

# The Marriage Maker

*The Pergamon Hermaphrodite as the God Hermaphroditos,  
Divine Ideal and Erotic Object*

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## **Abstract**

*The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* depicts the god Hermaphroditos, an image that stands for the idea of marriage, fertility, heterosexual union, and civilization. Textual evidence in the form of the recently uncovered Salmacis Inscription, and an extensive iconography of 175 images corroborate this identity. *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* is a document of a Hellenistic religious attitude, which forms part of the large artistic programme of *The Great Altar* at Pergamon. The Hellenistic World gives rise to a change in form expressed by the eroticised aesthetics of the divine cult statue, emphasizing the feminine shape due to the prominence of heterosexual marriage and increased participation of women in society. *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* combines this with a pederastic eroticism and static calm, keeping one foot in the Classical past.

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*χαλεπὰ τὰ καλά*

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# Chapter 1. Overview, Method and Theory

*Heraclitus, I believe, says that all things pass and nothing stays, and comparing existing things to the flow of a river, he says you could not step twice into the same river.* (Plato *Cratylus* 402a 6)

## Introduction

In *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical explanation of Pictures*, Michael Baxandall asks how far it is possible to “penetrate cultures and periods remote from our own?” and “whether we can...verify or validate our explanations?”<sup>1</sup> These are pertinent questions in relation to the subject of investigation in this thesis, that I have tried to not lose sight of while looking at *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, the largest surviving marble sculpture of a hermaphrodite from Antiquity, and the literary sources surrounding Hermaphroditos, with whom he is commonly identified. To what extent is it ever possible to extrapolate anything from the fragmentary literary and artistic sources that survive and speak to us across the boundaries of time? The sculpture and the content of the literature has stood still while time has changed context and meaning all around them.

Roland Barthes held that myth plays on the analogy between meaning and form.<sup>2</sup> In his essay “Myth Today”, he posits that mythological meaning can replace pure linguistic meaning. He uses the phrase «quia ego nominor leo» as an example of how the meaning of this phrase has become a grammatical example, rather than the actual literal meaning «because my name is lion», and how this also has replaced its contextual meaning relating to the story in Aesop's fable where this phrase is used to underline the nature of the lion as a dangerous and free predator.<sup>3</sup>

In the same way, a bunch of roses have come to be associated with passion and romance, so that when we see red roses now we do not simply think of the flower.<sup>4</sup> In the Ancient world roses had another connotation, as they were used to decorate graves during the Rosalia Festival, to commemorate the dead.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the hermaphrodite has taken on a variety of different meanings since Antiquity, so that its original purpose and significance has

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<sup>1</sup>Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (Yale University Press, 1985), 105.

<sup>2</sup>Roland Barthes, “Myth Today,” in *Mythologies*. (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, January 1, 1972), 113.

<sup>3</sup>Roland Barthes, “Myth Today,” in *Mythologies*. (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, January 1, 1972), 113.

<sup>4</sup>Roland Barthes. “Myth Today,” in *Mythologies*. (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, January 1, 1972), 113.

<sup>5</sup>Impact of Empire (Organization) Workshop, *Ritual Dynamics and Religious Change in the Roman Empire: Proceedings of the Eighth Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire* (Heidelberg, July 5-7, 2007), 21.

almost been eroded. Because so much of the original context of these sculptures is lost, another way of looking at them, is possible by approaching from the opposite end, and asking what the meaning is, and how this has shaped its form. The meaning of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* is connected to the artistic program it was part of at the Acropolis of Pergamon, and the mythic and cultic worship of deities performed in the city. The artistic contemporary sensibilities produced a dual-sexed, aesthetically sophisticated and erotic, over life-sized ideal as part of the symbolism of a great civilization, and the show of power it wished to display to the world.

Barthes emphasizes the blurred lines between text and pictures. Visual objects and textual sources overlap, as text is also visual, especially inscriptions in stone, and the description of sculptures is made textual, so they become part of the same discourse. The divisions between the physical objects becomes blurred, as their meanings feed into each other. As text and visual art becomes part of a cultural narrative, it becomes increasingly difficult to separate them within the discourse. The stone as a physical object carrying a literary meaning is part of the same discourse as the sculptural formulation of a body. They both embody meaning that is co-dependent in a cultural discourse. The story of Hermaphroditos in the Salmacis Inscription appears to find a parallel in Hellenistic hermaphrodite sculpture, and in particular *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, which is the closest hermaphrodite sculpture in date to the inscription, portrays a god, which is also the case in the inscription, and is part of the foundation myth and story of civilization of a city both at Pergamon and at Halicarnassus. This thesis explores the possibilities of meaning, if these two discourses inform each other.

Like the meaning of the rose, the meaning of the hermaphrodite need not elude the modern mind altogether. Even if that meaning is only one facet of the ancient sculpture, it is a project worth undertaking in order to step in and out of the flow of discourse with not the same mind as yesterday.

## **Thesis Structure**

Chapter 1, defines the parameters for the Hellenistic period, and shows that Hellenistic sculpture in this era is subject to a number of changes, due to the fact that Greek art is being produced over a much larger area. I give a general overview of the problems related to the Hellenistic period, and to statuary. Previous research identifies *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* as Hermaphroditos, and Hermaphroditos as a god connected to marriage, heterosexual unions,



and civilization as a symbol of order over chaos. My use of the Panofskian method and theory is explained as a hermeneutic tool in order to re-evaluate the sculpture in the light of constant new information. The chapter ends with a guide to the terminology used in the following chapters.

Chapter 2 moves on to the form of the statue and the identification of the artistic motif. By identifying *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* as the god Hermaphroditos, it makes it possible to connect the artistic motif with themes and concepts. Hermaphroditos as an image also stands for an idea that is not a concrete or individual person. He is an abstract notion.

Chapter 3, builds on the identification of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* as Hermaphroditos, and uses textual sources to reveal the abstract notion he stands for, and how this is part of stories or allegories. These show how the god represents marriage, fertility, heterosexual union, and civilization. Chapter 4 employs hermaphrodite iconology to examine how these notions are expressed in the form of statues of Hermaphroditos, which supports the identification of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* as such.

Chapter 5 shows how *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* is a document of a Hellenistic religious attitude, and the compositional and iconographical features are interpreted as evidence of this. The agenda of the patrons and artists, and the influence of theology, philosophy and politics correlate with the visible form of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*.

Chapter 6 establishes the principles revealing the basic attitudes of the Hellenistic era, and the religious and philosophical perspective. These principles are expressed by, and therefore illuminate, the compositional methods and iconographical significance. The Hellenistic World gave rise to a change in form expressed by the eroticised aesthetics of a divine cult statue, emphasizing the feminine shape due to the prominence of heterosexual marriage and erotics, and participation of women in society. *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* embodies this Hellenistic style, while combining it with a pederastic eroticism and a static expression, keeping one foot in the Classical past. Chapters 2 - 4 are primarily focused on iconography, while Chapters 5 and 6, move on to iconology, without a strict delineation but rather an emphasis on Panofskian synthesis, where these elements work with each other to form a whole.

## **Definitions and Problems**

It is difficult to define a Hellenistic culture or period exactly. Generally and empirically it is usually agreed that it means a later, diluted and expanded Greek, in contrast to the ostensibly

more pure and restrictive Classical period.<sup>6</sup> This is where the concord ends. The period of Alexander's reign 330 – 323 BC is by some seen as a transitional period between the Classical and Hellenistic era, and similarly Augustus's reign from 31 BC – 14 AD, is seen as transitional between the Hellenistic and Roman era.<sup>7</sup> For the purpose of this thesis, therefore, the chronological span of the Hellenistic era will be defined as from the death of Alexander 323 BC, resulting in the division of his empire, to the battle of Actium in 31 BC, where Octavian defeated Mark Antony, and Cleopatra VII, the last descendant of Alexander's successors died.

Hellenistic sculpture within the period defined above, was subject to new demands, and influences, which meant sculptural styles took a different direction from those in mainland Greek city states. This is not to say that Greek art had not been open to other influences before. In the mid-fourth century, the Greek masters Skopas and Leochares had worked for rulers such as Maussollos and Artemisia of Caria, and Lysippos had become the court sculptor of the Macedonian royal family.<sup>8</sup> So, it should rather be attributed to a matter of degree and scale.

Describing the characteristics of Hellenistic art is often problematic. That Hellenistic art is defined by its Eastern elements is too narrow a definition. Greek art was open to foreign influences previously, and in the Hellenistic era Greek art was also produced in Egypt, Italy, the Middle East, and even in Afghanistan in a local style or mixed with non Greek typological elements. It spread across a large number of countries, many of which had ancient civilizations, so that it readily took on new forms by adapting to and incorporating the existing culture.<sup>9</sup>

Pliny famously stated: *cessavit deinde ars*<sup>10</sup>, meaning that art ceased around 296-293 BC, and did not revive until more than a century later, around 156-153 BC. When Johan Gustav Droysden first used the word Hellenistic, in his *Geschichte des Hellenismus*, in 1833, he examined the last centuries of Greek civilization as an important part of its history, for the first time.<sup>11</sup> Since then, the characteristics of Hellenistic art have become of more interest to academic researchers, but there is still a great difference of opinion as to what those

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<sup>6</sup>Brunilde Sismondo Ridgway. *Hellenistic Sculpture I. The Styles of ca.331-200 BC*. (The University of Wisconsin Press. 2001), 3.

<sup>7</sup>Margarete Bieber. *The Sculpture of the Hellenistic Age*. Columbia University Press. New York. 1961, 5.

<sup>8</sup>Brunilde Sismondo Ridgway. *Hellenistic Sculpture I. The Styles of ca.331-200 BC*. (The University of Wisconsin Press. 2001), 4.

<sup>9</sup>Margarete Bieber. *The Sculpture of the Hellenistic Age*. (Columbia University Press. New York. 1961), 5.

<sup>10</sup>Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, Book 34.

characteristics are, and a natural tendency to compare with classical Greek art.

In the Hellenistic era the artists and craftsmen no longer worked for a small democratic community, building temples and public buildings adorned with sculpture and painting, but rather for the rulers. Different members of the monarchy required palaces and buildings to commemorate governments and beautify cities. For the first time, private citizens also commissioned high calibre art for domestic buildings, and in this way private houses became an object for the arts.<sup>12</sup>

The subjects of depiction were greatly extended in Hellenistic art, to also depicting a variety of ethnicities, a range of ages, different social classes, and genders. With this came a drive towards naturalism, rendering objects with extreme fidelity. This greatly aided the development of portraiture, as well as incorporating movement, and feelings into the range of artistic expression.<sup>13</sup>

A defining feature of Hellenistic aesthetic was an interest in sensuality, and finding new ways of portraying this. The world of Dionysos was particularly suited to this end, with its revelry and abandon. His companions were satyrs, nymphs, the Erotes, Priapus, and hermaphrodites. Modern scholars have a tendency to group these statues, into what they label *genre* figures. The problem with relegating certain subject matters into a different and distinct faction, is that there was quite a fluid transition between portraying mortals in the likeness of gods and their companions, and rendering gods with the fidelity of the portraiture of mortals. For example, queens and powerful noble women might have their portrait done in the likeness and poses familiar to Aphrodite, although clothed. Dwarves were also commonly depicted, but many of them were not the god Priapus, who was a dwarf, but rather actual individuals.<sup>14</sup> The links between the different subjects are often tenuous, but they have one thing in common: the difficulty in determining their original purpose and setting.<sup>15</sup>

Myth, religion, cult, gender, sexuality, sex, love and marriage rites are all inextricably interwoven themes in the depiction of Hermaphroditos or the hermaphrodite body in art. Why is the hermaphrodite in fact artistically represented? Is it a sacred cult statue, or an erotic ideal? There is a problematic trinity of meaning regarding the hermaphrodite. Firstly there is

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<sup>11</sup>Margarete Bieber. *The Sculpture of the Hellenistic Age*. (Columbia University Press. New York), 1961, 5.

<sup>12</sup>Margarete Bieber. *The Sculpture of the Hellenistic Age*. (Columbia University Press. New York), 1961, 5.

<sup>13</sup>Margarete Bieber. *The Sculpture of the Hellenistic Age*. (Columbia University Press. New York), 1961, 5.

<sup>14</sup>Veronique Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt and Greece* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 237.

<sup>15</sup>Brunilde Sismondo Ridgway. *Hellenistic Sculpture I. The Styles of ca.331-200 BC*. (The University of Wisconsin Press. 2001), 313.

the statue as a depiction of the god, Hermaphroditos, who is the child of Hermes and Aphrodite. He is a divine figure, who can function as a religious symbol, the presence of a god, and embody an aesthetic and erotic ideal. Secondly, there is the statue as Hermaphrodite, which can mean any god in hermaphroditic form, but would not be part of the iconography of Hermaphroditos if identified as a different god. The act of taking a hermaphroditic form is a way of becoming Hermaphroditos. However, the identification of other gods as gods in hermaphroditic form, can inform the iconography of Greek gods as a whole. Thirdly, there is the hermaphrodite, a sculpture depicting a human body, this would give it erotic potential and beauty, but it would not necessarily be read as an ideal. Gods, heroes, athletes, kings, queens, elders and notable citizens were all held as ideals for society in antiquity. The pose of the hermaphroditic sculptures fits the schema for gods, and the context is often religious. So, this means the first category is the most likely.

In the case of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, his context, size and pose speak to him being a god, and it makes sense to call his godly form Hermaphroditos, in order to place him within the rest of hermaphroditic art. His erotic aesthetics can have been inspired by human examples, such as eunuchs, particularly since they themselves often had a religious function and were seen as a link between the earthly and the divine. However, art historically, the real point of investigation is how *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* embodies both religious and erotic symbolism in one aesthetic form.

In this thesis I would like to look at *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* in the light of the Salmakis Inscription. This inscription positions him within a cosmogenic framework, where he has an important role as a tool of civilization through his position as inventor of marriage. I posit that the Salmakis Inscription provides a textual parallel to *The Great Altar* at Pergamon, not in exact mythical meaning but as an artistic expression of the greatness of the city that has produced it. Both the text and the visual decorations present a large cosmogenic framework within which the hermaphrodite is positioned. In the Salmakis Inscription, Hermaphroditos' role as the inventor of marriage ties him to heterosexual aesthetic and gives him a prominent position as a divine ideal. I investigate what *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* depicts, why it was made, and whether there was a cult to Hermaphroditos or a hermaphrodite deity at Pergamon. There is no detailed mythology for Hermaphroditos from any of the ancient sources that have been found, but the recent excavation of the Salmakis Inscription may be able to contribute an interesting literary parallel to *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*. My opinion is that they are both expressions of the civilizing forces of a city, and are used to

establish the foundation myth of that city. This similarity in function can inform the interpretation of this hermaphroditic deity. Building on this, I look at how *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* fits in with the rest of hermaphrodite statuary, as another method for informing the discourse surrounding the statue. Finally, I investigate whether the existence of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* mean that there was a different view of sex and gender in the Hellenistic era, and what this says about the intrinsic meaning of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*.

## Previous Research

To my knowledge there has been no previous in depth analysis of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*. Detailed information regarding the date, site where it was found, and composition of the statue appears in, *Das Weib im Manne: Hermaphroditos in der griechisch-römischen Antike*, 2004, by Stefanie Oehmke, which gives a complete catalogue of Hermaphrodite art in the Greek and Roman worlds. Oehmke identifies hermaphrodite statues from Antiquity as representations of the god Hermaphroditos. She is of the opinion that in the Hellenistic era, hermaphrodite sculptures present a new erotic, aesthetic ideal, with no counterpart in nature. She presents Hermaphroditos as a part of the Dionysiac world, where he fits in as a fantasy creature akin to fauns and satyrs. Oehmke states her aim to be the description of a mythological figure on the basis of archeological material and literary sources that explicitly refer to Hermaphroditos. She believes that the historical and religious context of the dual-sexed being has taken precedent over the wealth of art historical material that is available, and her goal is to remedy this situation.<sup>16</sup> I disagree with her notion that any hermaphroditic figure is pure fiction, and I only partly agree that nothing is gained by fragmenting hermaphrodite iconography, and that an art historical enquiry can be furthered by building on an iconography for Hermaphroditos the god. To define any god in hermaphroditic form in Greek and Roman statuary as Hermaphroditos can also fragment the iconography of other gods, and rule out an important dimension for Greek gods in general, which is the shifting of form along the sex/gender continuum. In this way, it becomes a divine attribute, that puts the hermaphrodite form in a central position in Greek mythology.

The statue is also listed in Aileen Ajootian's<sup>17</sup> *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae*

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<sup>16</sup>Stefanie Oehmke, *Das Weib im Manne: Hermaphroditos in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Berlin: Willmuth Arenhövel, 2004), 9.

<sup>17</sup>There is also Ajootian's dissertation: *Natus Biformis: Hermaphroditos in Greek and Roman Art*. Department of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology, Bryn Mawr College. However, this is only available as a reading copy not for loan in the Special Collections dept. at Bryn Mawr College Library. No digital copy exists, nor can be

*Classicae* (LIMC) entry “Hermaphroditos,” which is an account of his representation in Greco-Roman art. She also discusses hermaphrodite statuary in antiquity in her articles “The Only Happy Couple; Hermaphrodites and Gender,” *Naked Truths: Women, Sexuality, and Gender in Classical Art and Archaeology*, 2000, and “Monstrum or Daimon: Hermaphrodites in Ancient Art and Culture” in *Greece and Gender*, 1995. Ajootian identifies the hermaphrodite statues as Hermaphroditos for the most part, although she does propose Agdistis as a possibility for *the Sleeping Hermaphrodite* type. She proposes a sacred cult function for the statues, and certainly for *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, and believes the earliest function of the statues was apotropaic. Ajootian investigates the situation of intersex people in Ancient Greece and Rome, as a contrast alongside the hermaphrodite statuary. She does not explicitly suggest a parallel, or that hermaphrodite statues depict intersex individuals, but by combining these two aspects in her research she appears not to rule it out. Her research supports the proposition that there was an emerging cult to Hermaphroditos in the 4th and 5th centuries BC, in Athens.

Andrea Raehs has written an overview of hermaphrodite iconography in art in general in: *Zur Ikonographie des Hermaphroditen: Begriff und Problem von Hermaphroditismus und Androgynie in der Kunst*, 1990. Due to the fact that she looks at art from pre-historic times, right up until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there is only a brief discussion on Ancient Greek and Roman hermaphrodite statues, which provides a summary of some information on the subject, but does not further the research into this.

Marie Delcourt's *Hermaphrodite: mythes et rites de la bisexualité dans l'antiquité classique*, 1958, and *Hermaphrodites: recherches sur l'être double promoteur de la fertilité dans le monde classique*, 1966, provides extensive research on the hermaphrodite in the ancient world, concentrating in particular on the religious and ritualistic context. She is also of the opinion that the hermaphrodite statue has no parallel body type in nature, but is an aesthetic idea with deep roots in the rituals connected to wedding ceremonies and rites of passage. It is this premise that Oehmke builds on.

I agree that the hermaphrodite is connected to wedding ceremonies and rites of passage, and I will use this research in my thesis. I disagree with Delcourt's opinion that Greeks and Romans would never have sculpted a hermaphrodite body by observing an intersex person in real life, because they would have refused to be in the same room with such a person due to fear and disgust. She bases this opinion on the fact that the exposure and

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made.

drowning of infants, and burning of some individuals, displaying uncertain or dual-sex characteristics in Antiquity, has been recorded.

Dual-sex characteristics were defined as divine and could therefore be interpreted as a bad omen, which should be returned to the gods, so no doubt there were families who exposed their infants for this reason, as well as the myriad of other reasons children were exposed, since this was common practice. The state resorting to execution in some cases, is also related to seeing intersex individuals as bad omens, or unproductive in marriage unions, from which complaints had arisen. On the other hand, eunuchs were common and formed a complete social gender, having important religious functions, strong positions in royal courts, and were objects of desire to the extent of forming a category of prostitution.

In Lucian's *Dialogues of the Courtesans*, the characters Leanna and Clonarium, have a conversation where Leanna relates her experience with another woman whom she questions excitedly about whether she is a hermaphrodite, and seems disappointed when she finds out that she is not.<sup>18</sup> These dialogues are designed to be erotic, so the idea of a hermaphrodite was obviously thrilling. Therefore, I disagree that any conclusion can be drawn that a Greek or Roman artist would refuse to be in the same room as a hermaphrodite. This opinion is no doubt formed on the basis of a 1950's moralistic attitude, which is unfortunately restrictive to academic enquiry.

Luc Brisson, *Le sexe incertain: androgynie et hermaphroditisme dans l'antiquité gréco-romaine*, 1997, details the ancient sources that mention hermaphrodites, but does not include a connection to Hermaphrodite Statuary, apart from the picture of the Borghese Hermaphrodite on the front cover of his book. However, this book has been useful in my research by providing an overview of ancient sources on hermaphroditism and androgynie in Antiquity. I have, in particular, drawn from his section on hermaphrodites as archetypes in myth and philosophy.

*The Salmakis Inscription and Hellenistic Halikarnassos*, edited by Signe Isager and Poul Pedersen, 2004, provides interpretations and contextual information on the newest textual source that mentions Hermaphroditos. This is the most detailed Greek account we have of the god, and is important as a counterpart to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The myth of Hermaphroditos and Salmacis has a central place in the inscription, and it also has a central place in the book on the poem, and its location. It includes an article by Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood,

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<sup>18</sup> Lucian, *Dialogues of the Courtesans*, Leanna and Clonarium, section 5, Loeb.

“Hermaphroditos and Salmakis: The Voice of Halicarnassos,” that provides a different interpretation of the myth to that of Hugh Lloyd-Jones, “The Pride of Halicarnassus” (1999), Renaud Gagné, “What is the Pride of Halicarnassos?” (2006), and Allen J. Romano “The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditus and Salmakis at Halicarnassus and in Ovid” (2009). These articles do not make a comparison with the representation of Hermaphroditos in sculpture, but are useful in order to get a clearer mythological picture of the god, and how he functioned both religiously and erotically.

Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood's article is of particular interest to my research, because she introduces the idea that Hermaphroditos was invented at Halicarnassos, and that he plays a role as a civilizing agent. These are ideas that I continue to develop in relation to *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*. Allen J. Romano's assertion that marriage functions as a bridge between the divine and the human sphere, is also a premise I use to justify my claim that *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* plays an important role regarding the visualisation of the victory of order over chaos in *The Great Altar* at Pergamon.

Although it is not the focus of my thesis, the assertion that the hermaphrodite body has no parallel in nature, is somewhat naïve. The intersex condition that produces what used to be termed “true hermaphroditism” is a rare condition, but there is a large number of individuals who are gender variant enough to look remarkably like the hermaphrodites depicted in statuary without the help of modern medicine. Eunuchs formed a well-known social category in the Ancient world, many of which were described as extremely feminine, such as the Galli of the Magna Mater cult. That this is not better documented is probably down to the specifics of who writes history.

However, it is my opinion that the majority of hermaphrodite statues in the Hellenistic era are erotic, aesthetic ideals. This is not on the basis of any assumption that there is no counter part in nature, but rather because bodies displaying single-sex attributes in statuary are also aesthetic ideals to a large extent. The male or female nude or semi-draped bodies portrayed are erotic interpretations of masculinity or femininity.

The real tension for the modern viewer lies in the amalgamation of a religious ideal and an erotic idea. This is uniquely expressed in plastic and pictorial art, being an arena in which a thought can be literally be visualised.

*The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* is a particularly good example of this, because the statue is a Hellenistic original, representing the era in which the sensual eroticism of the nude reached its



zenith, with its voluptuous curves and sensual drapery, but at the same time embodies the symbolic language of the cult statue.

I will differ from the previously research I have mentioned by separating sex, gender and sexuality, and treating them as distinct categories that intersect but act independently of each other.

In my thesis I am drawing on all this research in order to build an extensive iconography for *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*. I accept and use Oehmke's premise that an art historical investigation has a lot to gain from building a cohesive iconography for Hermaphroditos, and that it is problematic to fragment it in attempt to solve historical, religious and cultural contextual problems that cannot be proven one way or another. However, I also assert that it might hinder academic research to rule out the possibility that the hermaphroditic form was a facet of divinity that was central to the way in which gods were visualised. Further, I am taking Oehmke's notion of a Hellenistic erotic aesthetic to its extreme, and positing that this can be combined with a religious expression in *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*.

I will use new textual evidence in the form of the Salmacis Inscription to add to the mythology of Hermaphroditos, and his connection with marriage, and wedding rituals, as proposed by Delcourt. This has not been used in connection with hermaphrodite statuary previously, but it shows the divine side of Hermaphroditos, as well as the erotic aspect. It clarifies how these different elements interact by positioning him as a religious symbol connected to marriage, and matrimony as a civilising tool, through which a state is built.

