

well as inscribed bases that preserve information relating to the act that inspired the dedications that they had once displayed.

Both types of dedications, thank-offerings and gifts of propitiation, were made by Greeks throughout the Mediterranean. Merchant sailors, fishermen, and the crews of naval ships all dedicated offerings that at times embraced a distinctive maritime character. The motives and mechanics of Greek offering and the substance of these gifts have direct implications regarding the validity of Saatsoglou-Paliadeli's theory that the marble eyes discovered at Zea were specifically fashioned for dedication as the marble interpretation of ship eyes. The forms of maritime offerings are presented here in two major categories to better evaluate her hypothesis:

1. The Ship
2. Ship Parts and Gear

Other forms of maritime offerings will be considered when they can be used to complement and explain the practice of dedicating gifts that relate to the ship and its gear.

Maritime Offerings: The Ship

The dedication and commemorative display of ships and boats in both Greek mythology and Greek history are known from a variety of textual and archaeological sources (Recio, 2000: 3-4). In Graeco-Roman mythology, ships were often dedicated to commemorate extraordinary feats and expeditions. Apollodorus (*Bibliotheca*, 1.9.27 [J.G. Frazer, trans., Cambridge, Mass., 1921]) tells us that after "Jason surrendered the

fleece. . . he sailed with the chiefs to the Isthmus and dedicated the ship [Argo] to Poseidon.” Dio Chrysostomus (*Orationes*, 37.15) also records that Jason dedicated the *Argo* to Poseidon, but he relates a slightly different story. In his version, the *Argo* was dedicated after Jason won a boat race in a mythical version of the Isthmian Games. The dedication of the *Argo* in both versions can be considered a thank-offering to Poseidon. Similarly, the ship that Theseus sailed to Crete to kill the Minotaur was believed by Plutarch (*Theseus*, 23.1) to have been on display in Athens until the late 4th century BC. In Rome, Procopius (*History of the Wars*, 8.22.7-8 [H.B. Dewing, trans., Cambridge, Mass., 1978]) attests that Aeneas’s ship was displayed in a “ship-house in the middle of the city on the bank of the Tiber, and depositing it there, they have preserved it from that time.”

Greek historians also record the practice of dedicating prize ships as thank-offerings as early as the Persian Wars. Herodotus (*Persian Wars*, 8.121 [A.D. Godley, trans., Harvard, 1946]) tells us that after their victory at Salamis in 480 BC the Greeks dedicated “three Phoenician triremes, one dedicated at the Isthmus, where it was till my lifetime, the second at Sunium, and the third for Aias at Salamis.” Similar dedications are known from the writings of Thucydides (2.84, 2.92) and Diodorus Siculus (12.48.1) to have been conducted by both the Athenians and the Peloponnesians during the Peloponnesian Wars. Later, Strabo (7.7.6) tells us that Augustus dedicated ten captured ships after his decisive naval victory at Actium.

The dedication of one’s own warship is also known in Greek history. Athenaeus (5.209e) records that Moschion indicated Antigonus Gonatas vowed his ship to Apollo

for victory over Ptolemy II during the mid 3rd century BC (Tarn, 1910: 212). Another type of ship dedication is described by Catullus (4) who wrote of the dedication of a ship to the Dioskouroi at the end of its usefulness during the first half of the 1st century BC. Much later, the *Anthologia Palatina* (6.69-70) preserves a pair of epigrams attributed to Macedonius Thessalonicensis dated to the 6th century AD that record the offering of ships by sailors as thank-offerings on the occasion of their retirement in Greece.

