

# Sanctuaries and Goods Markets<sup>1</sup>

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The sale of goods within sacred areas is a topic that has received increasing attention in the last twenty years<sup>2</sup>. The main goods sold at wholesale are primarily livestock, while at retail one can sell foodstuffs of various kinds (cereals, legumes, fish<sup>3</sup>), wine, clothing, precious metal objects (gold and silver). Among the goods on sale at retail level, a distinction must be made between artefacts specifically related to the cult of the divinity worshipped at the sanctuary, such as clay and bronze votives or incense<sup>4</sup>, or objects specific to a given sanctuary (such as the heavy boots worn by the Trophonion of Lebadeia, indispensable for consulting the oracle<sup>5</sup>), or perishable goods, primarily foodstuffs for the subsistence of pilgrims. Objects that had nothing to do with the feast or with the deity worshipped there (e.g. gold and silver in Tithorea) could also be sold on the occasion of the feasts, subject to specific regulations by the administrative bodies (boulé, demos or collegial bodies). It is clear, therefore, that panegyreis became the best possible occasion for spreading the circulation of goods and products, both on a local scale and on a larger scale<sup>6</sup>. A few years ago, Christophe Chandezon spoke of the ‘economic irrigation of the Greek countryside’<sup>7</sup>. In almost all cases, our documentation associates the markets within the sacred areas with the holding of agons, which, with their capacity to attract unusual masses of worshippers, were also an extraordinary occasion for the sale of handcrafts and consumer goods. The case of the slave trade<sup>8</sup>, which by its very nature had a continuous turnover and was not limited to the specific occasions of the panegyreis, as well as sacred prostitution, seems to me to be distinct.

In my paper, I will try to show the specific nature of the markets in question, starting from the spaces deputed to agoraic activity (usually mobile structures, stalls and counters made of ephemeral material) and moving on to the details of sales. An exceptional case is that of Olympia, where barley and cereals, dried fruit (lentils and beans), ground or grated ingredients and wine were sold in measuring cups<sup>9</sup>. The consumption of bread and its derivatives and fish is also attested, sold probably by small traders who used bronze measuring units<sup>10</sup>.

In an attempt to give a general picture, I would say that foodstuffs were sold at a short distance from their places of production: this was a trade on a local or, at most, intra-regional scale of products put on the local market in larger quantities during the great festive gatherings. On a different scale, a similar argument applies to meat for sacrifice, coming from regional districts, which it would not make sense to put on the market at a great distance from the centres of breeding and production. On the other hand, trade in refined goods and handicraft production must have been handled on a perhaps extra-regional scale.

The production and sale of votive offerings for immediate dedication within the sanctuary in question deserves a separate discourse, as their sale may have been permanent within the sacred areas and not limited to the days of panegyris and agones.

In fact, archaeological excavations have now clarified that in some sanctuaries workshops were active precisely for the production of votive offerings on site (Olympia<sup>11</sup>, sanctuary of Poseidon at Akovitika<sup>12</sup> (Messenia), Nemea<sup>13</sup>, Amyklaion<sup>14</sup>).

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> A longer version of this article in Italian has meanwhile been published in a Supplement of the *Annuario della Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente (SAIA)*, in a volume edited by me that collects some of the essays from this session: Lo Monaco 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Specific studies: de Ligt, de Neeve 1988; de Ligt 1993, p. 66; Chandezon 2000; Moretti, Fincker, Chankowski 2012, 225–246. The topic is treated also within more general analyses in Davies 2007; Bresson 2007–2008, p. 21; Chankowski 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Roesch 1974.

<sup>4</sup> *IEph VII 2*, n. 4102.

<sup>5</sup> Paus. IX 39, 8.

<sup>6</sup> Some of these markets have a non-local dimension. Cf. the exemption from port and customs duties in Elea, Oinoanda and Sparta (de Ligt 1993, 65–66).

<sup>7</sup> Chandezon 2000, p. 93.

<sup>8</sup> For slaves at the sanctuary of Apollo at Actium (200 b.C.) see LSCG Suppl. 45; de Ligt 1993, p. 65.

<sup>9</sup> Hamdorf 1981; Schilbach 1999.

<sup>10</sup> Hitzl 1996, 102–104.

<sup>11</sup> Zimmer 1990, 21–24, 39–50, 98 ss.; Moustaka 1999.

<sup>12</sup> P. Themelis, in *AAA 2*, 1969, 352–357; Zimmer 1990, p. 21.

<sup>13</sup> Miller 1990, 46–47, 146–147 e fig. 106 a p. 149; Zimmer 1990, 50–57.

<sup>14</sup> See the ongoing *Amyklaion Project* from 2005, now directed by S. Vlizos (see his paper in this volume).

### Literature

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