



FROM ARTEMIS TO DIANA

THE GODDESS OF MAN AND BEAST

12 ACTA HYPERBOREA 2009

From Artemis to Diana. The Goddess of Man and Beast

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Cover illustration: A wall tapestry from Egypt depicting Artemis.

Dated to the 5th or beginning of the 6th century AD.

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BOYS AT BRAURON

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A VOTIVE OFFERING

BIRTE LUNDGREEN

In 1878 Adolf Furtwängler was travelling in Greece with his colleagues Lolling and Löschke, and came across a small sculptural head of a child offered for sale in Attica near the old Artemis sanctuary at Brauron. It had apparently been found there shortly before. However, as Furtwängler wrote in a letter to his parents on 14 June 1882, unfortunately he could not afford the head at the time. But most surprisingly, and luckily, he spotted the very same head four years later in Athens, *and* at a lower price, and bought it.¹ The head was presented in an article dedicated to Heinrich Brunn in 1893.² Despite Furtwängler's apparent personal appreciation of the head, he put it up for sale, and it was bought by the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in 1894 (**Figs. 1-4**).³

The head is only 9 cm high and broken irregularly below the chin. The nose is missing and the right eyebrow, the lips and chin are chipped. The child has an oval shaped face with large eyes framed by heavy lids. The cheeks are full, though not heavy. The hair lies in long tresses from the top of the head where some hair has been gathered in a braid and lies in a line from the crown to the forehead. At the sides and at the back the hair tresses end in small, compact curls in the shape of snail shells. The finish of the curls on the right is less carefully executed than on the left, and covers the right ear completely. On the left side of the neck and on the face there are signs of work with a rasp.⁴ The overall impression is of a young child with the head turned slightly to the right and the direction of the gaze following the turn of the head.

The head is well published, so the purpose of this article is rather to trace the different interpretations over the years and their significance for our continuing difficulty in identifying, and, not the least, defining the function of objects of Antiquity.⁵

In the article dedicated to Heinrich Brunn, Furtwängler described the



Figs. 1-4 Head of a child. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN 453.

head as coming from the statuette of a boy. The less carefully executed right side suggests the child had his right arm raised, probably like an Eros, and Furtwängler dated the head to the late 5th century BC.⁶ Furtwängler had arrived at his conclusion by taking into account the provenance, Brauron. In the neighbouring Phlya there was an old cult of Eros, and Furtwängler suggested that a woman from Phlya might have made a dedication to Artemis at Brauron.⁷

The head's resemblance to the famous 4th century BC representations of Eros by Praxiteles and Lysippos, in particular, led to an interpretation of the head as a kind of forerunner to the more famous statues.⁸ Furtwängler was supported by Frederik Poulsen, who concurred with the date and the identification of the head as Eros.⁹

In the 1980s there was renewed interest in representations of children, in particular concerning their association with certain cults and their function as votive offerings.¹⁰

The variation within this repertoire is emphasised by the German scholars; the under life-size marble statuettes of children depict both boys and girls, from toddlers to children just short of their teenage years set. The boys are often naked, the girls decently dressed and often holding a small animal or some fruit – a gift for the goddess. Inscriptions from Brauron

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support this with examples of gratitude from parents of both boys and girls.¹¹ In the new catalogue series from the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek the work is simply called “Head of a Child”. The provenance, Brauron, leads to an interpretation of the head as belonging to a statuette of a child depicting an *arktos*, generally considered to be a girl serving the goddess Artemis in her sanctuary at Brauron. The head is dated to the late Classical – early Hellenistic period, more specifically to the 4th century BC.¹²

Recently, the head was on loan in Freiburg where an exhibition for Adolf Furtwängler, celebrating the 150th anniversary of his birth, was held in 2003. In the catalogue the head was presented as that of a girl, perhaps one of Artemis’ servants, and it was suggested that the less carefully executed right side of the face and hair indicated it may have belonged to a votive or grave relief. Stylistically the head was dated to the first quarter of the 4th century BC.¹³

In the following, firstly the older attributions will be considered falling into two categories: as an Eros, or as an *arktos*. Secondly, it will be considered what other possibilities might exist for the little head.

