

AN ARCHAIC GREEK *ÉCRITURE FÉMININE*?
EPIGRAMMATIC DEDICATIONS BY TELESTODIKE OF PAROS

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RESUMEN: Estudios contemporáneos sobre la costumbre dedicatoria femenina en el mundo griego durante la época arcaica se han ocupado con este tema como un medio para discutir preguntas sociales más amplias en cuanto a las funciones de las mujeres durante este periodo. Este estudio propone que los enfoques actuales del género en el mundo antiguo pueden reforzarse con un cambio crítico de perspectiva que se puede lograr al aplicar las teorías más recientes en la arqueología y en el discurso moderno feminista. Para respaldar esta afirmación, se presentaron dos dedicatorias por una tal Telestodike de Paros (CEG 413 y 414) como estudios de caso para argumentar que se pueden encontrar rasgos de una *Écriture féminine* en las inscripciones epigramáticas dedicatorias y funerarias en la época arcaica, a través de la exposición de feminidad en un género literario predominantemente masculino y predecible.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Epigrama, Epigrafía Arqueológica, Época Arcaica, Paros, *Écriture Féminine*, Auto-representación.

ABSTRACT: Contemporary scholarship on the female dedicatory habit in the archaic Greek world has engaged with this subject as a means to discuss broader social questions regarding the roles of women in this period³. This study pro-

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³ c.f. COLE (2004), GOFF (2004), CONNELLY (2007), and especially DILLON (2002), who characterizes his study honestly as “a serious start on the study of girls and women in classical Greek religion”. This text, and others like it, has been invaluable in shedding light on the roles of women in the archaic and classical Greek world, often exposing far greater social

poses that current approaches to ancient gender can be strengthened through a critical shift in perspective, achieved through the application of innovative archaeological theory and modern feminist social and literary theory. To support this assertion, two dedications by a certain Telestodike of Paros (CEG 413 and 414) are presented as case studies, through which I argue that hints of an *Écriture féminine* can be found in the texts of archaic Greek dedicatory and funerary epigrams, through the exhibition of femininity in what is otherwise a seemingly formulaic, masculine genre⁴.

KEYWORDS: Epigram, Archaeological Epigraphy, Archaic Greece, Paros, *Écriture Féminine*, Self-representation.

1. INTRODUCTION

In her treatise on the concept of *Écriture féminine*, Hélène Cixous (1976: 878) makes the assertion that “with a few rare exceptions, there has not yet been any writing that inscribes femininity”. Cixous follows this declaration with a proposition for literary composition which separates itself from that which has come before, and thus allows, for the first time, a truly feminine genre. Founded in Derridean deconstruction and Lacanian psychoanalysis, this somewhat utopian ideal, described by Elaine Showalter as the “inscription of the female body and female difference in language and text,” served as a foundation for not only French feminist discourse, but also as a worldwide feminist blueprint⁵. Yet, while Cixous almost exclusively employs the work of twentieth-century authors as successful paradigms of femininity, highlighting the work of Sidonie-Gabrielle Collète, Marguerite Duras, and Jean Genet as having broken from traditional phallogocentric discourse, she writes on classical topics as though not expecting to find examples of *la langue femme* within this genre⁶.

Nevertheless, as was argued by Jack Winkler regarding the poetry of Sappho, there exists something of a subtext of femininity, despite Sappho’s

(and especially, religious) participation than had been previously understood. However, because of the relative novelty of this perspective, these initial studies are somewhat broad and superficial, covering temporally and spatially diverse subjects.

⁴ Regarding *Écriture féminine*, see the work of CIXOUS (1975), WITTIG (1992), IRIGARAY (1985) and KRISTEVA (1984), as well as the work of BUTLER (2000) and WINKLER (2008).

⁵ The implications of this concept have been very far-reaching; see especially KRISTEVA (1983), IRIGARAY (1985) and WITTIG (1992).

⁶ See LEONARD (2000) for a more complete analysis of both Cixous’s scholarship on classical literature and the relative lack of classical scholarship which employs concepts developed by Cixous. Despite this, Cixous has been quite influential on the development of classical scholarship (see for example ZAJKO and LEONARD) (2006).

following the structure of the almost exclusively masculine genre of archaic lyric (Winkler, 1990: 162-187). Following this vein of scholarship, as well as that of Day (1989; 1994a; 1994b; 2010), Baumbach Petrovic and Petrovic (2011), and Lavigne (forthcoming), regarding the critical nature of materiality, context, and (re)performance, this paper argues that a model for Cixous's *Écriture féminine* can be found in the texts of archaic Greek dedicatory and funerary epigrams, through which hints of a purely feminist discourse are exhibited in what is otherwise a seemingly formulaic, masculine genre.

