The Sound of Sirens

Siren Stelae in Classical Attic Cemeteries

By Alex Oldfield

A thesis submitted to Victoria University of Wellington in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in Classics
Victoria University of Wellington

2014

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to look at how and why the siren is featured in Classical Attic cemeteries and how its mythical characteristics lead to its appropriateness in such a context. The exact origins of the siren are unknown, although it has been suggested that they stem from the folk tales of sailors at sea, or shared ideas from other cultures. Despite such unknown variables, the siren figure that is considered in this thesis is that found in Greek mythology, frequently remembered for her encounter with Odysseus on his journey home from Troy and ability to enchant sailors with her irresistible song. Typically combining the features of a bird's body and a woman's head, the creature known as the siren can also be seen in ancient depictions on vases, jewellery boxes and female toilette objects. During the Classical Period (479-323BC) the bird-women hybrid sirens are used as a decorative feature on top of funerary stelae in Attic cemeteries. The siren can be seen in two different forms in the funerary context, specifically in relation to their placement and representation on stelae: relief images of the creatures in the roof sima of the upper register of the tombstone, and sculpted in the round perched on top. The presence of the siren in this context can provide a constant mourner as well as inviting the viewer to grieve for the deceased.

The first chapter details the siren's character and role in early ancient literature and art, specifically relating to their mythological corpus. Discussion will focus on the evolution of their character and their appearance over time, as well as identifying distinguishing features which make the siren a unique figure. It is also necessary in this section to establish a distinction between the siren and the mythological harpy who combines the similar bird-woman features to make up a very different creature (particularly evident in a commonly misnamed Lycian sarcophagus, the 'Harpy tomb'.) The second chapter outlines the timeframe of the use and presence of funerary stelae featuring sirens in Attic cemeteries, predominantly found in the Kerameikos, with references to the legislation which may have affected them. This section covers examples of the presence of sirens in this context including, but not exclusive to, images in relief depicted in the roof sima, along with other figures, as well as the limited freestanding sculptures of sirens seen perched above stelae. I will also analyse the 'traditional' view of the sirens as 'soul birds' as suggested by various scholars, particularly those from the early 1900s. The final chapter looks at the appropriateness of the siren in a funerary context and attempts to identify the reasons why they were used for such a purpose. In order to answer these questions, it is important to look at the reception of these pieces by mourners and passers-by alike and the possible relationship between those that view the sculpture in such a setting and the piece itself.

Dedicated to:

All of my Grandparents,
for their limitless faith and giving me the courage to follow my dreams,

and to my Granddad Bill,
who always knew what a stele was.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	7
Introduction	9
1. The Siren in Art and Literature	12
The Sirens' Background	12
Harpies and Sirens	17
Odysseus and the Sirens	22
Sirens in the Argonautica	28
Early Artistic Representations of Sirens	29
The <i>Ba</i> Bird	34
The 'Harpy Tomb'	36
2. Sirens in Classical Attic Cemeteries	42
Attic Funerary Markers and Cemeteries: Transitions and Legislations	42
Classical Relief Stelae featuring Sirens	48
Mourning Women.....	52
Freestanding Classical Siren Stelae	54
Literary Evidence	58
Sirens as 'Soul-birds'	61
3. Reception and Use of Siren Stelae in Classical Attic Cemeteries	64
'Attracting an Audience'	64
Inscriptions and Epitaphs	67
The Appropriateness of the Siren Figure in a Funerary Setting	69
Conclusion	72
Appendix	75
Bibliography	104

Acknowledgments

It is fair to say that I cannot take all the credit for the completion of this Masters thesis as it has taken the combined effort and support from family, friends and colleagues who helped make this become a reality.

First of all, I would like to thank the staff and my fellow post-grads of the Victoria University Classics department for all their invaluable advice, support, answers to my unending questions and continuing to listen about sirens or harpies whenever the occasion arose. I would also especially like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Diana Burton for her wisdom and thoughtful words as well as much needed critiques and constant draft readings, no matter the quantity or quality.

To my parents and sisters, for their love and persistent words of encouragement, who never fail to lend a hand, impart advice and offer to read through material even when they are not entirely familiar with the topic in question. Thank you as well to the Wilson family for their inquisitiveness, support and motivation.

And to James who deserves more thanks than I could attempt to express in words; for all the cups of tea, the best words at just the right moments as well as all your love and encouragement on what seemed like a never ending project.

Introduction

“What song the Syrens sang,
Or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women,
Although puzzling questions are not beyond *all* conjecture.”
- Sir Thomas Browne, ‘Urne-burial’

Over time the siren has lent its name to a myriad of different terms, eventually becoming synonymous today with loud warning signals, femmes fatales found in the middle of the ocean or even beautiful Hollywood actresses. They have graced the pages of many an author through time in different forms and guises, the mythical beings consistently beguiling the minds of those that conjure them into being again and again. The exact origins of the siren figure are unknown, although it has been suggested that they stem from the folk tales of sailors at sea, or shared ideas from other cultures.¹ Despite such unknown variables, the siren figure that is considered in this thesis is that found in Greek mythology, frequently recalled for her encounter with Odysseus on his journey home from Troy and ability to enchant sailors with her irresistible song. Typically combining the features of a bird body and a woman, the creature known as the siren can also be seen in ancient depictions on vases, jewellery boxes and female toilette objects, as well as in references in literature and mythology.

During the Classical Period (479-323BC) the bird-women hybrid sirens can be used as a decorative feature on top of funerary stelae in Attic cemeteries.² This is particularly evident in the Kerameikos of Athens which also provides a trove of evidence today for burial practices in ancient Greece. The siren can be seen in two different forms in a funerary context, specifically in relation to their placement and representation on stelae; there can be relief images of the creatures in the roof sima of the upper register of the tombstone as well as figures sculpted in the round perched on top. The presence of sirens in this funerary setting is most intriguing, not only for the specific time frame they were used in (after which they disappear) but also due to the choice of this mythological creature, seemingly unconnected to their original mythology. Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to look at how and why the siren is featured in classical Attic cemeteries and how its mythical characteristics lead to its appropriateness in such a context.

¹ Aasved 1996: 383, Pollard 1965: 143 possibly adopted from Phoenician folk-tale.

² For the purposes of this thesis Attica refers to the territory of Athens. A funerary stela is a ‘stone slab, especially bearing figured decoration or inscribed text’ (Roberts 2007: 727) which is used in cemeteries as a tomb marker, similar to a grave stone today.

Throughout my initial research of this topic I was struck by the lack of study and sources currently available in relation to sirens as well as their presence on funerary stelae. A lot of the work that has been undertaken in regard to sirens and their depictions is predominantly from the early 1900s and unfortunately mostly in German and French.³ More recent work that has been conducted in this area tends to focus on these original theories by either accepting or disagreeing with them to some extent.⁴ While such reflection may remain relevant, such theories have become largely outdated in most areas and are deserving of a fresh study.

Earlier German and French scholars have tended to focus on the idea that sirens present in a funerary context are soul-birds, either as reincarnations, spirits of the dead or beings that inhabit the Underworld, crossing the border between our mortal sphere and the next. An emphasis is placed upon the evil or demon-like nature of the hybrid creatures in association with ideas communicated in early literature. The sirens represented on stelae are presented by scholars as having a hostile nature to the extent that they are thought to have vampirish proclivities, preying on other weary souls in the necropolis.⁵ While scholarly opinions seem to differ as to the truth of these claims, in general, a constant connection is made between the sirens and their association to song and music, demonstrated in the *Odyssey*, considered as a possible form of communication with the dead.⁶ This thesis aims to challenge the wholesale acceptance of such scholarly ideas with a review of the evidence from the perspective that the siren presents a less maleficent character.

The first chapter details the siren's character and role in early ancient literature and art, specifically relating to their mythological corpus. Discussion will focus on the evolution of their character and their appearance over time, as well as identifying distinguishing features which make the siren a unique figure. It is also necessary in this section to establish a distinction between the siren and the mythological harpy who combines the similar bird-women features to make up a very different creature (particularly evident in a commonly misnamed Lycian sarcophagus, the 'Harpy tomb').

The second chapter outlines the timeframe of the use and presence of funerary stelae featuring sirens in Attic cemeteries, predominantly found in the Kerameikos, with references to the legislation which may have affected them. This section covers examples of the presence of sirens in this context including, but not exclusive to, images in relief depicted in the roof sima, along with other figures, as well as the limited freestanding sculptures of sirens seen perched above stelae. I will also analyse the

³ Including, Maxime Collingnon (1911), Georg Weicker (1923) and Ernst Buschor (1944).

⁴ See Pollard (1965), Gresseth (1970), Vermeule (1979)

⁵ Collingnon 1911: 79.

⁶ Pollard 1965: 141.

‘traditional’ view of the sirens as ‘soul birds’ as suggested by various scholars, particularly those from the early 1900s.

The final chapter looks at the appropriateness of the siren in a funerary context and attempts to identify the reasons why they were used for such a purpose. In order to answer these questions, it is important to look at the reception of these pieces by mourners and passers-by alike and the possible relationship between those that view the sculpture in such a setting and the piece itself.

This thesis focusses on the ancient sources that mention sirens in an attempt to determine how they develop and evolve over time to be used eventually as crowning decoration on stelae. In order to discover how and why sirens have been used in this context, I will analyse the physical evidence currently available from classical Attic cemeteries as well as references to them in literature and art. Unfortunately, a paucity of evidence poses challenges for such an investigation, especially in relation to siren sculptures in the round where only four freestanding Attic funerary stelae remain sufficiently intact. This is due to contemporary use and destruction of funerary markers for other building projects as well as modern mistakes in cataloguing.⁷

⁷ Closterman 2006: 58, Garland 2001: 7.

1. The Siren in Art and Literature

The Sirens' background

Ever since their first literary appearance in the *Odyssey* the sirens have been given a variety of possible names and parentages from ancient sources, further connecting them with their established characteristics and abilities.⁸

Although the original encounter with the sirens found in the *Odyssey* makes no specific reference to their identities, other ancient sources have provided suggestions to fill in the gap, including their possible lineage.⁹ A common suggestion for the father of the sirens is the river god Acheloos who shares his daughters' hybrid appearance (Ov. *Met.* 8.547-619). Acheloos is said to be the eldest son of the sea gods Oceanus and Tethys providing a firm connection with the ocean and water as well as hinting at a dangerous nature.¹⁰ Apollonius of Rhodes (4.892) and Apollodorus (1. 3. 4) both state that the sirens were the daughters of Acheloos. Lycophron (711) extends a further link between Acheloos and his own parentage identifying the sirens as, 'the triple daughters of Tethys' son'. The ancient Greek idea of Acheloos being the sirens' father is continued through to the Roman authors Pseudo-Hyginus (*Fab.* 30) and Ovid (*Met.* 5. 553-56) later solidifying this lineage. The paternal links provided for the sirens through their father and their grandfather firmly associate the mythical figures themselves with the ocean or water and their hybrid appearance, thereby providing an explanation for inhabiting their mysterious island on the sea, living as if they were sea birds.¹¹

As outlined above there is a general consensus among ancient authors as to the father of the sirens; suggestions provided for their mother have varied. Pseudo-Hyginus (*Fab.* 125. 13) and Lycophron (712) name Melpomene as the mother of the sirens, 'the triple daughters of Tethys' son who imitated the strains of their melodious mother.' Apollodorus mentions both Melpomene and Sterope as mothers of the sirens on separate occasions, while also continuing to name Acheloos as their father (Apollod. 1.3.4-10). Lastly Apollonius (4. 891-92) and Nonnus (D. 13. 313-15) provide another possible option naming Terpsichore instead, 'beautiful Terpsichore, one of the Muses, bore them after sharing Acheloos' bed.' Despite various possibilities suggested for the mother of the sirens it is more appropriate to focus on the fact that the two most commonly used choices are

⁸ Later ancient authors have also addressed possible explanations for the intriguing appearance of the sirens, in relation to their hybrid bird-women features. One of the more popular analogies is mentioned in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* where the sirens are given their wings by the gods to help continue their search for Proserpine as her maiden companions, after they saw her stolen by her uncle, Pluto (Ov. *Met.* 5.52-65).

⁹ Gresseth 1970: 211.

¹⁰ Roberts 2007: 2.

¹¹ Gresseth 1970: 212.

names of two Muses, which is surely no coincidence. Just as Acheloos creates a link between the sirens and the sea, having a Muse for a mother connects the sirens with the attributes typically associated with the Muses. This lies predominantly in their enchanting singing voices, omniscience and a powerful memory, abilities they clearly share with the sirens. The legendary musician Orpheus is also said to be the offspring of one of the Muses in the *Argonautica* (Ap. Rh. 1. 22-23); along with the sirens Orpheus also appears to have inherited his musical talents from his mother. In Book 4 of the *Argonautica* he overpowers the sirens' song so the sailors are unable to hear them and escape certain death.

Although the sirens share attributes typically associated with their mother (melodious song and omniscience) and present themselves as such to Odysseus the sirens possess a contradictory nature in stark comparison to the Muses.¹² The sirens are able to charm the sailors with their enchanting voices but no one who listens to their song returns home instead they 'reach a shore whitened with bones and the debris of rotting flesh' having been promised eternal fame and the knowledge the sirens themselves possess.¹³ As the Muses offer *kléos* (glory) to the poets that call on them and the heroes they sing about, the sirens sing to sailors passing by that they will promote their fame to other travellers as they do for Odysseus. Yet if anyone did in fact hear this song they would not be able to relay it, having joined the exposed skeletons on the island. Therefore while the sirens utilise the beautiful and charming singing voice they appear to have inherited from their mother, instead of promoting the heroic deeds of the men that sail past their island they offer up a deceitful promise that will in fact result in death and namelessness.

The promise the sirens offer through their song to Odysseus (and presumably other sailors) in particular demonstrates the powers of omniscience inherited from their mother as they promise to tell of all the exploits that occurred at Troy. The sirens must know what happened in Troy if they can recognise Odysseus by sight and begin to sing of his glory in the war. One of the interesting characteristics of the sirens however is that they do not appear to leave their island at any stage and therefore must possess all-knowing powers (like their mother) to be able to recall what happened.¹⁴ Having such powers of omniscience from their mother allows the sirens to use the knowledge they possess in their song as they enchant men towards their island to an untimely and horrifying death as their bleached bones are stranded on an island to be forgotten forever.

¹² Pucci 1998: 7, Vernant 1991: 104.

¹³ Vernant 1991: 105.

¹⁴ Pucci 1998: 6.

