

Aphrodite Euploia: The patron goddess of seafarers

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The goddess Aphrodite is most commonly associated with love, fertility and beauty. Consequently, she is particularly associated with the female sphere of life, with many women worshipping her in the context of weddings or marriages. It is less well known that Aphrodite also had another sovereign power: she was the protective goddess of seafarers and merchants.

From ancient written sources and inscriptions, we have gained knowledge of several Aphrodite epithets that depict her as the protector of seafarers. The most well-known adjective is *Euploia*, which can be translated as ‘the Aphrodite of safe and lucky voyages’. This term has been recorded for Aphrodite at Knidos, as well as at Piraeus near Athens, and later at various other locations such as Olbia and the island of Delos. Along with the epithet *Euploia*, there are other sea-related epithets commonly associated with the goddess: *Thalassía*, *Pontia*, and *Einalía* (goddess of the sea); *Liménia* ((safe) harbour) and *Epiliménia* (lead to the harbour); *Limenarchis* and *Nauarchis* (mistress of the harbour and the ships); *Anadyomene* (emerging (from the sea)); and finally *Galenaia* (calm waters).

The plethora of epithets used to describe the goddess highlight her unique relationship with the sea and activities related to it. It is noteworthy that these epithets were not exclusively applied to Aphrodite; they were also bestowed upon other deities on occasion. For instance, Athena could be referred to as *Polias* in one sanctuary as the protective city goddess, while in another cult she was known as *Ergane* as the patron goddess of craftsmen. Consequently, if other deities were associated with the sea in their cult, they could also be given epithets such as *Liménia*, *Pontia* or *Euploia*. But the association of Aphrodite with these epithets relating to the sea is more common than with other deities.

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The oldest surviving records of Aphrodite are those of Homer, which were written in the second half of the 8th century BC. In these records, the attributes of Aphrodite are not mentioned and she is referred to only as the goddess of love and fertility. Shortly afterwards Homer, in the Archaic period, the first prayers addressed to Aphrodite provide evidence that her relationship with the sea was firmly established.

In the 6th century BC, the celebrated poet Sappho of the island of Lesbos implored goddess Aphrodite on several occasions to safeguard her brother during his maritime journey.

“Kypris and daughters of Nereus, bring my brother safely to me...

...And Kypris, guide him joyfully back to his homeland. Protect him from any harm (storms) along the way.” (Sappho, fr. 25 Diehl)

Another prayer goes like this:

“Kypris, bestow!...

Let’s hope our ship reaches the harbour with good fortune and let us ... set our feet on the black earth again.”

(Sappho, fr. 31 Diehl)

A prayer has also been handed down from the Athenian legislator Solon. According to historical records, Solon travelled to Cyprus in the early 6th century BC and played a role in the foundation of the city of Soloi. Before embarking on his return journey to Athens, he beseeched the goddess *Kypris, adorned with violets, to ensure his safe passage on a swift ship* (Solon, fr. 19, ed. West).

In both cases, Aphrodite is worshipped, who is known as “Kypris” due to her origins in Cyprus, to ensure a safe journey across the sea.

Aphrodite’s strong connection to the sea has been documented through numerous epigrams dating back to the 4th century BC. These epigrams often refer to a temple dedicated to Aphrodite located on the shoreline or a statue of the goddess positioned to face the sea.

“This is the land of Kypris, for she has always been drawn to the sparkling sea from atop a high cliff, guiding seafarers on their journey. The seas quiver in awe of her divine presence, beholding her radiant image”

(Anth. Palat. IX, 144).

It is evident from the written sources that seafarers engaged in prayer in these locations for a safe voyage and offered gifts to the goddess as a gesture of gratitude upon the conclusion of a successful voyage.

*«Aeximenes dedicated the magnificent statue of Kypris,
Who protects all who sail the seas...»*

(Anth. Palat. IX, 601).