To support this assertion, two dedications by a certain Telestodike of Paros, CEG 413 (IG XII⁵ 1 216) and 414 (IG XII⁵ 1 215), are presented as case studies. These inscribed verse texts are synthesized with their archaeological contexts and overall dedicatory milieu. The resultant textual, material, and spatial context is briefly juxtaposed with contemporary examples from the Parian, Naxian, and Delian dedicatory tradition, providing a critical comparative perspective. This methodology is also briefly extended to employ other examples of both female and male/female joint dedication from the archaic Greek world as comparative models, from which these epigrams can be placed within a larger social context. Through this analysis, Cixous's concept of *Écriture féminine* is perhaps not just "fundamentally a hope, if not a blueprint, for the future," as has been expressed by Nancy Miller, but instead a lens through which the past can be better understood.

2. BACKGROUND

CEG 413 and 414 have been chosen as the focus of this study for a series of distinct reasons. It has been convincingly argued that the same Telestodike of Paros erected both of these dedications⁷. This provides the opportunity for two monuments by the same woman in two distinct contexts to be juxtaposed against one another: a votive offering by a woman on her own, and another by the same woman alongside a man. They therefore afford unparalleled insight into not only the female dedicatory habit, but also the effects of a male intrusion on this habit. In addition, both of these monuments were dedicated to Artemis, a goddess with explicit female significance⁸. Finally, it is possible to recover the contexts of both of these monuments based on earlier epigraphic and archaeological scholarship. This same body of scholarship, however, also highlights the voids left in our understanding of these dedications. Both of these inscriptions

⁷ See for instance KRON (1993: 157) and DAY (2010: 190).

⁸ See BURKERT (1991) for comprehensive analysis of the female over-and-undertones in Artemisian worship in the Archaic Greek world.

have undergone a series of very thorough textual analyses. Nevertheless, in spite of this large body of scholarship, little attention has been paid to the significance of either the initial context of the monument, or its complete physical makeup.

CEG 413 (ca. 525-500 BCE) was first published by Karl Purgold in 1883 (pp. 391-3). This report provides a very brief physical description of the object, before engaging with a traditional epigraphic analysis. Although it was not found on Paros (having been studied by Purgold at the Museo Archeologico Oliveriano in Pesaro, Italy before being lost) it is argued that it was originally dedicated by Telestodike ca. 525-500, probably at the Sanctuary of Artemis on nearby Delos⁹. Moreover, Purgold tentatively links this monument to the already extant, yet chronologically subsequent CEG 414, remarking that (pp. 392-3) *“Der Name Telestodike kehrt in einer auf Paros selbst gefunden Weihung, ebenfalls an Artemis, wieder, und es ist nicht unmöglich, dass sich diese Inschrift auf dieselbe Person bezieht wie die unsrige, den die jüngeren Formen”*.

In 1893, Oliver Hoffmann included this inscription in his treatise on Greek dialects, employing it mainly for its distinctly Parian dialect and letterforms. However, he provides a more complete recent history of the monument. Hoffmann (1893: 150) remarks that, while its overall provenance is unknown, CEG 413 was first brought to Italy sometime before 1738 by a Greek merchant trading in Ancona. The stone was subsequently acquired and transported to Pesaro, where it was displayed –as it was for Purgold a decade earlier– in the Museo Archeologico Oliveriano.

Finally, Otto Rubensohn, who was in charge of the German excavations of the sanctuaries of Apollo and Asclepius on the island of Paros, includes information on this inscription in his 1901 report of excavations on the island. Rubensohn (1901: 220) makes the assertion that, unlike CEG 414 which had been recovered from the temple of Artemis on Paros, this inscription had probably been dedicated in a distinctly non-Parian landscape. This argument is founded on account of the Parian toponym in the secondary inscription and has been largely accepted by subsequent scholars¹⁰.

