

## Sacred places, territorial economy and cultural identity in northern Epirus (Chaonia)

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Until the late Classical period, Chaonia, the northernmost part of Epirus corresponding to nowadays southern Albania, is clearly differentiated in two cultural units: the coastal areas that borders with Thesprotia, falling from the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC into the *peiraia* of Corcyra, and the ‘indigenous’ districts of the interior (fig. 1). If the belonging of the Chaonians to Greek culture and ethnicity could hardly be denied by present scholarship, the literary sources of Classical times regarded them as barbarians.<sup>1</sup> This ‘peripheral’ connotation, even if depending on a sort of cultural and geographical prejudice, seems to find a parallel in the archaeological record concerning the sacred landscape.<sup>2</sup>

Earliest attestations of worship come from Butrint, part of the Archaic Corcyrean *peiraia*, where an inscribed potsherd found in a votive deposit in 1938 points to the existence of a cult of Athena as early as the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, possibly related to a monumental temple, located, according to a recent hypothesis, on the acropolis hill.<sup>3</sup> Apart from this early case, the development of a full-fledged religious architecture among the native tribes can be traced as far back as the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, occurring in most cases only in the Hellenistic age. It is the period when new fortified centres, featuring in some instances a real urban layout and a Hellenistic-like monumental equipment, make their appearance beside the traditional network of *komai*.

The new centralised settlement pattern, with main centre-*poleis* (Phoinike and Antigonea) and their gravitating system of minor settlements bordering territories well defined also from a geomorphologic point of view, even if not unknown to the other Epirote ethne, seems to have been particularly familiar with the Chaonians,<sup>4</sup> conditioning the spatial distribution of the cults as well. In the light of this pattern, the fact that most of the evidences related to cult activity are found inside the few urban centres that emerged in the Hellenistic period, even if largely influenced by the lack of extensive archaeological surveys over the territory, may suggest a certain attractive power of the cities over religious manifestations.<sup>5</sup>

What is more remarkable with Chaonian sacred landscape, indeed, is the fact that divinities and ritual forms having elsewhere a mainly non-urban or suburban character seem to have played a central role, in the Chaonian cities, also with regards to social and political life. It is the case with the cult of Poseidon, a chiefly mountain and continental god in Epirus and southern Illyria, who is attested in Antigonea and presides in Phoinike over manumissions,<sup>6</sup> as well as with the rites of passage generally performed in the name of Artemis: to this religious sphere we must refer four fragmentary terracotta protomes found in 2012 in a votive deposit on the hill of Phoinike, close to the alleged agora of the middle Hellenistic city to whose installation, very possibly, the deposition of these materials is directly linked.<sup>7</sup> Finally, one would be tempted to relate the location of the few non-urban shrines known so far in the region along the natural boundaries and close to the access to



Fig. 1: Geographical localisation of Chaonia and Butrint.

territories controlled by the cities, to the supposed urban-like attitude of the Chaonians in the late 3<sup>rd</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, the lacking of data concerning the cult places of northern Epirus makes it difficult to recognize, in the wider frame of Epirote ethnic identity, specific Chaonian habits parallel to those, which emerge more vividly in the case of other Epirote ethne.<sup>9</sup>

If the majority of the evidences consists in isolated inscriptions, architectural fragments, and votive materials lacking a stratigraphic context, the recent reinterpretation of the supposed in-antis temple in the agora of Phoinike as part of a larger building without clear religious function, possibly a stoa, has deprived the major city of Chaonia of a cult place belonging to its Hellenistic phase.<sup>10</sup> After this reassessment, the sanctuary of Asklepios at Butrint stands out even more clearly as the sole Chaonian shrine whose material, spatial, and cultic features are sufficiently known for both its Hellenistic and Roman stages.

In the complex at the southern slope of the acropolis hill, investigated by Luigi Maria Ugolini between 1929 and 1935, scholars have recently recognised the typical architectural components of this kind of sanctuaries, that in the whole Mediterranean