Furtwängler’s identification makes sense in theory: the hairstyle, the turn of the head, and the proposed date point towards a statue slightly earlier than the original of the so-called Eros with a Bow attributed to Lysip-

pos (**Fig. 5**).¹⁴ Lysippos' Eros at Thespiiai, in Boiotia, was made of bronze and its identification rests on its similarity to another work associated with Lysippos, namely his figure of Opportunity, *Kairos*.¹⁵ However, if we look carefully at the head of the so-called Lysippean Eros, a younger-looking boy appears. Eros' hair is shorter with a distinctive curl lying on the right side of the forehead, and the snail-shell curls are missing.¹⁶

In the 1980s the focus had, generally speaking, shifted from gods and goddesses to private individuals, the ordinary people and their everyday life. The Copenhagen head was considered to have originally formed part of a votive offering, perhaps one of the famous *arktoi* of Artemis at Brauron.

The sanctuary of Artemis at Brauron is well-known for its cultic rituals, or rites of passage, associated with the so-called *arktoi*, the little bears, described and depicted in ancient literary sources and vase-paintings. The literary sources record girls taking part in various dances, games, and sacrifices.¹⁷ Lily Kahil, who has carried out detailed research on the material from Brauron, summarises the rites briefly: an initiation ritual where the goddess prepares the girl for the transition to puberty;¹⁸ where they are taught to serve as mothers later in life. The ritual is called the *arkteia*, which is apparently what is presented on the small vases, the *krateriskoi*, of the 6th and 5th century.¹⁹ The material evidence from the Brauron sanctuary has only been published in part and summarily.²⁰ The main body of statuettes and fragments thereof have been found in, or around, the stoa. The stoa was built in the last quarter of the 5th century BC, and presumably functioned until the sanctuary was abandoned due to the flooding of the river Erasinos in the late 4th – perhaps early 3rd century BC.²¹

The stoa consisted of a π -shaped peristyle with Doric columns, and a number of square rooms, *oikoi*, on the northern and western side. The greater part of the sculpture was found in the north aisle of the stoa.²² Furthermore, several plinths, most with their original bases intact, were also found here. Placed right outside the *oikoi*, along the wall were several sculptures, among these the well-known little girl with a pigeon, and the girl with a hare.²³ Some sculpture was found in the area of the temple and is assumed to have been placed on the stylobate between the columns.²⁴

The function of the marble statuettes from Brauron has been much discussed. A general tendency has been to describe them as *arktoi*, the girls serving the goddess at the sanctuary.²⁵ Therefore almost all have been

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interpreted as girls. However, according to some scholars the function of the statuettes was not restricted to the actions of the *arktoi*; they were also in much more general use as votive offerings in the sanctuary, similar to that at other sanctuaries at this time.²⁶

The type of the girl holding an animal is indeed known from grave reliefs, but the statuettes of this type are generally considered to be votive offerings. These types of statuettes – dating from the late Classical to the early Hellenistic period – have been found in sanctuaries all over Attica, and much further afield.²⁷ A similar figure is for instance a girl from Delphi,²⁸ and there are further examples from Agrai and Turkey.²⁹



Fig. 5 Eros with bow. 2nd century AD copy of Greek original of 4th century BC. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN 488.



Fig. 6 Eros with bow. 2nd century AD copy of Greek original of 4th century BC. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN 488.

Vierneisel-Schlörb reiterates Vorster's statement that in there is no way the statuettes can represent *arktoi*, as it is impossible to differentiate these statuettes from the large group of general votive offerings from other sanctuaries. Strictly speaking, this makes sense, but the concept that the identification with an *arktos* has to depend on the girl being represented in her special "party-dress", the saffron-coloured chiton,³⁰ is untenable. It is true the images seem to present a general type of votive offering of the time, but the inscriptions on bases in the sanctuary support an interpretation of the statuettes that they represent children of parents blessed with safe deliveries, or presented to the goddess for having taken good care of their offspring when they served her.³¹

The Brauron statuettes show girls in their everyday costume and with a variety of hair styles. The particular hairstyle with a central braid and hair tresses falling over the ears is popular and also found on grave reliefs.³² This special hairstyle with the braid running back from the centre of the forehead is found on boys too. It is worn by both children and the deities who protected them, e.g. Eros.³³

Concerning the representations of young boys, they seem to follow a similar picture, that is, being presented as Eros-like or toddlers in the same way as at other Greek sanctuaries of the 4th century. But if the votives are argued as being representations of the donor or their child, then what role did these small boys play at the sanctuary for Artemis? Why would a boy be associated with the cult of Artemis at Brauron otherwise described as an initiation process for young girls? However, as is well known, Artemis encompassed many powers, one being as *kourotrophos*, where she was the protector of children of both sexes.³⁴ According to Diodoros it was Artemis who taught humans how to care for their children.³⁵

