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Cover illustration: Submerged structures from shipsheds in the Zea harbour, Piraeus.  
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# The cult and political background of the Knidian Aphrodite<sup>\*</sup>

Antonio Corso

## Introduction

Praxiteles' Knidian Aphrodite is one of the most renowned works of Classical Greek art. As such, it has been the object of many publications, some of which are quite recent and of monographic length.<sup>1</sup>

These studies have focused on the problems of the setting as well as of the architectural context of Praxiteles' masterpiece at Knidos (Figs. 1–2),<sup>2</sup> of the religious *status* of the statue,<sup>3</sup> its erotic message<sup>4</sup>

south-east of the altar of the round temple and in the terrace just below it, of Parian marble fragments pertaining to copies of the Knidia (Love 1972a, 75–6; 1974, 96), probably suggests that copies of the Knidia were carved not far from the setting of the original statue. 7. The discovery near the temple of a decree on the cult of Aphrodite (Blümel 1992, no. 161) suggests that the goddess was worshipped on the terrace. 8. The discovery on the terrace of clay figurines and other objects which are typical of the world of Aphrodite (young female heads, figurines representing the birth of Aphrodite, babies with doves, a Hermaphrodite with a dove, figurines of a naked goddess, figurines of a bride and groom, seated *kourotrophoi*, female musicians with musical instruments, *phalloi*, phallic vases and lamps with shells: cf. Love 1972b, 393–405). 9. A small base was found near the *rotunda*: it bears the inscription (Blümel 1992, no. 178) probably the dedication by a lover to the naked Aphrodite and to Praxiteles (cf. Corso 2000a, 227–36). 10. A small round temple of Aphrodite with a marble statue of the goddess in the middle was made in a luxurious boat owned by Ptolemaios Philopator (Kallixenos, *De Alexandria*, fr. 1, *FGrHist* 3C.627, revealing the continuity of the association between marble statues of Aphrodite and round temples in the early Hellenistic royal courts. 11. Finally, Aphrodites within round temples are often painted in Roman representations of idyllic landscapes (see Lehmann 1953, 118–31). The observation by Bankel 1997, 51–71 that Athena was worshipped in the area just west of the *rotunda*, in the same terrace, agrees with the epigrammatic *topos* of Athena and Hera as “guests” of Aphrodite in her sanctuary, near Praxiteles' statue (Evenos, *Anth. Plan.* 165).

<sup>3</sup> It is likely that the statue was a votive offering, as it is regarded as an *anathema* by Lucian, *Anth. Plan.* 164, v. 1 (the dedication of the statue is underlined with the use of the verb *anatithemi*). Added to this are the reasons given below, 176–9, on the antiquity of the cult of Aphrodite *Euploia* at Knidos, whose sanctuary must have had a cult statue at the latest by the age of Konon. Finally, there had been an attempt by Nikomedes, King of Bithynia to buy the Knidia (Plin. *HN* 7.127, 36.21: he was perhaps the first king with this name to make this offer, around 260 BC). This detail is incompatible with the possibility that the Knidia was a cult statue. On the different concepts of images of deities in the Greek world, see Scheer 2000, 44–229.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. esp. Stewart 1997, 97–129, 231–4; Seaman 2004, 531–94, esp. 544–69.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. the ‘classical’ works of Blinkenberg 1933 and Closuit 1978. See, more recently, Havelock 1995; Corso 1997a, 91–8; Kelpen 1997; Stewart 1997, 97–129, 231–4; Ortolani 1998; Rolley 1999, 257–61; Corso 2000a, 227–36; Geominy 2004, 305–19, esp. 311–3; Kallegia 2004, 42–9; Schröder 2004, 116–20, no. 116; Seaman 2004, 531–94.

<sup>2</sup> The setting of the statue within the round temple on the highest terrace of Knidos is argued by the following evidence: 1. Antip. Sid. (*Anth. Plan.* 167, v. 1) states that the Aphrodite stood “upon rocky Knidos”, therefore suggesting that the statue was set up in the highest section of the city. 2. In Lucian (*Amores* 11–7) a group of friends, after having landed at Knidos, pays a visit to the city and then goes to the sanctuary of the Knidian Aphrodite: it is possible to argue from this narration that this sanctuary was not in the middle of the city, but in its part furthest from the harbour. 3. Plin. (*HN* 36.20–2) asserts that the statue stood within an *aedicula*. 4. Lucian (*Amores* 16) describes the small temple as round, being closed by just one wall (*toichos hapas*), with gates at the front and back, details, which may be attributed also to the round temple of Knidos. 5. The round *monopteros* housing a copy of the Knidian Aphrodite within the Villa Hadriana at Tivoli (cf. Ortolani 1998) suggests that the original statue also stood in a round temple. 6. The discovery, at



Fig. 1. Map of the ancient city of Knidos. 1: Round temple, probably dedicated to Aphrodite Euploia. 2: Altar of the round temple's sanctuary. 3: Sanctuary of Athena. 4: Temple of Apollo Karneios A. 5: Temple of Apollo Karneios B. 6: Altar of Apollo Karneios. 7: Ionic propylon to the sanctuary of Apollo Karneios. 8: Doric temple. 9: Corinthian temple. 10: Monumental building, 11: Doric stoa. (Drawing after Bankel 1997, 67, fig. 30).

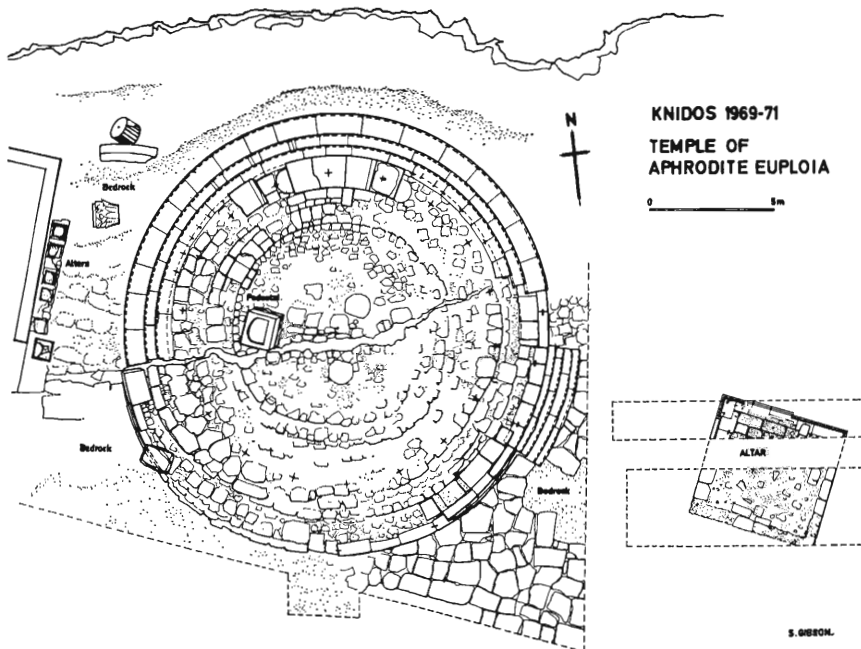


Fig. 2. Round temple and altar in the upper terrace of Knidos, probably dedicated to Aphrodite Euploia (Photo after Love 1972b, 403, fig. 6).



Fig. 3. Representation of the Knidian Aphrodite on the reverse of a Knidian coin struck under Caracalla (London, British Museum, no. XVI. 7).

as well as its tremendous success (Figs. 3-4). The catalogue of the copies of the Knidia collected by Kristen Seaman, listing no less than 192 surviving ancient reproductions of the masterpiece,<sup>5</sup> suggests that this Aphrodite was the most copied statue in Antiquity.<sup>6</sup>

However, the historical/political context in which the creation and setting up of the statue at Knidos took place has never been the focus of a specific study.

This article aims therefore to fill this gap in the scholarly bibliography.

In particular, the following syllogism will be explored:

- I. The Athenian family of Konon and of his son Timotheos were tied to the sanctuary of Aphrodite *Euploia* at Knidos.
- II. The workshop of Kephisodotos the Elder and Praxiteles, during the first period of his activity, was the most important *ergasterion* of sculptors with close ties to the politician Timotheos. It sometimes worked on the monumental enterprises promoted by the general or his political circle.
- III. Thus, one of the reasons explaining the wish of the Knidians to have this Aphrodite from

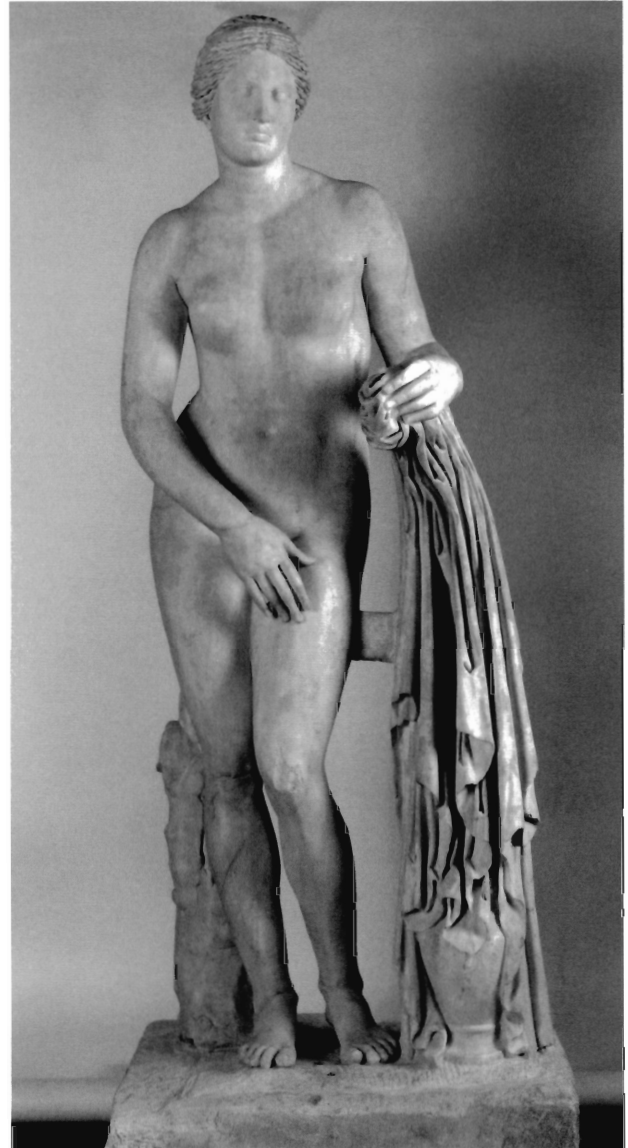


Fig. 4. Belvedere copy of the Knidian Aphrodite, Rome, Vatican Museums, no. 4260.

Praxiteles must have been the latter's connection to Timotheos, as he was an influential politician of an Athenian family devoted to the Knidian cult of this goddess.