## **Panofsky - Iconology and Iconography**

*It is apprehended by ascertaining those underlying principles, which reveal the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion - qualified by one personality and condensed into one work.* (Panofsky)

Panofsky's iconographical and iconological model has been widely criticized and highly questioned in the course of the development of art historical theory over the last few decades. Michael Hatt and Charlotte Klonk in *Art History: A Critical Introduction to Its Methods*, 2006, list three major objections; that the visual image is too greatly absorbed by linguistic forms of thinking in Panofsky's iconography-iconology method, that history for Panofsky is mainly the story of changing mind-world relationships, and that Panofsky has a homogenised

view of the past, which is not readily defensible.<sup>19</sup> With these objections in mind, I will continue by outlining how his method is useful in this thesis and extrapolate on the objections listed, as they arise in relation to the areas discussed in this section.

Despite the objections and the problems with Panofsky's method, his model is still useful for my thesis, because it opens up for the investigation of themes and ideas, while attempting to ground these interpretations in a reliable account of artistic form. Panofsky developed his approach in order to examine his own specialist field, which was the Renaissance, but I believe it is a good model for the Hellenistic era, too. The Renaissance, being a revival of ideas from the Classical World, has many similar artistic features. The use of symbols and allegory, for example, is a shared artistic convention that is central to the type of art produced in both eras. An iconographical approach is useful when examining art from an epoch that is distant from the contemporary world, because it begins by not assuming any cultural knowledge of the object, and asking basic questions at the simplest level regarding what the art work really represents.

It also continues by acknowledging that looking is always tainted by the culture of the viewer. The culture of the art work and the culture of the commentator are both important elements that affect any interpretation of the object observed. This means that it is also flexible in terms of bringing in ideas from other fields, such as the study of sex, gender, and sexuality, where I have drawn on ideas from writers outside of the strictly art historical arena, in order to complement my analysis. This approach, although one might not always agree with Panofsky's point of view, brings in a perspective that might otherwise have been missed, as well as ambiguities and hidden assumptions that lead to reevaluating and reconstructing previous positions.<sup>20</sup>

Panofsky explained iconography and iconology in a synoptical table in *Meaning and the Visual Arts*, by dividing the study of art objects or images into three levels.<sup>21</sup> On the first level, there is the primary or natural subject matter, which is firstly factual, and secondly expressional, making up the world of artistic motifs. The act of interpreting this is pre-iconographical description, requiring practical experience or knowledge of the objects and events. A corrective principle or added understanding of the history of style, or insight into how objects and events were expressed by forms is helpful.

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<sup>19</sup>Michael Hatt and Charlotte Klonk, *Art History: A Critical Introduction to Its Methods* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 115 – 118.

<sup>20</sup>Michael Hatt and Charlotte Klonk, *Art History: A Critical Introduction to Its Methods* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 118.

<sup>21</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 1974. 40, 41.

On the second level, are the secondary or conventional subject matters, the world of images, stories and allegories. This requires iconographical analysis, and knowledge of literary sources. An understanding of the history of types, that is to say how themes and concepts were expressed by objects and events under different historical conditions.

On the third level, there is intrinsic meaning or content, the world of “symbolical” values. This requires iconological interpretation, using synthetic intuition, or awareness of the essential tendencies of the human mind, as conditioned by psychology and world view. An important added factor is familiarity with the history of cultural symptoms or “symbols” , or how tendencies of the human mind were expressed by specific themes due to different historical conditions.

Dividing this up into three levels is only useful for explanation, as Panofsky intended it to be an integrated process guided by intuition. The interpreter's psychological make up will of course influence any interpretation, which is why a corrective principle is important to qualify the degree of subjectivity. The methods of approach are intended to be merged and become one organic and indivisible process.<sup>22</sup>

The pre-iconographical, then, deals with the form of the art work. According to Panofsky there is a connection between form and content, so this is important in an iconographical context. The iconography, deals with the subject matter or meaning of the object. The iconology is a method of interpretation derived from synthesis rather than analysis.

Dora and Erwin Panofsky's analysis of a drawing by Rosso Fiorentino, using the mythical symbolism of Pandora's box, is a good example of the iconographical methodology. Pandora<sup>23</sup> is a well-known mythical figure, the first woman, who opens a forbidden box and lets out every kind of evil, with only hope remaining in the box. Pandora's box, is even proverbial. However, the Panofskys point out that this is remarkable, as originally neither literary texts nor visual art attest to her owning the object in question, nor to it in fact being a box.<sup>24</sup> So, she became famous, and easily recognised in artistic depictions, through an attribute that she originally never had. According to Hesiod, and those dependent on him, the vessel Pandora opened was a *pithos*, or large earthenware storage jar typically for wine or oil,

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<sup>22</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Studies in Iconology*, 17.

<sup>23</sup>Interestingly, Boccaccio misinterpreted her name as “Pandorus”, and interpreted her as a hermaphrodite. Panofsky. *Pandora's Box*, 11.

<sup>24</sup>Dora and Erwin Panofsky. *Pandora's Box: The Changing Aspects of a Mythical Symbol*. Pantheon Books. 1962, 3.

and did not belong to her, but was rather just part of the household inventory.<sup>25</sup>

In Erasmus of Rotterdam's hugely popular book *Adagiorum chiliades tres* (1508), Erasmus replaces the *pithos*, or vase, with a *pyxis*, or small container. Subsequently, Pandora is now known to have opened a *box* of evils. The Erasmian *pyxis* then migrated and made its first appearance in art in Rosso Fiorentino's pen drawing, *Pandora Opening the Box*, (1530 – 1540).<sup>26</sup>

So, by using iconography to trace the history of the mythical figure of Pandora through art and literature, the Panofskys demonstrate how the written word and visual representations have combined to transform this myth through the imagination and mistakes of authors and artists from the Classical era onwards.

The iconographical aspect, then, deals with meaning rather than form.<sup>27</sup> The well-known example Panofsky uses in order to clarify the difference between subject matter and form, is that of the acquaintance who greets him on the street by lifting his hat. The response to this has three levels; 1. discerning a change of details that make up a pattern of colour, lines, and volumes forming his world of vision, and identifying this as an object or in this case a gentleman, and the change in detail being this gentleman lifting his hat, 2. the realisation that the lifting of the hat constitutes a greeting, through social conventions of Western history, and qualifying it as hostile, friendly, indifferent, 3. discovering the intrinsic meaning conveyed through this action, by reading the action from a familiarity with conventions that goes beyond the visible or intelligible. This final level, is the iconological. The meaning discovered from this is intrinsic, and is essential where the primary or natural meaning and the secondary or conventional meaning are perceived through the senses or immediate experience.<sup>28</sup> This can be defined as a unifying principle, underlying and explaining the visible event and its comprehensible significance. It also determines the form of the visible event.<sup>29</sup>

So, in identifying the pure form, the configuration of lines and shapes in the marble as a representation of a human body, I am dealing with the primary or natural subject matter of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*. I can divide this into factual and expressional. What is his gesture or pose, and what does it mean? This is already ambiguous in terms of this sculpture.

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<sup>25</sup>Dora and Erwin Panofsky. *Pandora's Box: The Changing Aspects of a Mythical Symbol*. Pantheon Books. 1962, 8.

<sup>26</sup>Dora and Erwin Panofsky. *Pandora's Box: The Changing Aspects of a Mythical Symbol*. Pantheon Books. 1962, 36.

<sup>27</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 51.

<sup>28</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 53.

<sup>29</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 53.

Not being from the time, or civilization when it was made, I cannot fully apprehend the meaning of his nakedly revealing contrapposto, just as an ancient Greek person would not readily have been able to interpret the lifting of the hat by Panofsky's acquaintance. As for the expression, he appears confident, peaceful, and unashamed. But is this appropriate, common, in keeping with the gesture? The form is a carrier of primary or natural meaning, and can be called the artistic motif. Identifying this motif is a pre-iconographical description of the work of art.<sup>30</sup> Even the form of the sculpture in question, a human body, but one encapsulating both female and male parts in one shape, raises questions. Why this form?

The next level, the iconography, is the secondary or conventional subject matter. Who does this figure represent? Is it a representation of the god Hermaphroditos? Identifying him would make it possible to connect the artistic motif with themes or concepts.<sup>31</sup> The motif as a carrier of secondary or conventional meaning can be called an image. An image can convey an idea that is not the concrete or individual person, but an abstract notion such as Wisdom, Faith, or Luxury.<sup>32</sup> They can in turn be part of stories or allegories. Identifying these is the definition of iconographical interpretation. A correct iconographical interpretation presupposes a correct identification of the motif, which means that both of these levels are problematic in relation to *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*.

The third level of intrinsic meaning or content is the iconological. This is understood by establishing the underlying principles that reveal the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical perspective, which is modulated by one personality and compressed into one work.<sup>33</sup> These principles are expressed by, and therefore illuminate both the compositional methods and the iconographical significance.<sup>34</sup> The hermaphrodite form or the representation of Hermaphroditos, whichever it is, or both, changes from the Classical to the Hellenistic era. From primarily an *anasyromenos* motif, in the Classical era, the Hellenistic world gives rise to the sleeping, leaning, and wrestling hermaphrodite. From a compositional view this presents different schema of lines, and from an iconographical one it shows the introduction of a variety of new themes. This could imply a new emotional attitude specific to the Hellenistic era.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 54.

<sup>31</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 54.

<sup>32</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 54.

<sup>33</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 55.

<sup>34</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 55.

<sup>35</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 55.

A comprehensive interpretation of intrinsic meaning or content could even show that the technical procedures characteristic of a certain country, period, or artist are symptomatic of the basic attitude that is discernible in all other specific qualities of the artist's style. In the case of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, the artist is unknown, but Pergamon itself was a centre of artistic production, and there was a distinct Pergamene style to the art produced in the workshops there. So, by understanding the pure form, motif, image, story or allegory as an indication of the fundamental principles, all these elements are interpreted as symbolical values.<sup>36</sup> When understanding the sculpture as a document of Hellenistic civilization, or of a certain religious attitude therein, the work of art becomes a symptom of something else, which expresses itself in a variety of other symptoms. The compositional and iconographical features can be interpreted as specific evidence of this “something else.”<sup>37</sup> Finding and interpreting these symbolical values, which can be unknown to and different from what the artist or workshop intended, is the object of iconology in contrast to iconography.

So, where iconography describes and classifies an art work, establishing dates, provenance and all the other necessary fundamental knowledge needed for further interpretation, iconology uses this to investigate the origin and significance of the evidence. It takes into consideration the interplay between the influence of theological, philosophical and political ideas, as well as the agenda of patrons and artists, and the correlation between intelligible concepts and the visible form they take on.<sup>38</sup> As established earlier, this is a method of interpretation that comes from synthesis rather than analysis.

Panofsky himself conceded that there was a danger of iconology behaving not like “ethnology as opposed to ethnography, but like astrology as opposed to astrography.”<sup>39</sup> This is in essence Hatt and Klonk's second objection. Panofsky treats history as the story of changing mind-world relationships. The interpreter can end up identifying a deeper meaning behind every feature of an art work and tenuously link it only by seeming analogy to other cultural manifestations.<sup>40</sup> Panofsky's only defense is to ensure reasonableness through his synthetic intuition and world view.

So, the successful use of iconology hinges on being able to substantiate the pre-

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<sup>36</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 55.

<sup>37</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 56.

<sup>38</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 56.

<sup>39</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 58.

<sup>40</sup>Michael Hatt and Charlotte Klonk, *Art History: A Critical Introduction to Its Methods* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 117.

iconographical and the iconographical information it builds on. This also presents a problem. There is a possibility of not having wide enough experience in order to correctly identify the object at the pre-iconographical level, or of the object being ambiguous and its use obsolete, such as with *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*. Practical experience is indispensable and should be sufficient for pre-iconographical description, but does not guarantee it being “correct” .<sup>41</sup> This is why it is important to locate the object within a historical context, and use this history of style as a corrective principle. This is a methodical cycle in which an individual art work is interpreted by using a history of style, which in turn is built up by interpreting individual works of art.<sup>42</sup> It escapes being a tautology by taking into account that whether in history, or nature, facts become facts by being individual observations that can be related to each other. This is done so that the whole series of observations make sense. If an observation arises that throws out the sense of the series, then the whole series has to be reinterpreted so that the new observation can be included. So, this hermeneutic circle of understanding applies to the relationship between the interpretation of motifs and the history of style, and to the relationship between interpreting images, stories, allegories and the history of types, as well as that between the interpretation of intrinsic meaning and the history of cultural symptoms in general.<sup>43</sup>

A postmodernist objection to this is that the world can only be known through the words used to describe it, and that in order to establish a certain reading of a text or art work, other readings are alleged as the ground for this reading. So, systems are really open-ended systems of signs referring to signs. This means that no concept can have a universal, unequivocal meaning. Baxandall states that any description of an art work is really just a representation of our thoughts about it.<sup>44</sup> For Baxandall, the study of a work of art is an intellectual exercise rather than the act of looking connected to the eye.

So, instead of using Panofsky's methodology to ascertain a “correct” pre-iconographical, iconographical, and iconological synthesis of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, I will use it to establish a picture that is as cohesive as possible. In order to combat my possible indiscriminate use of literary sources, irrelevant experiences, and general fallible intuition, I make an effort in this thesis to check what I think is the intrinsic meaning of the work of art against what I think is the intrinsic meaning of as many documents of civilization

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<sup>41</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 59.

<sup>42</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 61.

<sup>43</sup>Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*, 61.

<sup>44</sup> Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention*. 1985, 52.

historically related to the art work, as I could master, which testify to the political, poetical, religious, and philosophical tendencies of the period and area.<sup>45</sup> I cannot step outside of my tradition, all I can do is try to understand it.<sup>46</sup>

I am basing my contextual analysis of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, on the principles behind the building blocks of Panofskian iconography and iconology. The premise for my thesis is that a detailed investigation of the iconographical and iconological aspects of the hermaphrodite in art and literature, will shed light on the enigmatic persona of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*. At the pre-iconographical level I look at the form and pose of this sculpture. Moving on to the iconographical level I address who this figure represents, and whether it is a representation of the god Hermaphroditos. Finally, on the iconological level, I investigate the intrinsic meaning of this sculpture, and the origin and significance of this.

## Terminology

According to Pliny the term *androgynous*, is used earlier than *hermaphrodite*, to suggest a dual-sexed being. This is not supported in any other textual and inscriptional evidence. The literal meaning of *androgynē*, is “manwoman.” This word employs the same logic as *hermaphrodite*, in that this is a combination of Hermes and Aphrodite, a male and a female name, or a man and a woman. The word eunuch, or *eunoukhos*, means bedroom guard, because they were in essence castrated men used to guard the women's quarters at royal courts. They were also often priests, with important religious functions in cults such as the cults of Cybele, and Hecate. In this way, *eunuchs* share a religious and matrimonial context with *hermaphrodites*. The word also sometimes refers to men who are impotent, sterile, or celibate.

The most famous use of the term *androgynē*, is from Aristophanes' speech in Plato's *Symposium*, where the term is used to describe human beings who are globe-shaped *androgyna*, and later cut in half.<sup>47</sup> Herodotus writes that the Scythian *Enarees*, or diviners, are *androgynoi*, and believe they have been given the power of divination by Aphrodite.<sup>48</sup> Herodotus also wrote that a group of Scythians pillage the temple of Aphrodite Ourania at Ascalon in Palestine, and as punishment by Aphrodite their offspring were afflicted with a

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<sup>45</sup> Erwin Panofsky. *Meaning in Visual Culture*, 64.

<sup>46</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer: "The Ontology of the Work of Art and its Hermeneutical Significance" in Richard Kearney and David Rasmussen (ed.): *Continental Aesthetics*, (Blackwell, 2001), 321.

<sup>47</sup> Ajoonian. LIMC, 285.

<sup>48</sup> Herodotus, 4,67.



“female” illness, and were called Enareas.<sup>49</sup>

Hippocrates calls these Scythians *eunuchs*, and describes them as the most *eunuchoid* of nations, as a large number of them become impotent, whom he calls *Anaries*, and speak and live like women.<sup>50</sup> He wrote that the Scythians thought that they were afflicted by a divine disease, but that he himself believed it was because they spent so much time on horse back that their joints became stiff, and to cure this problem they would cut the veins behind their ear, which Hippocrates believed was connected to the genitalia. He also asserted that riding and wearing trousers could lead to muscle and joint problems for most men, as well as gout, leaving them sexually weak, and that there was nothing divine about impotence.<sup>51</sup>

Diodorus Siculus writing about the assassination of Philip II, says that a bodyguard, called Pausanias, receives insults from a jealous cohort because he is becoming close to the king, being called a *hermaphrodite*, who would accept the advances of anyone.<sup>52</sup>

So, the terms *hermaphrodite*, *androgynous* and *eunuch/eunuchoid* seem to intersect as having similar, someone lacking in male virility or behaviour, but not necessarily always the same contextual meaning. *Hermaphrodite*, and *androgynous* also refer to divine beings, whereas *eunuch* refers to a mortal man, although he may also have divine powers of divination, or act as a priest. They all combine male and female elements in one personage, on one level making them beings of higher power, and on another making them less than male and therefore reducing their status. The double nature means the words are also used as insults to mean someone sex and sexuality are not fixed and therefore cannot be trusted.

I use the term, *binary*, to mean the concept of sex and gender existing as a system of two opposites, in contrast to sex and gender existing as a spectrum.

*Dual-sexed*, is used to describe a body that has both male and female characteristics. The term dual sexuality is often used to mean this, but I find this to cause confusion with sexuality, in the sense of sexual orientation, or attraction, towards both, or either sex. The same applies to the term bisexual, which in the context of antiquity is often used to mean hermaphrodite, as well as someone who is attracted to both sexes. In a contemporary context this also means desiring both sexes. Gender/sex and sexuality act independently of each other, so that it is not logical to assume that a hermaphrodite body necessarily means a bisexual orientation. I will confine myself to a use commensurate with modern understanding for

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<sup>49</sup>Herodotus, *The Histories*, 1.105.4.

<sup>50</sup>Hippocrates. *De aere aquis et locis*, 22.

<sup>51</sup>Hippocrates. *De aere aquis et locis*, 22.

<sup>52</sup>Diodorus Siculus. *Library of History*, 16.92.

clarity, so that sex, sexuality, and gender can function as separate and distinct concepts whose intersections can easily be followed.



## **Chapter 2. The Pergamon Hermaphrodite: a Representation of Hermaphroditos**

*The Pergamene Hermaphrodite is a votive statue, a static depiction of a god (Ajoonian).*

### **Introduction**

*The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* is a sculpted female shape with male genitals, and a mixture of male and female clothing. These features aid the identification of the hermaphrodite, since the Hellenistic world had particular ways of representing gods and mortals. The first issue, is in fact whether this statue represents a god or a mortal. Eunuch priests were an important feature of cult worship in Pergamon, so they could have been an inspiration for the statue. However, the size and religious function of the sculpture means that a divine being is a much more likely identification. There are certain problems associated with this, since gods and goddesses share many features, such as posture and body type. Other possible candidates for the identification of this statue are Dionysos, Aphrodite/Aphroditos, and Attis. The size, posture, hair, and clothes, and context show that an identification of this hermaphrodite as a depiction of the god Hermaphroditos is the most probable, and on the basis of this, it is possible to connect him to certain ideas and concepts.

The existence of a god called Hermaphroditos as a dual-sexed being in mythology, does not necessarily mean that every hermaphrodite body in ancient art has to be him. It makes it likely that these were attributes that made this identification possible, however, in the same way that other gods and goddesses had characteristics that made them more or less easily identifiable. Aphrodite could be recognised by her various nude erotic poses, and props such as apples, shells, sceptres, and Hermes is identified by his round hat, travellers cloak, and herald's staff. However, individuals were also portrayed in the likeness of gods or goddesses, which means that the statue can be associated with both a divinity and a mortal. A girl, or an athlete in general could also be portrayed in the likeness of a goddess or a god. The Sandal-Binding Hermes is difficult to distinguish from a human athlete, apart for his divine attribute, in the form of a turtle from which he made a lyre. So, a statue can be a specific individual modelling for a representation of an athlete, in the form of Hermes. A dwarf could in fact be a depiction of a specific individual, but not necessarily representing Priapos

### **The Statue**

*The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* is rare in being one of the only large-scale Hellenistic originals

known today, and not a Roman copy of an earlier prototype. This statue is also unusual in that it was found in the vicinity of the area in which it was almost certainly displayed, *The Great Altar* of Pergamon, so that the context of the wider surrounding artistic program it was part of is known. What is particularly notable about it, is that the religious function associated with earlier hermaphrodite iconography is here combined with the aestheticised eroticism characteristic of Hellenistic hermaphrodite iconography.

*The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, now in the Archeological museum of Istanbul, measures 1.86m including the plinth, which is 11cm. It is made of white marble and dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, the reasons for which will follow in the section on dating. It is the largest surviving hermaphrodite sculpture, and the size and inclusion in a temple, speaks to the fact that this was an important religious monument.<sup>53</sup> The statue was found in a cistern to the South East of the foundations of the altar at Pergamon in 1879, with a marble female head, and the upper body including head of a female, that may be of a queen or noblewoman.<sup>54</sup> In 1885 it was placed in the Istanbul Museum.<sup>55</sup> The reason for this, and thereby why it is not with the rest of the statues believed to be part of The Great Altar, now restored in Berlin, is that in 1884 Osman Bey, the director of the Imperial Ottoman Museum, brought in regulations that made it illegal to export antiquities as they were in the ownership of the Ottoman state. However, a trade was made of a Zeus Ammon and the Hermaphrodite, in exchange for two reliefs from the Telephos frieze found after the new law had passed.<sup>56</sup>

The Hermaphrodite is missing his right arm including the shoulder, the lower part of the left arm from the mantle, part of the mantle beneath the genitals where there are two pin holes, the right top corner of the mantel near the base, the tip of the nose and the middle part of each shoulder blade, part of the bun and the penis. It is possible that he held some further attributes in his missing hand and arm, that would have made identification easier.<sup>57</sup> The left half of the plinth with lower part of the trunk, and the left heel are restored in plaster. The head is broken at the neck, and he has traces of grease on the bust as though this is an insert. The surface on the face and hairline is especially corroded. The outer edge of the plinth is roughly worked and tapers down. The surface of the plinth is roughened to a rim around the

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<sup>53</sup>Aileen Ajootian, "The Only Happy Couple," in *Naked Truths: Women, Sexuality and Gender in Classical Art and Archaeology*, edited by Natalie Boymel Kapman, Ann Olga Koloski-Ostrow, and Claire L. Lyons, (Routledge, 2003), 233.

<sup>54</sup>Grüßinger, *Pergamon: Panorama der antiken Metropole*. (Petersberg: Imhof, 2011), 432.

<sup>55</sup>Stefanie Oehmke, *Das Weib im Manne: Hermaphroditos in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Berlin: Willmuth Arenhövel, 2004), 85.

<sup>56</sup>Francois Queyrel, *L'Autel de Pergame: Images et pouvoir en Grèce d'Asie*. Paris: Antiova&Picard, 2005, 35.

<sup>57</sup>Grüßinger, *Pergamon: Panorama der antiken Metropole*. (Petersberg: Imhof, 2011), 432.

feet. The back is only vaguely worked.<sup>58</sup>

He juts his hip out from his right leg and leans back on his left leg and over onto a tree trunk to his left side. His body forms an S-shape in front of the viewer. To place the forearm on the support, the upper body must be clearly drawn to the left. Below the arm rest under the arm pit, the arm might have been lowered, relaxed downwards, keeping the elbow touching the hem of the garment, as there is still a slight height increase in that area. Around the hips there is a mantle, whose material underlines the genital arc. The garment ends meet over the left arm, the piece from the back is over the upper arm, while the front part is again taken from the forearm. The space between the body and the trunk is filled with a high concentration of material folds. He leans on a trunk, with the folds of his mantle coming across his thighs to expose the genitals and torso.<sup>59</sup> The body type is fleshy and resembles an undeveloped Dionysos or Apollo, the proportions of the body being concurrent with that of a male physique.<sup>60</sup> The female side of the figure is expressed in the rather restrained protruding breasts, rather than in lush soft flesh tones. He shares the same, layered curly hair as female heads from the North side of the large altar frieze, such as Persephone/Nyx, and therefore easily fits into the stylistic classification of Pergamene art.<sup>61</sup>

## Dating

Many suggestions have been made in terms of the dating of the statue; from early to late 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, as well as the latter part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. This is because his face has often been compared with the face of *The Beautiful Head* from Pergamon, but due to the corrosion on the face it is in fact difficult to establish a definitive likeness in expression or style, so that this comparison does not make the dating any more secure.<sup>62</sup> However, Arnold Schober suggests that the hairstyle and garment design would place him with the female Pergamene statues belonging to the time of the great Pergamene frieze.<sup>63</sup> Katherine Dohan Morrow, in *Greek Footwear and the Dating of Sculpture*, supports this suggestion by using an analysis of

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<sup>58</sup>Stefanie Oehmke, *Das Weib im Manne: Hermaphroditos in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Berlin: Willmuth Arenhövel, 2004), 85.