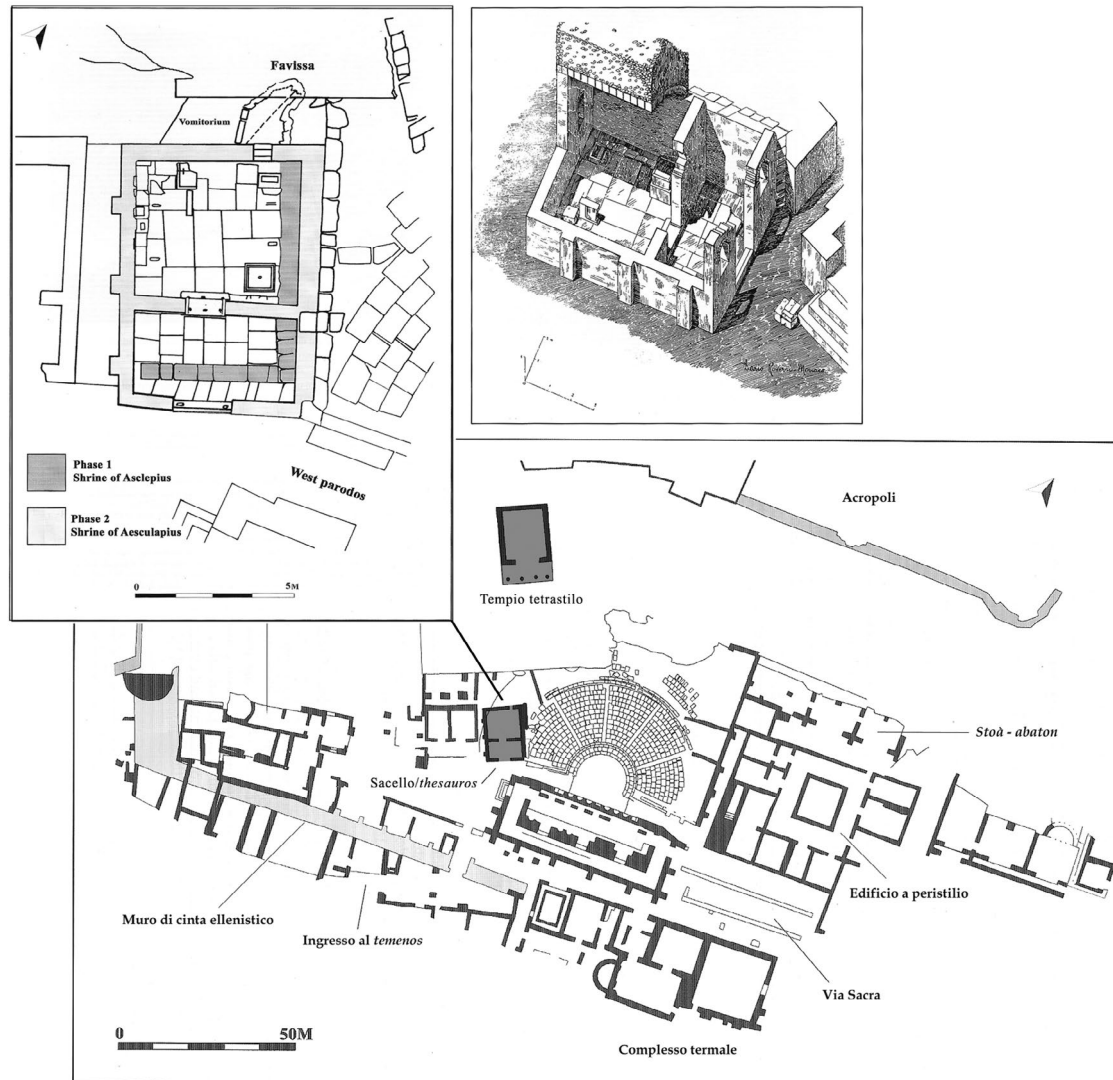


Fig. 2: The sanctuary of Asklepios and the sacellum and its favissa.

area show recurring arrangements strictly determined by the Epidaurian ritual:<sup>11</sup> a prostyle temple on a terrace dominating the sanctuary, whose dedication to Asklepios is confirmed by a mosaic emblema depicting a coiled snake;<sup>12</sup> a theatre used for sacred performances and manumissions; a smaller temple-like building to the west (the so called 'Sacello ad Esculapio', radically rebuilt in the Imperial period), which at least at one moment of its life may have performed the function of deposit for votive offerings and the most sacred ritual objects; a stoa to the east, in connection with the spring of the healing water, interpreted as the *enkoimeterion*, in which the incubation ritual was performed; other buildings with auxiliary functions (fig. 2).

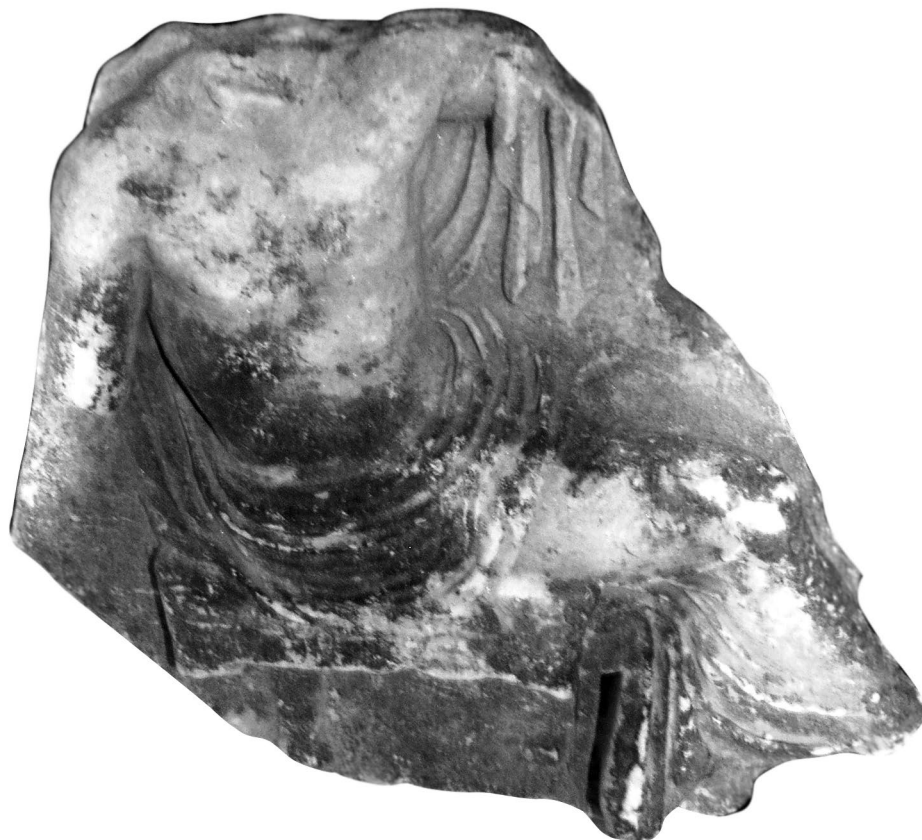


Fig. 3: Votive relief found by Domenico Mustilli behind the scene of the theatre.