When we add to the epigraphic evidence other written records, such as those of Pausanias and Plutarch, it becomes clear that Aphrodite protected all types of ships and was accordingly worshipped by all types of seafarers:

Naval commanders, seafarers, fishermen, ship captains, travelling merchants and private individuals, as well as the crews of all types of ships. Aphrodite's protection extended not only to people and ships, but also to the cargo and goods carried by these ships. Consequently, merchants also expressed gratitude to the goddess for the favourable outcome of their transactions and the profits they had made.

One example is the inscription discovered on the base of a statue of Aphrodite that was previously situated in Halicarnassus (SEG 28, 838). The inscription, which is in the form of a dedication, reads as follows: The inscription on the base of the statue of Aphrodite in Halicarnassus (SEG 28, 838) reads: The merchant Phaeinos dedicates a 'beautiful statue' to 'beautiful Kypris' and thus offers her the first income from his trade. *Aphrodite was always present at sea, protecting his wealth.*"

Aphrodite's dominion over the sea is best exemplified by a famous anecdote. This incident occurred around 685 BC, according to the 4th century BC historian Polycharmos:

The merchant Herostratus purchased an ancient statuette of Aphrodite in Paphos, Cyprus, and subsequently continued his trade by sailing from Cyprus to Naukratis in North Africa. However, during the voyage, the ship encountered a violent storm. In a last-ditch attempt to ensure their safety, the sailor sought refuge next to the statue of Aphrodite and implored her for assistance. In a remarkable turn of events, Aphrodite responded to

their supplications by bestowing upon the ship a bountiful growth of green myrtle, which not only imparted a delightful fragrance but also alleviated their seasickness. Furthermore, she mitigated the severity of the storm, thereby enabling the ship to navigate safely to the port of Naukratis. In recognition of her benevolent intervention, Herostratus presented the ancient statuette to the temple of Aphrodite in Naukratis as a gesture of gratitude.

The question remains as to the source of Aphrodite's power over the sea.

In Hesiod's *Theogony* (lines 154-206), written around 700 BC, the goddess is presented as inherently connected to the sea. In this work, Hesiod provides an account of the creation of the world and the gods. The creation of the world begins with Chaos, from which Gaia (Earth) is born. Gaia then gives birth to Uranos (Sky) and conceives from him on multiple occasions. However, Uranos declines to permit his offspring to emerge into the daylight and conceals them within the womb of the earth. Gaia appeals to her son Kronos for assistance, and he ultimately castrates Uranos and expels him. The severed genitals fall into the sea, causing white foam to form and giving birth to Aphrodite. Aphrodite first appears on the island of Kythera, then moves to Cyprus, and finally emerges from the sea. The island of Cyprus is known as the island of Aphrodite and is also referred to as Kypris. The ancient Greeks named the goddess Aphrodite based on this myth, as the word is derived from *aphros*, meaning 'foam' in Ancient Greek.

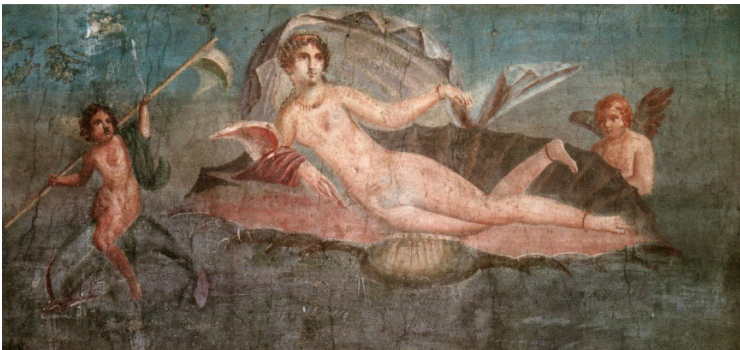


Figure 1 Venus travelling across the sea in Pompeii. Wall painting in the Casa della Venere in Conchiglia, Pompeii, around 50-79 AD.