The features and characteristics specific to the sirens emphasised through their later assignment of parents are also prevalent in the different names which have been bestowed upon the figures by ancient authors.

Apollodorus Bibliotheca E7.18	Hesiod Cat. Of Women Frag.47	Lycophron Alexandra 720
Thelxiepeia (Beguiling with her words)	Thelxiope (Enchanting voice)	Parthenope (Maiden Voice)
Peisinoe (Persuading the Mind)	Thelxinoe (Charming the Mind)	Leukosia (‘Whiteness’)
Aglaope (Splendid Voice)	Molpe (Song)	Ligeia (Clear-toned) ¹⁵
	Aglaophonos (Splendid sounding)	

The connection created between the various names given to the sirens clearly emphasises their musical talents and powers continuing to recall the link provided to their mother. In his work, *Phrasikleia*, Jesper Svenbro addresses the importance of name giving for the Greeks; highlighting the idea that a child’s name can be the signifier for their parent’s characteristics and exploits and can be demonstrated in these circumstances. For example, Telemachos’ name means ‘he who fights far away’ which could in fact be an epithet for Odysseus when he takes part in the Trojan War, rather than referring to Telemachos’ own personality or exploits in any way.¹⁶ While Svenbro focuses predominantly on the process of name giving from father to son or daughter the information could also be applied to the relationship between the characteristics of a mother and her daughters and in a mythological context, as is appropriate for the sirens. The sirens appear to inherit their place of habitat (and possibly their hybrid appearance) from their father while the powers over song they possess are entirely from their mother. It is therefore appropriate that their names also reflect this particular aspect of their being.¹⁷ Some of the names provided recall the enchanting abilities they have over sailors while others place an emphasis on their voice, song and how lovely they are which in turn creates a firm connection between the sirens and the Muses with their own mesmerising singing talents.

¹⁵ Ligeia can also mean ‘shrill’ and is used in relation to the singing voices of the Muses and Sirens.

¹⁶ Svenbro 1993: 69.

¹⁷ Notably the sirens seem to attain their names from authors after their first literary appearance in the *Odyssey* where they are not given titles.

Anthemoessa

The original mention of the sirens in the *Odyssey* does not assign a name to the island the mythical figures inhabit but the episode does provide details about certain features, establishing an image of the island as well as emphasising characteristics specific to the sirens. The idea that the sirens live on an island specifically is communicated throughout this episode (*Od.* 12. 42, 53, 182) and continued in later literary and artistic portrayals of the siren encounter. The placement of the sirens on an island in particular can be explained for several different reasons. As the sirens are mythological creatures it is better to identify the figures with a habitat that is completely unattainable for a normal traveller and in the faraway land of myth. Just like the other mythical beings and places that Odysseus encounters on his journey home there is no real geography to follow that could be associated with them, therefore the figures are found on a series of land masses similar to the nature of Peter Pan's Neverland.¹⁸

Having the sirens live on an island could also be due to practical reasons in literature as the crew in the *Odyssey* and *Argonautica* must pass by the area as quickly as possible in order to escape the voices of the sirens (*Od.* 12. 53, *Ap. Rh.* 4. 908-911). This necessity can be portrayed more effectively when the sailors can put the land mass and the creatures that live there behind them completely while also escaping the alluring song. By living on an island the sirens can also be isolated from any other inhabitants in the middle of the sea, adding to their mysterious, unknown nature as well as addressing the fact that no one would be able to survive in their presence. Hesiod confirms this theory when he mentions the 'island of the sirens' where it would appear they live alone waiting for their victims (*Hes. Fr.* 24). Apollonius of Rhodes also locates the bird-women on a 'lovely island' (*Ap. Rh.* 4. 888) where they 'kept a constant look-out from their perch in the lovely harbour' (*Ap. Rh.* 4. 897) following the idea provided in the *Odyssey*.

Not only do the sirens appear on an island in the *Odyssey* but they can also be specifically located in a beautiful 'meadow starred with flowers' (*Od.* 12. 51, 174), although admittedly also said to be littered with corpses, 'rotting away, rags of skin shrivelling on their bones' (*Od.* 12. 52). The contrast between the serene and the frightening visual presentation here is a reflection of the beautiful yet dangerous nature the sirens possess themselves, luring the sailors with beautiful song to their death. Jean-Pierre Vernant does not see this placement as a coincidence either stating that, 'their cries, their flowering meadow and their charm locates them in all their irresistibility unequivocally in the realm of sexual attraction or erotic appeal' emphasising their alluring nature.¹⁹ The mythological

¹⁸ Gresseth 1970: 208.

¹⁹ Vernant 1991: 104.

habitat provided through literary sources for the sirens can be firmly connected with their powers and characteristics as well as adding an overall sense of disquiet to the encounters.

The phrase 'flowery island' used by Homer is adopted by later authors, prompting the island to be titled Anthemoessa (Ἀνθεμόεσσα)²⁰, seen in the *Argonautica* when the home of the sirens is referred to as the 'lovely island of Anthemoessa' (Ap. Rh. 4.889) and in Hesiod's *Catalogue of Women* (Hes. Fr. 24). The idea that the sirens live in such a picturesque environment further emphasises the apparent beauty and fantastical nature of it.

Not only does the island itself denote the seductive, mysterious nature of the mythical creatures who live there but both Homer and Apollonius mention the magical connotations presented when the crew sail past the island. Homer and Apollonius make note of the fact that when Odysseus and Jason are approaching the island the wind driving the ships forward dies down significantly making it difficult to pass by quickly to escape the oncoming danger (*Od.* 12. 181-185, Ap. Rh. 4. 887).²¹ The fact that the wind begins to die down as the men sail past the island could add to the fantastical nature of the episode, reflecting the sirens' power of seduction. It could also have to do with what happens when victims arrive on the island, 'it is the flat calm, the serenity of the port, of safety after the storm, or of a land where life is forever fixed.'²² The way in which men die from exposure on the island of the sirens is frightful in itself; 'no funeral, no tomb, only the corpse's decomposition in open air,' and yet it fits in with the idea that time stops for the sirens' victims who give up any other worldly cares.²³ Focussing on the fact that there are ominous signs, like the wind falling to a deadly calm, just before you reach the island is an indication of the mysterious or scary nature of the space and the sirens by extension.²⁴

The placement of the sirens on an island in the middle of the sea and the imagery associated with their home in literature and art appears to have been specifically chosen as a reflection on the mythical creature's character, as well as helping with the general image of the sirens already established through their background.

²⁰ Heubrek 1989: 127.

²¹ 'Our trim ship was speeding toward the Sirens' island, driven on by the brisk wind. But then – the wind fell in an instant, all glazed to a dead calm . . . a mysterious power hushed the heaving swells.' (*Od.* 12. 181-185)

²² Gresseth 1970: 210 'Throughout folklore unusual weather often marks the epiphany of the supernatural.' Vernant 1991: 104.

²³ Vernant 1991: 104.

²⁴ Nugent 2008: 48.

Harpies and Sirens

The concept of hybrid creatures is a common phenomenon in Greek mythology, combining the features of animals and humans. Combining demonstrative traits such as intelligence, physical strength and the power of flight, for example, to create a particular mythological figure is evident in multiple myths.²⁵ Typically the combination of features presented is unique and different from one case to the next, however two figures can also possess the same features to create two distinct mythological creatures with their own background and myths. This is demonstrated by the Greek siren and harpy, combining bird and female features. It is therefore necessary at this stage to establish a distinction between the siren and the harpy and how they are identified in art to avoid future confusion.

Like the sirens, complete descriptions of the harpies' appearance are limited in ancient literary sources. A focus is instead placed upon their distinctive features: their ability to fly and their frightening nature. In the *Theogony* Hesiod refers to their genealogy,

Thaumas and Elektra whom bore the swift Iris and the beautiful-haired Harpies,
Aello ('storm winds') and Ocypete ('swift flying') who with their swift wings keep
up with the blasts of the winds and with the birds, for they fly high in the air.

(Hes. *Th.* 265-270)

The short passage from Hesiod places an emphasis upon the harpies' association with the swift winds and their power of flight as well as hinting at their possible appearance as they are 'beautiful-haired'.²⁶ Such a description implies having some sort of human or feminine head along with the wings of a bird; coinciding with visual depictions of the hybrid composition of the harpies in literature and (typically) in art.

Distinguishing features of the harpies consistently emphasised are their wings and specific powers of flight; in mythology they fly with the winds and swoop down from the skies to attack their victims. The Greek word for harpy derives from the word ἀρπάζειν (*harpazein*) meaning 'snatchers', and has strong connotations with swooping and darting, typically associated with the sudden and rapacious kidnapping of their victims (or their food).²⁷ Their connection with such attributes is firmly established in their well-known mythology retold in the *Odyssey* (20. 73-87) and *Argonautica* (Ap.

²⁵ Tsiafakis 2004: 73.

²⁶ The harpies are also made to be the sisters of Iris, messenger of the gods who travels on the winds and is associated with rainbows. Similar to the sirens the genealogical connections created by ancient sources can serve to emphasise the features particular to a mythological character.

²⁷ Vernant 1991: 103.

Rh. 2. 176-299) in which they kidnap the daughters of Pandareus and cause unending misery to the blind Phineus.²⁸ In the *Odyssey* Penelope refers to the harpies as 'storm spirits' and 'whirlwinds' (*Od.* 20. 73, 85) in relation to the abduction of Pandareus' daughters, once again emphasising their abilities and where their power lies, associating their arrival with the sudden onset of a harsh storm or the confusion that accompanies the winds. It has even been suggested that originally the harpies were nothing more than meteorological phenomena personified, as demonstrated by the names provided by Hesiod.²⁹

The episode featuring the harpies in Book 2 of the *Argonautica* makes several references to the method in which the mythical figures assail their victims (in this case Phineus) including the way in which they swoop down on the blind prophet. Phineus states that the harpies 'swoop down from some invisible lair and snatch the food from my mouth ... so quickly do they dart through the air' (Ap. Rh. 2. 21-24), focussing on the way the harpies fly and how they use this ability to their advantage. Such a feature contrasts with the sirens who possess wings in literature and art but never seem to use them and certainly not in the same way as the harpies who are defined by the speed at which they fly with the Zephyrs.

The passage mentions that the harpies have been sent by Zeus as a punishment for the *hubris* committed by the prophet (Ap. Rh. 2. 185). Rather than killing their victims the harpies cause Phineus pain and misery by snatching food from his mouth leaving only meagre scraps or pouring a foul stench upon what remains (Ap. Rh. 2. 182-202). Compared to the episode in the *Odyssey* where the victims of the sirens are lured to their slow deaths the harpies only seem to cause a nuisance and leave just enough for Phineus to survive. The harpies are also ordered by Zeus to cause such misery to Phineus instead of committing the act of their own volition, unlike the sirens. A similar order is present in the abduction of Phineas' daughters as Zeus seemingly makes them deliver the girls to the Furies (*Od.* 20. 85-87).³⁰

Artistic depictions of the harpies on vases most frequently contextualise the winged figures through their association with the Phineus myth and the subsequent pursuit by the Boreades.³¹ The figures that are shown to be harpies, due to the obvious similarities between the myth and each artistic depiction, are portrayed as clothed women with large wings. On an Attic red-figure hydria from

²⁸ Levin 1971: 163.

²⁹ Pollard 1977: 191, Levin 1971: 164.

³⁰ Levin 1971: 163.

³¹ The artistic representations of the harpies and Phineus or the Boreades are certainly not a direct depiction of the episode found in Apollonius' later *Argonautica*; instead artists are working from original mythological source material. This conclusion is based on the images available from LIMC which contextualises artistic portrayals of harpies by stealing the food away from the blind prophet or being chased by the winged Boreades, (and which are both earlier and differ in detail from the later epic.)

around 480BC three winged women are shown in various stages of stealing food off the table of Phineus positioned to the left (fig. 1).³² The figures demonstrate their power of flight as they swoop in on the clearly distressed Phineus as outlined by the myth. A similar depiction of the scene can be observed on an Attic bell krater from c. 450BC showing three hovering winged women wearing chitons and additional winged sandals to emphasise their abilities while in the process of taking food away from the centrally seated Phineus (fig. 2).³³ Throughout the artistic portrayals in relation to the Phineus myth the flying abilities of the harpies have been emphasised as a defining feature in the same way as attention is drawn to the singing prowess of the sirens in their own depictions.³⁴ Such a feature could therefore be used to distinguish the two hybrids from each other, as is demonstrated when they are contextualised by their popular mythology.

Harpies can also be seen on vases being chased by the Boreades who feature in the *Argonautica* episode as they rid Phineus of the miserable hybrids (Ap. Rh. 2. 263-299). As the Boreades attempt to catch the flying harpies Zeus grants them unwearying strength, for without it, 'they could not have followed after the harpies who would always outstrip the blasts of the Zephyr on their journeys to and from Phineus' (Ap. Rh. 2. 74-76). The episode focusses heavily on the speed at which the harpies fly to the point that it can be viewed as a feature which defines them and distinguishes them from the sirens. The harpies can be seen depicted in relation to this episode on several different vases including a vase from c. 530BC showing the harpies as clothed women with wings on their backs and shoes in the act of flying over the water (fig. 3).³⁵ They are being pursued by the winged Boreades who have their swords raised to demonstrate the purpose of their chase. Once again the episode found in literature and represented in art makes the swift flying abilities of the harpies a primary focus.

Another defining feature of the harpy creatures throughout mythology and art is their frightening nature and appearance. In comparison to the sirens the harpies embody the more frightening features of a bird of prey, their presence typically accompanied by loud screeching and talons flashing, inciting fear and dread in their victims. In the *Argonautica* the hybrids snatch Phineus' food with their claws, 'attacking with a rush, screaming' (Ap. Rh. 2. 66) terrifying those they prey on. The sirens are feared for the paralysing spell they place on men and the eventual death that occurs while the harpies are not only feared for causing misery but also due to their very appearance. In the much

³² Attic red-figure hydria-kalpis, Kleophrades Painter, c. 480BC, Malibu, J Paul Getty Museum 85.AE.316, *LIMC* Harpyiai 9 (fig. 1).

³³ Attic bell krater, c. 450BC, Ferrara, National Archaeological Museum 20294, *LIMC* Harpyiai 12. The warrior in Thracian dress is to signify the setting of where Phineus lives and the citizens who provide his food. *LIMC* 447 (fig. 2).

³⁴ This idea will be discussed later in this chapter.