The main issue with this sanctuary is that of the implantation of the healing cult and its earliest building stages.<sup>13</sup> As regards the latter, the sole reliable chronological anchorage is provided by the dedicatory inscription of the theatre, most likely subsequent to the fall of monarchy in Epirus (232 BC) but antedating the establishment of the autonomous *koinon* of the Prasaiboi around 163 BC, having in the Asklepieion its political and self-identity centre.<sup>14</sup> The construction of the theatre, on its turn, offers a *terminus ante quem* for the stoa-*enkoimeterion* and the small shrine on its sides, while for the upper temple a subsequent dating, related to the increasing prosperity of the sanctuary attested by the theatre dedication, remains equally possible.<sup>15</sup> In the absence of stratigraphic data, in archaeological literature the dating of this early stage to the very beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, if not to the end of the 4<sup>th</sup>, has relied only on the alleged chronology of some movable finds on the one hand, and on the assumption that the healing cult was introduced from Corcyra, after the emancipation of Butrint from its political sphere but still under its influence, on the other.<sup>16</sup> As far as the movable finds are concerned, for the votive relief found by Domenico Mustilli behind the scene of the theatre, depicting a seated deity – probably Asklepios (fig. 3) – and

traditionally considered late Classical or high Hellenistic, a dating to the Augustan period can be rather proposed on the basis of its stylistic features.<sup>17</sup> (L.M.)

### The favissa: vessels

In the rear of the small shrine above mentioned, Luigi Ugolini found a rock-cut compartment closed by stone slabs containing a votive deposit interpreted as a favissa (fig. 2).<sup>18</sup>

As already suggested by the Italian Archaeologist, this votive deposit is composed by more than 300 objects of different periods that were originally displayed or conserved in the shrine-thesaurus or in other parts of the sanctuary, and then put together in the favissa in order to make space for new objects or in correspondence of architectural remakes of the sanctuary.

Giving the fact that these materials are not anymore available, Luigi Ugolini's publication is the only way for us to know the artefacts found in the favissa. Because inscriptions have been recently re-edited by Pierre Cabanes<sup>19</sup> and the numismatic data have not been published,<sup>20</sup> we will focus on vessels and other ritual objects.

Because of the abovementioned importance of the dating of this pottery, we will start from their chronological study.

Among Hellenistic pottery, the drinking vessels are represented mostly by kantharoi and secondly by bowls. These latter, six in total, are all to be referred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC: they comprehend a hemispheric sample with head-figured appliqué supports (fig. 4, 1)<sup>21</sup> and five 'Megarian bowls' (fig. 4, 2–5).<sup>22</sup> Regarding kantharoi, the most peculiar is the one defined by Luigi Ugolini as "vaso di Nikadas"<sup>23</sup> (fig. 4, 6) because of the graffito in its neck referring to the dedicant, Nikadas (repeated two times), son of Nikaios (ΝΙΚΑΔΑΣ ΝΙΚΑΙΟΥ ΝΙΚΑΔΑΣ). The dating proposed by the archaeologist (the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC) is not appropriated, being its shape certainly to be related to that of the thorn kantharoi, a very peculiar type unknown in the region, dating from last decades of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC but mostly in 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.<sup>24</sup> It is interesting to notice that, in Butrint, the name Nikadas occurs in eight manumission documents dated from 163 BC, dating confirmed by other occurrences in Epirus.<sup>25</sup> The other kantharoi, 19 in total, have all a black glaze and are not so different one from each other in shape, having generally a high foot, simple handles and a body wider in its lower part (fig. 4, 7–12).<sup>26</sup> It is clearly to be related to the ritual, which included the offering of food to god (see *infra*), the prevalence of plates and paterae, more than 130. These latter, that differ from plates for their small diameter (10–13 cm), are all in plain ware and red fabric, and are fundamentally of two types: one with simple rim and one, very peculiar and dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, with wavy rim (fig. 4, 13).<sup>27</sup> Among plates, 20 (both in plain ware and with black glaze) are certainly referable to the Hellenistic age:<sup>28</sup> they comprehend, on the basis of the descriptions, at least 5 plates Morel 1440, (possibly 1443) produced in 2<sup>nd</sup>–1<sup>st</sup> Century BC (fig. 4, 14).<sup>29</sup> To the same period pertain the fusiform unguentaria (more than 20,



Fig. 4: Hellenistic pottery found in the favissa. Hemispheric cup (1); 'megarian bowls' (2-5); thorn kantharos (6); other kantharoi (7-12); patera with wavy rim (13); Plate Morel 1440 (14). Photos are not in scale.