An interesting, but slightly different, sort of ship dedication is preserved by the 2nd-century AD Roman writer Apuleius in his novel *Metamorphoses* (11.16). He describes the *navigium Isidis*, an annual festival in Roman Egypt that celebrated the start of the spring sailing season and involved the launching of an actual ship as an offering to Isis for a successful sailing season:

There, after the images of the gods had been set in their proper places, the chief priest consecrated a ship, which was constructed with fine craftsmanship and decorated all over with marvelous Egyptian pictures. He took a lighted torch, an egg, and sulphur, uttered prayers of great solemnity with reverent lips, and purified the ship thoroughly, naming it and dedicating it to the goddess. The gleaming sail of this holy barque bore an inscription woven in letters of gold, whose text renewed the prayer for prosperous navigation during the new sailing season. Now rose the mast, a round pine, high and resplendent, visible from far off with its conspicuous masthead. The stern curved in a goose-neck and flashed light from its coating of gold-leaf, and the entire hull bloomed with highly polished, pale citron-wood. Then all the people, worshippers and uninitiated alike outdid one another in loading the ship with baskets heaped with spices and similar offerings, and on the waves they poured libations of grain-mash made with milk. When the ship was laden with generous gifts and auspicious sacrifices, it was untied from its anchor-ropes and offered to the sea, as a mild breeze arose especially for it (Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, 11.16 [J.A. Hanson, trans., Cambridge, Mass., 1989]).

Although late, this passage is particularly important because it not only attests to the dedication of actual ships, but also provides a rare detailed description of a ritual that accompanied such offerings. This ritual likely shares some general similarities with

those conducted during the launching of ships and boats earlier in antiquity. These aspects likely include the purification of the ship, the evocation of a protective deity, the naming of the ship, the pouring of libations, and the offering of sacrifices and gifts. It has been suggested by some scholars, including Rouge (1981: 198) and Johnston (1985:138) that such festivals also involved the launching of ship models in place of actual ships.

Archaeological evidence suggests that the dedication and display of ships may have been practiced during the Archaic Period on Samos. Excavations at the Temple of Hera have uncovered two sets of large stone bases dated to the 7th century BC that appear to have been the foundations for blocks that once supported the hulls of ancient ships (Kyrieleis, 1981: 88-90; Walter, 1990: 83, 89, figs. 92, 98; Recio, 2000: 3-4) (Fig. 3.2). These foundations are comprised of seven and nine transverse rectangular units and measure a total of 25 m and 30 m in length respectively. Little information is available relating to the events that prompted these dedications, but evidence exists to suggest that these may not have been the only ship dedications on Samos. A fragmentary inscription also discovered at the Temple of Hera alludes to the offering of at least six other ships to Hera and one to Poseidon by a certain Amphidemos during the 6th century BC (Ohly, 1953: 111-112). Unfortunately, little else is known about these offerings and it is possible that they took the form of models rather than actual ships.

Monuments have also been uncovered on Delos and Samothrace that dramatically attest the dedication and permanent display of ships. The excavation of the Monument of the Bulls on Delos was the first archaeological discovery of a building that once housed

