their heads towards each other. Eye-contact between the figures can be subtle, with their gaze barely directed towards their partner (PM 567 (pl. 50)), or explicit, i.e., they can be seen exchanging looks with each other (PM 539 (pl. 48), 555 (pl.49)). This variety extends to the positioning of the bodies, though pairs rarely show true interaction, as physical contact is usually not depicted. The figures can be placed close together (PM 530 (pl. 46), 545 (pl. 49)), or with space between them (PM 505 (pl. 46), 564 (pl. 59)). Sometimes there is so much space that it appears as if the figures are leaning away from each other (PM 341 (pl. 38), 539 (pl. 48)). Interestingly, two reliefs with pairs of female figures show the closest physical contact: on PM 506 (pl. 129) the larger woman wraps one arm around the shoulder of the smaller woman (maybe mother and daughter), and the pair on PM 507 (pl. 130) stand especially close, with one woman holding up a piece of cloth or a scroll to her companion.

While the general consensus is that the visual syntax during the Hellenistic period became more additive,[163] it is still worth asking whether the interaction between figures created by their positioning was intentional or a by-product of the artisanal process. Put more precisely: was there much thought invested into the visual interplay of the figures regarding gaze and body pose, or did the commissioner/craftsman choose from a 'catalogue' of figures that could be 'mixed and matched' freely (depending on taste and technical skill)?[164] The surviving reliefs support the thesis that there was less of an established 'recipe' for how figures were paired, creating reliefs that

[161] Boardman 1974, 198, 226; Boardman 1975, 212; Scheffold 1993, 77; Turner 2015, 157–160. Korshak 1987 analyses frontal faces on Archaic Attic vases, pointing out that the frontal perspective expanded the range of expressions but was limited to a restricted selection of figures, e.g., figures of the Dionysian sphere and figures engaged in combat or training; Hedreen 2007 and Hedreen 2017 pick up the discussion of frontal faces in vase-painting. For the frontal face of Medusa see Mack 2002.

[162] Osborne 1988, 3f, 6–8; Breuer 1995, 63. For a discussion of frontality especially under the aspect of active and passive characters, as well as the relationship between viewer and figure cf. Frontisi-Ducroux 1995.

[163] Hesberg 1988, 312, 315, 333.

[164] Cf. Cox & Sons (1875), Illustrated catalogue for funeral monuments; GMA 1918, esp. 276–306.

conformed with an overarching theme and tradition, while combining fixed figure types in an additive way to create a level of uniqueness and interactive elements within the relief composition.

This becomes more obvious in the rare examples of 'family portraits': reliefs depicting more than two standing individuals (PM 640 (pl. 52), 646 (pl. 53)). While couples create a coherent composition through either flow (matching posture: PM 564 (pl. 50)) or tension (contrasting posture: PM 539 (pl. 48)), the compositional balance of groups tends to be unstable, the uneven number of figures, causing them to fall apart visually. Often, the figures seem unable to decide on a focus point; instead of creating a cohesive scene with two figures turning their bodies and heads towards the third, they appear like a selection of static set-figures that do not quite fit together, especially when compared to couple-stelai. The figures seem awkwardly placed next to each other. As Pfuhl wrote: "The countermovement of two figures combined with the parallel movement of a third figure in relation to one of the former results in a gaping space that, as in the depictions of couples, is not closed through the addition of children and attributes but becomes only more palpable."[165] This is a stark contrast to scenes created on Classical funerary monuments from Athens. Athenian reliefs show family members or single figures and servants interacting, creating tableaux that have no specific narrative but emphasize the unity of the *oikos* and familial dynasty, while Hellenistic reliefs are more concerned with individual figures than an overarching narrative tying them together.[166] This shift should be understood not simply as stylistic change but as part of a broader re-negotiation of civic identity within a network of peers, where the representation of the individual citizen gained symbolic weight. Rather than marking a break with Classical models, the move to a more individual-focused imagery reflects the adaptation of a shared Classical visual *koine,* in which familiar compositional forms were retained but recalibrated to foreground the individual citizen as a key locus of civic meaning.

However, the additive composition using fixed figural types does not negate interaction, especially interaction between relief-figures and viewers. On the contrary, considering how rarely standing figures are depicted in profile, the focus of funerary reliefs may have shifted from interaction between figures (to create a harmonious picture of the democratic family) to establishing a connection between the dead and the viewer. The deceased face towards the 'outside' and the living visiting them or viewing their funeral monument, creating a confrontation between the two realms, instead of being occupied with themselves, removed from the world of the living they have left behind.

[165] Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, 75.
[166] Bergemann 1997, 67, 94.

1.4.2 Seated figures

Seated figures are the characters most frequently appearing in profile, especially on reliefs with a seated individual and one or more standing figures. As Breuer has pointed out, the sitting motif became unorganic during the Hellenistic period, with the pose (less popular than standing) and the profile view of the face appearing as an involuntary concession to Classical Attic traditions.[167] This becomes apparent in scenes combining seated and standing figures: while the standing figures are usually depicted in full-frontal view, turning towards the viewer, the seated figure tends to be presented in profile, in rarer instances in three-quarter view. The motif of the seated person pictured from the front is used only in reliefs for single figures (e.g., PM 885 (pl. 132), 891 (pl. 132), 892 (pl. 133), 811 (pl. 12)). Here, as with the standing figures, the onlooker is directly confronted with the dead individual who gazes out of the frame.

A significant number of stelai show seated figures in three-quarter profile, with some turning their upper body frontal (PM 906 (pl. 61), 907 (pl. 61)). The pose, halfway to a full frontal, is mostly reserved for reliefs with only one figure and their servant. As mentioned, combining seated and standing figures seems to demand adherence to older iconographic tradition that does not allow for the same additive composition of fixed figure types that is present in ensembles of all-standing characters. While interest in, and perhaps even a 'push' for, a more open and viewer-orientated composition for seated characters is apparent, the iconographic solutions are not viewed as appropriate in scenes with other figures. A rare exception is PM 1107 (pl. 84), showing two seated women facing each other in deep conversation. The woman on the right is depicted in profile, but the woman on the left, seated in a chair with a high backrest, rather than on a stool, is shown in three-quarters profile with her head turned towards her conversational partner.

Generally, the seated position is used more often for women than for men, but in reliefs combining seated and standing figures, it is usually the man who is seated (PM 855 (pl. 132), 856 (pl. 14), Känel 15,1 (pl. 73)). In rare cases of a seated woman and a standing man, the male figure appears to be an adolescent rather than an adult (PM 1030 (pl. 64), 1040 (pl. 135)) This could be evidence of the seated position being understood as a hierarchical marker used for the most important individual, i.e., the father or husband of a family.[168]

[167] Breuer 1995, 34, who also notes that most seated figures are placed on a *diphros*, a stool without a backrest that makes relaxed lounging impossible and forces an upright and stiff position.

[168] Another rare 'family portrait', PM 861, shows three figures: a seated man with a woman standing behind him, facing a standing man. Pairing the woman and man so distinctly may mark them as the parents of the second man.

As with standing figures, there is a shift over time towards compositions allowing a direct connection between dead and viewer, but the development is restricted and shows adherence to older, more established iconographical traditions and rules.

1.4.3 *Dexiosis*

Dexiosis scenes can be considered displays of intimacy as physical touch is otherwise rarely depicted in funerary reliefs.[169] There seems to be a slight preference for combining a seated and a standing figure linked in handshake, rather than two standing individuals, but the preference is not distinctive enough to indicate a set iconographical rule. In contrast to reliefs with a combination of seated and standing figures, in mixed-gender *dexiosis* scenes it is primarily the woman who is depicted sitting, not the man. If the seated position is to be understood as indicating hierarchy or honour, it is remarkable that the woman is given the 'higher' rank when shaking hands. Otherwise, it should be noted that standing figures (PM 718 (pl. 114), 872 (pl. 60)) in *dexiosis* scenes are also turned towards the viewer, as observed in the other compositional variations discussed above. The seated figures remain mostly in profile but can sometimes display a similar (PM 1096 (pl. 65)) or less pronounced (PM 1057 (pl. 136)) turn in the upper body.

The *dexiosis* is a highly ambiguous gesture and has garnered much attention regarding its interpretation, being read as a sign of parting between dead and bereaved, as well as reunion, either after death or during grave visits.[170] In general terms, the gesture shows the close connection between participants, be they alive or not. In Classical Athens *dexiosis* can be understood as representative of family unity, stylizing familial solidarity and cohesion as building block for the democratic polis. According to Breuer, the handshake, as well as the profile view and the seated figures, are deliberate recourse to Athenian forms, although it remains unclear how concrete this recourse may have been beyond a general sense of "good old times".[171] Again, the hand-clasp gesture is an established formula of Classical Athenian reliefs (not only sepulchral), representing another communal motif that was known and used by Greek communities across a wide geographic area. However, since the depicted connection is no longer primarily embedded into a scene populated by several family members but most often between a man a woman, the contemporary focus has shifted away from the family unit and more towards married couples.[172]

[169] Arrington criticizes the comparison of document reliefs and funerary reliefs, which both may depict figures shaking hands, pointing out that official public reliefs convey a different meaning and are less concerned with the intimate interpretation of touch as longing for a lost loved one. Arrington 2018, 11f.
[170] Davies 1985, 629; Karlsson 2014, 233f; Estrin 2023, 85. For a general introduction to the *dexiosis* motif see Nováková – Pagáčová 2016.
[171] Breuer 1995, 35.
[172] Breuer 1995, 36f.

Important for our consideration of interaction is the visual connection made between living and dead not just through line of sight, but through direct touch. While the handshake-gesture might not appear particularly intimate, owing to the distance between figures, it establishes a direct point of contact between living and dead that a viewer of the relief could focus on. Living and dead are embodied within the same physical space and, unlike what the literary sources and scenes on white lekythoi suggest, recognize each other.[173] It is the closest a bereaved family member can come to interacting with the dead: envisioning touching them again while facilitating 'indirect' contact during a grave visit and the placing of offerings. As Estrin has pointed out with reference to Achilles and Odysseus, 'real' physical touch is not necessary to truly encounter the dead. Instead, the fact that one might see the dead (even if only in relief or memory) is already a reunion with the deceased, where instead of the physicality of death rendering usual sensual perception of mortals invalid *semata* become alternative bodies to remember the real bodies by.[174] With the reliefs as alternative bodies and the *dexiosis* a motif relying on personal memory and connection to the deceased, it makes sense that the handshake scenes are the composition remaining the most 'internal', without directly engaging with the outside of the relief. The emotional response to the picture is linked to past encounters, to actual physical touch that the bereaved shared with the dead and now long for in the absence of the warm body that once was. For an unfamiliar passer-by the motif speaks of the intimate connection the depicted individuals shared, but one that the passer-by is neither invited to share nor becomes part of if they had no relationship with or memory of the dead. Nonetheless, the *dexiosis* offered a visual point of recognition for viewers beyond the local community, enabling individuals from other poleis to read the scene within a shared cultural framework and thereby reinforcing inter-polis connectivity through common gestures of memorialisation. The motif could function as a bridge between communities, linking them through common iconographic traditions.

1.4.3a Heightened displays of affection: Embraces

An even more advanced display of intimacy and affection can be found in a motif exclusive to Rhodes, depicting two standing figures embracing each other (PM 721–725 (pl. 9–10)). Two reliefs show two women (PM 724, 725) hugging, while the other three depict a man and a woman (PM 721, 722, 723). Within the restrained Greek iconography, where a handshake usually constitutes the highest level of appropriate physical touch, they are not only outstanding in their emotiveness, but also a rare example of true interaction between figures on funeral reliefs.[175] The participants are

[173] On the importance of recognition in Classical Attic grave reliefs see Estrin 2023, 13f.
[174] Estrin 2023, 105, 116–118, 122.
[175] There are a few Classical Attic reliefs that also show unusual examples of intimacy, by having one figure lay its arm around another, often while gently touching their chin with the other hand. Usually, the gesture is shown between an adult woman and a child (CAT 3.269a, 1.870, Conze 1854) although tender moments

completely absorbed in their embrace, focused only on each other without any direct contact with the viewer. The reliefs are a clear visual sign of the deep love and longing, but also the loss, felt by the surviving family member. Like the *dexiosis* motif, they also allow the bereaved family members a visual substitute for their lost loved one, a connection to the inaccessible and invisible body within the grave and a way to interact with the dead even in their post-mortal, non-corporeal form. The viewer who is unrelated to the dead can be a witness to this reunion and may be moved by it, but they cannot access the scene in the same emotional way as the bereaved.

The exclusivity of this motif to Rhodes demonstrates that not all visual strategies circulated evenly among peer poleis. Its absence elsewhere highlights how individual communities could push established conventions further than their neighbours, developing locally specific forms of emotional expression that nonetheless remained legible within the broader Hellenistic visual *koine*.

1.4.4 Banquet scenes

Banquet scenes, with figures frequently interacting, together with the depictions of equestrians/horsemen, are the only ostensibly 'narrative scenes' and the closest to the 'family portraits' found on Classical Athenian grave reliefs. The 'cast' of the motif includes at least one banqueter on a *kline,* attended by several slaves, one often being a cup bearer, and usually in the company of one woman, if not several. Children may be present but are uncommon (PM 1784 (pl. 99), 1797 (pl. 99), 1883 (pl. 103)). Furniture, food, drinking vessels, attributes and horse *protomai* are used to enrich the setting. The figures can face each other, with the banqueter/s as the focus of attention, holding drinking cups (PM 1586 (pl. 93)) or *kalathoi* (PM 1511 (pl. 86)), raising wreaths (F 45 (pl. 150)), or taking food from the table (PM 1589 (pl. 94)). This gives an illusion of movement to the relief that is missing in other, more static compositions. Female figures are more passive but they, too, can hold or take items (PM 1916 (pl. 106), 1797 (pl. 99)). Servant figures have a wider range of action: while most stand quietly in attendance, others are more active, such as the cup bearer fetching a drink for his master (PM 1582 (pl. 92)). Interestingly, men on reliefs from Samos are more frequently shown drinking, while Byzantine reliefs use the banquet setting simply as a backdrop for the figures, without depicting wine being drunk.

Compared to the other iconographic motifs, banquet scenes show greater interaction between figures. Not only does the banqueter provide an obvious focal point with which other figures can interact, but the large cast and numerous props allow additional interaction between protagonists,

between adults also exist (CAT 2.421, Conze 2096). Exceptional are two reliefs with two adult figures sitting close enough to each other that it almost appears like one is sitting in the lap of the other (Conze 1878, man and woman; Conze 1880, two women).

minor figures, and the surroundings. However, it should be noted that the condition of surviving reliefs makes the analysis of interaction particularly difficult for banquet scenes: a majority of figures are missing their heads, deliberately destroyed during iconoclastic movements, making it impossible to reconstruct lines of sight and head-turns.[176] Most surviving reliefs show female figures and slaves turning towards a centrally placed male banqueter, who usually turns his head in three-quarter view towards the woman depicted in profile (PM 1872 (pl. 102)). If only a man is depicted, without a female companion, he is more likely to turn his face frontally towards the viewer (PM 1167, 1488, 1512), directly engaging them by meeting their gaze. A few rare cases also change the posture of the woman to different degrees: in PM 1547 (pl. 21, Rhodes) the woman does not look towards the reclining man, but turns her body and face towards the front, appearing in almost full frontal view; the centrally placed woman in PM 1883 (pl. 103, Samos), seated on an elaborate chair with a high backrest, turns her body towards the viewer; the woman on PM 1863 (pl. 102, Samos) on a similar chair, shows her body in three-quarter view. The latter two reliefs both depict a second woman in profile, turning towards the reclining man. A set of exceptional reliefs depict figures touching or uncommonly close together: on PM 1561 (pl. 90, Samos) the man holds the hand of the woman, in a more gentle gesture than the *dexiosis*; PM 1902 (pl. 122, Pergamon) shows one banqueter resting his hand on the shoulder of his companion; on PM 1844 (pl. 23) and 1846 (pl. 24, both Rhodes) a woman shares the *kline* with a man; and PM 1913 (pl. 105, Samos) depicts the man gently touching the woman's cheek.

The theme of the banquet and the reclining man is well established and can be found on vases and reliefs dating from the Classical and Archaic period, as well as earlier.[177] Hellenistic funerary reliefs change this particular motif only minimally, turning the heads of the men from profile to three-quarters view and thus allowing the figures a more naturalistic appearance that aligns with the frontal orientation of their upper body. Similarly, slave figures almost exclusively turn their bodies to the viewer, even if that does not make sense when considering image composition (PM 1915 (pl. 106)): cup-bearers and servant girls alike are placed closest to the viewer, the rest of the scene playing out behind them, yet they technically turn their back towards the master they serve or the wine vessel they are using. This could be resolved by putting them in profile, but clearly the frontally orientated figure was considered more interesting and fitting for these scenes, as it does not obscure their gestures and makes them more noticeable. Given the small number of reliefs showing the

[176] Cf. Vasiliev 1956; King 1985; Jacobs 2010; Elsner 2012.

[177] Fabricius 2016, 36–39. For a discussion of the origin of the Greek banquet and its iconography see Dentzer 1971; Dentzer 1982; Fehr 1984; Murray 1990; Ferrari 2002; Topper 2012; Wecowski 2014; Murray 2018a; Murray 2018b. In a number of places and contexts (e.g. Laconian hero reliefs) the banquet motif is associated with heroization, yet there is also a lot of use of the banquet scene on Attic pottery that has no clear allusion to heroes.

female figure in profile, it appears that regularly turning them into a frontal view towards the onlooker was deemed inappropriate, possibly due to technical difficulties (the examples noted above show awkwardness in the frontal pose), although the reason might also be a simple aesthetic preference for the established and well-balanced profile figure.

Even though banquet scenes appear to tell a story (or more than the 'non-narrative' scenes discussed above), the narrative style remains associative and is often generated by the setting and attributes.[178] The banquet appears to be full of movement, giving the illusion of a story, when in fact, the viewer learns little about the dead and their life. The scenes are not to be understood as realistic depictions of the deceased's daily life, but as idealized representations of wealth and abundance, potentially with a visual reference to epic heroes. They emphasize prosperity and membership of educated and well-off social circles, whether that was true for the dead individual or not, more akin to a painting than a glimpse into a real moment. While direct interaction through gaze and body language mostly occurs between relief-figures, sometimes even expressing particular tender moments of affection, scenes can be opened subtly by turning the banqueter and the slaves towards the viewer, or more directly, when the onlooker encounters the full-frontal gaze of the reclining man. Nonetheless, the general composition of the banquet scene is by its very nature less inclusive and less confrontational than the standing or even seated figures.

The banquet scene exemplifies how shared visual formulas circulated widely among peer poleis while still allowing considerable room for local differentiation. Its uneven distribution across the case-study cities (highly favoured in Samos and Byzantion, more restrained in Rhodes, and comparatively rare elsewhere) demonstrates how a common motif could be selectively adopted by communities but inflected it with distinct compositional habits, gestures, and degrees of intimacy.

1.4.5 Equestrians

Like banquet scenes, equestrian reliefs create the semblance of a narrative stemming largely from the dynamic composition. We see either a man on horseback with the horse depicted mid-stride (PM 1336 (pl. 116)), or the equestrian next to his mount, one hand raised and buried in its mane (PM 1432 (pl. 67)). In the former case the rider usually carries a shallow libation bowl in his hand, ready to perform an offering (PM 1346 (pl. 117), 1360 (pl. 66)). An altar may be present as an implied destination, often located under a tree where a snake is observing the scene (PM 1346 (pl. 117), 1360 (pl. 66)). As with the majority of Hellenistic reliefs, a miniature servant can be found in most pictures, sometimes as a squire holding the reins of the horse (PM 1439 (pl. 68), 1477 (pl. 121)) or a (sometimes armoured) manservant carrying the weapons or shield of his master (PM

[178] Fabricius 2016, 34f.

1361 (pl. 118), 1432 (pl. 67), 1436 (pl. 67)). Alongside the altar and the tree with the snake, hounds are often part of the composition, and additional figures, either male or female, can witness the libation (PM 1477 (pl. 121)) or participate in it (PM 1378 (pl. 120)).

Just as banquet scenes create an associative narrative focusing on affluence and influence without necessarily depicting the lived reality of the deceased, so equestrian reliefs use performative cultic rites to connect the dead with motifs from mythical and epic iconography. Equestrians are common in Attic black-figure painting, but grave reliefs combine them with the cultic act of libation, usually found in more domestic settings, like departure scenes of soldiers setting off for war, or, as discussed above, funerary scenes on white lekythoi.[179] Equestrian reliefs do not appear particularly military, but rather emphasize the social status associated with cavalry.

Regarding interaction with the viewer, the equestrian on horseback is depicted in profile, as expected, since the movement of the horse and the orientation towards a destination or focus point demand a side view. The dismounted rider, however, always turns his body towards the viewer, even when performing a libation in apparent interplay with another figure (PM 1477 (pl. 121)). Like the servant figures in banquet scenes placed in the foreground of the relief, i.e., closest to the viewer, but interacting with objects or figures carved behind them, the body of the rider excuses breaking perspective and arranging elements in an illogical/unrealistic manner. It should be noted that equestrian reliefs are also the only motif in funerary art featuring a significant number of naked male figures (or men wearing only a cloak), instead of the fully clothed men common in Hellenistic reliefs (PM 1439 (pl. 68), 1440 (pl. 68), 1477 (pl. 121)). This may be linked to the age of the dead, signifying youth, or be part of the iconographic reference to epic imagery. While the composition may not be particularly interactive, the libation can be read as a reference to drink offerings made at graves by visitors, thereby connecting living and dead through the action, visually performed by the rider, and physically by the mourning bereaved. The dead, like the gods who are also recipients of libations, are not depicted as directly receiving the offering but holding the bowl in which they may catch the liquid, after it was poured on the grave and flows from the realm of the living into the realm of the dead.

[179] Boardman 1974, 207 (men concerned with horses), 209 (chariots and horses in departure scenes), 213 (libations in departure scenes), 229-230 (scenes of the Iliad); Boardman 1975, 218 (chariots and cavalry).

1.4.6 Servants

The ubiquitous servant figures populating the scenes of almost every relief are also worth examining. Their size has been reduced, sometimes to an extent that is almost comical, and it can be hard to make out the tiny figures squeezed into corners among furniture and attributes.[180] Size is an important marker of significance and status, so it is understandable that servants and slaves are depicted smaller than their masters, i.e., the protagonists of the reliefs.[181] The relation of size between dead and servants on funerary reliefs is similar to that in depictions of gods and worshippers on votive reliefs. It may be possible that the servant figures, apart from functioning as an attribute of wealth and social status of the deceased, act as models for correct mourning behaviour, or stand-ins for Archaic mourning practices, deemed excessive and inappropriate in Solonian and other laws.[182] The tiny figures not only make mourning gestures (PM 414 (pl. 43), 191 (pl. 126)), but can be depicted with clothing slipping off of one shoulder (PM 251 (pl. 36), 531 (pl. 47)), which may indicate clothing torn during lamentation. Whether mourning or lamenting, in most reliefs they are the only definite iconographic motif that can be linked to the funerary context. While slaves have been interpreted as an outlet for inappropriate feelings or as artistic devices framing the deceased, I would argue that their function extends beyond being a sign for the first overwhelming feeling of loss after a death.[183] A bereaved viewer could feel their grief mirrored in the servant's mourning gestures, even after the initial pain of the loss of a loved one had eased. But, unlike the bereaved family, the servants never stop grieving, instead becoming eternal mourners at the gravesite, continuously displaying to family and passers-by that the dead are missed. Reduced in size and detail they are sometimes barely recognizable as human, the iconography of their servile status reducing their personhood, making them merely an object or attribute. Like gifts laid down on tombs during visits they become part of the continuous rites in honour and memory of the dead.

1.5 Summary

The analysis of funerary compositions has shown that there is less interaction between figures of the Hellenistic grave reliefs than on Classical Athenian funerary stelai, where family members and servants were usually shown engaging with each other. The focus of Classical stelai was the depiction of the *oikos*, a visual record of a dynasty and the close-knit unity of the nuclear family –

[180] Enslaved individuals were also a common feature on Classical Athenian funerary reliefs, but their iconography was less clear, with their size matching that of other non-servile figures and funeral monuments for enslaved people with no different mode of visualisation than free individuals. Estrin 2023, 123, 126.
[181] See Nerdinger 1986, 310; Frank 2019, 254 for the definition of hierarchical scale.
[182] Plut. *Sol.* 12.5; Cic. *De Leg.* 2.63-68.
[183] Karlsson 2014, 50; Estrin 2023, 128.

not in opposition to 'the public', but in accordance with facets of male and female life within Athenian society.[184] Hellenistic reliefs move away from this collectivism and instead highlight the individual, made evident by the iconographic emphasis on each figure, even in apparently interactive scenes, and the tendency to sacrifice more naturalistic composition and perspective to allow certain figures (i.e., the protagonists) to become more prominent. Praiseworthy are no longer virtues demonstrating dutiful commitment to one's role in the polis but exceptionalism expressed through outstanding qualities or achievements, linked to epic/heroic iconography and the visual language of public honours/euergetism. Accordingly, the reliefs do not aim to truthfully depict honours actually awarded to the dead or actions deserving those honours, but to portray the deceased favourably and give the general idea, or illusion, of public glory and exceptionalism.

Within the canon of sepulchral imagery, Hellenistic funerary reliefs deploy motifs and iconographical elements that were prominent in the Classical period but became widely recognised, panhellenic forms, often modifying them to fit new system of values and aesthetics. Not only did they alter Classical Attic designs, they also invented new pictorial formulas (e.g. the embracing figures of Rhodes) or translated imageries from other genres into the sepulchral context (e.g. the 'honorary statues' on Smyrnean reliefs). By creating new compositions with new motifs, altered poses, and iconographical modifications, Hellenistic grave reliefs created a new system of visual communication not achieved by epigrams. The analysis has shown that these compositions also participate in mechanisms typical of peer polity interaction. Across the selected cities, largely the same repertoire of motifs circulated widely, forming a recognisable sepulchral *koine* that allowed poleis to communicate within a shared visual language. Reliance on this shared repertoire was essential: it guaranteed that funerary monuments were intelligible to visitors from other cities, enabled communities to inscribe themselves within a common Greek cultural framework, while providing the stable iconographical foundation upon which meaningful local identities, as well as the contrasts central to PPI could be articulated.

The turn of figures towards an onlooker invites an exchange between the inside-the-frame and outside-the-frame, a feature of Hellenistic reliefs also discussed in the context of framing in the next chapter. Instead of being solely bound into the relief-scene, the dead make contact with the mortal realm by engaging with those who look at them. This 'direct contact' and front focus is enabled by the additive nature of Hellenistic iconography but leads to less narrative cohesion. Overall, the compositions aspire to create narrative only in an associative way, with most reliefs depicting single figures or couples with one or both figures orientated towards the viewer rather than towards each other. Scenes feel less 'natural', which seems odd given the push towards

[184] Bergemann 1997, 67, 75, 94.

naturalism in non-funerary Hellenistic sculpture but may be explained by the differing purpose of the objects. Sculpture of the Hellenistic period created more subject categories than its Classical counterpart, with an extensive set of iconographical formulas and motifs that could be used across genres and contexts to identify certain characters (e.g., gods, rulers) without losing their original association.[185] In contrast, grave stelai reliefs create a more homogenous group of material, with a much more limited set of attributes and compositions.

Unlike in freestanding sculpture, there was no need to distinguish gods from athletes in funerary reliefs , since the depicted figures all belong to the same group of mortals and the recently deceased. Funerary sculpture is a different category requiring different effects and interactions. In addition to this clear affiliation the limited compositional variety may also be linked to an interest in creating a more direct and personal connection between deceased and viewer, who encounters the dead face to face and 'one-on-one'. This may occur either as a relative visiting to remember a loved one by connecting with them through the placement of gifts on the grave, or as a passer-by, compelled to 'meet' the dead through relief and inscription. Unlike the dead on Classical Attic reliefs, those on Hellenistic reliefs appear more approachable, allowing interaction between viewer and viewed. With their corporeal reality altered and their bodies removed from sight and the realm of the living, living and dead can use grave monuments as places of recognition, remembrance and reunion. Unlike general textual accounts of death and remembrance in literary sources, the compositional analysis of reliefs has shown how funerary art creates an immediate, tangible connection with the dead. This shift in perspective not only broadens insight into ancient practices but also positions (contemporary) viewers as active participants in a dialogue with the past, enabling emotional and visual participation in acts of remembering.

The chapter contrasts broad, ritualized representations of death in literary sources with the concrete, interactive qualities of funerary art. While literary sources and epigrams outline general, ritualized modes of interaction with the dead, emphasizing proper rites, formal commemorations, and mythic or normative narratives, the material evidence of Hellenistic funerary reliefs reveals a markedly different engagement. These reliefs not only encode social and familial hierarchies but open a space for individual, embodied interaction. They are composed not merely to record ritual but to invite a 'face-to-face' encounter between viewer and depicted deceased. Figures in the reliefs (often shown in frontal or three-quarter view) direct their gaze outward, establishing a visual connection that draws observers into the act of remembrance. Where texts tend to be idealized and general, funerary reliefs actively open an immediate, personal dialogue between living and dead.

[185] Smith 1991, 269f.

This shift from the collective focus of Classical Athenian stelai, which celebrated the unity of the *oikos* and familial duty, to the individualized presentation of the dead in Hellenistic art marks a significant iconographical reorientation. Emphasis on individual exceptionalism is evident in compositional choices: gestures like the handshake (*dexiosis*) or the rare, emotive embraces convey intimacy and loss while reframing the dead as accessible and engaging. The reliefs thus operate on two levels: reproducing established iconographical formulae while modifying them to allow the living audience – grieving family members or intrigued passers-by – to interact with the images and by extension, the dead.

This interaction between viewer and object shows why funerary reliefs are especially well suited to a PPI approach. Like other highly visible forms of symbolic display, grave stelai operated in shared, public spaces where meaning depended on being seen. Resident citizens recognised their own community in the images, and visitors or foreigners could identify familiar motifs drawn from the wider Greek repertoire. This visibility made cemeteries potent arenas of identity formation: they strengthened regional civic imageries and projected local values outward while simultaneously inviting recognition through the common visual language that linked peer poleis. The consistency of such shared forms, even when locally adapted, is itself a stabilising feature of PPI systems, providing the reliable, cross-regional homologies that make comparison intelligible, while allowing variation to signal civic distinctiveness. In this sense, the stelai examined in this thesis participate fully in the dynamics of emulation, differentiation, and mutual intelligibility that define peer polity interaction.

The chapter argues that the evolution in funerary art, from generalized literary ideals to a direct, personal visual language, opens new perspectives on how we encounter death. The dual approach taken here enriches our understanding of funerary practices by showing that the ancient Greek experience of encountering the dead was both a shared cultural norm and a deeply personal event. As the analysis in 1.4 has shown, and as further explored in the case-studies in Chapter 3, imagery on funerary monuments was distinct between different cities. Yet the overall impact is consistent. By transforming memorialization into an embodied, interactive experience, the artifacts invite viewers to read an inscription, see an image, and feel the presence of a lost loved one in an emotional and sensory encounter. Funerary reliefs blur the boundary between the realms of living and dead, suggesting that remembrance is not confined to ritual but is an ongoing dialogue – a connection that continues to resonate across time.

2. Framing death

Humans have always tried to make sense of death and to find ways to deal with the loss of a life, on a personal level for the individual, as well as in relation to broader social impact. This often happens by drawing borders and creating different frameworks for understanding and processing death. These frameworks are enacted within the physical context of burial and gravesite, the emotional facet of coming-to-terms with loss, and societal (and religious) rules about the correct way of dealing with the deceased. We will see that funerary laws, the location of cemeteries, the format of stelai and burial practices constituted shared customs (homologies) among the peers of the eastern Greek cities, applicable on a supra-regional level.

In this chapter I explore different forms of context, or framing, for the monuments forming the subject of this thesis, opening with a reflection on cemeteries as real spaces within the urban context, before considering the framework of funerary legislations and then turning to frames in the more established architectural and pictorial sense. I will continue examining where the dead are located in comparison (or contrast) with the living and the gods, and how this status of in-betweenness is expressed visually through grave reliefs. This culminates, after an exploration of how visual languages were altered and borrowed between Athens and among peer polities, in a recognition of what those languages reveal about the function of funerary reliefs in context.

2.1 Setting the scene

We often think about ancient grave reliefs in the context in which we encounter them most commonly: as illustrations in books or journals, or as exhibits in museum collections. The stelai are removed from their original setting and presented as isolated artefacts to be admired for their art historical value and the craftsmanship that created them.[186] The viewer is offered no hint of how different varieties of grave monuments, such as relief stelai, palmette stelai with engraved names, and funeral stone loutrophoroi, might have been grouped and presented at the front of family plots, facing roads leading to and from the polis. For the Eastern Greek poleis discussed in this thesis (and many other ancient cities) this is further complicated by the fact that ancient *necropoleis* have at best been partially excavated, and more often dismantled through stone looting to gain materials for other buildings and built over by modern settlements. However, stelai surviving in situ from the Kerameikos in Athens (fig. 9), Rhamnous (fig. 10), and Pompeii (fig. 11) give an

[186] The perspective of a modern viewer can be further distorted by the selection of stelai that are exhibited and published, since normally the best preserved and most aesthetically pleasing pieces are picked. This creates an artificial hierarchy, favouring a certain aesthetic, giving the impression that these examples are representative of a 'normal grave'.

impression of how an ancient *necropolis* might have presented itself to passers-by. Show fronts with reliefs and other grave monuments facing towards the road could sit on terraces more than two metres above street level, making it all but impossible for passers-by to see behind the grave markers, while other graves in less prominent spots were smaller, less strictly aligned, and less lavishly designed.[187]

While it is impossible to access the minds of those who saw these ancient monuments, we may gain some insight through comparison with the function, experience and placement of more modern cemeteries. Cemeteries established in the 18th century, for example, form part of the cityscape in many British cities; graves from the Victorian era (and later, wheree cemeteries remained in use) can be viewed, and the grounds they occupy may be used as green spaces with benches and walkways offering places to stroll or sit.[188] Urban development has moved them from city outskirts into a more central locations, making them part of the city's infrastructure, with cyclists and pedestrians crossing the 'sacred ground' as a shortcut, as well as visitors touring particularly interesting or famous graves.[189] Usually, passers-by give little thought to the deceased, their families, or lingering memory, but may occasionally stop to read an inscription or to take a closer look at a particularly interesting gravestone. Cemeteries as urban features evoke little emotional response except when experienced on a personal level, such as when attending a funeral or visiting the grave of a loved one. As Turner writes:

> "It is a point worth labouring that mourners and passers-by are very different types of viewer. The bereaved families visiting *periboloi* interacted directly with the tombstones, their tender care made visible by the wreaths, ribbons and small oil vessels they left behind. But beyond the practical, mourners, unlike passers-by, view with eyes shadowed by bereavement. Commemorative monuments anchor the memory-making process, negotiating loss and constructing continuing bonds with the dead. Mourners and passers-by quite literally see differently."[190]

[187] Bergemann 1997, 8–10. Not all parts and grave plots followed a strict system or were designed in such an orderly fashion. Some areas within the Kerameikos that were excavated during the 1990s show graves that were "jammed together […] without any visible system." Snodgrass 2009, 102; Turner 2015, 149–151.
[188] For a discussion of the cultural heritage of cemeteries, especially those of the Victorian era, see Pareskevopoulou 2019, for a brief excursion on the iconography of grave monuments of the modern period in Berlin cf. Bloch 1987.
[189] Cemetery tourism is no modern phenomenon but can be shown through surviving Victorian guidebooks to London cemeteries, see Dungavell 2019.
[190] Turner 2015, 151.

It is hard to imagine that travellers, merchants, or labourers were generally profoundly moved by the funerary monuments lining the arterial roads of Greek poleis each time they passed them. *Necropoleis* and the graves within them were a mundane sight and transit zones crossed by many on a daily basis. This ordinariness, however, is lost when one is personally confronted with death and becomes a participant in rituals performed during a funeral or commemorative festivals for the dead. Death becomes personal and changes a familiar person into something other, something "unrecognizable" that demands specific treatment to ensure the safety of the bodily remains and the memory of the departed, as well as the protection and purification of the bereaved from pollution.[191]

In Athens[192], the funeral procession, moving the body of the deceased accompanied by family and friends through the city and the *necropolis* to their final resting place, occurred on the third day after death before sunrise.[193] Given the time of day, the procession was likely illuminated by torches or lamps, making it easily visible to others in the vicinity. We can assume that roads around a polis, especially larger ones, were populated with travellers, merchants, labourers, and farmers at all hours, so even before sunrise there must have been witnesses to the solemn funerary party. After the procession reached the grave plot, the remains were lowered into the ground and funeral rites, most likely involving libations (*choai*), were performed before the mourners returned to the home for the funeral feast (*perideipnon*).[194] However muted the law required the interment to be, it would have been visible and audible to passers-by. Beyond that, while the *necropolis* itself might not have provoked an emotional response from a stranger, the sight of a mourning family may have prompted memories of losses they themselves had suffered, or contemplation of their own mortality.

Apart from funerals, graves were regularly visited by family members as part of annual commemorative rites.[195] Unfortunately, we do not know how many (official) festivals for honouring the dead were celebrated, or many details about the rites involved in these celebrations. Grave visit scenes often depicted on vases however, especially the white lekythoi used in funerary contexts in the 5th century, suggest that these rites involved adorning stelai with garlands and

[191] Garland 1989, 1; Turner 2015, 143; Platt 2017, 359f.
[192] It is worth noting that our interpretation (as often) is dominated by the primacy of Athenian sources.
[193] Dem. XLIII *Mac*. 62–63; Plut. *Sol.* 21.4–5. While women were only allowed to attend the funerals of close family members, no such restrictions existed for men. Kurtz – Boardman 1971, 143.
[194] Kurtz – Boardman 1971, 146; Garland 1985, 39; Oakley 2004, 13. The funerary laws from Iulis specify the number of choes, and that the empty vessels needed to be taken home after the burial ceremony was completed. *Rhodes – Osborne GHI* II 194.
[195] Pl., *Leg.* 717d–e. Proper care of deceased relatives and diligent performance of rites during the funeral proceedings are mentioned in several of Isaeus' speeches as part of estate disputes and ancestry questions. Few details of the "customary rites" are given, but the fact that they need no further clarification suggests that the particulars were well known amongst the citizens. (Isae. 1.10, 4.19, 9.4).

ribbons, and offerings to the dead (fig. 12–13).[196] These lekythoi, painted at a time when no stone stelai were in use at Athens, show visitors at grave sites carrying baskets with *taeniae* and branches, as well as vessels which could be used for libations or placed on the grave monuments as offerings.[197] One can imagine that these visits might have felt bittersweet, reminding mourners of the loss of a family member or close friend while also providing an opportunity to share memories and celebrate the life of the deceased and the time shared with them.

It is enlightening to consider how the journey from residence to the grave and the visit to the *necropolis* was perceived by the bereaved, since the focus usually lies on a passive stranger's impression of the cemetery and its monuments rather than on those emotionally concerned with the graves. As Estrin has pointed out, Classical Archaeology has focused on social readings of funeral monuments, as vehicles to "dispassionately communicate the status and family relations of the deceased", rather than understanding them as places where people not only mourned and expressed grief over the loss of a loved one, but where grief was actually constituted.[198] Carrying baskets with garlands, ribbons, and grave offerings, the bereaved moved through the *necropolis*, possibly with other families visiting their own grave plots to honour their ancestors and remember lost family members. Pleasantries might have been exchanged until they reached the border of the enclosed family grave district (*peribolos*), which became popular in Athens in the 4th century BCE, as the place behind the show front of the stelai, where the deceased are laid to rest.[199] After their arrival, visitors might have taken the opportunity to clean the grave monument before adorning the stele and performing the appropriate rites. Remains from grave sites and literary evidence reveal that these involved offerings made to the dead in the form of perishables such as libations, food, and flowers or wreaths, as well as lekythoi, likely filled with oil for offerings.[200] These offerings

[196] Kurtz – Boardman 1971, 147f; Shapiro 1991, 649–655; Oakley 2004, 145f.
[197] Oakley 2004, 145–214. Oakley himself cautions that tomb scenes on lekythoi are the most complicated scenes to interpret, especially regarding the question whether they depict reality or are imagined by the vase-painters. While a definitive answer cannot be given, it is likely that lekythoi present a mix of reality and imagination. Oakley 2004, 213f. It might be best to understand them as idealized versions of real events and customs that were artistically enriched and condensed. While the subtle meaning of iconographic details obvious to ancient viewers who themselves participated in ancient practices may be lost to us, we can, nonetheless, understand that visits to the grave and the laying down of offerings were common.
[198] Estrin 2023, 4, 6. For a recent analysis of Classical Athenian grave art as status symbol cf. Posamentir 2020.
[199] Kurtz – Boardman 1971, 106–108, Turner 2015, 150. It must be noted that *periboloi* were expensive and therefore only accessible to the middle and upper classes, while the majority of less affluent families had to memorialize their departed in more modest, i.e., less permanent, forms. These funeral monuments and their appearance are lost to us. Turner also points out that anybody able to afford one of the prime spots for a *peribolos* at the roadside at the Kerameikos was not only financially well-off but made a conscious decision to appear rich. Ibid. Bergemann gives an overview over the possible costs for the Athenian *periboloi* and different kinds of grave markers of the Classical period. Bergemann 1997, 131–142.
[200] Aesch, *Cho*. 84–164; Eur. *El*. 509–15; Kurtz – Boardman 1971, 100; Burkert 1977, 123f; Alexiou 2002, 7. Offering trenches installed for this specific purpose were a feature of Archaic grave complexes, especially during the 7th and early 6th century BCE, but became less popular from 600 BCE on. The implementation of an offering

were placed on the bases of stelai so that they were visible, demonstrating continuing care for the plot, which not only signalled good citizenship but was also evidence of an unbroken genealogy. So important was the performance of proper burial rites and continuous sacrifices at the tomb that men without an heir were willing to adopt children to ensure they received them after their death.[201] Consequently, the dead retained not only a physical representation but also a civic function within the public sphere, influencing the reputation of the living.[202]

But gravesites and funerary monuments are not just public places where certain civic duties were exercised on specific dates. Grief and longing for a lost loved one do not end with the burial of a body. Beyond collective social implications, grave visits and the laying down of offerings can be understood as continuous contact with the deceased. Their body may be absent, or out of reach, but with the grave stelai as quasi-corporeal presence of the dead, the objects placed in the grave, gifts for the dead, allow for the indirect connection of living and deceased.[203] Ribbons tied around stelai, lekythoi, meals, or locks of hair placed on the grave can function as indexes of physical presence and touch of a still living family member.[204] With the body gone, the memory of the deceased is kept alive through ongoing celebration of and connection with the dead by those who care for their resting place.

These customs, while extensively explored and analysed for Classical Athens, can be understood as homologies within the framework of peer polity interaction, common across Hellenistic communities. Grief and mourning are universal reactions to the death of a close person, and visits to gravesites and care for burial markers occur in antiquity as well as in modern society. It is important to remember that grave reliefs and gravestones are not just archaeological artefacts gazed upon by ancient and modern viewers, but deeply personal and emotional signs of a cherished life: lost, missed and remembered.

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trench into the tumulus of Marathon (490 BCE) was a conscious choice and alludes to the epic burials of past times, including those in the Homeric epics. Whitley 1994, 213, 217f, 228.

[201] Isae. 7.30; 9, 7. Where the ancestry and the individuals' right of inheritance was in question, the attendance of funerals provided evidence of kinship, as the restrictive nature of these events allowed only relatives to partake (Isae. 8.26). Furthermore, failure to follow proper procedure in carrying out the duties owed to the deceased was grounds for denying inheritance, while the fulfilment of said duties would earn one the respect of the deme (Isae. 2.36) and by extension, portrayed the dutiful relative as good citizen (i. e. fit for office, a good pick for a marriage etc.). These duties included not only a proper funeral, but also the continuous visit of the tomb and performance of sacrifices and libations, especially by (biological or adopted) children (Isae. 2.46, 6.51, 65).

[202] Bruss 2005, 26.

[203] Estrin 2016, 196–202; Arrington 2018, 14. For a discussion of the embodiment of the dead through their grave monuments cf. Squire 2018, for the discussion of the body, its absence and presence, in funerary epigrams cf. Bruss 2005.

[204] Arrington 2018, 21; Estrin 2023, 30, 32.

2.2 Legal framework: Greek funeral laws

Funerals were always at least partially public events, by virtue of having to move the bodies of the dead from the place of the wake (usually the private home) to the site of interment (usually outside the city walls). Details of the wake (*prothesis*), procession (*ekphora*), and burial rites are mostly unknown, but literary and epigraphic sources detailing funerary legislation from different Greek poleis offer insights into funerary practices. Literary sources are most numerous regarding funerary practices in Athens, particularly concerning the laws of Solon (c. 590 BCE), with Plutarch, Cicero, and Demosthenes contributing testimony on reforms made by the Athenian lawmaker.[205] Regulations addressing dealings with the deceased also survive from other poleis, including Sparta, Delphi, Iulis and Gambreion, allowing us to broaden the often Atheno-centric view on burial practices. Like shared funeral practices among members of a peer group, common legal approaches to the treatment of the dead in different places of the Greek world are revealed by these laws.

Athenian laws prohibited excessive displays of wealth or lamentations during the wake (which had to take place 'inside') as well as during the procession of the dead. The burial was to be performed before sunrise, with limitations imposed on the women who were allowed to attend (only those older than 60 or related to the deceased to the degree of 'cousin's children'), the sacrifices made (no oxen are to be slaughtered at the grave), and the number of garments worn by the deceased (no more than three). No tombs other than those of family members were to be visited, except at the time of burial.[206] After restrictions on the *prothesis* and *ekphora* made any public spectacle all but impossible and funerary monuments were seemingly becoming increasingly lavish to make up for it, additional limits on grave furnishing were set by an unknown lawmaker after Solon: grave monuments were not to be more elaborate than what ten men could construct in three days, and stucco décor and the erecting of herms were prohibited.[207] These restrictions were extended further at the end of the 4th century BCE by Demetrius of Phaleron, who limited burial mound finials to a small column, table or basin.[208] Together, these laws limited the disruption (or perhaps, competition

[205] Plut. *Sol.* 21. 4–5; Cic. *De Leg*. 2.59; Dem. *Mac*. 43,62–63, with referencing that the oracle in Delphi and Solon are in agreement concerning the rites to be performed for the deceased by surviving relatives in Dem. *Mac.* 43.66–67.
[206] Dem. *Mac.* 43.62–63.
[207] Cic. *De Leg.* 2.64–65.
[208] Cic. *De Leg.* 2.66. On the laws of Solon cf. Garland 1989, 3–6; Shapiro 1991, 630f, 641; Seaford 1994, 74-–76; Leão-Rhodes 2015, 116–121; Oakley 2004, 12. Plato also recommends modesty in regard to funerals: "[…] one ought never to spend extravagantly on the dead […] it is our duty to make a wise use of what we have and to spend in moderation," Pl. *Leg.* 958d–960b.

among affluent and influential citizens) caused by excessive, 'attention-seeking' funerals by restricting their visibility within the polis community.[209]

While Classical legislation clearly sought to curtail excessive display in private funerals, this trajectory should not be understood as leading to a uniform suppression of funerary visibility in later periods. The Hellenistic period (as well as the Roman period) instead witnesses a reconfiguration of funerary participation, in which restricted or muted ordinary rites coexists with new, highly visible public forms of honouring the dead in civic contexts for individuals who were of great service to their polis, such as (golden) crowns, statues, public burials and (intramural) tombs, all funded by the polis.[210]

Seaford argues that the primary purpose of funerary restrictions at the dawn of the democratic city-state was to create unity (*homonoia*) between the citizens by preventing potentially divisive displays of wealth and status.[211] Instead, Archaic traditions of public mourning and elaborate funerals were 'collectivized' and channelled into honours for outstanding citizens who served the polis and not themselves. Thucydides gives an account of these public burials for the fallen soldiers of the Peloponnesian War, who were buried at public cost, following the 'custom of their ancestors': the remains were laid out in a public space where relatives and friends could pay their respects and bring offerings. Everyone was allowed to attend the procession, and women were explicitly permitted to participate and make lamentations. An oration delivered by a reputable citizen brought the ceremony to a close.[212] The most prominent (and quite exceptional) example of public war burials was the Marathon tumulus, which broke with the custom of returning remains of the dead to their home polis for burial in the *demosion sema*. In a gesture of unparalleled honour, the fallen soldiers were buried on the battlefield and covered by an earthen mound, an Archaic burial practice that had fallen out of favour by the 5th century BCE, and a conscious allusion to epic burial customs sung about in the Homeric epics. The warriors who gave their lives in defence of the city received a monument that appropriated the "aristocratic values and symbols to serve the needs of the new democracy" by allowing citizens to mourn their lost sons, husbands, and brothers publicly and

[209] Morris 1992, 128f; Turner 2015, 145f.
[210] Herrmann 1995, 195–197; van Bremen 1996, 163–165, 170–172. An exceptional example are eight public decrees surviving from Kyme, detailing the extraordinary treatment of Archippe, a wealthy woman who acted as benefactor to the city by funding various projects, who in turn was rewarded with a public burial, a special burial plot with the other benefactors of the city, a gilded statue and exemptions from public service. Van Bremen 1996, 13–19. On intramural burials see P. Fröhlich 2013; J. Fouquet 2017. A public funeral did not automatically imply a city-funded or intramural tomb.
[211] Seaford 1994, 83–85. An argument can be made about the anti-luxury funerary laws being designed to control the aristocracy and their influence within the city. The restrictions limiting the public attention the elité may garner by turning the funeral into a spectacle and (potentially) arousing hostility between rival kinship groups. Garland 1989, 15; Seaford 1994, 82f; Leão-Rhodes 2015, 119.
[212] Thuc. 2.34.

collectively, thereby uniting them in grief.[213] During the Hellenistic period this logic was not abandoned but extended beyond the battlefield. Honorific decrees for the (outstanding) dead increasingly employed emotionally charged language (matching the focus on the private characteristics of the deceased and the grief of the bereaved in grave inscriptions) and, in some cases, exceptional burial arrangements for *euergetai* were chosen, blurring the boundary between private mourning and civic commemoration.[214] Funerary honour thus became an important medium through which cities articulated collective values and rewarded exemplary individuals within the urban community.

Athens was not the only city with laws and regulations concerning funeral expenses: another comprehensive set of funerary laws comes from Iulis, a polis on the island of Ceos, dated to the second half of the 5th century BCE.[215] Like the laws of Solon and Demetrius' burial expenditure laws, limitations were placed on accoutrements of the ceremony, including the number of cloths the deceased was buried in, the furnishings of the bier, and the amount of wine and oil brought to the tomb (three and one *chou* respectively), as well as the obligation for the procession to happen in silence and the prohibition of the thirtieth-day rites. As in Athens, lawmakers of Iulis made sought to prevent flashy displays of wealth. Additionally, large parts of the legislation deal with pollution, an aspect of death not addressed by the Athenian laws at all.[216] During the wake no drinking-cup was to be placed under the bier, no water should be poured out and the sweepings were not to be brought to the tomb. These provisions, as well as the order in which vessels were returned from the tomb, seem to represent efforts to limit potential claims of pollution through contact with these objects – an equivalent to the Athenian concern about excessive lamentation. On the day after the burial, a free man was to purify the house by sprinkling sea water, earth and fresh water successively, after which the home was considered pure again and sacrifices could commence at the hearth.[217] Pollution appears to affect women exclusively, and it is explicitly stated who can be affected (mother, wife, daughters, sisters of the deceased, and up to five other related women).[218] As with purification of the *oikos,* no elaborate rituals were required: polluted individuals

[213] Shapiro 1991, 644–646; Morris 1992, 129–132, 144; Whitley 1994, 213f, 228f. For a detailed analysis of the memorialization of the war dead cf. Arrington 2011 and 2015.
[214] Herrmann 1995, 192f; van Bremen 1997, 162–164; Bruss 2005, 50f; Fröhlich 2013, 234f, 282. Cf. also Breuer 1995, 50–53, 60, 85, 94. Archippe was laid to rest where other benefactors of the city were already buried, indicating that there was a special area of the *necropolis* reserved for *euergetai*, similar to the Athenian *demosion sema*.
[215] *Rhodes – Osborne GHI* II 194 (*LSG* 97; *LGS* II 93; *SIG*³ 1218; *IG* XII.5 593; *CGRN* 35); cf. Garland 1989, 11f.
[216] *Osborne – Rhodes GHI* II 194, esp. P. 570.
[217] Osborne – Rhodes (ibid. 571) note the heavy symbolism of salt water and smeared earth being washed away with fresh water, taking with them not just the physical dirt, but also the incorporeal pollution of death.
[218] These additional women could be children of daughters and (first) cousins (Garland 1989, 12; CGRN 35). Osborne – Rhodes translate the fragmented lines as "The mother is polluted, and the wife and the sisters and

became pure/clean by simply pouring water over their heads and washing themselves from head to toe. Osborne – Rhodes have argued that "local tensions also revolved around attempts to claim to be, or claim that others were, polluted, and therefore unable to take part in public life":[219] it was not only excessive performances of mourning and lavish burials which had the potential to disrupt life and to threaten the *homonoia* but also pollution, forcing withdraw from public life, or indeed enabling others to impose such withdrawal.

The burial regulations of the Labyadai in Delphi,[220] dated to the first half of the 4th century BCE, provide another set of laws limiting funerary ceremonies: grave offerings must not exceed 30 drachmae in value, the shroud is to be of grey or dark colour, and the deceased should rest on no more than one mattress and one pillow. Again, the procession should happen in silence, the bier was not to be set down until the place of interment was reached, and everyone but those sharing a hearth with the deceased should leave right after the procession. Lamentations and dirges at other tombs were prohibited, as were wailing and lamenting on the following day, the tenth day or the one-year anniversary. Like Athenian legislation, the laws of the Labyadai appear unconcerned with pollution, focussing instead on restricting expenditures and public displays of mourning.

Funeral legislation from Asia Minor survives from 3rd-century BCE Gambreion, near Pergamon.[221] Less informative regarding expenditure or pollution, it addresses the behaviour of mourning relatives. Women were to wear grey garments to signify their mourning, men and children grey or white. The customary rites (*ta nomima*) for the deceased were to conclude within three months, with mourning ending after four months for men and five for women. All further funerary duties were then ceased by the women, while civic duties, like the participation in public processions, resumed. This return to normal life was further emphasized by the fact that men and women following the laws were blessed by the *gynaikonomos* before the Thesmophoria, while those who did not were prohibited from sacrificing to any god for ten years – significant punishment given how pervasive sacrifices and offering were in Greek communities. Exclusion from important festivals and ceremonies of the cultic calendar meant extreme isolation from other polis members and loss of access to divine protection and blessings.

A number of fragments offer glimpses into further funerary legislation: in Gortyn, relatives of the deceased could not refuse to hold the *prothesis*;[222] Mytilene prohibited anyone but relatives from

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the daughters, but in addition to these not more than five women, two children, daughters of cousins, but no other person," *Osborne – Rhodes GHI* II 194.

[219] *Osborne – Rhodes GHI* II 194.

[220] *Rhodes – Osborne GHI* 1 (*LGS* II 74; *CID* I 9, *LSG* 77; *SIG*³ 1220; *CGRN* 82); Garland 1989, 8f.

[221] *LSA* 16 (*SIG*³ 1219; *CIG* 3562; *CGRN* 108); Garland 1989, 10.