Given that Aphrodite herself originated from the sea and traversed the Mediterranean shortly after her birth, it is reasonable to posit that her unique affinity with the sea and her capacity to influence the sea may be attributed to this primordial origin. Furthermore, she was in competition with the principal sea god, Poseidon. But while Poseidon can stir up the sea and symbolises the natural power of the element it is Aphrodite who is responsible for the pacification of the sea and the assurance of its safety. For this reason, the goddess has been an important patron deity of seafarers and merchants since the Archaic period.

It is of particular interest to note that in certain sanctuaries and numerous sources, Aphrodite's two principal areas of activity, love and seafaring, are interlinked. For example, on the island of Kos, Aphrodite was worshipped as both *Pontia* (of the sea) and *Pandemos* (of all the people). The sanctuary was situated in close proximity to the coastline, with a priestess overseeing the two cults. From some surviving inscriptions, it can be deduced that offerings were made to ensure the fertility of young married women on the one hand, and the happy return of the crews of warships on the other. A fee was levied annually on seafarers, fishermen and ship owners, with the amount calculated per ship.

This association between love and the sea is not limited to the cult; it is also evident in ancient literature. The term "sea of love" has been in use since the archaic period. Lovers are frequently depicted as seafarers traversing the metaphorical "sea of love." Similarly, love can be tumultuous and, and one can be shipwrecked. Consequently, in a relationship, as in the sea, favourable winds and good weather are conducive to a positive outcome. Both of these are attributes that Aphrodite is capable of providing.

We will now consider the sanctuaries of Aphrodite associated with seafaring. In a study of Aphrodite of the mariners, Martin Eckert analysed 172 sanctuaries of the goddess. It was observed that in a significant number of sanctuaries, the appearance of the cult site and the cult itself remain largely unknown. Identification is typically based solely on inscriptions, and archaeological features and finds are scarce. In contrast to the case of deities such as Zeus or Athena, no major cult sites were typically constructed in honour of Aphrodite. The sanctuaries dedicated

to Aphrodite are typically modest structures, often open-air, with only an altar and a small temple. However, some sanctuaries lack a temple altogether. Consequently, the identification of Aphrodite sanctuaries is often challenging.

M. Eckert found in his study that the vast majority of Aphrodite sanctuaries located near the sea actually have a connection to seafarers. Most of them are located at harbours or close to them at important nautical points. The sanctuaries can be located within a settlement or trading centre, but can also be outside the city walls on a beach or landing place.

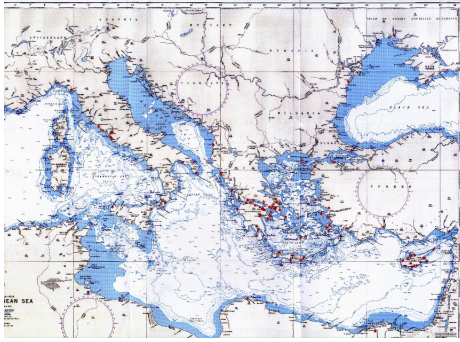


Figure 2 Map of the Aphrodite sanctuaries with reference to the sea

Some of the sanctuaries in the harbours were constructed as early as the 8th century BC, but the majority were erected in the 7th and 6th centuries BC. It is probable that the Phoenicians, who revived the old trade routes from the 9th/8th century BC and intensified trade in the Mediterranean by sailing westwards from the Levant, played a role in the establishment of some of the sanctuaries. Indeed, the distribution of Aphrodite's maritime sanctuaries in the Mediterranean is not uniform. Rather, concentrations can be observed along major trade routes and in important trade centres. The existence of a direct connection between the sanctuary of the goddess and a suitable anchorage is evident from Cyprus.

Additionally, Cyprus is the location of the oldest sea-related temples dedicated to Aphrodite. This is certainly no coincidence, as Aphrodite not only derives from Cyprus according to myth, but also probably originated there from the blending of an ancient

Cypriot and Mycenaean goddess with an oriental goddess that the Phoenicians brought with them.