<sup>59</sup>Stefanie Oehmke, *Das Weib im Manne: Hermaphroditos in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Berlin: Willmuth Arenhövel, 2004), 85.

<sup>60</sup>Aileen Ajootian, "The Only Happy Couple," in *Naked Truths*, 234.

<sup>61</sup>Grüßinger, *Pergamon: Panorama der antiken Metropole*. (Petersberg: Imhof, 2011), 432.

<sup>62</sup>Stefanie Oehmke, *Das Weib im Manne: Hermaphroditos in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Berlin: Willmuth Arenhövel, 2004), 85.

<sup>63</sup>Arnold Schober, *Die Kunst von Pergamon*. Rohrer.1951, 106.

the statue's footwear.<sup>64</sup>

The sandals help to place the hermaphrodite to earliest around the mid-second century BC.<sup>65</sup> These sandals are unique, because they draw on elements from both male and female footwear.<sup>66</sup> They are an invention of the artist, building on basic realistic footwear features and embellishing to suit the iconography of the figure.<sup>67</sup> The soles follow the contours of the foot, deeply indenting between the first two toes. The sandals then mix the plain thonged style with that of the *lingula*. The thong carved between the toes is knotted before widening out into a tongue and at the same time dividing into two flat straps. The mixture of the tongue and thong is covered by a heart-shaped ornament with a frontal sphinx carved in relief. The thonged style is found only on females from this time, and the *lingula* normally only on males.<sup>68</sup>

The *lingulae* are inspired from Italian form, and only appear on Greek monuments from the second half of the second century BC, when they start being used in major cities along the coast of Asia Minor.<sup>69</sup> Therefore, dating *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* to the mid-second century BC is the most logical conclusion of the options presented.

## Posture

*The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* is part of the Standing Hermaphrodite iconography, which constitutes a large heterogenous group. Because of the variety in this group, it provides a good overview of the appearance of the hermaphrodite in sculpture. Apart from his masculine genitalia, his body is always feminine, although a few examples do emphasise his youthful figure. His head is always female, with long curly hair, in a female hairstyle, and a feminine face. He often has jewellery, such as earrings, necklaces, and bracelets, and has delicate sandals protected by soles.<sup>70</sup> He also sometimes holds a *mitra*, a kind of headdress that is associated with Dionysos. The tree trunk as a prop could be an indication of a connection to

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<sup>64</sup>Katherine Dohan Morrow. *Greek Footwear and the Dating of Sculpture*. (The University of Wisconsin Press. 1985), 139.

<sup>65</sup>Brunilde Sismondo Ridgway, *Hellenistic Sculpture* (Univ of Wisconsin Press, 2001). 328.

<sup>66</sup>Aileen Ajootian, "The Only Happy Couple," in *Naked Truths*. 234.

<sup>67</sup>Katherine Dohan Morrow. *Greek Footwear and the Dating of Sculpture*. (The University of Wisconsin Press. 1985), 139.

<sup>68</sup>Katherine Dohan Morrow. *Greek Footwear and the Dating of Sculpture*. (The University of Wisconsin Press. 1985), 140.

<sup>69</sup>Katherine Dohan Morrow. *Greek Footwear and the Dating of Sculpture*. (The University of Wisconsin Press. 1985), 141.

<sup>70</sup> Stefanie Oehmke, *Das Weib im Manne: Hermaphroditos in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Berlin: Willmuth Arenhövel, 2004), 85.

nature, and the realm of Dionysos.<sup>71</sup> However, this type of pillar is a very common support structure for all kinds of static standing sculpture where the body is not caught in the middle of a movement, and may be more purely decorative than carrying any kind of symbolic meaning.

The effeminate, fleshy physique of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* means that the statue is unambiguously hermaphroditic. Both Dionysos and Apollo appear with very hermaphroditic body types in the Hellenistic era. Although Dionysos is often extremely effeminate, it is unusual for him to be portrayed as this explicitly feminine in body type, in that sculptures of him more often than not articulate male musculature around the abdomen and hips, and the pectoral area only vaguely morphs into breasts, if at all.

Dionysos started off as a bearded deity of agriculture and vintage in the Classical era, and progressed into a soft Apolline youth by the Hellenistic period.<sup>72</sup> The two main stories he is portrayed in relation to is the Rescue of Ariadne and the Return from India. His realm in the Hellenistic era was the ideal countryside populated by satyrs and maenads.<sup>73</sup> They were his followers, his *thiasos*, or “festive band.” In depictions of the Return from India, they form his procession. The Hellenistic *thiasos* also included hermaphrodites, centaurs, nymphs, and Pan. A good example of his full *thiasos* can be seen in the *Dionysian Sarcophagi* from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.<sup>74</sup> Dionysos was a particularly popular deity in the Hellenistic period and was used by kings as a role model and supposed ancestor, because he was an Eastern conqueror and ruler who had become a god, living a carefree and luxurious life.<sup>75</sup>

There is an exact parallel to *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* in the *Tozzi Hermaphrodite Statuette*, found in Rhodes, and now in the possession of Mr. Piero Tozzi, in New York.<sup>76</sup> Here the figure leans on a pillar. The closest stylistic parallel is a bronze of Dionysos with Ariadne, in the British Museum. This was found on the island of Chalkes, near Rhodes.

Dionysos has the same mantle arrangement, and also leans on a pillar in the same way as the hermaphrodite. The difference being Ariadne on the other side of the pillar, which reinforces the mythological context of Dionysos in the rescue of Ariadne. The bronze is

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<sup>71</sup>Stefanie Oehmke, *Das Weib im Manne: Hermaphroditos in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Berlin: Willmuth Arenhövel, 2004), 85.

<sup>72</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. (Thames and Hudson. London. 1991), 127.

<sup>73</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. (Thames and Hudson. London. 1991), 127.

<sup>74</sup>Dionysian sarcophagus in Rome, St. Peter's. Dionysos comes to sleeping Ariadne accompanied by his *thiasos*.

<sup>75</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. Thames and Hudson. London. 1991. 127.

<sup>76</sup>Margarete Bieber. *The Sculpture of the Hellenistic Age*. Columbia University Press. (New York. 1961), 125.



thought to have been attached to the handle of an amphora.<sup>77</sup> This raises the question of whether the Tozzi Hermaphrodite could actually be a Dionysos, in complete hermaphroditic form.

Other than Dionysos, Hellenistic images of Aphrodite, Apollo, Hermes and Satyrs also sometimes have them appear in this pose. *The Leaning Satyr (Capitolene)*, shows a young satyr leaning on a tree stump with an animal skin draped over his shoulder and lifted off his hip by his left hand. *The Cyrene Apollo* (2<sup>nd</sup> century AD), a massive cult statue from the Temple of Apollo in Cyrene, shows the god leaning languidly on a tree trunk with his mantle draped around him, almost in an identical way to *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*. *The Apollo Belvedere*, or *Pythian Apollo*, is also similar, although not leaning, he is standing with a tree trunk, and naked apart from a mantle draped around him. *The Aphrodite of Knidos*, a copy of a 4<sup>th</sup> century statue by Praxiteles, leans naked on a large jar with a drapery. *The Farnese Hermes*, a copy of a late 4<sup>th</sup> century original, relaxes in contrapposto beside a tree trunk, with a garment draped over his shoulder.

There is even a statue of Zeus from Pergamon, dated to c.200 – 150 BC, and 2.31 metres in height, with an almost identical posture. His feet are parted and left leg drawn up in the same way as the hermaphrodite, and his drapery is also arranged around the hips and over the left shoulder, although the fabric has not slid down enough to expose his shoulder and genitals.<sup>78</sup> His body is clearly muscular and masculine, though.

Many postures were shared by different gods, and indeed mortals portrayed in the likeness of a god. Mythological context sometimes helps to make one identification more likely than another, as the pose often, and certainly in this case, has a complex shared iconography with many other gods, goddesses, and mortals, but the form at any rate, is without question hermaphroditic.

## **Is The Pergamon Hermaphrodite, Hermaphroditos?**

It is a function of modern scholars to identify dual-sexed clay and stone figures as the visualization of Hermaphroditos.<sup>79</sup> However, no inscribed example has been found yet to corroborate this.<sup>80</sup> The extremely large size of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* speaks to it

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<sup>77</sup>Margarete Bieber. *The Sculpture of the Hellenistic Age*. Columbia University Press. (New York. 1961), 125.

<sup>78</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. (Thames and Hudson. London. 1991), 67.

<sup>79</sup>Ajootian, Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2003.01.15, 3. <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2003/2003-01-15.html>.

<sup>80</sup>Ajootian, Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2003.01.15, 3. <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2003/2003-01-15.html>.

being a cult statue, and this would indicate his divinity. Cult statues were venerated for the deities they embodied or represented. Cultus, or the practice of religious formulas of worship of the cult were often directed toward the treatment of the cult image, in terms of dressing, feeding, parading it, or making offerings and sacrifices to it. Hellenistic rulers could also be the object of cult worship, in addition to heroes, and to gods on both local, national, and international levels.<sup>81</sup> Hermaphroditos is the only god in Greek mythology described as purely a hermaphrodite, as his name suggests, but it is a godly quality to transgress the human boundaries of sex, so in essence any god could appear in hermaphroditic form.

Dionysos is a possible candidate for the identification of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*. As the previous section shows, he shares this same posture as part of his iconography, and it is worth considering whether *The Tozzi Hermaphrodite* actually is a Dionysos. However, in his other appearances connected to Pergamon, he is not depicted as hermaphroditic. This does not altogether rule this type of depiction out in Pergamon, but it does not fit with the rest of his Pergamene iconography at least. Also, as mentioned in the previous section, decidedly masculine divinities, such as Zeus, shared this pose. This makes it less likely that Dionysos is a correct identification for *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, and points to the distinct identity of the god Hermaphroditos.

Another possibility is that the hermaphrodite is part of the *thiasos* that Dionysos surrounds himself with. The problem with this is that there is nothing that ties this *thiasos* together in particular around *The Great Altar*. *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* has a much more imposing, static and classicistic style than is common for the *thiasos*, the members of which usually are depicted in movement and expressing emotion. There are no free standing statues from Pergamon that would particularly lend themselves to such an ensemble.

It is also possible that eunuchs were an inspiration for the motif. This oriental institution had become widespread, as a result of the campaigns of Alexander, whose train they were part of.<sup>82</sup> Asia Minor was also under Persian rule in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, where eunuchs were an established social group. They were often slaves who were bought by the rich as a status symbol.<sup>83</sup> The cult of Cybele, which was very popular in Pergamon, was served by eunuch priests called the *Galli*, whom the hermaphrodite aesthetic may also have been modelled on. This will be further examined in Chapter 5. Therefore, a connection

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<sup>81</sup>John Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 35.

<sup>82</sup>Grüßinger, *Pergamon: Panorama der antiken Metropole*. (Petersberg: Imhof, 2011). 433.

<sup>83</sup>Grüßinger, *Pergamon: Panorama der antiken Metropole*. (Petersberg: Imhof, 2011). 433.

between eunuch priests and hermaphrodite divinities cannot be ruled out. It is likely that they were what the hermaphrodite aesthetic was modelled on. There are also a few statues of eunuchs, and some of Attis, who was the beloved youth of Cybele, and died as a consequence of castration. Eunuchs are often portrayed as effeminate young boys in statuary, and as such do not fit the template of adult female physique that *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* follows.

The statues of Attis vary from depicting him with a feminine physique and with attributes from the world of Dionysos, such as grapes and the *mitra*, an example is a statue of a reclining Attis, at the shrine of Attis, to more boyish with attributes in common with eunuchs, such as the phrygian cap. He sometimes also has wings, and a coat that opens to show a penis underneath, as depicted by a statuette from Pergamon.<sup>84</sup> In this way, his depiction bridges the gap in presentation between the eunuch and hermaphrodite, by spanning them both. However, the large marble statues of Attis from Pergamon, which probably were part of *The Great Altar*, show him fully clothed in Phrygian dress in the company of Cybele, and not similar to *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*.

The standing pose of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* is shared with Aphrodite, and the body type and head is very similar to the way she is depicted. It is possible that the iconography of Hermaphroditos has developed from the Cyprian Aphrodite, or Aphroditos, who was represented in a half male, half female form. Hermaphroditos and Aphrodite share many poses, such as *kallipygos*, and are depicted together. There is a depiction of Aphroditos, or one of the attendants of the cult, with a false beard, holding up a mirror to Hermaphroditos. Sourvinou-Inwood proposes that the two divinities are separate, but could have inspired each other.<sup>85</sup> It would also, of course, be logical for Hermaphroditos to resemble his mother, which could be part of the reason for the likeness. I agree with Sourvinou-Inwood's opinion that the two deities are separate, because Aphrodite has a strong non-hermaphroditic iconography, on the provincial and city level. When she is depicted as having ambiguous sex, a beard commonly signifies this.

The evidence linking the name Hermaphroditos and statues representing him specifically comes down to two dedications that provide evidence that Hermaphroditos

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<sup>84</sup>Grüßinger, *Pergamon: Panorama der antiken Metropole*. (Petersberg: Imhof, 2011). 492.

<sup>85</sup>Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood. "Hermaphroditos and Salmakis: The Voice of Halikarnassos", in *The Salmakis Inscription and Hellenistic Halikarnassos*. Edited by Signe Isager & Poul Pederson. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2004. 60.

existed as a divine personage.<sup>86</sup> The first is a small base with a private dedication to Hermaphroditos, which has been dated to the early 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. The second is a marble altar at Kos from around the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, with inscribed dedications to divinities and mythological beings on all four sides.<sup>87</sup> On side B the engraving reads; *Haliou, Ameras, Horan, Khariton, Numphan, Priapou, Panos, Hermaphroditou*.<sup>88</sup> This shows evidence of a collective cult. The large number of hermaphrodite statues from antiquity, and how widespread they are, speaks to the fact that there is a whole iconography around Hermaphroditos. Therefore, this makes the identification of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* as a representation of Hermaphroditos very likely. However, no literary evidence has been found specifically labelling *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, Hermaphroditos.

## Summary

*The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* depicts an erotic expression of a divine personage, borrowing elements of both female and male nude schema, and uniting form and content. He is a god in hermaphroditic form, which most likely means he is Hermaphroditos. However, there is no inscriptional or other literary evidence linking the name Hermaphroditos with this specific statue. He also shares this pose with other gods, and the similarity with *The Tozzi Hermaphrodite*, makes it important to consider whether it is a depiction of Dionysos. It is interesting to admit the possibility of other gods appearing in hermaphroditic form, such as Dionysos and Aphrodite, because it gives them another iconographical facet. He also has a lot in common with depictions of Attis. His aesthetics may also have been inspired by eunuchs, who acted as priests of Cybele, an important cult in Pergamon, which might be a reason for his inclusion in the artistic programme of *The Great Altar*.

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<sup>86</sup>Ajootian, Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2003.01.15, 3. <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2003/2003-01-15.html>.

<sup>87</sup>Ajootian, Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2003.01.15, 3. <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2003/2003-01-15.html>.

<sup>88</sup>Luc Brisson. 170.

### Chapter 3. Sources: Hermaphroditos and Textual Evidence

*The holy waters in the cave that she pours forth makes gentle the savage minds of men.  
(Salmacis Inscription).*

#### Introduction

The identification of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* as Hermaphroditos, leads to the issue of who this mythological character is. Textual sources provide biographical information about Hermaphroditos in relation to the Greek pantheon, and also reveals the ideas of marriage, fertility, heterosexual union, and civilisation that he stands for, as well as how this is part of certain stories and allegories.

Inscriptions are public documents that can be issued from civic bodies or private individuals. Gods often play a part in them, in civic or public roles.<sup>89</sup> They have sanctuaries, priests, and receive sacrifices and dedications from the city, officials, citizens, non-citizen residents and visiting foreigners. The persona of the gods are constructed through festivals to the divinity, their temples, priests, and sacrifices, and in relation to the local pantheon, which defines an individual deity. Myths are the most important tool in constructing a divinity, but they are rare in inscriptions.<sup>90</sup> At best, they allude to stories from local myths, which luckily is what the Salmacis Inscription does regarding the mythical history of Halicarnassos, which was used to give the city a Greek pedigree that would put them in a favourable position within the Hellenistic world, and win the respect of the Romans.

This Chapter accounts for the literary sources relating directly to Hermaphroditos, and compares and contrasts Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and the Salmacis Inscription. The latter provides us with important new information relating to Hermaphroditos as the inventor of marriage, linking him firmly to weddings. It also gives a very different account of his origins and relation to the Salmacis spring, which in Ovid's account had negative powers, but in the inscription has a positive effect. I also include wider views on the spring as a source of hermaphroditism or not, from Vitruvius and Strabo. In conclusion, I look at other literary sources on hermaphrodite sculpture and Hermaphroditos, including Theophrastus, Posidippus of Cassandreia, Diodorus Siculus, Christodorus, Martial, Pliny the Elder, and two inscriptions; one on a statue base and one on a marble alter. I will use this material to

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<sup>89</sup>Jan N. Bremmer and Andrew Erskine, *The Gods of Ancient Greece: Identities and Transformations* (Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 57.

<sup>90</sup>Jan N. Bremmer and Andrew Erskine, *The Gods of Ancient Greece: Identities and Transformations* (Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 57.

demonstrate how the Salmacis Inscription can shed new light on the mythology of Hermaphroditos and therefore the interpretation of hermaphrodite sculpture, and *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*.

## Ovid's Metamorphosis

Ovid's *Metamorphoses*<sup>91</sup> was, until 1995, the main primary source from Antiquity relating the myth of Hermaphroditos and Salmacis. The poem has been used as the decisive contextualization tool in order to interpret hermaphrodite iconology. Ovid describes how the young god Hermaphroditos, whose parents are Aphrodite and Hermes, goes to bathe in the Salmacis spring in Halicarnassos. There the nymph of the same name as the spring<sup>92</sup> sees him and falls in love. She approaches him, but he rejects her. However, when Hermaphroditos enters the waters, Salmacis ambushes him in an amorous embrace, and prays to the gods to unite them forever. The gods hear her prayer and unify them into one being, making the young god dual-sexed. When Hermaphroditos sees what has become of him, he prays to his parents to make it so that any man who bathes in the spring will become feminized in the same way as himself. His prayer is also heard, and the spring gains the reputation of having a feminizing effect on all men.<sup>93</sup>

The feminizing effects of the Salmacis spring may have been a common concept in Augustan times, and Ovid may have connected it with the male and female aspects of Hermaphroditos in a poetic way, in order to explain it. Ennius, Martial, Cicero, Statius and Festus also write about the effects of the Salmacis spring.<sup>94</sup>

No depictions in visual art from Antiquity, sculpture or otherwise, is found of Ovid's Hermaphroditos and Salmacis myth, although it became a common theme in a variety of media in the Renaissance and subsequent epochs.<sup>95</sup>

## The Salmacis Inscription

In the summer of 1995, a large inscription was found on the remains of an ancient wall still *in*

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<sup>91</sup>Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. 285-388.

<sup>92</sup>Ovid sets the scene at an existing site in Caria, so the nymph and spring, Salmacis, share their name with an ancient place close to Halicarnassos, or Bodrum, in modern day Turkey. Aileen Ajoonian, "Monstrum or Daimin," 12.

<sup>93</sup>Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. 285-388

<sup>94</sup>Ennius (347 Jocelyn), Cicero(*DeOffic.* 1.18.61), Philodemus(*A.P.* 7.222), Martial(6.68, 10.4,14.174), Statius(*Silv.* 1.5.20–21), Festus (s.v. *Salmacis*).9

<sup>95</sup>Ajoonian. LIMC. 284.

*situ* at a promontory to Halicarnassos, now known as Kaplan Kalesi, but in the Ancient World was called Salmacis.<sup>96</sup> Halicarnassos is today called Bodrum, and is in Turkey. It was an ancient Ionian Greek city of Caria, at the Gulf of Cerameicus in Anatolia. The town was founded by Dorian Greeks of the Peleponnese. It became the capital of the area, due to its key position on the sea routes and large sheltered harbour.

The Augustan geographer Strabo gives special mention to the Tomb of Maussollos, built for King Maussollos by his wife Artemisia, and the Salmacis Fountain, when writing about Halicarnassos.<sup>97</sup> The Maussoleion was known as one of the Seven Wonders of the World. It consisted of monumental architecture and extensive sculptural decoration. The Salmacis inscription is now the oldest written material we have relating to the myth of Hermaphroditos and Salmacis.

Because of the letter-form, the inscription is dated to the mid or late 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.<sup>98</sup> The inscription is cut in two columns on blue limestone with white veins. It was worked with a tooth-chisel, in accordance with the other stones of the same promontory course. The stone is 133.4 cm wide and 51.2cm high, making it the widest stone on the course. As the letters in the stone are broad and regular, and very professionally cut, it shows it was meant to be a beautiful wall-decoration.<sup>99</sup>

The inscription is an elegiac poem of 60 lines, describing what the Halicarnassians considered to be their greatest achievements. The structure of the poem is as follows: lines 1-4 address Aphrodite and ask two questions; lines 5 - 54 recount a story and answer the questions; lines 55 - 60 contain a summary and moral of the story. The questions asked of Aphrodite are: “What is so good about Halicarnassos?” and “Why is this place so special?”

In her answer, Aphrodite relates the story of her son:

And Halicarnassus settles the delightful hill beside the stream of Salmakis, sung of as dear to the immortals, and her domain includes the desirable home of the nymph, she who once received our child in her kindly arms and reared Hermaphroditos the all-excellent, he who invented marriage and was the first to bind together wedded couples by his law, and she herself beneath the holy waters in the cave that

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<sup>96</sup>Signe Isager. “The Pride of Halikarnassos.” *Editio princeps of an inscription from Salmakis aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 123 (1998) 1–23.

<sup>97</sup>Strabo. *Geography*. 14.2.16.

<sup>98</sup>Signe Isager. “The Pride of Halikarnassos.” *Editio princeps of an inscription from Salmakis aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 123 (1998) 1–23. 6.

<sup>99</sup>Signe Isager. “The Pride of Halikarnassos.” *Editio princeps of an inscription from Salmakis aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 123 (1998) 1–23. 6.

she pours forth makes gentle the savage minds of men<sup>100</sup>.

This version is completely different from that of Ovid. Here the nymph Salmacis has a kourotrophic function, rearing Hermaphroditos to become all-excellent, inventing marriage as a lawful union. This may be the only known source in which Hermaphroditos is explicitly associated with marriage.

The waters from the Salmacis spring also have a very different effect in this account. In Ovid's account they are seen as having a feminizing effect on men, which is deemed negative. Hermaphroditos is bereft at the loss of his manhood. His limbs have been softened, and he has become weakened. He is now less than a man.<sup>101</sup> In the Salmacis inscription they have a civilizing effect by “making gentle the savage minds of men.” This distinction is important in how the hermaphroditic body is interpreted and what associations it evokes in the minds of the audience. If the audience is informed by Ovid's account, they will associate the hybridization of Hermaphroditos with something negative and shameful. It also means that the effeminate or feminine is associated with demeaning the male body. The erotic in this tale therefore becomes illicit and the moral of the story cautionary. Ovid's story is often interpreted as explaining the origin of the «receiving» or «feminine» homosexual, which again takes on demeaning associations, as in the ancient world it was not seen as fitting for a man to take a passive role. This was only acceptable for boys and women. Men were meant to take the active role of the aggressor. Ovid's account, then, serves to uphold sex and gender as distinct categories that cannot be transgressed without tragic consequences.