³⁵ *LIMC* Harpyiai 14 (fig. 3).

later *Aeneid*, Virgil imagines a terrifying image of these creatures: 'they are birds with the faces of girls, with filth oozing from their bellies, with hooked claws for hands and faces pale with hunger that is never satisfied' (*Aen.* 3.216). In both instances the horrible creatures have to be fought off as if they are a constant plague of hungry birds coming to snatch food (or occasionally people) while an awful smell accompanies their presence. Unlike the sirens that sit idly on their island until sailors pass by and listen to the fateful song the harpies will attack the victims from the sky without warning in the most horrible and nauseating way.

The idea of the harpies having a fearsome or ugly appearance that would be appropriate for their miserable presence has been expressed in vase painting in relation to their known mythology. A louterion from the late 7th century depicts two winged women dressed in chitons, consistent with later artistic portrayals (as demonstrated earlier in this chapter), as they are chased by the Boreades (fig. 4).³⁶ In this depiction however the hybrids are shown with curled hands that resemble claws and hideous facial features. These particular creatures can be securely identified as harpies not only because of the pursuing Boreades on the other side of the vase and their winged female bodies but also because of the word ΑΡΕΠΥΙΑ (harpy) that is inscribed in front of the hybrid on the right. Thus it is now a possibility to not only identify the harpies by their large wings and flying abilities but also, as demonstrated in this case, their terrifying nature can be communicated through their appearance. Such a depiction of the harpies was not only an early artistic view but it can also be seen on a Apulian red-figure amphora from around 360BC where a winged woman with an ugly face is pictured with the winged Boreades, carrying away the stolen goods, far from the maiden-like harpies found on the Kleophrades Painter hydria (fig. 5).³⁷ These portrayals are in stark contrast to the sirens portrayals in art which despite their associations with death reflect their alluring and seductive nature through their maiden-like appearance.

Having looked at the portrayals of harpies in literature and art it is intriguing to note the lack of instances in which a bird's body is in fact present. Due to the lack of detailed descriptions of the harpy's appearance in ancient literary accounts it is necessary to look at the depictions above to observe how the hybrid creature is portrayed contextually in art. In all the examples presented above where it is possible to securely identify the harpies due to mythological context, the harpy figures are represented as clothed women with large wings. These depictions fit in with the limited literary descriptions of the figures that include features of a bird (with swift wings) and a female. If the harpies can then be identified in this way, as a clothed woman with large bird wings, is it

³⁶ Harpies and the Boreades, louterion, c. 620BC, Berlin, Staatl Museum F. 1682, *LIMC* Harpyiai 1 (fig. 4).

³⁷ Harpies and the Boreades, Apulian red-figure amphora, c. 360BC, Ruvo, Jatta Museum Pl. 60,2, *LIMC* Harpyiai 17 (fig. 5).

therefore safe to assume that this figure is consistently portrayed in this way and artistic depictions of creatures with the body of a bird and the head of a woman are not in fact harpies at all?³⁸ Emily Vermeule states, 'harpies are often difficult to distinguish from sirens until the latter's feet grow webbed'. I would like to suggest, however that harpies are not in fact portrayed in the same way as sirens in art as women with predominantly bird features at all. Sirens can be identified in art in the context of their scene with Odysseus, where they are depicted with the body of a bird and varying degrees of female anatomy. Bird-women hybrids can therefore be more safely identified as sirens rather than harpies. It is difficult to identify predominantly 'bird based' hybrids in art as harpies when they appear significantly differently from the narrative contexts outlined above and there is no solid evidence to support such identification.

This is not to say that every bird-women depiction in Greek art and sculpture represents a siren per se either. It seems likely that early depictions were primarily decorative, and not linked to any narrative, whether siren-related or harpy-related. Similarly sphinxes and other hybrids on many Corinthian vases had no mythological context. When the first artists depicting the Odyssean episode needed to depict the bird-woman hybrid, they picked the appropriate, and already existing, form which then over time became more and more closely identified with the mythological siren, and lost its role as decoration. Early depictions of bird-women, therefore, were quite likely not considered by the Greeks to be either sirens or harpies.

³⁸ Sirens featured in relief on stelae can be portrayed with a predominantly female body but are also shown with the wings, tail, larger thighs and feet of a bird, in comparison to the clothed winged female harpies.

Odysseus and the Sirens

The encounter between Odysseus and the sirens in Book 12 of the *Odyssey* is arguably the most well-known account of a meeting with the sweet-voiced figures. Despite the fact the *Odyssey* contains the first literary description of the mythical figures entitled the 'sirens' it is interesting to note the distinct lack of detail relating to the creatures' background and appearance, particularly in contrast to later ancient sources.

Prior to Odysseus meeting the sirens at sea he receives a warning from the witch Circe who describes the threat they pose to sailors and how to avoid the danger.

First you will raise the island of the Sirens,
Those creatures who spellbind men alive,
Whoever comes their way. Whoever draws too close,
Off guard, and catches the Sirens' voices in the air -
No sailing home for him, no wife rising to meet him,
No happy children beaming up at their father's face.
The high, thrilling song of the Sirens will transfix him,
Lolling there in their meadow, round them heaps of corpses
Rotting away, rags of skin shrivelling on their bones...
Race straight past that coast! Soften some beeswax
And stop your shipmates' ears so none can hear,
None of the crew, but if *you* are bent on hearing,
Have them tie you hand and foot in the swift ship,
Erect at the mast-block, lashed by ropes to the mast
So you can hear the Sirens' song to your heart's content.
But if you plead, commanding your men to set you free,
Then they must lash you faster, rope on rope. (*Od.* 12. 44-60)

Because of the warning above provided by Circe prior to the encounter of Odysseus and the mythical creatures the audience's view of the sirens has already been affected in a negative way.³⁹ The overall image presented is one of horror with the focus of the warning placed predominantly on the fearful picture of the meadow the sirens live on, strewn with the rotting corpses of their victims.⁴⁰ The victims themselves also appear to be completely helpless, transfixed under the 'high, thrilling song' of the creatures as they sail past the island soon to join the rotting bodies of other sailors. Circe has

³⁹ Pucci 1998: 7.

⁴⁰ Nugent 2008: 49.

not only described the fatal consequences that will occur because of the sirens but also why, subsequently explaining the mythical figures' power. In reference to this power Pietro Pucci succinctly states, 'Circe characterises the siren's pleasing song as a powerful incantation which creates confusion and paralyses the will,' emphasising the enchanting and bewitching abilities of the sirens.⁴¹ Unlike other creatures mentioned later in this warning, such as Scylla and Charybdis, Circe does not make any reference to the appearance of the sirens or how to identify them, apart from their song; the emphasis is instead placed on the danger the sirens pose as well as their seductive and frightening nature.⁴²

Throughout Circe's warning there is no specific mention as to how the siren's victims die. It is possible however to infer from the text that paralysed by the siren's song their victims are entranced on the island to the point that they perish due to their complete inaction. The fact that heaps of rotting skeletons surround the sirens appears to confirm this theory as opposed to Scylla, Charybdis or the Cyclopes who eat their victims. It is interesting to note here that Circe is the only source to reference such a feature of the sirens' environment, although the idea that the sirens' song is dangerous and causes death through 'wasting desire' (Ap. Rh. 4.898) present in the *Odyssey* continues in later ancient accounts of the sirens.

Circe is the only one who mentions the heaps of rotting corpses apparently featured on the island. Odysseus himself makes no reference to the horrific scene specified by Circe and comes to the conclusion that it would be best not to relay this message to his men. While Odysseus does not view the piles of skeletons or the sirens it is evident that he is put under the spell of the sirens' song and would have fallen prey to them if it had not been for Circe's warning.⁴³ The idea that the sirens are dangerous and feared for their seductive charm and song persists in other literary sources (Ap. Rh. 4. 897-898) after the *Odyssey* episode despite there only being one mention to the way in which their victims die and subsequently surround the cruel hybrids.

As the *Odyssey* contains the original literary account of an encounter with the sirens it is surprising that at no point during Circe's forewarning to Odysseus does she mention how the mythical siren creatures look. In fact throughout the episode in Book 12 there is no indication as to how they might appear. The reason for this may be because Odysseus cannot physically see the meadow which the sirens stand in as their song echoes out towards the ship, adding to the overall mysterious nature of the figures.⁴⁴ Otherwise the poet is putting his audience in Odysseus' mindset where the only thing

⁴¹ Pucci 1998: 8.

⁴² Pucci 1998: 9.

⁴³ Pucci 1998: 8.

⁴⁴ Murgatroyd 2007: 45.

he cares about are the beautiful words of their promises. Instead of analysing or describing the appearance of these mysterious figures the author places a focus upon the power of their song and the way in which they entrance their victims as this is what defines the sirens, just as Scylla and Charybdis are defined by their horrific appearance and their insatiable hunger for men.

When we were at shouting distance from the Sirens' island,
Going along briskly, they noticed our sea-swift ship
Coming near and began their clear-sounding song:
'Come on, then, famous Odysseus, great glory of the Akhaians, come here
And anchor your ship so you can listen to our song.
No-one has ever gone past us in a dark ship,
Not before hearing the sweet-voiced song from our mouths—
It sends you away happier and wiser.
We know about everything that happened in Troy,
Everything the Argives and Trojans did at the gods' will,
And we know everything that happens on this fertile earth.'
That was the beautiful song they sang. And my heart
Wanted to hear, so I tried to order my crew to untie me,
Signalling with my eyebrows. But they leant on the oars and kept rowing.

(*Od.* 12.181–94)⁴⁵

Odyssey Book 12 provides the original and authoritative version of the siren's song as translated above. The song featured in the epic is specific to Odysseus' own desires and current journey home from Troy as well as a heavy focus on spreading his *kléos*.⁴⁶ The warning from Circe, prior to Odysseus meeting the sirens, specifies that whoever listens to the enchanting song of the sirens will be denied a homecoming, never seeing his wife or son again. This consequence would be particularly disheartening to Odysseus as he attempts to complete his *nostos*.⁴⁷ As the song in the *Odyssey* is specifically catered to Odysseus it could imply that the song is particular to the victim and may have been different in this account if the other sailors could have heard as well.

⁴⁵ Translation provided by Dr. Simon Perris.

⁴⁶ Pucci 1998: 6 'The sirens with specific Iliadic diction appeal both to Odysseus' literary complacency and his glorious deeds.'

⁴⁷ Nugent 2008: 47.

Through the song (and information provided by Circe's warning) the sirens appear to model themselves off the Muses and their particular attributes.⁴⁸ The sirens tell Odysseus they know everything that happened in Troy, as well as immediately recognising the hero when he passes as the 'great glory of the Akhaians'. But it is also seemingly implicit that the creatures themselves were never present at the war (nor left their island). Such a lack of a first-hand account leads to the idea that the sirens possess the omniscience of the Muses, despite some limitations to this power by not delving into specific details.⁴⁹ The concept that the sirens model themselves on the Muses is continued with their self-proclaimed 'sweet-voiced song', a talent typically attributed to the Muses, especially in relation to helping spread the glory of heroes and men through a poet's song.⁵⁰ There is one crucial difference however between the song and characteristics of the sirens and the Muses and that is the truth of their promises.⁵¹

The dangerous element of the sirens' nature is indicated through the deceitful and deceptive words of their song which promises to sing the glory of sailors who pass by and to send them away 'happier and wiser', 'bestowing a knowledge that cannot be forgotten.'⁵² Yet those that listen to such an alluring song will perish among the bodies of sailors who previously believed the same enchanting promises and never returned home.⁵³ The song of the sirens balances the pleasure of their voices with the knowledge that they promise to bestow on their listeners resulting in a deadly combination that is also highly desirable.⁵⁴ The sirens appear to epitomise desire not only in the charm and beauty of their singing voices but the everlasting knowledge and glory they promise their victims. Even the cunning Odysseus is tempted by their song and the sirens' deceitful message as he struggles against his ties and pleads to be set free.

It is interesting to note at this stage that it has been suggested that the figures encountered in Book 12 of the *Odyssey* identified as the 'sirens' were not originally envisaged by the poet as the half-bird, half-woman hybrids depicted on early orientalisising vases.⁵⁵ Although the representations may have been originally unconnected to the 'nameless enchantresses' described in the *Odyssey*, after the *Odyssey's* account it became conventional in later art and literature to associate depictions of bird-women with the Odyssean 'sirens', thus combining their charming voices with the dualistic appearance can be seen in artistic depictions.

⁴⁸ Pucci 1998: 7.

⁴⁹ Pucci 1998: 6.

⁵⁰ 'Speak to me, Muse, of golden Aphrodite's works.' (*Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 1)

⁵¹ Vernant 1991: 105.

⁵² *Ibid*

⁵³ Vernant 1991: 104.

⁵⁴ Wellmer 2000: 8.

⁵⁵ Pollard 1977: 188.

The earliest representation of a scene depicting Odysseus tied to a ship's mast sailing past strange creatures perched on a rocky outcrop can be seen on a black figure Corinthian aryballos from the 6th century BC (fig. 6).⁵⁶ Although badly faded this oil flask undoubtedly depicts the same siren episode as that described in the *Odyssey* as Odysseus is depicted tied to his ship while his crew focus on escaping as fast as possible with the hybrids perched above them. This particular scene was been reproduced on several different vases portraying the encounter. Although artists may have been influenced to some degree by the Homeric version, they are of course illustrating the myth rather than the epic redaction of it, as can be seen by the variations they introduce over time, from one piece to the next.

Depicted on an Attic black figure oinochoe from circa 520BC (fig. 7) Odysseus stands towering over his crew members tied to the mast in front of the sirens depicted as bird-women, in a similar representation to that seen on the Corinthian aryballos.⁵⁷ An interesting element on this particular piece is the image of Odysseus reaching out his arm towards the creatures depicted on a rocky outcrop. This is presumably part of the artist's attempt to indicate the seductive nature of the sirens and the temptation Odysseus experiences as he pulls against his bonds. A similar attempt to communicate the powers of the sirens specified in the *Odyssey* can be seen on an Attic black figure stamnos from the late 5th century BC (fig. 8).⁵⁸ Three sirens are pictured in the scene with the word 'ἡμερόπα' (meaning 'long for' or 'desire') inscribed above the left hybrid's head, indicating the emotions and reaction felt when listening to their song, through the artistic medium.⁵⁹ From these vases it is evident that the power of the sirens relating to their song and voice is an important feature of the mythical creatures and is continually emphasised in art and literature since the *Odyssey*.