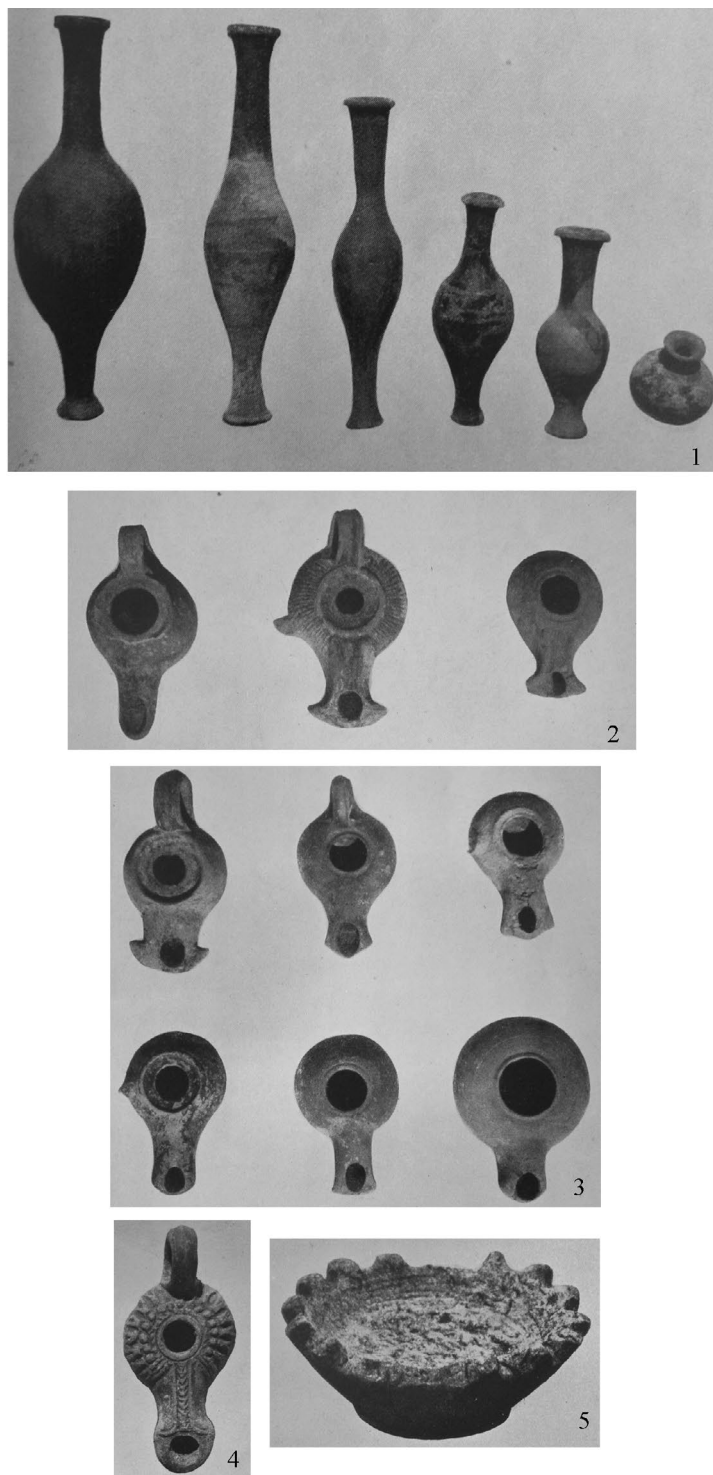


Fig. 5: Hellenistic pottery found in the favissa. Unguentaria (1); lamps (2-4); marble small cup (5).

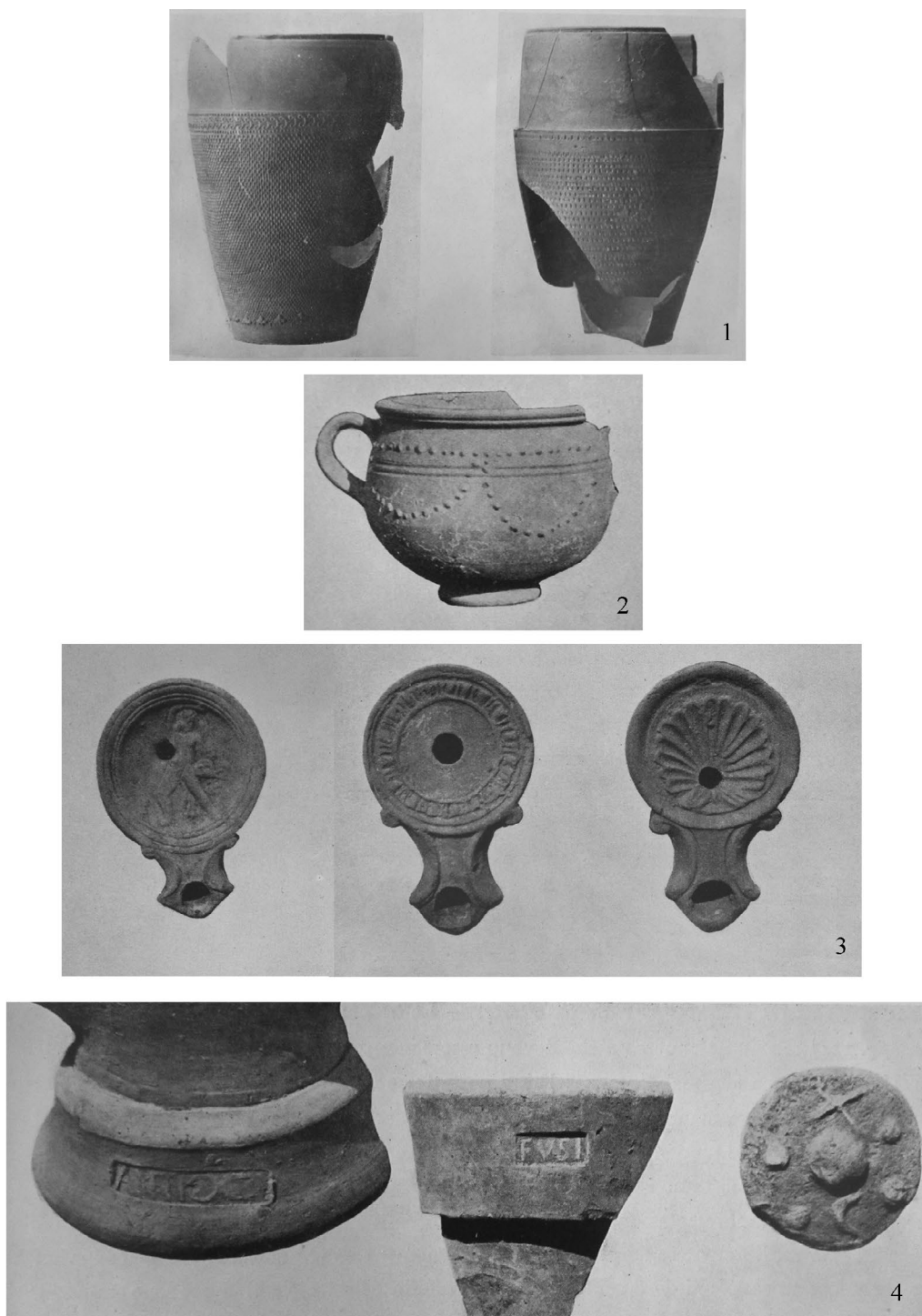


Fig. 6: Roman Pottery found in the favissa. Aco beakers (1), Thin walled cup (2), Lamps (3); Amphoras Dressel 6A, with stamps (4).