Scholarship on CEG 414 (ca. 500 BCE) follows the tradition observed above. It was likely originally recovered from the *τέμενος* of the Temple to Artemis on Paros. Early analyses, however, employed this dedication merely as a text to be analyzed, rarely acknowledging any physical context, archaeological data, spatial milieu, or the provenance of inscription. Rubensohn (1901) provides

⁹ Purgold bases these Parian origins on both the authorial inscription of Kritionides the Parian, as well as its typographic style. The proposed dates for this dedication are also substantiated by the alphabetic morphology of the inscription in JEFFREY (1961: p. 295).

¹⁰ See HANSEN (1983) who approves of this assertion by Rubensohn, the dedication of this stone at the sanctuary of Artemis on nearby Naxos seems likely (KRON, 1993: 158).

little in the way of scholarship on *CEG* 414, as it had been excavated decades before his tenure on Paros. However, he does make one assertion, referring to the inscription as (p. 220) “*die Weihung der Telestodike und ihres Gatten Demokydes*”¹¹. Instead, it is Elter, in his 1911 article on epigraphy in *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*, who first takes any real scholastic interest in this inscription. Although, he provides an utterly comprehensive analysis of the metrical intricacies of the dedicatory text, Elter provides no physical, archaeological, spatial, or provenance information on the inscription. In effect, the stone exists only as a text to be analyzed.

Despite the ready availability and relatively comprehensive nature of these reports, *CEG* 413 and 414 have experienced relatively little scholastic analysis during the majority of the twentieth century. Their marginality, however, has lessened as scholars have turned their attention to the female dedicatory habit over the last few decades¹². As a result, the texts of these monuments have been employed as a means to discuss broader social questions regarding the roles of Greek women at this time.

For instance, in her examination of feminine influence on archaic dedicatory art, Brunilde Ridgway (1987) briefly refers to *CEG* 414 when examining joint dedications between spouses¹³. Ridgway remarks that the most important dedication in this category is “that by Demokydes and Telestodike, who in the late sixth century set up a statue to Artemis on Paros ἀπό κοινῶν, from the common capital, that is, sharing expenses”.

Likewise, in her investigation of the relationship between activity in religious cult and social status for archaic Greek women, Uta Kron (1993: 157-8) offers *CEG* 413 and 414 as comparative examples to the Naxian dedication of Nikandre on Delos (*CEG* 403, *IG* XII⁵ 2)¹⁴. Tentatively placing *CEG* 413 at the Artemision of Delos –where the Nikandre dedication was made– Kron engages exclusively with the text of the dedication, remarking on the illustrated familial relations of Telestodike, possible individuals in honor of whom the dedication would have been made and the unusual patronymic/toponymic identification of the artist, Kritionides. Kron subsequently examines the text of *CEG* 414, reading Demokydes as the likely husband of Telestodike, and exploring the ramifications of the concept of ἀπό κοινῶν with regard to the social and legal position of the Archaic Greek woman.

¹¹ This claim, while entirely plausible (and very likely) will be examined more thoroughly below.

¹² See COLE (2004), GOFF (2004), CONNELLY (2007), or DILLON (2002).

¹³ It is clear that she accepts Rubensohn’s reading of Demokydes as the husband of Telestodike, as do many others (eg. KRON 1993, 158).

¹⁴ KRON (1993, p. 157) remarks that these three dedications (*CEG* 403, 413, 414) are the only large-scale monumental dedications by women in the archaic world.

In her argument for the reading of Greek prayers in antiquity as an active experience, based on the foundations laid by Day (1994b) regarding the function of dedicatory epigram, Mary Depew (1997: 238) employs CEG 413 as an example for the primary function of epigram: “not only to record spoken language but, perhaps more importantly, to perpetuate it”¹⁵. Depew also employs CEG 414 as evidence for the argument of (re)performance, convincingly asserting that the use of an aorist participle creates a sense of correspondence to the original dedication. As such, reading this text aloud (re)enacts the dedication both through illustrating the fulfillment of the vow, as well as through an echo of the original request of Telestodike and Demokydes to Artemis directly.