The siren's connection to song and music is demonstrated again in two other vases featuring the creatures and Odysseus in a portrayal of their encounter. Depicted on the neck of an Attic black-figure lekythos from circa 500BC is a siren playing an aulos to the bound Odysseus (where only the mast of his ship is visible) on an upright rock with a dolphin jumping into the water between them (fig. 9).⁶⁰ The siren has been depicted once again with a bird's body and female head complete with crowned hair and white feminine skin as well as two arms to more efficiently play her instrument. Providing the sirens with arms in their artistic representations appears to be predominantly due to

⁵⁶ Pollard 1977: 188 Corinthian black-figure aryballos, c. 575-550BC, New York MMA 01.8100 (fig. 6).

⁵⁷ Attic black figure oinochoe, c. 520BC, Berlin, Staatl Mus. 1993.216 (fig. 7).

⁵⁸ Attic black figure stamnos, c. 475-460BC, London, British Museum 1843. 1103. 31 (fig. 8).

⁵⁹ The *Odyssey* refers to the idea that there are two sirens that Odysseus encounters, however that number can vary throughout literary and artistic depictions who predominantly mention three, until there are eight found in the Underworld of Plato's *Republic* (Plat. Repub. 617b). Murgatroyd 2007: 47.

⁶⁰ Attic black-figure lekythos, c. 500BC, New York, MMA cc958 (fig. 9).

practical reasons as they can be depicted playing instruments and the artist can successfully communicate the sirens' power over song.⁶¹ Such a trend is seen again on an Attic black-figure oinochoe from circa 525-475BC on which three sirens are depicted standing on a cliff over a boat playing instruments, including the lyre, kithara and aulos, most typically seen accompanying sirens (fig. 10).⁶² These particular sirens appear almost as if in a band and the artist has successfully managed to recalling the powers specified in the *Odyssey*.

One of the more famous pieces depicting Odysseus' encounter with the sirens can be seen on a red-figure stamnos from the late 5th century BC (fig. 8).⁶³ There are once again many similarities with other artistic depictions of Odysseus passing the island of the sirens; however the intriguing element of this portrayal is the central siren seemingly falling towards the ship with her eyes closed as if in death. It has been frequently suggested that the central siren here is committing suicide, having been eluded by Odysseus who is able to hear their song and escape unharmed.⁶⁴ Such an image stems from the idea that once they had been thwarted they no longer have a purpose, their *raison d'être* is no longer necessary and therefore they must die. Such an idea shares similarities to the sphinx who hurls herself off a cliff once her riddle is solved.⁶⁵ This particular depiction demonstrates the preference of the artist and the addition of other elements to a frequently painted scene. Other aspects of the mythology concerning sirens can be included and elaborated upon, especially over time when the background and myths about the creature are expanded.

Despite the fact the original literary mention of the sirens in the *Odyssey* makes no mention as to the appearance, background or purpose of the figures, through close analysis of the passage in which they feature it is possible to understand what features are emphasised and used to define the siren. Rather than stating what the sirens might look like, a focus has instead been placed upon their powers over song and ability to ultimately paralyse and lure men to their awaiting slow death on their island. Through this idea the dangerous nature of the feminine hybrids is communicated as well as their connection with death, as it surrounds them. The features made prevalent in the Odyssean episode define the siren in later portrayals in art and literature and become an important component in their eventual presence on funerary monuments in the Classical Period.

⁶¹ Tsiafakis 2004: 75.

⁶² Attic black-figure oinochoe, c. 525-475BC, New York, Private collection, Beazley Archive 351329 (fig. 10).

⁶³ Attic black figure stamnos, c. 475-460BC, London, British Museum 1843. 1103. 31 (fig. 8).

⁶⁴ Wellmer 2000: 17, Murgatroyd 2007: 47.

⁶⁵ Wellmer 2000: 17.

Sirens in the Argonautica

While analysing the presence and importance of sirens in ancient literature it would be amiss to not to look briefly at the information provided in Book 4 of Apollonius' *Argonautica* as the Argonauts sail pass the island of the sirens. Particular details relating to the appearance and possible background of the mythical creatures that are omitted in the Odyssean encounter are included throughout the episode in the *Argonautica*.⁶⁶

The reader is primarily made aware of the parentage and habitat of the sirens, entitled Anthemoessa (Ap. Rh. 4. 897-901) in Book 4 of the *Argonautica*, details previously unknown in the *Odyssey* account. The names provided in the *Argonautica* also coincide with other suggestions associated with the sirens' parents, mentioned previously in this study.⁶⁷ In this particular account the sirens are also seen by the Argonauts whereas they seem to have been hidden from Odysseus' sight, as 'they keep a constant look-out from their perch in the lovely harbour' and 'looked in part like birds and in part like young girls' (Ap. Rh. 4. 894-86). Apollonius' added description of the sirens correlates with early depictions of sirens on vases as bird-women hybrids when their appearance and associations have been firmly established in art. Apollonius also touches on the reason why the sirens appear in this form, as they had once looked after Persephone and were with her when Hades abducted her for his bride (Ap. Rh. 4. 892-894). While they were looking for the girl they prayed to the gods for wings that could aid their search of the goddess and thence become the sirens later found on the island of Anthemoessa. Apollonius has therefore provided a more detailed literary account about the sirens appearance and background, while continuing to use and build upon the established Odyssean encounter and their defining features.

Not only does Apollonius provide more details as to the appearance of the sirens but he also continues with the idea found in the Odyssean episode that the sirens possess a dangerous nature. While the Argonauts may not have received a warning about the creatures as Odysseus did, the reader would already be aware of the threat they pose, and instead Apollonius provides a different way for the men to escape the sirens with Orpheus playing his lyre (Ap. Rh. 4 905-908). The desire that overwhelms Odysseus also takes hold of the Argonauts and one man throws himself into the sea in his bewildered state to reach the island (Ap. Rh. 4. 911-919). In both literary encounters with the sirens there is a focus on their enchanting singing powers and the danger this presents.

⁶⁶ Knight 1995: 201.

⁶⁷ Murgatroyd 2007: 47.

Early Artistic Representations of Sirens

The siren episode found in Book 12 of the *Odyssey* does not include any details of their appearance, although the creatures can be identified in artistic depictions from the surrounding context. Representations of the hybrid creature with a bird's body and female facial features can be seen on various media as early as the 7th century BC from Greece and surrounding countries.⁶⁸ Due to the varied artistic portrayals of sirens over time it is important to look at the ways in which the mythical figures have been depicted unattached from any surrounding context to safely identify the siren as well as distinguishing features in the future.

Along with sphinxes, griffins, gorgons, lions and other animals or mythological creatures, sirens are a popular figure to depict in orientalising friezes on vases, especially in the 6th century BC.⁶⁹ Within the borders of the frieze multiple figures can be shown in a procession, either following the creature in front of them or turning to look at the one behind. In this context sirens can be identified by having a bird's body with large wings and the head of a young woman, frequently shown with long wavy tresses hanging down on her shoulders and a crowning headband or fillet. The wings of the sirens can be presented as outstretched on either side of her or furled up against the body in a sickle shape (fig. 11)⁷⁰, very similar to the wings typically seen on the Greek sphinx (fig. 12)⁷¹.

When sirens (and other creatures) are depicted in orientalising friezes they are utilised as decoration on a vase; in this sense they are completely separated from the myths we would now firmly associate them with (fig. 13)⁷². Depicted in a procession of other mythological creatures and animals it is not the aim of the artist to place them in any sort of context (in contrast to scenes when the sirens are shown singing to the bound Odysseus) instead they are depicted alongside lions, oxen, sphinxes and gorgons as if just another figural decoration in the designated space.⁷³ The interesting hybrid appearance of the sirens along with their fantastic, mythical nature can add another element to the decoration of the piece, especially when other mythological creatures or scenes are being

⁶⁸ Tsiafakis 2004: 74, For the purposes of this thesis I will be focussing on Attic representations of sirens on stelae, however to firmly distinguish and identify the siren figure in art it is useful to look at possible portrayals in other areas for consistency.

⁶⁹ Tsiafakis 2004: 74.

⁷⁰ Attic black-figure terracotta hydria, attributed to the painter of London B76, c. 560-550BC, New York, MMA 45.11.12 (fig. 11) Both types of wing presentation can be seen here, balancing out the procession 'pattern', with the sirens depicted in the central frieze.

⁷¹ Late Corinthian neck-amphora, attributed to the Tydeus painter, c. 570-560BC, Paris, Musée du Louvre E640, (fig. 12) Tsiafakis 2004: 80 Sirens and sphinxes can be distinguished from each by the sphinxes winged lion's body.

⁷² Attic black-figure plate, attributed to the Gorgon painter, c. 590-580BC, Baltimore, Walters Art Museum. 48.215 (fig. 13) Padgett 2004: 308.

⁷³ Tsiafakis 2004: 74.

represented. On a terracotta hydria from around 560-550BC sirens have been depicted within the two friezes wrapping around the vase alongside bulls and lions (fig 11)⁷⁴. Portrayed on the upper quarter of the hydria is the mythical scene where Achilles hides at the fountain house awaiting the Trojan prince Troilos. On this particular piece the sirens are clearly not associated with their own mythological context, possibly adding to the mythical nature of the upper frieze or they could be purely decorative, their hybrid appearance making an aesthetically pleasing and interesting addition to the animal frieze below.

Most early representations of the bird-woman hybrid feature the same elements to depict the siren of bird-woman appearance in art; however in portrayals from the 6th century it is possible to see the figure with a beard. On one particular vase from Corinth dating around 570BC there is a hybrid bird-human figure presented in the same way as other sirens seen in 6th century BC orientalisng friezes, with the addition of a beard (fig 14)⁷⁵. Is it possible there was such a thing at this early stage as a male siren completely separate from the seductive female figures found in ancient literary accounts? This does not appear to be the case primarily due to the fact that despite the facial hair everything else about the siren's portrayal remains the same, including long wavy hair with headband. It appears that sirens, sphinxes and gorgons could have been depicted as bearded in various regions and art forms as late as the 6th century BC where the artist does not seem to be very decisive about the accepted gender of the creature.⁷⁶ Depicting these creatures as either male or female would probably not have been of any concern when they are disassociated from any mythological context and their gender is not important.⁷⁷ However by the 5th century BC the bearded siren had completely disappeared when its depiction as bird-woman with a beautiful maiden's head becomes accepted in association with common mythology. Despite slight variations in the sirens' appearance in early artistic portrayals the distinctive features of a bird's body and human (female) head with long hair can firmly identify the siren in its most basic hybrid form.

During the 6th century BC sirens can also be seen on vases as the central focus rather than being depicted in an orientalisng frieze alongside other creatures. The siren can be pictured alone filling the space she is allotted on the vase, as a central decorative figure under a vase handle or seen with other sirens (or some animals).⁷⁸ The features that distinguish the siren remain the same in these particular early portrayals, with a bird's body from the neck down including fanned tail, large wings

⁷⁴ Attic black-figure terracotta hydria, attributed to the painter of London B76, c. 560-550BC, New York, MMA 45.11.12 (fig. 11) Sphinxes can also be seen on this piece, disassociated from their own myth and the scene depicted next to them.

⁷⁵ Round bodied pyxis, Corinth, c570BC, Malibu, Getty Museum 88. AE. 105 (fig. 14), Aasved 1996: 384.

⁷⁶ Tsiafakis 2004: 75.

⁷⁷ Cooney 1968: 265.

⁷⁸ Vermeule 1979: 169.

and short legs. Once again they have the head of a young woman with long wavy hair cascading down the side of their face and frequently topped with a headband. As with the siren's depiction in friezes they can have their wings outstretched to either side or resting next to the body (these can be sickle shaped or not). Featured on the body of a small aryballos (oil flask) from the second quarter of the 6th century is an early example of an individual siren depiction (fig. 15), a siren with large wings can be seen as she turns her head back behind her.⁷⁹ In this way there is a strong emphasis placed on the bird features and appearance of the hybrid with only the head of a woman, as demonstrated by many early portrayals. The long wavy hair and beautiful maiden face remain, however, identifying it as a siren specifically.

In some depictions the bird body and the wings can include colour and details to indicate feathers and emphasise the bird features. On addition the face white to emphasise the female character of the siren (fig. 16).⁸⁰ Depicted on a pyxis from the early 6th century BC there are two sirens, mirror images of each other, painted on the body of the piece (the lid shows an orientalising frieze of animals running around the edge) (fig. 17).⁸¹ The sirens face each other and fill up the space available with floral decoration placed within the gaps left. The bird-women figures are portrayed with common features and once again appear to be depicted dissociated from their mythological context, without any indication of the powers they possess in the *Odyssey* or the danger they pose. When framed in this particular way the popular siren portrayal is used exclusively as a decorative figure, the features providing an interesting looking creature.

Sculptural figures of sirens used as decoration on hydria can be seen during the 5th century BC at the base of the vertical handle extending from shoulder to neck. As demonstrated on two vases from Rhodes and Attica around 460-430BC a siren is presented frontally near the shoulder of the vase, having the full body of a bird with wings unfurled and a young woman's head (fig. 18 & 19)⁸². Similar detailing has been added around the tail of the creature adding focus to the lone decorative figure on this piece. Similar to the earlier depictions of sirens on vases the figures seen on these particular 'siren hydriae' portray the hybrid unattached from any mythological context or specific

⁷⁹ Late Corinthian aryballos, Calauria painter, early 6th century, Wellington, Victoria University Museum 1950 A5 (fig. 15.).

⁸⁰ Late Corinthian Hydria, Tydeus Painter, mid-6th century, Berlin, Staal Mus. 135, Tsiafakis 2004: 75 (fig. 16.).

⁸¹ Corinthian Pyxis, Dodwell painter, c.600-575BC, London, British Museum 1851,0507.7 (fig. 17.).

⁸² Bronze hydria with siren neck-handle, Rhodes, c. 460BC, London, British Museum 1927,0713.1 (fig. 18.). Attic bronze hydria with siren neck-handles, c. 440-430BC, Private collection, Padgett 2004:300 (fig. 19.).

characteristics, like their singing prowess. The sirens seem to have been utilised in this way because of their mythical nature and beautiful feminine appearance⁸³.