For ancient seafarers, the sea was an unknown and dangerous cosmos. This cosmos was uncontrollable and often left the man in front of it unprotected. Weather, dangerous shoals, currents and too calm or strong winds not only made voyages difficult, but could also cause great loss of property and life in an instant. Despite this, maritime trade has always been an important driver of innovation and prosperity. For this reason, seafaring was not abandoned.

It is therefore relatively straightforward to envisage the circumstances in which, following days and weeks spent at sea in adverse conditions, seafarers arriving safely in a harbour felt compelled to express their gratitude for the safety they had been provided. It is reasonable to posit that a visit to the sanctuary of Aphrodite in one of the harbour towns was a common practice among seafarers. However, it was also customary for seafarers to pray and make offerings before embarking on a voyage. A depiction by an Athenian artist on an *oinochoe* (a type of jug, pottery), which is in the Theben Museum corroborates this assertion. The image depicts a seafarer engaged in a prayer ritual before embarking on a voyage. A male figure is depicted crouching on the bow of the ship, holding a wreath which he is about to throw overboard. In a swift and decisive manner, Nike approaches the ship, promising a successful voyage. According to some researchers, the ancient Greek letters that can be read on the depiction can be interpreted as the sentence 'Protect it (the ship)'.



Figure 3 Drawing of the depiction on an *oinochoe*, Thebes, Museum

Seafaring sanctuaries were certainly especially popular in the summer months. It can be reasonably assumed that these sanctuaries were international and lively cult sites, where seafarers from a multitude of origins prayed in a multitude of languages. Such cult places are also referred to in research as *contact sanctuary*, as they were also places where news and innovations were shared. Aphrodite, a multilayered figure, offered a convenient identification opportunity for seafarers from diverse origins, due to her resemblance to Eastern goddesses such as Astarte or Ishtar.

In the vicinity of such Aphrodite sanctuaries, it was also necessary to consider the entertainment areas where seafarers could relieve their long-term tension and fatigue. The diversity, vibrant atmosphere, and international character of such harbour districts were a concern for some ancient writers. Plato, for example, therefore recommended that an ideal city should be built a few kilometres away from the sea.

But how can we recognise whether a particular Aphrodite sanctuary has been visited by seafarers? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to consider a number of criteria. Firstly, we must examine whether ancient written sources and/or inscriptions relating to the cult of a sanctuary convey an epithet of Aphrodite connected with the sea. Secondly, we may also consider the spectrum of finds in the sanctuary, provided that the offerings make a clear reference to seafarers. Finally, the location of the sanctuary may also be an indicator, although this criterion is of limited importance when considered in isolation.

In the ancient geography of Caria and its immediate surroundings, there are numerous sanctuaries of Aphrodite with maritime connections. These include Miletus, Mylasa, Halicarnassus, Knidos and Kaunos. A number of factors suggest that these cult sites were maritime sanctuaries. At Mylasa (where the actual sanctuary has not yet been discovered) and Halicarnassus (the sanctuary is located on the western edge of the harbour, near the Salmakis spring), inscriptions are the criterion for the cult of Aphrodite Euploia.

The cult of Euploia in the city of Knidos, where the worship of Aphrodite was already well-established in ancient times, is documented in ancient literary sources.

Pausanias (I, 1 3) records that the inhabitants of Knidos particularly venerated Aphrodite, which is reflected in the presence of three Aphrodite sanctuaries in the area. The earliest and most ancient of the sanctuaries is said to have been dedicated to Aphrodite Doritis (honoured with offerings, gifts.), while the second was dedicated to Aphrodite Akraia (the goddess who lives on the heights). Finally, the youngest of the sanctuaries is dedicated to Aphrodite, commonly known as Knidia (Knidos), but called Euploia by the Knidians.