[222] *IC* IV 22; *LSAG* 315 no.2; Garland 1989, 10.

attending a funeral;[223] in Nisyrus, delinquents were barred from funerals;[224] and in Syracuse, expensive processions and goods for the dead were prohibited.[225] Remarkable in comparison to other funerary laws are customs followed in Sparta, according to Plutarch. Here, restrictions on intramural burials and gravesites near sacred places were lifted by Lykourgos to eliminate superstitious fears of death and pollution.[226] Furthermore, he prohibited any kind of grave goods and even grave inscriptions except for men fallen in battle and women who died during childbirth or while holding sacred office.[227] The deceased was to be covered in a scarlet robe and strewn with olive leaves, with all mourning ceasing after eleven days. While burials of most citizens were humble affairs, the death of a Spartan king called for the opposite reaction: one man and one woman from every household became polluted, and all Spartiates, *perioikoi*, helots and women were to attend the funeral, where loud lamentation was expected of them.[228]

The above-mentioned Greek funeral laws differ in detail but all seek to control public aspects of funerary ceremony for private individuals. Their primary concern is restriction of excess, both in displays of wealth through elaborate sacrifices, bier furnishings, grave offerings and monuments, as well as in performances of mourning (especially by women) through loud lamentation, wailing, tearing of hair and clothing, and laceration of the flesh. By limiting funeral parties to relatives of the deceased who had to perform the rites in a quiet and humble fashion, wake and burial became private events under state control, removed from the wider public to prevent disruption and (possibly) civil unrest.[229] At the same time, however, this legal framework did not eliminate funerary visibility altogether. Hellenistic cities increasingly created sanctioned spaces for commemoration, ranging from the erection of statues, public burials and honorific decrees to sometimes even intramural tombs.[230] This not only permitted public expressions of emotions and monumental commemoration but encouraged it for selected individuals. Rather than a simple narrative of restriction, funerary practice in the Hellenistic period is best understood as a differentiated system that carefully negotiated who could be commemorated publicly, how, and on what grounds.

While no specific laws or customs regarding funeral ceremonies in the Eastern Greek poleis discussed in this thesis survive, general assumptions can be made based on homological literary

[223] Cic. *De Leg.* 2.66; Garland 1989, 13.
[224] Garland 1989, 13.
[225] Diod. Sic. XI 38.2; Garland 1989, 14.
[226] Plut. *Lyk.* 27.1–2; Plut. *Mor.* 238d.
[227] The restorations of the text regarding the part of women vary. Garland 1989, 13.
[228] Hdt. VI 58.1; Toher 1991, 169–173.
[229] Garland 1989, 14f.
[230] Decrees for Archippe in Kyme: *SEG* 33.1035-1041 (I-VIII) – *SEG* 43. 871; 56.1356 (cf.) (*IK Kyme* 13); decrees for benefactors in Priene: *Priene* 22 (Herodes Poseidonious), *Priene* 32– 34 (Aulus Aemilius Zosimos), *Priene* 56 (Krates), *Priene* 66 (Moschion), *IK Priene* 65 (Herodes); honorific decree from Kolophon for Ptolemaios: *SEG* 39.1243. Examples of Hellenistic intramural tombs are discussed in detail in Fröhlich 2013, 250–274.

and epigraphic evidence from other Greek peer communities: after death, a wake was held in the home, where the body was laid out after being washed and anointed by female relatives.[231] The funeral procession had to happen without disturbing the public, without excessive furnishings of bier or body, and with only a limited number of attendees. At the tomb the burial was to be performed with accompanying rites that are not transmitted in detail but sometimes referred to as following 'ancient customs', often witnessed only by the closest family members. If a funeral banquet was held, it most likely took place at the house of the deceased rather than the cemetery. Regarding pollution, Parker has noted that "for many parts of the Greek world no actual evidence that such regulations have existed" survives, but pollution likely was a fact that accompanied death in many (if not all) communities, even without a panhellenic norm.[232]

2.3 Framing the dead on Hellenistic grave stelai

Having explored the legal framing of the burial as well as the contextual framing of grave monuments and their reliefs, we can now consider the ways in which the reliefs (i.e. the image fields) themselves are framed on these monuments. As we will see, framed reliefs are another homology among our peer polities, all choosing to delineate the image field against their surroundings through visual means. This subchapter opens with a short survey of what frames do for an object (2.3.1), before focussing on the specific types of framed stelai and reliefs from the five poleis. This consists of an analysis of the different stele and frame types deployed in the east Greek poleis (2.3.2) as well as architectural elements found within the image field (2.3.3). This is followed by an exploration of the threshold-function of graves and how that influences the reading of reliefs and their figures (2.4). I will outline common design choices among the Greek peer poleis while also demonstrating how those designs affect the (interpretations of the) status of the dead (and their grave markers) within the worldview of the Hellenistic community.

2.3.1 What do frames do?

> *"However assertively they exert themselves, frames all too easily lend themselves to overlooking; adumbrated by the framed object, cast to the interpretive sidelines, frames can prove all but invisible to modern eyes."*[233]

What do frames do to the object they surround? Their most apparent purpose is to provide a clear border distinguishing between an outside and an inside. Frames can be plain or lavishly decorated

[231] Garland 1985, 24; Alexiou 2002, 5.
[232] Parker 1983, 34; cf. Osborne 2011, 158–184 for a discussion of polluted (or 'dirty') bodies.
[233] Platt – Squire 2017, 3.

as well as constructed from a variety of materials. Not exclusive to reliefs, they also surround image panels on vases, statues placed in niches, or wall paintings with panels or zones marked off by frames or mouldings. However, frames are not merely supportive element providing basic visual markers for the onlooker to distinguish between here and there, outside and inside. In recent years scholarship has begun to investigate the meaning of frames beyond aesthetic and functional effects, encompassing the relationship between frame and object, as well as their role in the interaction between onlooker and object.[234]

Often cited in the study of frames and framing are Kant and Derrida. In his *Analytik des Schönen,* Kant states that the 'good' ornament (*Zierat*), or *parergon*, does not contribute to or elevate the inner meaning of an object but emphasizes this interior quality by exterior means as an addition (*Zutat*). The 'bad' ornament (*Schmuck*) is added only for aesthetic reasons, causing it to diminish the 'true beauty' (*tut der echten Schönheit Abbruch*) of the artwork it adorns.[235] While Kant gives framing devices some credit as 'visual highlighters', he does not believe them to possess inherent significance capable of adding to the framed object's meaning (even though they clearly have the power to make it worse). This inconsistency is addressed by Derrida, who asks how the *parergon* can define the aesthetic boundaries of the work/object while remaining subsidiary to it in nature. He argues that frames are not merely borders between inside-the-frame and outside-the-frame but active agents of interaction and mediation essential to experiencing and understanding the work.[236] While looking at an object, be it a painting, a sculpture or a building, we cannot detach the *parergon*/frame/'ornament' (such as the frame around the canvas, the clothing of a statue, or the *tympanon* relief of a temple) from the *ergon* without fundamentally altering our perception of the object. It might remain functional, but the removal of the 'ornament' takes away more than just 'non-essential decoration', instead removing context essential to the object itself: frame and object are not two entities that exist separate from each other. Therefore, we should not (and cannot) look at them as such.

Frames are not chosen at random but result from conscious choices made by the artist and (sometimes) the client. Especially in the context of death and burial, we must assume that the person purchasing a gravestone for themselves or a close relative made meaningful decisions about the piece that would mark the grave of the deceased and act as permanent memorialization.

[234] Cf. Haug 2015; Platt – Squire 2017; Dietrich – Squire 2018.
[235] Kant 1790, 43; Platt – Squire 2017, 38–47.
[236] Derrida 1987, 53–82; Platt – Squire 2017, 47–59.

2.3.2 Stele types of east Greek poleis

In her treatise on the funerary monuments of the Athenian agora, Janet Grossman establishes nine different types of funerary stele used during the Classical period: plain stele, stele with relief panel, pediment stele, arch stele, *naiskos*, flat-topped *naiskos*, *acanthus* stele, rosette stele, and *acanthus* stele with additional elements.[237] Grossman's *acanthus* stele (with and without additional elements) and rosette stele are not found in the corpus of material of this thesis, except for one example surviving from Rhodes (PM 150), and seem to have been uncommon in eastern Greek poleis. Whether this was due to aesthetic preferences and development in style or rooted in a different, maybe less rigorous approach to citizenship is uncertain.[238] The other six types of stelai are found among the grave monuments discussed here but given that this thesis expands beyond the Athenian context it will also be necessary to expand the number of types. This thesis requires the creation of a new, updated list specific to the polities covered by it, which reads as follows:

1. **Plain stele.** A monument with a figural relief but without any moulding. Often the relief panel is recessed into the stone, creating a simple frame without decoration (PM 1584 (pl. 92)).
2. **Plain moulded stele.** A rectangular monument with a simple moulding at the top and relief sculpture not set off by surrounding architectural elements or in a panel. The figures can be standing on a ground line (PM 1820 (pl. 100)). Only four examples are represented in this thesis, three from Rhodes (PM 779 (pl. 12), 2198 (pl. 27), 2267 (pl. 27)) and one from Samos (PM 1820 (pl. 100)).
3. **Stele with relief panel.** A rectangular monument with the figural designs placed inside of a recessed panel. The moulding at the top of the stele can be simple (PM 118 (pl. 1)) or have multiple increments (PM 136 (pl. 74)). The relief panel can be framed with an additional moulding (PM 726 (pl. 11), 733 (pl. 11)).
4. **Pediment stele.** A rectangular monument with the top part shaped into a triangle. Usually, the crest and the corner are decorated with acroteria, and many tympanums have a carved emblem, e.g., shields (PM 640 (pl. 52)) or rosettes (PM 156 (pl.33)).

[237] Grossman 2013, 19–23. These types are also found in the Roman period. As Grossman points out, only a few monuments can be confidently dated to the Hellenistic period, with the most common type being unadorned *columella*. This can most likely be attributed to the restrictive funerary laws implemented by Demetrius of Phaleron which prohibited stelai. Ibid., 58.

[238] Both acanthus and rosette stele survive with (partially) intact inscriptions, which show a family lineage of male heirs and were possibly used as proof of decent in questions of citizenship. Bergemann 1997, 24f, 32, 153; Closterman 2006, 59; Closterman 2007, 635, 637. On the shifting representation of women on Classical Attic gravestones linked to the importance of women for the formal qualifications of Athenian citizenship cf. Osborne 1997a.

Pediment stelai make up the majority of the surviving funerary monuments where the type can be identified unequivocally.

5. **Arch stele.** A stele that incorporates an arch at the top of the relief panel (PM 1686 (pl. 142)). There are only a few surviving examples of this type, and there is an overlap with other stele designs, i.e., the relief panel is embedded into the shaft of a rectangular stone that is capped by a pediment (PM 2036 (pl. 146)). Given that the arch is comparably uncommon in Greek art and architecture it is worth separating this variation as its own type.
6. ***Naiskos* stele.** Another variation of the pediment stele, in which the relief panel is not only capped by an entablature at the top but has pillars on the sides of the relief panel (PM 149 (pl. 33), 405 (pl. 41)). The figures are presented inside this architectural niche that is reminiscent of temple front architecture.
7. **Flat-topped *naiskos*.** A variation of the *naiskos* stele where the entablature is not a pediment but a flat roof, often with several antefixes on the eaves (PM 138 (pl.2), 2041 (pl. 27)). A considerable number of these stelai are wider than they are tall.
8. **Flat-topped stele.** Like the former type, the shaft of this type carries a flat entablature which can be decorated with antefixes or *acroteria*, but the relief panel is not framed by pillars (PM 223 (pl. 127), 1056 (pl. 135)).
9. **Grave altar.** Common in Rhodes are grave altars, either round or angular, decorated with figural reliefs. All these monuments have mouldings at the top of the altar body (i.e., beneath the top stone plate), which can be simple (PM 377 (pl. 6)) or elaborate (PM 1081 (pl. 20)). The sides of the altar can carry a pediment which is not visible from the front (PM 421 (pl. 7)).
10. ***Acanthus* stele.** A stele crowned by floral decoration, usually of *acanthus* leaves in relief. Popular during the Classical period but fell out of favour during the Hellenistic and Roman period.[239] The only surviving example is from Rhodes (PM 150 (pl. 2)).

Some 200 stelai from the five poleis are either too fragmented or not catalogued in a way that allows for a clear identification of the framing and overall type.[240] The remaining stelai grant insight into the trends and preferences of stele types in the cities discussed. Another group of reliefs are clearly showing a *naiskos* but are too heavily damaged to determine if the pillars carried a pediment or a flat entablature (e.g., PM 169 (pl.35), 539 (pl. 48)).

[239] Grossmann 2013, 21.

[240] The stelai of unclear type are not included in the calculation of the percentages.

Furthermore, some overlap between types cannot be prevented. There are, for example, arch stelai that also carry a pediment. In an effort to avoid double counting and to establish clear object groups, ambiguous stelai were counted towards the less common type (e.g., arch stele instead of pediment stele).

		Byzantion		Pergamon		Rhodes		Samos		Smyrna		Total	
1	Plain stele	14	12%	5	46%	1	2%	16	38%	1	1%	37	14%
2	Plain moulded stele	0	0%	0	0%	3	5%	1	2%	0	0%	4	1%
3	Stele with relief panel	20	17%	0	0%	8	20%	1	2%	0	0%	29	11%
4	Pediment stele	50	41%		9%	8	20%	9	21%	45	65%	112	40%
5	Arch stele	15	12%	2	18%	0	0%	3	7%	0	0%	20	7%
6	*Naiskos*	0	0%	1	9%	1	0%	1	2%	11	16%	14	4%
7	Flat-topped *naiskos*	13	11%	2	18%	4	10%	9	21%	2	3%	30	10%
8	Flat-topped stele	8	6%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%	9	3%
9	Grave altar	0	0%	0	0%	15	37%	0	0%	0	0%	15	5%
10	*Acanthus* stele	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%
11	*Naiskos* of some sort	1	1%	0	0%	2	5%	2	5%	9	13%	14	5%
	Uncertain form	20	X	23	X	42	X	77	X	54	X	216	X
Total		**141**		**33**		**85**		**119**		**123**		**501**	
Total without uncertain type		121		10		43		42		69		**285**	

Table 2: Overview of the types of stelai from the five poleis discussed in this thesis.

Peer polity interaction can be seen to lead both to conformity (across poleis) and to variety (between poleis): clear trends are observable in both cases, demonstrating both designs and iconographies shared among peers as well as contrasting regional preferences that show how homological designs could distinguish a polis (visually) from its peers. The most popular design is the pediment stele, followed closely by the *naiskos* (especially when all variations are considered).[241] The overall distribution of styles largely falls within the types of funerary monuments established for Athens by Grossman, all represented to varying degrees across the different poleis, but with clear regional preferences: Byzantion favours the pediment stele, while Samos prefers plain stelai and flat topped *naiskoi,* and Smyrna has the largest group of *naiskoi* stelai.

[241] Pergamon presents itself as an outlier, with no significant number of surviving pediment stelai, only a small number of naiskoi, and the least diversified set of material. This extreme case is amplified by the small number of surviving stelai combined with the large number of fragmentary pieces, which often allow for some statements about motif and composition but offer no insight into their framing.

True innovation in stele type occurs only in Rhodes with the introduction of the grave altar, a format absent from the other case studies and accounting for a significant number of sculpted grave monuments on the island.

Plain stelai with no architectural decoration on the frames surrounding the relief panel are found in all poleis. The minimalist design likely reflects, to some degree, the financial status of those commissioning and purchasing the grave markers; affluent families would have had the means to invest in more elaborate stelai, while the less fortunate would have opted for simpler and more affordable designs. However, relief complexity varies, with some stelai depicting comparatively simple compositions, such as standing figures (PM 193 (pl. 126), 466 (pl. 466)) or *dexiosis* (PM 702 (pl. 78)), and others showing intricate scenes with banquets (PM 1584 (pl. 92), 1993 (pl. 110) or equestrians (PM 1355 (pl. 118), 1366 (pl. 119)). Beyond financial considerations, this type may have been chosen for its focus on figural design without the 'distraction' of an elaborate frame, or because of an original placement context now unknown. Fabricius has proposed that Samian reliefs may have been built into the walls of funeral monuments, where most plain stelai were found.[242] This could have required avoidance of too elaborate frames or could have meant that additional decorative framing was added to the niche which held the stele. They may also have formed part of a larger collage of grave markers for collective family or association plots (the latter being particularly popular in Rhodes), where different kinds of *semata* were put on display.[243]

That only three examples survive for the second type, the **plain moulded stele**, two from Rhodes (PM 779 (pl. 12), 2198 (pl. 27)) and one from Samos (PM 1820 (pl. 100)), suggests that this style had fallen out of favour (numerous examples survive from Athens).[244] Citizens of these Eastern Greek poleis appear particularly interested in creating visual frames enclosing the figural scenes on all sides, even if the frame was simple and unembellished. Stelai with a moulding on the top and figures placed on a baseline created by the recessed carving do not seem to have met the general taste of the time.

Stelai with crowning mouldings and relief panels survive in numbers comparable to plain stelai and were found in Byzantion, Samos and Rhodes, with Byzantion utilizing them the most. While the majority of stelai are uniform in their comparably simple design (PM 118 (pl.1), 696 (pl. 8), F45 (pl. 150)), bearing a mould without any ornaments, a few have carvings to indicate several trims,

[242] Fabricius 2010, 204. It needs to be stressed that none of the reliefs have been found *in situ* and all reconstructions of the ancient mounting or placement can only be generated through evidence apparent from the material itself. Pfanner 1989, 186; Fabricius 1999, 113.
[243] Pfanner 1989, 183f presents a convincing argument for the installation of reliefs in a free-standing array, attached to a stone base with bolts and pegs.
[244] Cf. Conze 1893–1922.

creating a sort of minimalist *cyma* (PM 136 (pl. 74)), or add a separate frame to the relief panel (PM 726 (pl. 11), 733 (pl. 11)). The frequent use of this stele type in Rhodes demonstrates an ongoing affinity for Athenian traditions and imagery, also evident in the style and iconography of the reliefs themselves.

As noted above, **pediment stelai** are the most numerous, with Byzantine and Smyrnaean examples far outnumbering those elsewhere. Typically, the pediment has a low slope, though narrower grave stelai may display steeper angles and decorative *acroteria* at the centre and corners. *Acroteria* can be small and unobtrusive (PM 1804 (pl. 144)) or larger and more noticeable (PM 397 (pl. 40)), but they almost always lack further detailing, with one Rhodian exception (PM 289 (pl.5)) incorporating acanthus and palmette leaves typical of Athenian funerary monuments, further establishing links to Attic iconographic traditions. Many stelai feature a carved emblem in the middle of the pediment, usually a shield (PM 640 (pl. 52)) or a rose (PM 532 (pl. 47)), though a butterfly (*psyche*) (PM 1657 (pl. 140)) on one example suggests that custom emblems were possible; additionally, some details may also have been painted rather than carved.[245] Another similarity is the preference for a 'closed frame', i.e., enclosing the relief panel with frames on all sides. Unlike Athens, where reliefs could be 'open' to the sides with a border (and/or moulding) at the bottom and a pediment or entablature at the top, the relief panels of this group are usually fully framed. Of the five exceptions of this trend, four are Rhodian, again aligning with Classical Athenian tradition (PM 289, 756 (pl. 11), 1011 (pl.18), 2027 (pl. 26)).[246]

Arch stelai are found in Pergamon, Samos and Byzantion; although uncommon in Greek funerary reliefs, arches are also attested on funerary monuments from Delos and Rheneia.[247] Byzantine stelai constitute the majority of the arched type and employ the type most elaborately, combining arches with pediments, pillars, caryatids, and mouldings (PM 507 (pl. 130), 2315 (pl. 149), 2316 (pl. 149)), thus creating unique stages for the figures inhabiting the relief. Stelai from Pergamon (PM 1361 (pl. 118), Winter 310 (pl. 124)) and Samos (PM 973 (pl. 83)) are simpler, featuring undecorated arches and lacking additional architectural elements.

[245] Examples of grave stelai with surviving paint are rare, but some are preserved well enough to make out the painted decoration of the pediment. Several painted funerary stelai have been found in Vergina, Macedonia (c. 350–300 BCE). Andronikos 1983, 104. For an example of the colourful pediment cf. Andronikos 1983, 98 fig. 61. On painted Attic grave stele of the Classical period cf. Posamentir 2006.

[246] The fifth being PM 716 from Samos, with a peculiar "half-finished" relief, which could be the result of reworking an older stele for later reuse, also indicated by the younger inscription. Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, 195.

[247] Arches are a more typical feature in Roman art and architecture. Delos had a large Roman population, which might explain the influence there. Cf. Le Dinahet-Couilloud 1970; Le Dinahet-Couilloud 1974a; Le Dinahet-Couilloud 1974b; Le Dinahet-Couilloud 1975.

***Naiskos* stelai** are especially popular in Smyrna but also appear in other poleis, except for Byzantion and Rhodes. This category contains the most elaborate and detailed frames, with examples featuring fluted columns (PM 158 (pl.33)) carrying Corinthian (PM 405 (pl. 41)) or Ionic capitals (PM 415 (pl. 43)), carved dentils in the architrave and pediment (PM 435 (pl. 44), 989 (pl. 63)) or fully realized triglyph friezes (PM 170 (pl. 35), 804 (pl. 56)), while PM 1917 (pl. 123) elevates the *tympanum* by decorating it with not just an emblem but also two snakes. Furthermore, there is more detailing in the bases below the relief panel, including protruding and receding elements (PM 405), as well as carved mouldings (PM 804). *Naiskoi* are overwhelmingly rectangular, with the shaft narrowing at the top. The relief panel of this stele type usually displays one or two standing protagonists, often with several attending slaves. Banquet scenes appear on Samian and Pergamene *naiskoi*, reflecting local iconographic traditions and tastes. Outside Smyrna, *naiskos* stelai also employ more restrained architectural detailing, forgoing fluted columns and rich details of the pediment and foundation zone (PM 1581 (pl. 91)). So, while not all *naiskoi* are equally ornate, Smyrna shows a clear preference for elaboration and provides the largest group of surviving *naiskoi* stelai.

Flat-topped *naiskos* stelai are found in areas distinct from the *naiskos* type, most frequently in Byzantion and Samos, and generally conform to the more minimalist design and style observed in non-Smyrnaean *naiskoi*. Pillars have unfluted shafts, capitals are lacking distinctive features, and *cymae* are absent (PM 1107 (pl. 84), 1915 (pl. 106)). There might be simple mouldings, but examples like the architrave with *fasciae* (PM 1439 (pl. 68)) or the small triglyph frieze (PM 1826 (pl. 101)) are unique exceptions rather than part of the general iconography. Antefixes on several examples (PM 138 (pl. 2), 2037 (pl. 146), 2041 (pl. 27)) suggest an allusion to building sides rather than frontal temple facades. The stelai tend to be square and wider than tall, a format well suited to banquet scenes or seated women. Flat-topped *naiskoi* are the stele type most often used for the uniquely Byzantine motif of the caryatids (PM 891 (pl. 132), 892 (pl. 133), 2034 (pl. 145), 2037 (pl. 146)), with the female figures placed on pillars supporting the architrave on their heads and raised arm, in one example (PM 2034) with sirens resting between them and the entablature.

The **flat-topped stele** may be understood as a variation of the pediment stele, as all examples have *acroteria* while omitting *geison* and *sima*. (PM 131 (pl. 32), 1056 (pl. 135)). The allusion to temple architecture is therefore less obvious but still legible. Overall, this simplified pediment form appears less popular than other styles, with only eight examples surviving from Byzantion and a singular exemplar from Smyrna.

The **grave altar** is a form frequently used in Rhodes and absent from the other poleis examined here.[248] These altars are decorated with architectural details, just like rectangular *Bildfeldstelen*. All examples analysed here have at least a rim above the relief panel, reminiscent of a *geison* and rest on bases with decorative bands, while some display more elaborate details, such as a dentil and *cyma* (PM 1081 (pl. 20)). PM 421 (pl. 7) is the most ornate piece, not only being decorated with a dentil, a bead and reel (*astragal*) and egg-and-dart (*ovolo*), but also a *bucranium* frieze above the relief. Moreover, the altar rests on a base with another bead and reel, a lesbian *cyma* and a braided band. Although no pediment is visible from the front, the narrow side shows a small pediment with a central *acroterion*. According to Fraser, the moulding of the sides into small *aediculae* with pediment ending flush with the top cornice of the altar is common in rectangular altars.[249] Another unique detail can be found on PM 1547 (pl. 21), a round grave altar with more modest base and *geison* but decorated with a massive *bucranium* circling the upper half of the altar and the top and sides of the relief. The texture of the *bucranium* garland, made from leaves that look almost like scales, is used to frame the relief field depicting a banquet scene, elevating the image into the cultic sphere.

Connections may exist between scenes depicted on the relief panels, choice of format and stele type, as designs such as the flat-topped *naiskos* lend themselves more easily to iconography involving larger groups and prolate motifs like reclining banqueteers. The *Totenmahl* with the horizontally placed dining figure/s and the Samian preference for opulent accessories, such as sideboards full of expensive tableware, do not fit well into a narrow picture frame and work best in a wide format. While the pictorial themes of the architrave-framed reliefs are less clear than in Pergamon, it can be noted that the majority show banquets, which could happen outdoors or in hypaethral courtyards in real life. Architectural frames do not necessarily mean that the framed image is meant to be inside (and indeed, there are multiple examples showing 'outdoor' activities/attributes such as athletes, trees and herms, within the confines of a *naiskos*), but it is notable that Pergamon chose the plain stele over the *naiskos* for their horseman reliefs, an activity linked to the outdoors. This may indicate an effort not restrain horse and rider visually within an architectural frame, instead opting for something less indicative of an indoor space. However, for a significant number of Pergamene reliefs we cannot establish any specific frame due to their state of preservation. As mentioned above, Fabricius and Pfanner have put forward theories about the original placement of grave stelai, which involve the stone plates being inserted into wall niches or

[248] The majority of Rhodian funerary monuments fall into three categories: cinerary caskets made from stone, rectangular grave altars and cylindrical grave altars. The caskets are plain without any reliefs (but can carry inscriptions), while the altars (regardless of shape) are usually decorated with mouldings and *fasciae*. They can be decorated with *bucrania* and garlands but do not necessarily carry a figural relief. For the purpose of this thesis only those monuments with a figural relief are of interest. Fraser 1977, 11-13, 16, 19, 27f.
[249] Fraser 1977, 13.

clamped onto stone bases. Such placement makes it possible for the reliefs to have been framed in some external way, e.g., by decorations carved into the wall into which they were inserted. Surviving votive reliefs record another way of displaying reliefs: free standing, mounted on the top of small pillars (fig. 14–15). In the votive examples the depicted relief-within-a-relief shares the rectangular wider-than-tall format seen in some grave stelai and it is possible that grave reliefs were displayed in a similar fashion and not framed at all.

Architectural framing of grave reliefs was not mundane: elaborate pillars and pediments with *acroteria* were not part of ordinary housing constructed from clay bricks, quarry stones and wood, but recall monumental architecture of public buildings and temples.[250] Incorporating architectural elements like caryatids or elaborate embellishments usually found in temple architecture (e.g., dentils, friezes) elevates the framed picture and transports it from the mundane to the sublime. The similarity to sacred architecture is no coincidence, but a deliberate choice that situates the depicted dead beyond the mortal realm, in a world outside that of mortals and more akin to that of the gods and heroes, already discussed in Chapter 1. Frames thus contribute to positioning the dead, but it is not their only purpose.

2.3.3 The "residences" of the dead: architectural features inside the reliefs

Architectural elements within the panels come in two categories: ambient elements, such as individual columns, that have no load-bearing function, and structural elements, like walls and roofs.

Ambient elements include herms, columns and curtains. **Herms** appear on stelai from all poleis except Pergamon, where the number of surviving stelai is small.[251] They seem to be universally reserved for male children or young men and reference the *palaestra* and *gymnasium*, appearing alongside 'sports equipment', as with the boy on PM 126 (Byzantion, pl. 126) carrying two spears, or athletic utensils like the strigil and the alabastron, such as those held by slave boys (PM 114, Smyrna, shows the servant carrying the cloak of his young master, pl. 31). While herms are not

[250] Pfuhl briefly noted that the "Kleinarchitektur der Stelen den großen Bauten [nahesteht]" and that the architecture references grave temples without depicting them in a realistic way. Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, 52. Karlsson interprets the architectural frames simply as echoes of monumental tombs for the elite, which – for both tombs and tombstones – function as a way to turn them into *heroa*. I believe the reference is not to grander funeral monuments, but sacral architecture and I disagree with the frames (or general 'heroic' iconographical elements) elevating the deceased to the level of heroes. They may be read as the deceased having qualities that could be regarded as 'worthy of a hero' but not as unequivocal evidence for official honours and a cult. Karlsson 2014, 169, 171f.

[251] Pfuhl correctly emphasizes that herms are not portraits of the dead, referencing a fable by Babrius, in which Hermes asks an undecided sculptor who contemplates whether he should sell a recently carved herm to a customer looking to use it as a grave marker or an artist who would use it as an image of Hermes: "[…] it remains to be seen whether you will make me a corpse or a god." Babr. 30.10.

commonly associated with adult figures, PM 646 (pl. 53) from Smyrna depicts a herm between the two adult male figures of the relief, presumably the funerary portrait of a family.[252] They allude to the outdoor space of hypaethral courtyards of the *gymnasia*, where physical training took place, and this location is confirmed by trees appearing alongside the herms on several grave reliefs (PM 256 (pl. 37), Smyrna; PM 136 (pl. 74), Samos). Herms were also found at crossroads and as grave markers, signifying liminal spaces of crossing and crossing over. This makes them fitting figures for burial monuments, since graves are not only the location where the physical remains of the deceased are laid to rest, but also spaces where a connection between dead and living endures, being revived and strengthened through continuous visits and rituals.

The rarest ambient element is the **curtain,** although at least one example can be found in each of the poleis discussed in this thesis: PM 2036 (Byzantion, pl 146), PM 817 (Pergamon, pl. 115), PM 1846 (Rhodes, pl. 24), PM 1511 and 1863 (Samos, pl. 102), PM 415 (Smyrna, pl. 43). The fabric is usually hung behind the figures and serves as semi-permanent wall that is easily set up and separates inside from outside. An exception is the Byzantine relief of PM 2036, where two thick stripes cutting diagonally across the background are identified by Pfuhl and Möbius as plausibly representing drawn-back curtains.[253] In other cases, curtains are hung across all or parts of the background and provide a canvas behind the relief figures. As Pfuhl points out, curtains are also found on Athenian votive reliefs of the 4th century BCE, as well as the Telephos frieze in Pergamon (fig. 16), on the Icarius frieze (fig. 17), and in Pompeiian wall paintings (fig. 18).[254] He further notes that curtains were used as improvised yet stable walls in Southern countries, especially during summertime when they provide shade and climatize buildings for comfort.[255] Again there seems to be a general implication of an 'outdoors'; either in the sense of the figures being 'outdoors in nature' or in a more domestic courtyard setting, with this temporary setup providing shelter and privacy. Apart from the horse peeking over the curtain in PM 817 and the potential door in PM 415, there is no indication of what lies behind the curtain. Instead, the fabric itself appears to act as an additional canvas against which the figures are placed, possibly being brightly painted to indicate the value of the material. The curtains in PM 1511 and 1846 do not cover the background of the whole reliefs but only specific figures: on the former it covers the ground behind the reclining man but not behind the slaves to the left, while in the latter relief it is used to create a contrasting

[252] The man occupying the central space is dressed in a *himation* that leaves his right shoulder and chest exposed, while the man to the left has his cloak wrapped around him. The heads of all figures are missing, and no inscription survives, making it impossible to conclusively guess the relations between them or even assign them to an age group, but it seems plausibly that the man ranking highest hierarchically would be placed in the middle, making him the father to the other man, and husband or father of the woman.
[253] Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 490.
[254] Pfuhl 1905, 125; Karlsson 2014, 179f.
[255] Pfuhl 1905, 125, 138.

backdrop for the seated women (the male banqueter sits in front of a shield). If the reliefs were painted, the figures would have stood out even more against the backdrop of a richly colourful curtain. Similar motifs appear in votive reliefs, such as the Icarius frieze mentioned above or a Hellenistic votive relief in Munich (fig. 28), where the divine and more important figures are differentiated from satyrs, revellers, and worshippers by being placed against the curtain.

Columns can be found in Samos and Smyrna (but are most popular in Smyrna), and do not appear in association with any specific age group or gender. In place of a capital, columns carry a variety of objects, which may be linked to the gender of the figure/s depicted on the reliefs (book scrolls for men, *kalathoi* and jewellery boxes for women (PM 1107 (pl. 84)), but more often than not they are either genderless attributes (chests, cornucopias, instruments) or linked more generally to the funerary context (urns, sirens) (PM 693 (pl. 54)). Already in 1905 Pfuhl suggested that these columns should be understood as grave monuments within the images, and the objects placed upon them read as representations of grave goods or offerings to the dead.[256] Pfuhl interprets chests on columns or walls as *larnakes* (coffins made from terracotta), carrying the ashes of the deceased, or just generally as urns/*cistae*.[257] The chest placed on a column next to the woman of PM 419 (pl. 43) shows a garland adorning the box, a common decoration for religious altars (including grave altars from Rhodes, e.g. PM 2039 (pl. 26)), as well as tombs and urns.[258] This could be read in support of Pfuhl's hypothesis, but also strengthens the link between the realm of death and the cultic sphere. Only in rare cases can an object be definitively identified as an urn: on PM 109 (Smyrna, pl. 31) the column carries a lidded pot. In this case, the column has an honorary wreath etched into its surface – matching the wreath found on virtually all Smyrnaean grave reliefs – as well as an inscription. This clearly identifies the vessel as an urn, though this cannot be extrapolated as a general rule. While most chests are simple objects of uncertain purpose or contents, some reliefs show them propped open, with contents spilling out: PM 382 (pl. 39) and 415 (pl. 43) both show chests with jewellery hanging from the open lids. Some chests may represent urns or ash chests, but variation between reliefs does not allow a general interpretation of every box as

[256] Pfuhl 1905, 58, 70, 76. He blames the lack of surviving 'grave pillars' on the fact that they make excellent construction material and were re-used as spolia. Ibid, 70. An example for the use of pillars and columns as dedicated cult objects can be found in Metaponto, where a large number of pillars from the sanctuary survived *in situ*. These pillars, along with undressed boulders, were placed around the temples and the altars of the sacred site. For a discussion of the votive stelai of Metaponto cf. Doepner 2002.

[257] Pfuhl 1905, 59.

[258] Urns: Roman urns are often adorned with garlands, e.g., the urn of M. Graecinius Blandus, or a square urn found in the tomb of the Volumnia in Prusia (cf. Sinn 1991, 228, fig. 247–249) Tombs: The Hellenistic tomb of Lyson and Kallikles (Grave III) in Lefkadia, Macedonia shows a row of painted garlands (cf. Sakellariou 1983, 150f, fig. 96, 97). Painted garlands can also be found in the Hellenistic Chamber Tomb 10 in the *necropolis* of Tarent (cf. Ruhardt 2019, pl. 4, fig. 10). Given that some grave stelai were painted, it is possible that garlands were added in paint.

container for human remains. Accordingly, while some of the objects depicted on the columns may be intended to signify offerings to the dead, there is no conclusive evidence to verify this interpretation. Another case for Pfuhl reading columns in grave reliefs as funeral monuments are pillars with sirens placed on top of them. Sirens lamenting or playing music are already found on Classical Athenian grave monuments, where they appear as decorations on top of stelai or in the form of statues similar to lion or bull figures that formed part of the visual ensemble within a *peribolos*.[259] The sirens on these columns may indicate a sort of *mise en abyme*, transforming the columns into grave monuments and locating the scenes they inhabit specifically in the *necropolis*. Alternatively, they could exemplify the creative borrowing/relocation of motifs from the *acroteria* of Classical Athenian grave stelai into the internal reliefs of these grave monuments to match different aesthetic preferences regarding stele form during the Hellenistic period.

Roofs and 'dwarf pillars'[260] are each represented in only a few reliefs, all depicting banquet scenes (roofs: PM 1557 (pl. 89), 1916 (pl. 106), both from Samos; dwarf pillars: PM 1883 (pl. 103), 1993 (pl. 110), Samos; Pfuhl 1905 tbl. 24 and 28, Smyrna). Pfuhl interprets the small pillars as openings in "*Hallenbauten*," reminiscent of public *stoas* but within the banquet context likely to be understood as arcades and part of a more domestic setting.[261] He further places these banquet depictions within the realm of funerary cult, noting that "the importance of commemorative banquets during the Hellenistic period can be seen in the works of Epicurus."[262] The identification of the dwarf pillars as part of *stoas* or private (courtyard) halls seems convincing, fitting into the general theme of unspecific 'outdoor' spaces that many grave reliefs allude to. This also allows for the roofs depicted on the two Samian reliefs to be interpreted as the roofs of gazebos or arcades used for dining. Using the remains of meals as part of grave offerings (either during the funeral or later visits to the grave) does not automatically prove that participants of the funeral party or grave visitors participated in the consumption of meals offered to the dead. They might have brought small portions to represent a shared meal, or a proper banquet might be held at home, but there is no evidence of regular large meals consumed by family members at the grave site. However, the *Totenmahlreliefs* should not be taken as literal depictions of real events, and Pfuhl's assumption that big banquets were held at the *necropolis* should be treated with caution.[263]

[259] E.g., the so-called 'Siren relief' (c. 390 BCE; CAT 2.208), the grave stele of Aristodike (c. 350 BCE; CAT 3.397), and the grave stele of Kallistomache (c. 360 BCE; CAT 1.393). For discussions of sirens within the funerary context, see: Schrader 1868, 86-95, esp. 90f; Estrin 2021; Estrin 2023, 155–180.
[260] Pfuhl 1905, 137.
[261] Pfuhl 1905, 136–138. Pfuhl also mentions here that tents were erected to create spaces for meals/feasts, especially on a large scale, which would cover the *Totenmahlreliefs* featuring a curtain.
[262] Pfuhl 1905, 138.
[263] For a discussion of the interpretation of banquet scenes and their level of reality, see Chapter 3 as well as the sources in footnote 143.

The last architectural features are **ledges and shelves** carrying attributes. In Byzantion and Smyrna, ledges are typically located in the upper third of the relief and densely packed with objects, whereas on Samian banquet reliefs they appear much lower in the image field (e.g., PM 1581 (pl. 91)). Combined with the format of the stelai, this difference results in ledges being perceived as 'walls' when positioned low within the reliefs and as 'shelves' when placed higher up. Since grave reliefs reference the sphere of death and burial as part of their visual language, Pfuhl's interpretation of the ledges as the top of *peribolos* walls is persuasive.[264] He suggests that *peribolos* walls may have had the practical function of providing space to place and display objects dedicated to the dead during burial or consecutive visits. Arranging objects neatly on shelves and ledges (or depicting them as 'floating' in the air to signify suspension on walls) above and/or behind the figures creates a clear composition and characterises the dead through attributes. As Wood has pointed out regarding votive offerings, the nature of such offerings is "testimonial" to one's dedication, not only to the gods, but also to fellow worshippers.[265] This testimonial function of votive offering could also be assigned to grave offerings, especially given the importance of the care citizens demonstrated for the graves of their family members. The objects therefore assign virtues not only to the deceased, but also to the surviving relatives, promoting the good reputation and good standing of the family to onlookers. Interpreting ledges as cemetery walls may also explain the 'half walls' visible in a number of Smyrnaean reliefs (PM 990 (pl. 63), 994 (pl. 64), 1030 (pl. 64), Känel 14,1 (pl. 72), 15,1 (pl. 73)): while ledges usually form a continuous line crossing the entire relief, these examples show openings – in the case of Känel 15,1 even between two ledges/walls. These ledges can be mistaken neither for pillars, as they are too wide, nor for shelves, since they clearly show an edge extending from the ledge to the bottom of the panel. Instead, they may represent the entrance into a *peribolos*, where the figures, i.e., the deceased, as well as the onlooker or visitor, are currently located.

While these ambient elements and internal architectural features of the grave reliefs do not necessarily (all) depict actual grave monuments or the physical space of the cemetery, they clearly reference the funerary sphere. The spaces created within the relief panels should not be read as 'photographic' representation of real places; rather, the use of framing elements drawn from monumental architecture allows exploration of the status of the deceased and the realm they occupy.

[264] Pfuhl 1905, 133. The grave epigram on PM 640 mentions that the dead boy, Dionysios, for which the tombstone was erected, lies in the same place as the heroes. This has been interpreted by Karlsson as possible evidence for the parents having built a shrine for their dead son (Karlsson 2014, 182). But given that Dionysos had just started his military service as an ephebe, he may have been killed on duty and been laid to rest in either a shared grave for the (heroized) war dead, or within the *temenos* of a *heroa*.
[265] Wood 2018, 67–85.

2.4 Thresholds between worlds

The architectural elements utilized for the funerary stelai are not part of the designs found in ordinary, private houses: pillars and capitals, mouldings (e.g., dentils), pediments with emblems, *acroteria* and antefixes, multi-stepped bases, and caryatids are part of monumental architecture, particularly temples and treasuries. The figures of the deceased on grave reliefs are therefore not placed within the *oikos* they occupied in life but within a space carrying visual markers of monumental, often sacral, architecture. *Naiskoi* appear not only as framing devices on reliefs, but also in other media, such as vase painting (fig. 19–21) and coins (fig. 22), often with a deity or cult statue depicted within. One grave relief from Erythrai (PM 137 (fig. 23)) even shows the deceased posing between the pillars of an elaborate *naiskos*, with doors behind him leading into the 'grave temple', slightly ajar, like the open temple doors on a 4th-century Attic *krater* (fig. 20).[266]

The figures within the reliefs barely fit into the panels they occupy (fig. 25–28). Standing figures almost bump their heads into the top border of the relief panel, while seated figures are so tall that they would break out of the panel if they were to stand up.[267] The large relative scale of the figures is apparent in relation to the architecture they occupy and further emphasized by the almost comically small servants that attend them. Hierarchical scale plays an important role in visually establishing power and authority and is therefore common in depictions of gods and mortals or monarchs and their subordinates, where the most powerful and important figure/s are also the tallest. By adding miniature servant figures, funerary reliefs not only identify the protagonists but also signal their relative importance. Both relative scale and monumental architectural framing can also be observed in votive reliefs, with the architectural frames matching the stele types established above.

Milette Gaifman discusses the framing of the divine body as a mode to signify it as 'other', emphasizing the divinity of the immortals and setting them apart from mortals. This includes depictions of gods and goddesses as 'oversized' in comparison to mortals and to their physical surroundings, as the human-made structures (whether temples or the image field of a vase) struggle to contain the divine. This detail can also be observed in literature.[268]

[266] PM 415 (Smyrna) might also feature a door, with just the moulding of the lintel being visible behind the curtain that is hung up behind the female figure (fig. 24). Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, 140. For a brief discussion of doors in sepulchral settings see Karlsson 2014, 180f.

[267] In Athenian grave reliefs the figures often overlap with the frame, but this seem to have been an unpopular design choice during the Hellenistic period. This 'overstepping' of the frame can also be observed in vase-painting, cf. Haug 2015, 146f, 204f; Marconi 2018.

[268] Gaifman 2017, 394, 399. Cf. Osborne 2011, 185–215 on 'godsbodies'. In the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, the head of the goddess reaches the roof of Celeus' house. *HH* 2.184–189.

> "Although they belong to the same universe as human beings, the gods are of a different race: they are the *athanatoi*, the nonmortals, the *ambrotoi*, the ones who do not perish. This designation is paradoxical because, by comparison with human beings, it defines those beings whose bodies and lives possess complete positivity – without lack or defect – through negation and absence."[269]

If mortality (or the lack thereof) is understood as the defining distinction between humans and gods, where does this leave the deceased, those beyond mortality, the no-longer-living? They are no longer part of the world of the living yet have not ascended into the realm of the gods. While divine bodies escape the limitations of mortal flesh, the dead are mortals who have, in a sense, transcended those limitations through their loss of corporeality, their physical remembrance now tied to the monument marking the absent/dead body.[270] Funerary rites and the mourning period are highly ritualised ways in which a community not only deals with the loss of a group member, but also ensures proper treatment of the physical body, allowing the deceased to 'move on' to the underworld.[271] The dead are removed from the space they occupied in life, both physical and spiritually: whether they are thought to have been led away by Hermes Psychopompos, carried over the Styx by Charon, or to have fluttered off as a winged soul, they become 'other'.[272]

We have seen that visual markers used for gods can also be applied to the deceased, with framing and cale setting them apart from the mortal world. This does not mean that the deceased on grave reliefs are depicted as gods, or as god-like (as heroes arguably become), but that they share a quality of 'otherness' with the immortals. The process of dying turns humans into something else, not something less human, but something 'other'. When Gaifman discusses the framing of the divine body as something more than human – as 'other' – she notes that mortal subjects on grave reliefs are also depicted transgressing the confines of their image field, but attributes this to physical restrictions of the medium or artistic preference.[273] This overlooks the significance of what has just been discussed: grave reliefs do not simply depict mortal subjects, they depict the deceased as 'other' and employ visual markers otherwise used for divine bodies to signal that otherness.

Cemeteries are inherently liminal spaces, not only because they are the site where physical remains are buried, but also because they are located beside the roads leading to and from the city, literal transit zones. Travellers passing a tomb might know nothing about the individual dead (though

[269] Vernant 1991, 33f.
[270] Vernant 1991, 40; Jones 2015, 819.
[271] And just like funerary laws, there were many rules and laws regarding sacrifices and proper worship but many of their provisions seem to have been particular to individual sanctuaries rather than widely shared. See the material collected in *CGRN*.
[272] For a discussion of the different escorts of the dead on white lekythoi cf. Oakley 2004, 113–144.
[273] Gaifman 2017, 395.

grave epigrams might order the traveller to stop and see[274]), but for family and friends who have laid a loved one to rest, the grave and *peribolos* become a meeting place. Here, the dead and the living can come together, even though one has moved on to the beyond. The frames of grave stelai open a window or doorway into the realm of death, and vice-versa: a passage from the world of the dead to that of the living. This connection is anchored by offerings made by the living for the dead. Libations and incense, once poured or ignited, become immaterial, even if the grave visitor can still see or smell them. By rendering them unusable, such offerings become inaccessible to the world of the living and follow the dead into otherness. Visually, offerings were even made permanent on two surviving stelai from Smyrna (PM 539 (pl. 48), 804 (pl. 56)) and on the sides of a *naiskos* from Rhodes (PM 2318 (pl. 28)), where they are carved into the stone.[275] As mentioned above, the attributes depicted on ledges and pillars within grave reliefs may also have a testimonial function, immortalizing the offerings brought to the graves during visits, or placed with the corpse upon interment.

As Hölscher has pointed out, small-scale sculptures such as grave offerings or votives in sanctuaries were used in 'specific contexts' from the 9th century BCE onward. When life-sized sculptures became more common as dedicatory objects, they turned into "partners and witnesses of ritual acts" and had a "conceptual presence": they were situated near places where ritual acts were happening, greeting visitors near the entrance of sacred space dedicated to the divine, observing processions along the main path to the temple, and witnessing sacrifices at the altar.[276] Like these statuary ex-votos, offerings made by grave visitors are "material markers of an immaterial relationship" and signal the presence of the dead in a specific space.[277] As with entering the sacred ground of a sanctuary, shrine, or temple, the visitor to a grave entered the liminal space of the cemetery, where the dead were given visual and physical presence through their grave portraits.

It is here that a significant difference between Athenian grave reliefs and the Hellenistic reliefs of Asia Minor becomes apparent: on Classical Attic reliefs it is often impossible to identify which figure is deceased.[278] They (still) remain a part of the community, interacting with relatives and servants, largely oblivious to the onlooker. The reliefs show generic scenes of a lost past, when the family was whole and not separated by death, becoming a "frozen version of [idealized and stylized]

[274] An example being the base of the grave *kouros* for Kroisos: "Stand and weep at the tomb of dead Kroisos […]", see Robinson – Stevens – Vanderpool 1949.
[275] With a possible third example from Smyrna (PM 178 (pl. 36)) that shows a second relief panel beneath the figural relief depicting two vessels and a shield.
[276] Hölscher 2018, 60f.
[277] Elsner 2018, 3–25.
[278] Cf. Himmelmann 1999 and the response by Bergemann 2001. For an analysis of internal and external view(ers) see Turner 2009.

life."[279] By contrast, figures on Hellenistic grave stelai from Asia Minor turn toward the onlooker, confronting them by mirroring their gaze. Unlike the Athenian figures, they do not spill over the borders of their image fields but often dwarf their servants, recalling the difference in scale between gods and worshippers on votive reliefs. Just as Archaic *kouroi* and *korai* confronted viewers through strict frontality and a direct stare, the figures of Hellenistic grave reliefs establish a relationship with the viewer.[280] Elsner writes that through direct confrontation of viewer and (Archaic) object, the object "once perhaps of this world but now in another" intrudes "into the viewer's own space and time"[281] and that the "exchange of gazes completes a relationship that links viewer through image to another world which the object not only represents but also embodies".[282] While Archaic statues invited the viewer to see them not only as representations of specific individuals, but also as vessels for projection and reflection on mortality,[283] figures on Hellenistic reliefs seem to retain their individuality. By connecting the depicted deceased and the viewer, the border separating the world of the living from that of the dead collapses, allowing both to occupy the liminal space of the cemetery, a non-space, set apart from the 'real' world as much as from the underworld.

Cemeteries provided a physical location where living and dead could meet, just as sanctuaries and shrines allowed mortals to encounter the divine. The *peribolos*, the physical, architectural enclosure surrounding the sacred space of a sanctuary, also signifies the boundaries of a grave or group of graves. Within this border lies the *temenos*, the inviolable space containing the residence (*hedra*) of the divinity – in the form of the temple or cult statue – or of the deceased – in form of the grave stele.[284] The residence is visually distinct from 'mundane' domiciles, as architectural elements, scale, and decorations drawn from monumental temple architecture elevate it above the secular. Offerings initiate the connection between (mortal) visitor and (immortal/post-mortal) resident, providing an object that can reach into the non-material realm of the god or deceased, while remaining grounded in the physical world of the mortal. The architectural frame of the grave stele thus becomes a literal threshold between worlds, allowing visitors to glimpse into the beyond. Instead of creating an illusion of normality, the elements within the reliefs reference or allude to the cemetery in which the visitor stands. The stelai employ religious themes and objects such as

[279] Osborne 1988, 14.
[280] Elsner 2006, 76; Karlsson 2014, 243, 253.
[281] Elsner 2006, 83.
[282] Elsner 2006, 85
[283] Osborne 1988, 7.
[284] In addition, it is worth noting that votive gifts could not simply be removed from the temple or sanctuary, i.e., out of the possession of the god they were dedicated to. Old or broken votives were melted down to be either reworked into new votives or the metal value used for repairs and upkeep, *IG* II² 839 (*IG* II³,1 1154; *SEG* 21.403; *LSG* 41); *IG* VII 303 (*LSG* 70 (1-52); *SEG* 25,490; *CIG* 1570); *IG* I³ 52 (*SEG* 66.34; *SIG*³ 91). We do not have evidence for whether similar rules could have applied against the removal of grave offerings.

altars, references to the *Totenmahl,* and format familiar from votive reliefs, together with Classical funeral motifs (like the snake) and self-referential elements (like siren stelai and burial vessels) to create a space as distinctly different from the world of the living as the realm of the gods. They do not show the underworld, just as temples do not depict Mount Olympus. Instead, they denote a space that is other and belongs to the dead, but remains accessible to the living. In doing so, the dead themselves are established as 'other' beings, not less than humans, but different.

3. Case Studies

The exploration of common patterns in the iconographical development of Hellenistic grave reliefs and their inherently two-sided nature of coherence/stability/emulation and contrast/competition invites a move to the 'finer grain' of analysis: local identities created through contrast. This chapter examines relief stelai from five different poleis (map 2), beginning with the city closest to Classical Athens in motifs and style and moving further away. I will examine how poleis immortalised their dead, what was communicated through their specific sepulchral iconography, and how this imagery fits within the broader web of supposedly coherent Hellenistic Greek funerary art. While the previous chapters have demonstrated a shared language of themes and motifs, preferences and customs concerning specific attributes, symbols, formats and compositions varied between cities, creating distinct local iconographies.

A few notes need to be made upfront:

There is a general difficulty in determining the age of the depicted individual. Women appear only as clearly underage girls or adult 'ageless' women, without signs of aging that would allow further differentiation,[285] whereas male figures show a wider range. The iconography distinguishes between toddlers, teenagers, young men/ephebes, adult men and old men, although (apart from body size and shape in young children) identification largely rests on the presence or absence of a beard. Adult and adolescent men are shown with bodies in prime condition, with older adults sporting facial hair while their younger counterparts are clean-shaven. This distinguishing criterion proves problematic when figures have lost their heads due to damage, or when facial features have been rubbed away. Since surviving monuments are often heavily damaged and determining the age of the men is rarely straightforward, I have followed the identifications given in the corpus of Pfuhl–Möbius.

There will be no discussion of monuments size (with format being taken into consideration where necessary); measurements for each stele are provided in the plates volume. On average, the stelai are not taller than 100 cm and not smaller than 40 cm, with monuments from poleis with banquet scenes and horsemen usually smaller due to their wider-than-tall format. Similarly, I do not differentiate grave monuments according to either aesthetic or technical 'quality', following Croxford's insight regarding qualitative standards in art from Roman Britain:

[285] Cf. Dillon 2010 and 2012 for the discussion of the lack of female physiognomic differentiation in Hellenistic statues.

> "Defining quality often requires a departure into aesthetics, the field from which the initial damnation sprang. Attempting to avoid the modern sensibilities that inevitably manifest themselves when assessing artistic output is difficult but can be achieved via a focus upon competence in terms of physical achievement. In this sense, each piece of artistic production known from Roman Britain is successful, as it represents the adoption of the practice, and the completion of a piece executed in what are essentially alien techniques and often with alien materials."[286]

Assuming a particular aesthetic as the intended result of an artisanal creation risks interpreting and evaluating objects in comparison with the perceived 'ideal goal', rather than approaching them independently and for their own merit. While a certain comparison with motifs and iconographical elements from Classical Athens is necessary to understand the development of Hellenistic funerary imagery, the technical quality of Hellenistic pieces will not be measured against Classical examples.

In general, I have tried to analyse the reliefs divided by gender, discussing the iconography of men and women separately before examining how space and interaction were treated in each polis. It will become clear that this approach was not reasonable for all poleis, especially for those with particularly homogenous imageries expressed through the near-exclusive use of one favoured motif. Since such motifs usually include both male and female figures, and aspects like the treatment or use of space and interaction intersect without being accurately separated from other iconographic elements, I adopted a flexible structure for the analysis. Rather than following a rigid pattern, I focus on the distinguishing visual characteristics and unique features of each case.

[286] Croxford 2016, 603f.