all glazed) and the lamps (about 50, glazed, a few of whom with relief decoration). It is probably identifiable with a lamp also a small marble cup with jagged rim (fig. 5).<sup>30</sup>

Materials referring to the Augustan and Imperial age, less numerous, date the closing of the deposit to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (fig. 6): they are at least one plate in Terra Sigillata Italica,<sup>31</sup> two Aco beakers, one thin walled cup, three lamps with vaulted nozzle and two fragments of Dressel 6A amphoras.<sup>32</sup>

On the basis of these considerations, we can state that these materials cover a timeframe of about three centuries, starting from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, up to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, when the favissa was filled and closed, possibly in connection with one rebuild of the shrine.

Besides the chronology of these materials – to read together with that of the other artefacts from the favissa, as the Asklepios relief (*supra*) and the votive objects (*infra*) – their study is important also to understand the role that the sanctuary had in Chaonia.<sup>33</sup> First of all, the great cultural vivacity of Butrint depends evidently on both the presence in the site of the sanctuary and on its geographical position: this cultural opening is present but less evident in Phonike, significantly located inland. Moreover a few vases attested in the favissa and certainly of foreign provenance (like the thorn kantharos, the hemispheric cup with appliqué relief supports) are not known in Chaonia, in Butrint or in other Chaonian centres. Regarding other ceramic types like the ‘ear shaped kantharoi’, they are similar – but not identical<sup>34</sup> – to the many samples known in the region, suggesting the existence of a ceramic production dedicated to cult.<sup>35</sup> On the same direction goes the fact that wavy rim paterae, the best represented vases of the context, do not find parallels in the region and are generically similar only to vases from Phonike clearly connected with a ritual function both for shape and associated materials.<sup>36</sup> (A.G.)

### The favissa: ritual objects

The objects strictly connected to the rite found in the favissa can be referred to three main categories: thymiateria (15), arulae (at least 3) and paterae-kernoi (at least 3).

Ugolini describes fourteen “Porta offerte”<sup>37</sup> (fig. 7, 1), actually thymiateria, belonging to a widely spread Hellenistic type,<sup>38</sup> derived from stone altars and then identified as the bomiskoi mentioned in the sanctuary inventories.<sup>39</sup> However, Butrint thymiateria are distinguished from comparisons found for being in plain ware. Even if we do not know other thymiateria from Chaonia, this feature may perhaps be referred to a late Hellenistic local production.<sup>40</sup>

A second type of thymiaterion is attested by only one specimen, more elaborated, defined by Ugolini “high cup”<sup>41</sup> (fig. 7, 2). Due to the two pairs of hanging handles, he already correctly suggested that this type originated from the imitation of metal objects, as confirmed by following studies on this type of thymiaterion.<sup>42</sup> Regarding its chronology, parallels have been found in Taranto (bronze sample dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC) and in Athens: this latter, in clay and more similar, pertain to the late Hellenistic age.<sup>43</sup>