The precise date of the last cult's foundation remains uncertain. According to Pausanias, the cult was undoubtedly established as early as the 4th century BC. However, according to Eckert, it can be assumed on the basis of the nautical conditions that the spacious natural harbour below Cape Krio has always been used by ships on their way from Rhodes to Kos, Miletus and Samos. Consequently, it is plausible that a seafarer's sanctuary existed in this area in an earlier period.

The sanctuary of Aphrodite Knidia/Euploia in Knidos was renowned in antiquity. The cult's prominence was largely due to the statue created by Praxiteles, which was erected in the temple of Aphrodite and was a source of great fascination due to its remarkable appearance and beauty. This statue was the first example of a life size statue in which a goddess was depicted in the nude. The cult image still attracted a considerable number of tourists during the Roman Empire. This is precisely why Knidos never sold the Knidia statue, despite the receipt of attractive offers. Although the original sculpture by Praxiteles is no longer extant, copies and depictions created during the Roman period provide a comprehensive understanding of its original form.

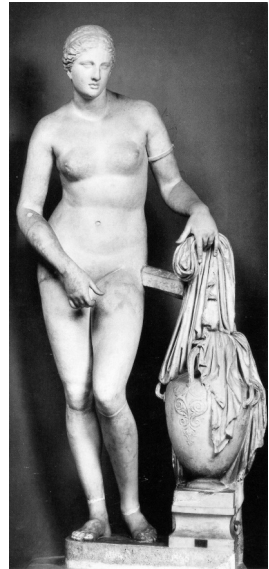


Figure 4 Aphrodite
Colonna, Rome, Vatican
Museums, 812, around
350 BC.

However, the situation is quite different with regard to the actual sanctuary of Aphrodite Euploia in Knidos. This is because it has not yet been possible to locate it beyond doubt and thus identify the temple in which Praxiteles' statue of Aphrodite stood.

To the northwest of the city of Knidos, above the harbour, there are several terraces on which various sanctuaries are located. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, an archaeological excavation discovered a circular cult building with an altar on the upper terrace. The sanctuary was identified as that of Aphrodite Euploia, and it was concluded that the *Knidia* of Praxiteles stood in the round temple. This conclusion was reached on the basis of Pliny's account (Plin. nat. 9, 79). The statue is situated within an open temple, thus affording a view from all sides. Furthermore, a Roman copy of the *Knidia* had been discovered in Hadrian's villa at Tivoli, which was also situated within a round temple.

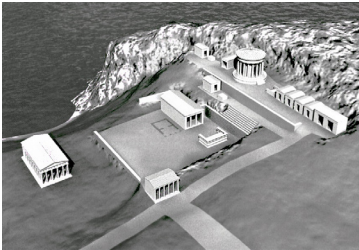


Figure 5 Model of the sanctuary terraces in Knidos



Figure 6 Round temple on the uppermost terrace in Knidos

Nevertheless, the attribution of this edifice in Knidos to Aphrodite Euploia is currently discredited. Subsequent research and analysis have demonstrated that the round building in question was, in fact, a closed structure with a cella wall. In other words, Aphrodite Knidia could not be viewed from all sides. It was also established that the round temple was constructed in the 2nd century BC, approximately 150 years after Praxiteles. Further excavations and research revealed inscriptions attributed to the goddess Athena on the round terrace, and thus Aphrodite could not be proven to be the owner of the sanctuary. It is also possible

that other deities were worshiped on the terrace. The discovery of statues typical of Asclepius may also provide evidence for the existence of a cult of the god of healing in this area.

Consequently, the renowned temple of Aphrodite Euploia at Knidos has thus far remained unidentified. In his work *Erotes*, Lucian (11-17) states that the temple of Euploia has a rectangular floor plan with a door on each narrow side leading to the temple room. Consequently, the statue could be observed from behind. Additionally, the renowned author references gardens within the sanctuary. It can be inferred that there was sufficient water and space available at the site. This information allows us to posit that the sanctuary was situated in the area of the Corinthian temple to the north of the Doric stoa, or alternatively, in the area between the stoa and the sanctuary of Dionysus. Further archaeological research may one day reveal the location of the sanctuary dedicated to the renowned goddess of Knidos.

