

As part of his ongoing resituation of Macedon away from the Demosthenic limits of civilization and towards a broader northern Greek cultural milieu, M. Hatzopoulos draws attention to a pattern of cults and rites of passage shared between Thessaly and Macedon (Hatzopoulos 1994: 25-62) which have southern Greek, especially Athenian and Spartan, parallels (cf. Vidal-Naquet 1986). In particular, in a series of Hellenistic dedications from Thessaly offered to Artemis Throsia (e.g., SEG 35.615 = Ed. pr. Tziaphalias 1984: 206, no. 62), Hatzopoulos identifies the traces of a three-stage initiatory sequence marking the phases of female maturation: His arguments have won general adherence (e.g., Cole 2004: 210). This paper refutes this scholarly consensus, reclaims these dedications for further interpretation and argues that they offer evidence of a uniquely Thessalian calculus of prayer.

The specific flaws in Hatzopoulos' argument are: (1) Linguistic analysis of the participle *νεβεύσσασα* is faulty. Attempts to connect the participle with the fawns of Artemis Brauronia (Clement 1934: 403-4) or women who have completed an initiatory race (Hatzopoulos 1994: 32) rely on very dubious etymologies. Formal Thessalian syntactic parallels for this expression suggest that *νεβεύουσαι* were cult officials, not participants in a rite of passage. There is, moreover, no indication of the dedicator's age in these inscriptions; (2) There is no evidence that the *λύτρα* mentioned in these dedications were a symbolic ransom dedicated following completion of the initiation (Hatzopoulos 1994: 39). Pindar's use of *λύτρον* in the sense of compensation for prior good acts at *I.* 8.1ff. and *O.* 7.77ff. invites an understanding of these Thessalian dedications as compensation for Artemis Throsia; (3) *τελέουμα* cannot be translated as if it were part of an adverbial phrase like *κατὰ τελέουμα*, *vel sim.*: "so-and-so made a dedication 'on the occasion of completion' [sc. of a rite of passage]" (Hatzopoulos 1994: 39-40). Comparison with similar adverbial expressions in Hellenistic dedications reveals that, while dedications made *κατ' ἐπίταγμα*, *vel sim.*, are common, *ἐπίταγμα* does not occur as a simple accusative. *τελέουμα* is more likely related to the common use of *τελέω* and its compounds in epigraphic and literary texts to signify the completion or fulfillment of a vow (e.g., Herodotus 1.86.2; CEG 1.275).

While the value of age-class initiation as an explanatory structure for various cults and myths in Greek antiquity cannot be underestimated, the initiatory template ill suits the evidence for the Thessalian cult of Artemis Throsia; once it has been removed, it becomes possible to glimpse a relationship between votary and divinity characterized by an idiosyncratic lexicon of compensation. The presence of *λύτρα* and *τελέουμα* in Hellenistic Thessalian dedications to the Dioskoroi (SEG 35.605 = Ed. pr. Tziaphalias 1984: 221, no. 100), Artemis Akraia (IG ix.2 303) and Demeter and Kore (IG ix.2 1235) strongly suggests that this attitude towards prayer was not unique to the cult of Artemis Throsia, but more generally invested in Thessalian religion.

Works Cited for Artemis Throsia and Rites of Passage: A Reconsideration

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