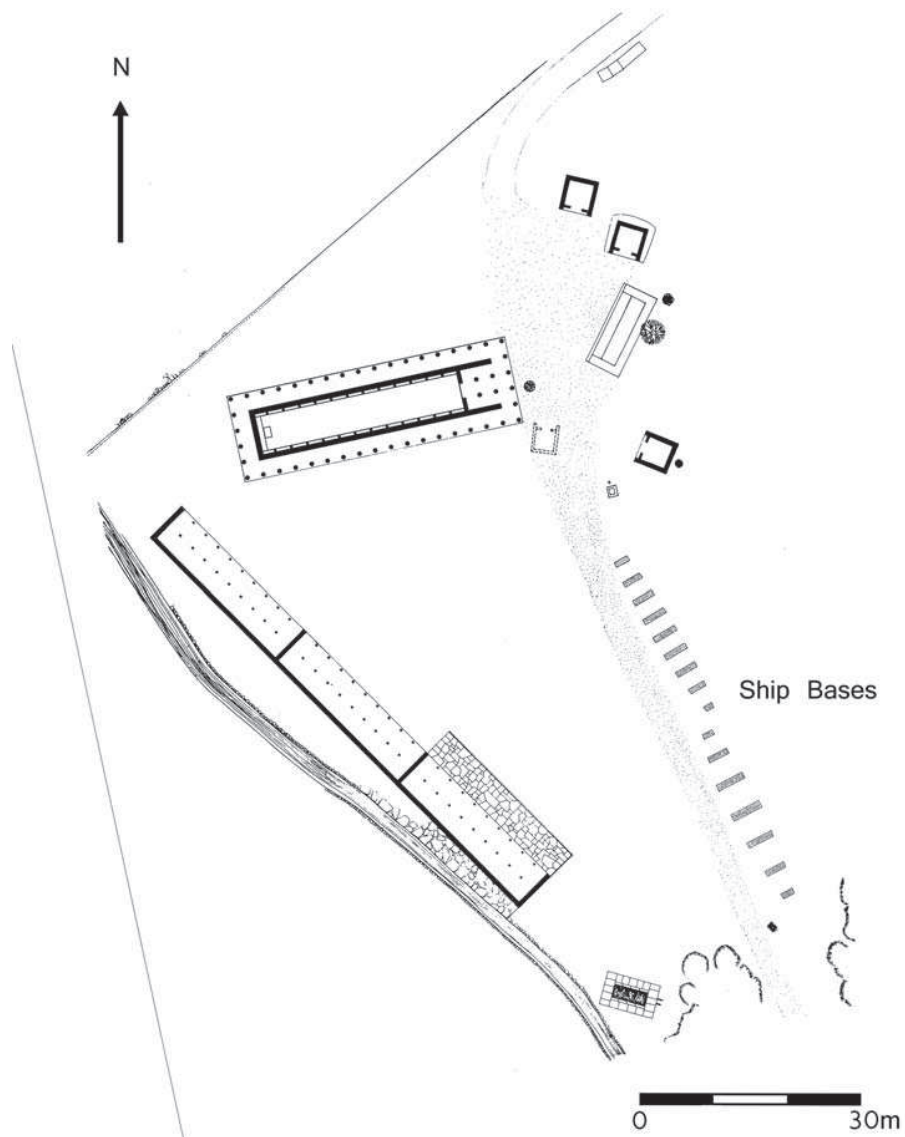
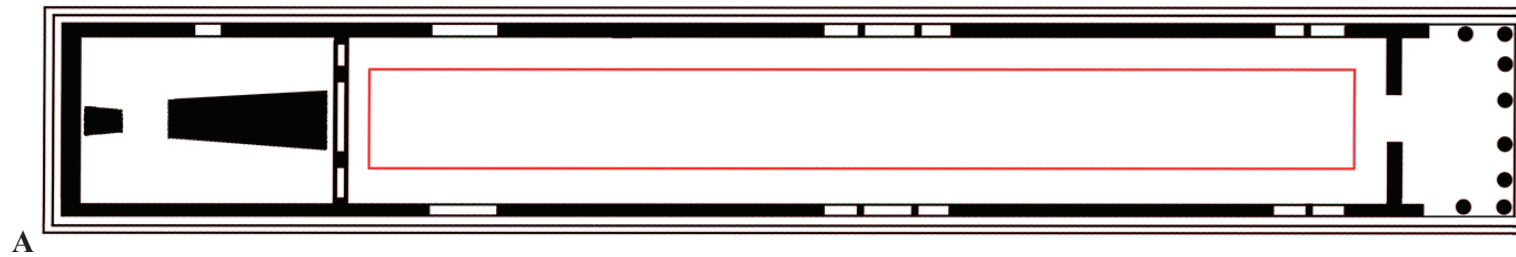


Figure 3.2. Plan of the Sanctuary of Hera on Samos c. 650 BC. Note the arrangement of the stone foundations that once likely supported the hulls of dedicated ships. (Drawing: author, based on Walter, 1990: 83, fig. 92; Kyrieleis, 1981: 89, fig. 65)