The most recent citations of CEG 413 and 414 follow the scholastic formula set over the past two decades, employing these inscriptions as emblematic of a feminine or familial dedicatory habit, with very little additional analysis. For instance, in his catalogue of familial dedication in the Archaic and Classical Greek worlds, Christoph Löhr provides very brief archeological contexts for both inscriptions before engaging more deeply with their connotations within the larger landscape of Greek family dedications. Of note, regarding CEG 414, Löhr is more cautious in labeling the relationship between Demokydes and Telestodike, remarking that (p. 25) “*die aus zwei Distichen zusammengesetzt ist, geht nicht hervor, in welcher Beziehung die gemeinsamen Stifter, Demokydes und Telestodike, zueinander stehen*”. However, more recently, Keesling (2005: 398), exhibiting CEG 414 as one of only three joint dedications recorded between a man and a woman in the archaic Greek dedicatory corpus, has returned to the earlier tradition of concretely labeling Demokydes and Telestodike as husband and wife.

While these studies provide invaluable information and perspectives to the scholastic record, serving to more fully articulate the nature of the female dedicatory habit in the archaic Greek world, they provide very little further analysis of CEG 413 and 414, settling for analyses and perspectives based in the scholarship of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. To overcome this, and to subsequently allow for new analyses of these inscriptions, they must first be completely contextualized: archaeologically, spatially, and textually¹⁶.

¹⁵ This concept is based on DAY (2004b)’s statement that “Writing on the object is substituted for live performance. However, this ‘performance in writing’ remains incomplete until people read out the inscription”.

¹⁶ This comprehensive perspective is based on the work of WITMORE (2014) and WEBMOOR (2012), regarding the New Materialisms and Symmetrical Archaeology, respectively, whereby prioritizing one aspect of an archaeological feature (in this case the texts upon these stones) without its complete context leads to a critically incomplete and inadequate analysis.

3. CONTEXTUALIZATION AND ANALYSIS

CEG 413:

Ἀρτεμι, σοὶ τόδ' ἄγαλμα Τελεστοδί[κη μ' ἀνέθηκεν]

Ἀσφαλίῳ μῆτηρ, Θερσέλεω θυγάτηρ.

το Παρίῳ ποίημα Κριτωνίδεω εὐχομ[αί εἶναι]¹⁷

The complete contextualization of CEG 413 is somewhat troubling for two explicit reasons. As this inscription was subsequently lost after being described by Purgold and Hoffman in the late nineteenth century, it is from their somewhat antiquated data that this context must be drawn. In addition, since its original provenance is also unknown, its context will have to be inferred from previous scholarship and through the examination of contemporary comparanda. Purgold (p. 391) describes the object as a column of Parian marble, broken, but with a preserved length of 0.675m, upper diameter of 0.315m, and lower diameter of 0.345m. Within column were carved 24 Ionic flutes, each of which was separated by .010m ridges. Therefore, each ionic flute measured roughly 0.033m. The text is inscribed in three of the flutes, with the initial dedication occupying concurrent flutes, and the signature written so as to leave a blank flute in-between. The base, Ionic capital, and abacus have not been preserved, in addition to the object being dedicated. However, based on comparanda from the Artemision of Delos, a likely and relatively well-substantiated original context of deposition for the dedication, as well as its age (ca. 525-500 BCE), Kron (1993: 157) develops a convincing argument for the dedication supporting either a statue of Artemis or, more likely, a *Kόρη*¹⁸.

If we accept that this monument was dedicated at the Artemision of Delos, the spatial context of this dedication becomes quite compelling. This was a sanctuary that attracted dedications from not only the native Delian populace, but individuals from the surrounding Cycladic isles. Case in point is the aforementioned very early dedication of a *Kore* at the sanctuary by Nikandre (CEG 403). This sanctuary was originally excavated by Jean Théophile Homolle in the mid 1870s. From his notes of this excavation it is clear that the Delian sanctuary to Artemis was, in the Archaic Greek world, a dedicatory destination an argument supported by the Homeric Hymn to Apollo (Homolle, 1878: 53-54). Alongside the dedication by Nikandre –to the northwest of the temple, in

¹⁷ Unless otherwise noted, all readings and supplements follow those provided in the commentary of HANSEN (1983).

¹⁸ One cannot rule out the dedication of another type of object. However, sixth-century (and earlier) dedications to Artemis with accompanying statuary traditionally took the form of statues to the goddess or of anonymous *Kore*.

the corner of the *τέμενος*— were found a large number of archaic votive objects, all of which had been damaged before their interment (Donohue, 2005: 29). This archaeological context paints the picture of a dedicatory landscape made up of a series of large archaic statuary dedications, around which were placed a series of smaller statutes, altars, and other votive objects battling with each other for viewership, (re)performance, and the resultant *κλέος*¹⁹.