Over time the form of the sirens change, as the female attributes are emphasised and their human features begin to dominate their once complete lower bird body, predominantly in the 5th century BC. From the 7th century BC onwards the presence of human arms can be seen, either as an addition to the bird's body or later as part of the human torso when it becomes more apparent (similar to the composition of a centaur). The appearance of the arms on sirens can primarily be utilised for practical reasons as they are now given the ability to hold things with ease.⁸⁴ Following their mythological connection with song and music the sirens of art are given musical instruments, most frequently a kithara, lyre or aulos, to emphasise the association as well as the idea that it helps the viewer to recall their characteristics, namely their powers over song. Sirens can be depicted playing the instruments individually or along with other sirens, frequently in trios (fig. 20).⁸⁵ As well as musical instruments sirens are shown to hold other objects which tend to emphasise their feminine nature. A mirror, beads, jewellery boxes, wreathes and ribbons can be held up by the sirens to admire themselves in or be admired with. The image of a beautiful young maiden gazing at her reflection is communicated in such images, as seen on the neck of an amphora from the late 4th century BC.⁸⁶ Sirens portrayed in this way appear to be quite separate from the dangerous female hybrids that dwell in the middle of the sea, surrounded by death; the focus here is instead placed upon their beauty and the seductive charm they possess over sailors, as if it can be adopted by the women who use the pieces.

Not only are sirens portrayed holding objects but they can also be sculpted into different personal objects to be used themselves. Three separate pieces from around Italy and Greece clearly demonstrates the sculpting of the siren figure into objects. A vase from Sicily, around 500BC (fig. 21)⁸⁷ provides a crude primary example of a later vase in the shape of a siren from the first of the 5th century BC (fig. 22).⁸⁸ The spout is positioned at the crown of the head and the horizontal body of a bird provides an area for the handle on the back making it easy to pour from. While the face and hair

⁸³ John Padgett also suggests that the sirens were appropriate figures to feature on hydria that were used in funerary rites to pour libations due to their association with death and burial. (Padgett 2004: 303).

⁸⁴ Tsiafakis 2004: 75.

⁸⁵ Terracotta black-figure kylix, Boeotia, c. 5th century BC, New York, MMA 57.12.5 (fig. 20) Although the sirens are connected to music through their song in the *Odyssey*, representations of the sirens with instruments does not necessarily connect them with the myth completely on that particular piece. Instead we are made to recall the characteristics of the sirens and the powers they possess (specifically over song.)

⁸⁶ LIMC Seirenes 58, 330-310BC, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 1899.540, This is quite similar to later portrayals of mermaids sitting on rocks gazing into mirrors as they brush their long hair.

⁸⁷ Terracotta jug in the form of a siren, Sicily, c500BC, London, British Museum 1846, 0512.14 (fig. 21).

⁸⁸ Askos in the shape of a siren, South Italy, first half of 5th century, Malibu, J. Paul Getty Museum 92.AC.5 (fig. 22).

of the hybrid has been sculpted into that of a young woman (seemingly smiling) the detailing of the body of the jug to represent a bird's body has been added with paint (the tail and legs have been damaged). The later example of a jug from South Italy utilises the siren figure in the same way with spout at the top of the head and handle attached to the neck; however this representation is much more detailed with the addition of sculpted arms and hands holding objects and incised feather details. Neither sculpted sirens has any mythical context associated with them in these portrayals to recall their link to Odysseus or the luring of sailors to their deaths, instead the focus has been placed on their unique hybrid appearance and possibly seductive feminine nature from their beautiful female faces. The singing powers of the sirens is well established through the *Odyssey* and other literary accounts which may signify that when represented alone in this way the abilities of the sirens may be seen as a given. The charming, seductive nature associated with the mythical sirens could make them an interesting piece in the house or as part of a beauty regime, demonstrated by a perfume 'bottle' from Rhodes around 550BC (fig. 23).⁸⁹ A statue of a siren has been sculpted into a usable piece with the possibility that the owner could possess some of the charm and allure over men that the sirens have⁹⁰. The associations with death that are communicated throughout literature seem to have disappeared here and instead the focus has been placed on the allure and charm the female sirens are known for.⁹¹

Despite variations in the depictions of sirens over time and in different areas there are obvious distinguishing features and ideas that are frequently used which aids the identification of the hybrid bird-woman. Sirens in art can be identified by having the head of a woman and the body of a bird. The human features of the mythical hybrid can be emphasised with added arms and extended female torso but always including more than just the wings of a bird, like a tail, feathers and feet. While sirens are not always depicted in context with their mythological canon at times it seems the viewer has to take their associated myth and characteristics for granted. Although the idea that sirens lure sailors to their death is played down in their individual depictions the seductive charm and musical talents of the sirens are present in the mind of the viewer.

⁸⁹ Terracotta scent-bottle in the form of a siren, Rhodes, 550BC, London, British Museum 1860,0201.49 (fig. 23).

⁹⁰ 'Greek ladies ignored the cold fact that sirens were not noted for their looks but for the deceptive sweetness of their song. Having a siren on a toilet object some of her charms would be transferred to the user of the object.' (Cooney 1968: 267)

⁹¹ See *LIMC* Seirenes 1-121 for more artistic depictions of sirens.

The *Ba* Bird

The siren and the harpy hybrids of Greek mythology not only share their distinctive bird-woman appearance with each other but by turning to an example found in Near Eastern Egypt mythology it is possible to see similarities with another hybrid creature. Egyptian art associated with death rituals and burial can feature a human-headed figure with a birds' body, identified as the *Ba* bird which can be seen to inhabit the tomb of the deceased with a close link to the sarcophagus in particular (fig 24).⁹²

The ancient Egyptians believed the soul of a human being consisted of five necessary elements that made up an individual: the *Ib*, *Sheut*, *Ren*, *Ba*, *Ka* and *Ankh*. The *Ka* was specifically associated with a person's life force or vital essence, distinguishing a human being between the living and the dead.⁹³ It is depicted with a pair of raised hands on top of their head to differentiate itself from the deceased it would resemble (fig 25).⁹⁴ The *Ka* was closely connected to the *Ba* element of the soul which can also be found depicted in Egyptian art, typically associated with death scenes; it is predominantly featured on sarcophagi accompanied by various images of the deceased. Where the *Ka* provided the vital essence for a person to be alive, the *Ba* was more commonly viewed as what makes an individual unique or their personality, similar to what we think of as the soul today.⁹⁵ 'The *Ba* represented the mobile aspect of the soul to the ancient Egyptians, who believed it could fly between where the portion known as the *Ka* remained with the body, and the heavens.'⁹⁶ The *Ba* was thought to enter the body at birth, after the *Ka* had brought it to life, and both elements of the soul were said to leave the body at the moment of death. Both of these elements in particular needed continual sustenance, such as food, to survive when separated from the body by death, which is why the deceased was provided with food within their tomb. It was necessary that the *Ka* and *Ba* survived after the death of the body so they could 'eternally traverse the path from the tomb to the after-world successfully' therefore allowing the soul to reach the afterlife and not die a 'second death'.

The *Ba* bird is depicted in Egyptian art from the XXI and XXII Dynasty, represented as having the body of a bird and head of a human resembling the deceased in gender and appearance.⁹⁷ The hybrid can

⁹² Mummified scribe Ani with his *Ba*, Book of the Dead, 19th Dynasty, El Mahdy 1989: 13 (fig. 24).

⁹³ Toynbee 1976: 116.

⁹⁴ El Mahdy 1989: 12, Upraised arms of the *Ka* (fig. 25).

⁹⁵ Goldstein 1990: 21, El Mahdy, C. 1989: 12.

⁹⁶ Padgett 2004: 123.

⁹⁷ Cooney 1968: 266, Cooney, J. 1968: 267.

appear flying down the tomb shaft to the burial chamber, hovering above or in close vicinity to an image of the deceased and sometimes in their arms or clinging to the breast of the mummy (fig. 26 & 27.).⁹⁸ The *Ba* bird's wings are fully utilised in its iconography, allowing the hybrid to fly around the burial chamber as well as hover around the deceased in different positions. The *Ba* is also later supplied with arms and hands which can be used to convey a somewhat protective gesture towards the deceased (fig. 28.).⁹⁹ While the *Ba* bird is specific to Egyptian religion, specifically associated with death ritual and rites, Emily Vermeule believes 'there is little doubt that the Egyptian *Ba* soul was the model for... the Greek siren and harpy' attempting to create a connection between the Greek and Egyptian hybrids.¹⁰⁰ Despite distinct similarities between the *Ba* and its apparent Greek counterparts, the siren and harpy (particularly through their appearance) no direct link has currently been made to confirm this theory. As Vermeule suggests however it is possible to see similarities between the mythical hybrids, predominantly through their depictions of having a human head accompanied by a bird's body and strong associations with death.

While there are obvious connections between the sirens (as an otherworldly spirit) and death the hybrid creature of Greek mythology cannot be 'characterised as the spirit of a dead man in the way that it's Egyptian equivalent, the *Ba* bird can.'¹⁰¹ It is interesting to note at this stage that the siren and *Ba*, sharing very similar appearances, both have strong connections with death and the afterlife (in relation to the siren's presence in classical Attic cemeteries.) The idea that both creatures possess bird features appears to significantly aid their travel between this world and the next as well as the cemetery and tomb. While being able to cross this divide due to their mythological status the fact that both figures have human facial features provides a humanising element which can further associate them with the soul they represent or the mourning women they resemble. Despite the fact that a solid connection has not been made between the *Ba* bird and the Greek siren it is clear that they share similarities that aid their association with the deceased.

⁹⁸ Murray 1972: 130, Cooney 1968: 266 Bronze Crossed arms with *Ba* bird, Egypt, late 18th Dynasty, c. 1400-1350BC, John Huntington Art and Polytechnic Trust 14. 556 (fig. 26), Cooney 1968: 267, Sarcophagus of Tash Penkhonsu Ekhmeem, Egypt, Late Ptolemaic Period, c. 150BC, Christchurch, Canterbury Museum EA 1989: 13 (fig. 27).

⁹⁹ Cooney 1968: 267, Papyrus of Hori, Egypt, 21st Dynasty, c. 1085-935BC, the Charles W. Harkness Endowment Fund 21.1032 (fig. 28).

¹⁰⁰ Vermeule 1979: 75.

¹⁰¹ Irving 1990: 114.

The 'Harpy Tomb'

Since its arrival to the British Museum in the 1840s the naming of the Xanthian Harpy Tomb has raised consistent criticism among scholars.¹⁰² Such controversy revolves around the initial identification of the four featured hybrids as harpies, instead of sirens as they are now generally thought to be.¹⁰³ This issue provides an intriguing anomaly in the representation of sirens and harpies in art which could further aid in the distinction between the two figures, if any exists at all.

During the early 1940s archaeologist Charles Fellows returned from his fourth expedition in Turkey having procured several monuments, including the Harpy Tomb for the British Museum, which later displayed them in a new 'Lycian gallery' in 1947 for the viewing public.¹⁰⁴ The display included monuments and sculptures collected in Lycia, from the Nereid Monument to the Payava and Harpy Tombs among others. The Harpy Tomb was placed in the centre of the room so people could walk around the sarcophagus (or pillar tomb), made up of four panels covered in detailed relief depicting similar scenes of various people of different sexes, ages and status (fig. 29).¹⁰⁵ They were thought to portray a Xanthian ruler (presumably the owner of the tomb) along with servants, ancestors, deities and family.¹⁰⁶ The most intriguing of all the figures depicted are two pairs of bird-women hybrids, sculpted as mirror images (differing predominantly through their hairstyles) of each other on opposite sides of the tomb (north and south).

The hybrids can be seen on either side of a seated/standing figure group, hovering above the ground while clutching a small human body in their arms. Charles Fellows identified these figures as harpies due to similarities found in the myth of the rape of the daughters of Pandareus.¹⁰⁷ As stated previously however this has been a contentious view point ever since its original suggestion and the general consensus today is that the mythical siren figure is portrayed here instead. It is important at this stage to see if it is possible to identify the creature one way or another, further aiding the attempt to distinguish the mythological harpy from the siren in art.

¹⁰² In an effort to reduce confusion when discussing this particular piece I will continue to use its original title, the 'Harpy Tomb' despite disagreeing with the identification.

¹⁰³ Ridgeway 1977: 161.

¹⁰⁴ Challis 2008: 23.

¹⁰⁵ 'Harpy tomb reliefs', Limestone sarcophagus, Xanthus, c. 470-460BC, London, British Museum 1848.10-20.1 (fig. 29).

¹⁰⁶ Disagreement persists today as to whom may be represented on this tomb, however I will attempt to answer this riddle momentarily. Up to the nineteenth century it was suggested that Poseidon or Triton was enthroned on the east side of the tomb, however since then several anomalies have negated this; including the fact that in the Classical Period no god was represented on a tomb. (Tritsch 1942: 39, 42)

¹⁰⁷ Fellows 1842: 19 'The object of the expedition was the bringing away the bas-reliefs representing the legend of the Daughters of King Pandareus, which were around a *stèle* or high square monument, which we called the 'Harpy Tomb'.

When attempting to identify certain figures in artistic pieces (especially when defining features of mythical characters are unfortunately lacking) it is helpful to view the available surrounding context to aid understanding. It is possible that the tomb itself was built for one of the ruling Xanthian dynasts of the 6th and 5th centuries, as it shares similarities with other pillar tombs in the area that were erected and identified as belonging to a series of rulers.¹⁰⁸ 'As time passed and the dynasts power becomes less secure they felt a need to present more grandiose monuments'¹⁰⁹, and this is no less the case for the Harpy Tomb reliefs and its elaborate, detailed decoration and figures.¹¹⁰ According to French archaeologists and taking into account coins of the time, the Harpy Tomb is thought to belong to Kypernis, a name given by Herodotus (7.98) to the leader of the Lycian contingent in the expedition of the Persian King Xerxes in 481-79BC.¹¹¹ The Harpy Tomb itself has been dated to 480-70BC by French excavators which would fit in well with the proposed time frame of Kypernis' rule and death.¹¹²

Accepting the premise that a Xanthian ruler has been depicted on this tomb at least and that it would have been used as his final resting place it is then appropriate to look at the figures themselves in an effort to contextualise the scenes and hybrid creatures. While similar in layout and appearance all four sides of the sarcophagus differ from each other, with a series of figures in the midst of action. Elizabeth Wakeley postulates a possible explanation as to the relationship between the figures depicted, stating, 'they are an aggregation of contemporary Greek funerary motifs ... which are paralleled by funerary stelae from outside Attica.'¹¹³ She states that, as they are represented on non-Attic stelae, the scenes portrayed on the Harpy tomb are stock Greek types which when put together in this way have no unifying theme or continuous action; the images are sculpted onto the tomb side by side in order to fill a wide surface area where they would have instead occupied a narrow stele shaft individually.¹¹⁴ I disagree with her point however as while the

¹⁰⁸ Tritsch 1942: 48, Keen 1992: 53-55 For a comprehensive study and timeline of the Dynastic tombs of Xanthus in the 5th century BC see Antony Keen's, 'The Dynastic Tombs of Xanthos: Who Was Buried Where?' The Xanthus site includes four other surviving pillar tombs: the 'Lion Pillar', 'Theatre Pillar', 'Inscribed Pillar' and the 'Acropolis Pillar' attributed to other dynastic rulers from 540-70BC.