Moreover, I shall suggest that both Maussolos, indirectly, and the Knidian Eudoxos, more direct-

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Seaman 2004, 531-94, esp. 570-80.

<sup>6</sup> The fame of the Knidia was established immediately after her being set up in the Knidian sanctuary: see below, 189-92.

ly, may have had an influence on the Knidian decision.

The demonstration of the validity of these statements will allow a specification of the chronology and the message of the statue.

## The family of Konon and the cult of Aphrodite at Knidos

The *locus classicus* concerning the relationship between Konon and the Knidian cult of Aphrodite is a passage of Pausanias (1.1.3), quoted here in Frazer's translation:<sup>7</sup>

"Beside the sea (*scil.*: at the Piraeus) Konon built a sanctuary (*hieron*) of Aphrodite after vanquishing the Lacedaimonian fleet at Knidos in the Karian peninsula; for the Knidians honour Aphrodite above all the gods, and they have sanctuaries (*hiera*) of the goddess. The oldest is the sanctuary of *Doritis* Aphrodite: next to it is the sanctuary of *Akraia* Aphrodite; and newest of all is the sanctuary of her who is generally called Knidian Aphrodite, but whom the Knidians themselves call Euploia Aphrodite".

It is possible to argue from the passage of Pausanias that at Knidos there were three sanctuaries dedicated to the goddess. In the two most ancient cult places, Aphrodite respectively had the epikleses of *Doritis* and *Akraia*. The first of these two sanctuaries probably got its denomination from the belief that it harked back to the Age of the colonization of the *polis* made by the Dorians of Sparta,<sup>8</sup> whilst the other sanctuary likely got its epiklesis from its position at the highest section of Knidos.<sup>9</sup>

The antiquity of the cult of Aphrodite at Knidos is strengthened by the invocation to this goddess with a reference to her Knidian cult by Alkman<sup>10</sup> and Sappho.<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, coins struck by Knidos from around 530 BC bear heads of Aphrodite in different configurations,<sup>12</sup> which may mirror the various cult images in the distinct sanctuaries of the goddess at Knidos.

Finally, clay heads of a young goddess who may be Aphrodite have been found on the highest terrace of Knidos, near the round temple which

probably housed the Cnidian Aphrodite,<sup>13</sup> and they are distributed in a chronological sequence from the Archaic to the Hellenistic period.<sup>14</sup>

When analyzing these issues, one cannot forget the debate regarding the location of Knidos before late Classical times. Some scholars support the thesis that the Archaic and early Classical city was at Burgaz, near Datcha, in the central stretch of the southern coast of the peninsula, where an important Archaic settlement has been found. They argue that it was only in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC that the city was moved to the western promontory of the peninsula, that of Tekir. Other scholars, considering the significant Archaic and early Classical material found at Tekir, have argued for a settlement continuity on the western promontory from the Archaic period.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Frazer 1898, i, 2. I have amended Frazer's translations of the different denominations of Aphrodite's three cults at Knidos mentioned by Pausanias with their original Greek names in Pausanias' passage, since each *epiklesis* of Aphrodite will be discussed below.

<sup>8</sup> The colonization of Knidos by the Spartans is mentioned already by Herodotos (1.174.2; see also Diod. Sic. 5.53.3). The oekistes was thought to have been Triopas (Diod. Sic. 5.61.2-3, Paus. 10.11.1); see Malkin 1993, 378-9; Vatin 1995, 113-32. Knidos is mentioned already in the Homeric Hymn to Delian Apollo, 43.

<sup>9</sup> Antip. Sid. (n. 2). Aphrodite was called *Akraia* also on the acropolis of Troizen, the motherland of Halicarnassos (cf. Paus. 2.32.6) and on Kypros, on the top of the local Mt. Olympos (cf. Strabon, 14.6.3.682) as well as at Paphos (*SEG* 32 (1982) no. 1380). On Aphrodite *Akraia*, see Pirenne-Delforge 1994, 181-3 (at Troizen) and 368-73 (on Kypros). On the cult of Aphrodite on Kypros, Budin 2003, 103-282. A dedication to Aphrodite *Akraia* assimilated to Arsinoe has been found at Alexandria (*SEG* 8 (1937) 361).

<sup>10</sup> Alcman fr. 55 (Campbell). This poet lived at Sparta, the motherland of Knidos.

<sup>11</sup> Sappho, *testimonia* 47 (Campbell).

<sup>12</sup> Cahn 1970, 19-67, 70-1, 81-3, 96-104, 125-6, 135-8, 150-1, 157-62, 212 and figs. 1-20.

<sup>13</sup> See n. 2.

<sup>14</sup> Love 1972a, 402-4, figs. 20-7, pls. 83-4.

<sup>15</sup> The most important contributions to this debate are the following: Bean & Cook 1952, 171-212 (the Archaic city was at Burgaz and moved to Tekir only in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC); Cahn 1970, 10-2 (the city always was at Tekir); Love 1978, 1111-33 (against a change in city location); Stampolidis 1984, 113-27 (against the moving of the city); Demand 1989, 224-37; 1990, 146-50 (in favour of continu-

I believe that the apparent contradiction in the evidence can be explained through the hypothesis that this Spartan colony was characterized, just as its motherland, by scattered settlements, *kata komas*, with villages distributed over several sites of the Knidian peninsula. As we shall see below, during the 360s, under the satrapy of Maussolos, the decision must have been taken for both a synoecistic process at the eastern promontory, that of Tekir, and a monumentalization program of the centre which already stood there.<sup>16</sup>

The third and most recent Knidian sanctuary of Aphrodite, according to Pausanias, was that in which the goddess had the epiklesis of Euploia. The relationship of Aphrodite with the sea at Knidos is already evidenced by an episode which potentially harks back to the high Archaic period.<sup>17</sup> This relationship is implied, moreover, by the belief that the goddess guaranteed a sweet arrival into the Knidian harbour for boats carrying visitors to Praxiteles' Aphrodite.<sup>18</sup>

Since the cult of Aphrodite Euploia is evidenced in other *poleis*, especially in Asia Minor and in the Ionian world, only from the mid-Hellenistic period onwards,<sup>19</sup> it is likely that it spread from Knidos. The Knidian Aphrodite was therefore the first to be endowed with this epiklesis. Pausanias states that Aphrodite Euploia at Knidos was usually denominated *Knidia*. This epiklesis is in fact used in reference to Aphrodite in two Knidian inscriptions. In the first, dating to as early as the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC and found in the terrace of the round temple, the goddess is called *Knidia*.<sup>20</sup> The later inscription, of the early Imperial period, is a dedication by the *Boule* and *Demos* of Knidos to Damoxenos, priest of the *thea erate Knidia Aphrodite*, of the "Knidian Aphrodite, lovely goddess".<sup>21</sup>

The Knidian sanctuary of Aphrodite Euploia/*Knidia* must have been that in which Praxiteles' Aphrodite was set up. This statue was usually called *Knidia*<sup>22</sup> and it was believed that the goddess, acting as *Euploia*, would guarantee a sweet landing to the visitors of Praxiteles' masterpiece, who used to arrive at Knidos by sea.<sup>23</sup> Finally, a decree on the cult of *Knidia Aphrodite* has been found near the round temple, which most likely housed the Athenian sculptor's statue.<sup>24</sup>

ity of the settlement of Knidos at Tekir); Berges & Tuna 1990, 19–35 (Archaic Knidos was at Burgaz); Blümel 1992, 1–2 (Knidos has always been at Tekir); Malkın 1993, 378–9 (in favour of the stable settlement of Knidos at Tekir); Berges 1994, 5–16 (the move happened at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC or at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup>); Ozgan 1994, 183–5 (in favour of locating Knidos at Tekir from the 13<sup>th</sup> century BC); Lang 2003, 574–85 (in favour of a change in city location: the move taking place between 360 and 330 BC); and finally Bruns-Ozgan 2004, 201–8 (publishes an Archaic head from Tekir, which strengthens the argument for settlement continuity on the promontory).

<sup>16</sup> In any case, the "political" centre of the Archaic and early Classical *polis* must have been Tekir. The definition of Knidos as "high" (*apeine*) in the Homeric Hymn to Delian Apollo, 43 fits the high promontory of Tekir well, as do the passages of Herodotos (1.174.2–3) and Thucydides (8.5.1–4), as Demand has demonstrated (n. 15). Herodotos (1.174.2) referring to Knidos as *chora*, shows also the territorial characterization of the Cnidian *polis* at the time of the events reported by him, which corresponds to 545 BC (cf. Müller 1997, 298–317). On the *kata komas* settlement of Sparta, I cite only Hansen 2004, 149–64.

<sup>17</sup> This was when murexes, sacred to the Knidian Aphrodite, clung to a boat, which was carrying despatches from Perander ordering some noble youths to be castrated. This brought the boat to a standstill (Mucian, in Plin. *HN* 9.80; on Perander's habit of castrating the sons of nobles who were hostile to him, see Hdt. 3.24.2–4, 49.2).

<sup>18</sup> Lucian, *Amores* 11.

<sup>19</sup> This cult is evidenced: 1. At Mylasa, probably at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC (Blümel 1987, 207, 210, 501). 2. At Olbia Pontica, also in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC (Latyshev 1916, 168). 3. At Aigai in Kilikia in 18 BC (*CIG* 3.4443). 4. On Delos, in the *Serapeion*, in the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC (Roussel & Launey 1937, 2132). 5. At the Piraeus, in 97–6 BC, as we shall see below. 6. At Naples, in the Flavian Age (Stat. *Silv.* 2.2.79, 3.1.149). 7. At Hippo Diarrhytus in Africa Proconsularis, probably in the late Augustan Age (*CIL* 8.25422). See Miranda 1989, 123–44; Pugliese Carratelli 1992, 58–61; see esp. Pirenne-Delforge 1994, 33–4, 373, 399, 433–4, 469).

<sup>20</sup> Blümel 1992, 161.

<sup>21</sup> Blümel 1992, 103.

<sup>22</sup> Hermodoros, *Anth. Plan.* 170, v. 1: *Knidia Kythereia*; Evenos, *ibidem* 16.165, v. 2: *Knidia*; Plin. *HN* 7.127: *Cnidia Venus*; Lucian, *Amores* 11: *Aphrodite Knidia*; 54: *Knidia Aphrodite*; Philostr. *V A* 6.19: *Knidia*; Clem. Al. *Protr.* 4.47: *tes Aphrodites agalma tes Knidias*; Ath. 13.591a: *Knidia Aphrodite*; Arn. *Adv. Nat.* 6.13: *Venus Cnidia*; Auson. *Epigrammata* 62 Green, v. 1: *Cnidia Cypris*; Kedrenos 322b: *Knidia Aphrodite*; Zonar. 14.24.2.52d: *Knidia Aphrodite*.

<sup>23</sup> See n. 18.