3.1 Rhodes

Greek settlements on Rhodes (map 4), the largest and most southern island off the coast of Asia Minor, can be traced back to the Mycenaean period, with the foundation of three independent cities: Ialysos, Kameiros and Lindos. During the 5th century they joined forces and formed the city of Rhodes though synoecism.[287] Owing to its political and economic importance as a trade port and naval power, Rhodes steadily generated wealth by charging port tolls and fees for escort services, and was largely on good terms with major powers of the Hellenistic period, including the Ptolemaic kingdom and the Roman Republic.[288] Rhodes initially stayed independent when Rome conquered the Aegean, and even once conquered, benefitted from its reputation as a cultural and educational centre with famous schools for rhetoric and philosophy, prompting important Roman families to send their sons there for training.[289] The economic interest and reach of Rhodes is evident in it intervening when Byzantion tried to restrict transit through the Propontis, even declaring war when the Byzantines attempted to levy transit duties for ships crossing the strait.[290] Throughout the Classical and Hellenistic period Rhodes tried (with varying degrees of success) to establish itself as hegemonic power in the Aegean and a leading power in the fight against piracy.[291] While it is unclear exactly how large and influential the Rhodian fleet was, we can extrapolate that Rhodes held a special position in regard to the number and quality of their ships and sailors from numerous inscriptions listing the names and roles of crew members and detailing the careers of naval officers, as well as the honours bestowed upon them by the polis and various associations (*koina)*.[292] Additionally, the Rhodes governed a extensive *peraia*; major holdings of land controlled and colonized by the city on the Asian continent, especially after being awarded additional possessions in the Treaty of Apamea (map 3), although it lost this land to Pergamon in 167 BCE after falling out with Rome.[293]

Despite its economic and cultural wealth, Rhodes is comparatively poor in surviving Hellenistic art. The question whether a Rhodian school of sculpture existed or not, especially in connection

[287] Mensching 1979, 1421; David 1986, 158, 162; Wiemer 2003, 53f; Kah 2016, 256; Thomsen 2020, 18f.
[288] Gabrielsen 2001, 166; Apostolou 2011, 268; Kah 2016, 263f.
[289] Mensching 1979, 1422; Bieber 1961, 123; Fabricius 1999a, 222f; Gabrielsen 2001, 166f; Kah 2016, 268. Strabo mentions several philosophers in his description of Rhodes (Strab. 14.2.13). Pompey (Strab. 11.1.6), Caesar (Plut. *Caes.* 3.1–2, Suet. *Iul.* 4) and Cicero (Plut. *Cic.* 4.3–4.) all spent time in Rhodes attending lectures.
[290] Kah 2016, 259; Wiemer 2003, 356; Apostolou 2011, 268.
[291] The claim of Rhodes to act as 'naval police' may be propaganda of the city and not based in actual success regarding the eradication of piracy. Kah 2016, 263–269. For a detailed analysis of Rhodian involvement in war, trade and (fight against) piracy during the Hellenistic period see Wiemer 2003.
[292] Gabrielsen 2001, 168f; Kah 2016, 261f, 268; Thomsen 2020, 109–118. Cf. Apostolou 2011 for a breakdown of Rhodes' resources through the analysis of numismatic material. On Rhodian associations see Boyxen 2018, esp. 96–191, and Thomsen 2020.
[293] Sonnabend – Niehoff 2006.

or competition with Pergamon, has been discussed extensively with no definitive answer.[294] Important for this thesis is the fact that, as Goodlett has pointed out, the sculptors commissioned to create works for important cities or major sanctuaries were not the craftsmen making 'common' stone and marble goods used as votives and gravestones, with these 'minor' works making up the majority of the sculpture created.[295] Certainly foreign sculptors joined Rhodian workshops, as is evident in surviving inscriptions on the bases of lost bronze sculptures. Notably, between c. 400–200 BCE the majority of these foreign sculptors came from Athens.[296] It can be assumed that they had an artistic influence on the style of bronze works, and possibly beyond on marble sculpture, including grave reliefs. This 'local' Athenian influence may have added to a general Atheno-classical trend in Rhodian iconography that used and adapted Classical Attic types.[297] In the context of Hellenistic funerary reliefs, these classical tendencies are reflected in a heterogenous group of material with a large variety of motifs, often closer to Athenian in style and composition than in other Hellenistic poleis, such as the comparatively large number of reliefs with military themes. However, in addition to the use of classical motifs (e.g., *dexiosis*, seated women with slaves) and themes distinguishing its sepulchral iconography from the visual language of her peer poleis, we will see that Rhodes also developed two unique pictorial formulas: embracing figures and women as active participants in banquets.

While Rhodes' Atheno-classicising imagery can be explained through external artistic influence or the island's cosmopolitan character, it can also be understood in terms of the stabilising mechanisms of peer polity interaction. The apparent paradox of innovation within a conservative visual language is resolved when novelty is seen not as a rupture but as a development of shared Classical homologies, anchoring Rhodes firmly within a recognisable network of peer poleis while still permitting local experimentation and differentiation. Structural homologies in the form of shared visual forms inherited from the Classical period functioned as a common cultural resource across the Greek world, and Rhodes' sustained adherence to these well-established motifs may reflect a (conscious) commitment to cultural continuity rather than emulation in a competitive sense. Adopting time-honoured Classical compositions provided a stable, commonly known and widely intelligible framework for expressing civic identity, ensuring that Rhodian monuments remained legible as 'Greek' to both local viewers and external audiences.

[294] Lawrence 1923/24–1924/25; Richter 1951, 30f; Bieber 1961, 123–135; Merker 1973; Gualandi 1976; Goodlett 1991; Isager 1995; Pollitt 2000; Bairami 2017.
[295] Goodlett 1991, 670.
[296] Richter 1951, 30; Goodlett 1991, 679.
[297] Bairami 2017, IV.

At the same time, PPI does not (and cannot) account for the specific internal motivations behind certain iconographic choices. The depiction of women participating in banquets, for example, is best understood within the context of Rhodian social practices, local attitudes toward female status, and workshop-level design decisions, rather than as a direct response to inter-polis rivalry. What PPI can explain, however, is the broader significance of such choices: by embedding locally specific innovations within a recognisable visual *koine*, Rhodes was able to assert distinct civic values without jeopardising its participation in a shared Greek cultural sphere. This demonstrates that PPI operates not only through differentiation and competition, but equally through continuity, stability, and the maintenance of cultural common ground. PPI can produce coherence and continuity just as much as differentiation and without contradiction.

The most common funerary monument in Rhodes is the funerary altar, in circular or rectangular form, produced *en masse* as a standardized grave monument.[298] While the majority of the grave altars are decorated only with non-figural ornaments, e.g., *bucrania*, they may be furnished with figural reliefs and elaborate architectural ornaments (PM 421 (pl. 7)). I will not discuss the non-figural grave altars or large number of the unadorned ash urns in this thesis.[299] Less numerous than funerary altars, the grave stelai of Rhodes present themselves as comparatively modest sepulchral monuments. Architectural detail is mostly limited to simple pediments 'floating' freely at the top of stelai without the support of pillars (e.g., PM 824 (pl. 13), 964 (pl. 16), 966 (pl. 17), 1011 (pl. 18)) and plain mouldings as border-ornament, with few and only very muted variations of the elaborate framing designs found in other Hellenistic poleis.[300] Reliefs are mostly placed unadorned onto the stelai (PM 118 (pl.1), 811 (pl. 12), 865 (pl.14), 1059 (pl.19)) or framed by modest fillets (PM 726 (pl. 11), 1061 (pl. 20)) with a few pieces placing their figures on top of a protruding ledge (PM 1011 (pl. 18), 1081 (pl. 20), 2027 (pl. 26)).[301] Noteworthy for their framing are PM 108 (pl. 1) and 138 (pl. 2), both depicting men, in which the figural relief is framed by a flat-topped naiskos carried by pillars, protruding from the shaft of the otherwise simple designed stelai. A frame within a frame that appears as if a small grave monument was chiselled out of the larger one.

[298] Fraser 1977, 11f; Fabricius 1999a, 211; Fabricius 2010, 280.
[299] Pfanner 1989, 188; Schmidt 1991, 6; Fabricius 1999a, 165, 190. On Rhodian funerary altars in general see Fraser 1977, esp. 11–33, and Berges 1996.
[300] Schmidt 1991, 6.
[301] Schmaltz 1983, 225; Schmidt 1991, 7.

Motif	Details	#	Total
Banquet scenes	Man reclining	2*	14
	Man reclining with seated woman	2	
	Woman reclining	2	
	Men & women reclining	3	
	Unclear/fragmented	5	
Dexiosis	Two men	3	13
	Man & woman	6	
	Two women	1	
	Banquet: Man reclining with seated woman	1	
	Banquet: Woman reclining	2	
Embrace	Man & woman	2	5
	Two women	3	
Multiple figures	All standing	1	4
	All seated	0	
	Standing&seated mixed	3	
Men	In armour	4†	10
	Equestrian	1	
	Seated	3	
	Standing (no military gear)	2	
Adolescent men	Context of *gymnasion*	3	9
	Musical education	2	
	With abacus	1º	
	Military	3	
Pre-adults	Boy/toddler	7	9
	Young woman/girl	2	
Women	Seated	13◊	16
	Standing	3*	
Objects/other			3
Fragments			3
		Total	**86**

Table 3: Motifs on Rhodian stelai.

*	PM 421 carries two separate reliefs: 421a) a woman of the Pudicitia type 421b) a banquet scene.
†	PM 288 is heavily fragmented with the majority of the relief missing; given that the small servant carries a spear the relief is counted as "martial/military" themed.
º	PM 811: the figure is identified by Pfuhl–Möbius first as "man" (indicating adulthood), then as "probably a schoolboy". I have therefore categorized the figure as adolescent.
◊	PM 996 depicts a woman in childbirth.

3.1.1 Men

Banquet scenes

Men in Rhodes are depicted in a variety of ways on the funerary reliefs. As mentioned above, banquet scenes, uncommon in Athenian funerary contexts (fig. 29–30), became popular during the Hellenistic period and can be found in great numbers in poleis such as Samos and Byzantion. Besides general feasting attributes, such as *klinai*, drinking and mixing vessels, tables with food, and servants (most frequently young boys with ladles to pour wine), these scenes often include 'heroic' attributes like snakes or horses. They link back to the iconographic tradition of Archaic and Classical votive reliefs for heroes but translate their pictorial formula into a 'profane' setting.[302]

The majority of banquet reliefs from Rhodes fit into the typical composition consisting of a reclining man accompanied by a woman seated at the bottom of the *kline* or on a chair next to it (e.g., PM 1547 (pl. 21)), slaves and various attributes.[303] Noteworthy within this group of common banquets are PM 1756 (pl. 22) which incorporates a *dexiosis* into a banquet scene with the man and women shaking hands, and the woman on R41a (pl. 30), who has placed her hand gently on the shoulder of her companion, a rare gesture of intimacy that fits well with the even more intimate motif of the embrace, discussed below.

Two banquet reliefs present unusual design choices that make them stand out against the others. Firstly, PM 421b (pl. 7) has a man, dressed in a *himation* but no *chiton*, almost fully stretched out on a *kline* and bedding his head on two pillows. His left arm hangs down holding a kantharos that nearly touches the ground. The right arm is positioned over his head with the hand touching the parting in the hair. This is similar to the traditional schema for a sleeping figure, found on vases as well as in sculpture. In principle, the connection between death and sleep has always been close, since the Greek personifications for sleep and death, Hypnos and Thanatos, are brothers, often depicted together on vases (especially white lekythoi) carrying away a dead person (most famously on the Sarpedon krater[304]). However, as a motif on a grave relief, particularly a *Totenmahlrelief,* a sleeping figure is unexpected since the deceased normally participate in the feast by raising their cups, offering sacrifices in the form of libations, or feeding/petting snakes. The pose can be found on vases depicting *symposia*, where it is not the pose of a deceased individual but the portrayal of

[302] Pfanner 1989, 179f; Fabricius 1999a, 21–27; Fabricius 2010, 264. For a short discussion of the snake as multifaceted symbol see Fraser 1977, 38–40; Rabe 2008, 155.
[303] PM 2041 is heavily damaged, with only a male torso and parts of the surrounding architecture surviving, but it can be assumed that it also fitted into the common schema. Additionally, PM 1835, 1847 and 2051 are too fragmentary to allow for any unequivocal statements about the gender or pose of the depicted figures.
[304] Cf. Spivey 2018.

singing during the consumption of (too much) wine.[305] These symposiasts can be found on both black-figure and red-figure ceramics, establishing the iconographic pattern well into the Archaic and Classical period.[306] Although reclining figures are part of the repertoire of grave reliefs, PM 421b does not conform to the typical pattern. Given that the sleeping pose is often displayed by symposiasts and satyrs during the *symposion* and that the sleeping man is still clutching a kantharos, there is a strong connection with the Dionysian sphere and on Rhodes associations with 'Dionysos' in their title are particularly common compared to other Greek cities.[307] Those *koina* often offered a communal burial plot within a *necropolis* where members could be laid to rest, and where continuous commemoration of the dead and care for the graves would be ensured as part of the 'member service'.[308] Therefore, it is not unlikely that the depicted man was a member of a Dionysian associations and chose the design of his funerary monument accordingly.

Secondly, PM 1520 (pl. 21), which is identified by Pfuhl as "most likely Rhodian" due to the name in the only partially preserved inscription.[309] The composition is unusual with one man reclining on a sofa in the centre of the relief, holding an omphalos bowl in his right hand, flanked by a group of five people on each side. In the background architectural features are visible, with pillars reaching up to the top of the relief and small openings, reminiscent of stoa architecture, similar to two reliefs from Samos (PM 1883 (pl. 103), 1993 (pl. 110)). Within each of the openings an attribute or figure is visible: a sword and a shield in the leftmost opening, followed by two women, a horse *protome*, and another woman. The relief is of high quality and well preserved apart from the inscription, but the missing provenance and unclear affiliation to the sepulchral context make the attribution to a Rhodian cemetery problematic.

Regarding the notion that the *Totenmahl*-motif is a visual tool to award heroic honours to the deceased, it needs to be noted that, while the origin of the iconography may lie in the iconographical

[305] On the depiction of singing in the context of the *symposion* see Lissarrague 1990, esp. 123–139.
[306] Symposiasts with their arm positioned over their head: CVA 203844, CVA 204353, CVA 206251, CVA 200102, CVA 11176, CVA 216093, CVA 205174, CVA 350215, CVA 302900, CVA 32053, CVA 361129, CVA 10707.
[307] Poland 1909, 197. As Gabrielsen has pointed out, while Poland's epigraphical collection is impressive and his conclusions still valuable, the corpus of inscriptions regarding Rhodian associations has increased significantly since the publication of Poland, calling for an in-depth revisit of the topic. Members of the Rhodian aristocracy acted as founders for many *koina*, making it more attractive for non-Rhodians to settle in the city and join the naval forces by creating a support system that allowed non-citizens to not just build close relationships but also to receive offices and honours in a social system copying the mechanisms of the polis. While foreigners were barred from participating in Rhodian politics and running for public offices, they could act in similar roles within their associations, together with their peers. The elite of the city gained human resources that maned ships, thereby facilitating commerce, war efforts and escort services on which their success and prosperity depended. Gabrielsen 2001, 163; 169–171. The interplay of elite benefaction and associations is explored in detail by Thomsen 2020.
[308] Poland 1909, 503, 506f; Boyxen 2018, 157, 171.
[309] The relief may be a votive, as Möbius suggests, which would explain the title of 'heros' in the inscription. Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 374f.

tradition of heroes, the deceased on grave reliefs should not be considered heroized.[310] No inscription, apart from the disputed PM 1520, uses the title of 'hero' and there is no known case of public heroization from ancient Rhodes.[311] The reliefs take up the existing scheme of Archaic and Classical votive reliefs dedicated to heroes, thereby implying that the deceased is hero-like, but there is no evidence that this honour was in fact bestowed upon them. The value of the heroic honour was transmitted through association between the 'original' votive relief and the funerary relief, since an ancient onlooker would understand the symbolic meaning behind the composition.[312] As a result, the deceased depicted themselves as respected members of the society, upholding the traditional values associated with a healthy body and mind (*kalokagathia*) and making an outstanding contribution towards the greater good by acting as a (hero-like) role-model. The Rhodian banquet scenes draw upon a widely recognisable Hellenic motif while subtly localising it through intimate gestures in some examples, thus allowing Rhodes to signal cultural alignment with its peers even as its imagery asserts a distinct social ethos.

Other male figures

Apart from the banquet scenes there is no consistent imagery scheme for the depiction of men. There are, however, still overarching trends and themes that can be observed in the material. Relatively well preserved are two massive torsos in full armour (PM 284 (pl. 3), 285 (pl. 3)), and one relief depicting a seated man wearing an *exomis* (PM 824 (pl. 13)), which can be grouped into the general category of 'military men', together with two fragments, one showing a small servant carrying a spear (PM 288 (pl. 4)), the other an armoured man carrying a helmet (PM 290 (pl. 5)).[313] The heavy armour of PM 284 and 285 indicates that the wearers are adult men, even with the heads missing, but the same cannot be said for the other three reliefs, which are more ambiguous in regard to the age of the individual depicted and who may be adults or adolescents.[314]

[310] Fabricius gives a concise introduction into the visual elements of votive reliefs to heroes of the 4th century BCE; the main motifs being the reclining male, a cloak draped around his hips, commonly holding one or multiple cultic objects (rhyton, sacrificial bowl, cakes); seated at the end of the kline a female figure facing the hero, and either holding an object (sacrificial bowl, jug, box) or clutching her veil or coat; a naked cupbearer; one or more worshippers raising their right arm in adoration. In addition, some reliefs feature sacrificial servants with an animal they are leading towards and altar, horses (or more specifically, horse heads seen through a window), a snake, a three-legged table with fruits and cakes, various mixing vessels (e.g., a dinos or krater). Fabricius 1999a, 21-27.

[311] Fabricius 2010, 280.

[312] Fabricius 2010, 282.

[313] Of the figure in front of the servant only the left arm and part of the back survive; Pfuhl assumes that the 'soldier' was gripping the hilt of his sword with his left hand, but the relief may also be the depiction of a young man about to take up his military service. Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, 114.

[314] The motif of the seated man on a rocky surface can be found more often on Cycladic grave reliefs, usually together with a ship or boat that clearly indicates a maritime context (and potentially death at sea), with several examples indicating that this iconography was used for young men. Le Dinahet-Couilloud 1974a, 483, 485.

PM 284 and 285 are of interest in terms of composition, since frontally oriented soldiers in heavy armour are uncommon in Greek funerary statues, with only a few examples from Classical Athens (e.g., CAT 1.460, 1.970 and 2.930). However, the Athenian reliefs depict the soldier in a more expressive and animated pose or contrapposto, while the torsos of the two fragments from Rhodes are rigid and almost lifeless. They seem close to the armour worn by a soldier on the frieze of the Hecateion at Lagina (c. 1st century BCE (fig. 31)) and appear to have more in common with late-Hellenistic *tropaia*, several of which survive from Rhodes and Kos, both in how the body is modelled in its straight pose, and in details of the armour itself.[315] The fact that both reliefs, albeit fragmented, show the remains of arms, as well as some surrounding background, puts them in a different category from the *tropaia* which are thought to have been placed free-standing on graves or within grave districts (possibly of military *koina*).[316] The specific depiction of a soldier in heavy armour is rare on Hellenistic grave stelai, with the few comparable examples placing the soldier in equestrian scenes: PM 1476 (Sporades) (fig. 32), PM 1429 (Daskyleion) (fig. 33), and PM 1477 (pl. 121, Pergamon). While they all show a man in full armour oriented frontally, they differ in other details. The soldier on PM 1476 is performing a sacrifice at an altar, accompanied by a horse, a seated women and a man crowning him with a wreath, PM 1429 has him standing next to his horse, flanked by a squire and a shield-bearer, and in PM 1477 it is not the main figure who appears armoured, but the shield bearer, holding the horse's reins, while the larger soldier, dressed only in a riding cloak, performs a libation with a woman observing him. So, while the subject of the fully armoured soldier may be uncommon but not without precedent, the Rhodian soldiers do not appear to perform any actions similar to those of the other examples, their bodies giving no indication of holding something or interacting with additional figures but simply standing still and facing the viewer. They were also notably larger than the comparative reliefs, with the fragments measuring 60 cm (PM 284) and 47 cm (PM 285) in height, while the total height of the other reliefs are 76 cm (PM 1429), 46 cm (PM 1476) and 67 cm (PM 1477). While there is no clear evidence for them being predecessors or variations of *tropaia*, their design is clearly distinct from the horsemen motif that includes heavily armoured soldiers. Given the naval focus of the Rhodian military forces it seems convincing that the use of iconography linked to cavalry would not be appropriate for depictions of military service and prowess. The rigid stance may appear rather lifeless, but it also draws the attention of the viewer towards the detailed armour, heavily emphasizing the militaristic image of the figure. Depictions of men as soldiers, while not particularly popular in Hellenistic

[315] For the grave *tropaia* found on Rhodes, cf. Rabe 2008, 150f. A well-preserved Rhodian *tropaion* from the 1st century AD shows how the depiction of armour, particularly of the breast plate, changed through Roman influence. Maiuri 1932, p. 57–60.

[316] Rabe interprets the *tropaia* not as a representation of (fictional) spoils of war or signs of individual military victories, but rather as symbols of military competence. Rabe 2008, 149.

funerary iconography in general but common in every genre of Classical art, illustrate that there was still appreciation for this traditional role and motif, well known across the Greek world, in Rhodes during the Hellenistic period.

Apart from the category of soldiery, depictions of Rhodian men consist of standing (PM 108 (pl. 1), 321 (pl.5)) and seated figures (PM 850 (pl. 13), 881 (pl. 14)), as well as one surviving relief of a horseman (PM 1386 (pl. 20)). The reliefs are usually too damaged to make any further assumptions about the composition, additional figures or attributes, with the only exception being PM 108, the relief of a man and his slave. Here, however, the head of the male figure seems to have been replaced or reworked to give him more adult facial features, instead of a youthful look, which would explain the athlete's tools (*strigil* and alabastron) carried by the slave, usually reserved for the depictions of young men or boys training in the *gymnasion*. These variations of male iconography reflect how Rhodes selectively engaged with a shared Greek visual repertoire, using familiar martial and civic types to anchor itself in a common cultural imagery while shaping their details according to local expectations.

Male adolescents

The interest in military themes already seen in the depictions of adult men can also be found in the grave reliefs for adolescents, several of which address the topic of soldiery: two reliefs show the torso of a man (naked but for a cloak draped over one shoulder), carrying a sword (PM 286 (pl. 4)) and a spear (PM 287 (pl. 4)) respectively, and one depicting a young man wearing a short *chiton* and cloak leaning against a pillar with a helmet in his hand (PM 289 (pl. 5)). His gaze is set on the helmet, and he appears to be contemplating the piece of armour (and its implication of battle and death), hinting towards the possibility that he died in battle. Both PM 286 and PM 287 are missing the head of the figure, thereby leaving the possibility that the men are no longer adolescents but adults. There are, however, no depictions of naked bearded men surviving from this time period, while younger men or boys may be shown without clothing (possibly to emphasize their youthfulness), making it likely that these young men are ephebes, reporting for military service.[317]

Beyond the military context, grave reliefs of male adolescents display a similar variety in topics and motifs as those of adult men. However, most of the surviving reliefs can be placed in the educational sphere: there are two reliefs with herms, implying the context of athletics in the *gymnasion* (PM 138 (pl. 2), 163 (pl. 2)), two reliefs with the youths playing an instrument (*kithara*: PM 150 (pl. 2); lyre: PM 813 (pl. 13)), and one relief with the figure holding an object identified by

[317] For the general pattern of men with beards not being shown naked, cf. Osborne 1997b. For a discussion of 'heroic' and other nudities, cf. Hurwit 2007, esp. 45–58.

Pfuhl as abacus (PM 811 (pl. 12)).[318] The pose of the naked young man in PM 138, who leans against the herm to his left and has his right arm raised above his head, resting the underarm on the crown of his head, is noteworthy in his exaggerated ponderation which stands out against the large number of figures in grave stelai who adopt a stiffer and more restrained pose. In the left corner a small and equally naked servant can be seen with his hands folded in front of his midriff, looking up to the youth. The herm, identifiable as Heracles by the lion skin, points to the context of *palaestra* and *gymnasion*, as does the nakedness of the two figures.[319] The pose of the young man can be found in depictions of Apollo, most prominently the Apollo Lykeios (4th-century BCE)[320], inviting a comparison between the young man and the deity. Apollo, together with Hermes and Dionysos, is one of the youthful male gods, and of exceptional beauty, often being depicted with elongated proportions. Highlighting the physical attributes of young men is not uncommon in Greek antiquity but it becomes less popular on funerary monuments, especially during the Hellenistic period, when bodies tend to be clothed. The prominent display of the naked bodies of deceased and slave on PM 138, as well as the other naked or only partially dressed male figures not only emphasizes their youthful bodies but presents an iconographical echo to motifs that can be found in Classical Athens (e.g., CAT 1.392, 2.950).

Two further reliefs simply show the young deceased with a ball in his hand (PM 103 (pl. 1)) and standing next to his slave (L 72 (pl. 29)), who might be carrying a small vessel. Toys and pets are also common in the depiction of younger children (PM 118 (pl. 1), 272 (pl. 3), 726 (pl. 11), 733 (pl. 11), 779 (pl. 12)) – a tradition established before the Hellenistic period and widespread in the funerary iconography across the cities of the Greek world. The boys and youths are characterized not through their actions, but through traditional Classical attributes that link them to specific contexts. The consistent use of Classical youth motifs can be understood as Rhodes' participation in a wider inter-polis language of education and virtue, while the prominence of military cues reveals internal priorities that inflect this shared visual tradition.

Summary: Male figures

Overall, the motifs and themes used for the depiction of male individuals on Rhodes are close to the Classical Athenian iconography, as is especially apparent in the appreciation for the traditional imagery of the soldier. While depictions of men as soldiers are common in Classical art, Rhodes illustrates a greater continued interest in the topic compared to other Hellenistic cities, where

[318] Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, 214.
[319] Neudecker 2006; Schmaltz 1983, 237.
[320] Luc. *Anach.* 7.

martial imagery becomes less common, or is referenced more indirectly.[321] The *himation*, now regularly worn by all adult men, may indicate a different (additional) visual clue, emphasizing civil society, culture and education, instead of martial talent or successes.

The *himation* should not, however, be understood as a sign of citizenship. From a linguistic standpoint it is merely an outer garment, typically worn over a *chiton* by men and women alike. Cloaked figures of any gender and age can be encountered in almost all art genres, not only grave reliefs, but they appear in greatest numbers on vases. Whereas 'properly dressed' girls and women drape the *himation* over their delicate *chitons*, the *himation* is often the only piece of clothing men wear in the Classical period. Young boys and male youths (*Manteljünglinge*) are often completely wrapped in their cloaks possibly as sign of modesty, respect, and socially accepted behaviour with peers in public or in the company of older individuals. Young men, athletes, and soldiers can carry a *himation* over one arm or are accompanied by a servant or squire who is holding on to the cloak for them.[322] Their bodies are put on display, emphasizing their physical capability, strength, and beauty. Older men, identifiable by their beards, tend to be depicted wearing a *himation* slung around their waist (*Mantelmänner*).[323] An explanation for the iconographic difference between the adolescent and adult figures could be their purpose: older men appear in positions requiring decency (e.g., teachers, referees, customers) and thereby an appropriate dress code that conveys decorum, whereas young men represent the ideal body of the Greek man in his prime capable of fulfilling physically demanding tasks such as competing as athletes or soldiers. Mature men and their bodies are not presented as a desirable ideal of youth and athleticism (although the defined muscles of the uncovered parts convey an ongoing level of fitness and health) but represent the self-control

[321] A man might not be shown wearing full armour, but helmets, weapons and arms may be depicted as attributes on shelves or ledges near him, e.g., PM 1797, 1872, 1915 (Samos), PM 2035, 2038 (Byzantion), or he might be accompanied by a squire, e.g., PM 1477 (Pergamon)

[322] On the depiction of ephebes and warriors on vases see Matheson 2009.

[323] Fehr proposes that the cloaked bearded men are used as a schema representing the resting and relaxed citizen after the day's labour, not as an indicator for a difference in social rank. He bases this on the depiction of craftsmen with oil-flasks, *strigils* and/or the walking stick in either their hands or in their proximity, putting no 'striking difference in social rank between the workshop visitors leaning on their sticks and the men working' (Fehr 2009, 134). I would argue, firstly, that oil-flasks or *strigils* do not constitute citizen or even unfree status, since they are just tools used for personal hygiene (often carried by servants for their masters), and secondly, that craftsmen are not necessarily slaves or *metics*, but definitely of lower social status than members of the elite. The fact that the visitors in Fehr's example of the bronze sculptor's workshop are twice the size of the craftsmen is a clear sign of a hierarchy established through visual terms. The leaning *Mantelmann* is, in my opinion, the iconographical schema of the 'Athenian Dream', depicting men with the financial means to spend their days idly visiting workshops, watching boys train at the *palaestra* (and pursuing them in paederastic scenes), or chatting with their peers.

(*sophrosyne*) and composure expected from adult men in the daily life of the polis.[324] This obviously includes citizens but is not limited to them.

Cloaked figures (male or female) stand in stark contrast to servants and their wardrobe. Servants and other slaves can be depicted naked, with loincloths, in short *chitons*, or garments with long sleeves but never wear a *himation*. This is also often true for craftsmen who were of low social status and often unfree. Therefore, the *himation* should not be understood as an attribute signifying citizenship, but rather one that informs us about the social status of its wearer. In vase painting as well as on grave reliefs it can be used to convey information about gender, age, and hierarchical position of those who wear it, as well as how clothed and unclothed bodies were perceived in different situations, but it is no definitive indicator for a citizen. Given that the *himation* becomes the default for the deceased and their families in Hellenistic funerary art, Rhodes stands out regarding the number of reliefs with unclothed figures, which can be understood as an additional reference to Classical Attic imagery.

The depiction of men on Rhodian funerary reliefs illustrates how peer polity interaction operates less as a direct driver of specific iconographic choices and more as a structuring framework within which those choices became intelligible. Across banquet scenes, military imagery, adult citizens, and adolescents, Rhodian reliefs consistently draw on a shared Classical and Hellenistic visual repertoire that would have been immediately legible to viewers from other Greek poleis, anchoring Rhodes firmly within a recognisable network of peers. At the same time, selective emphases, such as the sustained prominence of martial imagery, the display of unclothed male bodies, and the continued valuation of military readiness alongside civic decorum, set Rhodian men apart from contemporary trends elsewhere, where such motifs were increasingly muted or displaced. These features are not easily explained as products of competitive emulation alone, nor does PPI account for why particular motifs were chosen over others. Rather, the Rhodian material demonstrates how a shared visual language could be utilized to produce a distinct local 'dialect', one that balanced continuity with Classical forms against locally chosen difference. In this sense, PPI helps clarify the conditions that made Rhodian male imagery both traditional and distinctive, even if it cannot fully explain the social, ideological, or workshop-level motivations behind individual iconographic decisions.

[324] Fehr points out that cloaked youths, who can also appear as spectators, tend to be depicted in more animated poses than the calmly leaning *Mantelmänner*, indicating their lack of maturity and self-control. Fehr 2009, 133.

3.1.2 Women at the banquet

The first distinctly Rhodian motif is that of the reclining woman. Contrary to usual Greek tradition, where active participation in feasts was a male privilege, Rhodes experiences a small emancipation: women can be found reclining on *klinai* next to their male companions (a motif otherwise not found before the Imperial period).[325] While there are also grave stelai with *symposion* scenes attended only by women (discussed further below) the reliefs with mixed groups of *symposiasts* need to be analysed separately.

Three reliefs depict a mixed banquet group, with men and women sharing the couches (PM 1844, 1845, 1846 (pl. 23–24)).[326] In other aspects they follow the established pattern of the so-called *Totenmahlreliefs*: the figures are positioned in a reclining pose on the *klinai*, with the women wearing *chiton*s and cloaks, while the men wear only a *himation*. An animal-footed table is placed in front of the couches, laden with small cakes, fruits, and different drinking vessels for the participants. At least one slave is attending to the banqueters. A small servant, wearing a short *chiton* and carrying a ladle, was added on PM 1844, as well as a boy wrapped in a cloak. Since slaves are either clad in a *chiton* or naked, it can be assumed that the child is to be identified as the son of the deceased couple.

PM 1845 features three reclining figures, identified by Pfuhl as two men flanking a woman.[327] The surface of the relief is badly damaged and although Pfuhl admits that the remains show no distinct female features, such as hairstyle or breasts, he assumes that the figure could be female since the inscription mentions a female relative. It has been shown that epigraphs are seldom a reliable source for information about the name or gender of the deceased and can also be added during a secondary use of the grave stele.[328] Therefore, an inscription cannot be safely used to identify a pictured figure, their gender, their relation to other figures or their status (alive/deceased) at the time of the erection of the stele. However, in addition to the reclining figures, two servants are present on the relief, a *pais* in a short *chiton* on the left side and a larger female servant wearing a long *chiton* on the right. The female servant is carrying an object in her hands, probably a box. In funerary art, servants regularly match the gender of their master, pairing men with *paides* and squires, and women with female servants.[329]

[325] Several examples of women in a *symposion* context can be found for later centuries, e.g., PM 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2024.
[326] PM 1847 may also depict a woman and a man banqueting but the state of the relief does not allow for a clear identification of the gender of the figures.
[327] Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 443. On the slightly better photograph published in Fabricius 1999 the remnants of a belt worn by the middle figure may be visible, indicating that this depicts indeed a woman (pl. 23).
[328] Examples for later inscriptions include PM 854, PM 1360, PM 1570, PM 1581, PM 1903, F 118.
[329] One stele in Conze (No. 1165) shows a reclining man and a small female servant.

Furthermore, the motive of the servant offering her mistress a box or basket is well established – not just on funeral reliefs, but also on Athenian vase paintings. It is therefore likely that at least one of the three reclining figures is female, although it need not be the one in the middle.

PM 1846 is severely damaged, missing the entire right side of the relief where the large part of a male figure was depicted. The reclining female figure in front of him is preserved better. At the lower end of the *kline*, three figures can be seen, identified by Pfuhl as two boys and a girl, most likely the children of the depicted couple.[330] On the left side of the relief an altar decorated with a *bucranium* and garlands is shown. A bearded snake rises in front of the altar and takes a drink out of a vessel placed on top of it.

Of the three reliefs, two have surviving epitaphs, both mentioning a wife: Pottion from Cabalis (PM 1844), Isidora from Moiris (PM 1845), and the wife of Anaximbrotos, whose name is not preserved on the stele. Corresponding with their visual depiction, the women are mentioned in relation to their husbands – a common way of defining women by their status as wives that can be found in many Greek funerary inscriptions. However, as mentioned already, female figures are normally not shown lounging on couches together with men in banquet scenes but rather sitting next to them on a chair or at the end of the *kline*. The question is why women were 'elevated' to the same level as the men in these scenes, given that a widely known and established schema for the banquet already existed. The rejection of the conservative iconography must have been a conscious choice. One factor could be that the deceased, male as well as female, were not of Rhodian (or Greek) descent, but *metics* or freedmen: two of the epitaphs specify the origin of the women (PM 1844 and 1845), and the inscription on PM 1844 also states that Pottion's husband Onasander was from Hyllarmia.[331] While they clearly wanted a representative relief with a 'Greek' theme, they decided to alter the position of the female figure in order to place her closer to her husband. It is doubtful that the population of either the *metics* or the freed people in Rhodes held a more emancipated view of women's rights than the Greeks and saw them as equals of men. Rather, the *symposion* can be understood as a display of status and wealth, which *metics* and freedmen may have adopted to signify their social and financial success, as well as their 'Greekness'.

Although posing in a traditionally male-coded way, the women on the banquet reliefs are still very much defined by their husbands. They are not depicted on their own but next to their husbands in their role as wives and we should not imagine that the reliefs show actual scenes of everyday life

[330] Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 443.

[331] Boyxen 2018, 169; Lewis 2018, 181–183. Lewis mentions that C. Thomson (unpublished) has identified "188 examples of slaves stating their origins from epitaphs found in the *necropolis* of the city of Rhodes dating between c. 300 BC – AD 100". However, I would not necessarily assume that all names with an ethnikon automatically mean 'slave' or 'freedmen', but rather non-citizen.

on Rhodes. The depiction of a banquet on a funerary stele does not mean the deceased was known for hosting lavish dinners with women participating in the feast, any more than reliefs of men in armour show great fighters or brilliant generals. Instead, the placement of the female figures on the *klinai* may have been chosen to convey the close bond between husband and wife. As will be discussed below, several grave reliefs from Rhodes depict figures in a tight embrace, a unique iconography not known from other poleis und highly unusual for the otherwise reserved Greek sepulchral imagery, making it conceivable that the wives dining with their husbands were a different way to show intimacy or emphasize a marital relationship without being limited to the motif of the *dexiosis*. This reading may be reinforced by PM 1844, which seems to show the woman turning back towards her husband to embrace him, thereby combining the two Rhodian iconographic features of the reclining woman and the embrace into one picture, emphasizing the intimate love between the couple.

So while the addition of the reclining female figures cannot be read as evidence that the deceased women (or women in general) participated in banquets, either on their own or in the company husbands, it is significant that women have been added to such a highly stylized representation of ideal Greek lifestyle. The *Totenmahl* comes with well-established iconographic formulas for its figures and attributes, meaning that any profound change must be understood as an intentional choice to create a contrasting iconography. The reclining women transform the established iconography of the *symposion* into a distinctly Rhodian expression.

That Rhodian women appear more prominently than those of other poleis on grave stelai, correlates with the way they also acted as sponsors for public buildings, founded and maintained women-only *koina*, and earned the honorary title of *euergetis*, proving that women in Rhodes enjoyed more freedom and opportunities to participate as benefactors in the social life of the city.[332] Furthermore, women were able to reach a high level of financial independence since they could legally own businesses (e.g. potteries) and generate their own income.[333] In the Dodecanese there is also evidence of more adoptions of women during the Hellenistic period to ensure the continuity of an *oikos*, or family name, a practice by which (normally) a man is adopted into a family to carry the name in the absence of biological children.[334] On Rhodes it was to some degree more accepted and common to adopt a daughter into the family who would then bequeath the inheritance to her male descendants.

[332] Fabricius 1999a, 186–188.
[333] Fabricius 1999b, 212.
[334] Stavrianopoulou 2006, 144–146. There are three known cases of female adoption in Classical Athens compared to 22 cases from the Hellenistic Rhodes. Fabricius 2009, 23.On the practice of adoption and its significance in Rhodes cf. Thomson 2020, 59–64.

Fabricius suggests that this is due to the influence women could gain through financially supporting construction projects, associations etc., visibly establishing them as individuals of high status within the civic space and wider society.[335]

In addition to the reliefs of mixed gender banquets, four further reliefs depict exclusively women at the banquet: PM 2025, 2026, 2027 and 2039 (pl. 25–26).

PM 2025 depicts a reclining female figure on a *kline*. She rests her head on her left hand, shaking the hand of the woman sitting to her right at the foot of the couch. It seems that the reclining woman, unlike the seated one, is not using her cloak as a hood. Attributes such as a table, drinking vessels, cakes and fruits are missing, although Pfuhl thinks that a servant girl might have been standing at the head of the *kline*, lost due to damage to the relief.[336]

The surface of PM 2026 is even more worn. The small rectangular frame shows a reclining figure, identified as female by a barely visible belted *chiton*. She extends her right arm towards the figure sitting at the foot of the table, shaking their hand. Fabricius identifies the seated figure as female owing to there being a *chiton* under the *himation*, which is hard to verify given the poor condition of the stone surface.[337] In front of the *kline* the outlines of an animal-footed table can be seen.

On PM 2027 a female figure wearing a *chiton* and cloak is reclining on a couch, holding a cup or bowl in her left hand. The right arm is missing from the elbow down, but it can be assumed that she was extending it towards the figure seated at the far end of the *kline*. The latter is so badly damaged that no statements can be made about their gender or design. A three-legged table is placed in front of the *kline,* presenting cakes and fruits. If there was a servant, they were located at the severely damaged left side of the reliefs and are lost.

PM 2039 is the most detailed relief, as can be seen in the intricate design of the couch legs. Here, the reclining woman is holding in her right hand an open scroll which she seems to be reading, demonstrating her education. The seated woman, her body facing towards the viewer, was also holding an object in her hands, raising it up in front of her torso, but details have been lost here and the nature of the object can no longer be determined. Table, vessels and servants are missing, but in the middle of the frame a dog is jumping towards the reclining woman. Since it is not a dwarf spitz which can often be found on grave stelai for children, the dog can be interpreted as a hound. This might be a reference to Artemis as goddess of the hunt, or an iconographic link to the hounds found as feature of male iconography.

[335] Fabricius 1999a, 188f.
[336] Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 487.
[337] Fabricius 1999b, 209; Fabricius 2009, 19.

That it was possible for women (at least in iconographic terms) to participate actively in banquets on the grave stelai of Rhodes – usually an exclusively male setting – is remarkable.[338] In contrast to the aforementioned reliefs depicting men and women lounging on *klinai* together, this group of stelai shows women lying on the sofas alone (albeit accompanied by a second, seated figure at the end of the *kline*). They are not defined in association with a man but stand independently. As Fabricius has pointed out, the assumption the women are *hetairai*, corresponding to the (satirical) iconographical trope of the prostitute as female *symposiast* on vases, does not hold up. The women on the reliefs are fully clothed and, in the case of PM 2039, even hold a scroll as educational attribute, distinguishing them quite clearly from the naked or partially clothed *hetairai* in their drunken revelry. While no inscriptions survive on the four reliefs, it can be assumed that these women had husbands, like their contemporaries on the stelai already mentioned above.[339] Another significant distinction between those women and the solo symposiasts may be a difference in status: While Rhodian women could own businesses and land it is highly unlikely that foreign women or freedwomen had the same privilege. Therefore, the depiction of the women in such a male or emancipated pose may have been reserved for Rhodian women of higher social standing who had a certain level of freedom and autonomy outside of their role as wife and wanted to demonstrate it visually by using the established iconographic formula of the financially successful and cultured man.

The banqueting women exemplify how internal agency and local social conditions could produce striking innovations that functioned as markers of Rhodian distinctiveness within the wider visual *koine*. Within a PPI framework their appearance offers an opportunity to foreground the role of internal social dynamics. Rather than emerging as a response to inter-polis competition, this iconographic shift appears to arise from intra-polis conditions: elite self-fashioning, the legal and economic autonomy of Rhodian women, and evolving local expectations of visibility and status. In PPI terms, this represents a bottom-up mechanism. Local social realities generate distinctive imagery that later becomes a marker of differentiation among poleis. This nuance demonstrates that PPI does not treat external rivalry as the sole engine of innovation but accommodates internal social pressure as catalysts that shape the forms through which inter-polis comparison subsequently occurs.

[338] Cic. *Verr*. 2.1.66; Fabricius 1999b, 207.
[339] Fabricius 1999b, 210f.

3.1.3 Women

Apart from the banqueting women, depictions of female figures remain within established iconographic traditions and can be divided into standing and seated women. Only a few reliefs show the former, mostly damaged to a degree that prevents any meaningful analysis beyond the observation that the figure was (most likely) a standing woman (PM 439 (pl. 7), 491 (pl. 7)), in one case accompanied by a child (PM 501 (pl.8)), but even the well preserved *Pudicitia* (PM 421a (pl. 7)) offers nothing remarkable. The adherence to well-established Classical formulas underscores how Rhodes relied on stabilising visual conventions to signal its cultural alignment with other Greek poleis, even while innovating elsewhere.

Of interest is the unusual depiction of the woman on PM 377 (pl. 6): on her head she is carrying a *liknon*, a basket used to throw threshed corn into the air in order to separate the wheat from the chaff, as well as in religious contexts possibly linking the woman to a cult. In addition to that, the belt of the woman is formed into an Isis knot between her breasts, which may (also) have a cult-related meaning, especially given the fact that the oldest surviving Isis votives in the Mediterranean, two reliefs, were found on Rhodes, along with inscriptions calling the goddess 'protectress'.[340] Walters notes that the figure on PM 377 could have been a *kanephoros,* a term known from Attic and Delian Isis inscriptions, usually describing an individual who carried a basket with sacred objects in a cult procession.[341] We know of *liknophoroi* as part of initiation rites, especially associated with mysteries of Demeter, and of small *likna* miniatures which were dedicated in the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore in Acrocorinth.[342] Therefore, the girl on PM 377 might have acted as a basket carrier in religious processions, possibly for Isis, which could have been an honorary role not necessarily with further priestly duties.[343]

The majority of women are depicted seated, with the deceased placed on a chair or stool and a small servant girl carrying or offering various objects, such as fans (PM 945 (pl. 15)), mirrors (PM 915 (pl. 15)) and small boxes or chests (PM 929 (pl. 15), 966 (pl. 17), 970 (pl. 17)). This, again, is a well-established motif common already during the Classical period in Athenian funerary reliefs, envisioning 'proper' women within a domestic context and emphasizing common female virtues such as beauty and modesty.

[340] Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, 130; Walters 1988, 14f.
[341] Walters 1988, 53.
[342] Brumfield 1997, 147f; Bookidis – Pemberton 2015, 124, 130. While, according to Herodotus, there was a certain connection being drawn between Demeter and Isis, the myths of the two deities, as well as the goddesses themselves are 'quite different and cannot be equated'. Mylonas 1961, 15f; Witt 1971, 16, 20.
[343] Walters 1988, 53.

Within this group of reliefs, PM 954 (pl. 16) presents the seated woman performing an uncommon action: instead of interacting with a slave the fragment shows her bending down towards a small child in front of her. She seems to be in the process of picking up the toddler who is stretching out his arms in her direction, allowing for the assumption that she is the mother of the child. Such a depiction of direct interaction between mother and child is rare: only a few scenes on Attic grave stelai show mothers and their very young children,[344] and in these cases the child is commonly either carried by a wet nurse or relative or is shown standing next to the mother, who rarely reacts to its presence. In comparison, the movement of bending down towards the child and the implied embrace that is to follow appear as a remarkable expression of emotion and intimacy.

Equally uncommon is PM 996 (pl. 18). Here, a woman is seated frontally on a bed or couch, flanked and supported by two additional female figures (servants or relatives). She is wearing *chiton* and *himation*, although her breasts are exposed above the fabric bulge that is wound around her waist. In addition, her hair is open and flowing over her shoulders. The taller figure to her right has one hand placed at her neck/shoulder while the other rests on her lower arm. On her left side the smaller figure is patting her shoulder. Comparison with other pictures of women supported by female relatives or servants allows for an interpretation of the relief as a birthing scene: the seated woman either has just given birth or is still in labour.[345] As a motif on a funerary monument this could be interpreted as the deceased being either a woman who died in childbirth or a midwife or wetnurse.[346]

Only two relief for girls survive, one depicting an older girl with a female servant (PM 391 (pl. 6)), and one a small girl feeding grapes to a duck or goose (PM 756 (pl. 11)).

Apart from the unique reliefs highlighted here, the group of standing and seated women presents itself as both internally homogenous and without a distinct iconographic language that could be considered Rhodian.

[344] Examples of women embracing/holding a child: CAT 1.691, 3.269; Conze 1854, 1855. Examples of men interacting with children: PM 57; CAT 1.630, 1.690.
[345] Fabricius 1999a, 194.
[346] On birth and motherhood in Greek antiquity see Demand 1994, 121–140, esp. 130, 133.

3.1.4 *Dexiosis*

Funerary stelai depicting *dexiosis* scenes are the largest motif group in Rhodes apart from banquet scenes. Six reliefs (PM 705 (pl. 8), 710 (pl. 9), 1060 (pl. 19), 1061 (pl. 29), 1081 (pl. 29), R44a (pl. 30)) show a handshake between a man and a woman, three (PM 696 (pl. 8), 865 (pl. 14), 1059 (pl. 19)) between two men, and one (PM 1053 (pl. 19) between two women.[347]

Three reliefs have both figures shake hands while standing (PM 696, 705, 710), whereas in the other cases, one of the pair is seated. In scenes with a mixed gender pair, it is always the woman who is depicted seated (PM 1060, 1061, 1081, R44a), while in same-sex pairs the individual with more seniority is sitting down: On PM 865 the older man rests on a stone block while shaking the hand of a young man (accompanied by a servant carrying an aryballos), and in both PM 1053 and 1059 the seated individual is visually marked by wearing their *himation* as a veil, with one corner covering the back of their head, while the hair of their companion remains uncovered.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the *dexiosis* gesture is an established formula already used in Classical Athenian document reliefs as well as grave stelai. On document reliefs it represents the conclusion of a contract as well as the intent of both parties to honour the contract's content (e.g. the relief depicting the contract between Athens and Samos, dated 403/402 BCE (fig. 34)).[348] Elsner has stated in relation to the *dexiosis* on the Samos stele that the "simple sign of *dexiosis* covers up the complications" of an iconography that offers the onlooker an "extraordinary spectrum of potential meanings – from hello to goodbye, and including all the emotive baggage such greetings may carry."[349] In the context of funerary monuments, *dexiosis* is interpreted as illustrating the intimate bond between deceased and surviving relatives. Shaking hands is the physical embodiment of a familial 'contract', pointing to a continuing devotion and remembrance beyond death, not only providing the proper funeral rites, but also the continuous care for the grave, including sacrifices during the official commemoration festivities, as discussed in Chapter 1.[350] But apart from the practical aspects concerned with inheritance and ensuring the peaceful passing of the dead on the journey into the realm of Hades, the *dexiosis* also conveys a deep emotional connection between the deceased and their relatives. This connection was experienced by family members and witnessed by any viewer of the relief, and reinforced by this act of being seen and acknowledged.

[347] Additionally, in an uncommon combination of two strong iconographic formulas, there are three banquet scenes that show the protagonists shaking hands: the man and woman on PM 1756, and the two women on PM 2025 and PM 2026.
[348] Elsner 2015, 61f. On the relationship between text and image of the Samos stele see Blanshard 2007.
[349] Elsner 2015, 57.
[350] Maderna 2011, 67.

Therefore, the *dexiosis* on grave stelai does not necessarily show just the beginning of a 'contract', but the promise of a continuing bond between the living and the dead.

From the perspective of PPI, the Rhodian *dexiosis* scenes are notable less for local innovation than for their close adherence to a widely shared Classical formula that had become part of a panhellenic sepulchral *koine*, reinforcing Rhodes' participation in a stable and recognisable visual language. At the same time, this formal homology highlights a key limitation of PPI when applied to material evidence: while shared motifs indicate visual coherence between poleis, they cannot determine whether the social practices or ritual meanings attached to these images were enacted in the same way.

3.1.5 Embracing figures

A visual increase of the emotionality of the *dexiosis* is found in another special grave relief iconography on Rhodian stelai: embracing figures. Five such reliefs are known, including PM 723, found on the island of Syme, which was part of Rhodes' territory.

Three reliefs (PM 721, 722, 723 (pl. 9–10)) depict an embrace between a man and a woman, two *semata* (PM 724 and 725 (pl. 10)) between two women. For two reliefs (partial) inscriptions survive: PM 721 names Eutychos, son of Ladikeos, and his wife Agatharia, daughter of Alexandrios; PM 724 carries two inscriptions. The first simply reads "Agathiclea, daughter (or wife) of Apollonios," the second, in smaller script and seemingly added later, is more disputed, with no conclusive reading regarding the gender of the memorialized person.[351]

The motif of the embrace is uncommon and must be understood as even less of an ordinary gesture than the *dexiosis*. Intimacy and a personal bond between the two participants are further emphasized and surely indicate a close familiar relationship (either through blood or marriage) between the embracing partners. Such an expression of exuberant emotions is remarkable for ancient Greece and is a distinctive iconographic formula found on Rhodes, just like the reclining women, with an iconographical link to one of the few surviving stelai from the Classical period on Rhodes: the funerary relief of Timarista and Krito (5th cent. BCE).

The relief of Timarista and Krito (PM 46 (fig. 35)), depicts two women in a close embrace. Both are wearing sleeved *chiton*s, with Krito wearing a cloak draped over her *chiton* and Timarista a *peplos*, which she is also using to cover her head, possibly in a sign of marriage. Krito is depicted in profile,

[351] Pfuhl 1977 transcribes the inscription as "Menestrate, daughter of Menestratos of Knidos, wife of Dionysos", while Dontas 1958 assumes that two people are named: "Menestrate, daughter/wife of Menestratos. Knidia, wife of Dionysos." It seems unlikely that Dontas is correct to think Knidia is a (second) woman, rather than the ethnicon of the first person named (if he were correct, the first name could be either female or male)

her body facing towards Timarista, with her left hand on Timarista's left shoulder and her right hand raised in front of her, possibly in the process of putting her hand on Timarista's chin. While the taller Timarista is looking straight towards her companion, Krito's gaze is cast downwards. Krito's hair appears almost as if her head had been shorn, except for a few remaining locks framing her face. Strocka argues that this suggests the addition of a *krobylos* (a hairstyle where the hair is gathered at the base of the neck, twisted upwards and bound with a *tainia* or several ribbons) in plaster.[352] A *krobylos*, together with the less layered outfit of Krito, her smaller size, and passive demeanour indicates that she is younger than Timarista. The inscription above their heads gives no indication of the nature of their relationship, and no contemporary pieces from Rhodes are comparable.

As already discussed above, physical contact, beyond the handshake, is seldom depicted on funerary monuments and indicates a high degree of intimacy.[353] Only a small number of Classical Athenian grave stelai depict similarly intimate scenes (CAT 1.870, 2.421, 3.269a), and most of these show interactions between a woman, presumably a mother, and a small child. Only in the Roman period do Athenian stelai show a similar degree of intimacy between two adults (Conze 1879, 1880, 2096). With the exception of one late Classical relief from Athens (CAT 2.421), no *sema* matches the particular composition of Krito and Timarista, making it unlikely that this was a motif common in Athenian funerary art and adopted into the Rhodian visual canon.[354]

While it is unclear whether the stele of Krito and Timarista initiated the interest in the intimate motif of the embrace, or whether this stele is merely the only surviving example of a larger group of similar Classical stelai, the motif in itself appears as distinctly Rhodian, used to show a close bond not just between a mother and her child, but also between adult individuals during the Classical and Hellenistic period.

The Rhodian embrace motif illustrates particularly well the duality and limitations of PPI. On one level, the creation of a new, emotionally charged iconography serves the logic of differentiation central to competitive peer comparison: no other polis developed a comparable formula, making

[352] Strocka 1967, 120-122.

[353] Jacobi assesses Krito's and Timarista's embrace quite casually as "usual of the farewell between the deceased and the survivor", while Dontas notes the intense passion of the relief compared with Classical Athenian imagery. Jacobi 1931, 37; Dontas 1958, 209f.

[354] Pfuhl dates the stele of Krito and Timarista at the end of the 5th century BCE, making it older than the Athenian stele of Mynnion (c. 360–330 BCE). Conze 2096 shows a woman holding the hand of a man with her right hand, while she tenderly touches his chin with her left hand. According to Conze it carries the inscription Ἀριστοκλῆς/Νικομάχου/῾Ρόδιος/ἐπο[ίει or ἐπό[ει. Loewy assumes the inscription to be forged, but Conze believes it to be authentic. He interprets it not as the signature of a stonemason, but rather that of a relative responsible for the erecting of the grave marker. If Conze is correct it is noteworthy for a relief with this particular pose to be linked back to Rhodes, where depictions of intimacy on grave markers were not unusual.

the motif a powerful marker of civic distinctiveness. At the same time, PPI cannot account for why such an image emerged in the first place. The impulse behind the motif is more convincingly understood as developing from older, shared visual traditions such as the *dexiosis*, reworked to accommodate heightened emotional and commemorative concerns within Rhodian funerary practice. Rather than being driven by outwardly directed competitive impulses, the emotional and commemorative priorities of Rhodian families appear to have been at the centre of this innovation. The perspective of PPI allows us to recognize that personal commissions and local ritual practices can generate imagery that later acquires significance within the wider field of inter-polis comparison.

3.1.6 Summary

The iconographic programme of Rhodes is hardly homogenous, and the spectrum of topics is broad, revealing a close relationship to Classical grave reliefs in Athens through similarities in motifs and style, possibly owed, at least in part, to Rhodes' cosmopolitan character as an important trading port with a diverse citizen body consisting of indigenous Rhodians, non-local Greeks, *metics* and foreigners.[355] We find elaborate folds in the fabric of the garments, a naturalistic but not exaggerated flow of motion, and a new treatment of space with limbs consciously positioned in perspective and moving from foreground to background. Most of the iconographic motifs, too, are known from Classical Athens: the seated female, *dexiosis* scenes, children with pets or fruit, armoured men and naked youths. This produces a sense of Atheno-classicism regarding the Rhodian citizens who might understand these pictorial schemata as reminiscent of a glorious past.[356] Not only is there a high number of different motif groups, but often no preferred compositional formula for any given motif. Instead, motifs appear in many different variations regarding clothing, attributes, and formal composition (e.g., figures appear in profile or frontally, poses change) with male iconography being more varied than that of female figures, possibly due to the fact that the ideals of womanhood were much narrower than ideals for exemplary male behaviour.[357]

[355] Fabricius 1999a, 212.
[356] Fabricius 1999a, 191f. 211; Schmidt 1991, 41.
[357] As Osborne has pointed out in the context of women on Classical Athenian grave stelai, the death of a wife or mother "became the prime moment for advertising her identity and anchoring claims to citizenship: death and marriage acquired a political as well as a structural connection." Osborne 1997a, 29.

