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ΕΥΛΙΜΕΝΗ  
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On the occasion of a Hellenistic clay lamp from the  
ancient city of Aigai, Vergina

*Stella Drougou*

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**Περιεχόμενα**  
**ΕΥΛΙΜΕΝΗ 25 (2024)**

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## Περιλήψεις / Summaries / Zusammenfassungen /

### Sommaires / Riassunti

**Ευαγγελία Δήμα,** Αρχαιολογικές θέσεις και μνημεία στην Κρεμαστή και το Παραδεισι Ρόδου και η συμβολή ενός νέου υστερορωμαϊκού τάφου στον λόφο του Ασωμάτου στη μνημειακή τοπογραφία της περιοχής, *ΕΥΛΙΜΕΝΗ* 25 (2024), 1-29.

The article examines the monumental topography (archaeological sites and monuments) of the settlements of Kremasti and Paradisi in Rhodes, as well as the contribution of a late Roman tomb recently found on the eastern slope of the Asomatos hill, which rises between the two settlements. In historical times, this area belonged administratively and geographically to ancient Ialyssia, which occupied the northern end of the island and was its most important part.

The archaeological research in both settlements commenced with the Italian excavations during the interwar period, while subsequently, after the incorporation of the Dodecanese to Greece, the extensive rescue research was undertaken by the Ephorate of Antiquities of the Dodecanese. In this context, a chamber tomb was discovered, which despite its modest findings, constitutes a substantial contribution to the monumental topography of the region characterized for the most part by fertile plains that favored habitation from a very early age. The traces of its ancient inhabitants, lost in the depths of history, are identified in the abundant movable finds from the settlements of Kremasti and Paradisi, the architectural remains, the craft workshops and agricultural establishments, as well as the necropoleis scattered throughout the area of Ialyssia.

**Anna Alexandropoulou,** Female acrobats in the Classical world, *ΕΥΛΙΜΕΝΗ* 25 (2024), 31-39.

Οι εικονιστικές σκηνές αγγείων από την Αθήνα και τη Νότια Ιταλία, καθώς και ένα σύνολο κοροπλαστικών παραδειγμάτων από τη Λέσβο και τις Λιπάρες νήσους μεταξύ άλλων, συμβάλλουν στην εξέταση και την ερμηνεία του ρόλου των γυμνών ακροβάτιδων στην κλασική κοινωνία. Μολονότι η παραδοσιακή σχέση τους με τα συμπόσια και τον κόσμο των εταίρων είναι αδιαφριστήτη, οι εικονιστικές σκηνές της αττικής και κατω-ιταλιώτικης αγγειογραφίας, καθώς και οι αρχαίες πηγές, παρέχουν ενδείξεις για την εμφάνιση των γυμνών ακροβάτιδων και σε λατρευτικά πλαίσια, όπως για παράδειγμα στον τελετουργικό χορό *καλαθίσκο*. Δεν αποκλείεται να συνιστούν μία τελετουργική δραστηριότητα που σχετίζεται με τελετές ενηλικίωσης, δεδομένου ότι οι ακροβάτιδες, εκτός φυσικά από Διονυσιακές σκηνές, εμφανίζονται σε σκηνές που συνδέονται κυρίως με την Άρτεμη και τον Απόλλωνα.

Vases from Athens and South Italy, and statuettes from Lesbos and the Lipari islands among others, form a rich material for the examination and interpretation of the role of naked female acrobats in classical society. Their traditional connection with *symposia* and the world of *hetairai* has largely remained undisputed. A new interpretation is also possible based on the examination of figured scenes on Attic and Italian red-figure vases and literary sources. These offer evidence for the appearance of female naked acrobats in cultic contexts which include other known ceremonial acts such as the *kalathiskos* dance. Female acrobats appear in scenes chiefly connected with Artemis, Apollo and Dionysus. Therefore, we may assume that besides their evident connection with the world of spectacle, they may also form a special ritual activity related to the passage to adulthood.

**Stella Drougou**, On the occasion of a Hellenistic clay lamp from the ancient city of Aigai, *ΕΥΑΙΜΕΝΗ* 25 (2024), 41-50.