With this physical and spatial context in mind, we can begin reexamining the text of the dedication, exploring the possibility of a distinct *Écriture féminine*. Day (2010: 19) makes it clear that, regardless of overall subject matter, female dedicators are often self-identified through their relationships to male family members. For married women, this almost exclusively involves connection to a spouse. In this case, however, Telestodike chooses her father, a common trait of unmarried women, and her son, evidence that she was very likely already married, as a means of self-identification. With this decision, Telestodike not only labels her motherhood as primary and her daughterhood secondary, but she also leaves her presumed wifhood completely omitted. The exclusion of her husband's name here is significant, and, as we shall see, Telestodike depicts herself in this context far differently than she does in her local setting.

Finally, through its use of a formulaic vernacular, this inscription links itself to the greater epigrammatic corpus by employing an interesting dedicatory formula which has both precedent, and a lasting power in the inscribed and literary Greek epigrammatic traditions. For instance, the initial proclamation of *Ἀρτεμι, σοὶ τόδε ἄγαλμα* is seen in the roughly contemporary Theognis 11, as well as the much later Callimachus (*Ep.* 35) and Phaedimus (*G-P* 1). Through this inscription, Telestodike displays an explicit identity, while simultaneously following the conventionality required in epigrammatic dedications.

CEG 414:

Δημοκύδες τοδ' ἄγαλμα Τε|λεστωδίκη τ' ἀπό κοινῶν |
 εὐχσάμενοι στήσαν παρ|θένωι Ἀρτέμιδι |
 σεμνῶι ἐνὶ ζαπέδοι κό|ρηι Διός αἰγιόχοιο |
 τῶν γενεήν βίοτον τ' α|ὔχσ' ἐν ἀπημοσύνηι.

While CEG 413 is *nunc deperditum* —perhaps lost in the archives of the Oliveriani Archelological Museum in Pesaro, Italy— CEG 414 is still extant. Moreover, Löhr (2000: 25) provides a very tidy, if brief, physical description of the object. It is a square statue base, made from either Parian marble or limes-

¹⁹ Cf. DAY (2010) for a more complete analysis of the inherently competitive nature of archaic dedications.

tone²⁰, measuring approximately .875m x .350m x .325m²¹. In contrast to the neatly inscribed CEG 413 whereby each line of poetry was inscribed without breaks, the nature of this stone and horizontal orientation of the text mandated that each verse was broken roughly in half, and inscribed in rough stoichedon. While the type of votive offering dedicated by Telestodike and Demokydes can no longer be determined, both Kron (1993: 157) and Berranger (1992: 267) posit that the base was of the size to support a sizable statue.

The stone has since been used as *spolia* in the construction of an entrance to the cavern shrine to St. John the Theologian in the south of Paros (Berranger, 1992: 267)²². However, Kron (1993: 157) cites a general find context of the stone to the “south-western flank of the Parian mountain outside the ancient town” to be a very likely place which may have once held a sanctuary to Artemis. This hypothesis is corroborated through an analysis of the description of the dedication as *Ἀρτέμιδι σεμνῶι ἐνί ζαπέδοι*. Not only was this monument dedicated to Artemis, it may have been placed within her *τέμενος*. If this hypothesis is true, we may infer that the dedicatory context of this inscription would have been similar to that of CEG 413, albeit one which was singularly Parian, being that this was not recorded at a large-scale, regional sanctuary as is seen with the Delian Artemision.

With the spatial context of CEG 414 established, we may begin examining the text of the dedication. Dedicated up to a quarter century after CEG 413²³, we see a very different emphasis within the dedication. The dedication itself, a series of two elegiac couplets, exhibits rather standard epigrammatic formulae in the first couplet, which could itself stand alone, while the second distich elaborates on the first, articulating the dedicatory landscape and the details of the prayer itself.