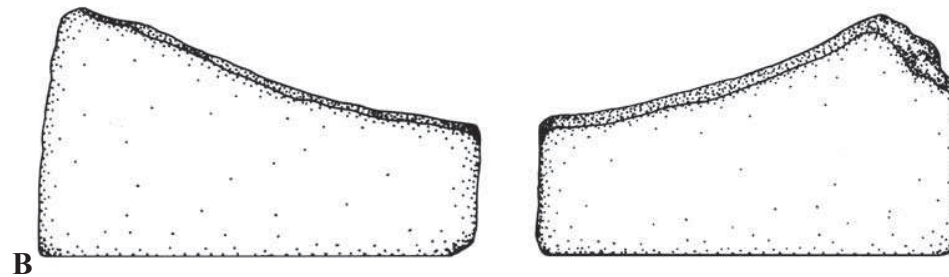
an ancient galley for public display (Fig. 3.3A). This building, which was named after elements of its decoration, consists primarily of a *cella* measuring 45.80 m long by 4.84 m wide. A series of transverse foundations, as well as a stone structure that may have functioned to support a ship's upward curving stern, have been uncovered in this room. Scholars have offered conflicting opinions relating to the identity of the ship that was displayed in this building, but most agree that it was an ancient galley (Pausanias, 1.29.1; Couchoud & Svoronos, 1921; Basch, 1987, 347-349; 1995; Morrison & Coates, 1996: 36; Guillerm, 1999; Recio, 2000: 4).

A recent discovery of a similar building dated to the first half of the 3rd century BC at the Sanctuary of the Great Gods on Samothrace is also believed to have once displayed a ship (McCredie, 1987, Rice, 1993: 247; Recio, 2000: 4). This structure has a *cella* measuring 27.25 m long by 12.18 m wide and preserves transverse stone foundations similar to those discovered on Delos and Samos. More importantly, a pair of large stone blocks that were undoubtedly cut to conform to the cross-sectional shape of a ship's hull have been discovered in situ, resting on their original stone foundations (Catling, 1986-1987: 50-51) (Fig. 3.3B). This discovery may shed light on the arrangement of the supports that once existed as part of the monuments on Delos and Samos.

Unfortunately, insufficient evidence is available to determine the circumstances surrounding the construction of any of these monuments with certainty. It is possible that they were constructed to display dedicated ships as thank-offerings, either to commemorate a particular commercial or military success, or to display enemy ships that were captured as spoils of war. Regardless of the identity of the ships, these monuments



A



B

Figure 3.3. (A) Plan of the Monument of the Bulls on Delos; Red indicates position of the ship in the *cella* (Drawing: author, after Couchoud & Svoronos, 1921: 283, fig. 1); (B) Stone supports designed to cradle a ship's hull discovered in situ on Samothrace. (Drawing: author, based on Catling, 1986-1987: 51, fig. 90)

comprised extraordinary displays of wealth and resources that undoubtedly served as much as tools of propaganda as they showed the gratitude of their dedicators. Other impressive monuments, including a number of interesting statue bases in the form of ship bows, survive from Epidauros, Rhodes, Samothrace, Thasos, and Cyrene; these surely served a similar function (Göttlicher, 1978: 67-69; Ermeti, 1981; Johnston, 1985: 99-105, 116-17). References exist in the work of the 6th-century AD writer Procopius (*De Bello Gothico*, 8.22.23-29) to similar monuments that were presumably dedicated as thank-offerings following successful voyages and naval battles (Johnston, 1985: 134-135).

The dedication of ship models and tablets depicting ships was much more common than the dedication of actual ships or monumental sculptures in antiquity. Evidence for the dedication of ship models is well attested in the archaeological record. Metal and terracotta ship models dating to the Archaic and Classical Periods have been discovered in deposits at Corinth, Isthmia, Athens, Perachora, and Lipari (Morgan, 1935: 196-97; Payne, 1940: 97, pl. 29.4; Stillwell, 1952: 195-197, pl. 43; Broneer, 1959: 301-303, 338, pl. 73c; Johnston, 1985: 64-65, 67, 78-81; Raubitschek, 1997: 10, pl. 7). In addition, excavations at the Heraion on Samos have yielded an impressive collection of wooden ship models (Ohly, 1953: 110-120, 125, pls. 34-35; Kopcke, 1967: 145-148; Kyrieleis, 1980: 89-94, pls. 18-20).