Το θραύσμα ενός ελληνιστικού πήλινου λύχνου με αξιοπρόσεκτη φυτική διακόσμηση στην ανάγλυφη λαβή του, εύρημα των τελευταίων χρόνων στον ανασκαφικό τομέα «αγρός Τσακιρίδη» στη Βεργίνα, αποτελεί την αφορμή για ορισμένες παρατηρήσεις ως προς τα διακοσμητικά θέματα της μικροτεχνίας – και όχι μόνο – στην απερχόμενη ελληνιστική περίοδο. Αξίζει να σημειωθεί ότι ο ανασκαφικός τομέας «αγρός Τσακιρίδη» γειτνιάζει με το ανεσκαμένο Μητρώο στην αρχαία πόλη των Αιγών (Βεργίνα), στα ΒΔ αυτού. Στον υπό έρευνα ακόμη χώρο έχουν αποκαλυφθεί κυρίως τα οικοδομικά λείψανα εργαστηριακών εγκαταστάσεων καθώς και χαρακτηριστικά κινητά ευρήματα, κατάλοιπα βιοτεχνικών προϊόντων.

The fragment of a Hellenistic clay lamp with a remarkable relief handle, a recent find from the excavational sector “Tsakiridis field” in Vergina, gave rise to some observations on the decorative motives of Hellenistic handcrafts products. It is noteworthy, that the site “Tsakiridis field” lies in the vicinity of the excavated Metroon in the ancient city of Aigai (Vergina), where remains of workshops as well as other finds, products of their workmanship, are significantly substantiated.

**Γεώργιος Κ. Καλλής**, Ειπτά κλίβανοι από τον νομό Κορινθίας, *ΕΥΑΙΜΕΝΗ* 25 (2024), 51-78.

The subject of this essay are the ceramic kilns that were identified and investigated in the region of Corinth. Two kilns were excavated in the area of ancient Sikyon and date back to the Hellenistic era and five kilns were discovered at Kamari of the municipality of Xylokastro, dated to the Roman period. In addition to the structural and functional elements of the kilns, the ceramic finds resulting from the excavation are also examined. The study of these humble monuments is a useful tool for reconstructing the social and economic organization of the ceramic workshop during antiquity and contributes to the promotion of the kilns’ research in the region of the Peloponnese.

**Anagnostis Agelarakis**, The Hippocratic Legacy in Cranial Trauma Surgery: from *On Head Wounds* to Rogerius Frugardi's *Chirurgia*, and the Semantic Transformation of “Trepanation” in Scholarship, *ΕΥΔΙΜΕΝΗ* 25 (2024), 79-93.

Στην ιστορία της ιατρικής, η Ιπποκρατική πραγματεία *Περί Των Εν Κεφαλή Τρωμάτων* αποτελεί την αρχαιότερη γραπτή πηγή της χειρουργικής αντιμετώπισης καταγμάτων κρανίου λόγω τραυματισμού. Πολλές σύγχρονες επιστημονικές δημοσιεύσεις αναφέρονται στις Ιπποκρατικές κρανιο-χειρουργικές μεθόδους, υπογραμμίζοντας τη σημασία τους στην ιστορία της ιατρικής. Συχνά συγκρίνουν τις Ιπποκρατικές πρακτικές με αρχαιο-παθολογικές περιπτώσεις κρανιο-χειρουργικών επεμβάσεων σε διαφορετικές περιόδους και περιοχές από τη Νεολιθική Εποχή και εφεξής. Ωστόσο, ορισμένα σχόλια που διατυπώνονται εκ των υστέρων, μετά από δύο και πλέον χιλιετίες, είναι ανακριβή ή ελλιπή. Σπανίως δε, αποδίδονται στον Ιπποκράτη εικασίες για ελλείψεις στη μεθοδολογία ή στις εμπειρικές του γνώσεις και δεξιότητες, βασισμένες ενδεχομένως σε ατελή μελέτη ή παρερμηνεία της πρωτογενούς ιστορικής πηγής, αλλά και σε ό,τι αφορά στον όρο «τρυπανισμός», που υιοθετήθηκε τον 19ο αιώνα και περιλαμβάνει κάθε άνοιγμα στο κρανίο μέσω χειρουργικής επέμβασης.