Regarding attributes and servants, Rhodians did not feel the need to boast about their wealth or social status through the depiction of a large number of attendants or (luxurious) belongings: usually the reliefs are limited to one or two servants and attributes. Even the banquet reliefs, often used to showcase a staggering abundance of vessels, chests, weapons, armour, slaves etc. (especially in Samos), are more minimalistic on Rhodes where we find a reduced set of objects, staying close to the Athenian *Totenmahle*.

Men are most often presented to the viewer standing, even more so if we count the standing adolescents as well, while banquets, equestrians and seated men were not as popular. Within the male iconography, we can recognise traditional forms like the *Mantelmann*, as well as military and athletic themes, but also new motifs such as visualizations of an educated élite through references to literacy and (musical) education, a trend that – still comparatively infrequent in Rhodes – becomes a major iconographic element in other poleis, e.g. Byzantion. Maintaining the iconographic traditions of athleticism and soldiery is understandable given that Rhodes was garrison to a small standing army of mercenaries and commanded a fleet during the Hellenistic period;[358] a career in the military remained a prestigious occupation for Rhodian men (both citizens and *metics*) while military service fell out of favour in elsewhere. Therefore, the corresponding values and the imagery remained relevant to the city as well as the self-image and self-understanding of the citizens. Simultaneously, Rhodes grew to become a centre of education and culture, famous beyond the borders of the Greek world, thereby elevating education and culture. Showcasing literacy and an educated background became as acceptable a way of male self-representation as traditional 'physical' qualities linked to sport and war. Consequently, men could express themselves through a wide range of social roles, each with their own set of attributes and related virtues, while women were much more restricted in their choices of representation.

In contrast, the female iconography shows clearer tendencies: a large majority of the reliefs depict seated women attended by slaves, one of the oldest iconographic formulas in burial contexts, frequently used to show mothers and wives in the company of servants, relatives or their husbands. While large family scenes with numerous people are absent from the catalogue of Hellenistic Rhodian stelai the seated women still reflect traditional customs of representation, well known from Classical Athenian *semata*, presenting women within the context of household and associated with the virtue of beauty. However, this was far from the only way of portraying women on Rhodes. Funerary reliefs depicting women participating in the otherwise exclusively male activity of the *symposion* present an imagery unique to the island during the Hellenistic period. While they should not be understood as 'photographic' evidence of women at *symposia* but as a tool to understand the

[358] Berthold 1984, 42–46; Schmidt 1991, 8; Fabricius 1999a, 221f; Boyxen 2018, 278f; Thomson 2020, 109–118.

social and civil roles of women in Rhodes, it would hardly be appropriate to depict women partaking in banquets were it commonly known that the only women *actually* attending them were prostitutes. If and how often women effectively took part in *symposia* (and in whose company) remains unclear, but it is evident that visually connecting them with this iconography was not shameful but rather a way to elevate them. Either by emphasizing their bond to their husbands, placing them next to each other on *klinai* and enjoying the banquet together, or by making them the sole banqueter, taking on the 'male' role, representing their independent standing and ability to participate actively in communal life. Instead of creating a new female iconography or expanding an established one to illustrate female (financial) independence, a traditionally male iconography was adopted to also represent women.

Curiously absent from a polis that seems so closely linked to Athenian traditions concerning sepulchral iconography are family scenes with several relatives interacting. Apparently immortalizing large families or emphasizing family bonds (especially parental relationships) were not deemed a priority for the commissioners of grave reliefs, with adults and children more likely to be shown as isolated, single figures than as part of a family union. Instead, Rhodian reliefs seem to memorialize intimacy and affection through the motifs of handshake and embrace, with the latter illustrating a level of emotionality not often found in funerary art.

Rhodes negotiates its place within the wider Hellenistic world through both stabilising and differentiating mechanisms of PPI. Its consistent reliance on Classical motifs reflects the operation of convergence: shared visual forms acted as a cultural stabiliser, asserting Rhodian participation in long-standing Greek traditions rather than signalling active rivalry. Yet the island simultaneously introduced strikingly new motifs that arose primarily from internal social structures and domestic practices. These locally driven innovations functioned as markers of inter-polis distinction, showing how internal agency can precede and shape the dynamics of peer comparison. The Rhodian case therefore underscores PPI's value for tracing broader relational patterns, while also revealing its limitations in explaining the internal, affective, or familial motivations that may underlie stylistic change.

To sum up, Rhodes mainly adopts an accentuated classicising iconographical programme, using traditional motifs and themes well known from Classical Athens, demonstrating a (visual) proximity in culture. But Rhodes is no simple copy or continuation of Classical Athenian iconography, instead Rhodian funerary imagery creates a blend of established, shared Classicism and locally driven innovation, creating a visual identity that was both recognizably Greek and Rhodian. Motifs and stylistic choices popular in Attica may have had a big influence on the sepulchral imagery, but they were not straightforwardly borrowed but altered to fit a distinct Rhodian visual identity that clearly

differentiates the polis from other Hellenistic cities. This identity includes polis-specific variations of known motifs, such as banqueting women being integrated into the imagery of the *Totenmahl*, as well as a particular interest in expressing close (physical) contact between living and dead visible in a large number of surviving *dexiosis*-reliefs and the unique new creations of the embracing figures, the latter traceable back to the Classical relief of Krito and Timarista. Rhodes presents herself as a cosmopolitan polis with a diverse population that allows for great variation and choice in funerary (self-)representation through an openness to innovative imagery, while remaining distinctly Greek.

3.2 Smyrna

Smyrna, modern Izmir, is located on the Western coast of Asia Minor (map 2). Its sheltered location at the very end of the Gulf of Izmir with easy access to the hinterlands made for the ideal place to establish a seaport.[359] Old Smyrna, a settlement that can be traced back to the 3rd millennium BCE, became a Greek city when Aeolian Greeks arrived on its shore in the 11th century BCE. Ionian exiles from Colophon took over around 700 BCE, before the city was destroyed by the Lydian king Alyattes, father of Croesus, ca. 600 BCE.[360] For several centuries only small settlements can be attested to on the former city grounds, until the restoration by Alexander the Great in the 4th century BCE. With the support of the Macedonian king Smyrna regained its status as city and eventually became the 13th member of the Ionian League.[361] The *de facto* (re-)founders of the city are Antigonus and Lysimachus who were responsible for the construction of public buildings at the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 3rd century BCE, after they took on the task after Alexander's death.[362] Eventually, the prosperous city became part of the Attalid kingdom and upon the death of Eumenes III., the last king of Pergamon, was bequeathed to Rome.[363] While Old Smyrna was located on the north coast of the gulf, New Smyrna was founded on the south coast at Mount Pagos (map 5).[364] However, the area is covered by the modern city, with only very small portions of either ancient city being excavated (e.g., the agora of New Smyrna) and few features still visible in the layout of the modern metropolis (e.g., the outlines of the ancient port of New Smyrna).

Already during the 3rd century BCE, Smyrna became an important seaport with excellent connections to Italy and a rapport with Rome, to which it dedicated a temple in 195 BCE.[365] Trade and long-term political stability allowed for growing prosperity and gave an ever-growing number of citizens the means to erect costly funerary monuments with elaborate reliefs, evident in the high level of technical skill and artistic quality of Smyrnaean gravestones with a relatively homogenous local style.[366]

[359] Bean 1969, 37.
[360] Cadoux 1938, 55, 57f, 66f; Bean 1969, 39; Berger 2001, 661.
[361] Cadoux 1938, 67, 84, 86; Bean 1969, 39f; Berger 2001, 661; Strab. 14.1.4, 14.1.37.
[362] Cadoux 1938, 98–100, 105; Bean 1969, 40; Känel 1989, 52; Strab. 14.1.37.
[363] Cadoux 1938, 106–113, 130, 136; Bean 1969, 41; Zanker 1993, 212.
[364] Laroche 2009, 40; Karlsson 2014, 8.
[365] Bean 1969, 41; Känel 1989, 52; Karlsson 2014, 9.
[366] Linfert 1976, 18; Känel 1989, 52; Meriç 1993, 73; Zanker 1993, 213; Schmidt 1991, 20; Klöckner 2013, 308.

Since the city is completely built-over by modern structures and the area has been inhabited continuously, excavations have been possible only in Old Smyrna and some small sections of the Hellenistic-Roman agora.[367] It is assumed that the *necropoleis* were located to the north-east and south of the city, outside of the city walls.[368] Based on repeated mentions of two or three deceased in the epitaphs of surviving stelai, Känel suspects that graves were organized in circumscribed family precincts. Pivots on the bottom of stelai could point to the placement of grave reliefs in stone bases to create a larger ensemble, instead of being located directly above the tombs.[369] Tomb precincts similar to the Athenian ones could have been constructed, where the different grave stelai of a family created a public 'exhibition' at the front, with the actual tombs located behind in a more private area. However, none of the Hellenistic *necropoleis* were excavated and no records of *in situ* contexts of grave monuments survive.[370]

In regard to their format several common features can be found in the Smyrnaean funerary monuments: most of the stelai are upright rectangular, bearing a recessed image field. Often, the top edge is slightly narrower than the bottom of the stele, and only the reliefs depicting equestrians are transversely rectangular, if not almost square. In many instances the pediments survive on an epistyle carried by pillars or columns (e. g., PM 158 (pl. 33), 530 (pl. 46), 414 (pl. 43), 906 (pl. 61)) and decorated with rosettes or round shields. The so-called *Rosettennaiskosstele* is characteristic for Smyrna.[371] The pedestals are massive and can be complemented with mouldings (PM 413 (pl. 42), 543 (pl. 48)) or inscriptions (PM 415 (pl. 43), 867 (pl. 60)).[372] Honorific wreaths, executed in low relief, can be found on almost every epistyle, sometimes encircling the inscription "Ο ΔΗΜΟΣ" (ho demos).[373] The verb *etimēsen* needs to be filled in here to form the sentence "The people honoured…" to be completed with the name of the honoured individual: this could explain the unusual engraving of the name of the deceased in the accusative case (instead of the more common nominative or genitive).[374]

[367] Bean 1969, 46; Känel 1989, 53; Berger 2001, 662.
[368] Laugier 2009, 66f.
[369] Känel 1989, 52f; Schmidt 1991, 9.
[370] Klöckner 2013, 307.
[371] Schmidt 1991, 10.
[372] Schmaltz 1983, 224f; Schmidt 1991, 9.
[373] Schmaltz 1983, 239; Schmidt 1991, 9f. The *demos*-inscription seems to only be used for deceased individuals; it cannot be found used of a person still alive at the time of the erection of the grave relief. Schmaltz 1983, 240; Känel 1989, 56; Zanker 1993, 214; Klöckner 2013, 321. While there are claims that the *demos*-inscription is not used for grave monuments of children there are several examples proving the contrary (PM 749, 766; PM 376 if the figure is read as a young woman, not an adult).
[374] Känel 1989, 55; Schmidt 1991, 9; Klöckner 2013, 320.

While there is no definite proof for the legal validity of these honours (and whether or not they would have been awarded posthumously), the sheer number of stelai depicting honorific wreaths allows the assumption that they were merely an iconographic formula and not corresponding to any formal action taken by the city.

Corresponding to these honorific wreaths a significant number of grave reliefs show standing male and female figures in poses associated with honorific statues; a widely known example being the statues of Cleopatra and Dioscurides on Delos (fig. 62).[375] Men are depicted in the so-called *Mantel-/Normaltypus*, women in the *Pudicitia* pose.[376] For the former, based on the models of Sophocles and Aeschines with the arm wrapped in the cloak, two subtypes can be differentiated through details, e. g., of the folds in the cloak.[377] Additionally, some reliefs show men with their arm uncovered by their cloak, but grasping the seam of the garment in the same way as the more 'classical' types. Similarly, the *Pudicitia* pose is also characterised by the placement of the arms: one is crossed over her body, the hand resting on the hip, while the other arm rests upon it with the hand raised toward the face. Three types have been established, distinguished by which leg is engaged and which arm is resting across the body.[378] The differentiation of miniscule details is only of minor interest for the analysis of the reliefs, since the message of the images is not dependant on ascribing a certain type. The different types could be the result of different artists or workshops who favoured one composition over the other, or a way to cater to the aesthetic preferences of different clients. Both *Normaltypus* and *Pudicitia* convey desirable virtues that all citizens should embody: *sophrosyne* for the men, modesty and reservation for the women.

Apart from the figural composition, the relief background featuring pillars and ledges equipped with a wide variety of attributes such as book scrolls, boxes and tins, further characterising the depicted deceased, is also a feature of Smyrnaean grave reliefs. While Smyrna participates fully in the panhellenic repertoire of grave relief imagery, its monuments display a striking degree of formal consistency, and internal homogeneity with specific local preferences and motifs that set the city apart from its peers.

[375] Pfuhl 1905, 66; Schmidt 1991, 36.
[376] The name '*Pudicitia*' (modesty) stems from a Hadrianic coin depicting empress Sabina on the obverse and the personification of *pudicitia*, including an inscription, on the reverse. Bieber 1977, 13; pl. 103, ill. 623.
[377] Schmidt 1991, 15. For a detailed analysis of the distinguishing features, see Schmidt 1991, 16 and Fehr 1978 on the meaning and significance of depicting movement in statues.
[378] Schmidt 1991, 15; for a detailed analysis of the three types, see Linfert 1976, 147–155.

Motif	Details	#	Total
Banquet scenes	Man reclining	1	5
	Man with seated woman	1	
	'Family scenes' (3+ figures)	3	
Dexiosis	Two men	4	10
	Man & woman*	5	
	Two women	1	
Multiple figures standing	Two men	2	25
	Two women	2	
	One man & one woman	16	
	'Family scenes' (3+ figures)	5	
Multiple figures standing & seated	Two men	1	14
	Two women	4	
	One man & one woman	3	
	'Family scenes' (3+ figures)	4	
	Unclear	2	
Men	Equestrian	8	26
	Seated	2	
	Standing	16	
Pre-adults	Adolescent (male)	7	17
	Boy/toddler	5†	
	Young woman/girl	5	
Women	Seated	4	20
	Standing	16	
Objects/other	No (surviving) figures	1	1
Fragments		5	5
		Total	**123**
Demeter priestess°	One woman	5	12
	Two women	1	
	One woman & one man	5	
	Unclear	1	

Table 4: Motifs on Smyrnaean stelai.

*	PM 1096 shows three figures (one man, two women) in an uncommon three-way handshake.
†	PM 730 and 766 both depict two children: one toddler and an infant.
°	The 'Demeterpriestesses' are counted as part of their respective motif group (i.e. standing woman), but it felt sensible to list them as a particular Smyrnaean motif in the overview as well.

3.2.1 Men

The majority of male figures on Smyrnaean grave reliefs are depicted wearing a *himation* with a short-sleeved *chiton* underneath. They usually stand frontally, facing the viewer; this holds true even when the men are not alone but accompanied by additional figures with whom they might interact. While the group of reliefs depicting a single man is one of the largest groups among the surviving grave stelai in Smyrna, men appear most often paired with a standing woman and accompanied by at least one small servant in a short *chiton*. In many cases the servants are leaning against a pillar in the background or the bottom border of the image field, often expressing mourning through gestures; either gripping one wrist with the other hand or burying their face in one hand while the other arm is crossed over their chest (PM 161 (pl 34)). Only in a few cases do the servants carry attributes such as scrolls (PM 168 (pl. 35), 251 (pl. 36)). Although the poses of the cloaked men are reminiscent of a Classical motif which was used for honorific statues of respected citizens (most notably by the public statues of Sophocles and Aeschines), only during the Hellenistic period did this motif become a standardised iconographic formula for (all) male citizens in general also used for private honorary monuments (such as the Delian Cleopatra and Dioscurides mentioned above).[379]

When depicted standing alone in a relief, the men are placed in the middle of the image field; they are moved closer to the frame on either side when they are part of a pair. Most often, their right arm is wrapped in their *himation*, while the left hand is hanging down on their side, sometimes gripping the fabric above the leg (PM 161) or holding a scroll (PM 168, 170 (pl. 35)). All figures of the *Normaltypus* are clothed not only in a cloak but also a *chiton* which usually can be seen only in the neck and chest area.[380] This also holds true for the small number of reliefs with seated men (PM 830 (pl. 57), 831 (fig. 57)) as well as for the men in banquet scenes (e.g., PM 1488 (pl. 69)).[381] A few rare exemptions depict men bare-chested with the *himation* slung around their hips or shoulder (PM 140 (pl. 32), 646 (pl. 53), 854 (pl. 58), 1102 (66)), and even fewer reliefs showing naked men survive, all of which are equestrians (PM 1439 (pl. 68), 1440 (pl. 68)).[382]

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[379] Känel 1989, 54.

[380] Zanker 1993, 216f.

[381] A general problem with banquet scenes (*Totenmahlreliefs*) is a level of uncertainty whether they were used as grave monuments or votive objects. PM 1823 has a *chaire*-inscription, while PM 1488 features a longer epitaph as well as a *demos*-wreath, allowing us to identify them as funerary stelai. PM 1568, 1866 and 1980 feature no ambivalent 'heroic' iconographic markers beyond the general theme of 'banquet'. But PM 1840 could be a votive stele, since it shows an altar, a sacrificial animal, and several worshippers. While religious personnel and cult objects might just be visual elements that were added to the sepulchral banquet scenes, but a certain ambiguity remains.

[382] Like the banquet scenes, equestrians are often interpreted as particularly 'heroic' and might have been used as votive reliefs and not in a sepulchral context. There are eight surviving reliefs with riders or horsemen from Smyrna, five of them heavily damaged. They do not fit with the common Smyrnaean iconographic taste or with

As has been stated above, most men appear as part of a couple, usually paired with a woman, with only a few surviving reliefs of three or more individuals, excluding servants. There is no discernible difference in the design of the standing men when they are placed next to a woman (most likely their wife) as the figures do not interact beyond exchanging gazes. Men can stand on the left or right side of the relief, with no particular preference for either, while the servants are usually placed near the relief frame (PM 532 (pl. 47)) and only rarely between the main protagonists (PM 536 (pl. 47)), unless more than two slaves are depicted (PM 555 (pl. 49), 564 (pl. 50)). The two reliefs depicting a pair of standing men (PM 341 (pl. 38), 343 (pl. 39)) follow the same rules.

While there is no necessarily reliable way to determine relations between depicted figures, the reliefs of three or more people can be understood as family portraits. In three examples (PM 632 (pl. 52), 634 (pl. 52), 640 (pl. 52)) the size of the middle figure allows for the identification of them as the child, flanked by their mother and father. Contrary to the 'family scenes' on Athenian grave stelai, the figures in Smyrna seldom overlap. Instead, men, women and children are placed next to each other, usually without any part of their body touching in any place. In addition to these family scenes there are also two reliefs with a father and his (clearly recognizable) child (PM 343, 693 (pl. 54)) as well as two reliefs with a single woman and two children (PM 419 (pl. 43), 1030 (pl. 64)).

In some reliefs servants carry attributes for the men, and in some various objects can be found on display on top of pillars, copings, or ledges. In scenes with figures of different genders, the attributes are clearly divided, matching the figure behind which they are placed (e.g., scrolls for men, *kalathoi* for women). Omnipresent are chests or boxes (Känel 13,1 (pl. 72)), scrolls (sometimes tied together into bundles) (PM 158 (pl. 33), 569 (pl. 50)), (double) *cornucopiae* (PM 170 (pl. 35), 250 (pl. 36)), and herms (PM 140 (pl. 32), 256 (pl. 37)). The better-preserved equestrian reliefs (PM 1360 (pl. 66), 1439 (pl. 68)), one banquet scene (PM 1568 (pl. 69)) and one relief of a standing man (PM 256 (pl. 37)) also feature a tree with a snake wound around the trunk, with the reptiles stretching their heads towards the male figures.[383] Elsewhere, boxes often carry a feminine connotation, since they are usually presented to women by their female servants or relatives, but in Smyrna they appear on numerous stelai depicting only men. Pfuhl has interpreted them as urns (*cisten*), storage boxes for book scrolls or non-descript burial gifts.[384] The first interpretation might be applicable for PM 109 (pl. 31) as it shows a spherical vessel on top of a pillar on which a wreath has been engraved, but using this single example to infer that all boxes associated with a male figure

the common format of stelai. There is, however, a possibility that they were specifically commissioned, perhaps from nearby Pergamon, where horse-themed stelai were popular.

[383] PM 256 might depict an adolescent, as the head of the figure is missing.

[384] Pfuhl 1905, 59f.

could be urns seems farfetched and unconvincing.[385] Instead, they should be approached in context with the other attributes, which all belong in the sphere of the house or office. They are decidedly non-military in their nature, rather they speak to literacy and prosperity. Men are depicted as highly educated and (financially) successful individuals rather than characterizing themselves as athletes or soldiers.[386]

That this represents an abandonment of highly traditional masculine themes is further demonstrated by the fact that even adolescents and boys also are not primarily presented within an athletic or militaristic context.[387] While herms are still regularly placed in the background, the young men and boys are not depicted naked, and their servants seldom carry the equipment associated with the *gymnasion* (aryballoi and strigils). Instead, young men either mirror the poses of adults, presenting themselves in the *Normaltypus*, or appear otherwise completely wrapped in their coats, displaying the proper etiquette for their age. Even young male infants do not appear naked but dressed in a thin *chiton*, while toddlers can be shown wearing short cloaks, fastened on one shoulder, covering their body down to the knee. Attributes for children change with age: *ephebes*/teenagers can draw from a wider variety of items, most of which are associated with a high education (scrolls: PM 114 (pl. 31), 169 (pl. 35), 634 (pl. 52), 640 (pl. 52); writing tablets: PM 131 (pl. 32); *kithara*: PM 160 (pl. 34); herms: PM 114 (pl. 31), 131 (pl. 32), 178 (pl. 36)), but also small pet dogs, snakes wound around trees or pillars, and non-descript vessels and boxes. There is some overlap between adolescents and young boys in regard to the snakes, but otherwise toddlers and infants are characterized through familiar 'child-oriented' attributes: dogs (PM 729 (pl. 54), 730 (pl. 55)), fruits (especially grapes) (PM 730, 766 (pl. 56)) and toys (PM 798 (pl. 56), 804 (pl. 56)).

As noted above, real interaction between protagonists is rare. The tendency to turn figures (men as well as women) towards the viewer in a statuesque fashion is not limited to standing figures but can even be observed in the interactive scenes depicting a *dexiosis*. Whether both participants are standing or one of them is sitting down, one figure is oriented to the front, usually the standing one (PM 867 (pl. 60), 1097 (pl.65)) and turns only their head towards their companion. Clearly the interest and desire to depict figures frontally outweighed any concern with 'naturalistic' figural composition.

[385] Karlsson follows Pfuhl, interpreting the boxes as urns as part of the wider assumption that the reliefs depict figures within funeral districts linked to *heroa* and royal grave sites. Karlsson 2014, 186.
[386] Känel 1989, 57; Zanker 1993, 218, 220.
[387] There are two reliefs depicting parents with their adolescent sons carrying bows and quivers on their back: PM 640 and PM 641.

Figures rarely overlap and body contact only happens in the form of handshakes. Here, men are clearly presented more often than women, with four *dexiosis* scenes between two men (PM 693 (pl. 54), 863 (pl. 59), 867 (pl. 60), 868 (pl. 60)) or a mixed pair (PM 704 (pl. 54), 872 (pl. 60), 1097 (pl. 65), 1102 (pl. 66)), and only a single example of two women shaking hands (PM 1052 (pl. 65)). One slightly odd relief, PM 1096 (pl. 65), depicts three figures taking part in a three-way handshake: one man and two women, one seated, and one standing behind her chair. The stele bears three wreaths, but only one is inscribed with *chaire*, featuring the name Hieroklea beneath it, allowing for the assumption that the monument was erected after Hieroklea's death by her surviving family members, potentially her husband and daughter or sister. Interestingly, *dexiosis* scenes are mostly missing the attributes on pillars and ledges; PM 693 and PM 872 both have a single slim pillar, and PM 1096 has a shelf carrying a few attributes. This suggests that objects are of secondary interest in these scenes, more likely to be carried by the small accompanying slaves, and instead keeping the focus of the images on the (physical) connection between the figures. The characterization of the protagonists takes place through this interaction and their close relationship to each other.

In conclusion, male funerary iconography in Smyrna is dominated by statuesque, frontal figures derived from honorific sculpture known across the Greek world, most commonly rendered in the *Mantelmann* or *Normaltypus* pose. Men are most often shown alongside a single female figure, subtly emphasizing marital status and social respectability, while reliefs depicting larger family constellations remain comparatively rare. The consistent emphasis on attributes such as scrolls, writing implements, and *cornucopiae* signals a deliberate reorientation of masculine ideals toward literacy, education, prosperity, and civic virtue, marking a clear departure from the military and athletic imagery popular in Classical Athens and still prevalent in Hellenistic poleis such as Rhodes. This shift can be explained primarily through internal conditions: Smyrna's prolonged period of peace as part of the Attalid kingdom during the Hellenistic period, economic success as a major harbour city, and the rise of a prosperous citizen class reshaped ideals of exemplary masculinity. This internally driven redefinition also functions as a mechanism of differentiation, allowing Smyrna to position itself within the peer field by rejecting certain traditional motifs while translating shared visual homologies into a distinctly civic, cultivated self-image.

3.2.2 Women

Women are represented on stelai as frequently as men are. This also holds true for pairs of the same gender (7 reliefs with two women, 7 with two men) and group depictions where we find six examples of two women and one man, and eight reliefs with two men in the company of only one woman. However, most compositions feature pairs of one man and woman (23), especially with both figures standing next to each other (16).

Mixed-sex pairs				
One man one woman	*dexiosis*	2	PM 704, 872	22
	Standing	16	PM 529, 530, 532, 536, 539, 540, 543, 545, 555, 559, 564, 567, 569, 572, 573, Känel 14,1	
	Standing & seated	3	PM 854, 855, Känel 15,1	
	Banquet	1	PM 1568	
Same-sex pairs				
Two women	*dexiosis*	1	PM 1052	7
	Standing	2	PM 505, Senff 6,2	
	Standing & seated	4	PM 989, 990, 991, 994	
Two men	*dexiosis*	4	PM 693, 863, 867, 868	7
	Standing	2	PM 341, 343	
	Standing & seated	1	PM 852	
Groups				
Two men one woman	*dexiosis*	2	PM 1097, 1102	8
	Standing	3	PM 634, 640, 646	
	Standing & seated	3	PM 419*, 861, 1030	
One man two women	*dexiosis*	1	PM 1096	6
	Standing	2	PM 632, 662	
	Standing & seated	1	PM 878	
	Banquet	2	PM 1823, 1866	

Table 5: Composition of multi-figural reliefs in Smyrna.

*	PM 419 shows a standing woman with two small children identifyable as (her) children through their dress and pose, which distinguished them from slaves

A counterpart to the male *Normaltypus*, the standard *Pudicitia* pose chosen for women on Smyrnaean grave reliefs is already known from Classical Athenian grave reliefs and often interpreted as a sign of grief.[388] Since the gesture survives not only in funerary monuments but also in honorific statues, the interpretation as solely an expression of grief is not sustainable.

[388] Kleiner 1942, 160; Känel 1989, 53; Zanker 1993, 224f.

Eule argues that the posture with the raised arm and the grip into the coat hem satisfied the aesthetic expectations of the citizens, interested in the display of intricate garment folds and the richness of the fabric, being (re-)introduced into the sepulchral context more as a sign for status than for grief.[389] That status could be moral as well as social, such as in interpretations of the pose as an indicator of modesty and restraint, as noted above.

Like men, women are further characterized by attributes placed on pillars or ledges behind them. The objects have a far wider variety than those used with male figures, with chests, sometimes open and filled with jewellery (Känel 14,1 (pl. 72)), *kalathoi* (PM 435 (pl. 44)), tins (PM 564 (pl. 50)), fans (PM 925 (pl. 62)), and hats or sunshades (PM 539 (pl. 48)) being the most common. There are also a few reliefs with sirens making music (PM 414 (pl. 43), 448 (pl. 45))[390], as well as isolated depictions of birds (PM 569 (pl. 50)), pet dogs (PM 435 (pl. 44)), musical instruments (PM 415 (pl. 43)), and snakes (PM 395 (pl. 40), 994 (pl. 64)). Attributes, especially fans and chests or boxes, can be carried by the servants that accompany all women, usually at least one, but sometimes up to three (PM 415); when paired with a man the woman is most commonly surrounded by two servants while the man has to make do with one. Interestingly, some servants wear a *chiton* shown sliding down one shoulder, leaving part of the body exposed and uncovered. This occurs with female servants (PM 531 (fig. 36)) as well as with male ones (PM 251 (fig. 37)) and may be an iconographic marker for grief and distress since the staff could have tugged on their clothing (and hair) to express their mourning.[391] It reinforces the mourning gestures many of them make, raising their hands to their faces, in a display of grief over the death of their masters.

In comparison with the male iconography, where attributes focus on education, women are – as so often – characterized by traditional feminine items of beauty and domesticity. Together with the fact that women are most commonly depicted at the side of a man (and connected to one in many epigrams), their identity is often closely linked to their status as wife or daughter. The poses of these women may be related to public, honorific statuary, but the implication of the attributes appears primarily to elevate women to role models of an idealised femininity and female virtues associated with the home, such as diligence, beauty, and propriety.

[389] Eule 2001, 15.

[390] Sirens playing musical instruments were already a popular motif in funerary art during the Classical period. Vedder 1985, 134. See Buschor 1944 Hofstetter 1990; Estrin 2021 for the significance of sirens as grave decoration and Tsiafakis 2001 for a more general discussion of sirens.

[391] Karlsson interprets this as a sign of activity, with the garment slipping off because the slaves were moving so much. Karlsson 2014, 226f.

While some objects shown were not particularly common in Athenian funerary art, they all fit into the same broad category and, unlike with men, do not show a shift in the ideals treasured for women. In this respect the female iconography of Smyrna remains more traditional (although not necessarily more restricted) than those of men.

Like grave stelai for male children, funerary reliefs for girls mostly employ traditional motifs and attributes, such as the pet dog and toys or fruits being held by the girls (e.g., PM 753 (pl. 55)). In several cases the children appear together with their parents (PM 382 (pl. 39), 632 (pl. 52), 994 (pl. 64), 1823 (pl. 70)), with PM 382 being especially noteworthy since the girl is being held by an unusually large servant. The uniqueness of the design could indicate that the servant woman (possibly the wet nurse of the child) was cherished by the family of the deceased. Otherwise, the number of reliefs with female children is notably lower than those for male ones. [392] With the missing excavations of Smyrna's *necropoleis* it is possible that the number of known reliefs simply does not reflect the number of stelai depicting girls that existed in antiquity as they were lost or never unearthed. However, there is no reason to assume that grave monuments for female children were erected in different locations from those for male children, and it is probable that families were less likely to erect monuments for dead girls.

Female figures in Smyrna largely adhere to the *Pudicitia* pose, emphasizing modesty, dignity, and domestic virtue, thereby maintaining continuity with long-established iconographic conventions. At the same time, Smyrnaean women are frequently surrounded by a rich array of attributes that articulate wealth, status, and the material dimension of the *oikos*. This combination suggests that female virtue remained grounded in traditional gender roles, but was increasingly expressed through conspicuous material display, enabled by the city's prosperity.

This approach closely mirrors the representation of Smyrnaean men, who likewise conform to stable bodily types while expressing education, status, and civic virtue through dense clusters of attributes. In both cases, bodily restraint functions as a marker of moral respectability, while attributes become the primary vehicles for articulating social distinction. Smyrna thus constructs a coherent funerary language in which gendered virtue remains traditional, but its expression is reframed through conspicuous material display. This lavish iconography, expressed through both the accumulation of attributes and the elaborate framing of the relief fields, is combined with the persistent use of conservative compositional body types, producing a carefully calibrated visual language. Rather than representing a lack of innovation, this strategy reflects the constraints as well as the possibilities of operating within a shared Hellenistic *koine*: prosperity and status could be

[392] Six reliefs for girls, four reliefs of girls with their parent/s. Ten reliefs for boys and adolescents, two reliefs for two boys each, five reliefs of boys with their parent/s.

articulated, but only insofar as they remained anchored to recognisable models of male and female virtue. Within a network of peer polities, where funerary imagery needed to remain legible beyond the local community, Smyrna's emphasis on abundance was therefore integrated into established forms rather than expressed through wholly novel representations. The city negotiated between differentiation and recognisability, 'updating' traditional iconography to reflect prosperity while preserving its moral intelligibility.

A unique iconographical feature of Smyrna are twelve reliefs depicting so-called priestesses of Demeter. They show women, wearing the customary combination of *chiton* and cloak, but with a fabric bulge stretched across the front of their bodies, a variation absent in the regular *Pudicitia* type. All women are holding or touching a large torch, which is usually carried (or at least stabilized) by a small servant girl.[393] In addition to the torches the women are carrying poppy seed capsules or ears of grain which, especially in combination with the torches, can be interpreted as a link to the cult of Demeter. Five of the reliefs depict the woman alone (PM 405, 406, 407, 409, 410 (pl. 41–42)), two with a standing man (PM 529 (pl. 46), 530 (pl. 46)), three with a seated man (PM 855 (pl. 58), 872 (pl. 60), Känel 15,1 (pl.73)), and one with a second standing woman of the *Pudicitia* type (Senff 6,2 (pl. 71)).[394] In most cases they are accompanied by two servants, one holding the torch, the second carrying a small tin or jug. The latter is surprising in its frequency as jugs are not part of the attribute repertoire for female figures, indicating that they could have a ritual function (e.g., be used for libations) and thereby furthering a religious interpretation of the reliefs. Additionally, two reliefs (PM 405 (pl. 41), 872 (pl. 60)) show a *cornucopia*, which is associated with fertility, prosperity, and the goddess Demeter.

Känel assumes that the iconography of the funerary reliefs was derived from the statue of a local Demeter priestess in the 2nd century BCE, without being able to prove the existence of such a monument.[395] None of the inscriptions explicitly describe any of the women as priestess and there is no literary evidence of particularly important roles for women in a local Demeter cult. Klöckner argues convincingly that the depiction of 'divine attributes' does not inevitably function as an iconographic marker for priesthood.[396] Instead, the objects could be understood as fertility symbol or indicator of affinity for Demeter or a close connection to her cult, which could be expressed

[393] PM 855 is fragmented on the left side where the woman is standing. The relief is counted as part of the Demeter priestesses because the woman is holding poppy seed capsules in her hand; even though she is not depicted in the *Pudicitia* schema, she clearly has her right hand lifted in the same way as some of the other 'priestesses' (e.g., PM 405, 407, Känel 15,1). It can be assumed that the missing piece of the stele carried the torch. Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, 222.

[394] PM 531 is heavily damaged but shows the bottom half of the large torch being held by a servant. It cannot be determined unequivocally if the woman was alone or in the company of a second figure.

[395] Känel 1959, 54; Klöckner 2013, 312.

[396] Klöckner 2013, 305, 319.

through priesthood, but also through an especially big commitment within the community of worshippers.[397] Noteworthy in this context is also that the connection of 'divine attribute' and 'priesthood' is only made in the case of women. Men depicted with headbands, kantharoi, and (ivy) wreaths that fit into the respective spheres of Dionysus and Isis, are not automatically taken to be priests, only to be worshippers. While modern commentators understand religious references on men's grave stelai as just one facet of their (civic) identity, the religious aspect has completely consumed the identities of women. The women, just like the men, are associated with several non-religious attributes and interact with other figures through handshakes or eye contact. The torch is one feature of their identity, but not the only one and not necessarily the most important one. Much like the 'honorary statue' type, the 'priestesses' express the exemplary function of the depicted women, this time not within the domestic sphere of the *oikos* but as pious participants within the religious part of their civic life.

From the perspective of peer polity interaction, the so-called 'Demeter priestess' reliefs demonstrate particularly clearly how local agency and shared visual conventions intersect. While the combination of torch, grain, and *cornucopia* draws on a panhellenic religious vocabulary that would have been legible to viewers from other poleis, the integration of these attributes together with the women in their distinguishing dress into the sepulchral imagery constitutes a distinctly Smyrnaean iconographic formula. Rather than emerging from direct competition or emulation, the motif appears rooted in local valuations of female piety (and possibly local cult practices), with its articulation through widely recognised iconographical signs ensuring that this local motif remained intelligible within the broader Hellenistic *koine*.

3.2.3 Space

There is quite a different approach towards the use of space in Smyrna than in Classical Athens. Figures on Athenian reliefs appear to take up more space as a result of an opposing placement strategy: the main individual/s fill out the image ground almost completely, in width as well as in height. Not only are they often constructed tall enough to touch the crown of their head to the upper border of the image, sometimes giving the impression that they are carrying/balancing the architrave on their heads, but they also overlap with the side frame. They are quite literally 'spilling out' of their relief. Additionally, pairs and groups of figures do not stand isolated but touch and intersect, often with several individuals stacked behind each other in deep relief, thereby creating vivid scenes with depth and perspective (fig. 38). The onlooker can place themselves among the figures as if they are a part of the action.

[397] Klöckner 2013, 313f.

By contrast, Smyrnaean reliefs present the figures as if on a stage, with male and female figures presented equal in size and proportions. Standing solo figures are without fail placed in the middle of the picture field with enough space on both sides to accommodate slaves, pillars, ledges and sometimes trees. Their head might come near the architrave in some instances, but usually the figures have some space between themselves and the frame on all sides. Seated figures are moved towards the frame on one side of the relief, with a huge free area in front of them and not overlapping with the border of the picture field. The isolation of the figures is also evident in reliefs with couples. Normally, neither of the two figures takes up a central position, but both are moved towards the side borders, leaving the middle part of the relief open. Although the symmetry can be slightly off when a seated figure is paired with a standing one, the two still create a noticeable visual break between one another, even when linked in a handshake.[398] Unoccupied relief ground between figures can be partially filled by servants, pillars, or attributes in a comparatively low relief (in some cases the background might have been painted), but the reliefs never feel as crowded or 'natural' as the Athenian ones. The stage-like poses reminiscent of private and public honorific statues, the isolation and strict frontality of the figures emphasize their sculptural qualities.

Regarding the architectural design of the reliefs there is a number of stelai standing out with their elaborate architecture among the majority framed with a simple pediment. On PM 112 (pl. 31), 158 (pl. 33), 405 (pl. 41) and 539 (pl. 48) the image is set between two columns of the Corinthian order (or a simplified version of that, possibly referencing the Egyptian style of pillars, with capitals formed out of flower petals), while PM 415 (pl. 43) and 435 (pl. 44) are framed by Ionian columns. These stelai also present the onlooker with pediments decorated with detailed and lavishly designed cornices, like dentils (e.g., PM. 405, 539) and several protruding and recoiling ledges. Additionally, the fragmented PM 531 (pl. 47) and 572 (pl. 51) indicate some elaborate framework of fluted columns as well, even though the capitals do not survive. There are also a small number of stelai (PM 170 (pl. 35), 413 (pl. 42), 530 (pl. 46), 804 (pl. 56), 1980 (pl. 70)) which are framed by simple columns but are designed with detailed pediments carrying metope triglyph friezes. Interestingly, the majority of these particularly richly decorated reliefs depict at least one female figure, with just four (PM 112, 149 (pl. 33), 158, 170, 804) showing only men. Seven reliefs exclusively portray women, and four are of mixed couples or groups.[399] Given the high amount of skill necessary to

[398] This symmetry between the figures usually allows us to infer the number (but not the gender) of missing figures on fragmented stelai from the distance between the surviving figure and the frame, even if there are no remains of a second (or third) figure.

[399] One woman: PM 405, 413, 414, 415, 435, 531; two women: 989; mixed couples: 530, 539, 572; mixed group: 1980. Additionally, PM XI is a pediment stele with columns and a metope triglyph frieze but no surviving figures. The stele carries an inscription, but the image field is flat with no indication of carving, leading to the assumption that the picture was painted.

execute the delicate forms of these reliefs, it is safe to assume that they were more expensive than the simpler monuments. This suggests it was more appropriate or common to choose these rich designs for women (or couples) or that more men decided to use these elaborate frames for their female family members. Looking beyond the architectural décor, most of the reliefs in this group present the figures in extremely opulent environments, surrounded by several attributes.

The most striking example for this kind of highly decorated environment combined with an elaborate frame is PM 415. A single woman in *Pudicitia* pose is placed in the middle of the deeply etched image field. She is accompanied by three small female slaves, two on her right (with the frontmost one exposing her shoulder, possibly in a visual representation of grief), and one on her left, cradling an object in her arms. Behind the woman two columns carry additional attributes: sitting on the top of one an open chest, overflowing with jewellery, on the other, slightly higher one, a *kithara*. All of this is staged in front of a heavily draped curtain that spans across the background of the relief, behind which the top of a door can be seen. The *aedicula* of PM 415 does not simply act as a frame in this example but creates a space with a specific entry (and exit) for the dead woman. Her full-frontal pose connects her in direct interaction with the (living) onlooker standing in front of her grave, while the door behind her may be read as entrance to the underworld. She is – quite literally – positioned between the two realms, appearing to have entered the liminal space of the relief (and by extension cemetery) to meet her visitors.

Apart from detailed architectural framing, a lavish exhibition of attributes seems to be linked closer to female figures in general, as single women are more often surrounded by a larger number of objects, which are placed on top of pillars and ledges, or carried by slaves, than men. This can be seen in PM 414 (pl. 43), where the woman is attended on by two servant girls, one holding a large fan, the other presenting a box to the woman. In addition, two wool-baskets and a flute-playing siren are placed on ledges behind the deceased. Similarly, the woman in PM 419 (pl. 43) is flanked to her right by a baby perched on a high stool, a servant, and a pillar with two *kalathoi*, and on her left by a servant girl with a jar, a boy clad in a cloak, and a pillar carrying a jewellery chest, and a hat or umbrella. In both cases (as well as in PM 415), it is noticeable that the space surrounding the women is filled, almost cluttered, with objects and other figures, but the deceased themselves appear detached from them. The solemn stance of the *Pudicitia* pose, their frontal orientation and straight gaze outside of the picture frame ground them in their own space, removed from the livelier background. In contrast to these reliefs, where shelves run across the whole width of the image field and the bodies of female figures are placed in front of columns and ledges, male figures commonly seem to be flanked with pillars displaying objects of interest rather than placed in front of continuous shelves.

Even in mixed pairs, there is a tendency to place more trinkets on the side of the woman. In PM 564 (pl. 50) the woman is attributed with a *kalathos*, a box, a small pot and accompanied by two slave girls, while the man has a (much smaller) servant and only a chest and two book scrolls placed behind him. The same is true for the man in PM 569 (pl. 50), who has to make do with a box and a couple of scrolls (but at least gets two slaves), while the woman is again attended to by two servant girls carrying several boxes and tins, and has an overflowing jewellery box behind her on which a dove perches.[400] The men in PM 559 (pl. 49) and Känel 14,1 (pl. 72) are given a slave, but are otherwise entirely without attributes, while the women get chests and a wool-basket (PM 559) or a servant with a jug as well as a shelf with an open jewellery box and other objects (Känel 14,1). Another example for this phenomenon are the *dexiosis* scenes: the stelai depicting two adult men shaking hands are devoid of any attributes thereby focusing on the act of closeness and connection (PM 863 (pl. 59), 867 (pl. 60), 868 (pl. 60)).[401] Meanwhile, the reliefs with mixed gender pairs linked in *dexiosis* depict several attributes, mostly associated with the women, such as sunhats, music-playing sirens (PM 1096 (65)) or a *cornucopia* and torch (PM 872 (pl. 60)), which clearly distinguishes the all-male setting from that of mingling men and women.

The question remains what this surplus of attributes means for our understanding of these women's funerary stelai. Given that these monuments are depicting the deceased in a positive light, the objects cannot be understood as evidence of vanity or excess but must be coded positively. It could be read as reference to the *oikos* being the space occupied more by women if we assume that the stelai (at least partially) allow for the glimpse into an idealized 'residence' of the dead. The disparity in the attribution of additional objects could also be interpreted as a visual representation of the physicality of male and female virtues: the feminine virtues beauty and diligence/domesticity are linked to physical objects such as jewellery, cosmetics, and wool-baskets, while male virtues like literacy and prosperity/euergetism are internal features of the mind and soul. This only differs for male figures if they have not yet reached adulthood: young boys and teenagers are surrounded by attributes mirroring their age (toys, pets) or linked to the *palaestra* and *gymnasion* (herms, athletic tools), where they would be receiving their education. This speaks more of the future potential of the children, which they will never be able to fully reach, due to their premature deaths. But for adults, male excellence in Smyrna seems to be characterized through actions and values which demands less material evidence than female virtues, which are primarily visualized through representative objects.

[400] The *tabula* beneath the framed demos-wreaths was added later according to Pfuhl. Pfuhl – Möbius 1977, 171.

[401] The *dexiosis* between an adult man and an adolescent boy (PM 693) shows a pillar topped with a siren.

3.2.4 Interaction

At first glance there seems to be barely any interaction between the protagonists on the grave stelai of Smyrna. Only the *dexiosis* scenes show actual physical contact, and even here touch is restricted to the hands with a clear space between the bodies of the participants. This spatial break becomes more visible in the popular couple depictions where there often is enough room between the two figures for a third one to be fitted in. But if interaction between the protagonists of reliefs was more limited, or at least more subtle, than on Athenian grave stelai, it was not non-existent.

A closer look reveals that the pairs (or couples) are by no means unaware of one another. On the contrary, the bodies are often turning toward each other in a subtle way, with the figures also turning their heads in the direction of the other and locking their gazes together. In some cases the positioning of the bodies seems to create a complementary and reciprocal composition: the free, non-weight bearing leg of one figure is mirrored by the engaged leg of the other figure (PM 539 (pl. 48), Känel 14,1 (pl.72)), an arm of a woman is raised to grasp a torch, while the arm of her male counterpart is withdrawn and crossed over his body (PM 529 (pl. 46)), or the bodies of the couple form a harmonious composition, with the weight being carried on their outer legs, while the inner ones create engaging patterns in the fabric of the rich garments (PM 555 (pl. 49), 559 (pl. 49), 569 (pl. 50)). There is a quiet give and take, or pushing and pulling between the figures, which creates tension between them. This subtle dynamic does not work in groups of three or more people, since the uneven number of figures makes interaction between all of them impossible. The missing symmetry and decreased tension between the protagonists might be two reasons why those reliefs were less popular. The almost chaste and tender looks between Smyrnaean couples (PM 545 (pl. 49), 559) feel more ingenuous and natural than the hard gazes and 'forced' closeness of the Athenian figures. PM 539 shows a couple gazing at each other, while keeping a respectable distance: the woman in *Pudicitia* pose lifts her left arm to tug at the seam of her veil, her body completely wrapped in a cloak. She leans slightly back as if to get a better look at the man standing to her right. While his body appears to turn from her due to the lighting in the picture and his dominantly placed left leg, he turns his head to answer her gaze. The space between them creates a room where the onlooker can almost feel their eyes meeting, creating tension and interaction between the figures and their bodies without them touching. Less intense and more tender is the depiction of the couple in PM 529, one of the 'Demeter priestesses'. The woman stands to the left of the typical large torch, her right hand resting on the handle, while she is twitching a fold of her cloak with her left hand. She, like the woman in PM 539, looks over to her companion, who holds his hands in front of his body, grabbing his right wrist with his left hand and turning his head toward her. Both figures seem more relaxed, which could be due to a more naturally composed contrapposto, that gives the

scene a 'softer' feel. The amount of free space the figures in Smyrna's reliefs have around them allows them to breathe, while the figures on Athenian stelai mingle in each other's space, filling the image field almost completely with their bodies in a way that is clearly orchestrated to depict as many people as possible and emphasize the importance of family and *oikos* in Classical Athens. In PM 545 the couple's bodies are placed close next to each other, with their heads turned towards the other, while the slave girl is using a large sun umbrella to protect her mistress against the heat by providing shade: it is easy to imagine that we are observing a walk through Smyrna, with a couple quietly enjoying themselves. Similarly, PM 632 (pl. 52) might be understood as a whole family taking a stroll, accompanied by their servants.

The way in which 'family portraits' are designed is also of interest. Instead of stacking the figures and having them overlap, the stelai in Smyrna depict parents flanking their children. PM 634 (pl. 52) and PM 640 (pl. 52) (potentially also PM 646 (pl. 53)) all have a central young male figure accompanied by an adult male figure to the left and a female figure to the right, who are presumably the parents of the adolescent. PM 634 has both parents looking fondly upon their son, and while PM 640 is missing the faces of the figures, it seems reasonable to assume it was similarly executed. In both cases the objects attributed to the young man are scrolls, painting the picture of the proud parents and their beloved child. While there might be no physical contact between the couples in Smyrna, there clearly is a connection between all of these figures.

Coming back to the servant figures, we may see their behaviour influencing how an onlooker interacts with the figures of the main protagonists: female slaves literally attend their mistresses, gazing up to them, offering them cosmetics, often appearing seemingly in the middle of a task or just pausing for a moment to grieve (e.g., PM 414 (pl. 43), 437 (pl. 45)). Even though some of them rest their heads in the palm of a hand to express grief about the death of the woman, they interact with the female figures as we might imagine that they would have done on a regular day. This creates a noticeable rift between the servants following their usual routine, and the dead who react in no meaningful way with their entourage but have their gaze fixed upon the (mourning) viewer who is well aware that they are visiting a funerary monument and that the women are no longer in need of slaves and their services. Meanwhile, male servants are most often depicted in the opposite way: they are not interacting with their master by presenting him with attributes, but are leaning against the frame, arms crossed or head in hand.

More often than not they even turn their faces away from the deceased (e.g., PM 343 (pl. 39), 863 (pl. 59)), and on reliefs depicting single men, they tend to be placed further away from the men, creating plenty of space between themselves and the 'protagonist' of the stele. While female servants seem almost to crowd the female figures (e.g., PM 414, 436 (pl. 45)), in many instances there is a noticeable caesura between male slaves and deceased men (e.g., PM 156 (pl. 33), 250 (pl. 36)).

In both cases the gaze of the onlooker is directed towards the figure of the deceased: within the more crowded relief for women the gaze of the onlooker is directed through the gaze of their fellow actors, the servant girls, and within images of men through the physically empty space created around them through the absence or low number of attributes and the distance between them and their servants, which places them in a 'spatial spotlight'.

But does the presentation of the figures as stage figures make them less or more approachable for an external onlooker? The Athenian stelai appear as if we are experiencing a real get-together of family members, but the viewer is not necessarily invited (or expected) to participate in it. A bereaved family member may feel included in the scene while an un-familiar passer-by, not part of the particular family unit depicted on the grave relief, might feel more like a witness to their bond. This would fit well with the democratic messaging of the Classical period, when the emphasis was on the different building blocks making up society. By contrast, the Smyrnaean monuments feel more 'confrontational'. The figures remain engaged with each other, though far more subtly than in Classical reliefs, while allowing for direct interaction with the viewer through their frontal orientation and gaze. Combined with their statuary qualities they embody the social ideals and values the deceased possessed and that the living should strive for. Referencing honorary statues and given the *naiskoi* architecture surrounding they may feel less approachable than figures in scenes focused on a family narrative or emotional connection, instead appearing more like avatars of social norms and values that one should strive for. Additional information and clues, such as inscribed names and epigrams, personalizing attributes and the understated body language can help to add a more personal touch, but like statues of gods and heroes, created to depict immortal beings of a different realm, the Smyrnaean dead remain iconographically removed from the realm of the living.

3.2.5 Summary

The funerary reliefs of Smyrna are characterised by a highly consistent and recognisable visual language centred on statuesque poses, frontal orientation, and honorific display. Across male and female figures alike, the dominant pictorial schema draws on the visual grammar of public honorific statuary, most clearly expressed through the widespread use of the *Mantel/Normaltypus* for men and the *Pudicitia* pose for women, both known during the Classical period and across the Greek world,

adapted to a funerary context. The architectural framing of the stelai, most notably the near-ubiquitous honorific wreaths, often accompanied by *demos*-inscriptions, further reinforces the public, exemplary character of the deceased, presenting them as individuals honoured by the community rather than primarily as members of an *oikos*.

The *Normaltypus* of men expresses dignity and self-control, virtues of great importance for ancient Greek society, which have already been popularized in this specific pictorial schema through the public statues of Sophocles and Aischines during the Classical period. A significant difference in the Hellenistic adaptation is the addition of a *chiton* worn beneath the *himation*: the traditional pose of the *Mantelmann* is merged with contemporary fashion norms. Attributes, especially scrolls, writing utensils and *cornucopiae* emphasize literacy, education, prosperity, and *euergetism* as qualities worth striving for. The remarkable absence of military and athletic accessories shows that martial and athletic accomplishments no longer played a major role in the self-image of the citizens. The choice to represent men as educated and cultivated citizens can be seen as a value system, which was still leaning heavily on the behavioural norms of the Classical polis. Similarly, the *Pudicitia* pose of female figures, together with the attributes ascribed to women, embodies the ideal of the demure wife who shines predominantly through domestic diligence (*kalathoi*, distaffs) and physical beauty (jewellery, cosmetics). An exception to this rather limited role are the reliefs of the so-called Demeter priestesses and their unique iconography, which, in parallel to the new level of sophistication in men, expanded the identity women could publicly portray. Within the social restrictions of Greek society, they expressed a religious dimension of women's lives without letting go of established female virtues.

The *Pudicitia* references mourning gestures found in Classical Athenian grave stelai but adds another dimension by referencing statues erected in public spaces for outstanding citizens and their contribution to the polis. A reference to older meaning of emotion and pathos may not be entirely lost, but it stepped into the background, instead emphasizing (like the *Mantelmann*) the visual link to honorific statues and the acts of euergetism they often rewarded, such as improving infrastructure and maintaining public buildings.[402] Men as well as women wanted to be recognized not just as small part within the bigger machinery of the polis, but on an individual level. This is made clear by the widespread use of honorific wreaths and the *demos*-inscriptions on Smyrnaean grave stelai. The citizens of Smyrna clearly presented themselves visually as a cohesive group of honourable individuals, still expressing conservative family values, albeit now focussed on the

[402] Mourning gestures were not lost, however, but appear restricted to servant figures, who show their grief through pathetic gestures, covering their faces with their palms and tearing their clothes until they become loose.

institution of marriage and the depiction of couples, rather than big family groups. Through their chosen forms of representation, the citizens claimed to have embodied the virtues of the community during their lifetime, and, in reference to honorary statues, depicted themselves as exemplary role models for any onlooker and future generations. Attributes were used to further characterize the depicted and to emphasize their virtuous qualities: education, prosperity and euergetism for men; domestic diligence, modesty and beauty for women. Unlike in Classical funerary reliefs where the individual is lost in the crowds populating the image field, the Hellenistic reliefs allow the individual to stand out and be the visual focus. Through iconographic means the dead are literally put on a pedestal and praised for their achievements, even if the public honours were fictional and not awarded in real life.

While Smyrna shares features with its peer poleis in regard to sepulchral iconography, there is not just a clear shift away from the collective iconography of Classical Athens by moving away from traditional formulas such as military and athletic themes, but additional visual difference in how the city portrayed its dead, such as the use of the *demos*-wreath, the motif of the 'Demeter priestess' and the preference for standing figures in reference of honorary statues. The disengagement from Classical iconographical forms of visual representation is not just evident in a change of motifs but can also be observed in the frontal orientation of the figures. Here, a connection between the dead and the viewer is established through the gaze that the figures are directing outwards, instead of being confined to interacting within the frames of their relief. They seem ready to step forward or to be approached by the living who are visiting the grave, to offer libations in remembrance and honour of the dead, or simply to read their name, making them known (again) in the world of the still-alive.