<sup>24</sup> See n. 20.

Konon,<sup>25</sup> having defeated the Spartans at sea near Knidos in the summer of 394 BC,<sup>26</sup> came home in early summer 393 BC<sup>27</sup> and promoted a sanctuary of Aphrodite at Piraeus, as we know from the passage of Pausanias quoted above.

Piraeus was already endowed with a sanctuary of Aphrodite, decided by Themistokles after the battle of Salamis.<sup>28</sup>

It is likely that Konon re-founded and monumentalized the sanctuary of Aphrodite established by Themistokles. The written *testimonia* on the cult of Aphrodite at Piraeus bear topographical suggestions that indicate the same sanctuary, located near the harbour of *Kantharos*, at north-north-west of the Eetioneia peninsula.<sup>29</sup>

A few epigraphic *testimonia* give evidence for the life of the sanctuary in the late Classical and Hellenistic period.

IG II<sup>2</sup> 1657, found at north-west of Eetioneia and dated between early summer 394 BC and early summer 393 BC, records that the *Aphrodision* was located not far from a city gate. This should probably be identified with the gate at north-north-west of Eetioneia, as the inscription was found nearby. The reference may be to either the sanctuary established by Themistokles or, in the case that the inscription dates to the early summer 393 BC, to the new *hieron*, which must have been just decided, since Konon arrived in Athens exactly at that time.<sup>30</sup>

IG II<sup>2</sup> 4570 and 4586 are late Classical dedications to the goddess, of the second and third quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC respectively.

By contrast, IG II<sup>2</sup> 2872 is a late Hellenistic dedication, dated to 97/6 BC, of *Argeios*, *strategos* of Piraeus, to Aphrodite Euploia. This inscription is of primary importance, as it demonstrates that in this sanctuary Aphrodite had the epiklesis of *Euploia*.

Finally, the sanctuary must have been seriously damaged by the Sullan destruction of Piraeus,<sup>31</sup> since it is included among the buildings to be restored in IG II<sup>2</sup> 1035, l. 46, an inscription to be dated to the early years of the Augustan Age.<sup>32</sup>

It is possible to argue from IG II<sup>2</sup> 2872 that Konon brought from Knidos to Piraeus the cult of Aphrodite Euploia, also called *Knidia*, in whose

sanctuary at Knidos, Praxiteles' Aphrodite was to be set up. It is therefore also possible that the Athenian general linked his naval victory in the waters of Knidos with the maritime characterization of this goddess Euploia, who was so powerful locally, and that he believed his victory was at least partly due to the support of the Knidian Aphrodite.

It is logical to assume, therefore, that Konon, must have established contact both with the authorities of the sanctuary of Aphrodite Euploia at Knidos<sup>33</sup> and, of course, with the most promi-

<sup>25</sup> On Konon, see Traill 2001, 520-6, no. 581750.

<sup>26</sup> On this naval battle, see Buckler 2003, 70-4; Brule & Descat 2004, 23-4.

<sup>27</sup> See Funke 1983, 149-89; Buckler 2003, 129-52.

<sup>28</sup> The *locus classicus* is Hammonios, *Peri' bomon kai thysion*, *FGRHist* 3b.361, fr. 5. This sanctuary is also mentioned by Kallikrates and Menekles, *Peri' Athenon* 1, *FGRHist* 3b.370, fr. 1. It is possible that *Menekles* is a corrupted transcription of *Mnesikles* and that this treatise was, in fact, written by Kallikrates and Mnesikles around 430 BC or short after: see Corso 2001a, 101-29, esp. 124, n. 10. On Themistokles and Piraeus, see Blösel 2004, 69-70, 90-1, 354-7.

<sup>29</sup> On the likely location of the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Piraeus, see Funke 1983, 175-89; von Eickstedt 1991, 35-6, 115-6; Panagos 1997, 156, 216, 224, 258, 269-70, 290.

<sup>30</sup> See the bibliography cited in n. 29.

<sup>31</sup> On the destruction of Piraeus caused by the Sullan army, see Steinhauer 2000, 34-8.

<sup>32</sup> On this inscription, see von Freeden 1983, 6-16, 145-83, 189-91; Stewart 2004, 199-200, 226-7, 233, 287, 324, n. 32, where the most important previous bibliography on the inscription is cited. Nothing is known on the possible continuation of the sanctuary during the Roman Imperial Age. The only writer of this period who mentions it, Pausanias, limits his information on the cult site to the notice of its foundation, without any reference to it as existing in his own day.

<sup>33</sup> The institution of a priest of the Knidian Aphrodite is known for the Julio-Claudian period, as it is argued from the inscription in Blümel 1992, 103. A male priest is appropriate to the maritime and perhaps war-like characterization of Aphrodite *Euploia* (Pirenne-Delfolge 1994, 399). Moreover, a sacred prostitute working in the sanctuary is mentioned by Ptolemaios Chennos, *Kaine' historia, fragmenta incertae sedis*, 1 Chatzis. This woman was named Ischas and lived around 300 BC (Men. *Kolax*, fr. 4 (Sandbach), Ath. 13.587d-e; Corso 2000a, 229). Finally, a woman worked as a door-keeper, at least in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD (see Lucian, *Amores* 14-7).



nent political elements of the Knidian *polis*.<sup>34</sup> This probably happened when the Spartan occupation of Knidos came to an end after the naval victory. It is likely that the city had been given again to the Persians, for whom Konon was admiral, on this occasion and not with the Antalkidas peace of 387/6 BC.<sup>35</sup>

A few indications of how Konon had contact with political elements within the *polis* can be suggested. In 399/8 BC, the Knidian Ktesias, at the time an influential dignitary in the court of the Great King Artaxerxes II, helped Konon to become an admiral of a Persian fleet,<sup>36</sup> after which Ktesias returned to his native city.<sup>37</sup> This suggests that from 398/7 BC Ktesias must have tried to promote a link between the Athenian admiral and the most influential social circle of the Knidian *polis*. This suggestion is reinforced by the fact that Ktesias, after returning to his motherland, had to face a trial, instituted by the Spartan representatives at Rhodes.<sup>38</sup> In fact, Spartan hostility towards the Knidian writer suggests that Ktesias' support of Konon's policy continued even after the former

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<sup>34</sup> Of the political authorities of Knidos, we know, for the late Classical period, the *prostatai* (Blümel 1992, 1, 4, 21–2, 38, 73, 160–1, 218–9, 603–4, 606) and perhaps the *agoranomos* (Blümel 1992, 803, of the late 4<sup>th</sup> century BC: however, the provenance of the inscription from Knidos is hypothetical). In the post-Persian period the *strategoi* are known from around 300 BC (Blümel 1992, 87, 219, 221, 231 and perhaps 801); the *damiourgos*, who was the eponymous magistrate, is evidenced from the same period (Blümel 1992, 34, 59, 73, 91, 183, 190, 219, 221, 231, 606, perhaps 801, 802); the judges (*dikastai*) are also known from 300 BC onwards (Blümel 1992, 218, 221, 231); the *boule* is evidenced from the period of the diadochs (Blümel 1992, 34, 73–4, 91, 103, 177, 220–1, 231, 234, 461, 606); the *ekklesia* is known for the period around 200 BC (Blümel 1992, 220); the *mnamos* are also evidenced from 200 BC onwards (Blümel 1992, 36, 73, perhaps 161); moreover the *astynomoi* are known in the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC (Blümel 1992, 187); finally, the *gerousia* is evidenced in the high Imperial Age (Blümel 1992, 83). It is possible that some of the magistracies, which are known only in later periods existed already in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. Unfortunately, the late Classical institutions are not well known also in other Dorian *poleis*, such as Rhodes (see Berthold 1980, 32–49; Papachristodoulou 1999, 27–40; Wiemer 2002, 21–2) and Kos (see Sherwin-White 1978, 153–223; Carlsson 2004, 109–18; Kokkorou-Aletras 2004). Therefore, the constitution of Knidos before

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Alexander cannot be hypothetically enriched through the comparison with the contemporary institutions of the latter two cities.

Concerning changes of constitution at Knidos during the late Classical period, two passages of Aristotle are relevant: *Anst. Pol.* 5.5.3.1305b, 5.5.11.1306b: in my opinion, they refer to the same episode, characterized by an internal conflict within the oligarchic faction, which made possible to the *demos* to seize power. It is at least possible that this situation arose in 394 BC, just after the Spartans withdrew from Knidos. The *polis* must have been democratic by 363 BC, as it is suggested by the proxeny decree in honour of the Theban Epaminondas, which is of that year (Blümel 1994, 157–9; Buckler 2003, 364). On the perhaps oligarchic constitutional reform accomplished by Eudoxos, probably short after 363 BC, see below, 183–184. On the two passages of Aristotle, see the discussion in Hornblower 1982, 115–9. In the Age of Alexander, Knidos appears again to be democratic: the *damos* makes the dedication of this period, Blümel 1992, 213 and is remembered in the funerary inscription, Blümel 1994, 157–9.

<sup>35</sup> For a synthesis of these vicissitudes, see Hornblower 1982, 116; Buckler 2003, 70–4. On the conditions of Persian rule of the Greek cities of the Aegean coast of Anatolia, see Briant 2002, 264–6, 388–421, 493–505, 634–56, 700–9 (on the first decades of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC). The city had to pay taxes both to the Great King and to the satrap; moreover it had to contribute soldiers and boats upon request of the central or of the local power; finally, a governor and a garrison could be installed there. However, the specific duties of Knidos towards the Great King and the satrap are not known. It is possible that the fact that the Knidian Ktesias had until 398–7 BC been a high dignitary in the court of the Great King (see n. 36) implied that Knidos could enjoy a favourable *status*.

<sup>36</sup> The sequence of the relationship of Ktesias with Konon appears to have been the following. In 399–8 BC, Konon wrote to Ktesias, soliciting the latter's help in seeking the favour of the Great King. The Knidian physician supported Konon's interests in his dealings with Artaxerxes, and informed the Athenian general of it through letters. Following further letters of Konon both to the Great King and to Ktesias, the latter delivered the definitive reply of the king to Konon, that he had been hired as a Persian admiral by the satrap Pharnabazos. These events were narrated by Ktesias in his *Persika* 63. See *Plut. Vit. Artax.* 21.2–3, who claims that Ktesias added a note to the letter of Konon to the Great King, with the suggestion that the king should send Ktesias to Konon, because, as a Knidian, he was an expert on maritime activities. Ktesias, in order to deliver Artaxerxes' letter to Konon, must have gone to Salamis in Kypros, where Konon was a guest of the King Evagoras (see Buckler 2003, 54–5, with a list of relevant *testimonia* in n. 18 and with a detailed reconstruction of this episode). On Ktesias, see Eck 1990, 409–34; Tuplin 2004, 305–47.

<sup>37</sup> Ktesias, *Persika* 64.