Το άρθρο διερευνά πινακίδες της Ιπποκρατικής πραγματείας, εστιάζοντας στις χειρουργικές διαδικασίες, τις τεχνικές και τα εργαλεία που χρησιμοποιήθηκαν, με παράθεση αποσπασμάτων αρχαίων κειμένων. Επιπλέον, προσφέρει μια διαχρονική ανάλυση από τον 5ο αι. π.Χ. έως την Αναγέννηση, αναδεικνύοντας τη σημασία της Ιπποκρατικής κληρονομιάς και καταδεικνύοντας τις επιστημονικές ανακρίβειες που προκύπτουν από την ελλιπή μελέτη του θέματος και την καθολική χρήση του όρου «τρυπανισμός» στη σύγχρονη αρχαιο-ανθρωπολογική βιβλιογραφία.

The Hippocratic treatise *On Head Wounds* (*Περί Των Εν Κεφαλή Τρωμάτων*) stands as the earliest recorded account of surgical techniques for cranial fractures resulting from trauma. Its descriptions of surgical procedures, tools, and methodologies have been widely referenced in modern medical and archaeological scholarship. Researchers frequently compare these Hippocratic practices with evidence of cranial surgery observed across various historical and cultural contexts, from prehistoric times through antiquity. Despite its historical importance, interpretations of the treatise are sometimes shaped by modern assumptions rather than a faithful reading of the original text. Certain retrospective analyses, written more than two millennia later, present incomplete or inaccurate assessments, often due to misinterpretations of the primary source. These studies occasionally attribute deficiencies in surgical methodology or empirical knowledge to Hippocrates himself. Additionally, the 19th-century introduction of the term *trepanation* –which has come to encompass all surgically induced cranial openings–has contributed to a generalized and often misleading classification of ancient surgical practices.

This article revisits the surgical concepts outlined in *On Head Wounds*, focusing on operative techniques, instrumentation, and textual evidence. It also examines the evolving interpretation of these procedures from antiquity to the Renaissance, emphasizing the need for greater precision in discussing Hippocratic contributions and the impact of terminological imprecision on archaeo-anthropological discourse.



## ON THE OCCASION OF A HELLENISTIC CLAY LAMP FROM THE ANCIENT CITY OF AIGAI, VERGINA\*

In memoriam of Ioannis Touratsoglou

Occasioned by a fragment of a Hellenistic terracotta lamp with remarkable vegetal decoration on its relief handle, recently recovered in the “Tsakiridis sector” of the Vergina excavation, some observations are made in this contribution on the decorative motifs used in minor and other arts towards the end of the Hellenistic period. It should be noted that the “Tsakiridis sector” is situated in the vicinity of the excavated Metroon in the ancient city of Aigai (Vergina) to the NW. In addition, at the site under discussion, building remains of workshops have been unearthed, as well as characteristic moveable finds, remnants of artisanal products.

The long-term collaboration with Ioannis Touratsoglou was, in effect, a creative dialogue that often gave rise to useful and fascinating outcomes. Throughout his steadfast and persistent engagement with coins —those wondrous small works— the numismatist I. Touratsoglou extensively exercised his characteristic observational skills. As a result, plain objects of everyday life or small details during excavation led many times from these small “paths” to significant deductions or events of ancient history and art history. With these preconditions in mind and on the basis of our shared stance on things, together with very few of our colleagues, we established over the years a new essential starting point for the study of the Hellenistic period and its pottery: from the fragments of clay vases and figurines, the clay seals on papyri, the tiles with their incised patterns or stamps on their surface, among the innumerable excavated small finds —and not only these— it became evident that the necessary historical and cultural testimony to the Hellenistic times which we endeavoured to investigate could be retrieved through detailed observation. Then, with all these small ancient “accounts” of the finds at our disposal and with the numismatist’s fascination with detail, we embarked in the 1980s on our effort to shape an emerging sample of Hellenistic Pottery —particularly for ancient Macedonia— sometimes on a theoretical level and sometimes being closer to historical reality. In the decades that followed and up to this day, assisted by many colleagues, the common research into Hellenistic pottery, in combination with numismatics, yielded many significant results collected in the published Proceedings of the International Scientific Meetings on Hellenistic Pottery<sup>1</sup>. Our efforts in the context of the major and complex archaeological

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\* I would like to thank the archaeologist Apostolos Thanou for the drawing and photographs of the lamp fragment, and D. Doumas for the English translation of this contribution.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Δρούγου 2023, 859-867; Δρούγου and Τουράτσογλου 2012, 241-274.

projects, such as the excavation at Vergina, the ancient city of Aigai, as well as the coins, the pottery finds, the fragments of small “non-valuable” ancient works proved useful and important because they continuously make available the necessary evidence of life in the ancient capital of the Macedonians: the stamp, for instance, on a tile depicting a goat’s head, or the clay seal of a papyrus taking the form of beardless Heracles recovered at the Metroon of the ancient city constitute, through their publication, a characteristic example of the distinct archaeological observation of Ioannis Touratsoglou<sup>2</sup>.