Artemis is the protector of any offspring of a living creature, animal or human, which in the case of the so-called pets in the hands of the children provides them with a more significant meaning. Each is not just any pet, but a carefully selected animal for the goddess.³⁶

Another interpretation of the presence of boys amongst the votive offerings at Brauron may be that they were intended for Artemis' brother Apollo. Apollo also acted as *kourotrophos*, and the triad of Apollo, Artemis and their mother Leto is honoured at Brauron.³⁷ Correspondingly, Artemis is likewise present at Delphi – Apollo's sanctuary.³⁸

After this brief look at the head of a child in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen and its history of interpretation, it has hopefully become clear, that an unambiguous attribution of the head to a statuette of a girl cannot be made. The combination of the unisex hairstyle, with the central braid on top of the head and the long hair at the sides, combined with the slightly elongated shape of the face, makes it probably more reasonable to attribute it to a statuette of a little boy. It is also clear that the provenance of Brauron provides several examples of statuettes of boys. However, Eros may also be ruled out: although he has the same central braid, he is presented with shorter hair at the sides, and has in general, more of the character of a toddler with fuller facial features.

If the head in Copenhagen is that of a little boy, we need to find an explanation outside the ranks of the *arktoi*, who were girls, for its presence at Brauron. First of all, there are indeed other finds from Brauron representing little boys, though our main problem is the lack of proper publication of the material from the sanctuary. Secondly, Artemis may also be the

protector of boys in her function as kourotrophos. This is also the case for Apollo, who was also spiritually present at Brauron. An interesting note for reflection is the fact, that there is a majority of boy votive offerings at Greek sanctuaries, including the Artemis sanctuary at Brauron.³⁹

However, at the end of the day, our considerations and contemplations rely heavily on the trustworthiness of Furtwängler's statement: that the head does indeed derive from Brauron. In Furtwängler's article from 1893 he initially made excuses for his earlier attribution of the head as belonging amongst the Olympia sculptures.⁴⁰ He explained his mistake by saying, "Ich urtheilte damals nur nach Erinnerung an das Stück, das ich einmal flüchtig gesehen hatte; dies und die geringe Uebung, die mein Auge damals hatte, mögen meinem Fehler als mildernde Umstände dienen." Which does make one wonder how he could then be so sure when, four years, later he saw a small Hellenistic head of a child in Athens, that this was the same head as the one he had seen in Brauron – and which he then believed to be contemporary with the Olympia sculptures.

The examination of material from both Brauron and other sanctuaries makes it clear the head belongs typologically and chronologically in the context of either a votive offering at a sanctuary or a grave marker at a cemetery. The stylistic uniformity of the head with other such objects dating back to the late 4th century BC, makes the head in the Glyptotek a persuasive example of the artistic *koine* of the Mediterranean already prevalent in the 4th century BC.⁴¹

NOTES

1 Hildebrandt 2003, 135.

2 Furtwängler 1893, 88-91.

3 IN 453; Poulsen 1951, cat. 177; Nielsen & Østergaard 1997, cat. 1.

4 Hildebrandt 2003, 135.

5 This paper was presented at the Greek Archaeology Group in Oxford, October 2005 – I hereby express my gratitude to Dr. R. Frederiksen for organising the event and making my participation possible.

6 Furtwängler 1893, 89.

7 Furtwängler 1893, 90 n. 113.

8 Furtwängler 1893, 91: "Dieses ragt indess über alles Spätere hervor durch jenen Reiz der Strenge und durch jene stille Vornehmheit, welche alle Werke kennzeichnet, die noch an

Phidias Richtung anknüpfen." The ultimate compliment to be paid by Furtwängler was an association with the master of masters: Pheidias.

9 Poulsen 1951, no. 177.

10 Vorster 1983, 391 no. 184; Rühfel 1984; Vierneisel-Schlörb 1988, 138 n. 7. In both Vorster and Vierneisel-Schlörb the head is placed among other votive offerings from the Artemis sanctuary at Brauron.