Within a peer polity interaction framework, Smyrna's funerary imagery can be understood as operating through a combination of stabilising continuity and deliberate differentiation. By drawing consistently on widely shared Hellenistic homologies also found in Classical Athens, Smyrna ensured that its monuments remained legible within the broader Greek visual *koine*. At the same time, the city's selective rejection of martial iconography, and its distinct forms, such as the *demos*-wreath, the motif of the 'Demeter priestess' and the preference for standing figures in reference of honorary statues, articulate a local identity positioned in contrast to other Hellenistic poleis.

Smyrna's distinctive funerary iconography must also be understood against the backdrop of local economic prosperity and workshop practice. As a major seaport enjoying prolonged political stability under the Attalids, the city supported a growing, affluent 'middle class' with the means to commission elaborate grave monuments, creating sustained demand for skilled production.

This economic context fostered highly consistent workshop traditions, evident in the homogeneity of poses, formats, and technical quality across the corpus. Standardized figure types such as the *Mantelmann* and *Pudicitia* poses were maintained and could be altered through workshop-specific preferences, catering to patron expectations while reinforcing a locally recognisable aesthetic. In this setting, poses that foregrounded sculptural refinement functioned not only as expressions of grief or virtue but also as markers of status shaped by local taste and artisanal convention.

PPI thus provides a relational context in which internally generated values, workshop practices, and socio-economic conditions were made visible and meaningful beyond the city itself. Smyrna's grave reliefs demonstrate how local agency could harness a shared visual language to assert a cohesive, recognisable, and distinctly Smyrnaean identity within the interconnected landscape of Hellenistic Greek poleis.

3.3 Samos

The island of Samos (map 6), located in the south-eastern Aegean just two kilometres off the coast of Asia Minor, shows traces of habitation from the Neolithic and Mycenaean period before being settled by Ionian Greeks around 1000 BCE.[403] Already during the 8th century BCE Samos had far-reaching trade connections across the Mediterranean and blossomed further in the 6th century BCE under the rule of the tyrant Polycrates, who followed an aggressive expansion policy that saw him conquer several neighbouring islands as well as coastal cities on the mainland.[404] After Polycrates' death (525 BCE) Samos fell to the Persians but sided with the Greeks during the Persian Wars and joined the Delian League in 478 BCE.[405] After Samos' territorial disputes with Miletus in 439 BCE the Athenians under the leadership of Pericles seized the island and established a democratic constitution.[406] Samos' citizens earned Athenian citizenship in 405 BCE in return for their loyalty towards Athens during the Peloponnesian War but fell under Spartan control one year later, conquered by the Spartan fleet commander Lysandros.[407] In 366/5 BCE the island was re-captured by the Athenian general Timotheos, after refusing to join the Second Athenian League, and parts of the local population were driven out to make room for Athenian citizens (the *kleruchoi*).[408] For more than a generation the Samians lived in exile, until 324 BCE, when Alexander the Great, in the so-called Exiles' decree, commanded an amnesty for all Greek exiles, and for them to return to their native cities.[409] While Alexander did not witness the fruits of his decree due to his premature death in 323 BCE, Antipater enabled Perdiccas to restore Samos to the Samians in 322/1 BCE, after subjugating the rebelling Greeks during the Lamian War and forcing the Athenians to leave the city. Samos became once again home to the Samians after over forty years of exile, but the displacement had caused shifted and fractured social structures: many citizens most likely returned with changed economic means, or not at all if they had settled and established themselves elsewhere.[410]

[403] Sonnabend 2011, 17.
[404] Horn 1972, 1; Fabricius 1999a, 162; Sonnabend 2011, 17f.
[405] Hdt. 3.139–149; Sonnabend 2011, 18.
[406] Diod. Sic. 12.27–28; Thuc. 1.115; Sonnabend 2011, 18.
[407] Xen. *Hell.* 2.3.6–7; Sonnabend 2011, 18. The oligarchs he appointed made Lysandros the first Greek to be awarded divine honours, as demonstrated by the festivals that the Samians named after him. Shipley 1987, 133; Fabricius 1999a, 156; Welwei 2006; Sonnabend 2011, 18.
[408] Nep. *Timoth*. 1.2; Dem. 15.9; Isoc. 15.111; Beloch 1923, 245f; Shipley 1987, 138–143.
[409] Diod. Sic. 18.8.2–7; Diod. Sic. 17.109.1; *IG* XII,6 1:17 (*SEG* 49.1143; Samos 35); Beloch 1925, 56f; Shipley 1987, 165.
[410] Diod. Sic. 18.18.9; Beloch 1925, 75f; Horn 1972, 3; Shipley 1987, 168; Sonnabend 2011, 18; Fabricius 2018, 50–52.

The early Hellenistic period remained an unstable time for Samos, with frequently shifting power relations, until the Ptolemies established themselves as rulers in 246 BCE and installed a naval base on the island.[411] Like other Anatolian cities, Samos obtained great wealth during the Hellenistic period, took a passive approach towards foreign affairs, and remained of little political interest to the Hellenistic kings (or their adversaries).[412] Augustus would award Samos with autonomy "out of gratitude" during a stay in 20 BCE after he had already wintered on the island following the battle at Actium, but Vespasian withdrew this freedom during his reign.[413] Nevertheless, Samos retained a high level of independence until well into the Byzantine period.[414] There is no evidence of a distinct network of clubs and societies such as existed on Rhodes, and Fabricius interprets this as proof of a low number of foreign merchants and other tradesmen.[415] This could also mean that immigrant residents were more integrated on Samos, removing the need to create and cultivate alternative ways for (non-)citizens to establish themselves as worthy members of society deserving of remembrance and celebration after death.

Samos had two *necropoleis* outside of the city walls, one to the north and one of to the west, on the road leading towards the Heraion. Neither has been systematically excavated. Pausanias mentions a specific monument for Rhadine and Leontichos, and Ludwig Ross, who visited Samos in 1841, reported that numerous ruins of grave monuments were visible on both sides of the sacred way, but none survive or have been recorded in sketches or detailed descriptions.[416] While information about the graves and funerary monuments that undoubtedly flanked the streets towards the city gates is missing, a small number of chamber tombs survive carved into the rock of the hills surrounding the main settlement of antiquity (modern Pythagoreio). They are dated to the Archaic and Hellenistic period and offer an alternative way of placing reliefs within a mortuary context, although no reliefs have been found *in situ*.[417] According to Horn, most stelai are accidental finds, made "in the city" or the *chora* along the roads, without further details.[418] While Horn calls the missing contextual knowledge of the objects "no great a loss," Fabricius points out that due to the missing provenience we are limited to what the objects themselves can tell us about their former

[411] Eule 2001, 113; Sonnabend 2011, 19.
[412] Linfert 1976, 138; Fabricius 1999a, 162.
[413] Suet. *Aug*. 17; Cass. Dio 54.9.7; Sonnabend 2011, 21.
[414] Sonnabend 2011, 21.
[415] Fabicius 1999, 152f.
[416] Paus. 7.5.13; Ross 1912, 124. Additionally, Bent notes that "the whole area of the ruined town, several miles in circumference, is now planted with vineyards." He mentions that he found several stelai after opening a few graves but gives no specifics, and otherwise only talks about "much marble of no special merit." Bent 1886, 145.
[417] Fabricius 1999a, 143–152.
[418] Horn 1972, 50, 64. The western *necropolis* has suffered due to the construction of roads and military structures, irretrievably destroying graves and making it impossible to verify the information given by Boehlhaus and Tskaos in their partial analyses of the area. Fabricius 1999a, 143.

placement.[419] From peg and clamp holes in the frame of the reliefs, their unusual format (the majority are wider than tall, which is uncommon within the genre), as well as the fact that most stelai from Samos have a smooth bottom side, while the sides and the top have only been roughly straightened, Fabricius (as well as Pfanner) deduce that the stelai were part of larger visual arrangements. This would mean that, unlike in Athens, they were not placed on the ground or a pedestal as isolated monuments but installed into a wall or attached to a separate frame, most likely alongside other figural or epigraphic reliefs.[420]

The most popular motif on grave stelai in Samos is the banquet, or *Totenmahl*.[421] The surviving examples are numerous enough that the banquet scene, like the equestrian reliefs of Pergamon, should be understood as a local type. The iconographic formula of the banquet had been widely used since the Archaic period and during Classical times, usually within the context of votive reliefs for (local) heroes; it experiences a 'revival' during the Hellenistic period, being used in the sepulchral depiction of ordinary people.[422] The fact that the island experienced significant political and social rupture, including a lengthy exile of indigenous Samians, means Samos did not have an unbroken development of funerary iconography. Consequently, the widespread adoption of the *Totenmahl* upon the Samians' return can be understood as an act of utilizing a shared cultural homology. The *Totenmahl* was an established imagery, widely used in the Greek world but not in Classical Athens. PPI can help explain that Samos took this widely legible Greek motif and re-purposed it to fit its local needs. The motif offered a visual formula that resonated with a community seeking to assert its recovered civic identity and project an idealised lifestyle of wealth, luxury, and indulgence. The mechanism of PPI, specifically competitive emulation, ensured that this single, pronounced visual preference became a distinct local type, positioning Samos within the interconnected Hellenistic *koine* through both its adherence to a traditional Greek motif and its local amplification.

It is necessary to briefly mention the so-called 'Samian workshop', whose work, according to Horn, can be identified in the details of several Samian grave reliefs.[423] Horn catalogues 13 reliefs as belonging to the same workshop, which could only have been localised on Samos, since no

[419] Horn 1972, 64; Fabricius 1999a, 136.
[420] Horn 1972, 50; Fabricius 1999a, 136–148; Fabricius 2010, 204, see Pfanner 1989 for a detailed technical analysis. Unfortunately, for most reliefs no exact findspot is recorded, making it impossible to reconstruct their original placement or fixing due to lack of documentation of the discovery context.
[421] The terms 'banquet relief', '*symposion*' and '*Totenmahl(relief)*' are used interchangeably in this thesis. I am aware of the 'heroic implication' of the latter, but as will be discussed further below, I find the ascription of heroic honours towards individual dead highly problematic. Therefore, the term is used only in an iconographical sense to describe banquet scenes.
[422] Schmaltz 1983, 225; Schmidt 1991, 23, 41f.
[423] Horn 1972, 60; Schmidt 1991, 23; Fabricius 1999a, 125–127.

Totenmahle of the same character have been found elsewhere; he also classifies another four reliefs as "close to the Samian workshop." Similarly, Pfuhl recognized several reliefs as creations of the same workshop (table 6). Notable are especially the female figures seated at the end of *klinai* that are often similar in every detail; the serving boy, usually placed next to or in front of a richly decorated *kylikeion* (credence table/sideboard to store and display ceramics); and the vivid attributes with which the scenes are furnished.[424] Besides these details, however, the pieces differ quite clearly with regard to format and other iconographic motifs used to construct the tableaux.[425] If Horn's argument for the Samian workshop is followed, it serves as an example of the existence of local workshops with established figure types that were used flexibly within larger iconographic scenes. This should not be surprising given the strong visual traditions observable in the reliefs of Samos and other poleis.

PM #	Horn #	Pfuhl	Horn
1517	158		Samian workshop
1526	148	same workshop	Samian workshop
1527	171 h		Samian workshop
1557	152		close to Samian workshop
1581	146	same workshop	Samian workshop
1589	147		close to Samian workshop
1593	144	same workshop; left half very similar to 1915	Samian workshop
1594	144 a	same workshop; very similar to 1593	Samian workshop
1595	143 a	same workshop	Samian workshop
1596	143	same workshop; same hand as 1595	close to Samian workshop
1639	141	same workshop as PM 1581; similarities with 1797 & 1593	Samian workshop
1784	147 a	M: cites Horn 1972, 171.	at the same time as the other works of the Samian workshop
1797	142	same workshop	Samian workshop
1872	165	same workshop	Samian workshop
1884	171 e		Samian workshop
1913	1913		close to Samian workshop
1915	159	same workshop	Samian workshop
1916	159a		Samian workshop

Table 6: Attribution of reliefs to a Samian workshop according to Pfuhl and Horn.

[424] Horn 1972, 60f; Fabricius 1999a, 121. Additionally, Horn lists the "in der Gruppierung der Gesten und Blicke sich ausdrückende natürliche, allem Pathos ferne Verbundenheit der Gestalten". However, I would argue that this cannot be regarded as a style-based rationale. The emotionality or bond between the figures does not appear more or less pathetic than on other *Totenmahlreliefs* from Samos.
[425] Horn 1972, 50, 60f.

With regard to the design of the image fields, Samos also shows several distinctive features: most reliefs are longitudinal rectangles and have a large 'airspace' above the figures, which is usually filled with attributes (PM 901 (pl. 80), 1834 (pl. 101)). Overall, the reliefs are generously sized, especially the backgrounds, which enables the placement of the opulent furnishings and accessories to be spread across a larger area.[426] This creates the illusion of spaciousness and distinguishes Samian reliefs from the reliefs of other poleis where figures are often more closely encompassed by their image frames.

As has been discussed in more detail in Chapter 2, the image field of the reliefs from Samos are often only framed with plain moulding (e.g. PM 938 (pl. 82), 1819 (pl. 100), 1968 (pl. 108), 1993 (pl. 110)) which is sometimes ornamented with minimalistic pillars at the sides and a simple pediment or roof structure (e.g. PM 1575 (pl. 91), 1826 (pl. 101), 1915 (pl. 106), 2003 (pl. 10)).[427]

Motif	Details	#	Total
Banquet scenes	One man	3	77
	One man with one woman	20	
	Multiple men (without women)	2	
	Multiple men (with one woman)	8	
	Man/men (with multiple women)	8	
	'Family scenes' (parents with children)*	8	
	Banquet scenes with worshippers	3	
	Unclear/fragmented	25	
Dexiosis	Man & woman	4	5
	Two women	1	
Men	Equestrian	4	5
	Standing	1	
Pre-adults	Adolescent (male)	1	6
	Boy/toddler	3	
	Young woman/girl	2	
Women	Seated†	14	18
	Standing	4	
Objects/other	No (surviving) figures	1	1
Fragments		8	8
		Total	**120**

Table 7: Motifs on Samian stelai.

[426] Horn 1972, 50; Schmidt 1991, 23; Fabricius 1999a, 113. Fabricius interprets the empty upper half of the relief as a counterweight to balance the tightly occupied lower part. Fabricius 1999a, 113. I would argue that there is a possibility of the reliefs being painted and the 'empty' half being decorated further, maybe with landscape scenes to match the outdoorsy atmosphere of the banquets.

[427] Horn 1972, 50; Fabricius 1999a, 111f.

*	While for the other poleis all banquet scenes with at least three figures (no matter their age) have been counted as 'family scenes' the greater variety in Samos calls for a finer distinctions. Therefore, only banquets with recognisable children (i.e. boys or girls) are categorized as 'family scenes'.
†	PM 453 has two reliefs (one on each side): a standing woman (PM 453a), and a seated woman (PM 453b)

3.3.1 Men

There is a very clear trend for the depiction of men on Samian grave stelai: reclined on a couch while being attended by slaves, often in the company of at least one woman. More than 70 of the surviving stelai (including fragments) show a banquet, and since there is no evidence that the Rhodian motif of the reclining women was used in Samos (or anywhere else before the Imperial period) it can be assumed that each of these reliefs showed one, if not several men.

The surviving stelai that portray men in contexts other than banquets are often 'unique': there is only one surviving example of a standing man (PM 266 (pl. 75)), and one with a seated adolescent (PM 826 (pl. 79)). The latter shows the young man sitting on a rock, with his cloak wrapped around his waist, his head resting on his hand.[428] Their uniqueness does not mean that they were only ever used once, but it tells us that they were far less common or popular than the *Totenmahl*. In addition to those singular surviving examples of male representation, there are also four reliefs that show equestrians (PM 1314 (pl. 85), 1443 (pl. 85), 1455 (pl. 86)[429], 1464 (pl. 86)) and four *dexiosis* scenes that include a male figure (PM 708 (pl. 78), 716 (pl. 79), 1069 (pl. 84), H134a (pl. 113)). None of these reliefs is particularly extraordinary, but their small number and the absence of such Classical motifs as athletes and warriors give some indication about the priorities of the Samian polis with regard to the commemorative representation of its citizens. The traditional 'male' roles and depictions are not abandoned, however, but integrated into the *Totenmahl* through attributes.

The basic equipment of the banquet is almost identical in all reliefs: a table, in most cases fitted with three animal-shaped legs, stands in front of the *kline*, laden with cakes, meat and other food, next to it a *kylikeion* and a serving boy with a ladle to serve wine from a mixing vessel (e.g., PM

[428] Figures seated on rocks are fairly common in vase painting as a visual marker to indicate that a scene is taking place outdoors. They are not limited to depictions of graves and grave visits (*CVA* 216711), but often appear in scenes of the Dionysian sphere, with satyrs and maenads lounging on rocks (*CVA* 275512, 9053753), or include mythical figures, like Heracles (*CVA* 19751), Orpheus (*CVA* 216168) or Paris (*CVA* 207313). Additionally, they are often used by musicians when playing their instruments (Orpheus and Paris: see above; Apollo *CVA* 214841; shepherd playing *aulos CVA* 207562).

[429] PM 1455 is categorized as equestrian due to Pfuhl's identification of the remains of a horse's ear next to the right shoulder of the depicted man. Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 345.

1511 (pl. 86)).[430] More often there are further servants present who are paired with the attendees of the banquet in gender: male slaves and cupbearers, naked or in a short *chiton*, are assigned to men, and female slaves wearing *chitons* or *peploi* tend to women, often carrying small boxes or tins. If women are present, they are usually seated on either the foot end of the *kline*, or on a stool or chair next to it (e.g., PM 1593 (pl. 95)).

Apart from these basic elements, the scenes are further enriched by attributes held by the figures and also placed on shelves or low walls behind them. The men commonly hold drinking vessels, such as kantharoi, skyphoi, rhyta or flat bowls which they can raise in toasting. Sometimes they offer the vessel to a snake, which can be depicted taking a sip. These vessels can also be interpreted as offering bowls, but due to the condition of the reliefs an unambiguous reading is not possible. The most common attributes associated with men apart from drinking cups are armour, shields, helmets, and horses. The former placed on ledges or 'floating' above the figures, the latter usually appearing 'disembodied', with only their heads peeping through windows or appearing to the side peering in from 'outside' the relief frame (PM 1565 (pl. 90)). While horses are linked to several heroic mythological figures, most notably the Dioscuri (but also Pelops, Heracles and Poseidon Hippios), they are also status symbols of wealth and power, connecting their owner or rider to the aristocratic elite cavalry. Depictions of armour and shields are found in the background of several reliefs (e.g., PM 1512 (pl. 87), 1575 (pl. 91), 1583 (pl. 92), 1916 (pl. 106)), and in two reliefs a (hunting) dog (PM 1992 (pl. 109), 1511 (pl. 86)) joins the scene. The snake, which appears in a large number of the reliefs, can be wrapped around a table leg (PM 1903 (pl. 104)), reaching towards the displayed dishes or being fed (PM 1872 (pl. 102)), twisted on the pillow of the banqueting man (PM 1575), wound around a tree in the background (PM 1992), stretching down from a shelf (PM 1581 (pl. 91)), or even 'out of nowhere', simply appearing out of a relief corner or in the midst of the background of the picture frame (PM 1565 (pl. 90)). Snakes are chthonic symbols of the underworld and understood as representatives of transformative processes, including death. Several snakes or monstrous creatures with serpentine aspects make their appearances in myths, most often to be slain by one of the epic heroes (or gods): snake-haired Medusa, beheaded by Perseus; the serpent-tailed Chimaera and the serpent-like Hydra, both slain by Heracles; Python at Delphi, killed by Apollon; and Erichthonius, the legendary ruler of Athens who was part snake.

Another notable detail is the dress of the men: unlike in Classical (votive) reliefs they are not depicted naked or draped only in a *himation*. Instead, they wear short-sleeved *chitons* and cloaks, indicating that either the proper dress code for men now consisted of this layered look, or that

[430] As discussed in Chapter 1, the banquets found on Athenian funerary stelai do not include slaves, furniture apart from the *kline* and chair, and no attributes.

there was a different dress code for attendants in the context of banquets. Comparing male clothing habits with the depictions of the *Mantelmänner* in Smyrna and the banqueters on Byzantine reliefs, who are equally depicted wearing *chiton* and *himation*, suggests that the general understanding of 'proper' male clothing practices had changed towards this more modest style in the Hellenistic period. Some men are wearing *polos* bands on their heads (PM 1517 (pl. 87)). In addition to the low number of reliefs depicting men outside the context of the banquet, there are also only very few grave stelai for children (either male or female). The three examples for young boys show them in a mostly conventional way, dressed in long cloaks, accompanied by a slave and a pet dog, with the familiar attributes of strigil (PM 116 (pl. 74)), herm (PM 136 (pl. 74)), and toy (PM 728 (pl. 79)). Interestingly, PM 136 and 728 add the element of the snake to the relief: in both cases the reptile is clinging to a tree on the side of the picture frame, but clearly facing towards the child.

Instead of receiving separate gravestones children are added to the setting in several *Totenmahlreliefs*. They can be seen sitting on the couch next to their father (PM 1517) or standing in front of it (PM 1519 (pl. 88), 1797 (pl. 99), 1819 (pl. 100), 1883 (pl. 103)), being doted on by a woman who reaches out towards a child (PM 1805 (pl. 99)), and in one example being held by the mother towards the father (PM 1784 (pl. 99)); heavily damaged). In contrast to the general trend of avoiding the depiction of unclothed bodies on grave stelai, two reliefs show a naked adolescent (PM 1821 (pl. 100)) and a naked boy (PM 1883) standing next to a *kline*. The boy is holding on to his mother while playing with a small dog, while the adolescent on PM 1821 follows a more martial theme. He is holding a spear or javelin in his right hand that is supported by a small slave, and has his left hand raised, whether to gesture towards the other figures or to lift an object is unclear, as the upper part of the stele is lost. Like the young men already seen on some Rhodian funerary stelai, the adolescent of PM 1821 conforms to the more Classical iconographic schemes of athletes and soldiers found on numerous Athenian grave stelai. Samian citizens (and sculptors) were clearly aware of these motifs and able to apply them in their funerary imagery, but such scenes seem not to have been especially common, with the shift in iconography of men and adolescents indicating a change in attitude towards military and athletic achievements. While the naked youth on PM 1821, the strigil of the boy in PM 116 and the herm on PM 136 allude to the *gymnasion* and athletics (although they are all missing the typical alabastron-carrying slave), two other reliefs link schoolwork with a child: PM 1517 shows a writing tablet and writing utensils on the shelf above the child, and the boy sitting on a low stool in front of the *kline* on PM 1519 offers his father a scroll, as if he was handing him his homework or a school assignment. Adult men might not be depicted with symbols of education (as they are in Smyrna), but children clearly are.

Considering how popular 'heroic' attributes like snakes and horses were in the sepulchral iconography of Samos it is surprising that there are not more depictions of equestrians, a pictorial scheme also closely linked with hero cults and heroic iconography. But only four reliefs with horsemen survive, three of them badly fragmented, making it impossible to reconstruct the original relief and leaving the possibility that these pieces were not used as funerary monuments.

The near exclusive depiction of men reclining as part of the *Totenmahl* scene highlights how internal values shaped the visual identity that Samos projected both to its own citizens and to external audiences. The banquet was a well-established, widely intelligible motif across the Greek world, allowing Samian monuments to participate in a shared sepulchral *koine* while articulating local priorities through selective emphasis. The scarcity of reliefs depicting traditional Classical male types such as athletes or warriors suggests a deliberate redefinition of male identity, shifting away from physical prowess toward the social status implied by wealth, domestic stability, and elite leisure. This internal choice contrasts sharply not only with Athens but with peer poleis such as Rhodes, where martial imagery retained greater prominence. By foregrounding the prosperous family man in an idealised banquet setting, occasionally incorporating armour or horses as symbolic attributes rather than primary identifiers, Samos fashioned a distinct civic profile that remained legible within the shared Greek visual language of the Hellenistic period while asserting differentiation through competitive emulation.

In conclusion, male figures on Samian grave stelai are overwhelmingly depicted attending a banquet. Most commonly they are in the company of a woman, but there are examples with multiple men and/or women in one scene. Picking up the overall design and composition known from votive reliefs, the funerary images from Samos apply the divine or heroic iconography of the banquet to depictions of the dead while also incorporating elements that are not usually found in sacral pieces. These include the attributes used to characterize the dining individuals, as well as any attending women and children, along with the presence of these family members. There are examples of tender interactions between the figures: the boys seated on (PM 1517) or next to (PM 1519) the *klinai* of their fathers, the mother grasping the hand of her child (PM 1805), and the couple on PM 1561 (pl. 90) where one of them is handing the other some fruit. Generally, the men are represented as wealthy heads of the family displaying not just objects as status symbols, but also servants and members of their families.

3.3.2 Women

As we have already seen in Smyrna, women are often more restricted in the ways they can be and are depicted than men, and while Samian reliefs represent a clear preference within the iconography of men, the options for female figures are even more limited; they are mostly reduced to being seated either alone or as companion of men. There are a few exceptions, namely the rare *dexiosis* scenes (four survive, all of them including at least one woman) and fragments with standing female figures so badly damaged that there is no possibility to reconstruct the original scene (or even if the relief was of a sepulchral nature).

The majority of the women on Samian funerary reliefs, whether alone or as attendants in banquets, are depicted seated.[431] As seen in similar scenes in other poleis the women are sitting on either a stool or chair, or on the end of the *kline* with their feet propped up on a footrest. They are properly dressed in *chiton* and a cloak that covers the back of their head, and are often accompanied by at least one servant girl carrying a chest or cosmetics. In terms of attributes the options are similarly conservative, consisting of well-known female objects such as *kalathoi*, chests, fans, sun hats, as well as more uncommon (but equally feminising) objects like weaving frames (PM 1557 (pl. 89), 1885 (pl. 104)), a dove picking at a pomegranate (PM 1581 (pl. 91)), and grain ears (PM 1883 (pl. 103)).[432] While women are most often very constrained in their movement, raising an arm only to tug at their dress or veil, they can be depicted holding a small round fruit or cake (e.g., PM 1565 (pl. 90), 1916 (pl. 106)) which they sometimes feed to a snake (PM 1797 (pl. 99), 1872 (pl. 102)). There is a small group of reliefs that seem to belong to a set produced by a single workshop, which show the women seated in a particularly elaborate chair or throne with armrests and a backrest (PM 901 (pl. 80), 904 (pl. 81), 1107 (pl. 84), 1863 (pl. 102), 1883 (pl. 103), 1885 (pl. 104); potentially PM 905 (pl. 81), though it is badly damaged). While seated women are usually depicted in profile, the enthroned women are shown in a three-quarters view, with one woman on PM 1883 even positioned in full-frontal. Apart from the throne, these reliefs vary greatly in their composition and quality, ranging from a rather simple setup with just one woman and her slave (PM 901 (pl. 80)) to multi-figured scenes with elaborate backgrounds and personnel (PM 1863 (pl. 102), 1883 (pl. 1003)). It is unclear whether the motif of the chair was an element that was specifically chosen or requested by the buyers of the stelai, or a characteristic of one artist or workshop.

[431] *Od*. 4.120–137. Helen sits down in the banquet hall while Menelaus is entertaining guests and starts to weave.
[432] Horn 1972, 53; Fabricius 2010, 124, 268.

There are even fewer surviving depictions of girls as for young boys. PM 368 (pl. 76) shows what seems to be a dancing girl or young woman, but the iconography is quite atypical for the genre of grave reliefs, making it more likely that the fragment belonged to a votive relief. Another relief that might show a girl is PM 390 (pl. 77), on which a cloaked figure is seen standing next to a tree with a snake wrapped around the trunk, accompanied by a pet swan or goose. Since the head of the figure is missing and no inscription survives it remains uncertain whether this is a child or indeed a grown woman, and in what context the relief was originally used. Unlike boys who can sometimes be distinguished from servant figures by their different attire and/or demeanour in banquet scenes, there is only one example of a banquet scene where a female figure can be identified beyond all doubt as a child of the household due to her size and cloak (PM 1819 (pl. 100)). Most of the smaller female figures are characterized as slaves by the attributes they carry (PM 1797 (pl. 99), 1913 (pl. 105)) or by their stance (one leg crossed in front of the other, one arm propped on their hip (PM 1593 (pl. 95), 1595 (pl. 96), 1596 (pl. 96)) and bear no signifier to allow for them to be interpreted as daughters of the depicted adults.

As mentioned above, there is no great pictorial difference in the composition of female figures in scenes where seated women are found in a setting with other figures and reliefs of one or two women. In both instances they are placed on similar stools or chairs and attended on by female slaves who are depicted with the familiar attributes already used in Classical Athenian reliefs: small chests, fans, fruits, and the less common weaving frames. In Samos, the motif of the seated woman becomes so streamlined that the figures can be used as either the 'wife character' in a *symposium* scene or as self-contained units on a separate stele. Samian women are consistently integrated into the banquet scene, adhering to established conventions by appearing seated beside or at the foot of the *kline*, yet their repeated inclusion transforms the *Totenmahl* into a familial rather than exclusively male space. This conservative use of a well-known Classical motif reflects strong workshop traditions and deeply embedded domestic ideals, emphasizing continuity over experimentation. This strategy harnesses shared homologies, particularly the seated female figure familiar from Classical Athenian stelai, while deploying them in a locally distinctive way that foregrounds family cohesion as a core Samian value. At the same time, it remains difficult to determine whether the persistence of this familiar female iconography reflects a conscious decision to maintain recognisable gender norms or the continued use of a default visual language readily available within the shared Greek repertoire.

Rather than undermining the interpretive framework, this ambiguity highlights both the reach and the limits of peer-polity interaction: while it helps explain why Samian funerary imagery remained anchored in legible, widely understood iconographic forms (especially significant in a city marked by discontinuities of 'native' Samian inhabitation) it cannot fully resolve the degree of intentionality behind individual iconographic choices.

3.3.3 The problem with heroes

Banquet scenes, especially those in the funerary context of the *Totenmahl*, are often labelled 'heroic' without necessarily much explanation, apart from the reference that this particular iconography was borrowed/adapted from votive reliefs found in sacred spaces dedicated to (local) heroes.[433] Athenian votive reliefs of the 4th century BCE show the same basic elements that will be picked up during the Hellenistic period: a reclining hero within a building structure (signified by the architectural frame of the image), often in the company of a seated 'heroine', a naked page, a table with various cakes, a horse *protome*, and a snake.[434] Unlike the grave stelai these votive reliefs also regularly include worshippers and depictions of sacrifices as well as the necessary ritualistic items such as altars, sacrificial animals, and offering bowls, which clearly marks them as sacred cult objects, rather than 'secular' grave markers. Much as the significance of the continuous gravesite cult may imply a non-secular context for modern viewers, the world of the funeral seems – in general – to have been one that did not invoke the gods in any significant way and did not employ priests or other religious personnel. Indeed, as we have seen in the surviving funeral laws, the care for the dead before, during and after the funeral was strictly a family affair, with clear restrictions on who was allowed to be involved, which differentiates it quite explicitly from the communal execution and experience of religious ceremonies and rituals.

This begs the question: do the citizens of Samos depict themselves as heroes or like heroes, and is there even a detectable difference? There are examples where the 'basic' *Totenmahl* gets extended by additional pictorial elements, such as worshippers (PM 1826 (pl. 101), H 106 (pl. 113)), altars, and sacrificial animals (PM 1834 (pl. 101)). In these cases it is not just the servants that are significantly smaller than the reclining figures but also the other attendees, allowing the possibility that these stelai functioned as votive reliefs and were not used as grave markers.[435]

[433] Fabricius 1999a, 21f; 25.
[434] Fabricius 1999a, 60–69, 122f.
[435] None carries an unambiguous inscription. PM 1826 only has 'Μενοίτιος Ναυαρχία' carved into the upper right corner, but the lettering could have been added later.

But given that many inscriptions in Samos address the deceased as hero or heroine (in such large numbers that it seems implausible that every deceased claiming the *heroes*-title on their grave monument was indeed officially awarded such honours by the city[436]), it does not seem inconceivable to add sacrificial groups as iconographic elements into the banquet scenes.

When (hero) cults for recently deceased individuals became more common during the late 4th century BCE, such honours were mostly bestowed upon venerated political figures, as well as a highly celebrated philosophers and poets. This exclusive circle of those who might potentially receive cultic attention continued to expand to private citizens during the 3rd century BCE, when it also became more common to award these honours to living individuals. According to Fabricius, the initiative for establishing new posthumous hero cults can be attributed in no small part to the donations bequeathed upon cities by members of the local aristocracy.[437] In the Hellenistic period, city-states became increasingly dependent on financial aid from private individuals for the resources to finance building projects, maintenance, and the expansion of infrastructure. Affluent citizens stepped up, taking on projects that could not be funded by the municipal treasuries, and in return, they expected to be honoured for their contributions. Public commendations, honorary statues, and free meals in the *prytaneion* formed the lower end of the honours list, with tax exemptions, the awarding of titles (*proxenos, euergetes*) and citizenship at the top. The installation of a hero cult was the highest public honour (*megistai timai*) a citizen could achieve and given the poleis' dependence on the financial power of their richest citizens, it was necessary to reward their engagement in a way that would satisfy benefactors (*euergetai*) and create an incentive for even more donations. The mutual dependence of cities in need of money and rich individuals/families with a desire for recognition beyond simple praise created a well-oiled machine that produced an ever-growing number of new 'heroes'.[438] The more individuals received the once rare honour, the less valuable it must have become to the elite. It also seems that those who may not have had the wealth to finance public works and thus receive the official honour of 'hero' were able to draw on the value of the hero honour in funerary iconography. This is reinforced by the large number of epitaphs using the title of 'hero', erasing all doubt about a subtle connection to the 'real' god-kin.

[436] Similar to the excessive use of the *demos*-wreath in Smyrna, which is also unlikely evidence of actual honours received by the dead. Fabricius 1999a, 129f; Fabricius 2010, 264, 269. Fabricius counts approx. 58 Hellenistic hero inscriptions. Fabricius 2010, 266, n. 25. She also explains that the *chiliastystes*, an organisational unit of the citizenship in Samos, as well as the *phylai, bekatostystes*, and families (*gene*) were allowed to establish and exercise hero cults without causing offence. Fabricius 1999a, 154.

[437] Fabricius 1999a, 71, 73.

[438] Fabricius 1999a, 72–74.

As mentioned above, the quantity of 'heroized' dead in Samos makes it clear that not every deceased person depicted attending a *Totenmahl*, or with the epithet 'hero' was actually awarded the honorary title by the polis.

By using the iconography of epic heroes, the Samians fashioned themselves as modern *heroes*, achieving greatness through serving their community – not necessarily in battle by defending their city against invaders or political adversaries, but by 'dressing up' as benefactors who helped the polis in satisfying its need for new or updated public buildings, sacred spaces and a better infrastructure. By re-incorporating the 'heroic' elements that Athenian grave stelai excluded in an effort to secularize the imagery and differentiate themselves from votives, the Samian reliefs consciously depict the deceased in the same manner as the larger-than-life heroes of the epics.[439] But the use of the banquet scenes also adds a reference to the *'imagerie royale*' of the 7th century BCE emphasizing wealth and a luxurious lifestyle of indulgence,[440] things that require a certain level of stability to be achieved and greatly hampered by live altering events such as displacement. The dead are depicted in a setting and a status of peace and prosperity that they may have longed for, if not achieved during their lifetime.

The citizens of Samos took the well-established iconography of the banquet and adapted it to meet their need for a visual formula which could be used to express exemplary civic behaviour while also illustrating longing for a peaceful, prosperous lifestyle. Just as references to public honorific statuary in Smyrna characterised the deceased as role models, the Samians chose the schema of the *heroes* to venerate and honour them. Figuring the dead as *heroai*, even if they were not in the official civic sense, performs a separating role like that of framing devices explored above. At the same time as removing these figures from the real of the living, references to heroism elevate their (real or imaginary) deeds to praiseworthy levels.

[439] Maybe also in a conscious effort to distinguish their funerary imagery from the Athenian one.

[440] According to Fehr, the banquet needs to be placed within the visual context of court ceremonials as part of the strictly regulated display of monarchic power extending beyond pure entertainment or indulgence: the gods are bestowing their favours on the king, granting him – and by extension the whole kingdom and its people – prosperity and good fortune. This repertoire of '*imagerie royale*' has to be understood as illustrative of the political power and importance of the ruling class. Fehr 1984, 336, 338f. Hunting scenes are also commonly understood as part of the '*imagerie royale*' Fabricius 1999a, 32. Cf. also Dentzer 1971, 215f; Dentzer 1982.

3.3.4 Space and interaction

At first glance the reliefs of Samos can appear overwhelming, with the image field almost cluttered with objects and figures of humans and animals. Additionally, there is a lot of movement in the various figures populating the scenes: men are raising their cups in toasts, cradling their drinks, or reaching for snacks, cupbearers are ladling wine, slaves are presenting objects to the attendees, women and men alike are feeding snakes that are coiling towards them from trees, horses are neighing in the background. The scenes feel restless, almost noisy.

While the focal points in the majority of cases are the reclining men, the composition of the scenes makes it hard for a viewer to absorb everything that is going on. Points of interaction between the figures are difficult to make out, partially because most of the heads/faces are missing, obscuring the lines of sight, and partially because the reclining pose creates a perceived logical direction that the eye of a viewer follows. The reclining men are always facing into the same direction, and if a woman is present, she will sit so that the men are opening their bodies towards her. When a second woman is added, the figure is sometimes awkwardly squeezed in towards the other end of the relief with the men turning their backs towards her, excluding her from the scene (e.g., PM 1883 (pl. 103), 1872 (pl. 102), 1964 (pl. 107), 2003 (pl. 110)).

The architecture and the way it occupies space does not help with anchoring the scenes in some kind of reality: what could have been interpreted as shelves or ledges carrying attributes in Smyrna becomes a physical division between an inside space (where the banquet is happening) and an undefined outside, often emphasized by the horse heads that seem to look over the wall into the 'main room'. The notion of inside and outside is deceptive, as there is no real space, and the illusion of the scene taking place inside a building, hall or courtyard can get broken by a tree being placed right next to the *kline* or chair (PM 1583 (pl. 92), 1965 (pl. 107)). The structural set pieces can consist of a simple wall (PM 1514 (pl. 87), 1517 (pl. 87)), a wall topped with small pillars (PM 1883 (pl. 103), 1993 (pl. 110)), pillars carrying a roof (PM 1557 (pl. 89)), or a combination of all of them (PM 1916 (pl. 106)). Sometimes the horse *protomai* are framed, making them look as if the horses are being seen through a window (PM 1511 (pl. 86), 1583 (pl. 92)). Big curtains can be added to the background (PM 1511, 1863 (pl. 102)) as decoration in place of or in addition to other architectural elements. Attributes are placed on walls or pillars (PM 1557), or float freely in the air above the figures (PM 1916 (pl. 106), 1834 (pl. 101), 1512 (pl. 87)). The architecture is as additive as the other elements of the reliefs, and the structures allude to the idea of an interior space rather than actually creating one.

Even given their 'noisiness' and the unrealistic elements, the scenes appear almost animated and lifelike. The viewer feels as if they are actually observing a banquet with different characters who are all engaged with each other or in their own task. While there is no particularly intimate interaction between the figures (either of the opposite or same gender),[441] a feeling of community and closeness is created through the mere fact that the figures are depicted attending a banquet together. Especially with women and the few instances of children present, the scenes evoke a sense of family that is not present when only male figures are depicted.

For example, PM 1512 shows a single man wearing a *chiton* reclining on a *kline*. In his left hand he is holding a bowl, in his right a cake, which he is either picking up from the table in front of him or offering to the snake which is wrapped around a leg of the table. To the right, a servant is leaning against the couch, head propped on his hand, without any particular task. On the left side of the relief the cupbearer is dipping his ladle into a large krater, to pour wine into the bowl he is holding. Above him two horse heads are carved inside a window-like square alluding to an 'outside'. Above the man a round shield, a helmet and a set of armour are depicted. The relief appears closer to the vase paintings of Achilles or Heracles, or votive reliefs dedicated to gods in sanctuaries than a funerary monument. While the connotation of 'heroism' or an exemplary life as a citizen in service of the polis is present, there is also a clear focus on the wealth and high status of the deceased.

In comparison, PM 1797 (pl. 99) can be labelled a family portrait. The centre of the relief is occupied a reclining man, cup in his left hand, right hand outstretched towards the heavily laden table, from which he is picking up a cake or piece of fruit. To the left a woman is seated, feeding the snake stretching towards her, its body wrapped tightly around a table leg. Behind the woman a female slave is attending to her, carrying a box in her arms. To the right stands a small boy, characterized as child of the *oikos* by his dress (*chiton* and *himation*) and the little pet dog at his feet. Next to him a male servant is leaning against the relief frame, behind him a *kylikeion*. The background is divided by a wall behind which the standard horsehead can be seen. On the ledge next to the women are a *kalathos* and a flat chest. Behind her a small building is depicted, potentially a temple but without distinct features that would allow for a more precise identification. Above the man a helmet and the remains of a round shield can be seen. Compared to PM 1512 this scene feels more intimate, as if the viewer has stepped into the courtyard of the family. While the allusion to the iconography known from votive reliefs for gods and heroes is present, the focus is on the family and the *oikos*. The man is not just showing off his wealth and achievements, but also his wife and child and their shared bond and identity as a family.

[441] The only exception being PM 1561 (pl. 90) where the man and woman are involved in some kind of exchange (it is unclear who is handing what to whom).

In the Samian banquet reliefs, space and objects are used to create a set for the viewer to observe the interactions of the depicted figures. Architectural elements suggest that the scenes are taking place in a courtyard or a dining hall, with a varying cast of attending members, who often can be interpreted as members of the same family. They are surrounded by servants who not only increase the implication of wealth and high social status but also enliven the scenes by being depicted 'in action'.

The spatial organisation of Samian banquet reliefs creates the illusion of an interior, private setting through layered compositions, architectural hints, and expansive backgrounds filled with objects and figures. This emphasis on intimacy and abundance contrasts sharply with the frontal, public-facing compositions of Smyrna and the emotionally charged interactions of Rhodes. The spatial organisation of the reliefs is structurally repetitive, technically embedded, and internally consistent in ways that strongly point to workshop habitus rather than strategies primarily aimed at legibility and comparison beyond the local community. While these spatial choices are best explained by local workshop practices and aesthetic preferences, PPI helps to clarifies their broader communicative function: the consistent presentation of wealth, domestic harmony, and controlled heroization created a recognisable Samian visual identity within the shared Hellenistic funerary imagery. The monuments thus speak less through confrontation or gaze than through accumulation and repetition, projecting a stable civic image to both internal and external viewers.

3.3.5 Summary

Unlike other cities, the make-up and origin of Samos' residents shifted profoundly, first through the settling of the Athenian citizens and the exile of the indigenous Samians, and a second time when the displaced Samians (or their descendants) returned more than four decades later. This means the polis does not look back on an unbroken line or development of funerary iconography like other Hellenistic cities. But given the fact that the Samians only came (back) together as a polis community at the end of the 4th century BCE it is remarkable that their funerary iconography is relatively homogenous. The banquet is the main motif on Samian grave reliefs, with other iconographic formulars, especially for men, far less common. Women, if not part of a *Totenmahl*, are most often depicted seated.

Unlike the statuesque figures we have encountered in Smyrna, the funerary iconography in Samos does not focus on a strictly public appearance of the dead but rather creates a setting within the relief that feels private and intimate. The banquet scenes, as well as the seated women, imply a location within the private area of a house, either in a room or within a courtyard, not in a publicly accessible space. Architectural elements do not simply frame the image field but contribute to the

creation of the scene and its structuring. Walls and ledges are not just used as shelf space to present attributes, but create the illusion of spatial depth, with a clear division into foreground and background. The pictorial space of the relief is broken up into different layers in which different actions take place, which make the scenes appear lively and 'real' even though the relief depicts an abstract or ideal, rather than a concrete space. The banquet scenes highlight the importance of financial stability and success through the richness of their set pieces, including slaves, furniture, and attributes.

'Heroic' attributes like snakes, horse *protomai*, trees, and *polos* bands refer to the iconographic tradition of votive reliefs and epitaphs address the deceased as heroes, although the frequency of the epithet (and the lack of respective heroization decrees) indicates that not every 'heroized' dead was the recipient of a publicly established cult. Considering the large number of banquet scenes and their inscriptions the conformation to heroes could not have served to elevate individual citizens for individual deeds and accomplishments. Instead, the formula acts as a generic iconographic marker that indicates a closeness to the epic heroes and their service for the polis, characterizing the deceased as a role model of exemplary citizenship. And while the scenes invoke the privacy of the *oikos*, depicting the dead in reference to the visual tradition of votive reliefs for heroes not only implies that they were worthy of honours, but also alludes to the publicity of the votives themselves, which were places of public cult.

The reference to a traditional iconography like the *Totenmahl* may be at least in part due to the break in Samian funerary monuments during their exile.[442] The motif was well known within the Greek world, common in sepulchral art and its widespread adoption in Samos indicates that it resonated with many, possibly because it could be easily upgraded through the addition of iconographic elements to encompass a variety of meanings: the banquet itself and its reference to heroic imagery and public honours, serves to further characterise the dead and their virtues, as well as wealth and the importance of family. The depiction of family scenes incorporated into the banquet is interesting, since staple motifs used to portray families or their individual members, such as the *dexioisis* or grave reliefs for children, are almost completely absent in Samos. Instead, a large group of *Totenmahlreliefs* shows children in addition to the reclining man and seated woman (which can be read as a reference to the institution of marriage in itself).[443] The banquet reliefs could be used as family portraits and also expressed a certain emotional connection between the depicted figures, presenting marriage and children as valuable and desirable alongside prosperity and stability. The

[442] The return to an old iconography may also be the reason for the comparatively common use of military attributes for men, which tend to be rare or of secondary importance in other Greek poleis.
[443] PM 1517, PM 1518, PM 1797, PM 1819, PM 1821, PM 1880, PM 1883, H147a. For the following reliefs it is unclear whether a child or a servant is depicted: PM 1557, PM 1583, PM 1820 and PM 1843.

institution of the family was part of the luxury and wealth citizens were striving for and could be incorporated visually into the (traditionally male-centred) iconography of the banquet when the motif was translated into the sepulchral context. The translation of the banquet scene from religious iconography into the funerary imagery and the addition of household members gives the motif a private dimension while still referencing the public aspect linked to votives and public cult performance. Within the banquet reliefs the dead are presented as visually removed from the realm of the living and part of an idealized space of luxury and abundance. Like the heroes on votive reliefs, the dead could be approached and interacted with by offering libations during visits to the tombs, honouring their memory.

The dominance of the *Totenmahl* motif on Samian funerary stelai demonstrates how a single, widely intelligible iconographic formula could be mobilised to carry a dense range of meanings. The banquet scene was ideally suited to expressing an idealised lifestyle of wealth, luxury, and indulgence, while simultaneously accommodating family presence and signalling exemplary citizenship through the selective incorporation of heroic and aristocratic attributes. Although a degree of individualisation was possible through the addition of objects, servants, and background elements, the overwhelming prevalence of the banquet motif indicates that Samian patrons prioritised adherence to a locally established visual tradition over iconographic experimentation. In contrast to Rhodes, with its emphasis on emotional intimacy, and Smyrna, with its statuesque and overtly civic modes of representation, Samos articulated a distinct civic profile by consistently elaborating a familiar form drawn from a shared Greek repertoire. Peer Polity Interaction helps to frame this choice not as isolation but as strategic positioning: by reactivating and intensifying a recognisable iconographic homology, Samian funerary imagery remained legible to external audiences while asserting a local identity grounded in stability, prosperity, and continuity. At the same time, the Samian material illustrates an important limitation of peer-polity interaction as an interpretive framework: elements that remain conservative or visually unremarkable, such as the restrained and familiar representation of women within the banquet, cannot be securely attributed to deliberate articulation of civic identity. This may rather reflect the persistence of default iconographic solutions sustained by workshop practice, communal norms, and local historical circumstances. Regardless, the effect is clear: the funerary art of Samos produces a coherent visual language whose effectiveness lay in stability rather than differentiation.

3.4 Pergamon

The ancient city of Pergamon (map 7) was located within the foothills of the Kozak Plateau some 26 kilometres inland from the Aegean. The location on the hill provided the city with an excellent defensive position, but it lacked a port; access to the sea could only be provided by travelling to the coastal town of Elaia, at the mouth of the Kaikos river (map 8).[444] Today the area at the bottom of the ancient *Burgberg* (citadel) is built-over by the modern city of Bergama, while the hill itself is free of urban development and has been excavated by German researchers since the late 19th century, with the DAI Istanbul being in charge of the site since the late 1930s.[445]

Early evidence of a fortified settlement can be dated into the 7th or 6th century BCE, with a new city wall being erected during the 3rd century BCE.[446] During Alexander's campaign the whole area fell under Macedonian rule, but became politically important only after Philetairos settled in Pergamon. Philetairos joined Seleukos I Nikator, who triumphed over Lysimachos in 281 BCE, and remained loyal to his son after Seleukos I was murdered in 280 BCE. Pergamon became part of the Seleukid empire, but Philetairos was granted sovereignty over the city.[447] He spent his rule expanding the city and establishing relationships with neighbouring Greek poleis as well as cities on the mainland and the Greek islands. Since he remained childless, Philetairos adopted his nephew Eumenes I who did not share his loyalty towards the Seleucids and defeated Antiochos I in 262 BCE, securing territory for the city and adopting the title of King around 241 BCE after defeating the Celts threatening the region.[448] In 188 BCE Rome granted control over a large part of Asia Minor to Eumenes II as part of the treaty of Apamea (map 3) as reward for his loyalty during the Roman-Seleucid War against Antiochus III.[449]

Pergamon was royal capital of the Attalid kingdom from 282–133 BCE, when King Attalos III bequeathed his kingdom to the Romans upon his death.[450] Although Rome seems to have accepted the demands with regard to the property and privileges of the city and its inhabitants formulated by Attalos III in his will, the transition to Roman control was not smooth. Aristonicus', having taken the name Eumenes III, revolt was short-lived and put down by consul Marcus Perperna, who sent Aristonicus to Rome where he was executed in 129 BCE.

[444] Gehrke 2011, 13; Radt 2011, 21; Mathys 2014, 13.
[445] Kästner 2016, 27–31.
[446] Gehrke 2011, 13; Radt 2011, 21f; Mathys 2014, 13. Although new evidence suggests that the city wall could have been erected in the 4th century BCE, before Philetairos' rule. Pirson 2017, 54.
[447] Gehrke 2011, 13.
[448] Gehrke 2011, 14f.
[449] Mehl 2008.
[450] Gehrke 2011, 19; Mathys 2014, 18.

With all western and central Anatolia under Roman control, and no surviving Attalid or Seleucid kings, the province of Asia was established, in which Pergamon was granted the status of *civitas libera*, following the wishes of Attalos III.[451]

The rapid transition from a city of little political relevance to royal capital not only meant that Pergamon's infrastructure was underdeveloped with little to no representative monumental architecture, but also that the imagery of the city was immature. Just as the city required extensive planning and development as seat of a young monarchy, so was it necessary to establish a visual programme for Pergamon. Regarding the urban development of the city, Philetairos and the Attalids were a close-knit dynasty focused on expanding their capital city through the implementation of extensive building projects, making it hard to reconstruct the features of the earlier city. The city wall of the 7th century BCE, which roughly occupied the same space of the Philetairian wall, can be dated through imported Greek ceramics. Remains of Archaic decorative bricks and fragments of statues found on the acropolis are indicators for some kind of monumental architecture on the *Burgberg*, potentially a temple (perhaps for Athena) with accompanying votives.[452] From the 3rd century BCE on, the urban development on the citadel was completely restructured and underwent a massive expansion, especially under the reigns of Eumenes II (197–159 BCE) and Attalos II (159–138 BCE): this included the construction not only of the famous altar of Pergamon, but also of the Upper and Lower Agora, administrative and logistic buildings such as cisterns, barracks, granaries, a pressurised water system, theatres, the *gymnasion*, and several temples and sanctuaries.[453]

These buildings were dismantled or destroyed when the citizens had to retreat onto the citadel in later times; first during the 3rd century CE, when the Goths roamed the area, and again in the 7th century CE, while attempting to defend the city against the Arabs.[454] On both occasions, material from ancient monuments and buildings was used to reinforce and erect the defensive structures of Pergamon, destroying the original context. The re-use of ancient material as spolia continued well into the 20th century, until Carl Humann, who visited the city for the first time in 1865/66, started campaigning to stop the lime kilns and spoliation on the castle hill.[455]

[451] Gehrke 2011, 19; Mathys 2014, 18.
[452] Radt 2011, 22.
[453] Mathys 2011, 278; Radt 2011, 23–25.
[454] Kästner 2011, 37; Radt 2011, 26f.
[455] Kästner 2011, 37; Kästner 2016, 27.

While excavations on the hill have been extensive since the first excavation campaign in 1878–1880 and have resulted in the discovery of major parts of the Hellenistic city, no systematic study has been conducted into the ancient *necropoleis*.[456] This is due to a focus on the citadel (and especially the retrieval of the Pergamon altar) during the early excavations, and the expansion of the modern city far into the plain, covering the areas in which some of the ancient cemeteries were presumably located. The DAI Istanbul, focussing their research on the city as an urban "*Gesamtorganismus*", has excavated parts of the *Südnekropole* and *Südostnekropole*, establishing that they were mainly used during the Imperial and Byzantine period, with isolated burials dating to earlier periods.[457] The northern *necropolis* (*Nordnekropole*), investigated after several looted graves were discovered during a survey in 2010, yielded no ancient discoveries and resources were therefore relocated to excavate the area of the south-eastern *necropolis*.[458] Some of the only surviving (and mostly undisturbed) funerary monuments are the grave tumuli, a few of which are large enough that they can easily be seen within the modern city, with the Maltepe (Ø 170 m) and Yiğma Tepe (Ø approx. 275 m) being the largest.[459] A few isolated Hellenistic graves have been found in the area of the Roman southern *necropolis*.[460]

The presence of grand grave monuments and expansive *necropoleis* adjoining the Hellenistic urban area has been posited by Kelb. The locations of the unexplored cemeteries she suggested include the hillsides of the *Burgberg*, the river valleys of the Ketios and Selinos, the surrounding hills, and the open plain at the foot of the citadel, as well as flanking the sacred road leading to the Asklepieion.[461] Kelb elaborates that, owing to modern development, remains of the *necropoleis* survive only in isolated spots and the numerous stray finds of funerary material are often missing any information regarding their provenance.[462] The situation is complicated by the re-use of ancient material, including parts of grave monuments, from Late Antiquity on, which led to displacement and loss of context for surviving objects.

[456] For a detailed recapitulation and analysis of the (early) excavations, cf. Kästner 2011 and Kästner 2016.
[457] Pirson 2012, 175, 190, 201; Pirson 2018, 127; Pirson 2019, 127; Pirson 2020, 183, 188; Pirson 2014, 100f; Pirson 2015, 173–175.
[458] Pirson 2011, 141; Pirson 2012, 175.
[459] In recent years, the Yiğma Tepe was investigated by the DAI Istanbul using modern excavation techniques. Cf. Mecking et al 2020 and Mecking et al 2021. Kelb suggests that the tumuli were likely reserved for members of the royal family on the basis that valuable objects were found in Tumulus II, one of the smaller tumuli. She later observes that grave reliefs must be understood as more cost-effective grave monuments than the tumuli of the wealthy Pergamene citizens. Kelb 2011, 292f.
[460] Pirson 2017, 89.
[461] Kelb 2011, 289. This broadly covers the entire area outside of the ancient city walls, with Kelb giving no specific information as to where this data comes from and no explanations for when different cemeteries were used.
[462] Kelb 2011, 289.