These thoughts have made us remember him once more as a valuable partner, and the occasion was provided by the fragment of a terracotta oil lamp, a small find coming from the stone foundations of ancient buildings in the “Tsakiridis sector” of the Vergina excavation, to the NW of the Metroon, on the east side of the ancient city of Aigai<sup>3</sup>. Investigation into such a small and “insignificant” find, that in fact belongs to the challenging category of “lychnology”, seems perhaps daring and, to many, possibly fruitless; however, its presence has proved important.

Be that as it may, the evidence and –perhaps for this reason – the relevant bibliography on terracotta oil lamps in the ancient territories of the Mediterranean abounds with views, classifications, typology and dates – a fact that reveals the difficulty and, at the same time, the value of this material’s research<sup>4</sup>. However, this small oil lamp fragment from the city of Aigai has two additional advantages: it comes from dated excavated layers<sup>5</sup>, while concurrently, it preserves a characteristic decorative vegetal motif encountered for several centuries in many categories of artefacts and monuments of Greek antiquity. According to the excavation, the destruction and abandonment of the site and the buildings found in the “Tsakiridis sector” must have taken place between the late 1st c. BC and the early decades of the 1st c. AD, a period to which the lamp in question should be attributed<sup>6</sup>.

The oil lamp fragment (excavation journal of 1999) was uncovered alongside a large number of fragments of clay vases and tiles in the destruction layers that had covered the stone foundations of the buildings, but also the water conduits as well as

<sup>2</sup> See Τουράτσογλου 1999, 533-541; 2015, 622-638; Δρούγου and Τουράτσογλου 2000, 307-319. To these must be added many more publications of I. Touratsoglou, of analogous importance, see Δρούγου *et al.* 2009, III-X (Complete list of his works).

<sup>3</sup> On the investigation into the “Tsakiridis sector”, see Δρούγου *et al.* 2009a, 228-230, fig. 5; 2009b, 131-132; Δρούγου and Καλλινη 2012, 151-156; Δρούγου *et al.* 2014, 129-134.

<sup>4</sup> It is obvious that lamps in an excavation context constitute more reliable elements for dating, in contrast to the lamp ensembles of larger or smaller museums and private collections that lack precisely the necessary indication of their provenance and their connection to specific places of production or use. At the same time, the creation of types and similar series based on morphological criteria serves as a practical classification tool of the material, but nonetheless, the threat of misinterpretation remains.

<sup>5</sup> See above n. 3 on the relevant excavation that is still in progress. Dating derives based on numismatic data in combination with pottery and the respective archaeological stratification.

<sup>6</sup> See, for instance, on the fate of the old Macedonian capital during the last pre-Christian centuries, Δρούγου 2009, 121-132 (mainly n. 3 and 4). This period that spans the end of the Hellenistic times and the transition to the Roman world, and was a challenging phase with many complex chronological and other questions of identity and of historical significance for the majority of the monuments and excavated ensembles in territories of the Eastern Mediterranean. Hegemonies and cities alternated and at the same time restructured their politico-economic role, apart from the military conflicts they engaged in, resorting to fast and almost “international” trade.

the small stone-paved courtyards, in the NE corner of the “Tsakiridis sector”<sup>7</sup>. The type of building remains but also the numerous and diverse moveable finds from the site confirmed our initial hypothesis on the existence and operation of workshops during this late and critical time period for the city, a topic that constitutes the ultimate goal of our research. Fragments of moulds, residues of processed materials, such as clay, glass and slag, as well as members of stone or built conduits for the use of water etc., further support the above characterization —an observation that holds true for other parts of the east section of the ancient city during the same period<sup>8</sup>.