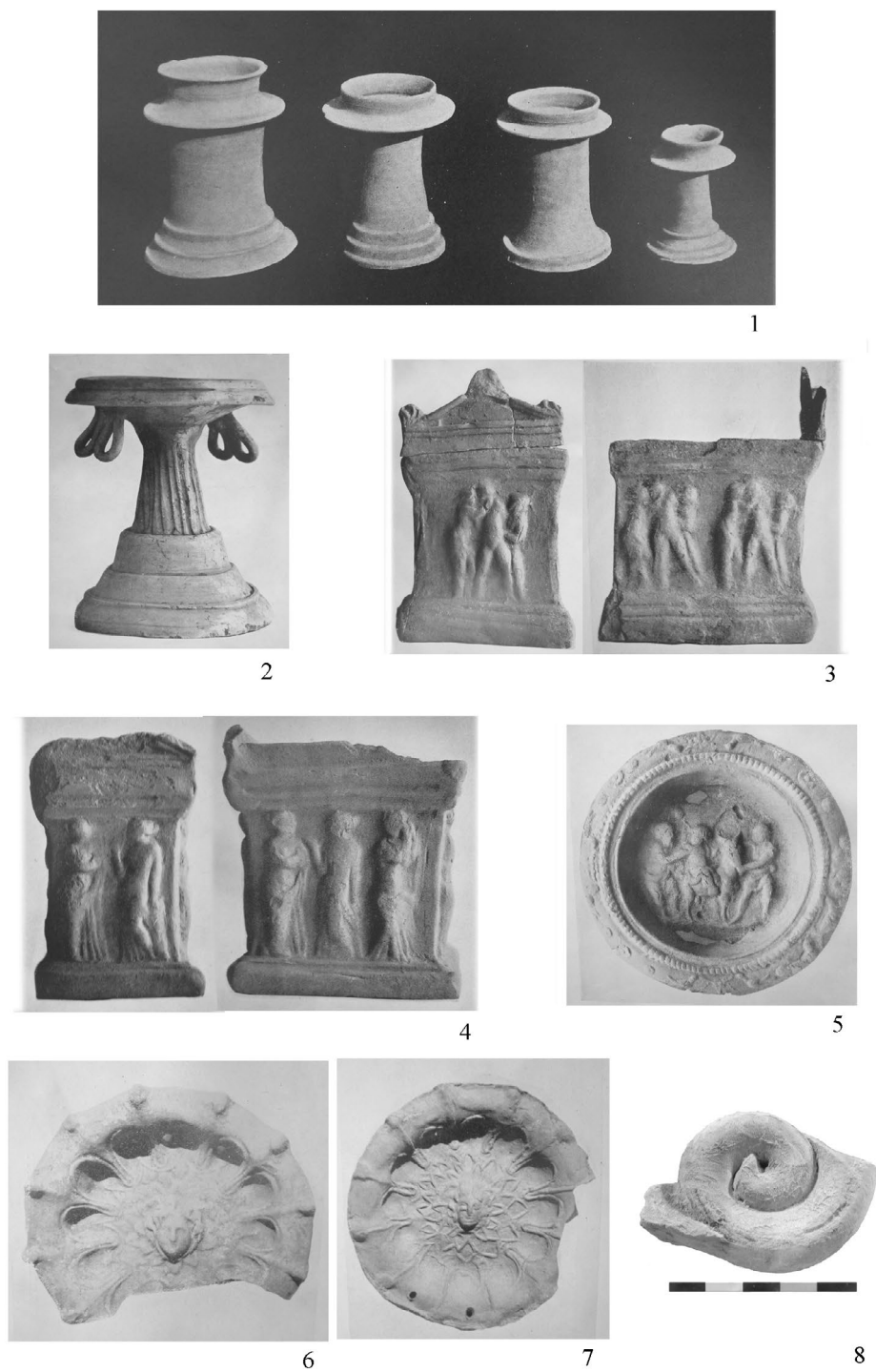


Fig. 7: Ritual objects found in the favissa. Thymiateria (1-2), Arulae (3-4), clay disc/patera (5), Paterae-Kernoi (6-7). Clay snake-shaped cake (8).

Ugolini also reports the description of at least three „bruciaprofumi“, or „piccole are in terracotta“:<sup>44</sup> small rectangular altars in terracotta, with moulded base and small pediment with acroteria preserved only in one specimen, and decorated by moulded figured scenes (fig. 7, 3–4). The function as an incense burner has been rightly hypothesised by Ugolini for the presence of a hole on one of the long sides to feed the fire, and the residues of burned resinous substances on their upper surfaces.

These small altars can be referred to the so-called ‘Tarentine’ type, although the origin of the type must be placed in Greece, probably in Athens at least from the middle 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. It is characterised by these morphological features and specific iconographic set also attested in the contemporary productions of moulded bowls: Dionysian trio, Poseidon and Amimone, Apollo and Leto, woman who crowns a trophy.<sup>45</sup> One arula from Butrint shows the typical Dionysian scene repeated on both short sides and twice on one of the long ones (the fourth is plain): Dionysus (slightly bigger than the other figures), with his head turned towards a female figure on his right (Arianna or a menade), supported by a satyr on his left (fig. 7, 3).<sup>46</sup> Also in the second published arula we find repeated scenes that on the contrary do not seem to be attested either on other ‘Tarantine’ arulae, nor on the contemporary moulded bowls: two female figures, in profile, facing one another, associated in the long sides with a third female figure (fig. 7, 4).<sup>47</sup> For both arulae, the reworking of the standard decorative patterns that normally occur on these arulae, the isolation of a (Dionysian) scene normally associated with other specific iconographies, the presence of an ‘unedited’ representation compared to the standard ones, the absence of decorations to frame the scenes and the quality of the reliefs, seem to exclude a provenance from important production centres such as Taranto or Athens, but rather seem to suggest the local reworking of the ‘Tarentine’ model.

Passing to the roles of these object in the rites, the incense burned in thymiateria, in the cult of Asklepios was used both to accompany offers and libations<sup>48</sup> and as medical material with drying and cauterising properties, healer and purifier, as well as being associated to others offers closely related to the Chthonian sphere, such as oil and honey, which in the healing curative practices that allowed the passage from illness to healing, from darkness to light, had to have an important role.<sup>49</sup> In the inventories of the Asklepieion in Athens, the dedication of both incense and thymiateria are attested;<sup>50</sup> inscriptions from Epidaurus and from Pergamon mention thymiateria both among the offers that precede the incubation, and during the rites for the healing of the patient, and a relief of the in the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul (Roman imitation of a model of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC) shows a thymiaterion wrapped by a snake in the presence of Asklepios and Igea.<sup>51</sup> It is not surprising, therefore, that the favissa in the Butrint Asklepieion has returned several thymiateria, as well as some arulae.

Another ritual vessel well attested in the favissa is the patera-kernos (fig. 7, 6–7), reported by Ugolini in many fragments and published in two specimens, with Gorgoneion-omphalos and surrounded by twelve ovoid depressions and that can have suspension holes. Similar paterae, beyond being depicted on figured vases for offer eggs, seems strictly connected to

the cult of Asklepios and his sacred snakes, being reproduced in the metopes of the Tholos of the Sanctuary of Epidauro, connected indeed to the offering of eggs to the sacred snakes.<sup>52</sup> Then, they could be used as kernos for the offerings of eggs for the sacred snakes of the god and it is interesting that in the favissa some egg shells have been found,<sup>53</sup> that can then confirm this practice.