<sup>38</sup> Ktesias, *Persika* 64 and discussion in Eck 1990, 422–7.

had returned to Knidos. This did not escape the attention of the Spartans, who must have felt that Ktesias' behaviour had been anti-Spartan not just in the remote past, but also in recent times.

This leads to the conclusion that the political relationship between Konon and the most important elements of the Knidian community must have been strong and enduring.

### Timotheos, son of Konon, the workshop of Kephisodotos the Elder and the young Praxiteles and the social circle of these two sculptors

It is well-known that Timotheos, the son of Konon, was the most influential politician in Athens during the years of restoration of the Athenian league, i.e. between 378 and 373 BC.<sup>39</sup>

The fortunate events of this period led to a great euphoria at Athens, expressed particularly by Isokrates, the teacher of Timotheos.<sup>40</sup> Such positive developments also determined the conditions for a new religious and monumental policy, which aimed at emphasising the retrieved hegemony.<sup>41</sup>

Within this promising historical context, one particular workshop of sculptors was privileged enough to win the commission for the most important sculptural monuments promoted by either Timotheos or his political circle, and so to become the most renowned *ergasterion* for sculptures, in both bronze and marble, in town. I am referring, of course, to the studio of Kephisodotos the Elder and of Praxiteles, who was most likely Kephisodotos' son.<sup>42</sup>

During these years, Kephisodotos' sister married Phokion,<sup>43</sup> a wealthy and respectable young man, from the elite of upper class Athenian society. Phokion had been a pupil of Plato at the Academy, probably in the late 380s BC,<sup>44</sup> and it is likely that this studentship increased the fame of this young politician, who had been educated in such a prestigious institution.

His sister's marriage to Phokion must have given Kephisodotos the opportunity for closer links with the social, political and cultural elite of Athens.

This explains why the young Praxiteles was commissioned the monument celebrating Timotheos' naval victory against Sparta at Alytia in 375 BC.<sup>45</sup> This was set up at Delphi and endowed worth a double dedication, of the Athenians and their allies as well as of Timotheos, the victorious general.<sup>46</sup>

Perhaps the following year, Kephisodotos the Elder was commissioned to produce the bronze statue of Eirene holding the infant Ploutos in her arms. This was set up in the *agora* of Athens, probably in celebration of the 'Panhellenic' Peace of that year, secured by Timotheos after a series of brilliant victories and reviving the naval power of Athens.<sup>47</sup>

It is obvious, therefore, that the proposal to monumentalize the probably preexisting Athenian cult of Eirene<sup>48</sup> with an altar and this sculptural

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<sup>39</sup> On the historical moment and the importance of the general Timotheos, see Bunch 1994; March 1994; Buckler 2003, 242-70.

<sup>40</sup> Isoc. *Antid.* 15.101-30, esp. 109-10. On the political thought of Isokrates concerning the second Athenian league, see Bearzot 2003, 62-77.

<sup>41</sup> The religious and monumental policy of the general Timotheos would need a monograph all to itself, which is still lacking. See the useful synthesis of Knell 2000, esp. 11-22, 63-114.

<sup>42</sup> On this studio of sculptors during the 370s BC and early 360s BC, see Corso 2004a, 77-325.

<sup>43</sup> Plut. *Vit. Phoc.* 19.1. On Phokion, see Tritle 1988, 46-50 (on his marriage to Kephisodotos' sister); Lamberton 2003, 8-13.

<sup>44</sup> Tritle 1988, 52.

<sup>45</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 5. 4. 65: see Buckler 2003, 253-4.

<sup>46</sup> *SEG XXXIII* (1983) 440 a-1. on the monument, i.e. the acanthus column, Corso 2004a, 115-25. I had the opportunity of scrutinizing extensively the dedicatory inscription on the east side of the base during 25-7 September, 1988. Even though the signs of the letters are often faint and difficult to read, I was able to identify most of the letters of the inscription, which therefore exists. The often asserted skepticism as to its existence (e.g. Martinez 1997, 35-46, esp. 44, n. 27) is therefore not well-founded. Praxiteles' signature on the base of the column has been photographed by Kris Seaman, and her publication of it is forthcoming.

<sup>47</sup> Evidence on this masterpiece and its historical context in Corso 2004a, 76-108.

<sup>48</sup> Plut. *Vit. Cim.* 13.5 asserts that an altar to Eirene had been already set up at Athens after Eurimedon's victory, with a reference to the embassy of Kallias to the Great King and the

group, thus stressing its importance with an annual sacrifice, must have come from either Timotheos or his political circle, which in these years dominated Athenian political life.

The open message of the group, that peace will lead to flourishing wealth, expresses well the atmosphere of euphoria and optimism of those years. Moreover, the sweetness of the gaze of Eirene suggests a maternal and appealing image of political power, which not only exercises its sovereignty, symbolized by the sceptre held by the goddess in her right hand, but also promotes the well-being of the citizens, expressed not only by the infant Ploutos, but also by the cornucopia, held by the goddess in her left hand.

Other works are both attributed to the workshop and indirectly linked to the Athenian political establishment of the time.

The bronze statue made by Kephisodotos of a *Contionans manu elata*, mentioned by Pliny (*HN* 34.87) is probably the same statue of Solon, set up in the *agora* of Salamis.<sup>49</sup> The re-consideration of the message of the lawmaker of a timocratic constitution is consistent with the emphasis given to wealth in the group of Eirene and Ploutos and therefore should be seen as part of the same political environment.

The assertion of a new group of Tyrant-slayers, attributed by Pliny (*HN* 34.70) to Praxiteles, is usually rejected by modern scholars. On the contrary, it is entirely plausible if we consider the emphasis that Konon and Timotheos appear to have laid on the efforts of Harmodios and Aristogeiton.<sup>50</sup> It is therefore likely that this Praxitelean group was also commissioned and promoted by the political circle of Timotheos.

Moreover, towards the end of the 370s BC, Praxiteles appears linked both with the influential and conservative ambience of the knights<sup>51</sup> and with the family of the Philaids.<sup>52</sup>

During the 360s BC, when, with the death of Kephisodotos the Elder, Praxiteles probably took over his workshop, he was able to link himself with other important men and circles within the Athenian society at the time.

First of all, the close relationship of Praxiteles to Plato is demonstrated by:

1. The aforementioned studentship of his uncle Phokion in the Academy.

2. The fact that the sculptor appears to follow the principles suggested by Plato on the contemplation and definition of a transcendent beauty.<sup>53</sup>

3. Praxiteles' expression in an epigram of his concept of love as a feeling dwelling in the inner life of the subject and diffusing from an absolute archetype, a concept which is close to the Platonic theory on love.<sup>54</sup>

4. The attribution of two epigrams on the Knidian Aphrodite to Plato: these two poems should in any case be attributed to the circle of the Academy in its late Classical phase.<sup>55</sup>

Especially during the 360s BC, *i.e.* during his later youth, Praxiteles appears linked to persons involved in Athenian theatrical life.

In fact, there are sculptural creations attributed to Praxiteles that were conceived within the world of the theatre and inspired either by repeat performances of Euripidean tragedies or by dithyrambic contests.<sup>56</sup> Other sculptures indicate close links

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peace agreement he secured. An altar to Eirene at Athens is evoked in *Ar. Pax* 1019–20. The presence of this mythical figure during the Archaic and early Classical period is argued for by the written *testimonia* collected by Simon 1986, 700–1; moreover, the vase representations in Simon 1986, 703–4, nos. 9–12 reveal that by the late 5<sup>th</sup> century BC Eirene had become a widely accepted deity. See also Simon 1988, 55–84; Shapiro 1993, 45–50; Stafford 2000, 173–97.

<sup>49</sup> Corso 2004a, 89–90. On the political model of Solon in the ancient tradition, Almeida 2003, 2–236.

<sup>50</sup> The relevant evidence has been collected by Corso 2004b, 221–9.

<sup>51</sup> In fact, he carved the funerary monument of a knight who fell in battle, see Corso 2003, 65–77.

<sup>52</sup> He also made the bronze charioteer for a chariot group by Kalamis, which is probably the same chariot group set up by the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC general Kimon to celebrate the Olympic victories of his grandfather, Kimon the Elder, see Corso 2004c, 137–55.

<sup>53</sup> For a further exposition of this position, see Corso 1997–8, 63–91.

<sup>54</sup> *Ath.* 13.591a = *Anth. Plan.* 204.

<sup>55</sup> *Anth. Plan.* 160–1. For a justification of their attribution either to Plato or to the late Classical Academy, see Corso 2000c, 125–61, esp. 150–1.

<sup>56</sup> See the groups of Thyiads, Karyatids, Silens (for a Satyr drama?) and Maenads (for a new representation of Euripides' 'Bacchae?'); the base of a choregic monument at Athens,

with Middle Comedy poets: Praxiteles' group of 'Danae, the Nymphs and Pan' may have been commissioned for the comedy 'Danae' by the poet Eubulos,<sup>57</sup> whilst the group of the 'Weeping matron' and of the 'Merry courtesan' may have been made for the comedy 'Athamas' by the poet Amphis. This play was in fact characterized by the opposition between these two female characters.<sup>58</sup>

Finally, the known social circle of the sculptor in the 360s BC is completed by his connection to the important Eleusinian sanctuaries, which commissioned him to produce sculptural groups<sup>59</sup> and a few wealthy Athenian ladies, devotees of the goddesses of Eleusis, who also commissioned statues from him.<sup>60</sup> Most important of all was his love of the most admired and infamous courtesan of the time, Phryne, who played a major role in all aspects of the artist's life for a long period, beginning around 366 BC.<sup>61</sup>

Another detail not to be forgotten is that our sculptor, even before carving the Knidian Aphrodite, was renowned for another marble statue of the goddess. This was in the sculptural group at the sanctuary of Eros at Thespiai, where it was the statue at the viewer's right of a triad including the statue of Phryne in the centre and that of Eros at the viewer's left.<sup>62</sup> In fact, the immediate fame of the statue is clear from both the emphasis given to it in a letter from Phryne to Praxiteles, supposedly written short after the dedication of the triad of Thespiai,<sup>63</sup> and the reproduction of the Thespian Aphrodite on a crater by the Painter of Athens 12592, which appears to date a little later than the completion of the triad.<sup>64</sup>

In conclusion, our sculptor, in the second half of the 360s BC, had at the same time close relations with important politicians (Timotheos), with renowned cult centres, with established philosophers (Plato) and with dramatic poets, and he could be proud to have distinguished patrons and clients. Moreover, he became wealthy<sup>65</sup> and, as we have seen, was already renowned for an important marble statue of Aphrodite.

This situation must not be forgotten, since it contributes to explain why the Knidians wanted a marble Aphrodite made by Praxiteles for a Knidian sanctuary. In fact, the Knidia was to bring interna-

tional fame to a sculptor who until that time was established mainly in his own city.