An additional difficulty arises with the classification of Pergamene reliefs (funerary or otherwise), which has been inconsistent since the earliest publications. Winter labels objects as grave relief, hero relief, *Totenmahl*, *Totenmahlrelief*, votive relief, or uses descriptive details (e.g., "Girl with box"), without giving parameters for these classifications.[463] In addition, he often identifies figures as 'deceased' regardless of relief type and composition, blurring the lines between supposedly distinct categories further.[464] It is also unclear what criteria Pfuhl and Möbius used to decide which of the reliefs (and fragments) published by Winter would be considered grave reliefs for their catalogue. While in other poleis the *Totenmahl* motif has been seen as clearly indicating the heroizing of the depicted individuals on a relief, in Pergamon the motif of the equestrian has been treated as the iconographic equivalent, both by Winter and by more recent authors, such as Kelb, who calls the equestrians the "embodiment of the hero relief".[465] Labelling attributes such as snakes, weapons and horse *protomai* as heroizing is highly problematic since they cannot be universally read as evidence for heroic cults and, as we have seen on the banquet reliefs in Samos, were used in funerary contexts. The majority of the Pergamene reliefs have no surviving inscriptions, although two reliefs with horsemen (PM 1378 (pl. 120), 1448 (pl. 121)) not only use the title of *heros* but also the farewell formula *chaire*, commonly used on grave monuments, indicating that it was acceptable to use the 'hero' title in funerary inscriptions, even if it was not officially awarded by the city. Without more inscriptions or other proof of public honours no definitive interpretation can be made.[466]

[463] W 310 explicitly calls the young Apollonios "ΗΕΡΟΙ ΠΕΡΓΑΜΟ[Ι]." Winter labels the relief "Heros Pergamos" in the catalogue and writes that it could be interpreted as a depiction of the "Stadtheros" as well as a heroized dead young man. Winter 1908, 252f.

[464] Winter 1908, 245–269.

[465] Kelb 2011, 292.

[466] The relief with the two horsemen bears the remains of an inscription, but the surface is too damaged to allow transcription, Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 339. Apart from the cult for the kings of Pergamon, there is evidence for the true heroization of at least one citizen: based on inscriptions found within the city (especially within the *gymnasion*) Diodoros Pasparos was awarded the *heros*-title shortly after 70 BCE to honour his commitment to the city and his financial support for the renovation of the *gymnasion*; he also received a cult, including a *heroon*, food offerings, a cult statue, and festivals with contests and processions. It is unclear if similar honours were awarded more often, especially earlier, during the reign of the Pergamene kings. Given that no older inscriptions survive, and the honours for Diodoros are so well documented, it is probable that his heroization was unique and not a common event: Kader 1995, 211f; Radt 1999, 248, 251. Radt identifies a house north of the Demeter sanctuary as the *heroon* for Demetrios, based on the discovery of an unnamed male portrait head within the building. However, no inscriptions or other material finds verify this identification. Kader interprets the same house as the assembly hall of an influential cultic association.

Motif	Details	#	Total
Banquet scenes	Man reclining	1	4
	Man reclining with seated woman	2	
	'Family scenes' (3+ figures)	1	
Dexiosis	Man & Woman	1	1
Man & Women	Standing & seated mixed	2	2
Men	Seated	1	1
	Equestrian	18	18
	→ *Snake & tree*	*13*	
	→ *Libation*	*12*	
	→ *Additional figures*	*7*†	
	→ *Altar*	*5*	
	→ *Servant/page*	*3*	
	→ *Dog*	*3*	
Pre-adults	Boy/toddler	1*	1
Women	Seated	1	1
Objects/other	Lids of some kind	1	1
Fragments		5	5
		Total	**34**

Table 8: Motifs on Pergamene stelai.

†	Total number of additional figures (3x female, 1x male, 2x squire/armour-bearer; 1x unclear); PM 1477 depicts two additional figures (woman and squire).
*	The relief depicts two brothers

Despite these issues, a significant number of funerary reliefs, or fragments thereof, have been found in Pergamon and can be assigned to the city. Even though the total number of funerary reliefs is small compared with other poleis, we can still gain important insights from the surviving data. Immediately evident is a clear preference for the motif of the equestrians or horseman, which constitutes the major funerary theme with more than half of the reliefs depicting a rider. Motifs popular in other poleis, such as the *dexisosis* or the seated woman are almost absent in Pergamon, with only the banquet being represented by a slightly higher number of reliefs. Considering the small numbers involved we would not necessarily expect to find that surviving motifs offer a representative sample, and the distribution of motifs will plausibly change if more funerary reliefs are discovered. That said, the number of equestrians still speaks of a very homogenous trend within the Pergamene funerary imagery.

Apart from the ubiquitous horseman two other (minor) themes appear across different motifs in Pergamon: the luxurious design of furniture and garments, and the use of the snake as iconographic element. The legs of the *klinai* and chairs in the banquet scenes (PM 1567 (pl. 122), 1902 (pl. 122),

1917 (pl. 123)) as well as the stool of the seated woman in PM 928 (pl. 115) are elaborately turned, showcasing their high quality and value. Similar luxury can be seen in the depiction of pillows (PM 1567, 1902) and the fine folds of garments and textiles (PM 928, 1477 (pl. 121), 1486 (pl. 121)). Prosperity, even luxury, and its visual depiction on grave reliefs appears to have been highly valued by the citizens of Pergamon, and it is a quality which intersects with the theme of horsemanship. The second theme is the snake, with the animal present not only in reliefs depicting equestrians, but also as part of other funerary reliefs, irrespective of the motif.[467] Furthermore, snakes also make an appearance on cremation cists (Winter 426-432) and altars (Winter 421, 425) found in the city. While snakes are closely linked to the chthonic sphere, the citizens of Pergamon seemed to have a particular affinity for the reptile.

Taken as a whole, this historical and archaeological context helps to situate Pergamon's funerary reliefs within the city's rapid transformation from a minor settlement into the capital of a young Hellenistic kingdom. The small but coherent corpus of grave stelai reflects a community in the process of defining itself, drawing on established Greek visual traditions while articulating a sharply focused local identity that was shaped and maintained through repetition and local workshop traditions. Pergamon's preference for the libation-offering equestrian motif can be understood as both a response to internal values (military virtue, piety, aristocratic status) and as a consequence of iconographic lock-in, whereby local workshops reinforced a limited but highly codified imagery through consistent production. Within the wider Hellenistic landscape in which cemeteries functioned as highly visible arenas of civic self-representation, this process allowed a locally grounded imagery to acquire broader communicative force. Although Pergamon's funerary iconography operates independently of the monumental royal programme on the citadel, it nonetheless participates in the same broader cultural conversation, mobilising a shared visual language to assert the city's place among its peers.

3.4.1 Men: Equestrians and libations

As mentioned above, the horseman or equestrian is the most common motif found on the surviving grave reliefs of Pergamon. The artistic quality of the pieces varies greatly, ranging from the finely carved PM 1477 to more modest examples, like PM 1367 (pl. 120), but all of them share certain characteristics. All reliefs surviving largely intact show the rider facing a tree with a snake coiled around the trunk or a branch fork. Sometimes an altar, which can be understood as the focal point of the upcoming libation, is placed in front of the tree (PM 1336 (pl. 116), 1355 (pl. 118),

[467] The snake appears in banquet scenes (PM 1567, 1902, 1917), on a relief with a seated man (PM 817), in the singular Pergamene *dexiosis* scene (PM 718), and as part of pediments (PM 1917, Winter 38).

1448 (pl. 121)). While the rider reliefs have a clear overarching theme and composition, the details can vary. Most often the equestrians are depicted riding their horses (PM 1355, 1366 (pl. 119)), but they can also stand next to them (PM 1448, 1477). The men typically wear a short *chiton* and a cloak (PM 1448) but may appear naked, except for a *chlamys* or *himation* (PM 1477).[468] The horse, usually facing to the right, stands in front of or heads towards a tree near the edge of the relief. A snake is usually found coiled around the tree, often stretching its head closer to the horseman, and even being fed by him (PM 1336, 1345 (pl. 117), 1425 (pl. 120)). The rider can be depicted alone (PM 1346 (pl.117)), accompanied by a dog (PM 1448), squire (PM 1336, 1355), another man clearly identifiable as soldier (PM 1361 (pl. 118)), with a female (PM 1366) or male figure (PM 1378 (pl. 120)), a combination of them (PM 1477), or, in one instance, another rider (PM 1425 (pl. 120)). Winter and Scholl identify the two men shown on this last example facing each other on horseback as the Dioscuri, although no inscription survives and apart from the duality of the rider, there is no way to identify the men as Castor and Polydeukes.[469]

The level of variation in iconographic detail is clear when comparing PM 1477, arguably the relief of the highest quality, with other examples. Centrally placed is the main protagonist of the scene (sadly missing his head), a youthful man, naked but for a long cloak covering his left shoulder but revealing the rest of his body. In his right hand he holds a phiale above a round altar, which stands between him and a woman who has placed her right hand on a small pillar behind her. She is completely wrapped in her cloak, even covering her hands and the back of her head, demonstrating her modesty and posing a stark contrast to the naked man. She is not actively participating in the libation, but clearly observes the performance of the horseman. His horse is standing to his left, held by a second male figure in armour and shield. The scene is completed by the tree behind the altar, entwined by a snake whose eyes are fixed upon the phiale below it, and a hunting dog who gazes up to his master. Snake and tree aside, the scene is reminiscent of departure scenes that can be found on Athenian ceramics. It is exquisitely crafted, not only using the available space evenly to place the figures across the relief ground, but also displaying fine details in the folds of the cloaks, and the armour of the foot soldier.

[468] The surface damage to the reliefs does not allow for a definite decision on the clothing of some riders, e.g., PM 1361, 1342, 1355.

[469] Scholl identifies the two riders as the Dioscuri, without providing an explanation as to how the motif "undoubtedly" depicts them, while Winter cites objects he believes to be similar: a relief in the Louvre that positions the Dioscuri on their rearing horses (but next to each other, not antithetical) and *pinakes* from Tarentum, some of which depict them facing each other, albeit again on rearing horses. None of the examples resemble the relief from Pergamon in all relevant details, and Pfuhl abstains from any identification, merely describing the figures as riders, but mentions in his preliminary analysis of equestrians that the comparison (not identification) with the Dioscuri on reliefs for pairs of young men is obvious. Winter 1908, 33; Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 313, 338f; Scholl 2011, 494. Regarding the Tarentine *pinakes* cf. Petersen 1900, esp. 24–26.

In contrast, the other reliefs appear cruder, with figures less well arranged and oddly proportioned. In these 'simpler' reliefs, the focus lies on the horses, especially the act of horse-riding, and is given preference over other elements in the composition. PM 1361 (pl. 118) for example clearly shows the horse and its rider as the central figures, with the accompanying soldier shifted to the edge of the frame and almost hidden behind the horse, while the tree and snake are moved to the other end of the frame. There might have been an altar and a servant in front of the horse, such as can be seen on PM 1355 (pl. 118), where the small figure of a servant is standing next to an altar, who appears to pour something onto it. Slave and altar are in much lower relief than horseman and steed, emphasizing their lower status and importance.

Horses are prevalent on Pergamene reliefs more widely, appearing not only in the horsemen scenes, but also as *protomai* (PM 718 (pl. 114), 817 (pl. 115)), and held by the reins by a page in the relief of a seated man and standing woman (Winter 303 (pl.124)). In a particularly clever instance (PM 1917 (pl. 123)), the horse is incorporated into a *Totenmahl* not as a *protome*, but as part of a miniature equestrian relief, attached to the left corner of the relief ground, creating a relief within a relief.

Pfuhl reckons the equestrian-reliefs of "little artistic value" and only a select few any "art historic relevance" but admits that they are of religio-historical interest.[470] Referencing works of Malten and Rhomaios he links the attributes of horses, snakes, trees and altars to the heroic sphere and the heroization of the deceased, even claiming that the rider appears at the grave, and sometimes in front of his surviving family members, "in the glory of his heroic power."[471] While he acknowledges the unreal quality of the scenes, clarifying that they "want to signify, not to portray", he disregards the idea that the horse can be understood as a symbol identifying the deceased as cavalryman and member of the élite.[472] Like the *Totenmahlreliefs* of Samos, the rider reliefs of Pergamon have been considered 'heroic', with Winter labelling several of them as *Heroenrelief*s in his catalogue and addressing the depicted figures as heroes and heroines.

[470] Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 310.

[471] Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 312. Cf. Malten 1914 and Rhomaios 1914 for their ascription of attributes such as horses, snakes and dogs to an original old or 'primitive' cult context linked to Poseidon and/or Plouton, which then was transferred to the realm of (mystic) heroes and the sepulchral. They both interpret these attributes as personification of the death god, *daimones* of the underworld, protective heroes, and finally, the deceased themselves. While Pfuhl does not position himself clearly for or against their interpretations, he notes that it would be unwise to try and find "too much sense in these pictures" as they visualize primitive concepts and can be understood in various ways, using the snake representing the soul of the deceased or a *Grabdämon* as an example. Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 312. Klöckner briefly comments on the epiphanic moment in depictions of riding heroes. Klöckner 2010, 118f.

[472] Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 311–313.

While banquet and equestrian scenes share certain iconographic patterns, such as the snake and the horse, they contrast in important ways: the banquet takes place in a (sometimes implied) interior space with horses peeking in through windows or from behind walls, while the horsemen are located outside without any architectural boundaries apart from the relief frame. Where the rider is depicted on the move, engaged in physical activity, the banqueter is enjoying himself, reclining in leisure on his couch.

Instead of interpreting the rider and horses as direct references to the real social position of the dead (or indeed an official heroization), we can more reasonably understand them as allusions to the virtues and prestige linked to epic heroes and the Archaic aristocratic cavalry.[473] While the equestrians are not depicted heavily armoured and rarely carry weapons (PM 1448 (pl. 121)) they clearly reference military themes and share similarities with hoplite departure scenes such as are found on Attic vases (fig. 39–40). These departure scenes typically consist of a (young) man, sometimes accompanied by other soldiers or a page, bidding their family (most commonly parents and/or a wife) farewell on their way to military service. Like the equestrians, the soldiers often perform a libation, although the involvement of a female figure carrying a jug from which a liquid is poured into the libation bowl makes it more of a collaborative act than the scenes on the grave reliefs.

This act of libation deserves a closer analysis in the context of funerary reliefs depicting equestrians. As I have discussed in Chapter 1, libations were a complex custom found in numerous ancient iconographic as well as literary sources with many subtle variables that we do not fully understand: they happened on many different occasions (sacrifices, banqueting, tomb visits etc.), used a variety of liquids (wine, oil, water, milk, honey, blood), and could be poured from different vessels (*phialai*, jugs, cups) onto various surfaces (altars, tombs, soil, water).

The figures performing the libation are another conundrum: on the grave reliefs the dead are the ones involved in the ritual, while in depictions in other contexts those libating can usually be assumed to be still living humans, as in the couples in the so-called departure scenes. In these cases, it can be assumed that the liquid is poured to a god or goddess to ask for divine blessing or support, even if it is not clear to which divinity this is offered.

[473] Edelmann has noted the ambiguity of the equestrian in votive reliefs, pointing out that the function/identity of the rider varies and can be read as historical person, hero, and even divine being depending on the nature of the monument. She also points out that the occasion for the votive dedication cannot be decerned easily, and may be linked to victories in athletic competitions, specifically the *anthippasia*. Edelmann 1999, 170–172.

That the dead are no longer in need of divine support makes their libation puzzling. Who are they making an offering to and why? Here, it is helpful to consider the depictions of gods performing libations, since they also have no need to offer gifts to receive divine favour or to thank another deity for their aid.[474]

Furtwängler proposed that gods offering libations were the last consequence of the humanisation of gods and illustrate the tendency to transfer iconographic types that were developed with and for humans onto divine figures. He suggest that the divine libation does not function as a representation of '*Do ut des*' (I give so that you may give), but as an act of respect and deference to a senior deity.[475] Pfuhl puts the gesture of the (heroic) dead offering a libation down to the tendency of ancient art to signify and not portray, reading it as one of the iconographic details that is "pure visual language that cannot be translated into words", evading a deeper interpretation.[476] Gaifman approaches the libation from a more 'materialistic' direction by exploring the genres or motifs in which libations take place. While there are only a few instances of libations being incorporated into sympotic imagery, they are numerous in departure scenes and in funerary iconography in vase painting.[477] In both instances they mark the separation of humans from each other: in one instance the soldier from his *oikos*, in the other the deceased from their surviving family. The departure scenes express hope about the return of the soldier, even though he might fall in battle, while funerary scenes highlight the final departure of an individual from the mortal realm. Both genres are an expression of intimacy and attachment between people, particularly within families.[478] Just as a visitor to the grave is often shown adorning the *sema* with fillets, wreaths, and lekythoi, the wife or mother who is performing a libation with her husband or son in the hope of appeasing the gods to ensure his safe return is expressing her love and devotion by material means. Gaifman observes that the tomb is effectively understood as an extension of the *oikos*, linking the living and deceased members of a family together.[479] Like Furtwängler, she concludes that deities who are performing a libation together (or just in the presence of each other) are articulating a complex connection or bond. Athena pouring the libation into a bowl held by Zeus acknowledges the higher status of the

[474] For the classical discussion of depictions of gods performing sacrifices on Athenian vases cf. Simon 1953. Among the gods Apollo is the deity most often shown performing a libation. Gaifman 2018, 8, 141.
[475] Furtwängler 1881, 116; Gaifman 2018, 118. Burkert suggested that the phiale in the hands of gods could be understood as priests having poured the libation liquid into them, and the offering flowing onto the ground/altar afterwards, 'dragging' the god into participating in the ritual. This seems like an overly complicated explanation and hardly explains why the gods would have need to make offerings themselves. Burkert 1985, 71; Patton 2009, 29f, 311. For Patton's argument of the divine figures as representations of the divine energy invoked by mortals during religious performances see Patton 2009.
[476] Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 312.
[477] Gaifman 2018, 65.
[478] Gaifman 2018, 62.
[479] Gaifman 2018, 88, 111.

senior god and this interpretation can be transferred to the mortal depictions of libations: Athena is serving the senior members of her divine *oikos,* the Athenian soldier is setting out to serve his polis and household, and his wife or mother serves both him and the gods by pouring a libation for his protection.[480]

Consequently, the libation, mortal and divine, can be understood as an expression and affirmation of the bonds and hierarchies of a household or community, strengthening those bonds through corporeal performance.[481] Each repetition of the ritual reinforces the ideals behind it, creating and affirming connections between household members, citizens, and, ultimately, mortal and divine as well as living and dead.

On Pergamene reliefs the rider is usually the lone protagonist, with the men playing the active part in all but one libation scene (PM 1378). Unlike the scenes in which the offering is taking place between two people, where one has it performed for him by the other in acknowledgement of a certain hierarchy, these men are performing the offerings themselves. Clearly, an additional figure was necessary neither to perform the libation, nor to act as a counterpart for the rider to play towards. But if these scenes are not, or are only implicitly hierarchical, and an additional member of the *oikos* receiving the libation or participating in it[482] is rarely present, we are left wondering who the equestrian could be affirming his bond with? I would argue that it is the viewer who is addressed by these scenes and meant to become part of it. As we have already seen in the funerary iconography of other Hellenistic poleis, frontality is a key part of encouraging this involvement, with relief figures turning towards the onlooker creating a link between inside- and outside-the-frame. Unlike other motifs, such as the *Normaltypus* or reclining and seated figure, riders on horseback do not lend themselves well to a frontal depiction, presumably because the depiction of a frontal facing horse is not only technically complicated but also strips the motif of its elegance and appeal. Even the attempt to twist the upper body of the equestrian into a frontal position (as happens with figures in banquet or *dexiosis* scenes) seems undesirable for this motif, possibly due to the visually awkward result of such a composition. Instead, the gaze of the viewer is visually guided towards the destination of the rider through the motion of his horse. Usually, this destination is a tree with a snake wrapped around its trunk, but in several cases the 'meeting point' is an altar (PM 1339 (pl. 116), 1346 (pl. 117), 1355 (pl. 118), possibly 1361 (pl. 118)) where the libation may take place. Additionally, the moment the horseman dismounts, his body is shifted into the full-frontal while standing next to his horse (PM 1448 (pl. 121), 1477 (pl. 121)), immediately

[480] Gaifman 2018, 124, 129, 136.
[481] Gaifman 2018, 151f.
[482] In departure scenes the women can often be seen carrying a jug from which to pour the offering, clearly illustrating their participation in the ritual.

engaging the viewer in the ritual act. In both cases of the dismounted rider, he is also depicted directly in the act of performing a libation, with his hand stretched out and the bowl held above the altar.

The viewer is invited to witness and even participate in the action by providing the liquid and pouring it into the sacrificial bowl held by the rider. An offering which might actually take place at the grave, performed by visiting family members honouring their dead through a physical act.

Assuming that the libation is not to be understood as a *heros* performing it 'for themselves' to show what he deserves from the viewer, the equestrians of Pergamon can be read as the dead seeking and strengthening a connection to the living visitor at their grave. Tombs were meeting places where family members could come together to remember and honour the dead, but also a physical reminder of the division between living and dead. The libation was a way to bridge this divide. As far as the state of preservation allows for general observations it seems that all equestrians on the Pergamene grave reliefs carry a phiale in their hand, not a kantharos, the drinking vessel frequently used by Dionysus and other divine beings with a chthonic connection, such as Heracles, to perform libations.[483] This choice of phiale over kantharos reinforces the aspect of human connections. Even though the dead are no longer part of the mortal realm, they use mortal tools to create points of contact with their living relatives.

For Pergamon, a city that was involved in military actions throughout its existence and had to defend not only itself but also the surrounding lands against invaders, the equestrian was an appropriate symbol for the traditional male theme of military service, while also invoking Archaic themes of epic heroes and aristocratic virtues and status. Horses and armed soldiers had featured on Athenian grave stelai, with some of the most famous examples being the stelai of Dexileos and Aristonautes. However, the citizens of Pergamon chose a more composed motif than the horseman stomping over his enemies or the heavily armoured soldier ready to strike. Instead, we see men calmly riding their horses, invoking the imagery of the departure scenes, with their *phialai* stretched out, ready to perform libations. The offering can be understood as referencing the act of asking for a divine blessing (possibly before a campaign), but also creates a link between the rider/soldier and the city they are setting out to defend and which is home to their family. The shared experience of the libation connects members of a family, of an *oikos*, and of the polis together and they interact with each other, and the ongoing offerings at the grave sustain and strengthen these bonds even after death. The libation is an all-inclusive act, performed not just by mortals, but also by heroes

[483] Patton 2009, 37. Some reliefs are too fragmented or damaged, with the relevant parts missing or the surface worn down (e.g., PM 1341, 1342, 1344, 1345), making it necessary to allow for the possibility of no libation happening in the scene depicted, but on most reliefs the offering can easily be identified.

and gods, and so connects mortals and immortals through continuous performance of ritual. In the funerary iconography of Pergamon it becomes the point at which the living and the dead, residents of different realms, can safely meet.

The dominance of the equestrian motif for Pergamene men reflects an internal value system prioritizing military prestige and aristocratic status, which was particularly relevant given the city's history as a new kingdom involved in continuous military actions. This sustained focus on military themes, which had been abandoned or marginalized in other economically successful poleis like Smyrna, did not emerge simply from individual preference, but could be understood as convergence of local values, workshop practice, and the funerary sphere as a privileged site for the articulation of civic ideals. The repeated commissioning of equestrian monuments encouraged iconographic lock-in within local workshops, reinforcing a limited but highly codified visual repertoire and gradually narrowing the range of available choices. At the same time, these choices operated within a wider field of peer comparison, in which repetition and recognisability themselves became meaningful. Workshop-driven lock-in stabilised local preferences, while their visibility against the practices of other poleis transformed this stability into a distinctive funerary language articulated through elaboration rather than variety.

3.4.2 Women

Only very few Pergamene grave stelai show women, and they are usually supporting characters amongst men within scenes belonging to the 'male sphere': seated at the end of a *kline* in banquet scenes (PM 1567 (pl.122), 1917 (pl. 123), Winter 322 (pl. 125)), as witness to the libation in one of the horsemen reliefs (PM 1366 (pl. 119), 1477 (pl. 121)), or in the single *dexiosis* scene surviving from Pergamon (PM 718 (pl. 114)). While the sample is small, it might be noteworthy that two stelai (PM 928 (pl. 115), 1486 (pl. 121)) depict the seated woman in a more relaxed pose than usual. The women place one hand behind them, leaning slightly backwards: the woman in PM 1486 turns her upper body and head to look towards the man who is standing behind her. The pose can be found on several Classical Athenian reliefs (e.g., CAT 2.424, 2.441), possibly chosen to display the carefully crafted garments draped aesthetically pleasingly around the bodies of the women. This may speak to the theme of elaborate furniture design mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, with women becoming an ornament to highlight the wealth and fortune of the men they are related to.

The marginal part played by female figures in Pergamene funerary reliefs, usually confined to supporting or witnessing roles, reinforces the city's emphasis on male military virtue and ritual action, contributing to a highly focused visual identity that remained legible within the shared Greek repertoire while separating Pergamon from poleis such as Smyrna or Rhodes, where women occupied a more prominent iconographic position.

3.4.3 Summary

Pergamon as the royal city of the Attalid kingdom played a major role in Hellenistic politics. It also became a place of enormous artistic relevance with the creation of their urban programme, which included the Great Altar, one of the most important pieces of Hellenistic (religious) art. This development of an official and public visual language had to happen quickly and without a long local tradition to build on, due to the comparatively young age of the city and its political insignificance before the arrival of Philetairos. However, little to nothing of this official visual programme is noticeable in the funerary iconography, illustrating that public art and monuments do not necessarily impact the visual language of (semi-) private objects. While until now only a small number of funerary reliefs have been found in Pergamon, they still demonstrate a consistent preference for a motif specific to the Attalid polis.

Unlike Rhodes, the city does not adapt a variety of 'Greek' funerary motifs but presents a rather homogenous sepulchral imagery. Instead of creating a whole new imagery, Pergamon chose a traditional motif and adapted it to their needs. Like the banquet reliefs from Samos, the horsemen reliefs are often interpreted as sign of heroization of the deceased. But classifying these images as heroic, or heroizing, is not particularly helpful, especially since we have no written evidence recording an affinity for establishing of hero cults in Pergamon. While the motif references iconographic patterns and formulas used in the iconography of *heroes*, they should not be read as definitive depictions of individuals who were honoured and worshipped as heroes of the city. Rather, the equestrian may be read as representing virtues and qualities that were celebrated and regarded as exemplary across the Greek world: piety through performance of libations, excellence in military service and close bonds with the family. Just as the banquet was adapted by the Samians, Pergamon used the iconography of the equestrian, primarily linked to soldiery and epic heroes, and translated it for the use in private memorialization. Libations shift focus to the ritual designed to allow for the communication of mortals with divine beings, the relief becomes the point of contact and interaction between the living and the dead at the gravesite.

The overwhelming dominance of the libation-offering equestrian does not represent a broad experimentation with available motifs, but a deliberate narrowing of the visual repertoire, producing a strongly codified and immediately recognisable funerary language. This narrow focus serves as a clear mechanism of competitive emulation, asserting a distinct civic profile within the Hellenistic *koine*. However, Pergamon's consistent choice and specific elaboration of the motif are primarily explained by powerful internal factors. These factors include the military necessity and royal ambition of the young monarchy, the rise of a prosperous (middle-)class capable of commissioning high-status monuments, and strong iconographic lock-in maintained by local workshop traditions. PPI provides the essential relational context, confirming that this specialized imagery functioned as a highly visible civic statement in stone intended for inter-polis comparison, much like the monumental *Prunkaltäre* circulating in the region. Nevertheless, PPI alone cannot account for ritual motivations or conservative social constraints that may have influenced and shaped the actual content of the reliefs. Ultimately, the Pergamon corpus shows how PPI operates: local agency, driven by internal needs and aesthetic preferences, harnessed elements of a shared visual language to create a recognizable iconographic identity, thereby setting itself apart from its peers.

3.5 Byzantion

Byzantion (map 9) was an important ancient trading port, founded by Greeks from Megara in the 8th or 7th century BCE, with material evidence dating a first settlement of the region back into prehistoric times.[484] As ancient authors have pointed out, the city is not only located in a strategic spot at the Bosporus, leading from the Marmara Sea (Propontis), which is further connected to the Mediterranean Sea through the Dardanelles, into the Black Sea (Pontus), but it also possessed great fortifications.[485] Megara established several colonies around the Marmara Sea, not only Byzantion, but also Chalcedon (map 10).[486] The peninsula on which the ancient acropolis and first Greek settlement was established forms a natural port which created shelter from the currents of the Propontis, making it an excellent spot for a settlement and providing anchorage for merchants travelling between the Mediterranean and the Bosporan Kingdom.[487] Since the area has been continuously inhabited and the modern city of Istanbul spreads out far beyond the ancient polis borders, comprehensive excavations are not possible and there is little knowledge about the early urban layout. Archaeological finds are made mostly accidentally in the course of construction projects, and excavations often happen under immense time pressure without the opportunity to expand research even in the light of the discovery of important structures or objects.[488]

The most comprehensive account of Greek Byzantion survives in a fragment of Hesychios of Miletos,[489] who lived in Constantinople in the 6th century CE, as part of the so-called *Patria of Constantinople*, a collection of texts addressing historical events and monuments of Byzantion and Constantinople. Hesychios' text, originally part of a history in six books according to Photios, gives a summary of the founding of Byzantion and the myths surrounding it.[490] Hesychios mentions gravestones being used to reinforce and repair the walls and battlements during the siege on Byzantion by Philip II (340 BCE).[491] The majority of the *Patria* (as well as other literary sources

[484] Janin 1950, 15; Özdoğan 2010, 37, 40, 44. According to Pliny the Elder, Byzantion (or an earlier settlement) was called Lygos and may have been a Thracian city, given the reported constant attacks by Thracians who inhabited the area around the colony. Plin. *Nat.* 4.18; Plb. 4.45; Hesych. 15–18. For a brief summary of the Thracian settlement of the Marmara region cf. Akurgal 1956, 17–19.
[485] Cass. Dio 75.10–11; Dio. Byz. *Bosp*. 4–6; Plb. 4.43–44; Gibbon 1896, 141.
[486] Delemen 2010, 54. The location of Chalcedon prompted some ridicule in antiquity, for it occupies a far inferior spot on the coast of Asia than Byzantion despite being founded earlier. Several authors report an oracle received by the colonists of Byzantion at Delphi advising them to build their city across from "the city of the blind," as the Chalcedonians clearly must have been blind to not pick the Golden Horn as setup place for their colony. Hdt. 4.144.1–2; Plin. *Nat*. 5.43; Strab. 7.6; Janin 1950, 16f; Russell 2017, 210f.
[487] Plb. 4.43–44; Janin 1950, 7, 9; Newskaja 1953, 5; Özdoğan 2010, 37; Kuban 2010, 18; Russell 2017, 2f, 20, 205.
[488] Newskaja 1953, 6f; Fıratlı 1978, 568; Delemen 2010, 56; Russell 2017, 15.
[489] Often abbreviated to Hes. Mil., but not to be confused with Hesiod. Abbreviated here as Hesych. Mil.
[490] Photios, Bibliotheca, cod. 69. For Byzantion's mythical founding story see Hesych. Mil. 3–10.
[491] Hesych. Mil. 24–25.

from late antiquity on) deals with the history of Byzantion after the end of the Hellenistic period, focussing especially on the time of Constantine and later. Demosthenes mentions Byzantion in several speeches as being in danger from Philip in an effort to convince his fellow citizens to declare war on the Macedonians,[492] and Xenophon mentions it in his *Anabasis*, in which he himself enters the city during the march of the ten thousand.[493] Polybius recounts the war between Rhodes and Byzantion (220/219 BCE), instigated by Byzantion levying taxes on export goods after the citizens were forced to pay off the Gauls to prevent them ransacking the city.[494] These sources confirm the strategic position of the city and attest its wealth, which was based not only on its location but also on exports of significant amounts of slaves, salted fish and luxury exports, such as honey and wax.[495] While we have no detailed description of the political and social situation in Byzantion we know that the city became independent in the 3rd century BCE and was on friendly terms with Rome, until Septimius Severus tore down the city walls, executed most of the men and made the city tributary after it had sided with Pescennius Niger.[496]

These sources, albeit limited, offer some clues about the unique status of Byzantion during the Classical and Hellenistic period as well as the relationship between Byzantion and other Greek poleis. Russell has pointed out, the city was never a 'global' player but remained a "backwater at the far northern limits of Greece: a frontier city, surrounded by ferocious Thracians and populated by alcoholic merchants and fishermen, hardly the centre of the universe."[497] However, as an important port between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, the city was visited by a constant stream of sailors and merchants.[498] The strait itself was monetized by levying taxes for crossing it and supplying escorts to protect trading vessels against pirates. Athens, after taking control of Byzantion in the early 5th century BCE, utilized its massive naval fleet to escort ships travelling the Bosporus charging for this service while maintaining good relations by not raising the levies too

[492] i. a., Dem. 5.25, 8.14–16, 9.19–20, 18.71, 18.93. Although he clearly has no love for the Byzantines, calling them "wretched creatures […] infatuated and stupid beyond measure" (Dem. 8.16).
[493] Xen. *Anab.* 7.1.1–32. He also mentions Byzantion briefly in his *Hellenica*, which covers the last years of the Peloponnesian War. Xen. *Hell.* 1.3.14–20, 2.2.1.
[494] Plb. 4.38, 4.45–47, 4.50–52; Gabrielsen 2007, 288. For a more detailed analysis of the Rhodian-Byzantine War cf. Russell 2017, 93–98.
[495] Dio. Byz. *Bosp.* 5; Plb. 4.38; Plin. *Nat.* 9.20; Strab. 7.6. The wealth of the city can also be seen in the high tribute Byzantion had to pay when it joined the Delian League, recorded in Athenian tribute-quota lists in the second half of the 5th century BCE. The tribute listed ranges from 1500 dr. to 2179 dr. (and sometimes additional tribute paid for the army: 815 dr. (IG I³ 281), 2019 dr. 3(+) ob. (IG I³ 283)); few other poleis paying nearly as much. IG I³ 259, 261, 265, 269, 270, 271, 279, 281, 282, 283. Gabrielsen 2007, 287; Delemen 2010, 55; Russell 2017, 28.
[496] Cass. Dio 75.10–14; Gibbon 1777, 178f; Delemen 2010, 55–57. Herodian writes that Byzantion was captured by Pescennius Niger, rather than siding with him voluntarily. Hdn. 3.1.5–7.
[497] Russell 2017, 5f. Freely offers an amusing summary of the sources referencing the "sybaritic ways of the Byzantines." Freely 1998, 14–18.
[498] Russell 2017, 54.

high or giving preferential treatment to any one group crossing the strait. They profited from the fees paid by merchants for the safety of their convoys and kept the strait open for travel, thereby securing the movement of military vessels and grain ships on which many Greek poleis depended.[499] The independence and neutrality of Byzantion and its port was of great importance not only to Athens, but to everyone, including the Persians and Thracians, which is evident in the fact that defending the city against a 'common enemy' such as Philip II caused rivals to form coalitions.[500] During the Hellenistic period monarchs and poleis did their best to keep on friendly terms with the independent city, as it was in their best interest not to allow a competitor to 'succeed where Philip had failed', and to keep the strait open to all, without one empire, kingdom or polis controlling it.[501] As the often-quoted passage in Polybius has it, Byzantion remained the "common benefactor to all.".[502] The city before Constantine might have never been a major political player itself, but nevertheless it remained closely linked to the Greek world while establishing a rare level of independence, freedom and influence.

Unfortunately, archaeological remains of the Greek presence are rare. Excavations in 1937 in the Topkapı palace on the ancient acropolis revealed no remains of Greek or Roman buildings, but some pottery fragments that were dated to be proto-Corinthian, which Ogan took as proof of the city's foundation lying in the 7th century BCE. Without further substantial evidence these fragments do not prove the existence of a Greek colony.[503] Fabricius notes that grave reliefs have been found "relatively often" in the course of construction work in Istanbul, but that no publication of the context of the stelai took place.[504] Delemen attests to traces of Classical and Hellenistic *necropoleis* discovered during construction work outside of the ancient city walls, in the Sultanahmet Law Courts, south-west of the acropolis, with grave goods dating to the 5th century BCE, and 4th–3rd century BCE cemeteries in the western city districts of Çemberlitaş, Beyazıt, Laleli and Süleymaniye, but there is no mention of gravestones or any further systematic excavations.[505] This matches Fabricius's statement that the *necropoleis* must have been located west of the ancient city, and that the lack of mentions of enclosing walls and foundations allows the conclusion that the (majority)

[499] Gabrielsen 2007, 290, 303–306; Russell 2017, 59f. While Athens seems to not have imported a significant amount of grain for herself in the 5th century BCE (but would do so from the end of the Peloponnesian War on), other poleis did. Russell 2017, 74.
[500] E.g., Athens, Rhodes, Artaxerxes II and others becoming allies against Philip in 340 BCE. Russell 2017, 91.
[501] Gabrielsen 2007, 308; Russell 2017, 92–94.
[502] Plb. 4.38.10: "Therefore, as being the common benefactors of all, they naturally not only should meet with gratitude from the Greeks, but with general support when they are exposed to peril from the barbarians."
[503] Ogan 1940, 331f; Delemen 2010, 54. Excavations on and around the acropolis revealed prehistoric shards and some Greek pottery and terracotta fragments. Fıratlı 1978, 565, 568, 570. Dionysios Byzantinos lists a few monuments, including temples, as well as gymnasia and a stadium, but none of them have been found, let alone been excavated. Dio. Byz. *Bosp*. 8–14.
[504] Fabricius 1999a, 264.
[505] Delemen 2010, 56.

of *semata* were simply set into the ground or small bases. She further explains that observations from grave stelai found in Chalcedon are most likely applicable for Byzantion. The tomb stones found were placed either directly onto the ground or on bases at the top end of graves.[506] Seven of the eight stelai with recorded findspots were arranged in small clusters of two or three stelai, which may be understood as sepulchral ensembles belonging to members of one family. According to Fabricius, this indicates that for families with the necessary financial resources it may have been common to erect not just one stele for the whole family, but rather to purchase a grave marker for each family member (or couple).[507]

While the grave stelai of Byzantion feature many inscriptions, almost all consist simply of names, patronyms and the common farewell, *chaire*. There are no elaborate epitaphs or funerary poems, with only a few gravestones giving further information about the deceased by identifying them as daughters or sons (PM 2037, 507, 223). These simple inscriptions cause particular difficulties in the case of women when they are followed by a male name in the genitive. Without specific indication, they could be either the man's wife or his daughter.[508]

Situated at a key maritime junction and characterised by intense connectivity, Byzantion operated within particularly dense networks of cultural encounter and exchange. Its funerary monuments must therefore be understood not only as expressions of local values, but as objects designed to be seen and interpreted by a diverse audience of residents, visitors, and foreign merchants. This context places a premium on legibility and recognisability, encouraging the use of widely shared visual forms while allowing meaning to be articulated through selective emphasis rather than radical innovation.

[506] Mellink 1977, 315f; Asgari – Fıratlı 1978, 7. Asgari and Fıratlı report a total of 16 grave stelai from Chalcedon, eight of which have a well-documented findspots. They also document 19 sarcophagi, some of which were found *in situ* during construction work. Asgari – Fıratlı 1978, 1, 6.

[507] Fabricius 1999a, 262–267.

[508] Fıratlı, by default, translates female names followed by a male name in the genitive as "fille de […]." This seems unwise, as it leaves us with a significant number of reliefs assumingly depicting fathers with their daughters in banquet scenes (e.g., F 53, F 80, F101). It is more plausible that most of these inscriptions name married couples, with the seated woman being the wife of the reclining man. Cf. Fabricius 1999a, 258–260. Only one inscription explicitly describes the woman as *thygater*, daughter, (PM 2037) while three identify her as *gyne,* wife, (F 63, F 94, F 149; there is also a sarcophagus that carries the inscription *gyne*, PM 202).

Like Samos, Byzantion favoured the banquet scene (*Totenmahl*) a widely known motif and part of the foundational visual *koine* shared by Hellenistic poleis. However, Byzantion differentiated itself through a clear transformation of this homology: the Byzantine banquet often becomes a *Bildungsmahl* (scholarly banquet) or a *Bekränzungsszene*, emphasizing civic virtue using honorific wreaths. This marked differentiation from the displays of wealth and heroic figures seen in Samos, is a clear mechanism of competitive emulation, where Byzantion asserted a local identity defined by culture and literacy.

Motif	Details	#	Total
Banquet scenes*	Man reclining	2	58
	Man reclining with seated woman	43	
	'Family scenes' (3+ figures)	7	
	Unclear/fragmented	6	
*Dexiosis**	Two men	2	18
	Man & Woman	6	
	Two women	3	
	At the banquet	7	
Multiple figures standing & seated	All standing	5	9
	All seated	0	
	Standing & seated mixed	4	
Men	In armour	0	19
	Equestrian*	4	
	Seated	3	
	Standing	12	
Adolescent men	Context of *gymnasion*	1	3
	Military	2	
Pre-adults	Boy/toddler	2	5
	Young woman/girl	3	
Women	Seated	6	14
	Standing	8	
Objects/Other	No figures		5
Fragments			12
		Total	**143**

Table 9: Motifs on Byzantine stelai.

*	F 191a and F 213 are *Stockwerkstelen* carrying two reliefs each. F 191a carries a dexiosis relief (F 191a-1) and a relief with a banquet scene (F 191a-2). F 213 carries a relief with a banquet scene (F 213a) and an equestrian relief (F 213b).

3.5.1 Figures of the grave reliefs

Numerically men and women are represented roughly equally on Byzantine grave reliefs, which is partly due to the fact that the popular banquet scenes overwhelmingly depict couples, while reliefs with single reclining men are comparatively rare. When depicted by themselves men are shown standing, accompanied by one or two slaves (PM 191 (pl. 126), F 133 (pl. 163)), arranged frontally in the *Normaltypus* common during the Hellenistic period. The depiction of standing women is similarly standardized: frontal orientation, styled in the widespread *Pudicitia*-type (PM 466 (pl. 129), F 146 (pl. 165)) with attending servants. Seated men were clearly less favoured, appearing on three examples by themselves and on no relief sitting down when interacting with other figures (PM 841 (pl. 131), F 166 (pl. 167)). Women are not only seated in banquet scenes, but also when depicted by themselves and together with additional figures. Several of the single seated women are shown in full frontal view, placed in elaborate settings with caryatid entablatures (PM 891 (pl. 132), 892 (pl. 133)), rich furniture (PM 891, 909 (pl. 133)) and surrounded by a multitude of attributes and servants (up to three in PM 892 and 909), while most more modest stelai show them in profile with only one servant (F 169 (pl. 167)).[509] Additionally, they are also shown seated in company of other figures (PM 992, F 180) and in *dexiosis* scenes (PM 1056 (pl. 135), 1065 (pl. 136)). Children follow common themes, with young boys and girls being depicted with pet dogs (PM 735 (pl. 131), F 143 (pl. 164)), and adolescent boys being linked to the *gymnasion* or the military through attributes like herms and weapons (PM 126 (pl. 126), 273 (pl. 127), 292 (pl. 127)).

The most popular motif, as in Samos, is the banquet, with the majority of the scenes falling into the subcategory of "*Bekränzungsszenen*" in which the reclining man holds up a wreath behind the woman. The wreath may be partially behind the woman's head (F 70 (pl. 154)), close to her (PM 1662 (pl. 141), 1686 (pl. 142)), or, most often, shifted prominently into the middle of the empty space between man and woman (PM 1144 (pl. 134), 1664 (pl. 141)). In three reliefs (PM 1657 (pl. 140), 1669 (pl. 141), F 87 (pl.157)) it is held flat instead of upright losing "visual conciseness in favour of emphasizing the act of crowning."[510] Like the honorific wreaths in Smyrna, the Byzantine crowns are to be understood as symbols of admirable civic virtue, not of actually awarded honours. They indicate the good qualities of the deceased: role models who fulfilled their civic duty for the polis, worthy of admiration and respect.[511] Apart from the wreath these crowning scenes appear comparatively 'bare': they rarely have shelves with attributes at the top (PM 1657 (pl.140), 1686 (pl.

[509] PM 885 shows a woman frontally under an arch with two servants carrying attributes but no further decoration or shelves with attributes.
[510] Fabricius 1999a, 236.
[511] Fabricius 1999a, 247f. While the depiction of wreaths or crowns is not common on Classical Athenian stelai, literary sources, as well as many surviving inscriptions, record the awarding of crowns to deserving citizens for outstanding services for the polis. Cf. Isoc. 15.93–94; Dem. 18.

142)), the tiny servants shrivel and become mere sketches rather than fully formed figures, and drinking and dining is reduced to a minimum. The men hold small cups in the hand not raising the crown, but they are inconspicuous and barely noticeable. Similarly, the food on the tables is nondescript, sometimes appearing so flat that it can be mistaken for the tabletop. The Byzantine iconographic tradition clearly had less interest in emphasizing the meal aspect of the banquet scene, reducing and abstracting it until it resembles the 'heroic' *Totenmahl* only in the most general terms. This also manifests itself in the banquet scenes without the crowning motif, with several removing the table in favour of educational objects, like an orb (PM 2034 (pl. 145)) or a scroll chest (PM 2036 (pl. 146)), while the men hold scrolls instead of drinking vessels (PM 1570 (pl. 139), 2035 (pl. 145)). Just as the crowning scenes emphasize civic virtue, these "*Bildungsmahle*" emphasize literacy and culture.[512] In addition to the more abstract composition shared by the majority of Byzantine banquet scenes, another theme is the addition of physical touch in some cases. While it happens mostly in the form of a handshake between couples or pairs (PM 1758 (pl. 144), F 84 (pl. 156)), there is more contact between the figures in 'family scenes'. Children can stand in front of the *kline* (F 60 (pl. 152), 108a (pl. 160)) in late Hellenistic reliefs, with some stelai dated into the Roman period depicting them sitting on the kline with their father (PM 1785, F 56) or on the lap of their mother (PM 1748). In the first two instances the man often puts his hand on the shoulder of the child in a gesture of intimacy and affection (F 60). On PM 2037 (pl. 146), one of the men touches the shoulder of the woman in the same way, displaying their close relationship. These displays of affection through physical proximity and touch are absent in the banquet scenes from Samos and reinforce the importance of the family unit, especially the bond between husband and wife.

Apart from these details, there is little variation in the composition of the figures on Byzantine reliefs generally. Standing, sitting or reclining men, as well as standing or sitting women are portrayed in a relatively uniform way and can be found in similar fashion in other poleis. To what extent the abstraction and lack of details can be ascribed to the stylistic choices or financial resources of the buyer, is debatable. As Fabricius has pointed out, it might have been common to put up grave markers for each family member, which would mean a bigger financial cost, compelling some to purchase simpler and more affordable pieces that required less time and skill.

The relative conservatism of figural types in Byzantion should not be read a lack of engagement, but as a potentially stabilising strategy that prioritised visual intelligibility across a wide social and geographical spectrum. As in the case of Samos, it remains difficult to determine whether the

[512] Fabricius 1999a, 248f. Additionally, some stelai show elaborate furniture through klinai (PM 1558, 1662, 2034) or chairs (PM 841, 891, 909) with finely turned legs. The details imply a high level of craftsmanship required to create them, therefore, making the production of these stelai more expensive.

persistence of familiar figure types reflects a deliberate commitment to recognisability or simply the continued use of a readily available visual 'default'. The material itself does not allow a definitive distinction between these explanations. What Byzantion demonstrates particularly clearly, however, is that even where the principal homologies appear conventional, distinction could be articulated through other means, most notably through the selective use and reconfiguration of attributes and compositional emphasis. In this respect, the Byzantian reliefs reinforce the value of a relational perspective: shared figure types provided a stable framework within which locally meaningful variation could emerge, allowing the polis to participate fully in a common visual language while still producing a recognisably distinct funerary idiom.

3.5.2 Attributes

Book scrolls, as a predominantly male attribute, are particularly common on Byzantine grave reliefs. Not only are they held by the men (PM 841 (pl. 131)) or arranged on shelves in the background (PM 191 (pl. 126), 223 (pl. 127), 1804 (pl. 144)), but they start appearing in banquet scenes stacked on the tables, instead of the cakes and fruit usually found in these scenes (PM 2037 (pl. 146), 2038 (pl. 147)). Scrolls are even featured multiple times within one scene. This emphasis on literacy is further amplified if Pfuhl – Möbius correctly identify some of the boxes arranged in the background as scroll chests. While there does not seem to be a clear system for when a crate/chest with handles is categorized as "scroll chest", in a notable number of reliefs the depiction of scrolls correlates with the presence of crates with handles (e.g., PM 223 (fig. 41), 1570 (pl. 139)), which have not been present to this extent in the funerary reliefs of other poleis.

The stress on education and literacy reaches almost comical levels on stele PM 2037 (pl. 146), the grave marker for Meniskos, his son Bakion and wife Aristoboula. The two men are reclining on sofas, with one, most likely Meniskos, resting his right hand on the shoulder of his wife, seated on a chair near the foot of the *kline*. Four servants are present, two male and two female, to attend on the three protagonists; a shelf in the background holds numerous attributes, and the small table in front of the couch is one typically found on *Totenmahlreliefs*. In total there are nine different stacks of scrolls, as well as one scroll crate with handles: both Meniskos and Bakion hold scrolls in their left hands, three scroll piles are arranged on the table in front of them, and the shelf carries another three stacks, together with one open scroll. Clearly, it was important to the men of Byzantion to show how well-read and educated they were.

Among the figural reliefs in Byzantine funeral iconography the *Totenmahl* is the most common motif, and needs to be examined in regard to its use of attributes. Notable is the virtual absence of both cupbearers and mixing vessels and of the *kylikeion* displaying expensive tableware, which are

so common in Samos. The composition of Byzantine reliefs in general favours smaller groups of just one man and one woman, rather than the large 'family portraits' found in Samos, closer to the layout of banquets on Classical Athenian and Hellenistic Rhodian funerary stelai. Unlike these, however, the Byzantine men are not depicted lifting one hand to toast with a drinking vessel, instead they are often holding up a wreath with their right hand, while holding a small cup in their left hand (PM 1662 (pl. 141), 1686 (pl. 142), 1721 (pl. 142), F 45 (pl. 150), F 97 (pl. 159)). Horses or horse *protomai*, popular in many other Hellenistic cities, do not play a significant role as attributes in Byzantine funerary art. They are missing from all but one banquet scene (PM 2035 (145)), and of the four examples of horses two show an equestrian riding his horse (F 184 (pl. 169)), while the two others are small and designed with little detail (PM 1437 (pl. 138), 1463 (pl. 138)), clearly not the focal point of the relief and not comparable to the numerous and elaborate depictions that can be found in Pergamon or Samos.[513] The banquet was an effective composition in which to incorporate attributes signifying literacy, since the figures are all seated or reclined, not only allowing them to hold objects prominently in their hands but also leaving space above them to be filled with shelves and other items.[514] PM 1570 (pl. 139) shows a reclining man who does not even carry a cup (let alone a *kantharos*) but rests his head in his left hand while holding a scroll in his right hand. On the shelf behind him rests a scroll bundle and one of the 'scroll boxes', further emphasizing his literacy, while the accompanying woman is characterized by a *kalathos* and a chest on the shelf, as well as a slave girl holding a basket (possibly a *kalathos* filled with wool). On PM 2034 (pl. 145) there is no table, no drinking vessel and no food. The man is resting on a *kline*, his head propped onto his left arm, while he holds in his right hand a stick pointing to a spherical object resting on a small base in front of his couch (fig. 42). Pfuhl and Möbius give no explanation for it, but it seems to be a teaching device symbolizing the earth, used for mathematics or physics. A similar object can be seen in the fragmented F 194a (pl. 170) and at the bottom of PM 2271. Fabricius sees the motif as a reference to depictions of the Seven Sages (fig. 43–46).[515] Additionally, the muse of astronomy and astrology, Urania, can be shown with a pointing stick and globe (fig. 47–48).

PM 2036 (pl. 146) also omits typical *Totenmahl* equipment; even the servants, present in PM 1570 (pl. 139) and 2034, are missing. Instead of holding a cup the reclining man is reaching into an open chest (identified as book chest by Pfuhl – Möbius) positioned in front of his *kline,* retrieving an object while the woman watches him. Similarly, one of the men on PM 2038 (pl. 147) also carries

[513] Pfuhl expresses doubt over whether PM 1437 is a genuine Byzantine work, calling it a "foreign object" for the polis and ascribing it to a master in Smyrna or Pergamon. Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 341.
[514] In contrast to Samos the *Totenmahlreliefs* of Byzantion are usually taller than wide.
[515] Fabricius 1999a, 249.

no drinking vessel but a small object (possibly a scroll) while a *kithara* and a ship's bow are displayed on the wall above him. The three-legged table with cakes remains, but again there are no other objects or attributes that signify a banquet as we have seen it in the iconography of other poleis. The 'classic' formula of the *Totenmahl* with a focus on drinking or even as a display of family and prosperity is reshaped, now mostly displaying more intimate scenes between a couple, emphasizing education for men and beauty for women.[516] The shift in using attributes across scenes is clear, revealing that the values cherished by the Byzantine citizens emphasized less the 'traditional' drinking culture, and equally 'traditional' activities like sports, and focusing instead on more educational topics; at least for men.

The transformation of the banquet into a *Bildungsmahl* demonstrates how Byzantion adopted a recognisable funerary structure while reorienting its meaning toward locally valued ideals, without abandoning the shared visual language that ensured recognisability beyond the polis. Rather than rejecting established motifs, the reliefs recalibrate them, replacing heroic or sympotic associations with an emphasis on education, literacy, and cultivated civic identity. The persistence of the banquet format, despite being given a new emphasis in meaning, suggests that innovation was deliberately channelled through familiar compositional frameworks, allowing novelty to remain legible to external viewers. In this sense, the model of peer interaction helps explain why Byzantion's evident desire for visual distinction did not result in the invention of an entirely new group scene, but instead in the systematic reorientation of an existing one: difference was articulated through transformation, balancing local self-definition with participation in a shared Hellenistic repertoire. This strategy ensured participation in a shared visual language while allowing Byzantion to articulate a distinctive set of priorities within it.

Like the 'male' book scrolls, female figures also have attributes exclusively used by them or their slaves appearing in a majority of the reliefs: pocket mirrors (e.g., PM 2034, 2037 (fig. 49)), and, to a lesser degree, double combs (PM 992 (pl. 134)) and double vials (e.g., PM 892 (pl. 133), 2034 (pl. 145), 2037 (fig. 49)). While these objects are not uncommonly associated with women, the consistency with which these items appear, especially the mirror, is unique to the Byzantion stelai. The mirrors are always depicted open and may be carried by an attending servant (PM 892 (pl. 133), 909 (pl. 133)) or placed on a shelf (PM 992 (pl. 134), 507 (pl. 136)), where they appear to balance open-faced on their narrow edge. Together with the comb and the vials, perhaps holding perfume or expensive oils, they emphasize the female virtue of beauty. The more generic attributes of pyxides and chests, and the *kalathos,* a recurring staple in the arsenal of iconic femininity, also

[516] Further examples of 'banquet scenes' that mostly or completely lack the banqueting part are PM 2034, 2036 and 2038.

feature heavily in reliefs depicting women and reiterate the focus on the traditional role and duties of women within the *oikos*, as homemaker, wife, and mother. This traditional understanding of gender roles may also be an explanation for the particular choice of female clothing in Byzantine funerary art. The women not only wear the usual combination of *chiton* and *peplos*, but are invariably veiled, covering their hair with a part of their cloak,[517] a feature matching the development of more modest clothing for men who are rarely depicted naked or without a chiton under their *himation*.