Finally regarding the figurative clay disc/patera with a Dionysian scene (Diam. 13,2 cm), called “oscillum” by Ugolini, because of the suspension hole “sotto il caprone”<sup>54</sup> (fig. 7, 5), its connection to the cult of Asklepios remains enigmatic.

Even if it does not come from the favissa, it is certainly to be linked to these ritual objects a fragment of a snake-shaped clay cake from a Hellenistic context of the excavations of the Butrint Roman forum (fig. 7, 8). It finds precise comparisons among offerings from the Asklepieion of Agrigento.<sup>55</sup> Beyond their symbolic meaning as representation of the animal sacred to Asclepius, these votive objects are closely connected to the offer of food and specifically of bread/cakes, attested by epigraphic and literary sources for different deities, but in particular for Asclepius and the circle of animals, characters and deities connected to him.<sup>56</sup> The offer of cakes was part of the preliminary rituals of incubation, as well as accompanying the consecration of the *ex voto* after the healing.<sup>57</sup>

The study of these ritual objects found in the favissa, then, clearly displays the features of the worship of Asklepios in Butrint. As already been proved for the architectural development of the sanctuary and the functions of its buildings, also all the objects related to the worship clearly displays the full adherence to the Epidauros model, for both the structure and parts of the ritual and the set of symbolic references, being perfectly comparable to the most important sanctuaries of Asklepios in all the Mediterranean Sea. (N.A.)

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the reassessment of the finds from the favissa in Butrint’s Asklepieion has showed the cultural vitality of the sanctuary in term of both material culture and features of the worship and it has given a new coherent dating of the Hellenistic phases of the deposit to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. The new dating proposed does not necessarily imply, however, a new dating of the arrival of Asklepios in Butrint nor dates the beginning of the worship at the same time. It simply do not more allow to link these materials to the earliest stages of the worship, whose chronology needs to be better investigated together with a new reading of the sequence of building phases of the complex *sacellum-temple-theatre*, in order to better understand this problematic. Only further researches on both the diffusion of the cult in the region and the investigations of the early Hellenistic phases in Butrint will be able to clarify these early phases of both worship and sanctuary. (L.M., A.G., N.A.)

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Thuk. 1, 5, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Mancini 2013 and in press. For Chaonia: De Maria – Mancini in press.

<sup>3</sup> Hernandez 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Cabanes 2007, 228.

<sup>5</sup> De Maria – Mancini in press.

<sup>6</sup> Cabanes – Drini 2016, 40–43 no. 8. 64 f. no. 66. Cf. Quantin 2004.

<sup>7</sup> Mancini 2015; De Maria – Mancini in press, 230–235.

<sup>8</sup> For the sanctuaries at Dobra (Vagalat) and Mesopotam see De Maria – Mancini in press, 237–241.

<sup>9</sup> This is the case of Thesprotians: Mancini 2017.

<sup>10</sup> De Maria – Mancini in press, 228 f.

<sup>11</sup> Melfi 2007; Mancini 2013, 79–81. 88–90 with references.

<sup>12</sup> Raynaud – Islami 2018, 24–34. 213–218.

<sup>13</sup> De Maria – Mancini in press, 221–228.

<sup>14</sup> Cabanes – Drini 2007, 71 f. no. 7.

<sup>15</sup> Mancini 2013, 89 f.

<sup>16</sup> Melfi 2012, 24 f.

<sup>17</sup> De Maria – Mancini in press, 223–225 fig. 8.

<sup>18</sup> Ugolini 1942, 98 f.

<sup>19</sup> Cabanes – Drini 2007, 176 f. nos. 177 f.

<sup>20</sup> In fact, the “many bronze coins” mentioned by Luigi Ugolini (Ugolini 1942, 146) are not then described in the chapter dedicated to numismatic discoveries (Ibid., 233–235).

<sup>21</sup> The supports have the form of heads of a Silen, a Satyrus and a comedian masque (Ugolini 1942, 132 no. 9. pl. XIX). Similar samples are attested in the area of the Isthmus of Corinth, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BC: in Corinth they have similar figured feet and relief decoration on the body (Edwards 1975, 171 nos. 873–897. pl. 38. 76); at Isthmia they present not figured or shell feet (Anderson – Stojanović 1993, 290 – 294 nos. 89. 124. 126. figs. 15. 20).

<sup>22</sup> Ugolini 1942, 133 f. nos. 10 (floral b.), 11 (figured b.), 12 (imbricate b.), 14 (floral b.), 15 (long petal b., not in figure). pl. XX.

<sup>23</sup> Ugolini 1942, 131.

<sup>24</sup> For the distribution of this type see De Mitri 2016, 30 f. fig. 8; For findings in Corinth: Bald Romano 1994, 70 no. 25 (with previous bibliography); Samples from Peloponnese: Dekoulakou 2011; Danale 2011, pl. 47.

<sup>25</sup> Fraser – Matthews 1997, 315 with bibliography and distribution.

<sup>26</sup> Ugolini 1942, nos. 218–236, “olle” and “ollette”.

<sup>27</sup> Ugolini 1942, 134 f. nos. 20–156. fig. 136.

<sup>28</sup> Ugolini 1942, 136 f. nos 157–177. fig. 137.

<sup>29</sup> Morel 1981, 113–115. The plates of this series were generally produced in the Italian Peninsula. However they are present in the chaonian production too (Gamberini 2016, 95 nos. 199–201).

<sup>30</sup> Ugolini 1942, 142–146 nos. 237–260 (unguentaria). nos. 261–267. nos. 271–314 (lamps and marble cup).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 138 fig. 137. Defined “aretino”, is possibly tiberian for the presence of a stamp in planta pedis. To this plate may be related other 20 samples defined as its imitation among whom a few samples may be rather referred to ESB plates (*Ibid.*, no. 187, “bacinella”, possibly a plate Atlante 62A, of end of 1st-beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 127. 132 nos. 6 f. 141 no. 236. 143 nos. 268–270.