11 Rühfel 1984, 217 n. 112 and 113.

12 Nielsen 1997, no. 1.

13 Hildebrandt 2003, 135.

14 Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek IN 488, Moltesen 2006, no. 64; in general see Moreno 1995, 111-129.

15 Praxiteles also made a statue of Eros in Thes-

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- piai, which was more popular in later sources than the Lysippean statue; Paus. 9.27.3; cf. Cic. *Verr.* 4.2 and 60; Pliny *NH* 34.91.
- 16 Moreno 1995, 113 fig. 4.15.1.
- 17 Ar. *Lys.* 641-646; Suda, s.v. ἄρκτοι ἢ Βραυρωνῖοι.
- 18 Kahil 1983 and 1984 with further references.
- 19 In general see: Sourvinou-Inwood 1988; Sourvinou-Inwood 1990.
- 20 Themelis 1971, 35. See also Coulton 1976, 164 and consecutive volumes of first *Praktika* from 1948 onwards, *Ergon* from 1954-55 onwards, and for the sculptural evidence see *BCH* 1959 onwards.
- 21 Travlos 1988, 56; Vorster 1983, 66 nn. 237-240; it seems the sanctuary was in use down to the 3rd century BC, as an inscription mentions reconstruction or rebuilding works going on at that time.
- 22 Vorster 1983, 64 with refs. Each room measured 6.10 square meter and had holes in the floors clearly indicating the fastening of eleven wooden benches/klinai in each room. (Though the first room on the northern side was slightly smaller and only had space for nine benches). For an exhaustive treatment of the sanctuary see the contribution by Inge Nielsen, above.
- 23 Rühfel 1984, figs. 92A-b: girl with pigeon (Brauron Museum IN 62), fig. 91: girl with hare (Brauron Museum IN 60).
- 24 Vorster 1983, 64-65; Rühfel 1984, 217 n. 111.
- 25 *BCH* 1959, 1960 and 1961.
- 26 Vorster 1983, 57 with discussion.
- 27 Vierneisel-Schlörb 1988, 135: like the Munich statuette several come from the art market and any consideration concerning the original usage/purpose must be pure speculation. See Vorster 1983, 330-350, nos 1-58 for list of similar statuettes: standing girls from various locations.
- 28 Vorster 1983, 345 no. 44; Rühfel 1984, fig. 88 (Delphi Archaeological Museum IN 1791 (head: IN 3333)).
- 29 Rühfel 1984, fig. 94: girl from Agrai (Athens, National Museum 693) and figs. 100a-b: girl from Turkey (Fethiye Archaeological Museum IN 862).
- 30 Suda, s.v. ἄρκτοι ἢ Βραυρωνῖοι.
- 31 Vorster 1983, 215-216, 382 no. 156: a mix of boys and girls, naked and dressed, also the boys. The material from Brauron listed by Vorster 1983, especially the heads: 387-390, nos. 170-180. E.g. finds from the Eileithyia sanctuary near the Ilissos – both as birth goddess and kourotrophos. Asklepios santuary at Epidaurus with a collective offering of five small children on one plinth (Athens, NM 304).
- 32 Vierneisel-Schlörb 1988, 137 n. 7; Vorster 391 no. 184 – and on girl with dove from the Eileithyia sanctuary (Athens NM 695).
- 33 Rühfel 1984, 228-229 figs. 96-97 (Joannina Museum: H. 16 cm); Edwards 1996, 53; cf. Harrison 1988, 253; J. Neils, in Neils and Oakley 2003, 141.
- 34 Giuman 1999, 46-48.
- 35 Diod. 5.73.5-6; Themelis 1971, fig. p. 85; for the subject of kourotrophos at Brauron, see Kahil 1984, no. 85; Vorster 1983, 249 concluding that the main body of statuettes of children in Greek sanctuaries have been erected to healing gods or kourotrophos.
- 36 Woysch-Méautis 1982, 101-103.
- 37 Rühfel 1984, 217 n. 114; Themelis 1971, figs. p. 59; Kontes 1967, pl. 104.2; Kahil 1977, fig. C, pl. 201: fragment of red-figured krater with Apollo who is in charge of the growing boys, n. 115.
- 38 Rühfel 1984, 218 n. 116a. For further references to shared sanctuaries of Apollo and Artemis, see Poulsen below.
- 39 Vorster 1983, 249: only on whole figures, no heads included.
- 40 Furtwängler 1893, 88.
- 41 Rühfel 1984, 223.

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