Archaeologically documented and a fine example of a seafaring sanctuary of Aphrodite is a sacred precinct of the goddess near Miletus. In 1989, the sanctuary of Aphrodite Oikous, situated outside Miletus on the sea, was unearthed on Zeytintepe. This sanctuary is frequently referenced in ancient written sources. The narratives describe the location of the sanctuary as being outside Miletus on the sea, women praying to the goddess about love, and a woman visiting the temple of Aphrodite before embarking on a voyage by ship (Chariton 3, 2, 12-14).

The location of the sanctuary, as previously described, is indeed on a prominent spot on what was once the sea. The discovery of inscriptions, terracotta and graffiti on pottery provides compelling evidence that the cult was that of Aphrodite. Furthermore, the evidence indicates that the sanctuary was established in the 7th century BC and, following a period of inactivity due to the destruction of the city of Miletus in 494 BC, was utilised until the Roman Empire. The remains of a marble temple, probably visible from a distance by ships entering the Latmian Gulf, have been identified as dating to the late archaic period.



Figure 7 The sanctuary of Aphrodite of Oikous near Miletus

Although the name *Oikous* does not explicitly refer to seafaring, the spectrum of finds in the sacrificial pits and waste layers within the sanctuary provides insight into this aspect. The presence of votive inscriptions written by women and terracotta female figurines indicates that the sanctuary was visited by women who were praying for fertility. On this point the archaeological evidence is in agreement with the written records. Conversely, a considerable number of votive objects were brought to the sanctuary from a considerable distance. Notable among the finds are pottery from all parts of the Mediterranean, statuettes from Cyprus and the Phoenician-Syrian region, as well as rich Egyptian finds. Although it is possible that these foreign objects may have been acquired by the local Milesians, who subsequently dedicated them to



Figure 8 Bronze falcon head from Egypt, Miletus, Museum

Aphrodite, but the abundance of objects and the diversity of their regions of origin demonstrate that seafarers from all parts of the Mediterranean worshipped the goddess at this site. The proximity of the sanctuary to the sea also serves to reinforce this interpretation.

Consequently, the nature of the offerings made to a deity may also provide insight into the identity of the individuals who have consecrated them. In addition to the international character of the offerings, it should be noted that a small



Figure 9 Fragment of an anchor votive for Aphrodite Epilimonia, Aegina, Museum

number of dedications provide clear evidence of the presence of seafarers in a sanctuary. One such example is the dedication of anchors, as evidenced by the findings at Aegina and Cyrene. Such occupation-specific offerings demonstrate that seafarers utilised the sanctuary for prayer, despite the lack of certainty regarding the deity or cult in question.

The final criterion, although of minimal significance, pertains to the location of a sanctuary. One example of this is the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Kaunos.

The cult of Aphrodite is referenced in the renowned customs inscription from the Roman Empire on the *Fountain Building* at the Agora of Kaunos. The inscription outlines the privileges that the city of Kaunos was able to grant to merchants thanks to a generous private donation. The goddess Aphrodite is mentioned on several occasions within the inscription. From the text, it can be inferred that it was customary for merchants in Caunos to donate a portion of the taxes to Aphrodite for goods to be imported or exported.

The inscription thus corroborates the existence of an Aphrodite temple at Kaunos, yet does not furnish any indication of a maritime connection to the goddess.