<sup>33</sup> The best known Hellenistic contexts in the region are those from the Butrint Roman Forum Excavations (RFE) Project, directed by D. R. Hernandez (see <<https://butrint.nd.edu>> [01.05.2019], Aleotti in press a and Aleotti in press b) and those from Phoinike, at present directed by Giuseppe Lepore and Shpresa Gjongecaj (see Gamberini 2016 and Gamberini in press).

<sup>34</sup> Gamberini 2016, 58–62.

<sup>35</sup> This phenomenon is well documented in other sites. For south Italy see Di Giuseppe 2012.

<sup>36</sup> The only two samples found in Phoinike, both in black glazed pottery, are characterized by central omphalos, were associated with the votive terracottas found in the acropolis of the city (*supra* and Gamberini 2016, 89 f.). Moreover, similar vases have been used in a tomb found in Kephalochoiri (Thesprotia) as lids for ash containers: Riginos 1997, figs. 75. 79.

<sup>37</sup> Ugolini 1942, 138. H. from 12 to 22 cm.

<sup>38</sup> Type N, variant 2, C. Zaccagnino typology, Zaccagnino 1998, 107. 215. 182. Deonna 1938, pl. CV. 929–936 for Delos; Schafer 1968, pl. 49. F44 for Pergamon; Davidson 1942, 124 f. fig. 13. no. 63 for Corinth; Rotroff 2006, 211 f. pl. 86. 1437–1442 for Athens, where the shapes with more molded base are dated from the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC.

<sup>39</sup> Zaccagnino 1998, 47. 76 f. For the origin from stone altars see also Deonna 1938, 380–383.

<sup>40</sup> The same technical evolution from early to late Hellenistic period is attested among regional fine wares in Phoinike, see Gamberini 2016, 42 f.

<sup>41</sup> Ugolini 1942, 132. h. 18 cm.

<sup>42</sup> Zaccagnino 1998, 78 f. 215. Type Q, variant 2.

<sup>43</sup> For Taranto see Wuilleumier 1939, 359; for Athens Rotroff 1997, 211 f. figs. 86. 1443.

<sup>44</sup> Ugolini 1942, 129–131. H. ca. 10 cm, width about 15 × 4–5 × 6–9.

<sup>45</sup> For the spread in all the Hellenistic Mediterranean Sea, see Williams 1979, 136–138. Rotroff 1982, 20; Thompson 1962, 260 with related bibliography, also about the supposed origin in Taranto between 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC.

<sup>46</sup> Arulae with same Dionysian scene from Athens: Rotroff 1982, 20; Thompson 1962, 259 fig. 2. pl. 91, with related bibliography; from Delos see Deonna 1938, 386 no. 451. Taranto: Wuilleumier 1939, 432–436. pl. XLI no. 3; Black Sea: Finoguenova 1991; For a recent attestation in northern Peloponneso (Lousoi): Mitsopoulos-Leon 2017, 149 cat. 270.

<sup>47</sup> Ugolini 1942, 131.

<sup>48</sup> Ehrenheim 2015, 75 also reports that in the cult of Asclepius the libations and the incantations could have been particularly important given the frequency of the offering requests (pre and post incubation), repeated daily for many worshippers, in place of the most complex animal sacrifices. Even in this second



case, however, the incense would have been fundamental “per attuire l’odore pungente sprigionato dal sangue e dalle carni” (Cali 2009, 173 n. 56).

<sup>49</sup> Zaccagnino 1998, 57.

<sup>50</sup> IG II/III, 1, 1429, 28–31 and IG II/III, 2, 1532, 22.

<sup>51</sup> Zaccagnino 1998, 56 f.; Cali 2009, 173 n. 56; Ehrenheim 2015, 74 f.

<sup>52</sup> For the relationship between this paterae-kernos, eggs and Asclepius and their importance for the comprehension of the Tholos of Epidaurus see Riethmuller 2005, 322–324 and Riethmuller 1996.

<sup>53</sup> Ugolini 1942, 146 no. 315.

<sup>54</sup> Ugolini 1942, 129.

<sup>55</sup> De Miro 2003, 68. 102 nos. 38–40. pl. LXII nos. 1a–1b. Where it is suggested that the snake-cake would be allusive to the sacred bread placed in the snake’s den, then passed into the symbolic offering of a coin in the thesaurus.

<sup>56</sup> Cali 2009, 173 no. 55. On the offerings of cake in Greek sanctuaries, the testimonies on their prescriptions in different rituals and their meaning see Kearns 1994; Patera 2015; Kearns 2011.

<sup>57</sup> Edelstein-Edelstein 1988, 187; Ehrenheim 2015, 56–62; Kearns 1994, 68; Kearns 2011, 98 with related bibliography. An inscription from the Asklepieion of Kos (IG XII, 4, 1, 285, late 4th century BC), prescribes not to throw cakes (and other objects) in the spring dedicated to the worship of nymphs inside the sanctuary (as evidence of the practice of „consecrating“ the water of the sanctuaries by throwing offers and votive objects). See Interdonato 2013, 112.

### Image Credits

Fig. 1: Screenshot from Mapped (ver. 2.1). Re-elaboration by the authors. – Fig. 2: Mancini 2013 (lower picture) and Melfi 2007 (upper pictures). – Fig. 3: Mancini in press. – Fig. 4–6: Ugolini 1942. – Fig. 7: Ugolini 1942 (7,1–7,7); from Butrint Roman Forum excavations project 2011–2014, photo by N. Aleotti (7,8).

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