## The commission by the Knidians

It is likely that the Knidian Aphrodite was created in the 104<sup>th</sup> Olympiad, which corresponds to the four years 364–1 BC, for two primary reasons, which will be strengthened by further observations:

1. It is the most famous work by Praxiteles, so it is logical that artist's peak, as determined by Pliny (*HN* 34.50), which fell exactly in this Olympiad, coincided with the years of the master's most renowned creation.
2. We know from Pliny (*HN* 36.20–1) that the two Aphrodites made by our artist and bought

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National Archaeological Museum, no. 1463, perhaps resulting from victories in choregic contests related to dithyrambic performances; the bronze Dionysos, probably related to another replay of the 'Bacchae'; the Archer Eros, probably made for a replay of the Euripides' *Iphigenia Aulidensis*; the Eros of Thespiai, perhaps initially conceived for a replay of Euripides' 'Hippolytus'; and the Pouring Satyr (linked to a Satyric drama?). For an analysis of these works, see Corso 2004a, 161–85, 232–90.

<sup>57</sup> Evidence in Corso 2004a, 289–308.

<sup>58</sup> Analytic consideration of the group in Corso 2004a, 308–17.

<sup>59</sup> See the bronze groups of Persephone kidnapped by Ares and of the daughter of Demeter while she is descending to the underworld (Corso 2004a, 144–59) and the two marble triads respectively of Demeter, Kore and Iakchos and of Kore, Triptolemos and Demeter (Corso 2004a, 185–229).

<sup>60</sup> See: 1. The statue of Kleiokrateia, the base of which partly survives, bearing a dedication to Demeter and Kore as well as Praxiteles' signature (*SEG* XVII (1960) 83), to be dated perhaps still to the mid-360s BC. 2. The statue of Chairippe, the base of which also survives, bearing the dedication to these goddesses and the sculptor's signature (see Orphanou-Phlorake 2000–3, 113–7), probably c. 360 BC. 3. The statue of Archippe, known from its surviving base, to date after 350 BC (see *SEG* XVIII (1962) 85).

<sup>61</sup> The relevant evidence has been collected in this article cited in n. 53.

<sup>62</sup> The evidence for the statue, see n. 53.

<sup>63</sup> Alciphron 4.1. fr. 3.

<sup>64</sup> Corso 2004a, 264, fig. 107.

<sup>65</sup> He was among the 300 or so Athenians who had to pay public dues (for evidence, see Corso 2004a, 111–4, 175–85).

respectively by the Knidians and the Koans were carved in the same period.

It is likely that the Koans decided to buy an Aphrodite from this Athenian workshop following the synoecistic foundation of the new city of Kos, capital of the island state, in 366/5 BC.<sup>66</sup> This must have brought about a need, in the years immediately following this foundation, for new statues of deities to be placed in sanctuaries, which at the time had been constructed or renovated.

In this period, Knidos, being part of the Karian satrapy, was subject to the satrap Maussolos, who ruled from 377 BC to 353 BC,<sup>67</sup> although it enjoyed an administrative autonomy. The fact that the Knidian scientist Eudoxos had been at the court of Maussolos,<sup>68</sup> probably during the 360s BC,<sup>69</sup> suggests that the satrap may have adopted a benevolent policy towards this city.

Maussolos probably took part in the second revolt of the satraps against the Great King, at the latest in 362 BC.<sup>70</sup> This is a salient episode of his *Westpolitik*, addressed towards the Greek world and aiming at the adoption in Karia of several aspects of the late Classical – especially Athenian – civilization.<sup>71</sup> Therefore, the need to admire, in the most important centres of the satrapy, masterpieces by the most celebrated artists of the time became pronounced. So, sculptures by Timotheos,<sup>72</sup> Skopas,<sup>73</sup> Praxiteles,<sup>74</sup> Leochares<sup>75</sup> and Bryaxis<sup>76</sup> soon came to adorn the capital Halikarnassos in particular,<sup>77</sup> but also Knidos.<sup>78</sup> In this historical context, Satyros and Pytheos, both established architects, writers of architectural treatises and sculptors, were to be asked to use their creativity to express the glory of the Hekatomnid dynasty.<sup>79</sup>

In the literary realm, some writers who were renowned in the oratory, which at the time was in fashion, were to go to the Hekatomnid court at Halikarnassos.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> On this foundation, see Diod. Sic. 15.76.2; Strabon 14.19.657. See also the studies of Stylianos 1998, 484-5; Carlsson 2004, 114.

<sup>67</sup> On Maussolos, see Högemann 1999, 1064. On the relations between Maussolos and Knidos, see Hornblower 1982, 115-9, 136, 318-9.

<sup>68</sup> Diog. Laert. 8.87.

<sup>69</sup> On the problem of Eudoxos' sojourn at the court of Maussolos, see Hornblower 1982, 115-9, esp. 117, n. 90.

<sup>70</sup> Diod. Sic. 15.90.3. See Hornblower 1982, 170-82; Ruzicka 1992, 76-89; Briant 2002, 656-75, 993-8 (the latter scholar is too skeptical on the detail given by Diodoros of the involvement of Maussolos in the revolt of the satraps).

<sup>71</sup> The pages on this issue in Hornblower 1982, 183-218; 223-351 are still unequalled. See also Moreno 1987, 96-9; Ruzicka 1992, 90-100; Isager 1994, 11-84; Rolley 1999, 307-17.

<sup>72</sup> See Muller-Dufois 2002, 476-9, nos. 1370-2, 525, no. 1526: sculptures on the southern side of the Maussoleion of Halikarnassos were attributed to Timotheos (cf. Vitruv. *De arch.* 7. *praefatio* 12-3, who, however, is far from certain on Timotheos' involvement in the Maussoleion; and Plin. *HN* 36.30, who on the contrary asserts Timotheos' involvement as certain), as well as the acrolithic colossus of Ares at Halikarnassos (Vitr. *De arch.* 2.8.11, who, however, reports that the statue was made by either Timotheos or Leochares).

<sup>73</sup> See Muller-Dufois 2002, 476-9, nos. 1369-72: statues of Dionysos and Athena at Knidos were attributed to Skopas (Plin. *HN* 36.22), as well as sculptures on the privileged eastern side of the Maussoleion (sources in n. 72).

<sup>74</sup> See Muller-Dufois 2002, 476-7, no. 1370, 492-501, nos. 1420-46: sculptures of the Maussoleion were attributed to Praxiteles (Vitr. *De arch.* cited in n. 72) as well as, of course, the Knidian Aphrodite.

<sup>75</sup> Muller-Dufois 2002, 476-9, nos. 1370-2 and 524-5, no. 1526: sculptures on the western side of the Maussoleion were attributed to Leochares (sources in n. 72) as well as the acrolithic colossus of Ares, also in the Karian capital (attributed either to Timotheos or to Leochares: see Vitr. *De arch.* cited in n. 72).

<sup>76</sup> Muller-Dufois 2002, 476-9, nos. 1369-72: a statue of Dionysos at Knidos and sculptures on the northern side of the Maussoleion were attributed to Bryaxis (*testimonia* cited in nn. 72-3).

<sup>77</sup> See the involvement of the aforementioned five sculptors in the enterprise of the Maussoleion and the acrolithic colossus of Ares (cf. nn. 72-6). On the debated problem of the presence of works of these five sculptors in the Maussoleion, see Jeppesen & Luttrell 1986, 13-101; Jeppesen 2002, 29-40. However, Jeppesen suggests an excessive number of corrections to the relevant passages of Vitruvius and Pliny, and these should be used with care.

<sup>78</sup> The statues of Dionysos and of Athena by Skopas (see n. 73), of Dionysos by Bryaxis (see n. 76) and of course the Knidian Aphrodite stood at Knidos.

<sup>79</sup> On Pytheos, see Hoepfner 2004, 334-8; on Satyros, see Waywell 2004, 366-7.

<sup>80</sup> Theopompos, Theodektes, Naukrates and, less certainly, Isokrates are known to have taken part in the competition held at Halikarnassos in 353 BC, to deliver the most convincing funerary oration on the death of Maussolos. The

On the contrary, there is no evidence that Mausolos, or other patrons within his satrapy, also wanted works by the most famous contemporary Greek painters, and one should ask why. It is possible that Eudoxos, a pupil of Plato,<sup>81</sup> enjoyed close relations with Mausolos and was thus responsible for introducing to the Hekatomnid court the Platonic concept that sculpture, particularly in marble, was to be regarded as more 'true' and less illusionistic than painting.<sup>82</sup>

On the relations of Mausolos with Knidos, first of all it is necessary to note that in this period the satrap followed a policy, which was friendly with both Sparta, since he co-operated closely with king Agesilaos,<sup>83</sup> and with Athens, since the military actions of the general Timotheos appear supportive of Mausolos' policy.<sup>84</sup> Both Sparta and Athens were busy fighting Thebes' efforts to establish a hegemony in the Aegean sea and supported the revolt of Asia Minor's satraps against the Great King: in fact, Agesilaos and Timotheos had been personally involved in struggles resulting from this policy.<sup>85</sup> Therefore it is likely that Mausolos did not approve the decision taken in 363 BC by Knidos, at the time probably ruled by democratic institutions, to honour Epaminondas with a proxeny decree.<sup>86</sup> This and, more generally, the philo-Spartan political orientation of the satrap and the likely appeal exercised on him by the world of the Academy, i.e. the less democratic quarter of Athenian culture, help us to understand the change to the constitution made at Knidos, certainly after the Epaminondas decree, probably a little after 363 BC. The new constitution was conceived by Eudoxos, who had been both a student of Plato and devoted to Mausolos.<sup>87</sup> It is obvious that the new constitution, inspired by a student of Plato, was oligarchic in nature: this deduction is strengthened by the fact that the *demos* is never mentioned in the Knidian epigraphical evidence between the late 360s BC and the Age of Alexander.<sup>88</sup> Of course, it is unthinkable that the new constitution of a city within the satrapy of Karia was drawn up without the agreement, not to say the inspiration, of the ruling satrap.

It is equally likely that the constitutional change in the *polis* took place together with the synoecism

and the monumentalization of the city on the promontory of Tekir. In fact, the two courses of action date from 360 BC onwards, since both the urban layout and several important buildings of the new Knidos are late Classical.<sup>89</sup> It is likely, then that new statues were needed in the context of the renovation or new foundation of sanctuaries. It makes sense that, in keeping with the aforementioned desire on the part of Hekatomnid society to have statues of renowned Greek masters, especially Attic ones, for the new centres of the satrapy, the Knidians wanted works by established overseas sculptors. These considerations explain why in this period the Knidians either bought or patronized statues of deities carved by Skopas, Praxiteles and Bryaxis.<sup>90</sup>

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*agon* was won by Theopompos (see esp. Gell. *NA* 10.18.6; other sources can be found in Hornblower 1982, 334). Poets had also been invited to Halikarnassos on the same occasion (Hornblower 1982, 334-7).