The preserved fragment forms part of the handle that is perpendicular to the lamp’s body, to which a relatively large decorative relief “leaf” made of clay is attached covering the ring handle (see figs 1-3)<sup>9</sup>. Based solely on the fragment and the shape of the handle, it is obviously difficult to determine with precision the form and type of the lamp in question; however, according to the data of the excavated sector, it is certain that a mould was used for the lamp’s production, which possibly belongs to the “Ephesus” type (see graphic reconstruction of the oil lamp, fig. 4) that gained popularity throughout the Late Hellenistic centuries<sup>10</sup>. As regards the handles, it has been generally deduced that, for the main part, the terracotta lamps of workshops in Hellenistic Macedonia do not feature an actual handle, aside from the “decorative” sigmoid lugs. Only in the late Hellenistic period —in the mid-2nd and the 1st c. BC— was an actual and discrete handle adopted by the Macedonian workshops for their oil lamps, mainly those made with the aid of a mould<sup>11</sup>. The visible surface of the large decorative heart-shaped “leaf”, S-like in cross-section, covering the ring handle, features an impressive mould-made vegetal composition in relief that consists of large acanthus leaves, tendrils and flowers: at the base of this “sapling” are found two or three large acanthus leaves from which grow two pairs of fluted tendrils ending in scrolls or half-leaves. From the two pairs of tendrils, the

<sup>7</sup> See n. 3.

<sup>8</sup> The small fragment of the terracotta lamp with the specific decoration represents in a special way the difficulty in dating this period and the archaeological remains, an issue that cannot derive from an automatic process. See above n. 3 and n. 10 below, on the pottery and the numismatic indications from the sector as well as the wider area that also includes the neighbouring Metroon, see Δρούγος and Τουράτσογλου 2000, 307-319; 2012, 241-274.

<sup>9</sup> The handle’s ring is rectangular in cross-section and the fragment’s overall dimensions are 5.5-5 cm. The clay is remarkably pure, pale greyish pink, coated with reddish slip.

<sup>10</sup> On the rich production of terracotta lamps of this type and their wide dispersal, but also on the systematic utilization of the excavation circumstance, among numerous similar publications, cf. indicatively, Howland 1958, 166-170 (Howland type D49a and D49b) or possibly the “Knidos type”, 170-174 (Howland type D50a-d); Perlzweig 1961, pls 1 and 2, nos 17, 19, 20, 27 (imported lamps from various workshops of the Eastern Aegean and Asia Minor mainly, but also Italy) and pl. 13, no. 391 (Attic workshop, 1st c. BC); Πετρόπουλος 1999, 62-64 and 73-74. On the spread in Macedonian workshops see Δρούγος and Τουράτσογλου 1980, 133-139; Δρούγος 1992, 74-79; Βασιλειάδου 2023, 131 ff., pl. 4 (with bibliography); Hübinger 1993, 42-45, nos 71-72 and 87, nos 153-154.

<sup>11</sup> See Δρούγος 1992, 111-114; 2012 86-106. Indicatively, only for local production and use, see Δρούγος and Τουράτσογλου 1980, 133-139; Αιλιμπάκη-Ακαμάτη 1994, 238-241 (funerary ensembles of vases with lamps); Χρυσοστόμου 2013, 473-474; Πινγιάτογλου 2005, 54-55, no. P1, fig. 131 (on the emergence of the decorated ring handle). The questions of the form, diffusion and affinity of the lamp types in the lands and workshops of the Hellenistic world is broad and complex and entail many different views, very rich primary material covering a very large geographical region of dispersal; however, the analytical discussion of these is beyond the scope of this text, cf. only indicatively, Meric 2002, 118-119; Giuliani 2001, 43-50; Περράκη 2012.