The inscription begins by labeling the dedicators of the monument, Demokydes and Telestodike. While the relationship between these two is perhaps somewhat ambiguous, we may make some inferences from the text and its relationship to the earlier dedication of Telestodike. The fact that this dedication was made *ἀπό κοινῶν* suggests some sort of familial or marital relationship, as these relationships would have led to a common capital from which these two would have drawn for the dedication. Moreover, in the second couplet it is

²⁰ As it is currently built within a standing wall, and presumably covered by paint, there is no reliable description of the material from which this object was carved.

²¹ As it is currently built within a standing wall, approximate (yet well-substantiated) measurements must be employed here.

²² BERRANGER (1992), 267.

²³ This later date, ca. 500 BCE, was established through the analysis of the letter forms employed in the inscription, cf. LSAG. However, the change in dedicatory locale could indicate a change in script, therefore, the quarter-century gap between these dedications could conceivably be shortened considerably.

revealed that this dedication was made in order that their family (*γενεά*) and their life (*βίοτος*) might prosper. These phrases, in conjunction with the sense of a common coffer between the two, suggest that these two were indeed married. In fact, as we can infer that Telestodike was already married by the time she dedicated CEG 413 –as she labels herself *μήτηρ*, we can infer that the *γενεά* to which this inscription infers includes her son Asphalios.

The significance of this relationship, along with the concept of *ἀπό κοινῶν* is of exceptional interest for this study. Telestodike, the sole dedicator of CEG 413, is in this instance part of a joint dedication. However, despite the fact that the name Demokydes takes precedent over her own, the immediate reference to their common capital quickly places these individuals on something of a level playing field. This is in contrast to the other two extant instances of joint male/female dedications in the archaic Greek world. The first, CEG 323 (IG XII⁹ 124), was carved atop an altar dedicated at Aulon, near Eretria ca. 450 (Hansen, 1983: 173). It has since been used as *spolia* in the construction of a local church, where it reads as follows:

Χαιριγένεζ · καὶ Εὐδένε̄ · θυγάτερ ἀνέθεκαν.

In contrast to the dedication by Demokydes and Telestodike, we find definitive indications of familial relationship in this brief epigram. Eudene is explicitly labeled as the daughter of Kairigenes. Through the use of this label, Eudene is portrayed as the unequivocally ‘marked’ actor in the dedication versus the ‘unmarked’ Kairigenes. As such, this subtle feature exhibits strong social and gender implications.

The vernacular seen in CEG 323 may exhibit the standard model for joint male/female dedications, corroborated by the final extant example of this phenomenon, IG 12⁵ 215: a non-verse dedication inscribed on an altar in Epizephyrian Locris in the mid-fifth century (Jeffery, 1961: 286), now housed in the archaeological museum of Naples²⁴, which reads:

Καπαρον | καὶ Προξενο | ανεθεκαν

In this instance, we find parallel vocabulary to the previous example, without any indication of the relationship between the two dedicators. However, without any clarifying features, we are left with a view of the dedication which exhibits the primacy of the first (male) name, and the subordinate nature of the second (female) name.

Juxtaposing these inscriptions against the relationally much less explicit CEG 414, we are left with a perspective of Telestodike and Demokydes which is seemingly more overtly egalitarian. While Telestodike is part of a joint dedication, she seems not to be marginalized. *La langue dédicatoire* employed is explicit

²⁴ This epigram was first published in the archaeological reports of Epizephyrian Locris by ORSI (1911): 3-4.

in marking these individuals as a pair, from whom a series of joint phenomena materialize.

A final point of emphasis regarding CEG 414 is the fact that, in this instance, Telestodike is represented –or, perhaps, chooses to represent herself– in a much different manner than that of CEG 413. Away from her native Paros, Telestodike is linked to her father, her son, and, most prominently, Artemis. She is depicted, through both the dedication and the text upon it, as a woman of considerable authority, able to make a financially significant dedication at a regionally prestigious sanctuary. In so doing, she succeeds in linking herself to other singularly female dedications, such as that of Nikandre.

However, when performing a dedication on her native Paros, Telestodike –while not overtly marginalized– is presented in a manner dissimilar to that of CEG 413. She is immediately linked to her husband, while retaining connections to her family and the goddess herself. This shift in self-representation in a local context versus that of a nearby, but distinctly foreign context illustrates that Telestodike may have experienced more freedom of expression outside of her native Paros.