In the Salmacis inscription, however, the waters have a civilizing effect on men and have been instrumental in the rearing of Hermaphroditos the all-excellent. Here most commentators agree that he is already a dual-sexed being, and his body as such is a physical representation of the union of the male and female under law, apart from Signe Isager, who expresses the opinion that Hermaphroditos remains fully male, but invents lawful matrimony.<sup>102</sup> In this opinion the undertone is hinting at the acceptability of marriage between brother and sister at court. If he was purely male though, it does not make sense why he in particular would be a god of marriage, as if his body was literally a union of male and female, he more easily fits the logic of symbolizing matrimony. There is also the matter of why the word hermaphrodite should be used by Greek and later Roman writers to mean someone who

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<sup>100</sup>Hugh Lloyd-Jones. "The Pride of Halicarnassus." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, Bd. 124 (1999), pp. 1-14.

<sup>101</sup>Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. 346.

<sup>102</sup>Isager. 20.



has dual-sex characteristics, if it is not to allude to the same predicament as that of Hermaphroditos. Therefore, it is much more likely that he already was a hermaphrodite.

In this way his body does the opposite of its function in Ovid, which is to physically represent the transgression of social boundaries, by symbolizing instead the gender boundaries that categories of sex in society adhere to and that propagates its structure, namely marriage. So, this is another example of the dual nature of the hermaphrodite and its symbolic function in art and literature.

## Other Ancient Sources on the Salmacis Spring

Vitruvius had obviously heard about the negative reputation of the waters of the Salmacis spring, but does not agree and tries to remedy this in *On Architecture*:

There is a mistaken idea that this spring infects those who drink of it with an unnatural lewdness. It will not be out of place to explain how this idea came to spread throughout the world from a mistake in the telling of the tale. It cannot be that the water makes men effeminate and unchaste, as it is said to do; for the spring is of remarkable clearness and excellent in flavour. The fact is that when Melas and Arevanias came there from Argos and Troezen and founded a colony together, they drove out the Carians and Lelegans who were barbarians. These took refuge in the mountains, and, uniting there, used to make raids, plundering the Greeks and laying their country waste in a cruel manner. Later, one of the colonists, to make money, set up a well-stocked shop, near the spring because the water was so good, and the way in which he carried it on attracted the barbarians. So they began to come down, one at a time, and to meet with society, and thus they were brought back of their own accord, giving up their rough and savage ways for the delights of Greek customs. Hence this water acquired its peculiar reputation, not because it really induced unchastity, but because those barbarians were softened by the charm of civilization.<sup>103</sup>

So, Vitruvius also testifies to the civilizing effects of the waters and that it softens the minds of barbarians. This fits in with the myth of the origin of Halicarnassos, as told by the inscription. However, Vitruvius still associates the effeminate with negative qualities such as unnatural lewdness, as he puts it.

Strabo also supports the argument Vitruvius makes in his *Geography*:

Then to Halicarnassus, the royal residence of the dynasts of Caria, which was formerly called Zephyra. Here is the tomb of Mausolus,<sup>1</sup> one of the Seven Wonders, a monument erected by Artemisia in honor of her husband; and here is the fountain called Salmacis, which has the slanderous repute, for what reason I do not know, of making effeminate all who drink from it. It seems that the effeminacy of man is laid to the charge of the air or of the water; yet it is not these, but rather riches and wanton living, that are the cause of effeminacy. Halicarnassus has an acropolis; and off the city lies Arconnesus. Its colonizers were, among others, Anthes and a number of Troezenians. Natives of Halicarnassus have been: Herodotus the historian, whom they later called a Thurian, because he took part in the colonization of Thurii; and Heracleitus the poet, the comrade of Callimachus; and, in my time,

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<sup>103</sup>Vitruvius. *On Architecture*. 2.7.11-12. (Translated by Morris Hickey Morgan), 2007.

Dionysius the historian.<sup>104</sup>

So, neither Vitruvius nor Strabo mention Hermaphroditos, but they both disagree with the negative characterization of the waters of the spring.

## Interpretations of the Salmacis Inscription

The Salmacis inscription has been interpreted as a colonization myth, by Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood and Hugh Lloyd-Jones, on the basis that there is often a connection between colonization myths pertaining to a specific geographical area and myths about nymphs who pull young men into springs. The nymph is tied to the area and the man also becomes inextricably linked to it.<sup>105</sup> The real agenda of these myths is often to legitimize physical dominion and political control of a geographical area.<sup>106</sup>

Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood uses the concept of mythological schemata, in order to understand the Salmacis inscription. Mythological schemata are patterns of mythemes, or an essential core that provide the structure for different myths that are variations on the same theme.<sup>107</sup> There are many variations of the theme of a divine male child, raised by a nymph in Greek mythology, and Hermaphroditos fits well into the framework of a male divinity raised by a nymph in connection with the founding of a colony.<sup>108</sup>

Christian Sourvinou-Inwood proposes that Hermaphroditos was in fact invented at Halicarnassos at a date prior to the Salmacis Inscription, since she is aware of the fact that the earliest hermdaphrodite iconography pre-dates the inscription.<sup>109</sup> She presents the following parameters as having shaped this creation: the religious sphere of the joint cult of Hermes and Aphrodite as presented by their temple in Salmacis; the geographical connection between this cult in Salmacis and the nymph Salmacis as an important protagonist in the foundation of Halicarnassos; the schema where a nymph has a kourotrophic function for a young god; the many schemata where local nymph and Greek male are associated in a colonial context; and

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<sup>104</sup>Strabo. Geography. 14.2.16.

<sup>105</sup>Isager. 14.

<sup>106</sup>Isager. 14.

<sup>107</sup>Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood. "Hermaphroditos and Salmakis: The Voice of Halikarnassos", in *The Salmakis Inscription and Hellenistic Halikarnassos*. Edited by Signe Isager & Poul Pederson. (Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2004), 59.

<sup>108</sup>Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood. "Hermaphroditos and Salmakis: The Voice of Halikarnassos", in *The Salmakis Inscription and Hellenistic Halikarnassos*. Edited by Signe Isager & Poul Pederson. (Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2004), 75.

<sup>109</sup>Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood. "Hermaphroditos and Salmakis: The Voice of Halikarnassos", in *The Salmakis Inscription and Hellenistic Halikarnassos*. Edited by Signe Isager & Poul Pederson. (Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2004), 76.

the notion of androgyny as an expression of fertility in Oriental religions, specifically the Egyptian god Hapi.<sup>110</sup>

Jan N. Bremmer, in the article «Zeus' Own Country: Cult and Myth in the *Pride of Halicarnassus*», refutes this idea on the basis that there is no mention of Halicarnassos in the literary evidence relating to Hermaphroditos other than the Salmacis Inscription. He believes it is more plausible that Hermaphroditos was invented in Athens at the time that non-Greek deities began to be worshipped there.<sup>111</sup> He also believes that Attis was created there at the same time,<sup>112</sup> which is relevant due to the fact that he was the beloved of the primordial dual-sexed being known as Agdistis/Cybele, and the myths surrounding him also concentrate on the themes of regeneration and fertility, involving castration and a hermaphrodite nature. So, Hermaphroditos is part of this mythological landscape and has many elements in common with Attis and Cybele. The eunuch priests modelled on Attis, is another aspect pertaining to the hermaphrodite aesthetic, as well as the representation of Attis in sculpture as effeminate, and sometimes hermaphroditic in form. Therefore, a connection between these personages is a possibility.

However, Allen J. Romano in his article “The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditos and Salmacis at Halicarnassus and in Ovid,” proposes a reading that is concerned with the question of how to understand the difference between Ovid's version of the Hermaphroditos and Salmacis myth and that of the Salmacis Inscription.<sup>113</sup> They show two very different ways of constructing a myth, but that they also have similarities that link them. His reading contradicts the understanding of the inscription as a local variation on an international myth. The inscription has also been described as provincial, local and derivative. Romano asserts that reading the inscription as local history limits the possible interpretations.<sup>114</sup> He proposes that the differences in the Ovidian version and the inscription could be due to the different narrators, each having a different perspective on the same phenomena, one negative and one

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<sup>110</sup>Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood. “Hermaphroditos and Salmakis: The Voice of Halikarnassos”, in *The Salmakis Inscription and Hellenistic Halikarnassos*. Edited by Signe Isager & Poul Pederson. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2004. 77.

<sup>111</sup>Jan N. Bremmer. “Zeus' Own Country: Cult and Myth in the *Pride of Halicarnassus*” in Ueli Dill and Christine Walde, *Antike Mythen: Medien, Transformationen Und Konstruktionen* (Walter de Gruyter, 2009). 300.

<sup>112</sup>Jan N. Bremmer. “Zeus' Own Country: Cult and Myth in the *Pride of Halicarnassus*” in Ueli Dill and Christine Walde, *Antike Mythen: Medien, Transformationen Und Konstruktionen* (Walter de Gruyter, 2009). 300.

<sup>113</sup>Romano, “The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditos and Salmacis at Halicarnassus and in Ovid,” 2.

<sup>114</sup>Romano, “The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditos and Salmacis at Halicarnassus and in Ovid,” 3.

positive, rather than describing two different phenomena.<sup>115</sup> Therefore the narrator is key and not the actual story related. This view also claims that there has been too much emphasis on ethnicity as the framework of the myth. The difference therefore, is one of theme, which is fertility and regeneration. So, where Sourvinou-Inwood emphasizes the schemata underpinning the mythemes in the inscription in relation to the wider context of Greek mythology, Romano concentrates specifically on the story as a whole, and how it is narrated.

Hermaphroditos plays a central part within a cosmogenic framework, which is related mainly for the benefit of visitors. The position of the inscription, on the promontory where boats moor, is in order for visitors to read it as the first thing they come across when visiting.<sup>116</sup> Vitruvius writes about a temple to Aphrodite and Hermes, that was somewhere on the same promontory as the inscription. Representations of gods and goddesses were interpreted as them actually being physically present in that location, which would have been important in terms of Aphrodite being close enough to be addressed, as she is in the inscription. Therefore, it makes sense that the temple and inscription would be close to each other. Vitruvius writes that in his time the temple could be seen “in cornu...summo dextro”.<sup>117</sup> At Halicarnassus, Aphrodite was worshipped as part of a cult, that is to say a *gemeinschaftskultus*, or collective cult. A 4<sup>th</sup> century BC inscription from Halicarnassus<sup>118</sup>, shows that Aphrodite was worshipped by the *agoranomoi* without a special cult title. She shares an altar also from Halicarnassus with Charites and Erotes. From the same area there is a catalogue of *Anathemata tes Athenas*, dedications to Athena, which includes *anathemata* to Aphrodite, and a dedication by a merchant to Aphrodite that was found near the sea, which could be for Aphrodite Euploia.<sup>119</sup>

The exact location of the Salmacis spring itself is still not known, but it is possible that a room yet to be excavated at Salmacis, could be a fountain room that housed the spring.<sup>120</sup> There is some debate on whether grotto-like natural caverns were a feature suggestive of associations with nymphs. A parallel with «The Sacred Fountain» in the rock face of the South slope of the Acropolis of Athens, has been suggested. This was part of the sanctuary of

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<sup>115</sup>Romano, “The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditus and Salmacis at Halicarnassus and in Ovid,” 3.

<sup>116</sup>Romano, “The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditus and Salmacis at Halicarnassus and in Ovid,” 4.

<sup>117</sup>Signe Isager. “The Pride of Halikarnassos.” *Editio princeps of an inscription from Salmakis aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 123 (1998) 1–23. 12. (8.50.6-7)

<sup>118</sup>Now in the British Museum (*GIBM* 901).

<sup>119</sup>Signe Isager. “The Pride of Halikarnassos.” *Editio princeps of an inscription from Salmakis aus: Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 123 (1998) 1–23. 12.

<sup>120</sup>Poul Pedersen. “The Building Remains at the Salmakis Fountain I,” in *The Salmakis Inscription and Hellenistic Halikarnassos*. Signe Isager and Poul Pedersen. (Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark), 2004. 25.

Asklepios, which was reached through an opening in the back wall of a Doric Stoa. «The Burina Fountain» in the Sanctuary of Asklepios at Kos, may have been of the same type.<sup>121</sup>

In terms of the effects of the spring itself, Romano holds that the Ovidian myth and the inscription describe two extremes of the same element, and not two distinct effects.<sup>122</sup> In this case, the spring is a kind of aphrodisiac, and «makes gentle the savage minds of men», in that it softens them and makes them more suitable for marriage with women, but too much of this effect can make them unmanly. In this way, the Salmacis spring has the potential for both positive and negative effects. The theme of the myth, according to him, is therefore one of fertility and reproduction, rather than colonization. Thus the effects of the source is to make men suitable for union with women, and not to civilise barbarians. Moreover, sources with a metamorphic effect were popular in Hellenistic paradoxography (e.g. Call. fr. 407).

Bathing in a source was part of the rituals surrounding marriage ceremonies, and the language surrounding marriage, sex and gender can be quite revealing and mirror thematically elements from the Salmacis Inscription. Renaud Gagné points out that young girls or virgins were often labelled «wild», and married women were termed «tame». Both young boys and young girls could be referred to as «wild animals». Brides were called *nymphai* and the source they were to bathe in was called a *nymphaion*.<sup>123</sup>

Hermaphroditos is firmly at the centre of the marriage ceremony and wedding rituals. Hermaphroditos' dual-sexed nature has a cosmogenic significance in itself. Romano holds the view that Hermaphroditos' hybrid condition is an ideal, but unproductive version of the male and female unified by marriage.<sup>124</sup> In Greek cosmogeny, dual-sexed gods are often at the beginning of the universe. They make the first set of gods through regeneration. The Orphic cosmogenies are an example of this. Plato parodies these gods in *The Symposium*, through Aristophanes' speech where he explains the origin of love.<sup>125</sup> He says that in the beginning there were three sexes; male, female, and androgynes.<sup>126</sup> They were globular beings, with four

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<sup>121</sup>Poul Pedersen. "The Building Remains at the Salmakis Fountain I," in *The Salmakis Inscription and Hellenistic Halikarnassos*. Signe Isager and Poul Pedersen. University Press of Southern Denmark. 2004. 26.

<sup>122</sup>Romano, "The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditos and Salmacis at Halicarnassus and in Ovid," 3.

<sup>123</sup>Renaud Gagné. "What is the Pride of Halicarnassus?" in *Classical Antiquity*, Vol.25, No.1 (April 2006), 8.

<sup>124</sup>Romano, "The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditos and Salmacis at Halicarnassus and in Ovid," 9. I believe this is a conflation of ideas. If Hermaphroditos is a god who represents the union of the male and female, he does not necessarily have to be unproductive. Gods in Greek mythology often beget offspring in a variety of ways. Aphrodite, for example, in one version is born from the foam on the sea. As a god, the hermaphrodite often represents the beginning of life or the human race, procreating with itself. If the figure of Hermaphroditos represents a human hermaphrodite, then it is a medical fact that many intersex conditions confer sterility. Also, If Hermaphroditos is a purely symbolic figure, he could signify both the parents and the progeny in one, as we see in later Christian iconography with the father, son and holy spirit/Mary.

<sup>125</sup>Romano, "The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditos and Salmacis at Halicarnassus and in Ovid," 9.

<sup>126</sup>This literally means "manwoman." I've used the word androgyne, as in the original Greek text, in order to

arms and legs and faces on both sides. Some were male on both sides, some female, and some male on one side and female on the other. They were so mighty that Zeus became jealous and split them in half down the middle with a lightning bolt. After this they spent their time on earth wandering around as single-sexed beings looking for their other half. This idea is present in the union of male and female in the personification of the god Hermaphroditos. Ovid's version of the Hermaphroditos and Salmacis story is a reverse version of Aristophanes' origin of love, where instead of being split, the bodies are unified.

Romano proposes that the invention of marriage by Hermaphroditos works as a pivot between the divine and the human.<sup>127</sup> Marriage signifies the transition between the divine and the mortal sphere. In the inscription the divine world of Zeus is followed by Hermaphroditos, leading into a section about the colonizers of Halicarnassus. In cosmogonic myths, marriage is often the pivot for mythic progression from chaos to order, and from the divine to the human sphere.<sup>128</sup> Hecate<sup>129</sup>, who is honoured by Zeus, is the product of a lawful union among the gods, which is important to the personage of Zeus as he is a father figure to whose dominion order and legitimate offspring is important.<sup>130</sup> She is depicted on the Pergamon Altar with three bodies, battling the Titans. She was often depicted with three bodies, or three heads, signalling her privileges over earth, heaven, and sea, as described in Hesiod's *Theogony*.<sup>131</sup>

In Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood's view, the nymph Salmacis used the waters of her fountain to a civilizing effect, by tempering the savage minds of men, but Hermaphroditos also did this by inventing a civilizing institution, legal marriage, into which sexual urges could be channeled to promote social continuity and thereby order over chaos.<sup>132</sup>

## Other Literary References to Hermaphroditos and Hermaphrodite

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delay the sex/gender category distinctions that are inevitable in the nuances between man/male and woman/female, where man and woman refer to gender and male and female refer to sex.

<sup>127</sup>Romano, "The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditos and Salmacis at Halicarnassus and in Ovid," 9.

<sup>128</sup>Romano, "The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditos and Salmacis at Halicarnassus and in Ovid," 9.

<sup>129</sup>Hecate possibly originated in Caria, she had a large cult following in Lagina, where it was attended by eunuch priests. She was the goddess of cross-roads, and had apotropaic powers, and kourtophobic functions. Also, connected to the moon, which was also the case in general for androgynous beings, mentioned in Plato's *Symposium*, where they were the children of the moon.

<sup>130</sup>Romano, "The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditos and Salmacis at Halicarnassus and in Ovid," 9.

<sup>131</sup>Hesiod and Glenn W. Most, *Hesiod: Volume I, Theogony. Works and Days. Testimonia* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2007).

<sup>132</sup>Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood. "Hermaphroditos and Salmakis: The Voice of Halikarnassos", in *The Salmakis Inscription and Hellenistic Halikarnassos*. Edited by Signe Isager & Poul Pederson. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2004. 75.

## Sculpture

The earliest literary reference to Hermaphroditos may be found in Theophrastus, from the late 5<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>133</sup> Here a character hangs a flower garland around the neck of Hermaphroditos.<sup>134</sup> This was probably a herm. These were squared stone pillars with heads carved on top, and sometimes genitals. They served as signposts or boundary markers. The head was often that of Hermes, who was the god of travelling, amongst other things. However, in the Hellenistic era herms also had the heads of other gods, such as Aphrodite, Dionysus and Priapus. There is a theory that herms are the origins of the Hermaphroditos statues.<sup>135</sup> There may have been a connection between the herms and fertility and marriage, but there is insufficient evidence to make this explicit.

The Greek comic poet Posidippus of Cassandreia (316 BC – ca.250 BC), wrote a play entitled *Hermaphroditos*, but only two lines of the play survive: «Every man rears a boy, even if he's poor, A girl ev'n rich men put outside the door.»<sup>136</sup> This does of course not shed any light on Hermaphroditos at all.

Diodorus Siculus, who wrote between 60 and 30 BC, describes Hermaphroditos thus:

A birth like that of Priapus is ascribed by some writers of myths to Hermaphroditos, as he has been called, who was born of Hermes and Aphrodite and received a name which is a combination of those of both his parents. Some say that this Hermaphroditos is a god and appears at certain times among men, and that he is born with a physical body, which is a combination of that of a man and that of a woman, but has the masculine vigour of a man. But there are some who declare that such creatures of two sexes are monstrosities, and coming rarely into the world as they do they have the quality of presaging the future, sometimes for evil and sometimes for good.<sup>137</sup>

So, Diodorus is writing about Hermaphroditos, the mythological figure. He does not mention his representation in art; sculpture or otherwise. However, he does describe him as already having both female and male characteristics, and not subject to a metamorphoses or transformation of any kind as in Ovid, nor does he mention Salmacis or a source. He does raise the question of Hermaphroditos and hermaphrodites, though. On the one hand, there is Hermaphroditos the god, and on the other hand there are people “of two sexes” who are capable of signifying both good and evil. The perceived nature of hermaphrodites, then, reflects another duality that is not just corporeal, and shows an uneasy attitude towards this physicality.

It is worth mentioning that Priapus is often described as the son of Aphrodite and

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<sup>133</sup>Theophrastus. *Characters*. 16.11

<sup>134</sup>Romano, “The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditos and Salmacis at Halicarnassus and in Ovid,” 11.

<sup>135</sup>Aileen Ajootian, ‘Hermaphroditos’, LIMC 5(1990), 268–85, 269.

<sup>136</sup>Posidippus, PCG vol. VII, 21.

<sup>137</sup>Diodorus Siculus, *Biblioteca*, 4.6.5.

Dionysus, so a half-sibling of Hermaphroditos. He is characterised by his enormous, perpetual erection, and gave his name to the medical condition priapism. Priapus was also a fertility god, who protected gardens, livestock, and fruit plants. He is thought to have had a cult that spread to Greece from Turkey after the conquests of Alexander the Great.

His function in sculpture form is thought to be apotropaic, which he has in common with the *hermaphrodite anasyromenos*, also displaying an erect penis. The island of Delos has been the source of a particularly large number of Hellenistic *anasyromenoi hermaphrodites* in relief and in the round.<sup>138</sup> Many of them are found in relief form on houses, or in the round at gymnasiums and baths, and even in graves, where they are thought to serve as apotropaic guardians.<sup>139</sup> This testifies to an underlying serious function in hermaphrodite iconology, although the modern audience may more easily fixate on the erotic nature of the Sleeping Hermaphrodites, and the comic undertone of the Wrestling Groups.<sup>140</sup>

Christodorus describes a statue in a public gymnasium called Zeuxippos, built under Septimus Severus:

There stood lovely Hermaphroditus, nor wholly a man, nor wholly a woman, for the statue was of mixed form: readily couldst thou tell him to be the son of fair-bosomed Aphrodite and of Hermes. His breasts were swelling like a girl's, but he plainly had the procreative organs of a man, and he showed features of the beauty of both sexes.<sup>141</sup>

So, according to Christodorus the statue is recognised as Hermaphroditos, because of his combination of female and male characteristics, which also makes his parents Aphrodite and Hermes. He also describes him as “lovely” and as possessing the “beauty of both sexes,” so Christodorus focuses on the aesthetically pleasing side of this statue type rather than any ominous associations with the nature of hermaphrodites.

Martial's epigram 14.174, from *Apophoreta* (tablegifts) from 84 or 85 AD, reads:

CLXXIV. — A Marble Hermaphroditus

Male, he entered the fount ; ' he came forth both  
male and female : one part of him is his sire's, all  
else has he of his mother.

This is a book that describes the presents given to guests at the December festival of the Saturnalia.

Pliny the Elder writes in Chapter 19 of book 34 of his *Natural History*: “Polycles

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<sup>138</sup>Aileen Ajootian, “Monstrum or Daimon”, 12.

<sup>139</sup>Aileen Ajootian, “Monstrum or Daimon”, 12.

<sup>140</sup>Aileen Ajootian, “Monstrum or Daimon”, 12.

<sup>141</sup>Christodorus (of Thebes), *Antologica Graeca*, Book 2, epigram 1.



made a splendid statue of Hermaphroditos.”<sup>142</sup> Unfortunately, we don't know which statue this refers to. It is speculated that it might have been a bronze hermaphrodite.

Barbara Fowler, in *The Hellenistic Aesthetic*, champions the idea of an expanded meaning of ekphrasis, where elements of each discipline equate between visual art and literature in the Hellenistic era. These include: magic, eroticism, naturalism, elegance, allegory and an emphasis on technique.<sup>143</sup> Authors such as Callimachus and Theocritus have been used as examples, amongst others. Hermaphroditos also has many similar elements in literature and sculpture that go beyond the purely descriptive, and is as such a very good example of an Hellenistic Aesthetic.

A statue base bearing an inscribed dedication to Hermaphroditos was found near Vari in Attica, and dated by letterforms to ca. 385 BC<sup>144</sup> The object that it supported is missing, so it is not possible to infer anything from this. It also means that no statues of hermaphrodites with the name Hermaphroditos on them have been found.

The only other inscription is on a marble altar found on the island of Kos, dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. This is a dedication to Helios, Aphaia, the Horai, Charites, Nymphs, Priapus, Pan, and Hermaphroditos.<sup>145</sup> So, this shows that in Kos Hermaphroditos was part of a *gemeinschaftskultus*, providing an example of Hermaphroditos being worshipped as part of a collective cult.

## Summary

There is a limited mythology around the god Hermaphroditos, but the combination of literary references and visual representations provides a solid schema for this personage. There are few explicit links between the statues and the literary references to Hermaphroditos, but the Salmacis Inscription is important new evidence that links Hermaphroditos unambiguously to the realm of marriage, and Sourvinou-Inwoods theory that he might have been invented at Halicarnassos is plausible. In Bremmer's refutation of this, he uses the same basic argument as Sourvinou-Inwood, which is the connection or influence of Oriental deities. The textual evidence shows that Hermaphroditos plays a part in a wider frame work, by representing marriage, and fertility, acting as a guardian of heterosexual union, and that these qualities

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<sup>142</sup>Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*. John Bostock, M.D., F.R.S., H.T. Riley, Esq., B.A., Ed

<sup>143</sup>Barbara Fowler. *The Hellenistic Aesthetic*. (The University of Wisconsin Press. 1989), 5.