two central and larger ones, arranged in a sigmoid configuration, meet at the top of the composition forming the base for a large palmette with triangular core and a large nine-leaved “fan” in which the whole composition culminates. The space in the centre of the decorative composition, beneath the meeting point of the two large tendrils and above the acanthus leaves, is occupied by a rosette surrounded by the two half-leaves of its calyx. The two smaller tendrils grow on the side, to the right and left, above the acanthus leaves. On the base with the acanthus leaves, the lyre-shaped arrangement of the tendrils that terminate in the palmette, and the rich lateral vegetal elements, with different variants each time, one can identify a known and recurring decorative motif of the Classical and Hellenistic periods, a theme already introduced into the monumental architecture and art of the late 5th c. BC. However, this pattern is frequently encountered in numerous variations and used in the 4th c. BC with great intensity in monumental art but also in minor arts<sup>12</sup>, whereas in the Hellenistic times, aside from the widespread vegetal decorative motifs, the theme of the “sapling” growing from acanthus leaves changes and adapts to the artistic tradition of the production of the local workshops or of the various vase and vessel categories. The image, for instance, of mould-made skyphoi *hemitomoi* (without foot or handle), with vegetal decoration dating from the late 3rd to the 1st c. BC that involves a rich repertoire of floral motifs, “saplings”, etc., alluding to the various decorative models of the 4th c. BC and to the tradition of other workshops of the Eastern Mediterranean is characteristic<sup>13</sup>. It should be noted, however, that during the same period or a little later, in the 1st c. BC or the 1st c. AD, a simpler large solid leaf was produced covering the vertical ring handle of the lamp, as in the case of Lamp P1 from the sanctuary of Demeter at Dion<sup>14</sup>.

Nevertheless, Hellenistic lamps with a similarly intricate decorative element on the handle, such as the Vergina example, are not known –at least to us–, with the exception of certain metal lamps, yet with distinctive differences in the way the

<sup>12</sup> Cf. for instance, the early Corinthian column capitals or the marble acroteria of the Parthenon on the athenian Acropolis, or the crowns of the attic grave stelae, while, in the 4th c. BC, the examples in architecture and monumental art (cf. the mosaic floors of residences and palaces or artefacts of minor arts, such as metalworking and weaving but also the rich red-figure vase painting of the 4th c. BC) increase. See relatedly Gropengiesser 1961, 2-17, pls III, VI; Delivorrias 1984, 289-292; Danner 1989, 13-14, pl. 7, cat. no. 77; Palagia 2005, 253-254, figs 75 and 91. See generally Froning 1985, 218-229. On the floor mosaics of the 4th c. BC, cf., Salzmann 1982, nos 103, 120, pl. 29. The topic of the supplementary decoration with vegetal compositions in red-figure vase painting is rich and exceeds the boundaries of Attica with the richly decorated vases of the workshops of Magna Graecia, cf. Shefton 1982, 149 ff.; Drougou 2000, 162-165, n. 48-49; Heuer 2019, 71. Also, for related artefacts of metalworking or even weaving, see Zimi 2011, 182-186 and 240-241; Barr-Sharrar 2008, 110-112, but also Pfrommer 1982, 308; 1987, 92 ff.; 1993, 27-32. On more general subjects, as these characterize the production of significant workshops across the entire Hellenistic world, Δρούγου 1987, 313 ff.

<sup>13</sup> Rotroff 1982, 17-18; Ακαμάτης 1993, 161-167.

<sup>14</sup> Πηνυμάτου 2005, 54-55 (with the respective bibliography); Βασιλειάδου 2023, 131-132, pls 4-5. The lamps from the ancient Gymnasium of Amphipolis also include examples of the “Pergamon-Herzblattlampen” type ΛΥ22, 124/MA3386, 33 which, although their handle features similar decoration, they clearly demonstrate a different –more naturalistic– approach to the rendering of the decorative element that is possibly associated with their metal models, such as, for instance, the bronze lamp from the Mahdia shipwreck with the remarkable “vegetal” decoration (the shipwreck dates to the 1st c. BC), Naumann-Stackner *et al.* 1994, 629-638. See also Zuravlev 2007, 209-220. On similar bronze lamps, see Barr-Sharrar 1994, 639-655 (mainly the lamps F305, F306, MB49); Bussiere and Lindros Wohl 2017, 10 ff. and 454 ff. nos 616, 619; Cf. also contemporaneous examples with similar decoration on the handle Perlzweig 1961, 73-74 (imported lamps). See also above, n. 11.

theme is perceived and rendered. In the case of the Vergina lamp fragment, it seems that models of the 4th c. BC or even of the Hellenistic period were copied, although the naturalistic components, namely the leaves, tendrils and flowers, conform to the normal, almost “geometric” shape of the composition’s main tendrils, while even the large acanthus leaves at its base have been integrated into this “geometric” regularity. Yet, at the same time, details, such as the flutes of the tendrils and the tips of the leaves, are rendered in a “linear” and austere manner as a graphic decorative element, in a way that may be associated with metal models or with the kind of mould from which the relief ornament of the Vergina lamp was produced, certainly denoting a different perception from that of the handled oil lamps in which a plant’s solid leaf is executed, as in the case of the bronze lamps from the Mahdia shipwreck<sup>15</sup>.