¹⁰⁹ Keen 1992: 54.

¹¹⁰ Tritsch 1942: 43 The layout on the east side is also said to emphasise the importance of the seated figure, through imbalanced symmetry.

¹¹¹ Keen 1992: 56, Challis 2008: 29.

¹¹² Keen 1992: 59 It has been suggested that Kypernis was killed at the battle of Salamis in 479BC, which also fits in well with the idea that tombs were probably erected during the owner's own lifetime. (Tritsch 1942: 43)

¹¹³ Wakeley 1966: 196, Tritsch 1942: 49.

¹¹⁴ Wakeley 1966: 196.

scenes and figures may be reminiscent of Attic funerary motifs and even stock images (which I take as true) there is a continuity to the scenes and actions that flows from one panel to the next.¹¹⁵

Characters portrayed on the panels interact with each other, mainly through the giving and receiving of an object between a seated and standing figure group. The west side panel features three girls in front of a seated female in what appears to be a ceremony or offering of sorts with an opposite seated figure to the left.¹¹⁶ Although this group differs the most from the other three sides the figures carry out actions very similar to the men on the other panels. Many of the figures hold objects in their hands, predominantly a fruit or a flower, providing a unifying image between the figures not only in representation but also in the motif of death, as this is a tomb.¹¹⁷ The bearded, seated older man is in the process of receiving 'gifts' from youths or boys on three sides, which could indicate that this is in fact a repeated image of Kypernis himself. Similar to later classical stelae reliefs depicting a group of people which portray the deceased accompanied by mourners, the figural reliefs on the Harpy Tomb may be a representation of mourners metaphorically bestowing gifts upon the deceased or scenes relating to death and grieving.¹¹⁸ Regardless of the people that are depicted I think it is fair to say that the images can be connected to each other aiding to the overall flow of the piece from one panel to another. The idea that the images are connected is also furthered by the layout of the panels. A certain amount of symmetry has been used on each relief so that the layout on each is much the same and aesthetically pleasing.¹¹⁹ This is especially true with the mirror images of the hybrid creatures on opposing sides of the sarcophagus.

Having looked at the images accompanying the hybrids it is now possible to analyse them on their own in an effort to identify what they might represent, be it harpy or siren hybrid.

Putting aside the appearance of the bird-women featured on the tomb for a moment, an intriguing feature replicated in all four of the hybrid depictions is a small human figure clutched in their arms as they hover off the ground (fig. 30).¹²⁰ As previously mentioned these figures were originally identified by Fellows as the daughters of Pandareus in a myth involving the harpies, an outline of

¹¹⁵ Challis 2008: 42, citing 'Lloyd (Williams, *Xanthian marbles: The Harpy Monument, A Disquisitional Essay 1844*) concluded that Athenian sculptors influenced the Xanthians, since the Nereid Monument closely corresponds to the Parthenon sculptures.'

¹¹⁶ Tritsch 1942: 47 For a detailed explanation of the figures found on the tomb and its comparison to other Lycian figural images on monuments see, Tritsch, F. T. (1942) 'The Harpy Tomb at Xanthus'.

¹¹⁷ The holding of a pomegranate is closely associated with death relating to Persephone's own initial journey to the Underworld.

¹¹⁸ Tritsch 1942: 39 'We know deplorably little of Lycian history.' Unfortunately solid evidence to prove who is being portrayed on the tomb has not yet come to light. Therefore my conclusions are based predominantly on the thoughts of scholars and my own guesswork from the tomb images.

¹¹⁹ Tritsch 1942: 43.

¹²⁰ Limestone sarcophagus, c470-460BC, British Museum 1848.10-20.1 (fig. 30).

which can be found in the *Odyssey* (20. 73-86); after Pandareus and his wife are killed for committing *hubris* his daughters are tended to by Aphrodite, Artemis, Hera and Athene. The goddesses bestow heavenly gifts upon the girls and Aphrodite eventually asks Zeus for 'their crowning day as brides.' At this point, for unknown reasons, the harpies (acknowledged as 'storm spirits' in the text) snatch the daughters away and deliver them to the Furies.¹²¹ Because of the basic similarities between the myth above and the images depicted on the sarcophagus the harpy title was attached to the tomb; however due to discrepancies in the portrayal this is no longer a popular theory.

It is unlikely that the rape of Pandareus' daughters has been depicted on the Harpy Tomb primarily because the abduction that is occurring in the myth is not reflected in the action portrayed on the sarcophagus. Rather than an abduction by (as we have seen) terrifying creatures whose appearance in the *Argonautica* is accompanied by the screeches of a bird of prey as well as a putrid smell, a genuinely miserable encounter (Ap. Rh. 182-201) no indication is seen in the relief images. A distinct lack of fear or terror in the expression of abductor and victim alike presents a portrayal inconsistent with of the myth.¹²² One possible flaw in this theory however is the small figure depicted underneath the hybrid on the North side of the tomb.¹²³

This is the only figure depicted on the sarcophagus to portray any sort of emotion which may be in response to the situation directly above it. However, I believe it has less to do with the hybrid creatures and should instead be seen as a grief-stricken reaction to the deceased, thus fitting in with the overall theme of the tomb setting. The pose of the crouching figures recalls images of mourning figures found on white ground lekythoi and grave stelae in Greece. Such a representation shares similarities with a grave stele found in the Illissos river in Athens from around 340BC depicting an old man, a dog, a small boy in mourning and a young nude male (fig. 31).¹²⁴ The figure of the young boy sits crouching behind the nude youth, who is presumed to be the deceased as he stares out towards the viewer and appears to be emotionally detached from the accompanying figures portrayed on the stele typical of such depictions. Therefore the one figure that could have indicated the abduction element of the myth is instead a reflection of the fact that this is a tomb and to introduce an element of grief similar to that depicted on later Greek funerary stelae.

If the appropriate reactions are absent in association with an abduction occurring it is necessary to find another explanation for the identity of the small humans being carried away in the four hybrids'

¹²¹ Presumably this is a euphemism for the death of the girls as the Furies live in the Underworld.

¹²² Tonks 1907: 321.

¹²³ 'Harpy tomb reliefs', Limestone sarcophagus, Xanthus, c. 470-460BC, London, British Museum 1848.10-20.1 (fig. 29) Note small figure huddling under the mythical creature to the right of the North side.

¹²⁴ Illissos stele, Athens, National Archaeological Museum of Athens 869, c. 340BC, (fig. 31).

clutches. The representation of the bird-women creatures hovering off the ground with the small figures may have to do with the idea that they are sculpted on a tomb and may be a visual indication of the souls of the dead being transported from the tomb to the afterlife. The small figures themselves lack any defining features to distinguish one from the other in comparison to the larger figures on all four sides of the tomb. The images provide a pictorial representation of what will happen to the deceased ruler while also having reliefs depicting him receiving gifts at the same time.¹²⁵

A gable from a tomb found in Xanthus in 1848 depicting a headless bird dressed in a chiton standing on top of a pillar may shed some light on whether the creature depicted on the Harpy tomb is indeed a harpy as initially suggested (fig.32).¹²⁶ Unfortunately the piece has been damaged in several places with features of the figures disfigured or missing altogether including each of their heads. Two bearded males are seated either side of the central pillar as they lean on canes and appear to converse with each other, making hand gestures, appearing in similar style to the men depicted on the harpy tomb reliefs. On top of the central fluted ionic column stands a siren, identified by its large outstretched wings and body of a bird along with its extended arms in front of the wings. The siren is also depicted with hair falling onto her shoulders and wearing a chiton with loose hanging sleeves. The siren's head is now regrettably missing but I believe it is safe to assume, due to its added long hair, arms and dress that it would have been that of a female possibly like the figures portrayed on the Harpy tomb.¹²⁷

Maxime Collignon and Ernst Buschor in the early 1900s have both claimed that this portrayal is representative of sirens featured as funerary stelae decoration and have even gone further to say that 'ces êtres fabuleux sont des Sirènes et non des Harpyies.'¹²⁸ Although certain aspects of their opinions are now somewhat outdated it is fair to imply that there is a connection between the harpy tomb depictions and this piece. It appears to be impossible to definitively identify the figure on the harpy tomb as a siren or a harpy however due to the gable piece being found in relation to a tomb it appears that there was a certain awareness of the siren in the area (albeit it may have been exclusively due to Greek sculptors) with associations with a funerary context.

¹²⁵ This concept is especially relevant if members of the dynast's family were buried in or near the sarcophagus.

¹²⁶ Gable from a tomb in Xanthus (found built into the acropolis wall), c480BC, British Museum 1848, 1020.23. (Information on provenance was found on the British Museum website.)

¹²⁷ Early scholars like Buschor (1944:57) and Collignon (1911:79) have identified this creature as a siren while also disagreeing with the suggestion that a harpy is depicted on the Harpy tomb. To my knowledge this particular identification has not been challenged and I tend to agree with it myself.

¹²⁸ Collignon 1911: 79 'that these fabulous creatures are Sirens and not Harpies.'

Due to the lack of solid evidence to successfully prove that harpies have been represented on this tomb it is fair to assume that they are not depicted on the so-called 'Harpy Tomb' and the title of the sarcophagus is therefore a misnomer. On the other hand I think it is difficult to fully determine if the bird-woman hybrids are actually sirens instead, despite being a more convincing suggestion. The hybrid creature's portrayal on the sarcophagus does not correlate with any mythology associated with sirens as of yet making it hard to distinguish them because of this. We are not always aware of all the mythical narratives connected with particular figures however and it may be up to the discretion of the artist to adapt the mythological figure according to the requirements of the piece. If the hybrids depicted are sirens then they may be used in a similar way to when they are featured on funerary stelae in Greece; their wings and mythical status providing a connection to their underworld and the souls that inhabit it.¹²⁹

Although there is a desire to firmly identify the hybrid creature depicted on the 'Harpy Tomb' it may be more important to disprove the original suggestion posed by Charles Fellows that the bird-women are harpies, since they demonstrate no clearly defining attributes nor do they appear to represent the myth of Pandareus' daughters. It may appear that the only option is then to identify the figures as sirens being the only other mythical Greek creature possessing the features of both bird and woman. However that might not be the best conclusion for this particular piece either.¹³⁰ Instead of being one or the other the hybrid presented on the tomb may instead embody the process of death and dying, similar to the role of the *Ba* bird and the later representation of the siren in classical cemeteries. Due to the placement of the tomb in Xanthus the artist may have been taking examples from the Greek iconographical corpus and adapting to the needs of the piece, possibly bridging a cultural gap.¹³¹ Instead of defining the creature portrayed on the tomb one could instead take away the attributes that are seen as useful and important for a bird-woman figure, predominantly their featured wings and status as a mythological creature placing them on the divide between the mortal and immortal realm.

¹²⁹ These ideas will be discussed later in Chapter 3.

¹³⁰ Tritsch 1942: 50 'Both (Orientals and Greeks) could understand its meaning and in a border country like Lycia, this was not merely desirable but perhaps essential.'

¹³¹ Tritsch (1942: 43) believes that the 'Harpy tomb' monument 'clearly bears all the traces of early Greek art and of Archaic Greek workmanship', implying that the sculptor took some liberties when creating the Lycian tomb and introducing certain Greek features to traditional Xanthian images. 'Means to adapt foreign principles to a Greek appearance clothing foreign ideas in a Greek dress.'

2. Sirens in Classical Attic Cemeteries

Attic Funerary Markers and Cemeteries: Transitions and Legislation

In order to understand the use of sirens atop of stelae in Attic cemeteries it is necessary to briefly look at the history and production of stelae preceding and following their appearance. Prior to the use and depictions of sirens on funerary stelae during the Classical Period in Attica, other figures, creatures and images were featured as decoration on grave markers.¹³² During the Archaic period, around 600-530BC, the mythological Greek sphinx is a prevalent feature perched atop of stelae as a capital in the Kerameikos.¹³³ These mythical hybrids are sculpted as winged lions, as demonstrated by other artistic Greek portrayals of the sphinx. Albrecht Wellmer postulates that, 'similar to the sirens, the mythological sphinx imposed an almost impossible challenge while bringing death and misery to humans, which when finally defeated becomes an ornamental artistic feature separate from their representations in a mythical context.'¹³⁴ Originally sitting on a relatively simple cavetto capital on top of Archaic funerary stelae the designs become more elaborate with a 'lyre design' or double-tiered volute form for the mythical sphinx to crouch on top of (fig. 33).¹³⁵

It would appear that the function of the sphinx in particular atop of Archaic Attic funerary stelae was in a protective role over the deceased, similar to a watch dog, 'in order to guard against and punish those who would disturb the dead.'¹³⁶ An inscription on the base of a stele from Thessaly affirms this theory by proclaiming:

'O sphinx, dog of Hades, whom do you ... watch over, sitting [on guard over] the dead.'¹³⁷

Just as sirens are later portrayed on funerary stelae mourning for the dead in various representations, sphinxes are used to fulfil a particular role in relation to the grave and their mythical attributes associated with death.¹³⁸ Portrayals of the sphinx on funerary markers can differ slightly from each representation but a popular way to represent the creature is to have it seated (or

¹³² Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 135.

¹³³ Langridge-Noti 2003: 144.

¹³⁴ Wellmer 2000: 18 On this point it is important to note the female winged lion's identified as sphinxes in artistic depictions may be unrelated to the Oedipus myth, which identifies the creature sending the plague as a 'sphinx'. The association is only made later when a visual representation of the figure is necessary for illustrative purposes. For further information on this idea see Langridge-Noti (2003) and Vollkommer (1991). This idea may also be relevant to the later connection between artistic depictions of the sirens and the original undescribed figures encountered in Book 12 of the *Odyssey*.

¹³⁵ Richter 1961: 2 Attic funerary stelae reconstructions, drawings by L.F. Hall, Richter 1961: 3 (fig. 33).

¹³⁶ Hoffman 1994: 73.

¹³⁷ Inscription from Archaic stele from Thessaly (Beazley, *Classical Review*, LX, 1946, 49f) Richter 1961: 6.