Since the 1960s, the investigation of the cult area has been conducted with a specific focus on the harbour in the centre of the city. The northern boundary of the harbour agora is marked by

a monumental columned stoa dating from the 1st quarter of the 3rd century BC. During the excavations in the hall, the entrance to a cult room, which was apparently added to the stoa at a later date during the Roman period, was uncovered at the rear of the hall. In the room, a podium on which an altar had previously been erected was discovered. The altar, which is in the form of a relief, depicts various gods, including Aphrodite holding the infant Eros in her arms. The prominent depiction of Aphrodite on the altar has led to the assumption that the cult was dedicated to the goddess of love. This hypothesis was corroborated by the discoveries made in the vicinity of the cult area. In addition to the pottery, a significant number of terracottas dating from the Late Archaic to Hellenistic periods were discovered in various excavations. These terracottas can be interpreted as votives of an Aphrodite cult.



Figure 10 The harbour agora of Kaunos with the fountain house (right) and the harbour stoa (centre)

In contrast to the assemblage at Miletus, the assemblage at Kaunos is much more uniform and not international. In addition to pottery, mostly terracotta votives were found. The terracottas almost exclusively depict female figures. Among these, the so-called protomes are by far the largest group. The term protome in the context of the votive here refers to a human figure in which only the upper part of the body is depicted. In all instances, only the front portion of the figure is modelled, in contrast to the practice of modelling the back of statuettes and busts.



Figure 11 Protome from the Aphrodite sanctuary of Kaunos, Fethiye, Archaeological Museum



Figure 12 Depiction of a protome from a cistgrave, Thessaloniki Archaeological Museum

The protome is the most common terracotta type, in which the body is depicted as a single section from the head to the waist. This half-figure form emerged in the Late Archaic period (c. 6th century BC) and gradually replaced the older, more limited type, which depicted a smaller section of the body from the head to the base of the chest.

All Kaunos protomes depict distinguished women attired in *chiton* and *himation* (ancient Greek dress), with graceful gestures. In general, the women depicted do not hold any objects in their hands, nor do they have any features that would allow them to be unambiguously identified. The majority of these protomes are dated to the 5th and 4th centuries BC. These protomes reflect the most prevalent protome type of the Classical period, commonly observed in the Mediterranean region. The majority of these artefacts have been discovered in sanctuaries, although they have also been found in tombs and houses on rare occasions. The practice of dedicating such terracotta offerings is not confined to a specific region or deity. However, it is evident that this type of offering is particularly prevalent in the context of female deities, including Demeter, Persephone, Artemis, Athena, Aphrodite and

nymphs. The Kaunos protomes also align with this context, as they originate from an Aphrodite sanctuary.

All protomes exhibit a perforation in the cranial region. This was employed to affix a rope that permitted the terracotta to be suspended from a tree or wall. In addition to protomes that were used for hanging, there are also examples of protomes that were designed for standing due to their size, which reached up to 30 cm.

The votive offerings at Kaunos are, at first glance, female in nature and readily associated with the feminine aspects of the cult of Aphrodite. The themes of love, marriage and fertility are evident in these votive offerings.

However, there is no evidence to suggest that the sanctuary at Kaunos was dedicated to seafarers or the sea. Given the uniformity of the offerings, there are only two possible explanations. One possible interpretation is that Aphrodite was worshipped at Kaunos primarily as the goddess of love and fertility, which would explain the predominance of purely local, female-specific offerings. An alternative hypothesis is that, as was the case at Kos, the votive ceremony required women and seafarers to make different offerings. For instance, the votive terracotta was typically donated by women, whereas seafarers were required to make a donation. If this is indeed the case, it is not surprising that we do not see seafarers' offerings today. However, it is also possible that all offerings, including those made by seafarers, were required to donate a specific type of offering. In other sanctuaries, there is evidence that men were able to donate the same terracottas as women. Nevertheless, it is notable that there is no evidence for the presence of seafarers in the sanctuary. In conclusion, it is not possible to state with absolute certainty whether seafarers offered offerings or not. The considerable number of protomes among the discoveries allows us to state this with certainty. Although the precise details remain unknown, it is evident that protomes played a pivotal role in Aphrodite's rituals at Kaunos.