<sup>81</sup> On Eudoxos, student of Plato, see Sotion, *Diadochai*, in Diog. Laert. 8. 86; Strabon 14. 2. 15. 656; Diog. Laert. 8.87-8. See further Lasserre 1966, *testimonia* nos. 5, 10, 12, 14, 24-5; *doctrina* nos. 2, 22-3, 25, 27-8, 32-3, fr. 342.

<sup>82</sup> On Plato and the visual arts, see Janaway 1995, 36-203. On Plato and painting, see Keuls 1978, 9-150. On the concept of marble sculpture regarded as a discovery of what already exists in nature, made by removing the superfluous material, and not as a construction, see Corso 2004a, 167, 280-1. It is likely that the Platonism, as a hegemonic cultural current in late Antiquity, gave a decisive contribution to the establishment, in the late Imperial Age, of a concept of ancient visual arts based especially on statues and only a lesser degree on painting, see Corso 2001b, 13-51, esp. 50-1.

<sup>83</sup> Mausolos had hospitality - *xenia* - relations with Agesilaos: evidence in Hornblower 1982, 10-5, 117, 142, 168, 173-5, 180, 201-2, 260-1, 337; Buckler 2003, 358, 367.

<sup>84</sup> On the *entente cordiale* between Mausolos and Timotheos, see Hornblower 1982, 108, 173-5, 179-80, 197-8, 201-2, 266; Buckler 2003, 351-9.

<sup>85</sup> Buckler 2003, 351-9.

<sup>86</sup> On the probability that Knidos had been ruled by democratic institutions between 394 and 363 BC, see n. 34. The Epaminondas decree is Blümel 1994, 157-9 = *SEG XLIV* (1994) no. 901.

<sup>87</sup> Hermippos, *Peri ton hepta sophon* 4, in Diog. Laert. 8. 88.

<sup>88</sup> Cf. n. 34.

<sup>89</sup> See the bibliography cited in n. 15 and esp. Lang 2003, 574-85.

<sup>90</sup> See n. 78.

The institutional context in which these requests were made may be carefully suggested. Even if it is only partially known, the institutional framework of these years, as far as we can tell from surviving inscriptions, makes it probable that the initial proposals came from the *prostatai*, since the *gnoma prostatan* appears at the beginning of the most important decisions of the *polis*.<sup>91</sup> The final decisions, however, were public, made by the *Knidioi*, as can be argued from the standard epigraphic formula: *edoxe Knidiois*.<sup>92</sup>

Since the cult of Aphrodite was among the most significant, if not the most important, of the *polis*, it is obvious that, among the statues that the Knidians wanted to purchase, there was an Aphrodite, for the sanctuary of the goddess with the epiklesis of *Euploia*. The spread and fame of this goddess had been promoted, as we have seen, by Konon.<sup>93</sup>

Before enquiring how and why Praxiteles' workshop had been asked to make the statue, it is necessary to specify that knowledge of Hekatomnid monumental policy, at least in its most visible aspects, must have been fairly widespread at Athens, during the decades before Alexander. In fact, the comic poet Epigenes composed a comedy entitled *Mnematōn* = 'Small tomb', in which Pixodaros, Mausolos' brother, appeared as a character.<sup>94</sup> The interest of the Athenian audience in the Maussoleion, which was probably a target of the poet's irony, must be explained by the aforementioned involvement in the enterprise of sculptors who were known by the Athenian public, such as the Athenian citizens Leochares, Bryaxis, and Praxiteles.

Finally, at Athens in this period there must have been the tendency to link news coming from Knidos and decisions taken by Mausolos. This conclusion is suggested by the fact that the middle comedy poet Alexis gave the title *Knidia* to a comedy in which a certain Diodoros appeared as a character. This was probably the Diodoros who accused Androtion, who in 355 BC guided the Athenian embassy to the court of Mausolos.<sup>95</sup>

Pliny (*HN* 36.20-1) informs us of how the Knidians purchased an Aphrodite carved by Praxiteles:

*(scil.: Praxiteles) duas fecerat simulque vendebat, alteram velata specie, quam ob id praetulerunt quorum condicio erat, Coi, cum eodem pretio detulisset, severum id ac pudicum arbitantes; reiectam Cnidii emerunt, immensa differentia famae'.*

Praxiteles, therefore, carved two marble statues of Aphrodite, selling them at the same time and at the same price: one was draped and the other was naked.

The Koans could choose first, probably because they had been first to request an Aphrodite, and they therefore picked the draped statue, in keeping with the typical Classical Greek habit before the Knidia, to represent the goddess of love draped. On the contrary, the Knidians came second and bought the naked statue, which had been not chosen by the Koans.

From the insistence *Coi... Cnidii... a Cnidiis* it is possible to argue that the statues had been decided upon respectively by the *poleis* of Kos and Knidos. Behind the *Cnidii* of the Plinian passage, it is possible to feel the presence of the *Knidioi*, who are the deciding subject of several late Classical inscrip-

<sup>91</sup> See the list of inscriptions in which the *prostatai* are recorded given in n. 34.

<sup>92</sup> See Blümel 1992, 1, 4-5, 7, 160-1, 233, 604, 606; 1994, 157.

<sup>93</sup> It is possible that Skopas' Athena (see n. 73) was requested for the cult area of Athena placed on the west side of the round temple attributed to Aphrodite *Euploia* and that it stood within the rectangular small temple which lies just west of the round temple. On the cult of Athena in the terrace, see Bankel 1997, 51-71, esp. 67-70, with fig. 30. However, the German scholar is wrong in arguing the dedication of the round temple to Athena from the presence of the cult of Athena on the terrace, because of the argumentation given in n. 1. It is likely that Skopas' Dionysos (see n. 73) and Bryaxis' Dionysos had been requested for the sanctuary of Dionysos (Newton 1863, 443-55, 633; Love 1972b, 393-405, esp. 395-7; 1973, 97-142, esp. 101-2), whose temple probably should be identified with the Ionic building below the early Christian church 'C'.

<sup>94</sup> Epigenes, *Mnematōn*, fr. 6 (Kassel & Austin): historical considerations in Ruzicka 1992, 43. Nothing can be argued from the comedy with the same title by Diphilos, fr. 56 (Kassel & Austin).

<sup>95</sup> Alexis, *Knidia*, fr. 110 (Kassel & Austin): historical commentary in Hornblower 1982, 215-8.

tions.<sup>96</sup> It is possible that the public decree concerning the Aphrodite, with the usual *incipit* ‘*edoxe Knidiois*’, is behind Pliny’s passage, through Posidippos’ antiquarian treatise *Peri Knidou*.<sup>97</sup>

Why did the Knidians want an Aphrodite made by Praxiteles and not by another *ergasterion*? I suppose, for three reasons:

1. It is possible that the Knidians either desired the opinion of Timotheos, the son of Konon, since the family was closely connected to the Knidian cult of Aphrodite *Euploia* or desired a statue made by a sculptor who was close to the Athenian general. As we have seen, Praxiteles’ workshop had worked for Timotheos or his political party.
2. It is possible that Eudoxos, certainly in these years the most influential man at Knidos, wanted the statue to be made by a ‘Platonic’ sculptor, close to the world of the Academy and therefore ready to translate the Platonic *desiderata* on *agalmatopoiia* into a work of art. As we have seen, Praxiteles was close to the world of the Academy and attempted to use the best earthly beauties in order to arrive at the definition of the less unsavoury echoes of the heavenly beauty of the goddess.<sup>98</sup>
3. Finally, it is likely that Maussolos, given his wish to have the most exciting products of contemporary Attic culture in Karia, wanted the new Aphrodite, destined to adorn his satrapy, to be made by the Athenian sculptor. If this sculptor was linked to the circle of General Timotheos and close to the philosophical world which was dear to his friend Eudoxos, then even better.

Now, we should enquire why the Aphrodite is naked, breaking with the tradition of representing the goddess draped, which had prevailed in the Greek world for many generations.<sup>99</sup>

It is clear, if we keep in mind the aforementioned suggestions, that the aim of defining in the least imperfect way the absolute beauty of the goddess must have been ripe in the Platonic world, a world to which Praxiteles was close.

The mythical justification for such a great audacity was provided by the fact that other men, i.e. Paris, Anchises, and Adonis, had already seen Aphrodite as a woman.<sup>100</sup>

We have seen that, in order to achieve beauty, which is the closest possible to the divine perfection, it was necessary to use the less imperfect examples of earthly beauty. Both Plato in his ‘Symposium’ and Praxiteles in his epigram<sup>101</sup> appear to regard a personal knowledge of beauty through the feelings of the experiencing subject as desirable. This explains why Praxiteles used as his models two courtesans, both of whom were his lovers and regarded as very beautiful: Kratine<sup>102</sup> and Phryne.<sup>103</sup>

Moreover, we cannot forget that the best established Classical Greek sculptors of statues of deities used magic practices to satisfy the need to give wise and worthy shapes to the deities.<sup>104</sup> Therefore, the detail that the iron instruments with which the Aphrodite was carved had been ‘placed’ in the power of Ares, the lover of the goddess, becomes credible. Consequently, the chisels guided the

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<sup>96</sup> See n. 92.

<sup>97</sup> In fact, the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC poet in the treatise, reported on the love of a man with the statue, related also by Pliny in the same passage (*HN* 36.21). See Posidippos, *Peri Knidou*, fr. 147 (Austin & Bastianini). However, it is likely that Posidippos was an indirect source of Pliny, since he is not included in the *ex libris* for book 36 of the *Naturalis historia*.

<sup>98</sup> The itinerary from the earthly echoes which are less unworthy of the Uranian beauty to the contemplation of the latter, through several steps, is described by Pl. *Symp.* 210a–211c. Praxiteles’ adherence to this artistic itinerary and to its target is known thanks to several documents, collected in Corso 1997a, 91–8; 1997–8, 63–91: of course, the most important is Praxiteles’ epigram handed down by Ath. 13.591a = *Anth. Plan.* 204. Moreover, see *supra*, the considerations exposed in the text corresponding to the nn. 53–5 and *infra*, these reported on the concept of the Knidia by the sculptor.

<sup>99</sup> On this problem, see Corso 2000c, 559–66.

<sup>100</sup> This *topos* is known from the following epigrams: Pl. *Anth. Plan.* 160–1; *Anth. Plan.* 162, 168, 159, 170, 169 (the citation of the epigrams follows their likely chronological order); Evenos, *Anth. Plan.* 165–6; Lucian, *Anth. Plan.* 163.

<sup>101</sup> For this target, see Plato’s passage and Praxiteles’ epigram cited in n. 98.

<sup>102</sup> Posidippos, *Peri Knidou*, fr. 147 (Austin & Bastianini); Clem. *Al. Protr.* 4.47; Arn. *Adversus gentes* 6.13.