¹³⁸ Langridge-Noti 2003: 146.

raised) on its hind legs and with body lifted up on its front legs with sickle wings curled behind the head.¹³⁹ The head can either look outwards to the side of the stele or more typically be shown turned 90 degrees to gaze at the viewer of the monument (fig. 34.).¹⁴⁰ The pose portrayed is not hostile or predatory in contrast to their Theban predecessor but instead one of a friendly guardian watching over its ward, with an element of warning in case anything should happen to the deceased, standing in for the family as a constant stone guard.¹⁴¹

Similar to stelae of the Classical Period the Archaic funerary markers also feature reliefs of human figures, underneath the crowning sphinx, with portrayals of the deceased they stand over. In contrast the narrow shape of the slab in the 6th century is more restrictive on composition, typically only allowing the profile view of a single standing figure taking up all of the space provided (with some exceptions).¹⁴² In this style during the Archaic period women are never represented on their own, instead there is an emphasis on athletes and warriors as well as elders leaning on staffs and men with their dogs.¹⁴³ An interesting example of how human figures were represented on Archaic stelae can be located in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. It is the most complete grave stelae of its type as well as one of the most impressive Archaic art monuments surviving (fig 35).¹⁴⁴

A crowning sphinx sits on top of an abacus, acting as a plinth in the upper register of the stele as it rests on all fours and turns its head towards the viewer of the monument, standing guard over the figures below. Depicted on the central shaft of the stele are a male youth and a significantly smaller girl, placed underneath his raised left arm in the remaining space. The tall youth holds a pomegranate in his left hand (presumably to provide a visual connection with the underworld where he now resides, as well as recalling the myth of Persephone) and an aryballos hanging from his wrist. The young male has been portrayed as an athlete in top physical condition with the aryballos that would have been utilised after his training; portraying the deceased youth in a favourable light to those who would view the funerary marker.¹⁴⁵ Initial questions about the relationship between the young male and female were solved when an inscription on the base of the marker revealed the answer: 'to the dead Philo and Me [gakles] the father erected (this monument), and together the

¹³⁹ Richter 1961: 6 Many representations of the crowning sphinx depict them with long hair styled into ringlets that hangs by the sides of their head, usually with an added diadem, fillet or crown.

¹⁴⁰ Crowning sphinx, c. 575-560BC, Athens, Kerameikos museum, Richter 1961: 15 (fig. 34).

¹⁴¹ Richter 1961: 6, Ridgway 1977: 156.

¹⁴² Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 86.

¹⁴³ Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 86 Unfortunately, due to the scope of this thesis there is no space to address the lack of women represented in the archaic period, however this theme will be mentioned at a later stage in relation to Classical Attic stelae.

¹⁴⁴ Richter 1961: 27, Attic stele of youth and girl with crowing sphinx, c. 530BC, New York, MMA 11.185 (fig. 35).

¹⁴⁵ Shapiro 1991: 632.

dear mother...'¹⁴⁶ The inscription makes the viewer aware that this funerary monument was dedicated by a mother and father to their deceased children who are also depicted on the stele. The size and splendour of the monument also suggests that it was erected by a wealthy, prominent family who could afford such a display.¹⁴⁷

This particular Archaic stele demonstrates the elaborate design and effort that was evident at the height of the use and production of grave stelae in the 6th century among aristocratic families, including the popular presence of the sphinx as a crowning decorative figure. Sometime around the middle of the 6th century when the 'sphinx stelae' was at its most elaborate it gradually gave way to a much more modest display where the sphinx is replaced by a palmette and volute decoration and the size of the stele is significantly reduced overall (fig. 33.).¹⁴⁸ At the end of the 6th century the general quality and grandeur of the sculptures appears to have declined to then disappear entirely for a time in the early 5th century, around 480BC until their short-lived return around 450-425BC.¹⁴⁹ It is hard to pin point the exact reasons to explain the decline and sudden disappearance of stelae for the short time period, but suggestions tend to lean towards funerary legislation at the time (primarily described by Cicero) primarily regarding the combined burial of the war dead in the Kerameikos and the presence of the peribolos tomb.¹⁵⁰ Most notably, at the beginning of the 6th century BC Solon of Athens passed laws whose principal aim was to 'set a maximum limit on all forms of ostentation that could be practised in connection with the interment of one's dead kin', which may have affected stelae presentation.¹⁵¹

Kouroi and relief sculptures of the high Archaic period in the 6th century BC are typically portrayed as, 'youthful, powerful, idealised, and heroically nude' while being associated with a prowess in athletics or in battle as a brave warrior, heavily reflective of the ethos associated with the heroes of Homeric epic poetry.¹⁵² Aristocratic families whose sons died in battle would set up elaborate and expensive monuments in family grave plots, not only commemorating their brave efforts as individuals but also associating them with their family specifically and the wealth and power they

¹⁴⁶ Richter 1961: 27.

¹⁴⁷ Shapiro 1991: 644.

¹⁴⁸ Richter 1961: 2, Attic funerary stelae reconstructions, drawings by L.F. Hall, Richter 1961:3 (fig. 33)

¹⁴⁹ Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 89, Stears 2000:43, 49. Other scholars have given slightly different dates (from circa 450 to 420 BC) for the reappearance of Attic stelae, however this date (provided by Karen Stears) is generally accepted and sufficient for the purposes of this study.

¹⁵⁰ Stears 2000: 27, Leader 1997: 684, Shapiro 1991: 644.

¹⁵¹ Garland 2001: 22, A series of legislation passed from the 6th century onwards, in relation to funerary practice in Attica, is commented on in Cicero's *Laws* in which restrictions are placed on the ostentatious presentation of funerary monuments and conduct in this setting, particularly for women. Possibly due to legislative restrictions during the first half of the 5th century there is a distinct lack of decorative crowning elements atop of funerary structures along the Sacred Way, where much more modest markers are presented (Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 122).

¹⁵² Shapiro 1991: 644.

demonstrate through the erection of fine funerary monuments.¹⁵³ The ideals and preferences associated with the funerary representation of the young men who died in battle began to change during the 5th century in between the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars.¹⁵⁴ In 490BC, the 192 Athenians who fell at the battle of Marathon were buried in a communal grave at the site where they died rather than the usual custom of burying the Athenian war dead in a state burial. Instead of having a large monument raised by the families of each individual the communal burial of the fallen heroes added an element of anonymity and placed the responsibility of burial on the state. While burial in a common grave appears to deprive families of commemorating their son individually those that died in battle and buried in this way were elevated to the status of heroes and communal tombs became a focal point of veneration.¹⁵⁵ By the early 460s an area between the Dipylon Gate and the Academy in the Kerameikos was set up as a public burial ground for all those who had fallen in battle and were commemorated with an annual ceremony and the funerary speech (*epitaphios logos*) (Thuc. 4.34-35).¹⁵⁶ Ten individual stelae (one designated to each tribe) on a common base were also set up in the area displaying the names of the war dead from the past year from around 465/4BC.¹⁵⁷ The introduction of the communal war dead burial created a new dynamic for the use and presentation of funerary markers (specifically focussing on the changes found predominantly in the Kerameikos) due to the shift from a relatively private, familial event to a more public, state affair.¹⁵⁸

The early presence and practice of familial burial plots and tomb groupings can be found during the Geometric and Archaic periods in the shape of round and rectangular mounds. During the last quarter of the 5th century to the late 4th century BC, however the more elaborate peribolos tomb comes into use, throughout the Street of Tombs in the Kerameikos.¹⁵⁹ A high wall facing out towards the street served as a retaining wall for the earth piled up behind it, allowing a closed area for the graves, with other low rubble walls bordering the sides.¹⁶⁰ This also provided space for the family to gather for funerals and celebrations of tomb cult like the *Genesia* (communal annual festival of the dead).¹⁶¹ The burial area found behind the front wall is hidden from the viewer on the main street, instead the passer-by is able to see the funeral markers that are orientated towards the street. Displaying inscriptions and reliefs of the people that are buried in that area, emphasising the family line. While the tombstones, stelae and monuments can present elaborate decoration and sculpture

¹⁵³ *Ibid*

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁵⁵ Shapiro 1991: 645.

¹⁵⁶ Garland 2001: 90, Loraux 1986 1-2.

¹⁵⁷ Garland 2001: 90.

¹⁵⁸ Leader 1997: 683-699.

¹⁵⁹ Garland 2001: 106.

¹⁶⁰ Closterman 2007: 633.

¹⁶¹ Garland 2001: 121.

the backs of the monuments are typically left roughly cut since they are only visible from the interior of the tomb area.¹⁶² The outward facing façade was the most visible place for family presentation and included a wide range of sculptures and monuments to represent the people that were buried there and the social values they wanted to demonstrate. An interesting change in the depiction of figures on Classical Attic stelae is the introduction of multiple figures to commemorate family members as well the much more frequent representation of females.¹⁶³ The aim of Classical Athenian funerary iconography (particularly in association with peribolos tombs) was to display the ideal roles of the family in context of the *polis* and the virtues held in esteem by the state.¹⁶⁴

Although it would appear that stelae were utilised on peribolos tombs to portray figures and list names of the deceased associated with those buried in the area they did not always fully reflect the burial activity in the tomb completely.¹⁶⁵ Peribolos tombs were used continually for burial and the sculpted figure of one person on a stele might come to represent a person who was buried later which is also because a new marker was not set up with every funeral that took place.¹⁶⁶ Multiple figures can then be portrayed on one stele and blank rosette stelae can be used to list several names of the male members of the family with additions throughout the peribolos tomb's use. This is not to say that all the deceased are represented in this way and it would appear that this is not an accurate record of those interred in the area of the tomb.¹⁶⁷

The use and rise in the popularity of the peribolos tombs in the 5th century BC may be due to the public burial and emphasis placed on the war dead at this time period. A family's ability to bury and individually commemorate their son who has fallen in battle is taken away and instead a state ideal of publicly heroising and burying the war dead takes its place. In an attempt to override and maintain the commemoration of individuals by their family members, importance is placed on elaborate monuments and tombs in relation to the family and their name. The family members are able to remember and honour the deceased as well as having their monuments publically viewed by passers-by, emphasising the ideals held by the state.¹⁶⁸ This is particularly evident in the peribolos tomb of Dexileos of Thorikos who is physically buried among his fallen comrades in the *demosion*

¹⁶² Closterman 2007: 633.

¹⁶³ Closterman 2006: 50.

¹⁶⁴ Closterman 2007: 635, This included the importance placed on having an Athenian born mother in accordance with the Perikleian citizenship laws of 451/450BC leading to the increased portrayals of women on funerary stelae in the Classical Period. (Stears 1995: 113, Closterman 2006: 50) As well as the emphasised portrayal of the cohesive and respectable family with women depicted in relation to their domestic role and men as the head of the house and valued Athenian citizen.

¹⁶⁵ Closterman 2007: 636.

¹⁶⁶ Closterman 2007: 636-638, Closterman 2006: 58.

¹⁶⁷ Closterman 2007: 368.

¹⁶⁸ Closterman 2007: 635.

sema but is further commemorated in an elaborate family peribolos tomb near the Sacred Gate in the Kerameikos.

Classical Relief Stelae featuring Sirens

During the Classical Period (479-323BCE) with the increase of elaborate decoration and images depicted on funerary stelae the siren becomes a common figure of the *anthemia* used.¹⁶⁹ They are portrayed in a posture expressing grief in the architrave above relief figures associated with the deceased and their family.¹⁷⁰ Additional figures can also be depicted alongside the sirens reliefs such as mourning women, vases, sphinxes and acanthus leaves.¹⁷¹ Variation in the figures portrayed with the deceased on the upper register of funerary stelae roof *sima* do not seem to be affected or related to the human figures represented in the lower register of the stelae, rather the focus on representing a familiar grieving figure in an identifiable pose appears to be the most important element regardless of the deceased depicted.

There are two distinct representations of funerary sirens shown on or atop of stelae; the mourner, typically portrayed as if tearing out her hair with one hand and beating her bare breasts with the other similar to the actions of a grieving woman. The musicians on the other hand are either playing the lyre or *aulos* (double pipes), similar to their depictions on vases.¹⁷² Both types of funerary sirens can be observed in relief on stelae, accompanied by other mourning women or as independent statues perched atop of columns.

Stelae that are framed by *antae* between which the figures are carved and feature relief sirens in the crowning finial are popular in the 4th century, commonly called *naiskoi* stelae (fig. 36.).¹⁷³ On these broader relief monuments it is possible to include several more figures to represent the deceased with servants and their family members in various groupings, including seated figures creating space for others.¹⁷⁴ The architectural frame provided by this type of stelae provided protection of the reliefs, more space for the figures to be depicted in and over time a more elaborate background or area to portray crowning *anthemia* on, including sirens among other figures.¹⁷⁵ In contrast to the earlier Archaic stelae more figures are able to be depicted on the funerary monuments in relation to a grave site particularly for a *peribolos* tomb with multiple burials. It also becomes easier to portray

¹⁶⁹ Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 140 While it is difficult to safely identify the human figures of various numbers, sexes and ages depicted on stelae I will address this issue at a later stage and instead focus on how the siren has been portrayed in relief specifically on these particular stelae.

¹⁷⁰ Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 140.

¹⁷¹ Clairmont 1993: 40.

¹⁷² Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 135.

¹⁷³ Clairmont 1993: 38, marble *naiskos* stele, found near the Dipylon Gate, Kerameikos, third quarter of the 4th century BC, Athens, National Archaeological Museum 737 (fig. 36).

¹⁷⁴ Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 131.

¹⁷⁵ Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 132, Greenburg 2001: 21.

elaborate images associated with the funerary setting in the roof sima, separated from the sculpture below.

The siren figure sculpted in relief is typically depicted as a fully nude female, most frequently facing frontally towards the viewer or slightly to the side, with large wings stretched out and tail spread behind the legs of a bird's body (fig. 37.).¹⁷⁶ The amount of detail dedicated to the hybrid can vary from one depiction to the next and is usually focussed on the addition of feathers and a more elaborate grief-stricken expression (fig. 38.).¹⁷⁷ In this setting the siren is typically shown with one arm bent and raised to her head while the other is raised to the chest as if tearing out her hair and beating her breast in a painful gesture of extreme grief and mourning, similar to images of women mourning on vases (fig. 48).¹⁷⁸ Which hand is used for each gesture can change with depictions of the siren and appears arbitrary depending on the artist's choice.

In comparison to the predominantly bird bodied portrayals of sirens on earlier vase paintings, the hybrids featured in relief on the upper register of stelae are depicted with an almost complete female body, with added wings, tail and bird's feet. The extension of the female torso in contrast to the sirens bird features may be an attempt to further humanise the figure in their mourning pose while still retaining the relevant attributes to distinguish them as the mythological sirens. The artist can utilise the arms and hands of the figure to successfully portray an expression of mourning and draw attention to it resembling images of mourning women.¹⁷⁹ Sirens represented in this way in particular can also be seen from sirens depicted in the round where they are portrayed with the lower body of a bird from the hips down and the upper body of a young maiden. The idea that sirens can use their hands to demonstrate a gesture of grief also makes them a better candidate to portray a recognisable expression rather than the Archaic sphinxes that were also previously used in a funerary context.