It is obvious that despite its “strict” rendering, the composition of the Vergina lamp returns (or indirectly refers) to the classical tradition of the 4th c. BC, a phenomenon that characterizes particularly monumental art in the late Hellenistic period and the early Imperial Roman times. It may be an exaggeration to connect a small, insignificant object of everyday life during that time – all the more so a fragment of it – with the classicism identified by archaeological and historical research in this period. However, the boundaries of this “allusion to the past” are broader and may involve other smaller events or works instilled with different purposes and content from those of its models<sup>16</sup>.

The years that followed the defeat and dissolution of the Kingdom of Macedon by the Romans constitute a distinct period, during which the former military and political forces were overthrown and the dominance of the new power, the Romans, over the Eastern Mediterranean was established. It is still difficult to reconstruct the demise of the ancient city of Aigai: the walls were torn down and no longer protected the settlement, the palaces were possibly inhabited by craftsmen and common people, while the population suffered from unremitting barbarian invasions. However, in everyday life and culture, earlier forms and shapes were produced or reused in clay or other materials, as they adapted to the new economic circumstances of the emerging Roman Empire.

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<sup>15</sup> See above, n. 14, Barr-Sharrar 1994, 639-658; Zuravlev and Zuravleva 2014, 255 ff.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. the endurance and persistence during this period in the decorative, yet originally symbolic, element of the Macedonian shield with the concentric semicircles in pottery, etc., when the theme no longer conveyed political content, see relatedly Δρούγου and Τουράτογλου 2012, 240-274; Blazevska 2006, 245-250. The question has been the focus of research in many ways, but here it falls outside the scope of this paper.

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Figure 1. Vergina. The ancient city of Aigai, “Tsakiridis sector”. Terracotta lamp: fragment of the lamp handle with the floral decoration.



Figure 2. Vergina. The ancient city of Aigai, “Tsakiridis sector”. Terracotta lamp: the back side of the handle.



Figure 3. Vergina. The ancient city of Aigai, “Tsakiridis sector”. Terracotta lamp: the rear side of the handle.

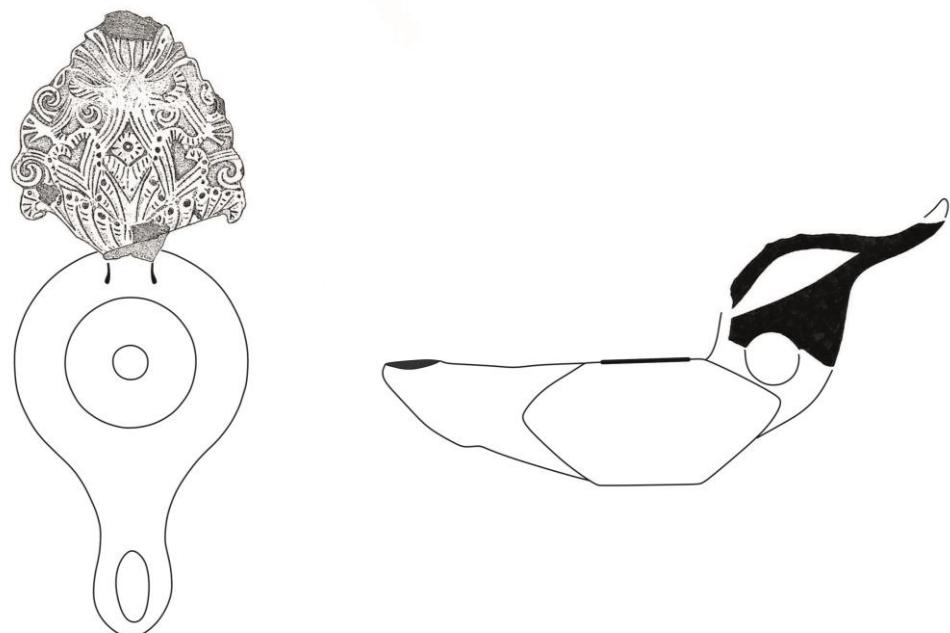


Figure 4. Vergina. The ancient city of Aigai, “Tsakiridis sector”. Terracotta lamp: the floral decoration of the lamp handle and hypothetical design reconstruction of the lamp.