<sup>144</sup>Aileen Ajootian, “Monstrum or Daimon”, 1.

<sup>145</sup>Aileen Ajootian, “Monstrum or Daimon”, 1.

makes him applicable as an emblem of civilisation within an artistic programme.

The element that Hermaphroditos in the Salmacis Inscription and *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* have in common is their use within such an artistic programme designed to exhibit the powers of civilization of the city they represent. The schema of mythemes underlies this incorporation, and Chapter 5 will examine how these tie in with the Salmacis Inscription, cults, myths and *The Great Altar* at Pergamon in relation to *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, while the next chapter moves on to show how hermaphrodite iconography works as a counterpart to the literary evidence.

## Chapter 4. Iconography: Hermaphroditos and Hermaphrodite

### Statuary

*Where the Sphere of practical object ends, and that of “art” begins, depends then, on the “intentions” of the creators. (Panofsky, The History of Art as a Humanistic Discipline).*

### Introduction

The iconographical context of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* shows how the notions of marriage, fertility, heterosexual union, and civilization are expressed in different formal ways through a variety of visualisations that support the identification of these as the god Hermaphroditos. It gives an impression of the development of this type of statuary from its first occurrence in the Classical era to the height of its popularity in Hellenistic times, and how *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* fits in with the rest of hermaphrodite statuary.

### Hermaphrodite Iconography

The hermaphrodite motif became increasingly popular in the Hellenistic era. Some were playfully sensual decorations, and others were probably votive statues, likely connected with a fertility cult that became particularly important at the time, presumably representing the god Hermaphroditos. However, only one inscription exists that labels a statue Hermaphroditos. This is a dedication to Hermaphroditos found on a base belonging to a missing statue, near Vari in Attica, dated around 385 BC.<sup>146</sup>

There are 175 recorded occurrences of the hermaphrodite motif in Antiquity. 60 of these are statuettes, the most commonly occurring art form in which the hermaphrodite motif is depicted. 29 are gems, 23 statues, 8 reliefs, 7 murals, 7 large size herms, 6 wall paintings, 4 statuette groups, 3 statue groups, 3 torso statues, 2 torso statuettes, 2 heads, 1 mosaic, and 13 fragments. Of the 23 hermaphrodite statues found, 2 are Hellenistic and of the 60 statuettes, 35 have been dated to the Hellenistic period. Of the 3 statue groups found, none are Hellenistic and of the 4 statuette groups, only 1 is from the Hellenistic era.<sup>147</sup>

The hermaphrodite motifs can be divided into 7 main groups; Standing without Anasyromenos, Standing Anasyromenos, Herms, Kallipygos, Sitting, Lying not Borghese type and finally the Borghese type, or Sleeping Hermaphrodite. The Standing without Anasyromenos (lifting of clothes) is the most common type from Antiquity. There are 54

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<sup>146</sup>Ajootian, "Monstrum or Daimon", 93.

<sup>147</sup>Oehmke. *Das Weib im Manne*. From data collated from her catalogue of Hermaphrodite Statuary.

examples of this motif, and 22 are Hellenistic. Then there are 35 examples of the Lying not Borghese type, of which 11 are Hellenistic. Of the 33 Anasyromenos examples, 22 are Hellenistic and equals the number of Hellenistic Standing without Anasyromenos examples. After which we have 18 Kallipygos (4 Hellenistic), 14 Herms (9 Hellenistic), 11 Sitting (3 Hellenistic), and 10 Borghese types (2 Hellenistic).

In terms of Hellenistic sculpture, there are 2 known Standing Hermaphrodites without Anasyromenos, 16 Standing without Anasyromenos statuettes, 15 Standing with Anasyromenos statuettes, 2 Kallipygos statuettes, 1 Lying not Borghese type statuette, 1 Borghese type statuette and 1 Standing Anasyromenos in group statuette. So, the Standing without Anasyromenos motif is the only original Hellenistic statuary type that has survived. The other motif types are preserved in statuettes from the Hellenistic period.

There are three main types of free-standing hermaphrodite statue and statuette: the Sleeping Hermaphrodite, the Standing Hermaphrodite (Hermaphrodite *Anasyromenos*, Standing without *anasyromenos* which includes the Leaning Hermaphrodite type, *Kallipygos* Hermaphrodite), and the Wrestling Group. The *Kallipygos hermaphrodite* is only known in statuette and not statue form.

## Copies and Originals

A large amount of contemporary Hellenistic sculpture has survived in the form of marble statues, reliefs, and statuettes in bronze and terracotta. Unfortunately, the major bronze works have not endured. These were the royal and state commissions, and were more innovative and made by more skilled artists and workshops than the work created for private villas. The marble “originals” are for the most part from family and private levels, with some exceptions. They are called “originals” to differentiate from the Roman “copies”, but are often just as derivative in conception.<sup>148</sup> Many of the Hellenistic bronze originals are preserved in Roman marble copies today.

With the Hellenistic originals the provenance is often known, and sometimes the context. However, they are for the most part ordinary and commonplace artistic productions. The Roman copies, in contrast, reproduce major monuments by famous artists.<sup>149</sup> Obviously, they are not the authentic product of that artist, though, and the Hellenistic context is mostly unknown. The originals and copies therefore complement each other, and a more complete

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<sup>148</sup>R.R.R Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture*, (Thames and Hudson. London, 1991), 14.

<sup>149</sup>R.R.R Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture*, (Thames and Hudson. London, 1991), 14.

picture can be constructed by taking both into account.<sup>150</sup>

## The Sleeping Hermaphrodite

This statue is made in order for the viewer to first come across what appears to be the back of a naked woman. It employs a radical twist in the upper torso, which means the viewer has to go around to the other side of the sculpture before discovering the male genitals. There are about ten Roman replicas and variants of this type, which are thought to derive from a single Hellenistic original.<sup>151</sup> Although, whether the original was bronze or marble is contested. Those who believe it was bronze, hold the view that this is the statue Pliny refers to by his mention of “a noble hermaphrodite,” attributed to a Greek artist named Polykles.<sup>152</sup> Since Polykles was such a common name in an Athenian family famous for sculptors, it is uncertain which one he meant. The record is part of a list of mostly Classical and early Hellenistic sculptors, so it is unlikely that Pliny is referring to the two better known sculptors called Polykles from the second century BC.<sup>153</sup> The Roman copies are clearly Hellenistic in style. In fact, it has a sensuality reminiscent of Pergamene style, and some think it may have originated at Pergamon. A problem with this is that the statue was most likely set outside in nature (despite Bernini's famous restoration with a mattress), and there is no known logical site for this at Pergamon.<sup>154</sup> Famous examples of the Sleeping Hermaphrodite are the *Hermaphrodite Borghese* in Louvre and the *Uffizi Sleeping Hermaphrodite*.

These statues are sensual and erotic, and most probably not a cult or mythological figure. Sleep became a popular new state to portray in the Hellenistic era, and the hermaphrodite shares this lying pose with nymphs. Portraying sleep was another device for inviting erotic viewing of the sleeping subject, such as with the *Barberini Faun*, a copy of an original from c.200 BC.<sup>155</sup> Another example is the *Sleeping Ariadne*, a Hadrianic copy of a Hellenistic original from the Pergamene School of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.<sup>156</sup> The back view also has a parallel with a late Classical painting, known in copies from Pompeii, of the sleeping

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<sup>150</sup>R.R.R Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture*, (Thames and Hudson. London, 1991), 14.

<sup>151</sup>Ajootian, ”The Only Happy Couple, 233.

<sup>152</sup>Pliny the Elder. *Natural History*. 34.80.

<sup>153</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. (Thames and Hudson. London, 1991), 134.

<sup>154</sup>Guy Dickins. 58.

<sup>155</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. (Thames and Hudson. London. 1991), 135.

<sup>156</sup>Reichs, Emil. *Führer durch die öffentlicher Sammlungen klassischer Alertümer in Rom*, 2010. I:109f.

Ariadne waiting for Dionysos to rescue her.<sup>157</sup>

Ancient commentators were involved in a popular debate on the female versus the male as an aesthetic ideal, and whether it was better to like boys or women. This statue provides a tantalizing new twist on this argument, by combining male and female aesthetics in one form.

## The Standing Hermaphrodite

This has three main variants: the *anasyromenos*, the standing without *anasyromenos* (including leaning type), and *kallipygos*. The *anasyromenos* pose shows what seems to be a female lifting up her garment to reveal male genitals. It is possible that they had a similar apotropaic power to that displayed by Priapus and that they were thought to ward off evil influences.<sup>158</sup> This is the earliest and most widespread hermaphrodite motif, as well as being found, in the form of a mosaic, as late as 300 AD in Timgrad, Algeria.<sup>159</sup> Hermaphrodites *anasyromenoi* have been found in Greece, Italy, France, Spain, Algeria, Egypt, and Turkey.<sup>160</sup> A large number of Hellenistic Hermaphrodite *anasyromenoi* have been found on Delos.<sup>161</sup> The earliest documented representation, a terracotta mould fragment for a figurine, is from 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, found in the Coroplast's Dump on the north side of the Aereopagus. It shows a draped figure with female breasts clearly outlined beneath the garment, raising the skirts to show male genitals beneath. Most of the representations are small-scale terracotta and marble.<sup>162</sup>

The pose comes from a much older tradition for the purely female body. This precursor in the Greek world can be found as early as the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC On Crete.<sup>163</sup> The gesture also occurred in a group of Daedalic terracotta figurines and relief plaques of women, at the site of Axos northwest of Knossos, where habitation flourished in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. A large quantity of terracotta statuettes, the earliest Geometric in date, were found near what is thought to be an archaic temple to Aphrodite, and eight of these statuettes depict women

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<sup>157</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. (Thames and Hudson. London, 1991), 133.

<sup>158</sup>Ajootian, "Monstrum or Daimon," 104.

<sup>159</sup>Oehmke. *Das Weib im Manne*. 23.

<sup>160</sup>Oehmke. *Das Weib im Manne*. 23

<sup>161</sup>Ajootian, "Monstrum or Daimon," 104.

<sup>162</sup>Ajootian, "Monstrum or Daimon," 95.

<sup>163</sup>Ajootian, "Monstrum or Daimon," 95.

performing the *anasyromenos* pose.<sup>164</sup> The Hermaphrodite *Anasysomenos* can be traced back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, but the iconography of the actual gesture is much older. The subsequent *anasyromenos* hermaphrodites have been found in votive deposits, which makes it likely that the context and function of these statuettes was religious.<sup>165</sup> An example is the hermaphrodite figurine excavated at the Demeter Sanctuary in Mytilene, from late 3<sup>rd</sup> to early 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.<sup>166</sup> It makes it likely that the statuettes were part of a cult worship of the god Hermaphroditos. Statuettes have also been found in Hellenistic and Alexandrian graves, and as reliefs positioned as guardians of houses, such as an example from the Maison de Fourni.<sup>167</sup> So, the hermaphrodite may also have functioned as a protector of the dead and guardian of the living.

There is some variation and also development of this motif. A statuette from 3<sup>rd</sup> century shows Hermaphroditos leaning *anasyromenos* on a herm of Hermes, and later Roman hermaphrodite *anasyromenoi* show him cradling an infant in his raised garment.<sup>168</sup> A theory that this connects Hermaphroditos as a divinity of childbirth has been proposed.<sup>169</sup> However, as the following examples show, there were also other mythological characters cradling infants, so this connection is not necessarily clear-cut. There were probably Hellenistic precursors to this variation on the *anasyromenos* motif, as there is a Roman copy of an original from c.300 BC, showing Silenos cradling baby Dionysos in his arms.<sup>170</sup> Silenos leans in an extended contrapposto on a tree trunk, with cloth draped over his arm, in a pose not dissimilar to the leaning hermaphrodite.

In Ajootian's opinion, the apparently sudden appearance of the hermaphrodite *anasyromenos* in Athens in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century, testifies to it being a motif invented in Athens due to the political and social climate of the time.<sup>171</sup> The evidence is sparse, but based

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<sup>164</sup>Ajootian, "Monstrum or Daimon," 95.

<sup>165</sup>Ajootian, "Monstrum or Daimon," 96.

<sup>166</sup>Ajootian, "Monstrum or Daimon," 98.

<sup>167</sup>Ajootian, "Monstrum or Daimon," 105.

<sup>168</sup>Ajootian, "Monstrum or Daimon," 98.

<sup>169</sup>Ajootian, "Monstrum or Daimon," 100.

<sup>170</sup>Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*, 142.

<sup>171</sup>Ajootian, "Monstrum or Daimon," 102.

on several commentators noting that the adverse effects of the Peloponnesian War and two outbreaks of plague from 430 to 425 BC, coincided with the introduction of foreign divinities in Athens.<sup>172</sup> Thucydides writes that there was a general feeling among the Athenians during the plague years, that the gods were either powerless against this plague or had deserted them.<sup>173</sup> This may have resulted in different religious measures amongst the population, such as turning to foreign deities. The introduction of the cult of Asklepios to Athens in 420 BC was directly linked to the plague and its wake.<sup>174</sup> Other connections between divinities and the plague include establishing Amphaios, a healing divinity, at Oropos in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, and the development of the sanctuary of Artemis at Brauron. Although no definite connection can be made between the plague, or warfare and the introduction of several foreign deities in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century: Isis, Cybele, Attis, Adonis, Sabazios and Bendis also became part of worship in Athens at this time.<sup>175</sup>

Some research suggests that the *anasyromenos* pose points to Hermaphroditos being specifically a fertility god, because of the formal proximity to Priapos, being associated with fertility and also the brother of Hermaphroditos, who also exhibits the *anasyromenos* gesture.<sup>176</sup> However, the dating of these examples of Priapos only goes back to at the earliest the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.<sup>177</sup>

Hermaphrodite leaning is a much less common pose than the others. *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, falls into this category, and is the largest known hermaphrodite sculpture. Several smaller, Hellenistic ones also exist.<sup>178</sup> Some examples are: a terracotta statuette in the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria from 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, and a Hellenistic terracotta statuette in Berlin.<sup>179</sup>

*Kallipygos* Hermaphrodite, shows a standing hermaphrodite twisting round to marvel at his fine buttocks. *Kallipygos* means “of the beautiful buttocks”, and the hermaphrodite shares this pose with many other characters from mythology, such as Aphrodite, an example

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<sup>172</sup>Ajootian, “Monstrum or Daimon,” 103.

<sup>173</sup>Thucydides. 2.47.

<sup>174</sup>Ajootian, “Monstrum or Daimon,” 101.

<sup>175</sup>Ajootian, “Monstrum or Daimon,” 101.

<sup>176</sup> Marie Delcourt, *Hermaphrodite: Myths and Rites of the Bisexual Figure in Classical Antiquity*, Translated by Jennifer Nicholson, (Studio Books: London, 1961), 51.

<sup>177</sup>Oehmke, *Das Weib im Manne*, 23.

<sup>178</sup>Aileen Ajootian, “Monstrum or Daimon” in *Greece and Gender*, (ed. Berggreen, Bergen, 1995), 93.

<sup>179</sup>Oehmke. *Das Weib im Manne*, 80.



being the *Aphrodite Kallipyge*, in the National Archeological Museum in Naples. This is from the late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and is most likely based on a Greek bronze copy from the beginning of the Hellenistic era. An interesting aspect of this statue is the *anasyromenos* gesture, that is to say the lifting of the clothes to expose the buttocks rather than the genitals in this case. An example of a *Hermaphrodite Kallipygos*, is the late Hellenistic bronze statuette in the Payne Knight Collection of the British Museum.<sup>180</sup>

## The Wrestling Group

The complex composition of a Satyr and Hermaphrodite entwined in playful wrestling is made to be viewed from all sides. The Hermaphrodite struggles to get free from between the Satyr's legs, thrusting a hand in the other's face, pushing him backwards and off balance. The bodies are slender and well proportioned, and the face of the Hermaphrodite smiling. This composition is also seen with Satyr and Nymph. They are called *symplegmata* or "entanglements." Pliny mentions a *symplegma* by Kephisodotos son of Praxiteles, and one by Heliodoros of Pan and Olympos.<sup>181</sup> The former was active around 290 BC, but otherwise exact dates for these erotic groups are not known.<sup>182</sup>

This group was commonly found in Roman theatres and baths. A Hellenistic prototype has also been proposed for these Roman sculptures, but it may also be a possibility that parallels can be found in Hellenistic vase painting.<sup>183</sup> Well known examples include *The Dresden Group*, and the *Berlin Torlonia Group*.

## Nakedness

Essential to the representation of Hermaphroditos is the nakedness, revealing the mixed sexual characteristics of the genitalia. The vast majority of depictions have a female physique. Depictions of the female body increased greatly in the Hellenistic period, and female nakedness became more acceptable. The female nude became more and more common from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC onwards as an accepted formula for expressing female beauty. It also became the most common way of conveying any type of sexually attractive body. This correlates with a change in attitude to and circumstance of Hellenistic women, becoming more visible in society, although not enjoying the kind of status associated with women in the

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<sup>180</sup>Oehmke. *Das Weib im Manne*, 129.

<sup>181</sup>Pliny. *Natural History*. 36.24 and 35.

<sup>182</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. (Thames and Hudson. London, 1991), 131.

<sup>183</sup>Aileen Ajootian, "The Only Happy Couple" in *Naked Truths*, 220.

modern era.<sup>184</sup> Statues of women were on the whole more homogenous than statues of men in the Hellenistic era, and it can be quite difficult to tell apart statues of goddesses, queens and other mortal women.<sup>185</sup> The Hellenistic world was still largely male-oriented, and Hellenistic women probably did indeed make up a more homogenous group within this world.<sup>186</sup>

There were two particularly notable inventions in this era: statues of upper and upper middle-class women, and the prominence of naked Aphrodite statues. An added dimension typical for the female nude as an erotic, religious object was the gesture of covering up or turning away from the viewer as if in shame or displeasure. Hermaphroditos has inherited the female nudity schema from Aphrodite, but unlike her he displays his naked body and genitalia shamelessly and without turning away from the viewer. His female physique is on display in much the same way as the female goddesses, but with him the point is to show everything. Although, billowing drapery is also sometimes used to enhance his curves, as with female nudes, other statues go to great lengths to show off the salient parts, such as a statuette from Kos, where he is fully clothed, but there is an ostentatious opening in the *chiton* showing a breast and his penis.<sup>187</sup>

The *anasyromenos* motif, too, usually shows him fully dressed and purposefully lifting his garment so that the viewer is confronted with his phallus. There are examples of this kind of exhibitionism in female iconography, as well, but they are exceptions. His posture projects a typically masculine attitude. When it comes to Hermaphroditos it is the rule, his defining characteristic. As mentioned earlier, the mixture of female and male components normally signifies a hermaphrodite sculpture, but there are subtle differences in this schema, too, between formulas for men, young men and women.<sup>188</sup> Apollo and Dionysos, for example, have a much more androgynous or even hermaphroditic physique in the Hellenistic era. They started off as bearded and masculine men in the Classical era, but become effeminate youths in Hellenistic depictions. Aphrodite, and to some extent Athena, have also had phases of a squarer, more masculine physique, especially in the torso, before coming back to a more female voluptuous formula. The fleshiness of *The Crouching Aphrodite*, is striking in comparison with the more matronly body of *The Aphrodite of Melos*.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>184</sup>R.R.R. Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*.75.

<sup>185</sup>R.R.R. Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*.75.

<sup>186</sup>R.R.R. Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*.75.

<sup>187</sup>Stefanie Oehmke, *Das Weib im Manne: Hermaphroditos in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Berlin: Willmuth Arenhövel, 2004). 65.

<sup>188</sup>Stefanie Oehmke, *Das Weib im Manne: Hermaphroditos in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Berlin: Willmuth Arenhövel, 2004). 65.

<sup>189</sup>Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture*, 81.

In the earliest representations of Hermaphroditos, he has a distinctly female physique in his *anasyromenos* poses, there was then a masculinization of his posture, clothing and hairstyle, before the return to his original more solidly female schema. These subtle changes are most evident in the standing hermaphrodite.<sup>190</sup> *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, with his over life size, marks a high point in the popularity of the mythical figure.

## **Ithuphallikos**

The inclusion of a penis is essential to the representation of the hermaphrodite body in the Ancient world. Herms are not necessarily a representation of the god Hermaphroditos, they also had the heads of many other gods in the Hellenistic era, but always an erect penis. An example is a terracotta figure of the goddess Aphrodite hanging a garland on the god Dionysos, from Myrna in Asia Minor, c.100 BC.<sup>191</sup> There were also phallus amulets, as seen in this coral phallus amulet from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD,<sup>192</sup> and phalluses as part of *tintinnabulum* or wind chimes, such as a bronze phallus in the form of a pet with tail and legs from c.100 BC.<sup>193</sup> The amulets were worn for luck, and the wind chimes were thought to ward off evil.<sup>194</sup> Before the rise of Christianity with its views on chastity and asceticism, and the eventual fig leafing of genitals, there was a different view on what was deemed explicit.<sup>195</sup> The male body was depicted naked with no hint of shame, and the female body found different formulas of nudity, too.

The earliest hermaphrodite motifs, the *anasyromenos*, proudly display their erect penis, whereas the later Hellenistic motifs have more subtle, and often flaccid, genitals. In these the penis is more aesthetically in tact with the body, rather than symbolically exaggerated and emphasized.

Phallic worship was a big part of religion, celebrating paternity and fruitfulness.<sup>196</sup> In early, matrilineal epochs, the vagina was symbolised by shells, and when society became patrilineal the phallic became the symbol of sex in religion.<sup>197</sup> Marriage and a monogamous way of life are promoted in patrilineal societies, where the family structure relies on knowing

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<sup>190</sup>Stefanie Oehmke, *Das Weib im Manne: Hermaphroditos in der griechisch-römischen Antike* (Berlin: Willmuth Arenhövel, 2004). 65.

<sup>191</sup>In the British Museum 1890, 1105.1. Caroline Vout. *Sex on Show: Seeing the Erotic in Greece and Rome*, (The British Museum Press, 2013), 11.

<sup>192</sup>In the British Museum 1814, 0704.1175. Charles Townley collection. Vout. *Sex on Show*. 9.

<sup>193</sup>In the British Museum 1814, 0704.1257. Charles Townley collection. Vout. *Sex on Show*. 9.

<sup>194</sup>Caroline Vout, *Sex on Show: Seeing the Erotic in Greece and Rome*, (The British Museum Press, 2013), 9.

<sup>195</sup>Caroline Vout, *Sex on Show*. 11.

<sup>196</sup>Bertrand Russell, *Marriage and Morals*, (Routledge. London. 2009), 20.

<sup>197</sup>Russell, *Marriage and Morals*, 21.

who the father of the child is.<sup>198</sup> It is associated with civilizing geographical areas, and creating families that can build a social structure to support cities, as in the case of Cecrops the mythological king of Athens, who introduces the people to the institution of marriage. The Salmacis Inscription is also evidence of this power structure at work, where Hermaphroditos invents the lawful union between man and woman, which can control female chastity and fertility and build up the male line. “The savage minds of men” are “made gentle” by the civilising instrument of matrimony, as part of the structure of an organised state.

In Classical Greece, boys and young men were seen as the proper objects of love because women were not part of the world of their ideas.<sup>199</sup> In a simplified view, women formed part of their reproductive duties, although this does not take into account the acts of individual devotion in both same and different sex relations. In the Hellenistic era, where women became a bigger part of the public world of men, and marriage became more of an individual choice, the heterosexual physical ideal came into conflict with the idealised male body, and the hermaphrodite with a female physique, yet with a penis, was a tantalizing aesthetic solution for the largely bisexual male audience.

## Summary

So, *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, fits into the rest of hermaphrodite iconography as a strong link between the early religious and sacred function, and the progression through the Hellenistic era developing a clearly erotic aesthetic ideal. Being part of the standing types also makes this progression quite clear. The Classical hermaphrodite iconology shows a connection with religious functions, and this is still clearly a part of the formal language of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*. The static posture, often used for a variety of gods, is a classicistic element that conveys gravity and associations of Athenian grandeur, along with the calm stillness of the facial expression. The corrosion of the face means it is difficult to make any closer comparisons. The fleshy body type, undulating curves, rippling cloth, and layered curly hair give the statue a distinctly erotic aesthetic, though, in keeping with a Hellenistic style. It's over-life size and position within *The Great Altar*, means it was either a votive offering or a cult statue, which places it firmly in the religious sphere.