Interestingly, the majority of extant ship models appear to represent warships. Unfortunately, very few reveal any indication of the occasion that prompted their dedication. Were they dedicated in place of actual ships that were vowed to the gods

when their crews encountered great peril at sea? Alternatively, might they have been simple thank-offerings made on the withdrawal of a ship from service or on the retirement of its captain when the dedication of an actual ship was impractical? Could they have been dedicated as part of a ceremony that endeavored to gain the favor of a particular deity and to ask for protection on a specific voyage, or could they have simply functioned to commemorate a successful trading venture or naval engagement? Such questions can rarely be answered without accompanying textual records.

Fortunately, a number of textual references survive that attest to a variety of reasons for ship model dedications. Plutarch tells us:

Out of the spoils, Lysander set up at Delphi bronze statues of himself and each of his admirals, as well as golden stars of the Dioskouroi, which disappeared before the battle of Leutra. And in the treasury of Brasidas and the Acanthians there was stored a trireme two cubits long, made of gold and ivory which Cyrus sent Lysander as a prize for his victory (Plutarch, *Lysander*, 18.1 [B. Perrin, trans., Cambridge, Mass., 1914]; 12.1).

The dedication by Lysander of this model to Apollo was likely made as a thank-offering for his crushing defeat of the Athenian navy at Aegospotami in 405 BC (Johnston, 1985: 135-136). Another reference survives in an anonymous epigram that records the dedication of a ship model to Apollo at Delphi, given in remembrance of a successful voyage that brought gifts of golden ingots to the sanctuary (*Anthologia Palatina*, 6.342). Furthermore, Johnston (1985: 138) notes that many of the ship models discovered in the waters off Greece and Cyprus may attest to a tradition similar to the *navigium Isidis* that dates back to at least the Archaic Period.

Dedications of other ship models constructed from precious metals dating to the Classical and Hellenistic Periods are known from temple inventories from the

Artemision and the Temple of Apollo on Delos. An inventory from the Artemision dated to 364 BC records the dedication of an unspecified number of *trieres*-like *kraters* and several inventories from the Temple of Apollo record the dedication of at least one silver ship model by Seleukos I (Rouse, 1902: 116, 230; Pritchett, 1979: 285; Johnston, 1985: 133-134). Neither the list from the Artemision nor the lists from the Temple of Apollo record the events that prompted these dedications. It seems likely that they were constructed from spoils gained from naval victories, in a manner similar to the bronze statues that Lysander constructed from war spoils and dedicated at Delphi (Plutarch, *Lysander*, 18.1).

The offering of tablets depicting ships is known from Athens, Corinth, Sparta, Sunium, and Penteskouphia (Rouse, 1902: 230; Morrison & Williams, 1968: 73, 74, 83, 87-89, pls. 8b, 10d, 12c-e; Basch, 1987: 235-237, figs. 486-494). In addition, Grandjouan (1989: 32-33) has proposed that some of the relief molds discovered during excavations at the Athenian Agora may have been used to produce dedicatory terracotta tablets. Four fragments of these molds preserve elements of an oared warship. These have been reconstructed to form a single mold that depicts a ship, possibly a *trieres*, being rowed among Tritons (Grandjouan, 1989: 7, 47, 48, pls. 7, 28). These tablets were likely dedicated following deliverance from the dangers of naval combat or foul weather at sea. Marble reliefs were similarly dedicated. An especially interesting example from Piraeus dated to between the 4th and the 3rd centuries BC, depicts the Dioskouroi, one on horseback and the other on foot, before a supplicant standing on the bow of his ship and raising a hand in reverence (Van Straten, 1981: 97; Kaltsas, 2002: 277).