As is the case with numerous other Aphrodite sanctuaries, the structure of the sanctuary at Kaunos has not yet been

reconstructed. For instance, the precise location of the pre-Roman altar remains uncertain, and the question of whether Aphrodite was worshipped at a temple in this area remains unanswered.

No adjective referring to the sea survives from the cult of Aphrodite at Kaunos, nor is there a series of finds indicating the regular presence of international seafarers. Nevertheless, the sanctuary's location within the harbour and the association of the sanctuary mentioned in the well house inscription with trade may indicate that seafarers also visited the Aphrodite sanctuary and prayed for a safe voyage.

The overview of the various Aphrodite sanctuaries in Caria demonstrated the applicability of certain criteria in identifying maritime cults, while also illustrating the challenges inherent in establishing the existence of such cults. Nevertheless, an analysis of the available ancient sources has demonstrated the significant role of Aphrodite as the patron goddess of seafarers and merchants, and her unique influence over the sea.

Further Readings:

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Epigramme:

H. Beckby, *Anthologia Graeca: griechisch und deutsch*. Band I-IV (München 1957-1958)

Image Bibliography:

Figure 1 Venus travelling across the sea in Pompeii. Wall painting in the Casa della Venere in Conchiglia, Pompeii, around 50-79 AD.

Seaford, R. 1978. *Pompeii*. Summerfield Press: London. p. 61.

Figure 2 Map of the Aphrodite sanctuaries with reference to the sea

Eckert, M. 2015. *Die Aphrodite der Seefahrer und ihre Heiligtümer im Mittelmeer*. Lit Verl: Hamburg. Suppl.

Figure 3 Drawing of the depiction on an oinochoe, Thebes, Museum

Hatzivassiliou, E. 2010. *Athenian Black Figure Iconography between 510 and 475 B.C.* Leidorf Verlag: Rahden. Pl. 5 Fig. 1.

Figure 4 Aphrodite Colonna, Rome, Vatican Museums, 812, around 350 BC.

Bol, P. C. (Hrsg.). 2004. *Die Geschichte der antiken Bildhauerkunst II. Klassische Plastik*. Verl. Philipp von Zabern: Mainz. Pl. 297

Figure 5 Model of the sanctuary terraces in Knidos

Bachmann, M. (Hrsg.). 2009. *Bautechnik im antiken und vorantiken Kleinasien*. Internationale Konferenz Istanbul vom 13.-16. Juni 2007. Ege Yayınları: Istanbul 2009. p. 324, Fig. 1

Figure 6 Round temple on the uppermost terrace in Knidos
Doksanaltı, E; Karaoglan, İ; Tozluca, D.O. 2018. *Knidos-Denizlerin
Buluştuğu Kent*. Bilgin Yay.: Ankara. Fig. 78.

Figure 7 The sanctuary of Aphrodite of Oikous near Miletus
Photo: J. Zurbach

<https://www.miletgrabung.uni-hamburg.de/milet-tour/tour-zeytintepe.html>

Figure 8 Bronze falcon head from Egypt, Miletus, Museum

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und Berührung*. Ausstellungskatalog Städel, Frankfurt am Main.
Wasmuth: Tübingen. p. 119 Fig. 10

Figure 9 Fragment of an anchor votive for Aphrodite Epilimena,
Aegina, Museum Welter, G. *Aeginetca XIII-XXIV*, in: *Archäologischer
Anzeiger* 1938, p. 497 Fig. 11

Figure 10 The harbour agora of Kaunos with the fountain house
(right) and the harbour stoa (centre)

Photo N. Schnorr, Kaunos Excavation Archive

Figure 11 Protome from the Aphrodite sanctuary of Kaunos,
Fethiye, Archaeological Museum

Photo B. Özen-Kleine, Kaunos Excavation Archive

Figure 12 Depiction of a protome from a cistgrave, Thessaloniki
Archaeological Museum.

Vokotopoulou, J. 1990. *Hoi taphikoi tymboi tes Aineias*. Athen.
Pl. 6