<sup>103</sup> Ath. 13.591a; Aretas, *scholium* to Clem. *Al. Protr.* 4. 47.

<sup>104</sup> I have collected a significant amount of evidence on the magic practices of the ancient artist in Corso 1999, 97–111. See also Pekary 2002, 17–191, esp. 139–54.



hand of the sculptor towards the full expression of a beauty, which could be compared with that which Ares admired in Aphrodite.<sup>105</sup>

Finally, Praxiteles' use of Parian marble for this statue<sup>106</sup> may have been regarded by the sculptor as a way to avoid the Platonic condemnation of the artistic imitation of earthly semblance. In fact mythical figures were thought to be already inside the marble and they were simply freed by the sculptor through the removal of the superfluous material.<sup>107</sup> Praxiteles' valorization of this idea is suggested by a passage in Cicero,<sup>108</sup> and the presence of the idea in the environment of the Academy is suggested by another passage of the same Latin writer.<sup>109</sup> It is thus possible that the Athenian master, by removing the superfluous material, believed that he could get progressively closer to the discovery of the hidden figure of the goddess. This figure was to be retrieved and not created anew, thanks to the wise guide of the iron instruments that were subjected to the power of Ares.

Now, we should ask the following question: why did the Knidians accept the naked Aphrodite and not reject her, as the Koans did?

Three explanations are plausible:

1. It is possible that in this city of Asia Minor, a *contaminatio* of Aphrodite with the 'nackte Göttin', diffused everywhere with varying identities and names in the near east, came to use.<sup>110</sup> Moreover, the representation of the goddess just after having bathed, probably regarded by Praxiteles as an act of purification from any earthly pollution, may have been reinterpreted by the Knidians as a way to make the water connection of the goddess *Euploia* clear.

2. It is likely that Eudoxos had spread a Platonizing concept of the *agalmatopoiia* at Knidos and that the Knidians liked the idea of purchasing a statue which was so emblematic of the Platonic mentality, at the time in fashion.

3. As we know from Aristotle,<sup>111</sup> Eudoxos theorized that pleasure, Platonically conceived in transcendent terms is the supreme good. This hedonistic reinterpretation of Platonic theory might have suggested to Eudoxos and his citizens a hedonistic reading of the nakedness of Aphrodite, as a tran-

scendent transfer of the beauty of the courtesans. Moreover, the sculptor who conceived the statue was well known for his devotion to a few exceptionally beautiful courtesans and for reflecting his attraction towards courtesans in his art.<sup>112</sup>

From this analysis, we can argue that the creation of the Knidian Aphrodite must be dated within the four years of the sculptor's peak, i.e. in the years 364-1 BC. It must also, however, fit with both the oligarchic reform of the constitution of the *polis*, prepared by Eudoxos, which must be later than Epaminondas' decree of 363 BC, and Maussolos' alliance with the revolting Satraps, which perhaps took place in 362 BC. The Knidia should therefore be dated towards the end of 362 BC or in 361 BC, i.e. towards the end of these four years.

A dedication to the Knidia is preserved in Lucian, *Anth. Plan.* 164 (the translation is from the Loeb, with amendments):

To the statue of Aphrodite which stands at Knidos.  
To thee, Kypris, I have dedicated the beautiful  
image of thy form,  
since I have nothing better than thy form.

This dedicatory poem has an unusually Archaic formula for the middle Imperial period during which it was composed (cf. v. 1: *perikalles agalma*). Therefore, it is possible that this is a re-statement of a real dedication. The idea presented in v. 2 that the "form" (*morphe*) of Aphrodite is superior to

<sup>105</sup> This notion of the chisels is handed down by Pl. *Anth. Plan.* 160, vv. 5-6 and is repeated with additional details by Auson. *Epigrammata* 62 (Green)

<sup>106</sup> Lucian *Amores* 13: critical evaluation of the question of the marble used for the Knidia in Corso 2000a, 227-36.

<sup>107</sup> Plin. *HN* 36.14.

<sup>108</sup> Cic. *Div.* 2.21.48: *in omni marmore necesse sit inesse... Praxiteha capita.*

<sup>109</sup> Cic. *Div.* 1.13.23 attributes this concept to the Academic philosopher Carneades.

<sup>110</sup> On the 'nackte Göttin', see Böhm 1990, 7-143; Corso 2000b, 559-66; esp. Marinatos 2000, 1-129. On the bathing motif in the Knidia, Seaman 2004, 531-94, esp. 544-50.

<sup>111</sup> Anst. *Eth. Nic.* 1.12.5, 10.2.1-2; Diog. Laert. 8.88.

<sup>112</sup> See the discussion on this aspect of Praxiteles' art in Corso 2004a, 239-81, 308-25.

any other evokes the Platonic *paradeigma* of the ascent of the experiencing subject from the steps which are closer to absolute beauty to the beatific contemplation of the latter (cf. Pl. *Symp.* 210e–211c), thus revealing a Platonic content. It is therefore possible that the Knidians conferred the privilege of composing a personal dedication to the statue (note the singular *anetheka*) to a prominent local personality with a Platonic background: this person could be none other than Eudoxos. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, the custom of allowing a local personality of widespread fame to dedicate a public offering is not unknown. For example, the Thespians allowed Phryne to inscribe her name on the base of their own gilded bronze statue of Aphrodite at Delphi.<sup>113</sup>

The Knidians, after having brought the statue to their own city, purportedly built for it a round temple on the highest terrace, in the sanctuary of Aphrodite Euploia. In fact, there are architectural elements in stuccoed limestone, in particular a Corinthian capital, which can be attributed to the late Classical phase of the round temple.<sup>114</sup>

Moreover, the epigram attributed to Pl., *Anth. Plan.* 160, in its v. 3, as we shall see below, bears the reference to the complete view being possible of the Knidia (*pante d'athresasa*) in a space laid out especially so that it was possible to see the statue from all sides (*periskepto eni choro*).

The adoption of Corinthian capitals can be explained by the fact that this type of capital was then thought to express the beauty of young women.<sup>115</sup>

As I have already stressed, the fact that a Platonizing philosopher, Eudoxos, was at the time the most famous person of Knidos makes it likely that Aphrodite, as defined with the Knidia, was interpreted according to a Platonic perspective, although adjusted to a hedonistic mentality. Therefore, it becomes plausible that the round temple suggested the notion of the *kosmos* as having the absolute principle of beauty emanating from its center.<sup>116</sup> In any case, the goddess is the focal element, encompassed in a circle, which indicates her dominion. The particularly important message of the statue must have made clearer and expressed more openly the concept, progressively

imposed from the Age of Perikles to that of Alexander, of the exceptional work of art as a salient element of the sacred/urban landscape. The architecture of these landscapes had the function, amongst many other functions, of allowing the full appreciation of these statues.<sup>117</sup> Such a setting suggests that art tourism, i.e. travel by wealthy men to cities endowed with works of art in order to admire renowned masterpieces, was at the time not only an established habit, but a phenomenon to be taken in consideration when decisions about the settings of works of art were taken, in order to

<sup>113</sup> The *testimonia* on the monument of Phryne at Delphi are collected and discussed in Corso 1997b, 123–50.

<sup>114</sup> These elements are: 1. A column drum. 2. A Corinthian capital. 3. A length of Ionian/Corinthian three fasciae architrave. 4. A small section of the dentil (see Bankel 1997, 51–71, esp. 65–6, figs. 23–9). The most important element in dating the building is the Corinthian capital, which, in my opinion, is late Classical, for the following reasons: 1. It has a linear configuration, both in the calathus and in the abacus, while the Corinthian capitals of the Hellenistic period become more convex and sculptural. 2. It has only two rows of leaves and therefore well-developed upper leaves, something that is typical of Corinthian capitals until the third to the fourth quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, while from that moment onwards they usually are endowed with much shorter upper leaves. 3. It does not have the two internal spirals (helices) on each side of the calathus, which are typical of Corinthian capitals from 350–30 BC onwards (see Corso 2000a, 227–36, esp. 230, with figs 8–9). Moreover, the surviving drum is similar, for material used and working technique, to the stuccoed limestone columns of the late Classical Doric temple of Apollo Karneios (see Love 1970, 149–55, esp. 151; Bankel 1997, 51–71, esp. 65). This confirms the late Classical date of this phase of the round temple.

<sup>115</sup> The *locus classicus* for the symbolic message of the capital is, of course, Vitruvius' *De arch.* 4.1.8–10. A justification of Vitruvius' assertions in the context of the culture of the late 5<sup>th</sup> century BC can be found in Corso 1997c, 351–522, esp. 429–33, nn. 56–64. See also Wesenberg 1999, 313–5.

<sup>116</sup> On the meaning of the round temple, see Lehmann 1953, 118–31; Seiler 1986, 115–9, 148–55; Weber 1990, 105–27; Corso 1997a, 351–522, esp. 501–2, n. 256; Rambaldi 2002, 15–36, 43–5, 101–2. On the influence exercised by Platonic thought on the conception of works of art during the late Classical period, see Steiner 2001, 56–78. On the frequent adoption of round temples in sacred idyllic landscapes, see Silberberg 1980.

<sup>117</sup> I have outlined the slow ripening of this concept, from the age of the Athena *Parthenos* and of the Zeus of Olympia onwards, in Corso 2001a, 101–29, esp. 102–5.



must also be given the opportunity to be able to love exceptionally beautiful women, regarded as echoes of the absolute beauty of the goddess.

The authority of these two epigrams and of their author, in ancient times, is strengthened by the observation that they were imitated by several new epigrams made by renowned poets both during the Hellenistic period<sup>121</sup> as well as during Imperial times.<sup>122</sup> The first poem was even translated into Latin by Ausonius,<sup>123</sup> who included the epigram in a selected series of famous Greek poems which he translated into Latin.

Therefore, their importance makes it possible that the first of the two epigrams promoted the habit of journeying to Knidos by visitors who could have been motivated by artistic, religious or even erotic interests.

The success of the Knidia during the late Classical period is also indirectly testified to by the aforementioned comedy *Knidia* of the Middle Comedy poet Alexis.<sup>124</sup> The title of the comedy must be understood to mean 'the girl from Knidos'.<sup>125</sup> Since the comedies of the decades of transition between Middle and New Comedy often focused on courtesans, and since Knidos was famous for its hetaerae,<sup>126</sup> it is likely that the girl after whom the comedy was named was a Knidian courtesan. One important character in this comedy was called Diodoros<sup>127</sup> and, as I have already mentioned, the figure should probably be identified with the accuser of Androtion, who in 355 had led an Athenian delegation to Mausolos.<sup>128</sup>

Since the only surviving fragment is focused on the story of Diodoros who squanders his huge fortune with a luxurious life, it is at least possible, then, that Androtion, back from Karia, was presented as having brought a Knidian courtesan with him, and that he attempted to corrupt Diodoros with this appealing woman, upon whom he foolishly wasted his wealth. In this case, the comedy would also testify to the fame of Knidos in the sphere of the Eros at Athens.