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<sup>198</sup>Russell, *Marriage and Morals*, 16.

<sup>199</sup>Russell, *Marriage and Morals*, 16.

## Chapter 5. Myth, Cults, and Rituals: *The Pergamon*

### *Hermaphrodite* and the Religious and Political Sphere

*Hermaphroditos the all-excellent, he who invented marriage and was the first to bind together wedded couples by his law (Salmacis Inscription)*

#### Introduction

*The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* correlates with influences from myths, cults, and rituals, and the agenda of the patrons behind its commission. The compositional and iconographical features of the statue are evidence of a Hellenistic religious attitude, and a public taste for sensual aesthetics of the Dionysian landscape.

In the same way that Hermaphroditos in the Salmacis Inscription is set within a cosmogenic framework within the structure of the poem, *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* is set within a cosmogenic framework, as part of the decorations of *The Great Altar* in the acropolis of Pergamon. I will outline how *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* is part of a large artistic programme designed to display the power of the Attalid dynasty, and draw cultural parallels with both Athens and Rome. These issues are pertinent, because *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* was made to be a part of the public art program of *The Great Altar* in Pergamon, as an expression of Attalid power, and celebration of its victories. These sanctuaries were also important areas in which cult worship of local deities took place. The divinities held special importance to the city and its people.

*The Great Altar* was a public religious monument, with propagandistic and dynastic overtones. The temple as a public monument, was the house of the deity of the community, and was a symbol of the collective spending and identity.<sup>200</sup> The lavish architecture was made to convey a sense of power, while the sculptures were constructed to be easily understood by the masses through visual means.<sup>201</sup> The sculptures define the

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<sup>200</sup>R.R.R Smith. "The Marble Culture of Antiquity," in *Sculpted for Eternity. Treasures of Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Art from the Istanbul Archeological Museum*. (Ertug & Kocabyk), 19.

<sup>201</sup>Nancy T. De Grummond and Brunilde S. Ridgeway. *From Pergamon to Sperlonga: Sculpture and Context*. (University of California Press. 2000), 75.

meaning and the source of that power.<sup>202</sup>

In the early Hellenistic period, Pergamon was a fortress city governed for the Macedonians kings, by Philetairos. Eumenes I gained a measure of independence, but it was Attalos I (241 – 197 BC), who defeated both the Gauls and the Seleucids, and gave the city a solid political standing, as well as taking the royal title. Eumenes II, and Attalos II then spent lavishly on art, culture, and buildings, imitating Athens and Alexandria, and patronising Delphi, to solidify the dynasty and combat their image as newcomers.<sup>203</sup>

Pergamon provides an essential position as contemporary evidence for Hellenistic sculpture, because it is the only one of the royal capitals to have been systematically excavated. Most of the material is from the late third and second century, so it is a cross-section of mid-Hellenistic sculpture, but it still provides a good supply of originals from which the record of copies can be complemented.<sup>204</sup> This is one reason *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* is an important part of hermaphrodite iconography, since it is a rare Hellenistic original, against which Roman copies can be compared, and against which the development from earlier sculpture can be measured.

## Public Art in the Hellenistic Era

Art in the Hellenistic era was created primarily for the public arena. Hellenistic schools of sculpture are quite hard to identify, due to the mobility of the artists, but the sculptors at Pergamon were engaged long-term on the extensive public works, with ample official patronage, so the style they produced is distinct and cohesive.<sup>205</sup>

The Hellenistic world had a display culture expressed through grand symbols, where each statue was a potent marker, and huge spending on marble statues and monuments was a distinctive feature of the culture. They represented religious, social and political concerns, as well as relationships between gods and humans, subjects and rulers, and between family members.<sup>206</sup> Altars of unprecedented size became an elaborated feature of religious buildings in the Hellenistic age, of which *The Great Altar* at Pergamon is a good example.<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>202</sup>Grummond and Ridegway. *From Pergamon to Sperlonga: Sculpture and Context*. (University of California Press, 2000), 75.

<sup>203</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. 155.

<sup>204</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. 155.

<sup>205</sup>Michael Grant. *The Hellenistic Greeks: From Alexander to Cleopatra*. (Butler&Tanner Ltd. London, 1990), 169.

<sup>206</sup>R.R.R Smith. "The Marble Culture of Antiquity," in *Sculpted for Eternity. Treasures of Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Art from the Istanbul Archeological Museum*. (Ertug & Kocabyk), 16.

<sup>207</sup>Michael Grant. *The Hellenistic Greeks: From Alexander to Cleopatra*. (Butler&Tanner Ltd. London. 1990),

Statues were always commissioned and produced for a specific setting and purpose, and not as evidence of the creativity of the maker. They had a definite function and occasion, and were generally made for three different areas. Firstly, they could be made to honour the gods in temples and sanctuaries, secondly to honour and commemorate the dead in cemeteries and tombs, and thirdly to honour the powerful living in the public sphere. Each specific statue, thereby also showed the relationship between the buyer and the honoured subject, whether gods, heroes, or living or dead mortals.<sup>208</sup>

The aim of the sculptures was to be life-like or better than life-like. This realness was achieved through structured, and masterfully composed images with a high degree of idealised components. This produces a tension between the goal of being as life-like as possible, and the means by which it was done. The main subject, the human body, was reformatted in huge variety of ways to act as a metaphorical medium through which ideas were represented and rearranged.<sup>209</sup> The realness also served to emphasise their role as substitutes for real presences. Moreover, they serve as indicators of how subjects were visualised by ancient viewers.<sup>210</sup>

Artists and craftsmen were praised for their technical realisation of a collective understanding of what the subjects of the statues should look like, not for their originality or novelty. This understanding was constantly evolving over time, and resulted in many different kinds of variation within subject matter. To a certain degree this also produced repetitiveness, but on the whole there is a great range in visual representation, due to the shifting public tastes, individual style of the artist, and workshop techniques.<sup>211</sup>

## **The Cultural Context of Pergamon**

Pergamon is situated in present day Turkey, roughly 30 kilometres inland from the west coast. It is half way between Smyrna on the south, and Troy on the north, opposite the island of Lesbos. The old fortified settlement was positioned on top of a mountain, about 250 metres above present day Bergama, and accessible from the south, with a view of the Kaikos

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145.

<sup>208</sup>R.R.R Smith. "The Marble Culture of Antiquity," in *Sculpted for Eternity. Treasures of Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Art from the Istanbul Archeological Museum*. (Ertug & Kocabyk), 17.

<sup>209</sup>R.R.R Smith. "The Marble Culture of Antiquity," in *Sculpted for Eternity. Treasures of Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Art from the Istanbul Archeological Museum*. (Ertug & Kocabyk), 17.

<sup>210</sup>R.R.R Smith. "The Marble Culture of Antiquity," in *Sculpted for Eternity. Treasures of Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Art from the Istanbul Archeological Museum*. (Ertug & Kocabyk), 17.

<sup>211</sup>R.R.R Smith. "The Marble Culture of Antiquity," in *Sculpted for Eternity. Treasures of Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Art from the Istanbul Archeological Museum*. (Ertug & Kocabyk), 18.

Valley.<sup>212</sup>

The Ancient city of Pergamon included an acropolis with The Great Altar; Temple of Athena, Sanctuaries of Demeter, Hera, Apollo, Artemis, Aphrodite, Hermes, Hephaistos and Poseidon<sup>213</sup>; Theatre of Dionysos, Temple of Dionysos, several baths, gymnasium, the House of Attalos, an upper and lower Agora, a library, and several palaces. Outside of the acropolis there was also the Red Hall that served the cult of the Egyptian deities, the Sanctuary of Asklepios, and a holy road.<sup>214</sup>

Prior to the Hellenistic period, Pergamon had held little importance, but with the rise of the Attalids as a ruling dynasty, it stepped out of the shadows and cultivated an international profile. Philetairos, the founder of the Attalids, was from Tios, a small town on the Black Sea, his mother was said to have been a flute player and a prostitute, and he was rumoured to have been a eunuch himself.<sup>215</sup> He seized power by force, by taking control of the garrison and betraying, Lysimachos, his overlord. He was succeeded by Eumenes I (263 – 241 BC), who was his brother's son, and in turn followed by Attalos I, who was the son of another brother of Philetairos. Attalos I (241 – 197) BC, was a powerful military leader, and successfully defeated the Gauls, who were seen as invincible. He was also successful in his conflicts with Syrian kings, after which he assumed the title of king himself, and began erecting great monuments in honour of his deeds.<sup>216</sup>

The founding family was keen to establish their cultural credentials, invent an aristocratic pedigree, and make a place for themselves in the Hellenistic world. *The Great Altar* of Pergamon was constructed as an emblem of the prosperity and authority of the Attalids. It linked both the heritage of Athens and the Power of Rome. *The Telephos Frieze* shows Telephos being nursed by a lioness. This is a reference to Romulus and Remus, who were suckled by a she-wolf. It creates a visual parallel, at the same time as surpassing the Roman version by using an even mightier animal.<sup>217</sup> The Gigantomachy echoes the Parthenon friezes, which also employs the mythological battle of gods and giants to symbolize the victory of order over chaos, and associates the Attalids with the classical

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<sup>212</sup>Mary McMahon Honan, trans. *Guide to the Pergamon Museum*. (Royal Museums of Berlin, Georg Reimer. Berlin, 1904), 7.

<sup>213</sup>Francois Queyrel, *L'Autel de Pergame: Images et pouvoir en Grèce d'Asie*. Paris: Antiova&Picard, 2005. 145.

<sup>214</sup>Volker Kästner, "The Architecture of The Great Altar of Pergamon," in *Pergamon: Citadel of the Gods*. Harvard Theology Studies 46. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1998. 111.

<sup>215</sup>Eric S. Gruen. "Culture as Policy: The Attalids of Pergamon," in *From Pergamon to Sperlonga*, 17.

<sup>216</sup>Mary McMahon Honan, trans. *Guide to the Pergamon Museum*. Royal Museums of Berlin. Georg Reimer. Berlin. 1904. 8.

<sup>217</sup>The lion is associated with the goddess Cybele, who was often represented surrounded by lions.



Athenian achievements: civilizing forces against barbarians and order in the face of chaos.<sup>218</sup> There was also a temple to Athena, and a sculpture of Athena opposite *The Great Altar*, making the link with Athens even more explicit.<sup>219</sup>

The monument uses the myth of Telephos to form the backdrop for the origin of the Attalids, at the same time as it shows their resistance to and victory over the Gauls. Being internationally accepted was the only way for the small state to keep its independence.<sup>220</sup> Pergamon considered itself part of the Greek community from the very beginning, and made great efforts to establish connections with important international sanctuaries such as Delphi, Plympia, and Delos. Where neighbouring states like Bithynia, Paphlagonia, and Pontos remained provincial, Philatairos recognised and believed in the effectiveness of cultural politics to maintain and expand his power.<sup>221</sup> One generation later, in 188 BC, Pergamon was a mighty capital, and by the time of Augustus' rule, it was the capital of Asia, second only to Ephesos.<sup>222</sup>

The acropolis at Pergamon was a decorative display of power on a gigantic scale, and provided a profoundly eastern people with associations of Greek and Roman civilization. This is an interesting parallel to the Salmacis Inscription, which can be interpreted as a civilization, or founding myth, and employs the same structure of showing the rise of a civilization with a divine origin, absorbing and using an expression of Greek cultural heritage.

### ***The Great Altar at Pergamon***

In all probability, *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* was part of the freestanding sculptural decorations of *The Great Altar*. Mathias René Hoftler in his article “Die Altarterrasse als 'sacraler Ort' – Überlegungen zur Skulpturenausstattung des Altarplatzes” , proposes that the hermaphrodite could have formed a Dionysian ensemble together with the statues of a youthful drunken satyr, a Silenus, and an enigmatic obese sitting figure.<sup>223</sup> Dedicatory inscriptions honouring Dionysos are found in the wider area of the altar terrace, showing that Dionysos and mythical beings connected to him were important in Pergamon.<sup>224</sup> As,

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<sup>218</sup>Eric S. Gruen. “Culture as Policy: The Attalids of Pergamon,” in *From Pergamon to Sperlonga*, 17.

<sup>219</sup>In addition, there were classisizing sculptures of Athena from the library and temple terrace.

<sup>220</sup>Renée Dreyfus, Ellen Schraudolph. *Pergamon. The Telephos Frieze from The Great Altar*. Vol.2. Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco. 1996. 24.

<sup>221</sup>Dreyfus. *Pergamon*. 24.

<sup>222</sup>Dreyfus. *Pergamon*. 25.

<sup>223</sup>Mathias René Hoftler, “Die Altarterrasse als 'sacraler Ort' – Überlegungen zur Skulpturenausstattung des Altarplatzes” in Grüßinger, *Pergamon: Panorama der antiken Metropole*. (Petersberg: Imhof, 2011). 222.

<sup>224</sup>Mathias René Hoftler, “Die Altarterrasse als 'sacraler Ort' – Überlegungen zur Skulpturenausstattung des

mentioned in Chapter 2, the hermaphrodite was found in a well with a large, marble, female head and the marble upper body of a female sculpture that may have been a representation of an empress, such as Apollonis, the wife of Attalos I, and mother of Attalos II and Eumenes II.<sup>225</sup> She had a large cult dedicated to her worship in Pergamon. However, the hermaphrodite does not necessarily belong to the group that these statues were part of, although it is also possible that they all belonged to the Hecate group. Another possibility, is that he may have been part of the Cybele and Attis group, if he was in fact aesthetically connected to the portrayal of the eunuchs who were her priests.

The Great Altar stood on the acropolis, in the middle of the old town of Pergamon. It is now reconstructed in Berlin, and is a centrepiece of Hellenistic art and architecture.<sup>226</sup> The date, program, and function of the altar are all uncertain, in that to whom it was dedicated is not known, or where much of the free-standing sculpture stood, as well as its exact purpose. It was probably built by Eumenes II, and most likely dedicated to Zeus and Athena.<sup>227</sup> The fragments that survive of the architrave do not preserve the name or names of the god/gods to whom it was dedicated.<sup>228</sup>

The consensus is that the building must be a kind of altar, because it fits this genre in terms of structure, and also a victory monument.<sup>229</sup> Ampelius, one of the few ancient writers to mention it, refers to it as an altar, which is a testament to how it was seen in Antiquity, although we lack definite proof.<sup>230</sup> Volker Kästner, is of the opinion that the sanctuary of Artemis at Ephesos served as a prototype for the later columned altars in Asia Minor, which is also the case for the Pergamene Altar.<sup>231</sup> There was a trend to enhance the appearance of architecture in the Hellenistic era, due to the monarchic self-aggrandizement that expressed itself as a heroization of the ruler, and this led to the development of the columned altars. Grave monuments also followed this trend, as can be seen with the mausoleum at Halicarnassos.<sup>232</sup> These buildings also have an extensive decorative sculptural program,

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Altarplatzes” in Grüßinger, *Pergamon: Panorama der antiken Metropole*. (Petersberg: Imhof, 2011). 222.

<sup>225</sup>Grüßinger, *Pergamon: Panorama der antiken Metropole*. (Petersberg: Imhof, 2011). 500.

<sup>226</sup>Andrew Stewart. “Pergamo Ara Marmorea Magna. On the Date, Reconstruction, and Functions of The Great Altar of Pergamon,” in *From Pergamon to Sperlonga*. 32.

<sup>227</sup>Mary McMahon Honan, trans. *Guide to the Pergamon Museum*. Royal Museums of Berlin. Georg Reimer. Berlin. 1904. 14.

<sup>228</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. 157.

<sup>229</sup>Evamaria Schmidt. *The Great Altar of Pergamon*. Veb Edition Leipzig, 1962. 5.

<sup>230</sup>Lucius Ampelius. *Book of Memorable Facts*. 8,44.

<sup>231</sup>Volker Kästner, “The Architecture of The Great Altar of Pergamon,” in *Pergamon: Citadel of the Gods*. Harvard Theology Studies 46. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1998. 139.

<sup>232</sup>Volker Kästner, “The Architecture of The Great Altar of Pergamon,” in *Pergamon: Citadel of the Gods*. Harvard Theology Studies 46. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1998. 139.

including the roof area, so that groups of sculptures can be seen from a distance.<sup>233</sup>

The building consists of a court surrounded by colonnades, and positioned on a gigantic podium, decorated with a Gigantomachy. On the west, is a great staircase leading to the interior court, housing a winged structure, which was possibly a sacrificial altar. This was surrounded by *The Telephos frieze*,<sup>234</sup> using the story of Telephos<sup>235</sup> as an analogy giving the rulers of Pergamon the appropriate ancestry by showing Telephos as the mythological founder of the Attalid dynasty.<sup>236</sup>

The Gigantomachy, or battle between gods and giants, is an enduring theme from earlier Greek art. The giants were the sons of Gaia (Earth) who had been accidentally fertilized by Ouranos when Cronos castrated him. They were an older generation of beast-like creatures who wanted to overthrow the ruling Olympian gods. These were the anthropomorphic gods of the Greeks, who were told that victory would be their if they had the help of a mortal, so they enlisted Herakles. The battle and victory of the Olympian gods was seen as an aetiology for the Greek order of things and was understood and used as a historical defence of that order. The Great Altar shows an allegory of the defeat of the Gauls by the Attalids, but is also a symbolic defence of civilization as sanctified by Classical Athens.<sup>237</sup>

R.R.R Smith suggests that this Gigantomachy could be based on a lost literary text, possibly an Attalid court epic.<sup>238</sup> This is a pertinent issue regarding the way in which text and visual art complement and supplement each other, and is another example of the common discourse they are part of.

The function of the apsidal building encased in its foundations is uncertain, but it may have been a grave, a heroön or a nymphaion.<sup>239</sup> The latter is interesting in regard to the hermaphrodite sculpture, and the mythical context of Hermaphroditos and Salmacis the nymph, as it could point to rituals that may have involved a nymphaion.

More than forty over-lifesized female draped figures in contemporary style were found on or near The Great Altar terrace, but only one or two of their heads have been preserved.

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<sup>233</sup>Volker Kästner, "The Architecture of The Great Altar of Pergamon," in *Pergamon: Citadel of the Gods*. Harvard Theology Studies 46. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1998. 140.

<sup>234</sup>Andrew Stewart, "Pergamo Ara Marmorea Magna. On the Date, Reconstruction, and Functions of The Great Altar of Pergamon," in *From Pergamon to Sperlonga*. 32.

<sup>235</sup>In Greek mythology, Telephos was the son of Heracles and Auge. He became king of Mysia in Asia Minor and was wounded by the Achaeans when they came to sack Troy and retrieve Helen.

<sup>236</sup>R.R.R Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture*, 158.

<sup>237</sup>R.R.R Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture*, 159.

<sup>238</sup>R.R.R Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture*, 164.

<sup>239</sup>Andrew Stewart, "Pergamo Ara Marmorea Magna. On the Date, Reconstruction, and Functions of The Great Altar of Pergamon," in *From Pergamon to Sperlonga*, 32.

They are fairly homogenous in scale and style, with a few seated figures and only one carrying an attribute: a sword. The heads are indeterminate, and ideal, and could be equally appropriate for goddesses, mortals, or personifications. They may have decorated the external colonnades of The Great Altar.<sup>240</sup>

The Attalids nurtured cults to many different gods: Zeus, Dionysos, Athena, Demeter, Asklepios, and Cybele. A colossal cult statue of Zeus from the temple of Hera, was part of the artistic program. In addition, a statue of Cybele could also have been a cult statue. A figure of Attis was most likely part of her environment.<sup>241</sup> This statue is serious and reserved in tone, and *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* fits well with these in style. Attis has the same leaning contrapposto as the Hermaphrodite, but wears trousers, a belt and a mantle over his shoulder. His figure under the garments appears effeminate.

## Cults in Asia Minor

The common elements for the cult of a god included an altar, a cult statue, and a temple where the statue was housed.<sup>242</sup> Divine cults used festivals, sacrifices, and votive offerings as modes of expression. The sculptor created a recognisable image of the god, adding local attributes and characteristics. Sanctuaries that indicate the presence of a cult to the divinity it was dedicated to have been found in Pergamon in relation to Apollo, Zeus, Athena, Asklepios, Cybele, Demeter and Kore, Hera, Dionysos, and a collection of Egyptian gods.<sup>243</sup>

The mythical personalities in the Gigantomachy represent stories of founding cities, patriotism and victories. The Great Mother has a prominent position at the birth of Telephos in *The Telephos frieze*, and as the centre of cult worship in Pergamon.<sup>244</sup> Francois Queyrel proposes that the images of divinities on *The Great Altar* are not just iconic, but also deictic or indexical, that is to say, they cannot be fully understood without further contextual information.<sup>245</sup>

There is no mention of a cult of Hermaphroditos before the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, but the fact that there are so many examples of hermaphrodite sculpture in a variety of forms from Antiquity, many as votive offerings, indicates that Hermaphroditos had a following and a

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<sup>240</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. 157.

<sup>241</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. 156.

<sup>242</sup>R.R.R Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*. 63.

<sup>243</sup>Sol Agelidis, "Kulte und Heiligtümer in Pergamon," in Grüßinger, *Pergamon: Panorama der antiken Metropole*. (Petersberg: Imhof, 2011).175.

<sup>244</sup>Francois Queyrel, *L'Autel de Pergame: Images et pouvoir en Grèce d'Asie*.Paris: Antiova&Picard, 2005. 147.

<sup>245</sup>Francois Queyrel, *L'Autel de Pergame: Images et pouvoir en Grèce d'Asie*.Paris: Antiova&Picard, 2005. 148.

function as a deity. In Theophrastus' *Characters*, the Superstitious Man likes to hang garlands on the Hermaphrodites, but this could also mean a kind of herm.<sup>246</sup> This wouldn't imply a cult, as many gods were represented as herms. In Alciphron, the widow Epiphyllis says that she is going to dedicate an *eiresione*<sup>247</sup> at a shrine in the Attic *deme* of Alopeke to Hermaphroditos.<sup>248</sup> This is another indication that Hermaphroditos was a god connected to marriage, and supports the evidence found in the Salmacis Inscription where he is credited as being the first to bind marriage in law.

Not all translations are in agreement. Another translation of the Greek, has it saying that the shrine is to *herma Phaidriou tou*, and not *Hermaphroditou*.<sup>249</sup> This would mean a herm and not Hermaphroditos. Yet another reading suggests that Hermaphroditos in this case is the name of the dead husband of Epiphyllis, whose memory she is honouring, and in the context it would not be likely for her to pray to Hermaphroditos the god of marriage, since this implies that she wants a new husband.<sup>250</sup> In terms of the geographical context there is no other information, apart from the existence of a sanctuary of Aphrodite in this *deme*.<sup>251</sup>

As mentioned in Chapter 2, regarding the question of whether *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* is Hermaphroditos, inscriptional evidence on an altar indicates a cult. Even though the worship of Hermaphroditos may not have been widespread practice in Pergamon, it is likely that he was part of such a collective cult, consisting of several divinities.

This may have been the cult of the Great Mother, or Cybele, also known as Agdistis.<sup>252</sup> Cybele was the main Phrygian deity, called Matar, or mother. Sometimes she had the epithet “Kubileya”, which probably meant “of the mountain.” In Greek she is often called “Cybele”, a name taken from this epithet. She has other epithets, such as Meter Dindymene and Agdistis, after Mount Dindymos and Mount Agdos in Phrygia, as well as Mater Idaea after Mount Ida in Troas. These epithets all refer to holy mountains.<sup>253</sup> The myths surrounding her work on the traditional Greek story pattern of the separation of a powerful goddess and her beloved, and the exposure of a miraculous child at birth, who survives and affects the lives of its parents. It also combines this with the legend of the birth of the gods

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<sup>246</sup>Theophrastus. *Characters*. 16, 11.

<sup>247</sup>A branch of olive or laurel covered with wool, fruit, cakes and olive flasks as a dedication to the gods.

<sup>248</sup>Alciphron, *Epistulae Rusticae*. 2,35.

<sup>249</sup>Lloyd-Jones, “The Pride of Halicarnassus” 1999, 7.

<sup>250</sup>Aileen Ajootian. *LIMC*. 269.

<sup>251</sup>Luc Brisson, 170.

<sup>252</sup>Strabo. *Geography*. 10.3.12.