At Delos she is free to choose self-identifying characteristics which are atypical in feminine dedications²⁵. However, at Paros, as Telestodike is linked to her husband, the dedication follows a more superficially conventional mode of identification. Nevertheless, there may exist something of a *double consciousness* in this second dedication. As Winkler (2008) makes it clear that “to participate even passively in the public arena the minority must be bilingual,” Telestodike may have encoded a subtext of femininity within this dedication. Finally, the most overt retention of feminine influence within this dedication can be found in the recipient of the dedication. In this regard, Berranger (1992: 269) remarks that “*normalement les femmes s’adressent seules à Artémis. Ce qui est nouveau ici, c’est que dans la dédicace, les deux époux sont associés*”. Despite seeming to contain a somewhat conventional text, this dedication links itself to the greater female dedicatory habit –and, of critical import, the earlier dedication of Telestodike– through its physical and spatial characteristics and associations.

4. DISCUSSION

Throughout the preface to the 1999 edition of her magnum opus, *Gender Trouble*, Judith Butler illustrates the difficulty with which she grappled with standard English language throughout the writing and rewriting of her text.

²⁵ These characteristics could perhaps reflect a certain genre of dedication at the Delian Artemision which limited male participation. However, this inscription –while without any masculine participation– seems also to avoid any discernable masculine influence.

Despite using an inherently patriarchal mode to express distinctly non-patriarchal concepts, Butler (1999: xviii) remarks, “neither grammar nor style are politically neutral. Learning the rules that govern intelligible speech is an inculcation into normalized language, where the price of not conforming is the loss of intelligibility itself”. Therefore, out of necessity, Butler, like Winkler’s Sappho before her, has no choice but to employ a superficially inadequate mode in a novel way to express non-patriarchal concepts²⁶. In the same way, working within a clearly masculine genre, and employing patriarchal vernacular, Telestodike was able to exhibit her femininity through a combination of literary, material, and contextual traits.

As such, in contrast to Cixous’ claim that there has yet to be a successful feminine writing, Telestodike succeeds in presenting a voice all her own. Through the use of specific labels, she paints a picture of herself which is explicitly feminine and self-aware, even in a joint dedication with a male figure. The materiality of her dedications –large-scale statuary dedications to Artemis– contains explicitly female repercussions, especially when they are examined in their larger spatial context. These were dedications within *τεμένη* to Artemis, following earlier dedications by women, and comparable to the overall female dedicatory milieu, all while keeping within the rigid constraints of a narrow dedicatory and material category. While Cixous’ concept for a truly feminine genre requires a complete separation of female writing from precedent, these

²⁶ Despite focusing this study on the dedications of Telestodike, the arguments of this paper could perhaps be extended to analyze other writings attributed to women in the ancient world. For instance, see CEG 169 (IGA 495): a very compelling funerary inscription with a metrical defect on a stele from Erythrae. Eva STEHLE (1997: 117) convincingly argues that the epigram does not fit metrically due to the inadequacy of the Greek language to express a female dedication in the customary way: “its author has wrested the language adapted to expressing men’s relationships to her use as a woman”. For instance, the author employs *μητηρ* where one would expect to find, in a masculine dedication, *πατηρ*. As such a long syllable is forced into the place of a short. Just as Telestodike is forced to adapt the Greek dedicatory tradition to express herself, Stehle argues that this “metrical faultiness exposes the subversion necessary for a woman to use the conventional language”.

In addition, shifting away from a focus on materiality, it would perhaps be illuminating to examine Archaic lyric poetry and Hellenistic literary epigrams attributed to female authors as a set of comparanda from which lasting characteristics of femininity in both epigram, and the overall literary tradition, might be observed over the *longuee durée*. For instance, in his formative work on the epigrammatic influences on Homer’s Helen, ELMER (2005: 32) remarks that “Helen does not speak, but writes. Antiquity knows many women who, deprived of a public voice, must express themselves in writing”. As such, while the work of Sappho has been mentioned in brief above, the Archaic and Classical works of Corinna and Praxilla could perhaps be fruitfully juxtaposed with those of the Hellenistic poetesses Anyte and Nossis through the lens of a type of textual epigraphy. After all, as ELMER (2005: 33) notes, “inscribed letters traditionally compensate women for the congenital condition of being *aphônoi*,” and it matters not if that inscription is on stone or tablet.

dedications show that while it may perhaps not be plausible to reinvent the wheel, it is certainly not impossible to innovate within it.

5 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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