From a figurative point of view, the statue saw a success at least from the third quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. In fact at Knidos in these years a statue most likely of Persephone, which was set up in the local sanctuary of Demeter and Kore, was endowed

with a head, which is almost a copy of the head of the Knidia, except for the depth and the expression of the eyes (Fig. 5).<sup>129</sup> Moreover, the statues of Aphrodite that Praxiteles made after the Knidia must have contributed to making the Praxitelean formal interpretation of the goddess popular.<sup>130</sup>

In the period of New Comedy, when the mere-

<sup>121</sup> *Anth. Plan.* 162, 168, 159; Hermodoros *Anth. Plan.* 170, 169; Antip. Sid. *Anth. Plan.* 167. The idea to use a poem to correct an assertion made in a previous work is a poetic *topos* known from the times of Hesiod: in the *Theog.* vv. 225-6, he asserts that there is only one *Eris*, whereas in the *Op.* v. 11, he corrects himself, stating that he now believes there are two.

<sup>122</sup> Evenos *Anth. Plan.* 165-6; Lucian *Anth. Plan.* 163.

<sup>123</sup> Auson. *Epigrammata* 62 (Green). The poet from *Burdigala* includes among his epigrams other translations of poems attributed to Plato: 23 (= *Anth. Pal.* 9.44), 35 (= *Anth. Pal.* 9.506), 60 (= *Anth. Pal.* 6.1).

<sup>124</sup> See n. 95.

<sup>125</sup> Similar titles of comedies, taken from nicknames of women taken from their places of origin, are frequent in comic production, especially during the late Classical and early Hellenistic periods. See Sopater, *Knidia*: fr. 9 (Kassel & Austin); Alexis, *Lemnia*: fr. 139 (Kassel & Austin); Anaxandrides, *Samua*: fr. 43 (Kassel & Austin); Antiphanes, *Delia*: fr. 323 (Kassel & Austin); *Ephesia*: fr. 100 (Kassel & Austin); *Korinthia*: fr. 124 (Kassel & Austin); Apollodoros, *Lakaina*: fr. 7-8 (Kassel & Austin); Ar. *Lemniai*: fr. 372-91 (Kassel & Austin); Kratinos, *Thraittar*: fr. 73-89 (Kassel & Austin); Diphilos, *Lemniai*: fr. 53-4 (Kassel & Austin); Men., *Andria*: fr. 34-49 (Kassel & Austin); *Thettale*: fr. 170-5 (Kassel & Austin); *Karine*: fr. 201-3 (Kassel & Austin); *Knidia*, *Leukadia*, *Messenia*: fr. 229-33 (Kassel & Austin); *Melia*, *Olynthia*: fr. 257-60 (Kassel & Austin); *Perinthia*, *Samia*, *Chalkis*: fr. 403 (Kassel & Austin); *Nausikrates*, *Persis*: fr. 2 (Kassel & Austin); *Lemniai*: fr. 14-7 (Kassel & Austin); Pherekrates, *Persai*: fr. 132-49 (Kassel & Austin); Philemon, *Korinthia*: fr. 39-40 (Kassel & Austin); *Milesia*; Philippos, *Olynthia*: fr. 2 (Kassel & Austin); Posidippos, *Ephesia*: fr. 13 (Kassel & Austin); Similos, *Ephesia*; Strattis, *Phoinissar*: fr. 46-53 (Kassel & Austin); Theopomp., *Pamphile*: fr. 41-5 (Kassel & Austin); finally two comedies, whose authors are unknown, *Salaminiai*: fr. 16 (Kassel & Austin); *Lindia*: fr. 44 (Kassel & Austin).

<sup>126</sup> See the discussion below on the courtesan Ischas.

<sup>127</sup> Alexis, *Knidia*, fr. 110 (Kassel & Austin).

<sup>128</sup> Hornblower 1982, 215-8.

<sup>129</sup> The head is in the British Museum, London, no. 59.12-26.74/1314 (Haynes 1972, 731-7).

<sup>130</sup> These statues are: 1. The *Stephanusa* (Plin. *HN* 34.69). 2. The *Pselumene* (Plin. *HN* 34.69; Tatianus, *Ad Gr.* 33.35; 34.36: to be recognized in the Pourtales type of Aphrodite).

Fig. 5. Head, probably of Persephone from Knidos, third quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, London, British Museum, no. 59. 12-26. 74/1314.



*trix blanda* becomes a central figure, the habit of bringing onto the stage girls (presumably courtesans) representing characters from Knidos, and thus giving the title *Knidia* to the play, continued. Menander composed a *Knidia*<sup>131</sup> and the closeness of this poet to the Praxitelean circle is indicated by the fact that Praxiteles' two sons, Kephisodotos the Younger and Timarchos, produced the statue of Menander set up in the theatre of Dionysos Eleuthereos at Athens.<sup>132</sup> Another comic poet of the period, the Paphian Sopater, also wrote a *Knidia*.<sup>133</sup> He was active at Alexandria in Egypt and, since he hailed from Paphos, he was presumably close to the religious life related to Aphrodite. In this period we witness the emergence of devotees of Praxiteles' Aphrodite at Knidos. The dedicatory inscription of a certain *Aristf* to Praxiteles' Aphrodite, found at Knidos, dates to around 300 BC.<sup>134</sup> Another lover of Knidia, Makareos from Perinthos, came down from his arousal after the goddess appeared to him in a dream. He also fell in

love with the Knidian courtesan Ischas, who worked at the sanctuary.<sup>135</sup>

Certainly, she had been the most renowned of

3. The bronze Aphrodite at Korinth, later brought to Rome (Plin. *HN* 34.69: probably to be recognized in the type of head at Rome, Vatican Museums, storerooms, no. 287). 4. In the Aphrodite set up at Alexandria on the Latmos in Kara (Steph. Byz. s.v. *Alexandria*: to be recognized in the type of head Leconfield, at Petworth House). Praxiteles' gilded bronze Aphrodite set up at Delphi was a re-making of the statue of Aphrodite at Thespiai rather than of the Knidia (see n. 113). On these types of Aphrodite, see Corso 1998, 389-446; on the Leconfield head, see Raeder 2000, 34-6, no. 1.

<sup>131</sup> Men. *Knidia*, fr. 248-9 (Körte).

<sup>132</sup> On this portrait, see Seilheimer 2002, 12-38.

<sup>133</sup> See n. 125.

<sup>134</sup> Blümel 1992, 162.

<sup>135</sup> Ptolemaios Chennos, *Kaine historia*, fr. inc. sed. 1 (Chatzis): Makareos, when his love frenzy was at its peak, and before the apparition of the goddess in a dream, wanted to burn the temple in which the Knidia was set up. It is therefore likely that Antip. Sid. *Anth. Plan.* 167, when attributing

the sanctuary's sacred prostitutes, being mentioned by Menander,<sup>136</sup> Ptolemaios Chennos,<sup>137</sup> Athenaios,<sup>138</sup> and Tzetzes.<sup>139</sup>

During the same period, the elder son of Praxiteles, Kephisodotos the Younger, made a new marble Aphrodite, which was later taken to Rome and included among the *Pollionis Asini monumenta*.<sup>140</sup> Ovid, referring to the area of monuments as a usual meeting place for lovers, describes this Aphrodite very clearly,<sup>141</sup> permitting us to identify it with the original of the Capitoline type. An early date is also suggested for the type by the presence on the side of the left leg of the goddess of a *loutrophoros*, a type of vase, which went out of fashion towards the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>142</sup> With this creation, the path in the interpretation of the nakedness of the goddess, from a perspective, which was still conditioned by Platonic idealism to one which was at the same time realistic and hedonistic, and which is typical of the New Comedy, has been fully travelled. In fact, the Capitoline goddess has a realistic form, lives in a three-dimensional space and is therefore conceived as the absolute paradigm of immanent and everyday beauty, which takes pleasure in the *hic at nunc* and which was typical of New Comedy.

Finally, before the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, another of the Knidia's lovers was able, by hiding in the small temple during the night, to make love to the statue. This anecdote, already reported by Posidippos, and thus not dating to later than the first decades of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC,<sup>143</sup> implies the immanence and everyday nature of the supreme beauty of the goddess. This beauty is no longer placed in an ideal world, which is fabulous and unattainable, but is instead present in the New Comedy character of the courtesan.

## Conclusion

In the previous pages, I have tried to outline why and how one of the greatest masterpieces of the ancient world was made.

If my arguments are convincing, the demand for this work had arisen a little before 360 BC, in the Platonic environment of Athens, characterized by

the aim at defining the most adequate echoes possible of absolute beauty.

The cultural conditions of the Karia of Mausolos, characterized by the desire to seize the best that Attic culture could offer, the relationship of the authorities of the Knidian sanctuary of Aphrodite *Euploia* with the general Timotheus, who was also close to Praxiteles' *ergasterion*, and the friendship of Eudoxos, at the time the most influential man of Knidos, with the Athenian circle of Plato (which included Praxiteles) created the conditions for the acquisition of this work by the Knidians.

At Knidos, the setting up of the statue in a sanctuary in which sacred prostitution took place and Eudoxos' reinterpretation of Platonic idealism in a hedonistic direction led to a 'perception' of the statue especially as a sublimation of the tempting beauty of a number of exceptional courtesans.

The fame of the goddess may have been promoted by Plato himself, or by his environment at any rate. In any case, the success of the statue depended on the fact that it reflected two of the most vital and enduring cultural currents of the ancient world: Platonism and the so called 'hetaerae civilization', as exemplified by the life style represented by Middle and New Attic comedy.

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the power to burn stone elements to the Knidia, is perhaps referring to this episode.

<sup>136</sup> Men. *Colax*, fr. 4 (Sandbach).

<sup>137</sup> See n. 135.

<sup>138</sup> Ath. 13.587d-e.

<sup>139</sup> Tzet., *Chil.* 8.195, vv. 368-80.

<sup>140</sup> Plin. *HN* 36.24.

<sup>141</sup> Ov. *Ars am.* 2.613-4: "*Ipsa Venus pubem, quotiens velamina ponit/protegitur laeva semireducta manu.*"

<sup>142</sup> On the Capitoline type of Aphrodite, see Moreno & Viacava 2003, 182-3, no. 162.

<sup>143</sup> See Posidippos, *Peri' Knidou*, fr. 147 (Austin & Bastianini), from whom all the later *testimonia* on the episode depend: Val. Max. 8.11. ext. 4, 7.127, 36.21; Lucian, *Amores* 15-7, 54; *Imagines* 4; Clem. Al. *Protr.* 4.51; Arn. *Adv. Nat.* 6.22 (the latter two writers cite Posidippos as the authority for the story). On the phenomenon of the lovers of the Knidia, see Robert 1992, 373-437; Corso 1999, 97-111.

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