<sup>253</sup>Inge Claerhout and John Devreker. *Sacred City of the Anatolian Mother Goddess: Pessinous, an archaeological guide*. Translation by Marc de la Ruelle. (Istanbul: Homer Kitabevi ve Yayinilik Ltd. Sti,

and passage of power through successive divine generations.<sup>254</sup> Cybele was originally a Phrygian, an area now in Turkey, nature goddess, whom the Greeks closely associated with the goddess Rhea. There are many slightly different versions, but Pausanias writes about her birth that it came about by Zeus (or the Phrygian sky god) letting seed fall on the ground during his sleep, from which a daimon called Agdistis was borne, who had both male and female sex organs. This is a familiar theme from the gigantomachy of the Greeks. The gods feared him and cut off his male sex organs. From this, an almond tree grew, and the daughter of the river Sangarios took some almonds and lay them against her body. The fruit disappeared, but she was now pregnant. She gave birth to a boy, Attis, who was put out to die. However, he was found and raised by a goat. As he grew up, he attained an almost inhuman beauty, and when Agdistis saw him, she fell in love. Attis was sent to marry the king's daughter in Pessinos, but as the marriage song was being sung, Agdistis appeared and Attis went mad and cut off his genitals, as did the king. Agdistis repented for what she had done to Attis, and asked Zeus to prevent his body from ageing or decaying, which he did.<sup>255</sup>

Cybele was also the mother of Sabazios, the Phrygian equivalent of Dionysos. This was adapted by the Greeks, so that Rhea was the mother and nurse of Dionysos. There was an orgiastic cult to Dionysos-Sabazios. There was also the previously mentioned eunuch priesthood of Cybele, called the Galli, or also referred to in the feminine Gallai, where the initiates re-enacted the myth by self-castration.<sup>256</sup> The Romans were told by the Sibylline books that in order to defeat a foreign enemy they must acquire the Mother Goddess. They took this to mean that in order to defeat Hannibal they needed to move the cult of the goddess Cybele to Rome. So, in a parallel to the Athenians appropriating new gods during the Persian Wars to defeat plague and other consequences of war, the Romans asked Attalos of Pergamon to transfer Cybele to them, which he did, along with her priest: the Galli.

A marble herm, (height 0, 255m), in the form of a hermaphrodite was also found at Pergamon, which could indicate that there may have been an important Hellenistic cult there.<sup>257</sup> The herm dates from the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, and was found at the top of the Agora at Pergamon. The head, neck, arms, penis and lower part of the post are missing. This leaves a feminine torso with breasts, curved hips, a rounded belly, and finally testicles. The

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2008), 46.

<sup>254</sup>Inge Claerhout and John Devreker. *Sacred City of the Anatolian Mother Goddess: Pessinos, an archaeological guide*. Translation by Marc de la Ruelle. (Istanbul: Homer Kitabevi ve Yayinilik Ltd. Sti, 2008), 158.

<sup>255</sup>Pausanias. *Descriptions of Greece*. 7.17.8

<sup>256</sup>Pausanias. 7.17.8.

first letters of the Greek alphabet are carved in irregular lettering on the thigh. He has a mantle draped over his shoulders and back. Oehmke is of the opinion that this is Hermaphroditos represented in the form of a herm, because of the female breasts.<sup>258</sup>

Hermaphroditos shares elements in this context of the body being unmanned, even though he keeps his male genitals. Some interpretations of Ovid hold that Hermaphroditos' prayer makes all subsequent men who bathe in the spring emerge as eunuchs.<sup>259</sup> The connection to the Dionysian world provides another link.

There is an undeniable parallel between Ovid's account of Salmacis pursuing Hermaphroditos and his rejection of her leading to his unmanning, and the story of Cybele pursuing Attis, which also lead to his unmanning. It is also worth noting that Attis dies and is resurrected at his wedding. This is another connection between weddings and the merging of sex and gender.

Another connection between Ovid's Hermaphroditos and Cybele is the fact that Ovid says Hermaphroditos was raised in the caves of Mount Ida, in Phrygia. Cybele was also known as the Idean Mother, and her place of origin was Mount Ida.

The castration of Attis can be interpreted in different ways. It can be seen as an attempt to assimilate the characteristics of the female sex, in order to merge with the female deity. It can also be a way to reestablish the primordial androgyne, in opposition to his ancestor Agdistis, who was bi-sexed by nature.<sup>260</sup> However, the eunuchs and Attis were regarded as half-men, whereas Agdistis was seen as especially powerful, because he was both sexes, rather than half of one. This could be the crux of the difference between the eunuch and the hermaphrodite or androgyne. On the other hand, the castration of the eunuchs makes them closer to divinity, so perhaps the distinction is not that clear cut. Especially, if considering the the portrayal of Hermaphroditos, who is definitively a hermaphrodite, as a beautiful effeminate youth, in contrast to Dionysos as a “manwoman” in his earlier incarnation. Hermaphroditos is also dual-sexed by nature, but merges the eunuch and primordial androgyne in his Hellenistic representation. This may in that case better reflect the divided attitude towards hermaphroditism as on the one hand neither/nor and on the other hand both sexes. Both sexes implies extra power, whereas to be unsexed implies a lack of power and identity. This could be why *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* has acquired a voluptuous feminine

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<sup>257</sup>Aileen Ajootian, “The Only Happy Couple,” in *Naked Truths*, 234.

<sup>258</sup>Oehmke, *Das Weib im Manne*, 2004, 120.

<sup>259</sup>Lloyd-Jones, “The Pride of Halicarnassus,” 1999, 6.

<sup>260</sup>Giovanni Casadio, *The Failing Male God: Emasculation, Death and other Accidents in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, (Numen, Vol.50, Fasc.3, 2003), 243.

form to go with his male genitals, so as to appear extra sexed rather than unsexed. The latter would also be much less erotically powerful for the viewer.

The dual-sexed being represents an archetype or principle.<sup>261</sup> Primordial beings in the Platonic tradition, Orphism, the Chaldean Oracles, Hermetism, and Gnosticism were all hermaphroditic.<sup>262</sup> The Phoenix is a good example of this. The bird that is both male and female, and dies in flames and is resurrected from the ashes only to die again. The Phoenix is depicted in relief on the sandals of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*, making the connection between the two explicit. Self-generation and resurrection is central to the dual-sexed being, and castration also plays an essential part in this.

Terracotta figurines of Hermaphroditos also appeared in votive deposits in the sanctuary of Demeter at Paestum, as well as Mytilene on Lesbos, from 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.<sup>263</sup> This archeological evidence shows there is a link between the goddess Demeter and the representation of dual-sexed people in the Hellenistic period, and also possibly an earlier connection between Hermaphroditos and Demeter. Although we do not know the exact nature of this, we know that *thesauroi* and other offerings to dispel the dangers of dual-sex characteristic were given to Demeter and Ceres, and that they also received images of individuals with clearly expressed male and female secondary sex characteristics.<sup>264</sup>

The main feature of the religious landscape in the Hellenistic era, is its syncretism.<sup>265</sup> Deities from various places were identified and their cults combined. In this way the Greek Zeus became Zeus-Amon-Re in Egypt, Zeus-Jupiter in Italy, and Zeus-Hypsistos or Zeus-Baal-Shamayim in Syria.<sup>266</sup> Greek religion was itself a composite of many different cults, and was still the most influential in the Hellenistic world, but took on many other elements, such as Roman, Anatolian, Syrian, Persian, Egyptian, Babylonian, and Assyrian religious features.<sup>267</sup> This type of syncretism was a part of Greek religion previously, too, but in the Hellenistic age it reached an extreme, with the incorporation of even remote cults and

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<sup>261</sup>Luc Brisson. *Sexual Ambivalence: Androgyny and Hermaphroditism in Graeco-Roman Antiquity*. (University of California, 2002), 72.

<sup>262</sup>Luc Brisson. *Sexual Ambivalence: Androgyny and Hermaphroditism in Graeco-Roman Antiquity*. (University of California, 2002), 72.

<sup>263</sup>Ajootian, Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2003.01.15, 3. <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2003/2003-01-15.html>.

<sup>264</sup>Ajootian, Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2003.01.15, 3. <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2003/2003-01-15.html>.

<sup>265</sup>Frerick C. Grant. *Hellenistic Religions: The Age of Syncretism*. New York: The Liberal Arts Press, Inc. 1953. xiii.

<sup>266</sup>Frerick C. Grant. *Hellenistic Religions: The Age of Syncretism*. (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, Inc. 1953), xiii.

<sup>267</sup>Frerick C. Grant. *Hellenistic Religions: The Age of Syncretism*. (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, Inc. 1953), xiv.



deities.<sup>268</sup>

## Dual-sexed Gods as Gods of Marriage

Gender transgression was part of the Greek Religious landscape, and against this setting the figure of Hermaphroditos does not stand out as a unique example of the conflation of male and female. Being an original, primordial dual-sexed being is clearly a different category to transvestism as part of a ritual, and any other consecutive transsexuality, but the social gender expression could have been a way of mirroring the dualism of biological sex in the primordial being. Not only did the representation of a dual-sex being in sculpture symbolise the human union of male and female, sexually and lawfully in marriage, but rituals also mirrored the liminal character of these primordial beings, by enacting the transgression of social order and biological categories of the self-generating beings. Sourvinou-Inwood expresses the opinion that the rites of transvestism are occurrences of ritual inversion, which is a modality often found in rites of transition.<sup>269</sup> They serve as evidence, connecting Hermaphroditos, and dual-sexed gods in general to marriage.

Eva Cantarella believes that cults of dual-sexed deities in many Greek parts are underpinned by the consciousness that men also had homosexual in addition to heterosexual impulses, in other words the general bisexual orientation of men in Ancient Greece.<sup>270</sup> Her context is Ovid's version of how Hermaphroditos becomes dual-sexed as a result of his union with Salmacis, which, as mentioned earlier, is often interpreted as the origin of the passive homosexual man. Sourvinou-Inwood counters this argument, with the objection that since Hermaphroditos was born dual-sexed, the meaning of his androgyny is a contrast to homosexuality, and that he was primarily a protector of heterosexual union.<sup>271</sup> In my opinion it is possible to uphold this distinction in relation to Hermaphroditos in the Salmacis Inscription, but Hellenistic hermaphrodite statues, and *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* is no exception, do express an eroticism that appeals to a bisexual audience.

Cross-dressing was part of many wedding rituals in different areas of the ancient

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<sup>268</sup>Frederick C. Grant. *Hellenistic Religions: The Age of Syncretism*. (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, Inc. 1953), xxii.

<sup>269</sup>Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood. "Hermaphroditos and Salmakis: The Voice of Halikarnassos", in *The Salmakis Inscription and Hellenistic Halikarnassos*. Edited by Signe Isager & Poul Pederson. (Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2004), 80.

<sup>270</sup>Eva Cantarella, *Bisexuality in the Ancient World* (Yale University Press, 2002), 212.

<sup>271</sup>Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood. "Hermaphroditos and Salmakis: The Voice of Halikarnassos", in *The Salmakis Inscription and Hellenistic Halikarnassos*. Edited by Signe Isager & Poul Pederson. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2004. 80.

world. In Sparta women wore men's clothing in the bridal bed on their wedding night<sup>272</sup>, and in Argos the women wore a false beard<sup>273</sup>. In Kos, the groom and priest in the cult of Heracles wore women's dress<sup>274</sup>. So, there is a connection between marriage rites and reversing gender roles, chiefly by using male or female clothing as a disguise.

Gendered disguises also feature in courtship and pursuit of the beloved. The Eleian Leukippos, the Attic Hymenaios, and Achilles of Skyros all don women's clothes to pursue their beloved. The hermaphrodite, of course, is dual-sexed and displays this in statuary, but the concept of merging two sexes by using gendered disguises uses the same concept of a male and female union as part of marriage symbolism. An interdependence between sexual disguise, heroic action, and marriage appears in many stories related to initiation rites.<sup>275</sup>

For example, Leukippos was the son of Oinomaos of Pisa. He fell in love with the nymph Daphne, and disguised himself as a girl, in order to be near her. When his true identity was discovered while bathing, he was slain by the nymphs.<sup>276</sup>

Hymenaios was the god of the hymeneal or bridal hymn. He was one of the Erotes, or youthful gods of love. He was usually described as a son of Apollo and a muse, Calliope, Urania, or Terpsichore. The Attic legends describes him as a youth of such delicate beauty that he might be taken for a girl. He fell in love with a girl, who rejected him, but he disguised himself as a female and followed her to the festival of Demeter at Eleusis. The group of girls, including Hymenaios, were abducted by robbers. When the robbers made camp and lay down to sleep, Hymenaios killed them all. He returned to Athens and asked for his beloved in marriage in return for bringing back the girls. This was granted, his marriage was very happy, which is why he was invoked in the hymeneal songs.<sup>277</sup>

Plutarch attributes a story about Theseus and Ariadne to Paeon of Amathus, a Hellenistic historian from the island of Cyprus.<sup>278</sup> During a storm, Theseus puts the pregnant Ariadne on shore in Cyprus, but is himself swept out to sea. Ariadne is cared for by the locals, but dies in childbirth, and when Theseus manages to return he is beside himself, and gives the island money to make sacrifices to Ariadne. Two small statues, one silver and one bronze, are

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<sup>272</sup>Plutarch. *Lykurg*. 15.

<sup>273</sup>Plutarch. *De virtut. Mulier*. 245 F.

<sup>274</sup>Plutarch. *Greek Questions*. 58. (304 c – e).

<sup>275</sup>Marie Delcourt. *Hermaphrodite. Myths and Rites of the Bisexual Figure in Classical Antiquity*. Translated by Jennifer Nicholson. Studio Books: London. 1961. 7.

<sup>276</sup>Parthenius. *Love Romances*. I. c.

<sup>277</sup>Dictionary of Greek and Roman Mythology.

<sup>278</sup>Plutarch. *Plutarch's Lives. with an English Translation by Bernadotte Perrin*. Cambridge, MA. Harvard University Press. London. William Heinemann Ltd. 1914. 1.

set up in her honour. At the sacrifices made in her honour on the second day of the month Gorpiaes, a young man imitates the movements, cries and pains of a woman in child birth. They call the grove where the sacrifices were made the grove of Ariadne-Aphrodite.<sup>279</sup>

According to Paeon Amanthus, recorded by Theophrastus, the Cyprian Aphrodite could take the form of a man, and Macrobius describes a statue of Aphrodite in Cyprus as having a beard and male genitals, but dressed in female clothes and holding a scepter.<sup>280</sup> Macrobius also writes that men sacrifice to her in women's dress, and women in men's, because she is both male and female.<sup>281</sup> Aphrodite may have had oriental origins and passed through Cyprus to Greece, as she was not part of the oldest Greek Pantheon.<sup>282</sup>

## Summary

Public art, was the main art form in Antiquity, and the modern world still uses the schema, symbolism, and allegory for public art that was formed in the Ancient Greek and Roman world. *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* has some of the contemporary features of a mortal, in that his hairstyle and sandals incorporate Hellenistic fashion. However, his clothing and sandals are an amalgamation of female and male style, and in that sense, a new invention that along with his nudity speaks of his godliness. The setting and large scale, also confirms him as a votive sculpture, as the temples of the sanctuaries were the domain of the massive marble gods. He is something new in large-scale statuary in this period. Here there is no trace of the tormented Ovidian Hermaphroditos, he is rather a finely crafted, imposing divinity<sup>283</sup> The prominence of the cult of The Great Mother, her eunuch priests, the popularity of Dionysos, and the common practice of inversion rites as part of marriage ceremonies provides a congruent cult context for Hermaphroditos in the form of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*.

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<sup>279</sup>Martin P. Nilsson. *Griechische Feste von religiöser Bedeutung mit Ausschluss der attischen untersucht*. B.G Teubner. Leipzig. 1906. 369.

<sup>280</sup>Terence Bruce Mitford, "The Cults of Roman Cyprus" in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung, Volume 1*, Walter de Gruyter, 1972. 2185.

<sup>281</sup>Macrobius; Kaster, Robert A. (2011), *Saturnalia* Volume 2, Harvard University Press; p. 58

<sup>282</sup>Jaqueline and Vassos Karagheorgis, "The Great Goddess of Cyprus or the Genesis of Aphrodite in Cyprus," in *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East*. Simo Parpela and R.M Writing. 263.

<sup>283</sup>R.R.R Smith. "The Marble Culture of Antiquity," in *Sculpted for Eternity. Treasures of Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Art from the Istanbul Archeological Museum*. (Ertug & Kocabyk), 26.

## **Chapter 6. Divine Function and Erotic Aesthetics:**

### **Hermaphroditos and his Representation as *The Pergamon***

#### ***Hermaphrodite***

*Male lions don't desire male lions, because lions don't do philosophy (Ps.-Lucian, Erotes)*

#### **Introduction**

The religious and philosophical perspectives that formed the basic attitudes of the Hellenistic World lead to a change in form and importance of function, which is evident in the erotic aesthetics of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* and its position as a cult statue.

The rise of marriage as a personal, romantic union in the Hellenistic era, as opposed to a contractual obligation, supports the theory of the increase in popularity of a heterosexual aesthetic over the masculine, homosexual Classical aesthetic, which is reflected in the hermaphrodite aesthetics that appealed to the bisexual male audience in the Hellenistic world.

Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, has been very influential regarding sex, gender, and the body in Antiquity, and he uses several sources from ancient Greece and Rome to justify his conclusions, an insufficient coverage of which is a frequent criticism. Simon Goldhill, in his book *Foucault's Virginity: Ancient Erotic Fiction and the History of Sexuality*, acknowledges that he too has been partial in the texts he has chosen to analyse,<sup>284</sup> but challenges the extent to which Foucault claims there was a clear cut shift from the ideal union being homosexual to heterosexual. He also questions the distinction that Antiquity defines sexuality in terms of behaviour, rather than identity. Laqueur's one-sex model has been widely criticized, due to his limited use of sources to justify his one-sex model, and his reliance on a previously little known model by Galen. His basic argument being that before the eighteenth

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<sup>284</sup>Simon Goldhill, *Foucault's Virginity: Ancient Erotic Fiction and the History of Sexuality* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 111.

century male and female was understood as manifestations of a unified substratum.<sup>285</sup> Both Joan Cadden and Helen King document evidence of other models not reducible to Laqueur's.

## The Body

Sex, gender and sexuality all intersect on a common ground: the body. It is a commonly accepted practice to define these concepts in terms of binary codes or polarities. Recently, the field of Gender Studies has championed the idea of sex, gender and sexuality existing on intersecting continuums. That is to say, sex, gender and sexuality all operate on a spectrum, rather than polar opposites. They are also independent of each other, but intersect at certain points on this spectrum. There is the idea that they are all fluid rather than fixed values, so that they may change over time and coincide in many variations. This is often seen as a modern idea. However, ancient hermaphrodite sculpture present a problem with this assumption. On the one hand, this dual-sexed entity represents just that, a duality, the two-in-one. On the other, it is also the middle point in a continuum from male to female, the meeting point between the two extremes of the scale. The continuum of course, doesn't exclude the extremes, but rather admits all that is in between. As stated previously, Plato writes that in the beginning there were three sexes; men, women, and androgynes<sup>286</sup>. This acknowledges two extremes and a middle point.

Hellenistic hermaphrodite sculpture embodies the conceptualization of both the unification of the distinct categories of the male and female, and also the middle point of the continuum from male to female. In terms of biological sex, this statue type raises questions such as: what is male and female? Is there a male/female sex continuum? Are there more categories of sex? How can a body that is both male and female be categorized? Foucault writes:

For a long time hermaphrodites were criminals, or crime's offspring, since their anatomical disposition, their very being, confounded the law that distinguished the sexes and prescribed their union.<sup>287</sup>

This is somewhat ironic in terms of Hermaphroditos as marriage maker, or being the first to bind the union of men and women by law, as seen in the Salmacis Inscription, and his hermaphrodite body being used as the very emblem of this. However, Foucault's statement

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<sup>285</sup>Joan Cadden. *Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages: Medicine, Science, and Culture*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 3.

<sup>286</sup>Plato, and K.J Dover, *The Symposium*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

<sup>287</sup>Michel Foucault. *History of Sexuality: Volume 1*, (London, Penguin, 1978), 40.

serves to exemplify the problematic state of the embodiment of the hermaphrodite concept in relation to society and its laws, as well as in relation to categories of male and female in society. Foucault points out that it is the law that distinguishes the sexes that also prescribes their union.<sup>288</sup>

The fact that the hermaphrodite questions the definite boundaries of biological sex, also raises questions regarding gender, or the social roles designated according to the biological sex of the body. If the sex of the body is ambiguous, what is the gender of said body? *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* reflects this in the clothes he is depicted with. The sandals display elements of both male and female fashion. In this way, the ambiguous sex is carried over into societal dress codes, which are also ambiguous or an amalgamation of accepted male and female norms.

So, if both sex and gender is ambiguous, and does not sit within the boundaries of any specific categories, what then of sexuality? Sexuality is defined on the basis of sex. Does Hermaphroditos or the hermaphrodite therefore also have an ambiguous sexuality?

Furthermore, *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* and Hellenistic hermaphrodite sculpture in general, have aesthetically and erotically pleasing forms, so what of the sexuality of the viewer? The audience may be firmly within distinct categories of sex, but the appreciation of the hermaphrodite form automatically calls into question the boundaries of their own terms of attraction.

## **Marriage and Structures of Power**

What does marriage symbolism convey? What is the significance of a hermaphrodite as the symbol of marriage?

Foucault sees the law of marriage as one of the two great systems conceived by the West for governing sex, the other being the order of desire.<sup>289</sup> He posits that the theory of public law, based on Roman law, and reconstructed in the Middle Ages was not just a monarchic weapon, but also the manifestation of the monarchic system and its form of acceptability. So, power has since then been formulated in terms of the law.<sup>290</sup> Nineteenth-century psychiatry, law, and literature therefore, by making distinct medical categories of sexuality and gender, regulated by law, succeeded in exerting strong social controls over body

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<sup>288</sup>Note that Foucault wrote before marriage started becoming gender neutral, as it is to a large extent now. Also, Hellenistic hermaphrodite sculpture does, of course, predate same sex marriage.

<sup>289</sup>Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. (London, Penguin, 1978), 40.

<sup>290</sup>Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. 87.

and behaviour.<sup>291</sup>

This is in contrast to marriage as a private transaction in Greece and Rome that was not connected to political and social organisation. Rather, it only served as a way of continuing the *oikos*.<sup>292</sup> According to Foucault, ancient societies were in general societies of promiscuity, where existence was led in public.<sup>293</sup> Marriage was a ceremony, producing legal effects, but was not a juridicial act.

However, in the Hellenistic era, marriage became part of the public sphere.<sup>294</sup> Foucault cites Claude Vatin to say that there was a transformation in the second and first centuries BC, where marriage goes from being a familial institution and a religious ritual, to becoming a civic institution.<sup>295</sup>

In ancient societies, the objective of marriage was to transmit the estate to descendants, therefore everyone did not marry.<sup>296</sup> It also perpetuated a political caste, by ensuring the citizen status.<sup>297</sup> For the upper classes marriage was mainly political, dynastic, and economic. For the lower classes, a wife and children could constitute a useful source of labour for the free man who was able to support them, but there was also a level of poverty beneath which a man could not support a wife and family.<sup>298</sup>

However, there are tomb inscriptions that show the relative frequency and stability of marriage in the lower classes, and statements attesting the marriage of slaves. So, marriage in the Hellenistic world becomes more widely practiced and accessible.<sup>299</sup> It also becomes a more voluntary union between more equal partners, though that is not to say that gender inequality was obliterated, but only diminished to an extent. There were many local differences, of course, but taking all these into account, the status of the wife appears to have increased independence in relation to the classical period, and particularly in comparison to the Athenian city state.<sup>300</sup>

In the Hellenistic world, the citizen-husband had lost some of his importance, and the economic role of the wife was strengthened. Women received their own dowry, which they could dispose of more freely within the marriage union, some contracts gave them restitution

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<sup>291</sup>Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. 101.

<sup>292</sup>Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. 76.

<sup>293</sup> Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. 47.

<sup>294</sup>Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. 77.

<sup>295</sup>Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. 77.

<sup>296</sup>Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. 78.

<sup>297</sup>Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. 78.

<sup>298</sup>Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. 78.

<sup>299</sup>Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. 79.

<sup>300</sup>Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. 79.

in case of divorce, and they also had a share in inheritance. The authority of the father over his married daughter was also curtailed in Athenian, Roman and Egyptian law by judicial rulings that made the wishes of the woman the determining factor.<sup>301</sup> So, marriage in the Hellenistic world had become a more voluntary agreement, where the partners pledged themselves personally.<sup>302</sup> The duties and obligations may not have been equal, but they were shared, not just in the name of the families, which they represent, but also on behalf of the couple.