The notable exceptions from women being depicted conservatively as housewives, preoccupied by their chores and their looks, are Mousa (PM 467 (fig. 50)), a woman identified as practicing medicine (*iatreine*) in the epigram on her grave stele,[518] and another woman (PM 2035 (pl. 145, fig. 51)) characterized through the attributes of a *diptychon*. Mousa stands out further by being accompanied by two dogs, another uncommon attribute for women. While young children, male and female, are often depicted with a pet dog (usually a spitz), the customary animal associated with adult women are birds, especially doves. In the few examples in which they are depicted with a dog, the animal follows the same iconography as pet dogs of children, not the visual design of dogs accompanying men which are of a leaner stature and are identified as hunting dogs. The dogs next to Mousa, while similarly scaled down like the slave, fall into this latter category. Combined with the male-coded attribute of the book scroll and the fact that she was a physician, Mousa presents a uniquely emancipated depiction of a deceased woman.

The importance of attributes in the funerary art of Byzantion can be observed in the large number of (gendered) attributes in the relief scenes (regularly more numerous than in other poleis), as well as in surviving gravestones that show only various objects (PM 2256 (pl. 147), 2269 (pl. 148), 2270 (pl.148), 2271 (pl. 148), 2315 (pl. 149)) and no figural decoration at all. Into the group of reliefs with 'excessive' attributes falls PM 2037 (pl. 146), mentioned above for its numerous book scrolls. In addition to the scrolls the stele also sports a chest, *kalathos*, double vial and pocket mirror behind Aristoboula, and two butterflies as well as another chest for Meniskos and Bakion. Surprisingly, none of the servants carry any objects, but instead they are shown interacting with each other.

[517] Fabricius proposes that the emphasis on the back of the head displayed in some of the women (e. g., PM 1570, 2034) may point towards elaborate and complex pinned-up hairstyles, hidden under the veil worn by the figures. Fabricius 1999a, 230.

[518] For the depiction of women in their profession on Attic Gravestones of the Classical period cf. Kosmopoulou 2001.

Another opulent relief, PM 2315, is too damaged to fully reconstruct the scene, but showcases a bottle, quill, writing tablet, scroll stack, *kithara*, scroll case with handle, small box or bag, possibly carrying writing material, and a small ball on a shelf above the figures, in addition to a reading desk and a herm that are placed next to them.[519]

PM 2271 is one among several grave stelai showing no human figures at all, appearing like a glimpse into a cupboard or storage room, with various objects stacked on top of each other, hung on nails and placed on shelfs. The narrow stele shows a top shelf with a stack of scrolls, a sponge, a quill and an ink bottle, and a multiangular object[520] with a chain or rope attached to its top. Below this shelf, on the left side of the stele, 'floats' a chest (with handles, possibly containing scrolls) without any visible support above a wreath and a torch holder. On the right side another chest sits on the bottom of the stele with a large orb on top of it and a palm branch resting against its side. Behind the chest a *kerykeion* is propped up with a crescent at the top and a small band around the shaft. Another smooth staff leans to the right. Similarly, PM 2269 and PM 2270 both depict a selection of attributes, with the central few being the same: a set of horse tackle and a belt hanging from a nail, with a sword sporting a lionhead handle, attached to the belt. PM 2262 adds a ship's bow to the left and a simple box to the right, while PM 2270 has a chest on the left side, and two book scrolls to the right. Pfuhl – Möbius also report traces of additional painted objects (wreath, palm branch, another chest), but they are hardly recognizable in the photograph. These 'attribute-stelai' are by no means 'less' than the figural reliefs but provide a much more individual portrait of the life of the deceased with references to not just the educational aspect typical in Byzantion, but also the religious and military. The *kerykeion*, wreath and torch holder in PM 2271 could be interpreted as representing priestly offices held by the dead, while the swords and horse tacks in PM 2269 and 2270 are clear references of martial themes (with the ship suggesting a naval aspect) that are otherwise virtually absent in Byzantine funerary iconography. Even while omitting human figures the stelai use attributes to display the virtues of the deceased: *arete* through military service, piety through religious symbols and literacy through book scrolls, chests, writing utensils and the globe. These highly reduced monuments bring the dynamics of peer polity interaction into particularly sharp focus. The attributes associated with the *Bildungsmahl* (most notably scrolls and other markers of literacy) cannot be explained by PPI in terms of content: the framework does not tell us why education was especially valued in Byzantion, nor why this quality was chosen for commemoration.

[519] The inscription names the deceased as Sostrata, daughter of Damophilos and Damophilos, son of Damophilos, interpreted by Pfuhl as siblings. The attributes of herm and ball, typically used for children and adolescents, indicate that Damophilos died young. Pfuhl – Möbius 1979, 558.

[520] Identified by Pfuhl as possibly being a *parallelepipedon:* a three-dimensional figure formed by six parallelograms. If true, this, like the globes mentioned below, would fit with the interest in mathematics/physics and the overarching theme of education in Byzantion.

What PPI does help to explain, however, is how such values came to be embedded within a recognisable funerary scene rather than generating an entirely new iconographic motif. By attaching locally significant attributes to an established pictorial composition, Byzantion ensured that its monuments remained legible within a shared visual repertoire while simultaneously developing a scene that was specific to the polis. This highlights both the strength and the limitation of PPI: it clarifies why distinctive meanings were articulated through familiar formats, but it cannot determine whether the resulting restraint reflects deliberate strategic choice, default workshop practice, or a conscious return to established visual norms in a city marked by discontinuity and resettlement.

Attributes in Byzantion are generally used to paint a clear picture of gendered roles within the community, with men depicted as well-read, educated individuals who have achieved success, financially as well as privately, and women as beautiful and devoted wives. Additionally, a small number of attribute-stelai allow for the inclusion of objects related to military and religious themes, absent in most other reliefs. The high level of education, as well as the finely crafted furniture, rich garments and cosmetics speak of the wealth that could be made in a crucial port city, while military service and athletic competition appear to have been less important for most citizens.

3.5.3 Caryatids

Funerary stelai from Byzantion are notable for their architectural elements with the majority of monuments being crowned by a pediment or designed as a flat-topped naiskos, referencing monumental architecture as discussed in Chapter 2. But beyond those features, several Byzantine stelai survive with detailed carved caryatids as part of the relief frame (PM 507 (pl. 130, fig. 52), 891 (pl. 132), 892 (pl. 133), 2034 (pl. 145), 2038 (pl. 147)). In the case of PM 2034 the caryatids are additionally topped with a pair of sphinxes and eight stelai incorporate an arch into their composition (PM 191 (pl. 126), 400 (pl. 128), 507 (pl. 130), 885 (pl. 132), 1686 (pl. 142), 2036 (pl. 146), 2315 (pl. 149), 2316 (pl. 149)), often as part of a complex frame design. All Byzantine caryatids but one (PM 2038 (pl. 147)) are women in long dresses, with one arm lifted above their head, supporting the architrave with their hand as it rests on the baskets (possibly *kalathoi*) on their heads.[521] The other hand either rests loosely at their side or grasps the fabric of their gown. To understand how the caryatids on the Byzantine stelai may be interpreted it is necessary to briefly explore the use of the iconographical motif and its development.

[521] On PM 2038 only one caryatid survives; the figure is heavily fragmented, missing parts of the head, but seems to be a naked male, not a clothed woman. The body does not fit the common scheme of an Atlas figure (usually characterized by an adult figure with well-defined muscles), instead appearing softer and smaller, more like the depictions of young boys or toddlers found on grave stelai.

Female figures as load bearing elements have a long history in material culture: Archaic mirrors with handles in the form of female figures holding up the mirror plate (fig. 53); ceramic works with female support figures (fig. 54–55); women as part of the base of *perirrhanteria* (fig. 56); and women used instead of columns as architectural supports, like the maidens on the treasuries dedicated by the Siphnians and Knidians in Delphi (fig. 57). The most famous architectural caryatids are the maidens acting as columns of the small porch of the Erechtheion on the Acropolis of Athens (fig. 58). While the term *caryatides* is an ancient one, the six Erechtheion maidens are only called *korai* in the inscribed building accounts (dated to c. 420–410 BCE), with Vitruvius being the oldest source for the term caryatid.[522] [523] Pliny links caryatids and *thyiades* to the cult of Dionysos when describing a sculpture group of dancers by Praxiteles,[524] and Pausanias and Plutarch also call the female devotees of Dionysos in Delphi "*thyiades*."[525] A more conclusive origin might be recorded by Pausanias, who recounts the customs in a sanctuary of Artemis in Caryae: every year the maidens of Lakedaimonia performed dances at (and maybe for) a statue of Artemis Caryatis, which was placed not within a temple or shrine, but out in the open.[526]

It is not only the origin but also the significance of caryatids that remains obscure: the scholarly discourse regarding the supporting figures of the Erechtheion (and to a lesser degree of the treasuries in Delphi) focusses heavily on the etymology of the term "*caryatides"* or the development and description of different types.[527] While Vitruvius is referenced by almost every author, his account is unhelpful when trying to analyse the figures within the context of Classical Athens.[528]

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[522] IG I³ 474. It is unclear when the naming convention within modern scholarship shifted from "*korai*" to "*caryatids*" when addressing the sculptures of the Erechtheion. Lessing (Petersen – v. Olshausen 1925, 25f) does not mention them in his essay on caryatids, early publications such as Julius 1878 or Petersen 1907, only mention the *Korenhalle* (maiden hall), and Ronczewski calls them *korai* as well as caryatids. Ronczewski 1922, column 174.

[523] Vitruvius explains the name and the pose of the caryatids with the story of the Persian-friendly city Caryae, which was destroyed after the end of the Greco-Persian war, with all male citizens killed and the women taken as slaves. To ensure that the consequences of Caryae's 'sin' of allying with the enemy was known to posterity, the architects of the time came up with the sculptures of the load-bearing women to be used instead of plain columns or pillars on public buildings: the Caryatids. Vitr. 1.1.5; Plommer 1979, 98. Criticism of the Vitruvian explanation of the etymology of "carytides" was already voiced by Lessing in the 18th century, and today it has been largely accepted as fiction. Vickers 1985, 4; Muss – Schubert 1988, 122; Lloyd-Morgan 1990, 143; Scholl 1995, 197; Shear 1999, 66.

[524] Plin. *N.H.* 36.6.

[525] Paus. 10.6.4; Plut. *Mulier*. 13; King 1998, 275. Shear points out that the term "caryatid" could be used for dancing girls as well. Shear 1999, 66.

[526] Paus. 3.10.7. Lloyd-Morgan proposes the cult of Artemis Caryatis originating in the cult of a sacred tree which was the focus for a local cult, possibly of a reginal goddess called Caryae who later became an aspect of Artemis. Lloyd-Morgan 1990, 143. Pausanias' report would correspond to a fragment of the tragedian Pratinas titled "*Dymaenae or Caryatids*," where the Carytids are meant to be priestesses of Artemis from Caryae in Laconia. Ath. *Deipn*. IX 392f.

[527] Scholl 1995, 179; Shear 1999, 65.

[528] Shear 1999, 66. King suggests reading Vitruvius' work as a sign of his own time, when caryatids and Atlantes had become "established and acknowledged forms of decoration," King 1998, 275.

Vitruvius' focus on servitude and punishment which does not offer a reliable interpretation given that neither the caryatids of the Erechtheion, nor any of the maidens used as support figures in architecture and elsewhere display any visual clue that would allow for an interpretation of them as symbols or embodiment of inferiority or punishment of women or political enemies.[529] Other, more positive approaches have read the Erechtheion maidens as *kanephoroi* or *arrephoroi*, with the first being part of the Panathenaic procession on the Parthenon frieze, carrying the offering basket (*kanoun*), and the latter being acolytes of Athena Polias, living on the acropolis while serving the goddess.[530] Scholl puts forward a detailed analysis of the Erechtheion caryatids relying on their position above the mythological 'grave of Kekrops', and refers to vase depictions (especially on white lekythoi) of women visiting graves with *phialai* and performing *choai*, arguing for a literal interpretation of the caryatids as *korai*, young women, "ideational daughters of Kekrops", performing an everlasting *choai* for their progenitor and ancestor in the name of the whole polis.[531] Gaifman follows a similar argument but highlights the ambiguous character of the caryatids, pointing out that the different readings of the women do not have to be mutually exclusive.[532] She raises the possibility of a "deliberate vagueness" as an inherent trait to ancient sculpture and iconography, which, while in most cases most likely due to a modern perspective and missing information, could sometimes be intentional. In linking the caryatids with their *phialai* to the maidens with similar sacrificial bowls, she connects them to the realm of religious processions, as well as the funeral context where mourners and surviving family members performed libations at the grave. Like Scholl, she points out that the caryatids are part of a public monument, performing or invoking a ritual on behalf of all citizens of the polis and strengthening the importance of an ongoing ancestor cult on a private, as well as public scale, and even characterising the Erechtheion maidens as "memorials for the deceased, as *mnemata*."[533]

All these aspects tie back together with the caryatids found on Byzantine grave stelai and can be used to explain their placement on funerary stelai. By the time these sepulchral monuments were commissioned, caryatids had moved from being used for the adornment and decoration of some of the earliest and most sacred Greek sites and buildings, into the more secular realm of the

[529] Vickers 1985; Muss – Schubert 1988, 123. As King has pointed out, the presence of caryatids at the Erechtheion and in Delphi, as well as those used at the *heroon* of Pericles in Limyra makes an interpretation as trompe l'œil implausible, as "these figures are honoured rather than dishonoured." King 1998, 276f.
[530] Paus. 1.27.3; Schmidt 1982, 83. They were also addressed as the *Kekropides*, the daughters of the mythical first king of Athens, Kekrops; while these interpretations might seem compelling, the number of *korai* does not align with that of the *kanephoroi* (an office/title held by one maiden), *arrephoroi* (two) or the daughters of Kekrops (three). Schmidt 1982, 83f; Scholl 1995, 197; Gaifman 2018, 8.
[531] Scholl 1995, 182–185, 199, 202, 204f, 208f, 210.
[532] Gaifman 2018, 8.
[533] Gaifman 2018, 10, 48, 85, 115.

funeral.[534] As the interpretation of Scholl and Gaifman has shown, the caryatids can be understood as *choephoroi*, being closely linked to funerary and ancestral cult, as well as the preservation of (collective) memory as a way to strengthen a collective identity. While the Byzantine caryatids do not carry *phialai* they have one hand extended above their head, holding up the architrave. This pose can be found not only in the Eleusinian caryatid (fig. 59), carrying the *cista mystica* on her head, but also in the *arrephoroi* on the Parthenon frieze, and the women of the so-called Column of the Dancers in Delphi (fig. 60–61), tying the stelai figures back into the religious realm and cultic performance. The figure of the caryatid, with all its ambiguity, has one overarching theme: cult service. However one wants to read the maidens, if as *kanephoroi*, *arrephoroi,* or *choephoroi*, whether in the service of their *oikos* or the whole polis, they all are linked to the greater context of repeated cultic performance. Within the sepulchral context, caryatids embed the dead and the visitors performing offerings at the grave site in the greater cult events and ancestral memory that act as the foundation of the polis identity and tie the citizens together. They are a visual marker for rituals performed by dutiful women to honour and remember the deceased members of their families, ensuring the ongoing connection between the realms of the living and the dead.

The funerary use of caryatids in Byzantion similarly reflects a preference for embedding commemoration within well-established religious and architectural traditions. While the prominence of this motif may in part be supported by local workshop expertise and the availability of artisans familiar with architectural sculpture, such practical factors alone cannot account for its consistent funerary deployment, particularly given that caryatids continued to appear in non-funerary contexts in other poleis. Rather, the repeated use of caryatids in Byzantian grave monuments suggests a local reorientation of a panhellenic visual form toward sepulchral meaning, possibly emphasising ritual continuity and symbolic guardianship of the dead. In this way, a shared sacred motif was selectively integrated into Byzantion's sepulchral repertoire, reinforcing recognisability within the wider Hellenistic visual *koine* while articulating a distinct local commemorative emphasis.

3.5.4 Summary

Byzantion, like other Greek poleis in Asia Minor, did not initiate an independent sepulchral iconography. Many figure types, compositions and visual formulas are well established, like the seated woman (usually of the *Pudicitia*-type), the *dexiosis*, and the *Totenmahl*. Like others, the Byzantines added and subtracted details within the traditional scenes, altering the meaning of the reliefs. This is most obvious in banquet scenes that lack their typical attributes, like drinking vessels,

[534] Lloyd-Morgan 1990, 148–150.

cupbearers and tables with cakes and meat, as well as the heroically-coded attributes of *protomai* and snakes on trees that we have seen in Samos. Instead, they become *Bildungsmahle*, emphasizing literacy and education in men and the more traditional values of domesticity, diligence and beauty in women.

That Samos and Byzantion lean towards different themes in their uses of the banquet scene may be unsurprising given their distance from one another. Kyzikos (map 11), Byzantion's neighbouring polis, shows us that different iconographic preferences can also exist in geographical proximity.[535] This city also had a preference for banquet reliefs, although the number of attendees is often higher than in Samos or Byzantion.[536] They kept 'heroic' attributes like the *protomai* and trees with snakes as in Samos but did not include additional characterizing objects on shelves and ledges.[537] Many stelai also feature a smaller secondary image beneath the primary funerary relief, which often shows a man on a horse fitting with the 'heroic' theme but can also show unusual motifs such as a blacksmith or a dance performance.[538] Placing several images on one '*Stockwerkstele*' was not uncommon in north-west Asia Minor, especially in Bithynia, during the Hellenistic period.[539] There are thus differences in theme and focus as well as composition in the banquet stelai of Byzantion and even a close neighbour. This suggests that not only could poleis exhibit different visual languages from their peers but could also potentially deliberately differentiate themselves from their neighbours.

Apart from the comparatively weak visual reference to 'heroic' iconography in the motif of the banquet, the conservative male imagery of athleticism and military service are all but abandoned in Byzantion, with no men in armour or naked in the *gymnasion*. Apparently, martial and athletic competition, while it most certainly still played a big role in the life of the citizens, was not seen as appropriate depiction of the deceased on their grave monument.

The incorporation of caryatids along with other architectural designs associated with (sacred) monumental architecture clearly marks the grave as a space separate from the realm of its living visitors. The caryatids, a particular feature found in Byzantion, not only demonstrate a high interest

[535] Pfuhl – Möbius catalogue about 100 stelai as (possibly) from Kyzikos, with approx. 40 stelai being dated into the Hellenistic period. Among the reliefs several motifs known from Classical Athens, such as the seated woman and the *dexiosis* can be found, adopted by the workshops of Kyzikos in the local style. Apart from these Greek compositions, Cremer records several figure types with an "oriental" origin, for example huntsmen and chariots. Cremer 1991, 11, 19–25. On the Kyzican grave reliefs see Fabricius 1999a, 277–334.

[536] Cremer 1991, 9; Drew-Bear 2006. Often the reliefs depict two or more reclining men, usually in the company of one or two women (PM 1187, 2016).

[537] Cremer interprets the Kyzican banquets as a new creation with origins both in Attic hero banquets and the feasting imagery from Asia Minor. Cremer 1991, 74.

[538] Cremer 1991, KN 7 (pl. 4) and KN 2 (pl. 2).

[539] See Cremer 1991, catalogue KS 1-9; Fabricius 1999a, 323f. The precursor of the *Stockwerkstelen*, the so-called "graeco-persian stelai", is linked to the Achaemenid Empire. Cremer 1991, 17.

in elaborate and unusual framing designs but also give visual clues to the viewer about the importance of (continuous) cultic performance. Within the specific context of the cemetery the figures can be understood as a reference to offerings made to the dead as a way to remember and honour them, maintaining a connection beyond the realm of the living.

While the figures on Byzantine grave reliefs exhibit poses and compositions that can be found in Classical Athenian funerary iconography and share certain aspects of their imagery with other Hellenistic poleis, we have moved far away from the classicising reliefs of Rhodes. The family, the smallest unit within the polis, upon which society was built, is no longer the main focus of the sepulchral monuments. Instead, we see a large number of couples, depicted without additional family members, highlighting their own characteristics and virtues through the use of attributes and the design of the architectural space they occupy. Byzantion, like its peer cities, adapted an existing imagery, adjusting and adding details to match the values that were most important for its citizens. While the city kept a close relationship with Athens and other (Greek) poleis, politically as well as iconographically, there is a clear establishment of an independent visual language that contrasts with those of others even when using the same motifs as a starting point.

Taken together, the funerary reliefs of Byzantion reveal a strategy of selective semantic anchoring rather than iconographic innovation. Motifs such as the *Bildungsmahl* and the funerary use of caryatids demonstrate how the city consistently drew on widely recognisable visual forms while redirecting their meaning toward locally valued ideals of education, virtue, and ritual continuity. These choices cannot be fully explained by workshop practice or artistic competence alone, since both banquet imagery and caryatids were widely used across the Greek world but were rarely mobilised in funerary contexts in the same way elsewhere. A relational perspective helps to account for this pattern: by stabilising shared motifs within a sepulchral catalogue, Byzantion positioned itself within the common visual language of Hellenistic poleis while asserting a distinct civic imagery grounded in intellectual cultivation and symbolic restraint. At the same time, the material also highlights the limits of an approach, such as PPI, reminding us that the specific motivations behind these iconographic choices, such as personal commemoration, ritual practice, and emotional expression cannot be reduced to mechanisms of inter-polis comparison alone.

Conclusion

This thesis has explored the grave reliefs of different Hellenistic poleis in the Greek East and how those living in these cities chose to depict and memorialize their dead loved ones in stone. I have used the concept of peer-polity interaction as a theoretical framework. Although the idea of a cohesive Hellenistic cultural '*koine*' that developed simultaneously to the evolution of a Greek linguistic *koine* on a supra-regional level usefully draws attention to shared values and ideals it leads only so far. The peer poleis considered in this thesis shared language and religion, acted as political allies, and joined the same leagues to defend their interests, but they did not share their funerary iconography. While there are themes, motifs and attributes that all these communities have in common (e.g., the *kalathos* as a symbol of female diligence and domesticity, or the use of banquet scenes in different variations as part of the sepulchral canon), unique local traditions were established and developed in different poleis.

Funerary iconography in the Hellenistic period deploys a number of compositions, largely already used in Classical Athenian grave monuments. These general patterns, when broken down to their most basic components, are arrangements of one or several figures, placed on the image field in a comparatively manageable number of ways: figures can be depicted standing or seated, they can ride a horse, or lounge on a *kline* at a banquet. They may be portrayed as adults, or as children and teenagers. Several figures can be combined to create larger scenes, and they may interact by turning towards each other as if in conversation or shake hands to show their close relationship. Depending on the arrangement, reliefs can be sorted into categories: standing figure/s, seated figure/s, 'family portraits', *dexiosis* scenes, horsemen, or banquet scenes. All these compositions and categories carry a positive meaning and might be thought to be (figural) arrangements used as appropriate to the lifestyle of the deceased.[540] However, the analysis of the material from the five cities discussed in this thesis has shown that instead of adopting all available iconographic series, for use as appropriate, each community made distinct choices when creating the visual language of their funerary monuments, favouring particular elements and motifs, as well as specific combinations thereof, over others.

These choices show an interesting dynamic between variety and individuality, on the one hand, and a general conformity, on the other. Cities followed certain established traditions, but not others, while also composing their own variations on the imagery through the alteration of common features. This speaks to the need of Hellenistic cities to distinguish themselves from each other and

[540] Usually, a number of specimens of each category can be found in several (if not all) poleis, but the distribution varies, depending on which reliefs were most popular.

to establish themselves within the ever-changing political landscape that followed the death of Alexander the Great and during the rise of the increasingly more powerful Roman Empire. Faced with the complex and varied imagery formed in each city, the notion of a typical '*ostgriechisches*' relief becomes inadequate, if not meaningless. There is a fine balance to be struck between (general) observations that hold true for all poleis, or at least the majority, and the smaller details that appear applicable only on a regional level to one polis. The larger patterns that connect the sepulchral iconography of Greek poleis with each other and link them to older traditions are important, but more so are the polis-specific patterns and trends. Focusing on just one will lead to us missing out on important insights into the self-representation of Greek poleis during the Hellenistic period.

The aim of this thesis has not been to create a stylistic handbook of all Eastern Greek grave reliefs with a view to dating and/or assigning a place of origin to monuments, but rather to use the evidence of well-provenanced material to reveal how a shared set of iconographic motifs and elements can be used differently by different communities to create unique local corpora. My focus has been not on the relief alone, but rather on the whole monument, incorporating the frame into the analysis, and showing how it connects and divides viewer and depicted, living and dead.

Chapter 1 explores the interaction between the living and the dead, in literary sources (1.1 and 1.2), looking at how meetings between living and dead were initiated, what the dead expected from their relatives, and what, if any, power they exerted over the living, before asking what material culture (1.3 and 1.4) can tell us about the relationship between living and dead. The rites repeatedly performed at the grave (offerings, libations) after the burial bear a resemblance to the sacrifices made to the gods, although ancient texts never provide a clear explanation of what is expected in return for the offerings to the dead. While a final answer about the purpose of offerings to the dead cannot be given, it seems reasonable to anticipate that precautionary appeasing the dead through offerings could be regarded as an insurance policy to prevent potential harm and hauntings, while placing (personalized) gifts on the grave of a lost loved one mirrors customs of affection and devotion still practised today that might be regarded as a common, if not universal, response to loss. Funerary rites clearly separate the dead from the mortal realm, as they can no longer be reached by normal means and may demand nourishment to incentivise them (or revitalize them enough) to interact with the living, but they also provide the tool to stay in touch with deceased family members and friends. By making them 'unreachable' through normal means and establishing rituals necessary to contact them, the dead are, like the immortals, established as something 'other'. They are no longer human but 'post-mortal', removed from the realm of the living physically and spiritually.

The analysis of relief composition in 1.4 - in terms of interactions between the figures, as well as between the dead and the viewer - is foundational to this thesis in its establishment of a common visual language of Greek memorialisation. It is apparent that, overall, there is less interaction between figures in Hellenistic grave reliefs than was common in the imagery of Classical Athens. While Classical stelai put the *oikos*, as the smallest social and economic unit of the polis, and specifically a genealogical group, into the foreground, the focus during the Hellenistic periods shifted towards a more individualistic and public representation. Depictions of (large) families became less common, and figures were composed in a way geared towards interaction with the viewer, by turning their heads or whole bodies to the front. Frontal-oriented figures are uncommon in Classical reliefs but become the norm during the 2nd century BCE, referencing statues created in honour of outstanding individuals. This emphasis of the individual is true not only for those reliefs depicting only a single figure, accompanied by one or several slaves, but also for apparently 'interactive' scenes, where a banqueter or horseman is shown to engage with other figures: instead of composing the figure/s in profile, they are rotated towards the viewer, sacrificing a naturalistic perspective and composition in an effort to highlight the protagonist. This interest in exceptionalism and elevation of individuals through composition and additional honorary attributes (like the *demos* wreath in Smyrna), with no regard to whether any official honours were actually awarded to the deceased ante- or postmortem, fits with the rise of euergetism in the poleis of Asia Minor. With increasing expenses needed for the upkeep and improvement of public facilities, private citizens sponsored the construction, refurbishment or expansion of administrative, civic and religious buildings, securing themselves public acknowledgement and praise for their contribution towards preserving and enhancing the poleis. Just as poleis were in a competition with each other, in an effort to stand out, so their citizens aimed to be recognized as individuals, not just as part of a larger group or family.

Beyond compositional strategies such as frontality and viewer engagement, the shared visual language of Hellenistic funerary reliefs also operated through broader norms of monument type, scale, and thematic framing. Across the poleis examined in this thesis, stelai of comparable size, format, and material recur, signalling broadly shared expectations regarding visibility, permanence, and social appropriateness within the funerary landscape. Equally important is the recurrence of a limited set of overarching themes that structured commemoration across the Greek world. Honorific and heroizing imagery, banquet scenes, representations of education and cultivation, military service, and ideals of domestic virtue formed a recognisable thematic repertoire through which the dead could be positioned within socially intelligible narratives of value and achievement. These themes established general norms of what could be commemorated and how, without prescribing specific iconographic solutions. Individual poleis selected, combined, or recalibrated

these thematic frameworks according to local priorities, foregrounding military virtue in Pergamon, education in Byzantion, domestic cohesion in Samos, or civic excellency in Smyrna, while remaining legible within a wider Greek cultural horizon. In this way, shared themes functioned as stabilising reference points that enabled variation and differentiation without undermining mutual recognition among peer communities.

Chapter 2 follows the same structure in looking at different ways of framing the dead, building on a broader context of physical space and legislation to explore iconography. It starts with a setting of the scene (2.1), exploring how ancient cemeteries and the funeral monuments within them presented themselves to visitors and passers-by, and the general assumptions that can be made about what burials and subsequent visits to a grave site may have looked like. It emphasizes the personal experience of visiting a grave and interacting with the *sema*. 2.2 provides a summary of what we know of the Greek legal framing of death and burial. By establishing the evolution of funerary laws and customs over time it shows the different needs and expectations that the state/government and the bereaved families had in regard to the different parts of the (pre)burial arrangements. It is notable that funerary legislation increasingly sought to regulate the public dimensions of burial, particularly expressions of excess and ostentation, while simultaneously allowing for exceptional commemorative practices such as public funerals, honorific decrees or statues, and intramural tombs in specific circumstances.

2.3 turns to the iconographical frame of the reliefs, establishing the types of funerary stelai used in the poleis discussed in this thesis during the Hellenistic period. It clearly demonstrates the general tendency in all cities towards using stelai with decorative framing around the relief. While overall trends exist, and all poleis share certain formulas – such as the pediment and the entablature – for framing grave reliefs, the individual cities are unique in the ways they use these visual elements. Furthermore, this chapter explores the liminality of the funerary monuments and how poleis use different imageries to the same overall effect: the frame of the relief, as well as the scale of the figures within it and the attributes depicted in or around the relief, are used as an iconographical shortcut to remove the deceased visually from the realm of the living. By referencing sacred architecture usually reserved for the gods, the dead adopt some of the 'otherness' of the immortals, clearly separating them from the living visitor or passer-by. The clear borders between the realms provided by cemeteries and grave stelai, created a physical location where living and dead could meet and (safely) interact. They further consolidate the dead as no longer human but something 'other'.

The first two chapters clearly demonstrate the shared intention of grave monuments to create not just spaces of memorialisation to honour the ancestors, but meeting places of interaction between living and dead. Reliefs allowed the invisible and incorporeal dead to be seen, to become present when called by the names inscribed on their gravestones, and to receive gifts brought to them by relatives mourning their absence and longing for a connection. In all poleis the living found ways to represent the dead visually in places of remembrance, drawing from existing iconographical and architectural forms to demarcate the borders of different realms and to create liminal spaces.

Following these conceptual chapters, I offer case studies of five poleis (Byzantion, Rhodes, Pergamon, Samos and Smyrna), and an analysis of the grave reliefs originating from these cities.

Of all the cities discussed in this thesis, **Rhodes** presents the most heterogenous group of sculptures, but also the reliefs that stay the closest to Classical Athenian style and motifs. Sitting and standing men and women are popular motifs, as is the *dexiosis*. Martial and athletic themes, almost absent or only subtly referenced through attributes in most Hellenistic cities, remain popular in Rhodes and are used to characterize men as well as adolescents. In addition to commanding a fleet, making military service (especially in the navy) a commendable career option for Rhodian men, the city also became an educational and cultural centre, with a reputation reaching far beyond the Greek world, meaning that traditional motifs of *palaestra* and *gymnasion* as the ultimate representation of Greek education remained relevant. At the same time, this interest in education and literacy created new modes of self-representation for men, who could depict themselves as members of an educated élite through attributes like book scrolls. Banquet scenes, uncommon in Classical Athenian funerary art, proved quite popular and are one of the motifs where Rhodes shows its ability to create new and unique iconographies: unlike other cities, where up to the Roman Imperial period, women are only depicted seated at or near the end of the couch on which the men are reclining, several grave reliefs from Rhodes show women alone or together with men as banqueters. This visual emancipation correlates with greater freedom in economic and social regard, as epigraphic evidence records women as businessowners, sponsors for construction projects, and members of women-only associations. A second motif found exclusively on Rhodian reliefs consists of embracing figures, a gesture of unusual intimacy which displays a deep connection between the participants and can be understood as a progression of the *dexiosis*, which is usually used as iconographic marker for close relationships. This development beyond *dexiosis* scenes encapsulates a city whose grave reliefs remain influenced by traditional Classical iconography, but which also created new and exclusively Rhodian themes and motifs.

One of the largest sets of grave reliefs originates from **Smyrna**, with many specimens not only being well preserved, but on average also of a higher technical quality in comparison with other cities (a fact also reflected in the elaborate and highly detailed *aediculae* that frame many of the reliefs). The iconographic preference for this polis is the standing figure – used for single figures, as well as pairs and groups – with only a small number of reliefs depicting seated figures, banquet scenes or equestrians. Men follow the composition of the *Normaltypus*, established though honorary figures, to signify *sophrosyne*, while women are usually depicted in the *Pudicitia* type, representing modesty. Attributes are used to further ascribe characteristics to the individuals depicted, with the items being placed on high ledges or pillars behind the figures, and following established gendered patterns: wool baskets and cosmetics for women, book scrolls and herms for men. Unique to Smyrna is the motif of the so-called Demeter priestesses. The reliefs depict women wearing a slightly different dress from the *Pudicitia*, carrying poppy-seed capsules or ears of grains, while holding or touching a large torch usually carried by a small slave girl. The attributes do not necessarily make these women priestesses but surely connect them to the fertility goddess and may indicate a local cult or association dedicated to the goddess. Another typically Smyrnean feature is the omnipresent honorific wreath, often inscribed with the word '*demos*' which can be found on almost all stelai, sometimes in multiple iterations. Together with the figural composition referencing honorary statues, the dead were depicted as role models who led exemplary lives worthy of public honours. The motif of the standing figure is no new invention of the Hellenistic period, but Smyrna altered it to fit with the local desire to include the idea of euergetism and public honours in its self-representation.

Samos is a polis which developed a very distinct iconographic tradition and preference: the *Totenmahlrelief*, or banquet scene. Originally used primarily for votive reliefs, the banquet was fully translated into the corpus of sepulchral art, where it was not used exclusively for individuals who received heroic honours (the sheer number of reliefs makes that unlikely), but as an image heavily loaded with implications and associations. In a civic context this first and foremost meant that the individuals depicted are characterized as model citizens who fulfilled their duties and responsibilities during their lifetime to the highest degree, making them worthy of admiration, respect, and honours (real or only visually). Iconographically, the Samian reliefs are extremely busy, and compared to more minimalistic designs appear almost cluttered: 'heroic' attributes like snakes and horse *protomai* appear next to more mundane objects, such as armour, wool baskets and tableware. Rich tapestries and architectural elements create the illusion of a domestic setting in which the banqueter and his family lounge on luxurious furniture, enjoying food and drink while attended by their slaves. Everything speaks of prosperity and abundance. Further characterization follows traditional gender roles, with men associated with attributes related to warfare and

education, and women defined by domestic duties, modesty and beauty. Unlike on the 'family portraits' common for Athenian funerary reliefs, where female family members often take centre stage and occupy an equal amount of space as the men, the women and children in Samos appear as secondary characters in relation to the main protagonist: the reclining head of the household. They take up less space, both in size as well as in gesture, compared to the sprawling men, making them appear more as attributes than as protagonists. In summary, the religious motif of the *Totenmahl* was modified and enriched by adding mundane elements alongside the 'heroic' attributes in an effort to create an imagery fit for the use in the funerary context, portraying the dead as honourable and virtuous, as well as (financially) successful heads of their families.

With fewer than 30 surviving stelai, **Pergamon** has the smallest surviving set of grave reliefs of any polis discussed in this thesis. However, like Samos it exhibits a very clear preference in regard to themes, as the majority of the surviving images show equestrians performing sacrifices, usually with the added attributes of altar, tree and snake. Often labelled as 'heroic' iconography, the imagery demonstrates virtues like piety (performance of libations) and prosperity (horses are prestigious status symbols and only affordable to members of the élite) and may signal to a viewer the exemplary military service of the deceased. The attribute of the snake in a tree also appears in other funerary images from Pergamon, including the three surviving banquet reliefs, a motif that is similarly commonly referred to as heroic, even though we have no evidence (or reason to believe) that every individual memorialized with one of these 'heroic' reliefs was either awarded these public honours by the polis or otherwise 'heroized'. The initially mostly military image of the (armed) equestrian was modified by the addition of religious utensils and additional figures to reflect the more civic values of piety and familiar relationships that were important to the Pergamene citizens.

Byzantion has a large corpus of surviving grave stelai, but the artistic and technical quality of the pieces is generally lower than in Smyrna. Like the people of Samos, the Byzantines favour banquet scenes for the memorialization of the dead, but also produce a significant number of reliefs with standing and sitting figures. These compositions seem to be preferred for the depiction of singular figures and *dexiosis* scenes, while the go-to motif for pairs (most likely married couples) was the banquet. Family scenes or banquets with multiple reclining men are rare, emphasizing the importance of the married couple as a unit within the polis. Compared to the Samian banquets, Byzantion seems to be less interested in the explicit depiction of drinking: the *kylikeion* and the cupbearer, found in almost every banquet scene in Samos, are virtually absent in Byzantion. The men may carry a small cup in their hands, but it is by no means mandatory and is sometimes replaced with other objects, such as book scrolls. More important are the wreaths that most of the men are holding in their right hand, raised high between themselves and the woman seated at the

end of the couches. Whether they are meant to be understood as signs of honours awarded to them, or whether they are about to crown their female companions (or both) remains unclear, but the gesture may tie into the theme of references to public honours that appear in many forms on the reliefs in other poleis. Additional attributes are placed on ledges or shelves above the figures, again following established gendered traditions: men are assigned book scrolls, women *kalathoi,* mirrors and cosmetics. The Byzantine reliefs did not add a large entourage and particularly prestigious attributes to demonstrate wealth and abundance, but reference high social status through education and elaborate details in the depicted furniture and frames.

It has become clear that each polis had its own distinct visual language that it used to depict the dead on funerary reliefs. The assumption that some standard Greek polis exists fundamentally ignores the desire of individuals and communities to stand out, to define themselves against others, be distinctly recognizable, and perceived to be unique. Peer-polity interaction is best understood not as a single causal mechanism, but as a relational framework within which multiple forces intersect. The comparative analysis undertaken here demonstrates that PPI operates not only through processes of competition, emulation and differentiation, but equally through stabilising mechanisms that depend on the continued circulation of familiar themes, motifs, and compositional solutions across poleis. The repeated use of recognisable figure types, narrative frameworks, and thematic clusters (e.g., banquet scenes, *dexiosis* etc.) created a durable visual infrastructure that enabled mutual intelligibility between cities. Adherence to familiar themes and formats functioned not only as cultural conservatism but as a form of visual 'risk management', ensuring that monuments communicated effectively within reputational networks that extended beyond the immediate civic community. This stabilisation did not inhibit local agency; rather, it provided the shared conditions under which meaningful variation could occur. Poleis did not need to invent wholly new iconographies to articulate difference, but could signal identity through selective emphasis, recombination, or transformation of established forms. At the same time, the material makes clear that PPI cannot fully account for the specific motivations behind particular iconographic choices. PPI offers, instead, an explanation for why these locally grounded decisions consistently remained anchored within a shared visual repertoire: adherence to familiar themes and motifs ensured that funerary monuments could function simultaneously as personal memorials and as legible civic statements within a wider network of peer communities. There may be homologies, like overarching themes, practices, traditions and customs, that are shared to some degree between the members of a similar cultural background, but that does not mean that there is no space or need for uniqueness.

While the peer polity interaction framework has proven productive for analysing funerary iconography, the case studies also reveal important limitations that must be acknowledged. One of the principal strengths of applying a peer-polity interaction framework to funerary reliefs lies in its capacity to reconcile similarity and difference without reducing either to imitation or isolation. It allows shared visual norms to be taken seriously as active cultural resources rather than passive background conditions. At the same time, the approach has clear limitations. PPI cannot determine why particular attributes, themes or motifs were meaningful within a given polis, nor can it fully account for the emotional, ritual, or familial motivations behind individual commissions. These meanings emerge from local (social) practices, workshop traditions and personal memory rather than inter-polis rivalry. Recognising these limits is not a weakness of the model but a necessary corrective that prevents over-determination and preserves the agency of patrons, workshops, and viewers.

The material discussed in this thesis is understudied, and undervalued. But when the objects are examined in their own right as a corpus of material, they provide a clear and immediate demonstration of the differences between poleis that have for a long time been homogenised, even by the scholars studying them. Using peer polity interaction as a way to approach the funerary reliefs reinforces the value of overlooked material: looking at material that many people ignore and that individually is not unique or especially interesting (or indeed particularly detailed), can allow us to understand a Greek Mediterranean much more effectively by establishing and examining different patterns both on a supra-regional as well as a local level.

Taken together, the results of this thesis suggest that peer polity interaction offers a robust but testable framework, whose explanatory power depends on scale, comparability, and the density of interaction networks. Future research could test the scalability of this approach by expanding the dataset to include additional poleis or regions such as the Cyclades, Magna Graecia, the Black Sea, and mainland Greece, allowing the typological methodology developed here to function as a transferable analytical template that remains sensitive to regional visual dialects. Similarly, a diachronic shift into the Roman Imperial period would allow for the assessment of patterns of stability, divergence, and iconographic lock-in across a broader temporal range. Closer interdisciplinary integration would further strengthen the framework, particularly through a systematic dialogue between iconographic analysis and epigraphic corpora, to examine how visual and textual modes of commemoration jointly articulated identity, status, and memory.

Digital humanities approaches offer additional possibilities, including GIS-based spatial analysis, network modelling, and linked open data platforms to visualise the geographic distribution of motifs, stylistic affinities, and patterns of interaction across poleis, potentially in collaborative formats that integrate historical, epigraphic, and literary evidence.

Beyond methodological expansion, the material invites broader questions about collective memory and middle-class self-representation in antiquity. The funerary stelai examined here should not be understood solely as elite commissions, but as civic instruments through which a wider social spectrum negotiated status, belonging, and remembrance in highly visible public and liminal spaces. Finally, comparative studies could situate funerary imagery within a wider ecology of civic self-representation by examining how identities articulated in grave monuments relate to those expressed in coins, honorific inscriptions, public sculpture, and monumental architecture, thereby refining our understanding of how local and regional values were constructed, stabilised, and displayed across different public media.

The typical Eastern Greek grave relief does not exist. The notion that there was such a thing eradicates the fine details that mark and distinguish the funerary imageries found in different poleis communities. Many reliefs catalogued by Pfuhl and Möbius lack a provenance, and there is little hope of recovering this information in the future, but there is still the possibility of future excavations and discoveries at other cities, cemeteries and grave reliefs. This thesis has shown that the study of 'inferior' objects and the re-analysis of material (even many years after its publication) under different viewpoints can lead to meaningful insights into the visual language used by ancient societies to express self-representation and identity. It is necessary to look both at the big picture of shared motifs and themes, and the small pictures created through regional imageries to make sense of Eastern Greek grave stelai. Only by doing both can we hope to understand the material evidence that still survives today.

Bibliography

Note on translations and transcriptions

I have abstained from presenting inscriptions and primary sources in their original Greek or Latin forms in an effort to maximize accessibility and readability of this thesis. The editions and translations used can be found in the bibliography. Individual (technical) terms are given in transcription without accents and written in cursive.

All translations from German to English are my own.

Abbreviations

I have used the following abbreviations:

AA	*Archäologischer Anzeiger*
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
AM	*Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung*
Anadolu	*Anadolu/Anatolia Dergisi* (Ankara University)
ASAtene	*Annuario della Scuola archeologica di Atene e delle missioni italiane in Oriente*
BCH	*Bulletin de correspondance hellénique*
Belleten	*Belleten. Türk Tarih Kurumu*
BICS	*Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of London*
BSA	*The Annual of the British School at Athens*
CAT	C. W. Clairmont, *Classical Attic tombstones*, 9 vols. (Kilchberg 1993–1995)
CEG	P. A. Hansen, *Carmina Epigraphica Graeca.* Saeculorum VIII–V a. Chr. n. (Berlin & New York 1983)
CEG 2	P. A. Hansen, *Carmina Epigraphica Graeca*. Saeculi IV a. Chr. n. (CEG 2) (Berlin – New York 1989)
CGRN	*Collection of Greek Ritual Norms*, accessible online: http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/
CIG	*Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*, 4 vols. (Berlin 1828–1877)
ClQ	*The Classical Quarterly*
ClRh	*Clara Rhodos*
Conze	A. Conze, *Die attischen Grabreliefs*, 4 vols. (Berlin & Leipzig 1893–1922)
CVA	*Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum*; in an attempt to provide an easy way to find the vases mentioned in this thesis the numbers given in the reference are the Beazley Archive inventory numbers assigned to the vases in the online catalogue of the CVA: https://www.cvaonline.org/
DNP	*Der Neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der Antike* Accessible online through Brill: DOI: doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_dnp_COM_001 First published online: 2006

Ephem./AE	ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΗ ΕΦΗΜΕΡΙΣ: ΠΕΡΙΟΔΙΚΟΝ ΤΗΣ ΕΝ ΑΘΗΝΑΙΣ ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΗΣ ΕΤΑΙΡΕΙΑΣ / Archaiologikē ephēmeris: ekdidomenē tēs Archaiologikēs Hetaireias
EpigrAnat	*Epigraphica Anatolica. Zeitschrift für Epigraphik und historische Geographie Anatoliens*
Epigr. Gr.	G. Kaibel, *Epigrammata graeca ex lapidibus conlecta* (Berlin 1878)
IC IV	M. Guarducci, *Inscriptiones Creticae IV. Tituli Gortynii* (Rome 1950)
IG I³	*Inscriptiones Graecae I.* Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno anteriores, 3 vols. (Berlin 1981–1998)
IG II²	*Inscriptiones Graecae II et III.* Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno posteriores, 2nd edition, 8 vols. (Berlin 1913–2008)
IG II³	*Inscriptiones Graecae II et III.* Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno posteriores, 3rd edition (since 2012, ongoing)
IG VII	W. Dittenberger, *Inscriptiones Graecae VII. Inscriptiones Megaridis, Oropiae, Boeotiae* (Berlin 1892)
IG XII.5	F. Hiller von Gärtringen, *Inscriptiones Graecae XII. Inscriptiones insularum maris Aegaei praeter Delum, fasc. 5, Inscriptiones Cycladum* (Berlin 1903–1909)
IG XII.6	Klaus Hallof, *Inscriptiones Sami insulae: Decreta, epistulae, sententiae, edicta imperatoria, leges, catalogi, tituli Atheniensium, tituli honorarii, tituli operum publicorum, inscriptiones ararum* (Berlin 2000)
IK Priene	W. Blümel – R. Merkelbach, *Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien, Bd. 69, Die Inschriften von Priene,* 2 vols. (Bonn 2014)
IstMitt	*Istanbuler Mitteilungen*
JdI	*Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts*
JHS	*The Journal of Hellenic Studies*
KölnJb	*Kölner Jahrbuch*
LGS	I. von Prott et L. Ziehen, *Leges graecorum sacrae e titulis collectae*, 2 vols. (Leipzig 1896–1906)
LSA	F. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées de l'Asie Minoeure* (Paris 1955)
LSAG	L.H, Jeffery, *The local scripts of archaic Greece. A study of the origin of the Greek alphabet and its development from the eighth to the fifth centuries B.C.* (Oxford 1990)
LSG	F. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées de cités grecques* (Paris 1969)
MedA	*Mediterranean Archaeology*
NumAntCla	*Numismatica e antichità classiche. Quaderni ticinesi*
ÖJh	*Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes in Wien*
Peek Grabgedichte (GG)	W. Peek, *Griechische Grabgedichte, griechisch und deutsch* (Berlin 1960)
Peek GVI (GVI)	W. Peek, *Griechische Vers-Inschriften, I* (Berlin 1955)
Priene	D. F. McCabe, *Priene Inscriptions. Texts and List. «The Princeton Project on the Inscriptions of Anatolia»,* Princeton (1987)

QuadALibya	*Quaderni di archelogia della Libia*
RA	*Revue archéologique*
RGG	*Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart,* V (Tübingen 1909–1913)
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C. S. Wood, Public and Private Dimensions of Votive Giving, in: I. Weinryb (ed.), *Agents of Faith: Votive Objects in Time and Place (*New York 2018) p. 67–85.

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A. Yaylalı, Eine Grabstele im Museum İzmir, in: N. Başgelen – M. Lugal (eds.), *Festschrift für Jale İnan. Jale İnan armağanı* (Istanbul 1989) p. 471–481.

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P. Zanker, The Hellenistic Grave Stelai from Symrna. Identity and Self-Image in the Polis, in: A. Bulloch (ed.), *Images and ideologies. Self-definition in the Hellenistic world* (Berkeley 1993) p. 212–230.

Zanker 1995
P. Zanker, Brüche im Bürgerbild? Zur bürgerlichen Selbstdarstellung in den hellenistischen Städten, in: M. Wörrle – P. Zanker (eds.), *Stadtbild und Bürgerbild im Hellenismus* (1995) p. 251–273.