To which extent is this reflected in the symbolism of the hermaphrodite, and also reflected in the Salmacis inscription? The waters in the Salmacis spring are supposed to make gentle the savage minds of men, and one interpretation of this is that they are thereby more suited to a union with a woman.<sup>303</sup> The hermaphrodite body in this light becomes a powerful social construct. Not just a symbolic midpoint between two sexes, or the eradication of binary norms, but an ideal union and the symbol of a private aspiration.

The shift in focus from the ideal of beauty being male to female, emphasizes a heterosexual gaze. The increase in the depiction of the nude female body shows a shift in the erotic object of desire from male to female. Men are still the main audience, and the makers of statues, but women had a greater role in society, and this increased visibility was reflected in art. It was natural to reflect a heterosexual perspective, when women made up more of the audience than previously, as their relation to men as an object of desire was more dominant than the earlier homoerotic nature of public life for men. The rise of the individual with personal and private concerns, as opposed to citizens making up a city state, shows a personal investment in a conjugal union.

## Models of Sex

As stated earlier, in our century a binary understanding of sex categories is often assumed. Many countries have laws originating from the nineteenth-century, regarding determination of sex on the basis of gonad types.<sup>304</sup> The ability to procreate is at the heart of these definitions, but what were the definitions of sex in Antiquity?

Laqueur promoted the much-contested one-sex model as the way of understanding sex

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<sup>301</sup>Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. 79.

<sup>302</sup>Foucault. *The History of Sexuality*. 80.

<sup>303</sup>Romano. *The Invention of Marriage: Hermaphroditus and Salmacis at Halicarnassus as in Ovid*. *Classical Quarterly* 59.2 543 – 561. 2009. 558.

<sup>304</sup>Helen King. *The One-Sex Body on Trial: The Classical and Early Modern Evidence*. (Ashgate, 2013), 26.



in the Ancient World, which was designed to tie in neatly with Foucault's assertions about the medical and legal categorization of sexuality in the eighteenth-century. In his book *Making Sex*, Laqueur writes that when taken outside the realms of procreation, the supposedly self-evident signs of anatomy or physiology that signifies male or female, becomes ambiguous and anything but self-evident.<sup>305</sup> Furthermore, questions of final meaning go beyond any such facts. He points out that Darwin questioned why new beings should be produced by the union of two sexual elements, instead of by parthenogenesis, and says that the question of why sperm and egg are borne by different, instead of one, hermaphroditic being, is still open.<sup>306</sup> This question resonates with the hermaphrodite iconology from Antiquity, as well as the mythical figure of Hermaphroditos that they are attributed to. As previously stated, hermaphroditic gods are often at the beginning of cosmogenies, so this question is an old one.

The hermaphrodite as a concept asks how bodies determine what we mean by sexual difference or sameness. The biology of sexual difference is deeply embedded in our culture, and plays out in society through gender as an extension of this, where the boundaries between male and female can become political, and rhetorical.<sup>307</sup> He ascertains that before the eighteenth century, the two-sex model was not as readily used. He writes:.. “The single-sexed body with different versions attributed to at least two genders, was framed in antiquity in order to valorize the extraordinary cultural assertion of patriarchy, the father, in the face of the more sensory evident claim of the mother.”<sup>308</sup> The question for the classical model is not what it claims explicitly, why woman, but the more troublesome, why man?

Foucault and Laqueur differ in their approach to a one-sex or two-sex model, in that Laqueur is interested in an openness to both models, whereas Foucault favours one. Laqueur says that the record he has relied on bears witness to the fundamental incoherence of stable, fixed categories of sexual dimorphism, of male and/or female.<sup>309</sup> Throughout history, the categories of sex and gender have been continuously drawn and redrawn, so that it questions the possibility of any permanent definition. At the same time, a model of categories makes it possible to discuss different aspects of a continuum, and of different definitions of categories.

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<sup>305</sup>Thomas Laqueur. *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. (Harvard University Press, London, 1992), 18.

<sup>306</sup>Thomas Laqueur. *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. (Harvard University Press.London. 1992), 18.

<sup>307</sup>Thomas Laqueur. *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. (Harvard University Press.London. 1992), 19.

<sup>308</sup>Thomas Laqueur. *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. (Harvard University Press.London. 1992), 20.

<sup>309</sup>Thomas Laqueur. *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. (Harvard University

In his preface to *Making Sex*, Laqueur says that a two-sex and one sex-model have always been available to those who thought about difference.<sup>310</sup>

The concept of opposites, difference and sameness, is also inherent in many cultures. Laqueur uses the example of how Sagebush or *Artemisia*, stands for the feminine and *Chrysothamnus* stands for the masculine in Navaho rituals. The principle of opposition in this case is down to the subtle difference in tiny leaf serrations, yet they carry enormous symbolic meaning.<sup>311</sup>

The actual physical difference in the leaves is almost indistinguishable, but it represents an opposition expressed in radically different social roles. Even when the biological differences are barely noticeable they still act as a basis for two distinct categories of expression and behaviour, in terms of social functioning.

The hermaphrodite both defies and confirms Laqueur's theory of the construction of a two-sex or one-sex body. In one way, he exemplifies the middle point of a continuum, but in another he highlights the distinction between male and female. With his female body he emphasizes the maleness of the penis on display. The presence of the penis has also given rise to the convention of referring to him as “he.” The phallus acts as a deciding factor and overrides the rest of the physical attributes of the hermaphrodite body, to determine the sex and gender as masculine. So, the deciding factor of sex is the genitals, as opposed to the idea of a sexed brain, for example. The penis, of course, is external and highly visual, which therefore signifies the sex much more blatantly than any internally sexed organ. The representation in art, may of course signify Hermaphroditos' male identity in a way that is visible to the audience. The male organ symbolizes his male brain. The breasts, although not organs of procreation, are also essential to the representation of the female aspect of Hermaphroditos, in an external display of biological sex, similar to the visuality of the penis. However, the male still seems to be the defining aspect.

### “ True Sex ”

In her her book *The One-Sex Body On Trial*, Helen King critiques Laqueur's arguments in *Making Sex*. She holds that the two-sex body is not a modern construction tied to changes in

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Press.London. 1992), 22.

<sup>310</sup>Thomas Laqueur. *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. (Harvard University Press.London. 1992), viii.

<sup>311</sup>Thomas Laqueur. *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud*. (Harvard University Press.London. 1992), 19.

the eighteenth-century.<sup>312</sup> In this book she uses source material from Antiquity to show how both the two-sex and one-sex model coexisted from the time of Hippocrates in Greece and until the nineteenth-century. By using a much wider range of material and quoting less selectively, she demonstrates how these categories were much debated and studied in Ancient Greece and Rome. The shift that occurred in the nineteenth-century was to locate sex definitively in the gonads.<sup>313</sup>

There must also have been a deliberate juxtapositioning of biological sex in Hellenistic times, because the hermaphrodite sculptures are a sharp contrast to the congruent male or female bodies in statuary otherwise. So, the logic of Laqueur's one-sex body in Antiquity does not hold in the face of this, because the point of a conflation of a binary sex model, must presuppose a binary sex model.

King uses two stories to construct her main thread, which are very flexible for their users, meaning that a simple one-sex or two-sex model will not do justice to them.<sup>314</sup> These are the stories of Agnodice and Paethousa. They do not fit neatly into any category, but the story of Agnodice has many elements in common with the lists of who invented what.

Accounts of “who invented what” were a popular genre in the Ancient world, as the Salmacis Inscription exemplifies. They were a way for different cities to compete for supremacy.<sup>315</sup> Halicarnassus boasts of many fine deeds, and inventors, such as Hermaphroditos inventing marriage, hewn in stone. Many institution and activities had a named *prôtos heurètes* or “first finder” of this kind, such as Prometheus inventing fire, or as mentioned previously, Cecrops instituting monogamous marriage.<sup>316</sup> Cecrops was a mythological king of Athens, who taught the Athenians to read and write, ceremonial burial, and marriage. The Athenians had been polygamous, and Cecrops introduced monogamy through marriage. So, Hermaphroditos was not unique in being connected with marriage in a list of what cities took pride in, but rather specific as the pride of Halicarnassos in this respect.

Pliny described more than 200 inventions, based on over 2000 sources. Hygenius was another such compiler of lists writing before 207 AD<sup>317</sup>, and in his *Fabulae*, the latin version of a greek original, there is an account of Agnodice who was put on trial in Athens for

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<sup>312</sup>Helen King. *The One-Sex Body on Trial: The Classical and Early Modern Evidence*. (Ashgate. 2013), 223.

<sup>313</sup>Helen King. *The One-Sex Body on Trial: The Classical and Early Modern Evidence*. (Ashgate. 2013), 26.

<sup>314</sup>Helen King. *The One-Sex Body on Trial: The Classical and Early Modern Evidence*. (Ashgate. 2013), 19.

<sup>315</sup>Helen King. *The One-Sex Body on Trial: The Classical and Early Modern Evidence*. (Ashgate. 2013), 136.

<sup>316</sup>Helen King. *The One-Sex Body on Trial: The Classical and Early Modern Evidence*. (Ashgate. 2013), 136.

<sup>317</sup>This is known because an anonymous writer copied a Greek version of parts of the text then. Helen King. *The One-Sex Body on Trial: The Classical and Early Modern Evidence*. (Ashgate. 2013), 131.

corrupting women while practicing medicine. She was a woman who disguised herself as a man in order to practice medicine, and became very popular amongst women when she revealed her sex to one who did not want a male helping her through birth. The women of Athens later turn up to defend her in court, when she is on trial. The name means “chaste before justice”, and is convenient enough to be an indication that the story may well be an invention or a myth. Agnodice is the only woman part of the list, and follows characters such as Chiron the centaur, who established the surgical side of medicine, and Apollo who was responsible for medicine for the eyes. Agnodice is down as inventing “health.” When the Athenian women come to court and address the men in their defense of Agnodice, they tell them that they are not husbands but enemies, because they are condemning the woman who discovered health for them.<sup>318</sup>

Agnodice is on trial for seducing women while practicing medicine, because this is the only way in which the men can make sense of her popularity. In order to prove to the courts that she was not doing this, she chooses to reveal her sex by performing the *anasyromenos* gesture and lifting her garment. This is a gesture in common with the Hermaphrodite *Anasyromenos*, and also called the Baubo gesture, after the old woman, Baubo, makes Demeter laugh after the abduction of Persephone, by raising her skirts and exposing herself to her.<sup>319</sup> The *Priene Terracottas* are a Hellenistic example of women performing this gesture.<sup>320</sup> An *anasyromenos* figure from Memphis, Egypt, has a headdress that identifies her as Aphrodite.<sup>321</sup>

Plutarch describes women lifting up their skirts to their husbands who are fleeing the battlefield, in order to shame them into going back,<sup>322</sup> Herodotus recounts women going by boat to the festival of Bubastis lifting their skirts and shouting abuse at the women in towns through which the river passes,<sup>323</sup> and Diodorus Siculus writes of Egyptian women lifting their skirts as part of the worship of the god Aspis.<sup>324</sup>

Hermaphroditos surpasses the norm of bodily representation. He is the two in one. Two sexes, but at the same time one. In this respect, allowing for a sex and gender continuum,

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<sup>318</sup>Helen King. *The One-Sex Body on Trial: The Classical and Early Modern Evidence*. (Ashgate. 2013), 135.

<sup>319</sup>Arnobius, *Adv. Nat* 5.25 – 6. The story is also found in the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, where the name of the old woman is *Iambe*.

<sup>320</sup>Helen King. *The One-Sex Body on Trial: The Classical and Early Modern Evidence*. (Ashgate. 2013), 141.

<sup>321</sup>Helen King. *The One-Sex Body on Trial: The Classical and Early Modern Evidence*. (Ashgate. 2013), 142.

<sup>322</sup>Plutarch, *Moralia*, 241b.

<sup>323</sup>Herodotus. *Histories*, 2.60.

<sup>324</sup>Diodorus Siculus 1.85.3

the one sex as well as the two sex model, in addition to a binary system, provides a useful way to navigate this conundrum. King's point is that theories of one-sex and two-sex models existed alongside each other, even in Antiquity. As stated in the terminology, in the *Symposium* Plato writes that in the beginning there were three sexes; male, female and “manwoman.” In other words, he is an example of operating with a two-sex model, but conceptualizing three.

### **Desire and Erotic Ideals: Male versus Female**

Hermaphrodite statues flourished in the Hellenistic world, and new and more erotically charged motifs, such as the Sleeping Hermaphrodite and the Wrestling Group, were invented. At the same time, statues of a naked and explicitly erotic Aphrodite became increasingly popular. The female nude became both an ideal composition and an object of male voyeurism. This reflects a change in male attitudes towards women, as well as a change in their status in society.<sup>325</sup> Men were still responsible for the production of art in society, and constituted the main audience, but women no doubt viewed sculptures, too. In the new cities of the East, women achieved a higher level of public freedom, and unrelated men and women of equal social standing had more opportunity to come into contact with each other in social arenas. The rise of kings as rulers, gave prominence to Hellenistic queens who could provide a continued dynasty, as opposed to the purely male citizen-state. This meant a rise in the heterosexual romantic ideal, even though the homosexual ideal still flourished in some areas. New Comedy often centres on middle-class heterosexual romance, free women walk around the streets of Alexandria on their own in Theokritus,<sup>326</sup> and Appollinius' Medea is a feminine, and sympathetic figure.

There was a long-standing male debate on the merits of the male versus the female as erotic ideal. Simon Goldhill looks at Achilles Tatius' novel *Leucippe and Cleitophon*, because it provides an extensive framing of this discussion. The erotic language uses imagery of the liaison between river-gods and nymphs of the fountain. It describes the flowing together of the male river with the female spring as a marriage *gamos*, and the watercourse that links them as the marriage-broker, *numphostolei*.<sup>327</sup> These marriage allegories correlate with the imagery from the Salmacis Inscription, where Hermaphroditos and Salmacis the nymph

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<sup>325</sup>Smith. *Hellenistic Sculpture*, 81.

<sup>326</sup>Theokritus, Idyll 15.

<sup>327</sup>Simon Goldhill, *Foucault's Virginity: Ancient Erotic Fiction and the History of Sexuality* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 68.

combine the waters of the fountain with binding the marriage bed in law. To use the extended meaning of ekphrasis from Barbara Fowler, the sensual eroticism of this imagery finds its visual counterpart in the undulating curves and rippling drapery of *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite*.

Winckelmann wrote that Greek artists did not only pay attention to selecting the most beautiful parts from numerous beautiful persons who were female or male, but also directed this observation towards eunuchs.<sup>328</sup> He says that for the conformation of eunuchs, boys of a handsome shape were chosen. The ambiguous beauty produced by removing the testicles, was first undertaken by the “Asiatics,” in order to delay the rapid career of the ephemeral youth.<sup>329</sup> This produces from masculine characteristics, delicate limbs, and a plumper and rounder body, with a softness more akin to the female sex. Winckelmann writes that these youths were among the Greeks in Asia Minor consecrated to the service of Cybele, and Diana of Ephesus.<sup>330</sup> According to him, the Romans also used a decoction of hyacinth roots boiled in sweet wine to wash the chin and other parts, in order to make them less manly. He says that artists must have observed variations of this effect in eunuchs, depending on when they were castrated. However, he holds that their form is always distinct and evident in the hands, and even more so the back and hips, which are fuller, wider and more in unity with a female shape.

Ancient artists did, in Winckelmann's view, use the eunuch form to sculpt figures of the priests of Cybele, although examples have not been seen. He uses the example of a statue of a twelve-year-old boy that has been sent to England. The hips are wide, and can be easily distinguished as female in form, under the clothing. The figure wore a short vest, a Phrygian cap, had an apple in it's hand, and an inverted torch used in religious offices and sacrifices resting at it's feet, against a tree.<sup>331</sup> The apple and torch, are supposed to show it's real signification, but he does not elucidate this any further. He also cites the example of a mutilated relief work, which shows a eunuch of such feminine shape that a very skilful sculptor in Rome thought the figure was female. Winckelmann identifies this as a eunuch and a priest of Cybele, because the person has a whip in their hand, which he writes is because they scourged themselves with it. He also adds that the figure stands before a tripod, but not the significance of this. There is also a relief at Capua representing Archigallus, the superior

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<sup>328</sup>John Winckelmann. *The History of Ancient Art*. Translated by G. Henry Lodge. Vol. 1. Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington. London: 1881. 316.

<sup>329</sup>Winckelmann. *The History of Ancient Art*, 317.

<sup>330</sup>Winckelmann. *The History of Ancient Art*, 317.

<sup>331</sup>Winckelmann. *The History of Ancient Art*, 317.

of the eunuch-priests, as well as a celebrated picture by Parrhasius called Archigallus. There are, according to Winckelmann, no instances of portrayals of the eunuch-priests of Diana at Ephesus found.<sup>332</sup>

So, the artists constructed an idealised form consisting of the incorporation of prolonged youthfulness known from the female sex with masculine forms of a beautiful young man, so that he was plumper, rounder, and softer. In this way he was also more in keeping with Greek ideas of deities, Winckelmann asserts.<sup>333</sup> This ideal has been used to portray the gods Apollo and Dionysos. Some of the sculptures were given both sexes, made into one and with a mystic significance.<sup>334</sup>

After laying the groundwork with the idealised beauty of the eunuch being used to convey the ideal forms of deities, such as Apollo, Dionysos, and Aphrodite, Winckelmann writes that art went even further and united the beauty and attributes of both sexes in the hermaphrodite.<sup>335</sup> The great number of sculptures, and the large variety of sizes and positions of the figures, shows that the artists strived to express an image of higher beauty, the image of the ideal, in the mixed nature of the two sexes.<sup>336</sup>

He says he is not entering into an enquiry about how hermaphrodites might be constituted, but that every artist cannot have had the opportunity to have seen something so rare, if they do in fact exist, such as according to Philostratus, the philosopher Favorinus of Arles in France. Moreover, he thinks that hermaphrodites like the ones depicted in sculptures, are probably never seen in real life.<sup>337</sup>

Salmacis making gentle the savage minds of men, and Hermaphroditos doing the same by binding the marriage bed in law, is a testimony to a psychological hermaphroditism necessary to impose the order of patrilineage over the chaos of “barbarism.” The image of a bi-sexed god is the embodiment of the metaphysical idea of civilization.

## Summary

Concentrating on the intrinsic meaning of the sculpture, and its origin and significance, brings the thesis to a close on the iconological level. In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault exposes the underlying power structure of marriage in society, by showing that this is why it is important to establish the “true sex” of an individual, so that they can form a union with

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<sup>332</sup>Winckelmann. *The History of Ancient Art*, 318.

<sup>333</sup>Winckelmann. *The History of Ancient Art*, 318.

<sup>334</sup>Winckelmann. *The History of Ancient Art*, 318.

<sup>335</sup>Winckelmann. *The History of Ancient Art*, 318.

<sup>336</sup>Winckelmann. *The History of Ancient Art*, 318.

<sup>337</sup>Winckelmann. *The History of Ancient Art*, 318.

someone of the opposite sex and thereby produce offspring to continue their lineage and sustain the state: constructing a population. Ironically, the real life hermaphrodite becomes a problem in this regard, by defeating the system of procreation as state institution. While, in the Hellenistic era, Hermaphroditos the god was the symbol of this union, echoing back to the gigantomachy that represents the struggle for the order of things, starting with the castration of Ouranos. The hermaphrodite is a social construct, a primordial archetype, an aesthetic ideal. The Panofskian approach has allowed for an Ouroboros of hermeneutic understanding, where form and content is inextricably linked in the hermaphrodite as a symbol of unity in opposition.

## Conclusion

*The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* combines the erotic sensuality of Hellenistic wedding imagery with a classicistic static divine ideal, in his expression of Hermaphroditos. The god's androgyny is polysemic. His function as inventor of marriage, and connections with protecting sexual union and fertility is connected to his androgyny.<sup>338</sup>

The Great Mother goddess is worshipped in many forms, appearing as versions of Cybele, Artemis, Aphrodite. Hecate is commonly depicted by a combination of three statues, representing different sides of her. Hermes is the god of gateways and boundaries. Dionysos' liminal quality is in his turning order into chaos. This struggle between chaos and order is present already in the battle between gods and giants. Humans are restricted by certain boundaries, but gods are able to transgress all of them. This is the quality that the ancient artist has to depict somehow in a static form. Modern artists face similar problems in translating concepts into visual form.

Greek gods were not restricted to any specific form. The only reason they took any form at all was in order to appear to mortals in a way they could understand. Zeus himself took many forms to suit his purpose, such as a swan in order to seduce Leda. They were also not restricted to procreating only with a counterpart of the opposite sex. Hera produced Typhon, without the aid of Zeus, to take revenge for him bringing forth Athena without her.<sup>339</sup> This implies a certain androgyne, or at least not a definition of sex based on the abilities of procreation.

Hermaphroditos fits the godly schema of complete freedom of conventional masculine

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<sup>338</sup>Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood. "Hermaphroditos and Salmakis: The Voice of Halikarnassos," in *The Salmakis Inscription and Hellenistic Halikarnassos*. (University Press of Southern Denmark, 2004),73

<sup>339</sup>Marie Delcourt. *Hermaphrodite. Myths and Rites of the Bisexual Figure in Classical Antiquity*. Translated by



or feminine form very well. His whole purpose in many ways is to deviate from the norm.<sup>340</sup> *The Pergamon Hermaphrodite* shows him as a figure based on an aesthetic idea, whose eroticism coincides with the public taste in the Hellenistic era and fits in with their interest in the sensual figurative language of the world of Dionysos and Aphrodite.<sup>341</sup>

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<sup>340</sup>Oehmke. *Das Weib im Manne : Hermaphroditos in der griechisch-römischen Antike*. Winckelmann-Institut der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin 4. Berlin. 2004.70.

<sup>341</sup>Oehmke. *Das Weib im Manne*, 70.

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## **Glossary of Greek and Latin Terms**

*Apophoreta* - tablegifts

*Anasyromenos* - lifting of clothes

*Apotropaic* - averting evil influences and bad luck, from *apatropaios* “averting evil,” from *apotrepein* “to turn away from.”

*Chiton* - woollen tunic

*Deme* - township, or political division in Attica in Ancient Greece

*Eiresione* - dedication to a god, branch of olive or laurel with wool, fruit, cakes

*Gamos* - wedding, marriage

*Hieros Gamos* - sacred marriage, a ritual of marriage between deities played out by humans

*Gigantomachy* - the struggle between gods and giants

*Heroön* - a shrine dedicated to a hero, and used for the cult worship of that hero

*Ithyphallic* - having an erect penis, especially in relation to a statue of a deity

*Kourotrophic* - the function of nurturing/nourishing a man

*Nymphaion* - a monument consecrated to the nymphs, particularly of springs.

*Numphostolei* - marriage broker

*Oikos* - household

*Symplegmata/symplegma* - entwined, for statue groups of grappling protagonists

*Tintinnabulum* - windchimes, tinkling bells

**Table 2. Gods and Mythological Personages**

Achilles of Skyros	Achilles disguised as a woman, hiding on the island of Skyros
Agdistis/Cybele	God from Greek, Roman and Anatolian mythology who was connected with the Phrygian cult of Cybele and Attis, and possessed female and male sexual characteristics.
Aphrodite	Mother of Hermaphroditos, goddess of beauty, fertility, erotic love, daughter of Zeus and Dione, born from the sea.
Apollo	God of music and prophecy, main sanctuary at Delphi, had numerous cults.
Ariadne-Aphrodite	Cyprian dual-sexed version of Aphrodite
Ariadne	Daughter of King Minos of Crete and Pasiphaë. Helped Theseus to escape from the Minotaur's labyrinth.
Demeter	Daughter of Cronus and Rhea, mother of Persephone, goddess of corn, associated with Cybele, honoured in Eleusinian mysteries.
Ganymede	The cup bearer of Zeus, a youth so beautiful that Zeus abducted him.
Hera	Queen of the gods, wife and sister of Zeus
Hermes	Father of Hermaphroditos, son

	of Zeus and Maia, messenger god, god of oratory, thieves, merchants, transitions, boundaries.
Hymenaios	God of the bridal hymn.
Leukippos	Son of Oinomaos of Pisa, disguised himself as a girl.
Theseus	Hero of Athens, son of Poseidon (or Aegeus, king of Athens), slew the Cretan Minotaur.
Terpsichore	Muse of dance and the chorus, one of the nine muses.
Zeus	Supreme god, father of gods and men, son of Cronus and Rhea, dispenser of good and evil