Appendix

Appendix: concordances, dates, provenance

Key	
◊	dated into the Classical period
†	dated into the Roman Imperial period
X	no photograph
PM #*	stele was purchased in Smyrna without any surviving or verifiable provenance, but due to attributes, motifs or type it is treated as part of the Smyrnaean group

Abbreviations	
PM #	E. Pfuhl - H. Möbius, *Die ostgriechischen Grabreliefs,* 2 Vol. (1977, 1979)
F #	N. Fıratlı, *Les stèles funéraires de Byzance gréco-romaine* (Paris 1964)
W #	F. Winter, *Die Skulpturen mit Ausnahme der Altarreliefs,* Altertümer von Pergamon 7 (Berlin 1908)
Kelp	U. Kelp, Die Nekropolen von Pergamon, in: R. Grüssinger, V. Kästner, A. Scholl (eds.), *Pergamon. Panorama der antiken Metropole. Begleitbuch zur Ausstellung* (Berlin 2011) p. 288–296.
M #	A. Maiuri, Monumenti di Scultura del Museo Archeologico die Rodi, *ClRh 2* (1932-35) p. 7–76.
JV #	G. Jacopi, Monumenti di Scultura del Museo Archeologico di Rodi II, *ClRh 5,1* (1931)
J #	G. Jacopi, Monumenti di Scultura del Museo Archeologico di Rodi II, *ClRh 5,2* (1932)
L #	L. Laurenzi, Monumenti di Scultura del Museo Archeologico di Rodi IV, E dell'Antiquarium di Coo II, *ClRh 9* (1938) p. 9–120.
R #	P.M. Fraser, *Rhodian funerary monuments* (Oxford 1977)
H #	R. Horn, *Hellenistische Bildwerke auf Samos,* Samos 12 (Bonn 1972)
Wiegand	T. Wiegand, Antike Skulpturen in Samos, *AM 25* (1900) p. 145–214.
Schede	M. Schede, Mitteilungen aus Samos, *AM 37* (1912) p. 199–218.
Känel	R. Känel, Drei hellenistische Grabreliefs aus Smyrna in Basel, *Antike Kunst 32* (1989) p. 50–58.
Senff	R. Senff, Drei hellenistische Grabreliefs in Ketteringham Hall, *Boreas 8* (1985) p. 81–91.
Peek GVI	W. Peek, *Griechische Vers-Inschriften. I. Grab-Epigramme* (Berlin 1955)
Peek Grabgedichte	W. Peek, *Griechische Grabgedichte* (Berlin 1960)

Rhodes											
PM		**Provenance**	**Concordance Fraser**	**Concordance Maiuri**	**Concordance Laurenzi**	**Concordance Jacopi CR V,1**	**Concordance Jacopi CR V,2**	**Dated by PM**	**Dated by Maiuri, Laurenzi or Fraser**	**lost?**	**Comment**
37	◊	*Rhodes*						*second quarter 4. cent. BCE*			
40	◊	*Rhodes*						*mid 4. cent. BCE*			
44	◊	*Rhodes*						*third quarter 5. cent. BCE*			
47	◊	*Rhodes (1966)*						*430-420 BCE*			
49	◊	*Rhodes*	*R96c*					*mid 4. cent. BCE*			
60	◊	*Rhodes*						*approx. 410 BCE*			
66	◊	*Rhodes*						*mid 4. cent. BCE*			
68	◊	*Rhodes*						*first half 4. cent. BCE*			
72	◊	*Makri Steno*						*late 4. cent. BCE*			
100	◊	*likely Rhodes*						*440-430 BCE*			
103		Rhodes	R96a	M29				first half 3. cent. BCE (or earlier?)	R: 2.-1. cent. BCE		
108		provenance unknown, style eastern Greek, stele type Rhodian						second half 3. cent. BCE			
118		Rhodes			L61			3. cent. BCE	L: 2. cent. BCE		
120		purchased in Smyrna, according to its appearance probably from Rhodes or the Sporades						3. cent. BCE			
138		Rhodes	R93b					last quarter 4. cent. BCE	R: late Hellenistic?		
150		Rhodes	R93a					3. cent. BCE	R: late Hellenistic?		
163		Rhodes						second half 1. cent. BCE			
227	†							*1. cent. CE*			

244	†							*altar: hellenistic, relief & inscription: Roman Imperial*			
272		Rhodes						2. cent. BCE			
284		necropolis Makri Steno		M26				2. or 1. cent. BCE	M: 1. cent. BCE		
285		Rhodes						late hellenistic			
286		necropolis		M27				late hellenistic	M: 1. cent. BCE		
287		necropolis Rhodini						first half 3. cent. BCE			
288		Rhodes						late 4. or early 3. cent. BCE			
289		necropolis of Akandia	R93d					early 3. cent. BCE	R: Late Hellenistic?		
290		Rhodes						3. cent. BCE			
321		probably Rhodes						3. cent. BCE			
352	†							*late Roman Imperial*			
377		1968 Rhodes						3. cent. BCE			
381	X										
391		Rhodes			L71			late 3. cent. BCE	L: late Hellenistic		
421		south-east necropolis	R47a	M32				second half 2. cent. BCE	M: 2.-1. cent. BCE R: late Hellenistic		
439		Hellenistic-Roman necropolis of Akandia			L64			early. 2. cent. BCE	L: 1. cent. BCE		
446	†							*Roman Imperial*			
491		probably Rhodes						3. cent. BCE			
501		Rhodes						2. cent. BCE			
553	†							*Roman Imperial*			
643	†							*late Roman Imperial*			
667	†							*late Roman Imperial*			
689	†							*late Roman Imperial*			

696		Rhodes	R92b			JV23		Pfuhl: late hellenistic Möbius: stele&inscription: 3. cent. BCE, relief only slightly later	R: late Hellenistic		
705		Rhodes			L65			second half 2. cent. BCE			
710		Rhodes						second half 2. cent. BCE		whereabouts unknown	
721		Rhodes			L67			mid 2. cent. BCE	L: 1. cent. BCE		
722		Rhodes						second half 2. cent. BCE			
723		from Syme (neighbouring island of Rhodes)									
724		Rhodes, Tilos						before mid 2. cent. BCE			
725		necropolis of Korakonero						before mid 2. cent. BCE			
726		probably Rhodes	R95					Pfuhl: 3. cent. BCE Poulsen: 2. cent. BCE	R: late Hellenistic?		
733		Rhodes						3. cent. BCE			
756		Rhodes, suburb H. Iannis			L75			hellenistic	L: Hellenistic		
760	†		*Noll Nr. 52*					*3. cent. CE*			
774		purchased in Rhodes			L74			late hellenistic	L: late Hellenistic		
779		Rhodes, suburb H. Iannis			L76			hellenistic	L: Hellenistic		
811		Rhodes	R92e					mid 2. cent. BCE	R: late Hellenistic	lost	
813		Rhodes	R45d					possibly still 3. cent. BCE	R: late Hellenistic		
824		Rhodes						3. cent. BCE			
850		probably Rhodes						early 2. cent. BCE			
856		Rhodes	R17b					late 2. cent. BCE			

865		Rhodes	R96b	M30				late hellenistic	M: second half 1. cent. BCE R: late Hellenistic?		Peek GVI 1625; Grabgedichte 217
881		Rhodes						approx. 300 BCE			
915		Rhodes, Trianta					J29	1. cent. BCE			
929		Rhodes	R17c					second half 3. cent. BCE	R: early 3. cent. BCE		
945		Rhodes						3. cent. BCE			
954		Rhodes						approx. 200 BCE			
964		Rhodes			L69			possibly still 3. cent. BCE	L: late Hellenistic		
965		Rhodes						3. cent. BCE			
966		Rhodes					J37	first half 3. cent. BCE			
970		Rhodes	R86b					2. cent. BCE			
980		Rhodes						first half 2. cent. BCE			
984	X							*2. cent. BCE*			
995		was immured in Rhodes	R45a		L66			late hellenistic	R: late Hellenistic		
996		Rhodes before 1916						3. cent. BCE			
1011		Rhodes	R93c			JV24		Pfuhl: late hellenistic Möbius: 3. cent. BCE	R: late Hellenistic?		
1053		probably Rhodes						possibly still 3. cent. BCE			
1059		Rhodes	R92c					first half 3. cent. BCE	R: late Hellenistic		
1061		Rhodes before 1926	R92d					approx. 200 BCE	R: late Hellenistic		
1081		Rhodes	R46a-d					late hellenistic	R: late Hellenistic		
1386		Rhodes						hellenistic			
1468	X										

1520		provenance unsure; going by the name Rhodes seems most likely	Pfuhl 1905 Abb. 28					2. cent. BCE			Möbius: likely a votive relief
1547		necropolis Makri Steno	R86a				J27	first half 2. cent. BCE	R: 2. cent. BCE		
1579	X							*2. cent. BCE*			
1756		brought from Lycia by a naval officer, allegedly from Xanhos; possibly from Lycia even despite the 'pure Rhodian type' if the altar is older than the Rhodian sovereignity over Lycia	R55					approx. 200 BCE	R: late Hellenistic?		
1835		Rhodes		M20				approx. 200 BCE	M: 2.-1. cent. BCE		
1844		Rhodes						second half 2. cent. BCE			
1845		Massari, Rhodes	R45c			JV26		approx. 200 BCE	R: late Hellenistic		
1846		Rhodes 1968 or 1969	R50b					mid. 2. cent. BCE	R: late Hellenistic?		
1847		Rhodes approx. 1965						2. cent. BCE			
1848	X							*2. cent. BCE*			
2025		was immured in Rhodes	R45b					2. cent. BCE	R: late Hellenistic		
2026		probably Rhodes						2. cent. BCE			
2027		Rhodes					J36	2. cent. BCE			
2039		Rhodes						2. cent. BCE			
2041		probably Rhodes						late 4. cent. BCE			
2051		probably Rhodes						first half 2. cent. BCE			

2099		Rhodes						hellenistic (possibly early 1. cent. BCE)			*architectural joint piece*
2198		Rhodes						possibly still 3. cent. BCE			
2226		necropolis Deirmen-Dere						high hellenistic			*urn in the shape of a bell krater*
2227		necropolis Makri Steno						probably hellenistic			*probably lid of an urn*
2267		Rhodes	R94					early hellenistic			
2318		Rhodes 1965-1969						probably 3. cent. BCE			
I								2. cent. BCE			
II								probably early 2. cent. BCE			
VI			Noll Nr. 22								

Ialysos			
PM		**Provenance**	**Dated by PM**
2085	†	*near Ialysos (Trianta)*	*2. or 3. cent. CE*
Kameiros			
PM		**Provenance**	**Dated by PM**
19	◊	*1965 near Kameiros*	*second quarter 5. cent. BCE*
46	◊	*Kameiros*	*penultimate decade of the 5. cent. BCE*
1060		Kamiros	probably still 3. cent. BCE

Maiuri (Clara Rhodos II)			
M		**Concordance PM**	**Dated**
M20		PM 1835	2.-1. cent. BCE
M24	◊		*5. cent. BCE*
M26		PM 284	1. cent. BCE
M27		PM 286	1. cent. BCE
M29		PM 103	2.-1. cent. BCE
M30		PM 865	second half 1. cent. BCE
M32		PM 421	2.-1. cent. BCE

Jacopi (Clara Rhodos V-1)				
JV		**Concordance PM**	**Concordance Fraser**	**Dated**
JV5	◊	*PM 46*	*R16a*	
JV23		PM 696		
JV24		PM 1011		
JV26		PM 1845		

Jacopi (Clara Rhodos V-2)				
J		**Concordance PM**	**Concordance Fraser**	**Dated**
J27		PM 1547	R86a	
J29		PM 915		
J30				
J31	◊			*4. cent. BCE*
J36		PM 2027		
J37		PM 966		late 3. cent. BCE

Laurenzi (Clara Rhodos IX)						
L		**Provenance**	**Concordance PM**	**Concordance Fraser**	**Dated**	**Comment**
L50-52	◊			*R17a*	*mid 4. cent. BCE*	
L53-55		Kos	PM 117		first half 2. cent. BCE	
L56	◊				*4. cent. BCE*	
L57	◊				*5. cent. BCE*	
L58	◊				*4. cent. BCE*	
L59	◊				*4. cent. BCE*	
L60					*3. cent. BCE*	*only a heavily damaged female head remains*
L61			PM 118		2. cent. BCE	
L62					1. half of the hellenistic period	
L63		Kos			second half 2. cent. BCE	
L64			PM 439		1. cent. BCE	
L65			PM 705			
L66			PM 995		late hellenistic	
L67			PM 721		1. cent. BCE	
L68					second half 2. cent. BCE	
L69			PM 964		late hellenistic	
L70	†				*Roman Imperial*	
L71			PM 391		late hellenistic	
L72					late hellenistic	
L73						
L74			PM 774		late hellenistic	
L75			PM 756		hellenistic	
L76			PM 779		hellenistic	

Fraser 1977					
R		**Provenance**	**Concordance PM**	**Concordance Laurenzi**	**Dated**
R15	◊				*5.-4. cent. BCE*
R16a	◊		*PM 46*		*early 4. cent. BCE*
R16b	◊				*archaic*
R17a	◊	*Makri Steno*		*L50*	*mid 4. cent. BCE*
R17b			PM 856		
R17c			PM 929		early 3. cent. BCE
R41a					late hellenistic / early Roman Imperial
R44a					late hellenistic
R45a			PM 995	L66	late hellenistic
R45b			PM 2025		late hellenistic
R45c			PM 1845		late hellenistic
R45d			PM 813		late hellenistic
R46a			PM 1081		late hellenistic
R46b					
R46c					
R46d					
R47a			PM 421		late hellenistic
R47b	†				*Roman Imperial*
R50b			PM 1846		late hellenistic?
R55			PM 1756		late hellenistic?
R86a			PM 1547		2. cent. BCE
R86b			PM 970		
R86c					
R92a			PM 966	J37	late hellenistic
R92b			PM 696		late hellenistic
R92c			PM 1059		late hellenistic
R92d			PM 1061		late hellenistic
R92e			PM 811		late hellenistic
R93a			PM 150		late hellenistic?
R93b			PM 138		late hellenistic?
R93c			PM 1011		late hellenistic?
R93d			PM 289		late hellenistic?
R94			PM 2267		
R95			PM 726		late hellenistic?
R96a			PM 103		late hellenistic?
R96b			PM 865		late hellenistic?
R96c			PM 49		

Smyrna						
PM		**Provenance**	**Dated by PM**	**lost?**	**last known exhibition/storage place**	**Comment**
109		found near the east railway station	first half 2. cent. BCE	burnt	formerly Protestant School, Izmir	
112		allegedly Smyrna-Bahribaba	2./1. cent. BCE			
114		Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			
130		provenance unknown; according to style surely eastern Greek, likely Symrna	2. cent. BCE	lost	formerly Protestant School, Izmir	
131		Smyrna or vicinity	2. cent. BCE			
140		Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			
145	†		*early Roman Imperial*	*burnt*	*formerly Protestant School, Izmir*	
149*		provenance unknown; type surely eastern Greek, likely from the Ionian coast	2. cent. BCE			
156		Smyrna	third quarter 2. cent. BCE			
158		Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			
160		Smyrna	1. cent. BCE			
161		surely eastern Greek since it shares provenance with PM 160	second half 2. cent. BCE-first half 1. cent. BCE			
162		Smyrna	2. cent. BCE	lost	formerly Protestant School, Izmir	
168		Smyrna	late 2./early 1. cent. BCE	lost	formerly Protestant School, Izmir	
169		Smyrna	2. cent. BCE			
170		likely Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			
178*		once Izmir	2. cent. BCE			
237	†		*late Roman Imperial*	*shattered*	*formerly Protestant School, Izmir*	
250		Smyrna or Ephesus	second half 2. cent. BCE			
251		purchased by archaeologists in Ephesus, likely found in Smyrna	mid-late 2. cent. BCE			
253		Smyrna, Pagos	2. cent. BCE			
256*		purchased in Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			
258		Smyrna	late hellenistic			

259		provenance unknown, possibly Smyrna	mid 2. cent. BCE			
320*		purchased in Izmir	2. cent. BCE			
341		most likely Smyrna	2. cent. BCE			
343		Smyrna	late 2. cent. BCE			
376		Smyrna	early 2. cent. BCE			
382		from Asia Minor, likely Smyrna	first half 2. cent. BCE			
392		Smyrna, near the theater	first half/quarter 2. cent. BCE	destroyed	formerly Protestant School, Izmir	Peek GVI 1512; Grabgedichte 228
395*		purchased in the Dardanelles; according to Karusu found in Tarsos	first half 2. cent. BCE			
397		allegedy from the Pagos in Smyrna; purchased in Smyrna	first half 2. cent. BCE			
405		Smyrna, Karawanenbrücke	second half 2. cent. BCE			
406		Smyrna, Pagos	second half 2. cent. BCE	lost	formerly Protestant School, Izmir	
407		1966 as new find in the workshop of the Basmahane Museum, Izmir	first half 2. cent. BCE			
408	X			*lost*		
409		provenance unknown; style Smyrnaean	2. cent. BCE			
410		provenance unknown; style Smyrnaean	mid 2. cent. BCE			
413		Smyrna	mid 2. cent. BCE			
414		Smyrna	mid 2. cent. BCE			
415		Smyrna	mid 2. cent. BCE	lost	formerly in the courtyard of the Armenian School	
416	X		*mid 2. cent. BCE*			
419		Smyrna, foundation of St Boukolos	second half 2. cent. BCE	burnt	formerly Protestant School, Izmir	
434		Smyrna	mid 2. cent. BCE	lost	formerly Izmir, Turkish School	
435		provenance unknown; style surely Smyrnaean	mid-late 2. cent. BCE			

436		provenance unknown; style surely Smyrnaean	second half 2. cent. BCE			
437		most likely Smyrna	first half 2. cent. BCE			
448		Izmir, neighbourhood of Şeitan-tepe	late hellenistic			
487	X		*mid 2. cent. BCE*	*lost*		
505		Smyrna, Pagos	mid 2. cent. BCE	burnt	formerly Protestant School, Izmir	
529		Smyrna	first half 2. cent. BCE	lost	formerly Lowther Castle	
530		Smyrna	mid 2. cent. BCE	lost	formerly near the church of the Armenian cemetery	
531		Smyrna, Bath of Diana	second half 2. cent. BCE			
532		Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			
536		provenance unknown; surely Smyrnaean	late 2. cent. BCE			
539		provenance unknown; surely Smyrnaean	mid 2. cent. BCE			
540		Smyrna	mid 2. cent. BCE			
543		Smyrna	first half 2. cent. BCE			
545		purchased 1909 by the Protestant School in Izmir	2. cent. BCE	probably burnt	formerly Protestant School, Izmir	
555*		provenance unknown; style surely eastern Greek	last third 2. cent. BCE			
559*		provenance unknown; style surely eastern Greek	approx. 100 BCE			
564*		provenance unknown; style surely eastern Greek	third quarter 2. cent. BCE	lost	formerly Protestant School, Izmir	
567*		provenance unknown; style surely eastern Greek	late 2. cent. BCE			
568	X		*second half 2. cent. BCE*	*lost*		
569*		from Asia Minor (purchased in Izmir)	mid 2. cent. BCE			Peek GVI 874
572		Smyrna	2. cent. BCE			

573		Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			
604		Smyrna	2. cent. BCE			
632		most likely Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE	partially lost	formerly Protestant School, Izmir	formerly partially immured in Smyrna; Pfuhl matched the top fragment to the rest of the relief
634*		purchased in Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			
640		Armutlu (near Smyrna)	second half 2. cent. BCE			Peek GVI 768
646		provenance unknown; style surely Smyrnaean	early/mid 2. cent. BCE			
662*		purchased in Smyrna	mid 2. cent. BCE			
693*		provenance unknown; style surely eastern Greek	second half 2. cent. BCE			
704		Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			came to Celles in France (Poitou) together with PM 753 & 854 around 1730; between 1893-1895 gifted to the Fürst von Fürstenberg (Donaueschingen, Germany) by his mother-in-law, Princess Talleyrand-Sagan
729		Smyrna	mid 2. cent. BCE			same workshop as PM 730
730		Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			same workshop as PM 729
737	†		*late Roman Imperial*			
738	X		*not datable*			
749		Smyrna	first half 2. cent. BCE			
753		Smyrna	2. cent. BCE			s. PM 704
766		Smyrna, Pagos cemetery	2. cent. BCE			Peek Gvi 1178; Grabgedichte 216
788	†		*after 41 CE*	*lost*	*formerly Protestant School, Izmir*	
798*		purchased in Smyrna	first half 2. cent. BCE			
800		provenance unknown, formely in Smyrna	2. cent. BCE	lost		
804		Symrna, Mortakia district near the Meles river	mid 2. cent. BCE			
830*		purchased in Smyrna	mid 2. cent. BCE			
831		Smyrna	first half 2. cent. BCE			

847	†		*2. cent. CE*			
848		Smyrna	late hellenistic			
852			second half 2. cent. BCE	probably burnt	formerly Izmir, Turkish School	
854		Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			s. PM 704
855*		provenance unknown	mid 2. cent. BCE			
858		Smyrna, Pagos	2. cent. BCE			Peek GVI 1540
861*		purchased in Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			
863		likely Smyrna	2./1. cent. BCE			Peek GVI 760
867		Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			
868		Smyrna, Pagos	late 2. cent. BCE			
872		provenance unknown; style surely Smyrnaean	second half 2. cent. BCE			
878		Smyrna	100 BCE			Peek GVI 1315
899	X			*lost*		
906		most likely Smyrna	first half/mid 2. cent. BCE			
907		Smyrna, neighbourhood Dermen Tepe	second half 3. cent. BCE Möbius: more likely approx. 100 BCE			
918		part of Gaudin's donation, therefore probably found in Smyrna	2. cent. BCE			
925		probably Smyrna	first half 2. cent. BCE			
955		probably Smyrna	first half 2. cent. BCE			Pfuhl doubts that the artfeact was found in Smyrna
978	†		*1. cent. CE*			
989		most likely Smyrna	late 2. cent. BCE			
990		most likely Smyrna	last quarter 2. cent. BCE			arrived in Athens from out of the estate of the Russian consul of the Dardanelles
991		surely Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE	lost	formerly near the Armenian church	
994		probably Smyrna, purchased there	early 2. cent. BCE			
1030*		provenance unknown; style surely eastern Greek	first half 2. cent. BCE			

1045		Smyrna	2. cent. BCE			
1052		Smyrna (note A. Conze)	early 2. cent. BCE			
1076	†		*early Roman Imperial*			
1094	X					
1095	X					
1096		Smyrna	early 2. cent. BCE			
1097		Smyrna, Pagos	late hellenistic / probably 1. cent. BCE			
1102		Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE			Peek GVI 701
1139	†		*late Roman Imperial*	*probably burnt*	*formerly Protestant School, Izmir*	
1216	†		*late Roman Imperial*			
1241	†		*late Roman Imperial*	*lost*	*formerly in Wimple Hall (Lord Oxford)*	
1242	†		*late Roman Imperial*			
1252	†		*first half 3. cent. CE*			
1253	†		*3. cent. CE*			
1254	†		*late Roman Imperial*			
1256	†		*late Roman Imperial*			
1348	†		*2. cent. CE*			
1356	†		*2. cent. CE*		*formerly Protestant School, Izmir*	
1360		Smyrna	1. cent. BCE			
1430		Smyrna	2. cent. BCE		formerly Protestant School, Izmir	
1432		Smyrna	2. cent. BCE			
1433		Smyrna	late hellenistic		formerly Protestant School, Izmir	fragment without horse in the Museum [unclear which one]
1434	X		*late hellenistic*			
1435	X					
1436		Smyrna	second half 2. cent. BCE		formerly Protestant School, Izmir	
1439		Smyrna	before mid 2. cent. BCE			
1440		Smyrna	mid 2. cent. BCE			
1441	†		*early Roman Imperial*			
1450		Smyrna	2. cent. BCE			
1459	†		*1. cent. CE*			
1488		Smyrna	late hellenistic			Peek GVI 1710

1538	X		*late hellenistic*	*immured in Lowther Castle (Penrith), inaccesible*		
1568		Smyrna	2. cent. BCE			
1823		allegedly west Smyrna	late hellenistic			
1857	†		*Roman Imperial*			
1866		allegedly Vilâyet Smyrna	first quarter 2. cent. BCE			
1980		from Smyrna	late hellenistic or Roman Imperial			
2167	†		*2.-3. cent. CE*			
2181	†		*late Roman Imperial*			
2237	†		*2. cent. CE*			
2314		cemetery near the 'Karawanenbrücke' (Tepecik)	second half 2. cent. BCE			
XI		likely Smyrna	2. cent. BCE			
Känel 13,1						
Känel 14,1						
Känel 15,1						
Senff 6,2		provenance and purchase history unknown				

purchased in Smyrna but either not Hellenistic or too little surviving material to make educated guess about provenance						
45	◊		*5. cent. BCE*			*formerly part of the estate of Graf Lanckoronski in Vienna, then Würzburg, Martin von Wagner Museum of the university*
184	†		*Roman Imperial*			
252			2. cent. BCE			fragment; assignment to Smyrna uncertain
398			first half 2. cent. BCE			no typical Smyrnaean motifs or attributes
819			2. cent. BCE			fragment; assignment to Smyrna uncertain
846			late hellenistic			funerary?
1140	†		*early Roman Imperial*			
1175	†		*Roman Imperial*			
1350	†		*Roman Imperial*			
1461		from Miletos	2. cent. BCE	heavily damaged	formerly Protestant School, Izmir	
1479			2. cent. BCE			Roman Imperial? Very unusual motif
1796		allegedly from Ephesus	2. cent. BCE			
1985		surely from the area of Kyzikus to Miletopolis	late hellenistic or Roman Imperial			
2283	†		*271 CE*			*according to W.H. Waddington in Le Bas - Waddington not from Smyrna but inland Asia Minor, probably from Gordus or a neighbouring city*
1072	†	*according to L. Robert more likely from Sardis*	*late 3. cent. BCE*			*Makronisi near Smyrna*
1168	†	*the style more likely Lydian*	*1. cent. CE*			*Makronisi near Smyrna*

Samos									
PM		**Provenance**	**Concordance Horn**	**Concordance Wiegand**	**Concordance Schede**	**Dated by PM**	**Dated by Horn**	**lost?**	**Comment**
15	◊	*Lake Glyphada*				*first decade of the 5. cent. BCE*			
16	◊	*Lake Glyphada*				*480-470 BCE*			
17	◊	*1915 in Lake Glyphada*				*470-460 BCE*			
28	◊	*Samos*				*um 470 BCE*			
29	◊	*Samos*				*470-460 BCE*			
30	◊	*Samos*				*460-450 BCE*			
33	◊	*Samos*				*approx. 430 BCE*			
43	◊	*Samos*				*approx. 430 BCE*			
48	◊	*allegedly Samos; brought back by Theodore Bent, gifted to the British Museum by his family in 1926*				*fourth quarter 5. cent. BCE*			*funerary function uncertain*
54	◊	*found near Chora on Samos*		*43*		*late 5. cent. BCE*			
69	◊	*from the vicinity of the temple of Hera*				*early 4. cent. BCE*			
83	◊	*Samos*	*106b*			*second to last quarter 4. cent. BCE*			
88	◊	*found 1959 at the outskirts of the ancient city*	*106c*			*last quarter 4. cent. BCE*			
116		near Tigani, at Lake Glyphada (Wiegand)	126	90		late hellenistic		lost	Inscription apparantly older, 2. cent. CE
136		Samos	121	95		late 3. cent. BCE			Inscription probably from reuse in the 1. cent. BCE
164	†		*127a*			*Roman Imperial*			
266		Samos	120	93		late hellenistic	late 2. cent. BCE		
270		near Heraion	122			2./1. cent. BCE	after last quarter 2. cent. BCE		
276	†		*127*		*8*	*1. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. CE*		

279			124			early 3. cent. BCE Möbius: last quarter 2. cent. BCE	last quarter 2. cent. BCE		
280	†		*125*	*100*		*early Roman Imperial*	*first half 1. cent. CE*		
281	X		*119*			*3. cent. BCE*	*late hellenistic*		
331	X								
368		Samos	108			second half 3. cent. BCE	shortly after the middle of the century'		
374		Samos	109			second half 3. cent. BCE	shortly before 200 BCE		
375		Samos	110			3. cent. BCE	late hellenistic		
390		Samos	107			200 BCE	second half 3. cent. BCE		
394		1962 in Tigani	110a			last third 2. cent. BCE	before the frieze of Lagina'		
442		Samos	111	91		1. cent. BCE	not before the second half 1. cent. BCE		
453		probably Tigani	111a			last quarter 2. cent. BCE			
702		Samos	131	89		first half 1. cent. BCE			Pfuhl's photography shows the relief undamaged, while it was fractured when Horn catalogued it
708		Samos?	132	96		late hellenistic	approx. 130 BCE		Stele might have come to Samos from somewhere else (possibly used as ballast); stele shape suggests it might be from Rhodes
716		Samos?	133	97		2. cent. BCE	second third 2. cent. BCE		inscription added later
728		Samos	128			late hellenistic			
776	X								
809	†		*118*	*99*			*Roman Imperial*		
818		1962 on Samos	124a				late 2. cent. BCE /first quarter 1. cent. BCE		
826		Samos	129	88		late hellenistic	reuse during the 1./2. cent. CE		
849		Samos	130			first half 2. cent. BCE			
901		Samos	113			second half 2. cent. BCE			

902		Samos	117			1. cent. BCE			
904		Samos	112	98		mid 2. cent. BCE			
905		probably Tigani	116b				third quarter 2. cent. BCE		
912		Heraion	115b			late hellenistic	approx. 100 BCE		
938		Samos	115a	101		hellenistic	1. cent. BCE		
958		Samos	115			2. cent. BCE			
968		Samos	116			late hellenistic	second third 1. cent. BCE		
973		probably from path to Heraion	114			3. cent. BCE	third quarter 3. cent. BCE		
982		Samos	116a				third quarter 2. cent. BCE		
1069		vicinity of the city	134	92		late hellenistic	1 cent. CE		
1107		acquired in the art trade, provenance unknown; according to its style most likely Samian				probably still 3. cent. BCE			
1119		Samos	131a		7	2. cent. BCE	1. cent. BCE		
1120		Samos	131b		6	2. cent. BCE	1. cent. BCE		
1215	†					*2.-3. cent. CE*			
1314		Samos	135a			1. cent. BCE			
1324	†					*Roman Imperial*			
1365	†		*135*			*Roman Imperial*			
1443		Kastro Hill	123a			early 1. cent. BCE	third quarter 1. cent. BCE		
1455		Samos	123			2. cent. BCE	last quarter 2. cent. BCE		
1464		surely Samos		105		2. cent. BCE	Roman Imperial		
1511		Samos	139	70		second half 2. cent. BCE	first quarter 2. cent. BCE		
1512		probably Heraion	158b				late 1. cent. BCE		
1514		provenance unknown	157b			early to mid 2. cent. BCE	last third 2. cent. BCE		attributed to Samos by Horn
1517		Samos	158			mid 2. cent. BCE	last third 2. cent. BCE		Inscriptions later, probably covering an older, erased inscription
1518	†		*158c*			*Roman Imperial*			
1519		Samos, city	158a			approx. 100 BCE			

1524		Samos	150			first half 2. cent. BCE	after third quarter 2. cent. BCE		
1526		Samos	148		13	mid 2. cent. BCE			
1527		Samos	171h	82		2. cent. BCE	last third 2. cent. BCE		
1533	X					*late hellenistic*			
1557		Samos	152	66					
1561		found in early Roman Imperial cistern in Samos city	144b			second half 2. cent. BCE	late 1. cent. BCE		
1565		Samos	155a	73		late hellenistic	probably still 1. cent. BCE		
1566	X					*2. cent. BCE*			
1574		Samos		72		1. cent. BCE			
1575		Samos	145	61			second half 2. cent. BCE		
1581		Samos	146	59		first half 2. cent. BCE	last third 2. cent. BCE		same workshop as 1593, 1797, 1872, 1915
1582		Samos	149			2. cent. BCE	frühes 1. cent. BCE		
1583		Samos	156			2./1. cent. BCE	late period (?)		
1584		Samos	153			1. cent. BCE			
1585		Samos	155	64		late hellenistic			
1586		Samos	154			2. cent. BCE	early Roman Imperial		
1587	X					*2. cent. BCE*			
1588		Samos				2. cent. BCE			
1589		Samos	147			2. cent. BCE	late 2. cent. BCE		
1590		Samos	153a			2. cent. BCE			
1592		Samos	148a		12	2. cent. BCE	last quarter 2. cent. BCE/early 1. cent. BCE		
1593		once immured near the church in Mytilenaioi	144		10	first half 2. cent. BCE	last third 2. cent. BCE		same workshop as 1581, 1797, 1872, 1915
1594		Samos	144a	62		2. cent. BCE	last third 2. cent. BCE		
1595		Samos	143a			2. cent. BCE	late 2. cent. BCE		
1596		Samos	143			2. cent. BCE	late 2. cent. BCE		
1598		Samos		71		late hellenistic			
1639		Samos	141			first half/mid 2. cent. BCE			

1640	X					*2. cent. BCE*			
1642		Samos	157	63		2. cent. BCE	1. cent. BCE		
1643	X		*157a*	*76*		*hellenistic*			
1762	X					*2. cent. BCE*			
1763		Samos	151			2. cent. BCE			
1764		Samos	140			2. cent. BCE			
1770	X								
1780		Samos city	171g			2. cent. BCE	1. cent. BCE		
1784		1962 at the outskirts of ancient city	147a			last third 2. cent. BCE	last third 2. cent. BCE		
1797		Samos	142	65		first half 2. cent. BCE	last third 2. cent. BCE		same workshop as 1581, 1593, 1872, 1915
1798		Samos				first half 2. cent. BCE			
1805		Samos	155b			late hellenistic	Roman Imperial		
1819		Samos				2. cent. BCE	first half 1. cent. BCE		
1820		Samos	166 b			2./1. cent. BCE	early 1. cent. BCE		
1821		Samos city	166 d			late hellenistic	late 2. cent. BCE/early 1. cent. BCE		Peek GVI 1154; Grabgedichte 166
1826		after 1940	137			third quarter 3. cent. BCE			
1832	X								
1834		Samos	138			second half 3. cent. BCE	first quarter 2. cent. BCE		
1862	X					*3. cent. BCE*		*burnt in Vathy*	
1863		possibly from path to Heraion	163	69		2. cent. BCE	early 1. cent. BCE		
1872		Samos	165	60		first half 2. cent. BCE	last third 2. cent. BCE		Pfuhl's photography shows the relief undamaged, Horn records it as heavily damaged; same workshop as 1581, 1593, 1797, 1915
1880		Samos	166			late 2. cent. BCE	first half 1. cent. BCE		
1883		Samos (Mytilenaioi)	164			second half 2. cent. BCE	last third 2. cent. BCE		

1884		Samos	171e	77		2. cent. BCE	third quarter 2. cent. BCE		
1885		Samos	171d			2. cent. BCE	mid 2. cent. BCE		
1893		Samos		74		hellenistic			
1894		Samos		81		hellenistic			
1903		Samos	171	87		2. cent. BCE			second inscription Roman Imperial
1904		Samos	171a			2. cent. BCE	first quarter 1. cent. BCE		
1913		Samos	160	67		2. cent. BCE			same workshop as 1968
1915		Samos	159	56		first half 2. cent. BCE			same workshop as 1581, 1593, 1797, 1872
1916		1960 at the outskirts of ancient city	159a			second half 2. cent. BCE			
1943		Samos	160a	84		2. cent. BCE	first quarter 1. cent. BCE		
1953		probably Tigani	160b			early 1. cent. BCE			
1964		Samos	168a			2. cent. BCE	first half 1. cent. BCE		
1965		Samos	167	57		2. cent. BCE			
1967		Samos	168	58		late 2. cent. BCE	first half 1. cent. BCE		
1968		Samos	169	68		2. cent. BCE	first half 1. cent. BCE		same workshop as 1913
1969		Samos	166e			2. cent. BCE	first half 1. cent. BCE		no illustration or drawing; ill. in Horn
1970	X					*hellenistic*		*burned in Vathy*	
1992		Samos	162	55		first half 2. cent. BCE	approx. 100 BCE		
1993		Samos	161			first half 2. cent. BCE	last third 2. cent. BCE		
2003		Samos	170		11	second half 2. cent. BCE	1. cent. BCE		
2046		Samos		79		2. cent. BCE			
2048		likely Samos				2. cent. BCE			
2049		likely Samos		78		2. cent. BCE			
2050		Samos	171 c	83		2. cent. BCE	last third 2. cent. BCE		
2052		Samos	171 b	85		2. cent. BCE			

2053		likely Samos	166 a			1. cent. BCE	first half 1. cent. BCE		
2059		Samos				2. cent. BCE			
2060		Samos	171 i	80		hellenistic	1. cent. BCE		
2061		Kastro Hill				late 2. cent. BCE			
2062		Samos		86		hellenistic			
2132	X			*104*		*11 BCE to 21 CE*			
2178	†			*103*		*first half 2. cent. CE*			
2317		likely Tigani				2. cent. BCE			
XII		probably Tigani				2. cent. BCE			

Horn (not part of PM Corpus)							
Horn		**Provenance**	**Concordance Wiegand**	**Concordance Schede**	**Dated by Horn**	**lost?**	**Comment**
H104		to the North of the north-east corner of the big temple in the Heraion; immured in a Roman Imperial fountain house			3. cent. BCE	lost	possibly votive relief
H106/136		Samos	75		approx. 300 BCE		
H131 c		allegedly 1959 near the ancient city			last third 2. cent. BCE		
H131 d	†		47		1. cent. CE		
H134 a		Samos		9	last quarter 2. cent. BCE/early 1. cent. BCE		
H171 f		Heraion			1. cent. BCE		

Pergamon						
PM		**Provenance**	**Concordance Winter**	**Concordance Kelp**	**Dated by PM**	**Comment**
82	◊	*Via tecta*			*Mid 4. cent. BCE*	
84	◊	*Selinus in Pergamon*			*second half 4. cent. BCE*	
90	◊	*Via tecta*			*approx. 400 BCE*	
92	◊	*Via tecta*			*first quarter 4. cent. BCE*	
97	◊	*Via tecta*			*first quarter 4. cent. BCE*	
105		Pergamon			first half 3. cent. BCE	
293		Asklepeion			2. cent. BCE	
695		Pergamon	332	4.11	2. cent. BCE	
718		Asklepeion			1. cent. BCE	
817		Pergamon			first half 2. cent. BCE	
928		Pergamon	331		second half 2. cent. BCE	
1247	†		*341*		*late Roman Imperial*	
1257	†				*2. cent. CE*	
1332	†		*316*		*Roman Imperial*	
1334	X		*315*			
1336		Pergamon according to R. Burgon	306		2. cent. BCE	
1337		Pergamon	318			
1339		Pergamon	314		probably still hellenistic	
1340	X	*some find spots unknown, some listed as from within the city; PM 1341&1342 from outside the city walls (Erigöl hill); the same type was used as gravestones and votives (cf. PM 1366 and 1363)*			*probably still hellenistic*	
1341					probably still hellenistic	
1342					probably still hellenistic	
1343	X		*319*		*probably still hellenistic*	
1344					2. cent. BCE	probably fitting a similiar fragment of the remaining horse and rider (PM 1345)
1345		terrace below the gymnasion	308		Regal period	fragment prossibly belongs to PM 1344
1346		terrace of Demeter temple			1. cent. BCE	
1351	†		*312*		*late Roman Imperial*	

1355		Pergamon	313		might still be late hellenistic	
1359	X					
1361		found in a temenos between Pergamon and Smyrna				
1363		near Demeter temple			1. cent. BCE Möbius: probably later	found near the Demeter temple but with a funerary inscription
1366		Sanctuary of Demeter			2. cent. BCE	
1367		Pergamon	307		probably still hellenistic	
1378		1961 allegedly found in a chamber of the Zeus altar (E. Boehringer)			1. cent. BCE	
1387	†		*317*		*Roman Imperial*	
1425		Pergamon	320	4.14	late hellenistic	
1444	X				*probably 1. cent. BCE*	
1448		Pergamon	311		late hellenistic	
1472	†		*321*		*probably 1. KZ*	
1477		near path to the spring (Caicos valley)			second half 2. cent. BCE	
1486		citadel	334		first half 2. cent. BCE	
1498	†		*325. 326*		*early Roman Imperial*	
1532	X		*327*			
1567		Pergamon			late 2. or 1. cent. BCE	
1850	†		*324*		*early Roman Imperial*	
1902		stadion			late hellenistic Möbius: probably still2. cent. BCE	
1917		Caicos plane			2. cent. BCE	
2145	†				*3. cent. CE*	
2197	†				*late Roman Imperial*	
2199	†				*2. cent. CE*	

2229		near the South gate, palace and in the house of consul Attalos (1900 & 1901)	426-432			lid of some sort, two more specimens found in the sanctuary of Demeter
2230			426-432			F. Winter is aware of eight specimens in Pergamon (p. 341f; No. 426-432, Ill. 428-431)
2231			426-432			
2313	†				*Roman Imperial*	

Winter						
Winter		**Provenance**	**Concordance PM**	**Concordance Kelp**	**Dated by PM**	**Comment**
W303		1884 on the terrace west of the gymnasium	303	4.12	Regal period	
W310		found in Smyrna' (Thraemer)	310			from Smyrna into the possession of James Whittall and from him to the Ashmolean Museum; unclear where it was acquired by Whittall
W322		1885 near the medieval west wall of the northern plateau; top left corner found later on the citadel	322	4.15	similar to the Attic reliefs of the 4. cent. BCE; othing distinctly hellenistic, ended up in Pergamon	PM: surely no grave relief, originates in the citadel (p.354)
W328			328			only top of pediment survives
W329		1883 near the east gate of the Roman wall	329		similar to the execution of the Telephosfrieze	
W330			330	4.16	Regal period	
W338		from Klissekioi (Elaia)	338		hellenistic	
W340	†	*near the Armenian cemetery*	*340*		*later period*	*PM: hardly belonging to a grave relief (p.277)*

Byzantion							
PM		**Provenance**	**Concordance Fıratlı**	**Dated by PM**	**Dated by Fıratlı**	**lost?**	**Comment**
91	◊	Istanbul, Çarşıkapı	164	end of 4. cent. BCE			
96	◊	Beyazıt, Resit Pasa Caddesi	151	4. cent. BCE			
98	◊	Beyazıt	117	possibly before 300 BCE			
126		probably from Byzantion or sourrounding area (bought there)	214	first half 2. cent. BCE			
129	*X*			*2. cent. BCE*		*lost*	
172	†			*2. cent. CE*			
185	†		*132*	*Trajanic*	*2. cent. BCE*		
191		Istanbul, Unkapanı	122	late hellenistic	late 3./early 2. cent. BCE		
193		Byzantion		1. cent. BCE			
204	†		*199 a b*	*2.-3. cent. CE*			*sarcophagus*
205	†		*126*	*Flavian*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
218	†		*206*	*Roman Imperial*			*sarcophagus*
219	†		*205*	*1. cent. CE*			*sarcophagus*
220	†			*1. cent. CE*			
223		Istanbul-Beyazıt	128	approx. 100 BCE	late 2./early 1. cent. BCE		
229	†		*162*	*early Roman Imperial*	*late 1. cent. BCE*		
230	†	*Çemberlitaş*	*163*	*early Roman Imperial*	*late 1. cent. BCE*		
273		Istanbul-Beyazıt, courtyard of the university	119	late 3./early 2. cent. BCE	1. cent. BCE ?		
292		from Byzantion?	220	2. cent. BCE			

307	†		*258*	*2. cent. CE*			PM 307 and 308 found together during construction work. Reused for a grave monument of the 3. cent. CE
308	†		*257*	*early 3. cent. CE*			
330	X					*unclear*	
340		Istanbul, Silahtarağa	153	3. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
344			*200*	*1. cent. BCE*			*sarcophagus*
369		Çatalca	141	possibly still 3. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
400		Bostancı		1. cent. BCE			
402	†		*144*	*first half 3. cent. CE*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
466		Çemberlitaş	147	late hellenistic	2. cent. BCE		
467		Istanbul-Beyazıt	139	1. cent. BCE	2.-1. cent. BCE		
506		Istanbul-Beyazıt	152	2. cent. BCE	3.-2. cent. BCE		
507		Istanbul-Kadıköy	64	second half 2. cent. BCE	1. cent. BCE - 1. cent. CE		
590	†		*157*	*early Roman Imperial*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
603		probably Byzantion	158	1. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
628		Ambarliköy	255	1. cent. BCE			
735		Istanbul-Beyazıt	136	1. cent. BCE	2.-1. cent. BCE		
757	†		*216*	*early Roman Imperial*			
780	†		*124*	*2. cent. CE*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
834		Istanbul-Beyazıt	165	3. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		ill. in Fıratlı
841		Istanbul-Kadıköy		2. cent. BCE			
844	X			*3. cent. BCE (?)*			
885		Byzantion	252	1. cent. BCE			

891		near the Süleymaniye Mosque	167	second half 2. cent. BCE	2.-1. cent. BCE		
892		Unkapanı	251	second half 2. cent. BCE			closly related to PM 891
903	†			*2. cent. BCE Möbius: late Roman Imperial*			
909		Istanbul-Beyazıt, Büyük Reşitpaşa Caddesi	168	second half 2. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
934	†		*198*	*Roman Imperial*	*3. cent. CE*		*sarcophagus*
953	†		*183*	*early Roman Imperial*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
971		Çatalca	170	second half 2. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
992		Istanbul-Beyazıt	179	1. cent. BCE	2.-1. cent. BCE		
998		Istanbul-Beyazıt	261	end of 2. cent. BCE	1. cent. BCE - 1. cent. CE		
1040		Istanbul-Beyazıt, Vezneciler	182	1. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
1056		Istanbul-Beyazıt	172	2. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
1057		Istanbul-Beyazıt, Ordu Caddesi	171	2. cent. BCE	2.-1. cent. BCE		
1065		Çatalca		last quarter 2. cent. BCE			
1086		Istanbul-Beyazıt, Kantarcılar	174	1. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
1087	†		*178*	*1. cent. CE*	*1. cent. BCE - 1. cent. CE*		
1100		Istanbul-Beyoğlu	177	3. cent. BCE	3. cent. BCE		
1134		Küçükçekmece	69	1. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
1144		Kocamustafapaşa	64	1. cent. BCE	1. cent. BCE - 1. cent. CE		
1167		Istanbul-Beyazıt, university courtyard	32	second half 2. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
1185	†			*2. cent. CE*			
1238	†			*2. cent. CE*			
1412	†		*185*	*3. cent. CE*	*1. cent. BCE - 1. cent. CE*		

1437		Istanbul-Beyazıt, university courtyard	187	second half 2. cent. BCE	3.-2. cent. BCE		
1449	†		*186*	*1. cent. BCE (after Marc Anton)*	*late 1. cent. BCE*		
1463		provenance unknown, "probably from Byzantion"; according to style surely eastern Greek		2. cent. BCE			
1489		Çatalca	72	late hellenistic	late 3./early. 2. cent. BCE		ill. in Fıratlı
1509	†		*201*	*2. cent. CE*			*sarcophagus*
1530	†		*116*	*Roman Imperial*	*Roman Imperial*		
1539		Istanbul-Beyazıt	79	2. cent. BCE	2.-1. cent. BCE		
1558		Çapa	41	approx. 100 BCE			
1570		Istanbul-Beyazıt, university garden	37	approx. 100 BCE	2.-1. cent. BCE		inscription later
1597	†		*38*	*1. cent. CE*	*2. cent. BCE*		
1620		near Beyazıt, Vezneciler	29	1. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
1637		probably Byzantion or the surrounding area		second half 3. cent. BCE Möbius: 2. cent. BCE			
1657		Byzantion		1. cent. BCE			
1662		Seraskerat	75	1. cent. BCE	2.-1. cent. BCE		
1664		likely Byzantion	68	1. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
1665	†		*49*	*early Roman Imperial*	*2. cent. BCE*		
1668	†		*48*	*early Roman Imperial*	*2. cent. BCE*		
1669		Küçükçekmece	42	1. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
1672	†		*44*	*early Roman Imperial*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
1673		in the area of Beyazıt	46	1. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE ?		according to Fıratlı similiar to F45
1674	†		*58*	*early Roman Imperial*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		

1675	†		*203*	*2. cent. CE*			*sarcophagus*
1677	X						
1678	†			*early Roman Imperial*			
1679	X						
1680	†		*59*	*early Roman Imperial*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
1686		surely from the area of Byzantion		1. cent. BCE			found in cemetery of Ancona; brought there from Istanbul in modern times
1688	†			*early Roman Imperial*			
1690	†		*57*	*1. cent. BCE Möbius: 2. cent. CE*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
1691	†		*115*	*1.-2. cent. CE*	*Roman Imperial*		
1692	†		*108*	*2. cent. CE*	*2. cent. BCE*		
1721		likely Byzantion (Kağıthane)	96	1. cent. BCE	1. cent. BCE - 1. cent. CE		
1741	†			*2. cent. CE*			
1748	†		*93*	*1. cent. CE*	*2. cent. BCE*		
1751		Ishakpaşa	40	approx. 100 BCE	2.-1. cent. BCE		
1752		Beyazıt, Vezneciler					
1758		Süleymaniye	86	1. cent. BCE	2.-1. cent. BCE		
1781	X			*late hellenistic*			
1785	†		*56*	*1. cent. CE*	*2. cent. BCE*		
1790	†		*111*	*1. cent. CE*	*1. cent. CE*		
1804		Süleymaniye	77	1. cent. BCE	2.-1. cent. BCE		
1812	†		*102*	*1.-2. cent. CE*	*Roman Imperial*		
1817	†		*109*	*Roman Imperial*	*Roman Imperial*		

2012		Byzantion or Troas (according to Choiseul)		late hellenistic or early Roman Imperial			
2034		found near Beyazıt-Moschee	33	Mid 1. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		first "real" portrait of the deceased (according to Pfuhl)
2035		Byzantion	36	Augustan	2. cent. BCE		
2036		Istanbul-Beyazıt	82	1. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
2037		near the Beyazıt Mosque	35	Mid 2. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
2038		near Beyazıt, Vezneciler	34	second half 2. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
2058		Istanbul-Beyazıt	39	first half 2. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		
2086	†			*probably Roman Imperial*			
2180	†		*190*	*Trajanic*	*2.-3. cent. CE*		
2256		probably Byzantion (Çatladıkapı)	191	approx. 300 BCE	3. cent. BCE (or still 4. cent. BCE)		parts of a funerary epigram survive, possible death during childbirth
2269		Istanbul-Balat	189	late hellenistic Möbius: 2. cent. BCE	3. cent. BCE		s. PM 2270
2270		according to uncertain claims from Cyzicus	218	late Hellenistic Möbius: 2. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		certainly from the same workshop as PM 2269, 2271 (both from Istanbul), 2272 (from Chalcedon)
2271		Beyazıt	188	late hellenistic Möbius: approx. 1. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		s. PM 2270
2315		Süleymaniye	250	1. cent. BCE			tomb of two musically interested siblings (PM, p. 558)
2316			193	1. cent. BCE	2. cent. BCE		

IX			6		3. cent. BCE		pediment stelai without figural reliefs
VII			17	3. cent. BCE	late 3./early. 2. cent. BCE		
VIII			14		2. cent. BCE		

Listed in PM's concordances under 'Fıratlı', bt not in index 'Byzantion'						
PM		**Provenance**	**Concordance Fıratlı**	**Dated by PM**	**Dated by Fıratlı**	**Comment**
306	†		260	Trajanic		
322	†		219	early Roman Imperial	2.-1. cent. BCE	
624	†		161	Trajanic	Roman Imperial	
663	†		159	early Roman Imperial		
1088	†		191 a	1. cent. CE	2.-1. cent. BCE	
1491	†		212	mid Roman Imperial	Roman Imperial	
1666	*X*		*45*	*1. cent. BCE*	*2. cent. BCE*	ill. in Fıratlı
1752		Beyazıt, Vezneciler	87		2.-1. cent. BCE	
1815	†		209	early Roman Imperial		

Fıratlı (not added by PM or only noted down without adding their own entry to the catalogue)						
Fıratlı		**Provenance**	**Concordance PM**	**Dated by Fıratlı**	**Dated by PM**	**Comment**
1 – 5						only inscription preserved
7 – 13						only inscription preserved
15, 16						only inscription preserved
18 – 28						only inscription preserved
30		Beyazıt, Resit Pasa Caddesi	nach 1628	2. cent. BCE		
31		Süleymaniye	nach 1685	2.-1. cent. BCE		
43		*Beyazıt*	*nach 1685*	*1. cent. BCE*		
45			1666	2.-1. cent. BCE	*1. cent. BCE*	
47		*Istanbul*	*nach 1686*	*2. cent. BCE*	*more likely 1. cent. BCE*	
50		*Terkos*	*nach 1685*	*late 2. or 1. cent. BCE*		
51		*Beyazıt, Laleli*		*1. cent. BCE or CE*		
52		*Bakırköy*	*nach 1685*	*2. cent. BCE*		
53		*Beyazıt*	*nach 1685*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
54		Beyazıt	nach 2063	2.-1. cent. BCE		
55		*Ka*ğıthane köyü	*nach 1751*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
60		*Galatasaray*	*nach 1817*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE - 1. cent. CE*	
61			*nach 1452 und nach 1685*	*2. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE - 1. cent. CE*	
62		*Fener*	*nach 1685*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE - 1. cent. CE*	
63	†		*nach 1157 und nach 1685*	*1. cent. BCE - 1. cent. CE*		
65	†			*Roman Imperial*		
65a	†		*nach 2013*	*late 2. cent. CE*		
66	†		*nach 1685*	*Roman Imperial?*		
67		Beyazıt	*nach 1685*	*2. cent. BCE*	*more likely 1. cent. BCE*	

70		Cağaloğlu	nach 1685	2. cent. BCE		
71	†	*Beyazıt*	*nach 1685*	*keine Dat.*		
73		Beyazıt	nach 2063	2. cent. BCE		
74		Beyazıt	nach 2063	2. cent. BCE		
76		Yeşilköy	nach 1685	2. cent. BCE		
78		Beyazıt	nach 1685	2.-1. cent. BCE		
80		Beyazıt	nach 1760	2. cent. BCE		
81		Beyazıt	nach 2063	2.-1. cent. BCE		
82a	†	*Alibeyköy*	*nach 1685*			
83		*İshak Paşa*	*nach 1752*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
84		Süleymaniye	nach 1760	2.-1. cent. BCE		
85		*Beyazıt, Laleli*	*nach 1760*	*2. cent. BCE*		
85a		*Küçükçekmece*	*nach 1760*	*2. cent. BCE*		
87		*Beyazıt, Vezneciler*	*nach 1761*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
88		*Beyazıt*	*nach 1685*	*2. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE*	
89		*Beyazıt*	*nach 1685*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE*	
90		Beyazıt	nach 1685	2.-1. cent. BCE	1. cent. BCE	
91		*Beyoğlu, Tarlabaşı*	*nach 1685*	*2. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE*	
92	*X*		*nach 1685*	*2. cent. BCE*		
94	†	*Büyükçekmece*	*nach 1685*	*1. cent. BCE or CE*	*1. cent. CE*	
95	†	*near Lake Terkos (Durugöl)*	*nach 1685*	*1. cent. BCE or CE*		
97		*Beyazıt*	*nach 1685*	*2. cent. BCE*		
98	†		*nach 1719*	*1. cent. BCE or CE*		
99	†		*nach 2063*	*1. cent. BCE or CE*		
100	†	*Istanbul, Eyüp, Haraççı köyü*	*nach 1685*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. CE*	
101	†	*Beyazıt*	*nach 1685*	*1. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. CE*	
103	†	*Istanbul*	*nach 1685*	*1. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. CE*	
104	†	*Beyazıt*	*nach 1817*	*1. cent. BCE*	*1.-2. cent. CE*	
105	†		*nach 1696*	*1. cent. BCE or CE*		

106	†		*nach 1817*	*Roman Imperial*		
107	†		*nach 1696*	*1. cent. BCE or CE*		
108a		Istanbul		2. cent. BCE		
110	†		*nach 1696*	*1. cent. BCE or CE*		
112	†		*nach 2063*	*Roman Imperial*		
113		Istanbul	nach 2063			
114	X					
118		Istanbul, Koska		2.-1. cent. BCE		apparently the older inscription (for a man?) was removed to make space for the later inscription
120		Yarımburgaz köyü	*nach 249*	*2. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE*	
121	†		*nach 249*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. CE*	
123		Bahçekōy	*nach 249*	*2. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE*	
125		*Beyazıt*	*nach 249*	*2. cent. BCE*		
127	†		*nach 249*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*	*2. cent. CE*	
129		*Küçükçekmece*	*nach 249*	*2. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE*	
130		*Istanbul*	*nach 249*	*2. cent. BCE*		
131			*nach 249*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE*	
133		Vezneciler	nach 249	2.-1. cent. BCE		
134		Vezneciler	*nach 249*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
135		Vezneciler	*nach 249*	*2. cent. BCE*		
137	†		*nach 792*	*Roman Imperial*		
138	†		*nach 249*	*Roman Imperial*		
140		Istanbul		2. cent. BCE		
142		Bakırköy	*nach 741*	*2. cent. BCE*		
143		Haznedar Çiftliği	nach 756	2.-1. cent. BCE		
145	†		*nach 476*	*Roman Imperial?*		
146		Beyazıt	*nach 476*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		

146a		Küçükçekmece	*nach 476*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
146b		Yarımburgaz	*nach 476*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
148	†		*nach 491*	*2. cent. BCE*		
149		Beyazıt, Vezneciler	nach 491	1. cent. BCE	2.-1. cent. BCE	
150		Beyazıt				
154		Sultanhamet, neighbourhood of Nakilbent	nach 719	2. cent. BCE		
155		Beyazıt, university garden	nach 701	1. cent. BCE	probably 2. cent. CE	
156	†			*1. cent. BCE or Roman Imperial*		
160	†		*nach 659*	*Roman Imperial?*		
166		Beyazıt	nach 851	2. cent. BCE		
169		Beyazıt	*nach 924*	*2. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE*	
173		Beyazıt	*nach 1051*	*2. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE*	
175		Beyazıt	nach 1068	2. cent. BCE		
176		Çatalca		2. cent. BCE		
180		Beyazıt, Laleli	nach 1023	2. cent. BCE		
181	†		*nach 994*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE - 1. cent. CE*	
184		Village Litros, near Istanbul	ıch 509 b (p. 33	2. cent. BCE		
191a		Found during development works on the road between Silviri and Sinekli		*2.-1. cent. BCE*		
192		Beyazıt, university courtyard	nach 2314	2.-1. cent. BCE		
194		Sultanahmet, Ticarethane Street	nach 2314	2.-1. cent. BCE		
194 a		Istanbul				
195	†			*1. cent. BCE or Roman Imperial*		
196	†	*nach 984 und nach 2*		*2. cent. CE*		
197		surrounding area of Beyazıt	nach 984	2.-1. cent. BCE		

197a		Beyazıt	nach 2063	2.-1. cent. BCE		
197b		Beyazıt	nach 2063			
199						*sarcophagus*
201			nach 792			*sarcophagus*
202			*nach 1735*			*sarcophagus*
204	†		*nach 1719*	*Roman Imperial?*		*sarcophagus*
207				*2. cent. BCE*		
208			nach 1751	2. cent. BCE		
210				*2. cent. BCE*		
211			*nach 1969*	*2.-1. cent. BCE*	*1. cent. BCE*	
212	†		*nach 1696*	*Roman Imperial*		
213				hellenistic		
215	†					
217						

Local identities in a common language: the iconography of Hellenistic funerary stelai from eastern Greek poleis

Figures & Plates Volume

Sandra Strahlendorf

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F #	N. Fıratlı, *Les stèles funéraires de Byzance gréco-romaine* (Paris 1964)
H #	R. Horn, *Hellenistische Bildwerke auf Samos*, *Samos 12* (Bonn 1972)
J #	G. Jacopi, Monumenti di Scultura del Museo Archeologico di Rodi II, *ClRh 5,2* (1932)
Känel #	R. Känel, Drei hellenistische Grabreliefs aus Smyrna in Basel, *Antike Kunst 32* (1989) p. 50-58
L #	L. Laurenzi, Monumenti di Scultura del Museo Archeologico di Rodi IV, E dell'Antiquarium di Coo II, *ClRh 9* (1938) p. 9-120
PM #	E. Pfuhl – H. Möbius, *Die ostgriechischen Grabreliefs*, 2 vols. (Mainz 1977 & 1979)
R #	P.M. Fraser, *Rhodian funerary monuments* (Oxford 1977)
Senff #	R. Senff, Drei hellenistische Grabreliefs in Ketteringham Hall, *Boreas 8* (1985) p. 81–91
W #	F. Winter, *Die Skulpturen mit Ausnahme der Altarreliefs*, *Altertümer von Pergamon 7* (Berlin 1908)

Fabricius 1999	J. Fabricius, *Die hellenistischen Totenmahlreliefs. Grabrepräsentation und Wertvorstellungen in ostgriechischen Städten* (München 1999)
Fıratlı 1964	N. Fıratlı, *Les stèles funéraires de Byzance gréco-romaine* (Paris 1964)
Fraser 1977	P.M. Fraser, *Rhodian funerary monuments* (Oxford 1977)
Horn 1972	R. Horn, *Hellenistische Bildwerke auf Samos*, *Samos 12* (Bonn 1972)
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Scholl 2011	Objektkatalog, R. Grüssinger, V. Kästner, A. Scholl (eds.), *Pergamon. Panorama der antiken Metropole. Begleitbuch zur Ausstellung (*Berlin 2011)
Laurenzi 1938	L. Laurenzi, Monumenti di Scultura del Museo Archeologico di Rodi IV, E dell'Antiquarium di Coo II, *ClRh 9* (1938) p. 9-120
Pfuhl – Möbius 1977	E. Pfuhl – H. Möbius, *Die ostgriechischen Grabreliefs*, Vol. I (Mainz 1977)
Pfuhl – Möbius 1979	E. Pfuhl – H. Möbius, *Die ostgriechischen Grabreliefs*, Vol. II (Mainz 1979)
Senff 1985	R. Senff, Drei hellenistische Grabreliefs in Ketteringham Hall, *Boreas 8* (1985) p. 81–91

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