Despite apparent changes in preference and style from the Archaic to the late Classical Period sphinxes still retain a place on funerary stelae, predominantly used as subsidiary decoration to the centrally placed siren figures.¹⁸⁰ The mythical creature can be seen used in this way on a stele of Sostratos where a pair of sphinxes facing 90° away from the viewer flanks the central siren (fig.

¹⁷⁶ Stele finial, Athens, National Archaeological Museum 1146, Clairmont 0.776 (fig. 37).

¹⁷⁷ Marble grave stele, Attic, c. 370BC, Athens, National Archaeological Museum 896 (fig. 38).

¹⁷⁸ Prothesis scene, Attic Archaic black-figure terracotta funerary plaque, c. 520-510BC, New York, MMA 54.11.5 (fig. 48) Clairmont 1993: 447.

¹⁷⁹ Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 134.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid*

39).¹⁸¹ On one funerary stela featuring a nude male figure shown with his dog the crowning relief decorations are of two profile sphinxes facing outwards, positioned either side of an elaborate acanthus calyx, appearing to continue to project their protective nature while not replacing the predominant central image of the siren in this period (fig. 40.).¹⁸² Highly stylised they wear crowns and have their wings curled above them resting on their hind legs, in contrast to the nude sirens portrayed. On one other stele (fig. 41.) the siren is not only paired with an outward facing sphinx but a loutrophoros can also be seen, completely linking all three figures together as well as placing them firmly in a funerary context.¹⁸³

As it is now clear to see the popularity and variety of relief sirens depicted in the upper register of stela in Classical Attic cemeteries it is necessary to attempt to understand when and who they were used for. Unfortunately significant issues appear in such an attempt, as it is making it increasingly difficult to associate the grave and deceased with their own tombstone or monument.¹⁸⁴ Apart from the siren firmly linked to the Dexileos peribolos tomb, due to the location of discovery, the freestanding siren stela lack any information about the deceased they once stood over; therefore making it difficult to find common features between who they were erected for.¹⁸⁵ In relation to the freestanding sirens it is possible to identify the deceased more often when featured alongside relief sirens, especially when a single figure is depicted beneath the siren and an inscription is added with a description identifying the deceased. It could be a possibility that relief sirens were used for a person or grouping of a certain sex and age, however having looked at a series of stela from the Classical Period that include a siren this does not seem to be the case (figs. 42-46)¹⁸⁶. The crowning finial featuring sirens can differ from one stele to the next (while retaining their typical posture of mourning with hands raised to chest and head) seemingly independent of the figures depicted below and is instead up to the artist or possibly the family's discretion. The use of the relief siren in

¹⁸¹ Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 134, Attic marble grave stele of Sostratos, c. 375-360BC, MMA NY 08.258.41, (fig. 39) During the Classical Period, when sirens appear to be the preferred choice as the crowning finial of stela sphinxes can still be portrayed without sirens however not to the same scale that they were used in the Archaic period.

¹⁸² Stele depicting male and dog, Athens, National Archaeological Museum 2578, Clairmont 1.124 (fig. 40).

¹⁸³ Stele of woman and young girl and crowning finial with loutrophoros-hydria, siren and sphinx, Berlin, Pergamon Museum 1492, Clairmont 1.862 (fig. 41).

¹⁸⁴ Closterman 2006: 58, Stela available in the Kerameikos were perfect building materials unfortunately and had been used in the hasty reconstruction of the Themistoklean wall in 338BC, making it increasingly difficult to match the deceased with their tombstones. Garland 2001: 7, Greenburg 2001: 2.

¹⁸⁵ Grossman 2001: 1-2, Closterman 2006: 58.

¹⁸⁶ Siren stele, man with dog, Piraeus Museum 1471, Clairmont 0.841 (fig. 42).

Siren stele with woman and girl, Athens, National Archaeological Museum 4006, Clairmont 1.797 (fig. 43).

Siren stele with man and dog, Athens, National Archaeological Museum 2545, Clairmont 1.210a (fig. 44).

Naiskos stele with seated woman and standing man and woman, Athens, National Archaeological Museum 3657, Clairmont 3.932 9 (fig. 45).

Stele with double sirens, seated woman and slave, Berlin, Pergamon Museum 755, Clairmont 2.208 (fig. 46).

the upper register of classical stelae is therefore not reliant on the figures portrayed below and appears to be a popular figure of the time utilised by all to express a sense of mourning.

Due to the increased popularity and elaborate detail presented with funerary stelae of the Classical Period it has been suggested that the monuments were created 'ready to order' to be bought from sculptors and individual features added later.¹⁸⁷ Despite uniformity in the general presentation of most funerary stelae, due to the similar depiction of the figures in varying scenes in general it is possible to include individualising features provided by the family of the deceased with purchase; therefore retaining an amount of individuality and specificity from one grave marker to the next despite similarities.¹⁸⁸ John Boardman even suggests that due to the regularity of compositions and same stock figures (frequent depictions of a seated figure among standing for example) depicted in only slightly different arrangements and variations in personal features may imply that clients could choose from a 'pattern book' for their particular requirements.¹⁸⁹ It would seem that this could be the case with the frequent portrayals of relief sirens in the same posture in the roof sima above human figures on the main shaft of the stelae but is difficult to prove. When depicted in relief sirens are always shown with typical bird-women features including large wings as well as with one hand raised to her head and the other to her breast in an intense display of lamentation. Despite slight variations to this display between funerary stelae the use of sirens in this particular setting is a common feature during the Classical Period, possibly signifying it as a popular trend of the time. The idea that funerary monument sculptors included sirens in the upper register of the stelae as a possible add on or established design available to order is highly possible, due to the similarities in portrayal as well as the frequency with which they are sculpted in the 4th century. This may not be the case for freestanding siren sculptures that were probably created specifically for the client based on the figure's popularity in this setting at the time, due to the variety of their portrayals and rarity of the sculptures found today.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ Stears 1995: 119.

¹⁸⁸ Grossman 2001: 3.

¹⁸⁹ Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 137.

¹⁹⁰ Unfortunately this idea is relatively difficult to prove convincingly at this point due to the lack of evidence currently available for these sculptures.

Mourning Women

Alongside the frequently depicted reliefs of a central grieving siren figure atop of many funerary stelae it is possible to see accompanying portrayals of mourning women (fig. 49 & 50).¹⁹¹ As an interesting addition to an already mourning siren, clothed women are sculpted in relief as mirror images of each other in the throes of grief, kneeling on the ground provided by the roof sima.¹⁹² The women are shown in the same fashion as the siren with one hand raised to the head as if tearing out their hair and the other beating against their breast.¹⁹³ Women shown expressing grief in such a way can be seen on vases portraying some aspect of a funeral, most commonly the *prosthesis* scene (laying out of the body) (fig. 47 & 48) or the *ekphora* (conveyance to the place of internment).¹⁹⁴ Statues of individual women mourning sculpted in varying positions can also be located in cemeteries, sometimes crouching or sitting with their head in their hands, possibly demonstrating the need or preference to emphasise sadness in a funerary setting (fig. 51).¹⁹⁵ Despite slight changes from one portrayal of women mourning to the next it is obvious that an atmosphere of grief is presented to the viewer of the image, whether this is a necessary feature of a cemetery or simply individual preference.

For the ancient Greeks women have an important and primary role in the funerary process of handling the dead as well as mourning and expressing grief.¹⁹⁶ Women are typically responsible for washing and preparing the body and are portrayed in art as taking their place behind the head of the deceased; arranging pillows (while men will stand at the feet) and grasping the shoulders, as seen on vases depicting funerary scenes.¹⁹⁷ Along with the preparation of the deceased's body women also hold the role of publicly expressing grief for the loved one who has passed away, which could take the form of hand gestures raised to the hair and chest and crying or loud singing as dirges. *Threnoi* (dirges) are funeral songs sung by relatives or close friends for the deceased in a funerary context. They could be formal prepared songs or informal improvised laments performed by people close to the deceased with leaders and choruses of women, or in some cases professional mourners could be

¹⁹¹ Crowning stele finial, Sirens and mourning women, Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek 205 IN1527, Clairmont 1.393 (fig. 50.).

Crowning stele finial, Sirens and mourning women, Piraeus Museum 228, Clairmont 3.397 (fig. 49).

¹⁹² Boardman 1995: 116, Clairmont 1993: 40.

¹⁹³ Ridgeway 1987: 405.

¹⁹⁴ Attic black figure pinax, Sappho painter, Athens, c. 500BC, Paris, Louvre Museum MNB 905 (fig. 47).

Attic black-figure terracotta funerary plaque, c520-510BC, New York MMA 54.11.5 (fig. 48) Men are depicted at the foot of the deceased with hands raised in a mourning gesture.

¹⁹⁵ Boardman 1995: 155 Mourning woman statue, Attica, Berlin Staatl Museum, 499 (fig. 51).

¹⁹⁶ Lewis 2002: 23.

¹⁹⁷ Garland 2001: 25 & 28, Shapiro 1991: 634.

hired to act out the grief.¹⁹⁸ Along with the role women have in the preparation of the body and its journey to the grave, once the funeral had finished they then had the task of setting up a banquet at home in honour of the deceased.¹⁹⁹ The reason why women have such an important role in the entire funeral process appears to relate to a woman's already existing connection to blood pollution in their life through childbirth and that associated with death.²⁰⁰ The dual appearance of the sirens with bird-women features enables them to share similarities with established depictions of mourning women and artistic tropes.

The close association between women, the funeral and mourning makes them an appropriate image to be represented in the cemetery and funerary setting through artistic depictions. John Boardman suggests that, 'women seem to be predominant on the [stelae] reliefs as though their sense of loss and the grief felt by others at their death, seem to deserve special treatment.'²⁰¹ The use of women in this setting is particularly appropriate because of their role in association with funerary rites and ritual as well as the sympathy and respect induced by viewing a female in a constant state of grief for the deceased.²⁰² The portrayal of women on funerary monuments in general gains popularity in the Classical Period, compared to Archaic stelae, where they can be seen housed with other figures in *naiskos* stelae or in representations of intense grief.²⁰³ Such an increase in portrayals of women in the Classical Period funerary setting, especially in the act of mourning for the deceased on stelae, may be an externalised representation to retain the element of grief now restricted by contemporary legislation concerning open lamentation. Therefore the atmosphere of mourning and grief towards the dead, appropriate for cemeteries and funeral rites, remains present through artistic depictions on monuments when the physical action cannot take place in the same way. The portrayal of the female hybrid may serve a similar purpose by providing a constant mourner for the deceased in the place of the family and sometimes along with mortal female mourners.

¹⁹⁸ Garland 2001: 30.

¹⁹⁹ Garland 2001: 30.

²⁰⁰ Lewis 2002: 23, Shapiro 1991: 635.

²⁰¹ Boardman 1995: 116.

²⁰² Stears 1995: 116.

²⁰³ Boardman 1995: 116, Stears 2000: 4.

Freestanding Classical Siren Stelae

In contrast to the many pieces of funerary stelae featuring sirens sculpted in relief from the Classical Period in Attica, there is significantly less evidence for freestanding sirens on top of columns that were used in a similar funerary context. For the purposes of this thesis I will be looking at four freestanding sirens in particular as they are the most intact, complete pieces and provide a good general overview of a range of representations as well as their possible use and function.

One of the more complete siren sculptures originally located in the Kerameikos near the Sacred Gate from around 370BC is believed to have formed one of a pair on either side of the curved parapet supporting the peribolos monument of Dexileos (fig. 52).²⁰⁴ Dexileos himself is depicted in relief on his own stele which is placed in his own corner of the peribolos tomb almost as a hero-shrine surrounded by other stelae and sculptures, including sirens as well as marble sphinxes (fig. 53).²⁰⁵ In comparison to the sirens depicted in relief atop of funerary stelae these particular sirens would have perched atop of a thin, high stele were used more as decoration to accompany and enhance the large peribolos tomb rather than being a marker for a specific grave.²⁰⁶ Rather than being portrayed with the mourning gestures typically associated with sirens in relief on stelae, the siren found near the Sacred Gate is portrayed with a tortoise-shell lyre, (and probably a plectrum that has disappeared was held in her hand) as if about to play a dirge for the deceased Dexileos and his family. This particular portrayal also recalls the sirens' original literary association with song and music and similar depictions in art.²⁰⁷

This particular siren is depicted as a beautiful maiden from head to torso with tresses hanging down on either side of her face and the rest of the wavy hair collected into a bun at the back. While having the breasts, arms and head of a young maiden the bird features of a siren are also evident with their wings, short legs and webbed feet. The mythical hybrid gazes on with downcast expression as she furrows her brow as if in mourning concern and respect for the deceased she commemorates.

The well-established association between the Dexileos peribolos tomb and the siren statue found near its remains provides valuable evidence for the possible reasons for use of freestanding sirens

²⁰⁴ Closterman 2006: 65, Marble stele of Dexileos of Thorikos, Kerameikos, Athens, c. 394BC, Athens, Kerameikos Museum 1130 (fig. 53, 53a).

Attic siren statue, c.370BC, National Archaeological Museum of Athens 774, Kaltsas 2002: 181 (fig. 52).

²⁰⁵ Garland 1982: 136 Attic siren statue, c.370BC, National Archaeological Museum of Athens 774, Kaltsas 2002: 181 (fig. 52).

²⁰⁶ Garland 1982: 128.

²⁰⁷ Kaltsas 2002: 193 (see figs. 1.10-1.11).

atop of stelae. As stated previously, Dexileos is not buried in this tomb himself with the three generations of his family that erected this monument; although his monument is made a feature of the precinct, as a sculpture with an image of him gloriously astride a horse rearing up over the enemy.²⁰⁸ The precinct held five other funerary monuments which commemorated Dexileos's family along with his own central stele; two rosette stelae, an inscribed trapeza, an uninscribed trapeza and a kioniskos, most of these now damaged or lost.²⁰⁹ Along with the inscribed and uninscribed sculptures that featured on the tomb the siren statue is believed to have been one of a pair that stood on top of tall stelae as decoration. The use of the siren stelae appears to have fulfilled a function slightly different to the other monuments erected in the area that listed the names of the deceased buried there as well as commemorating Dexileos. The matching sirens may have provided an interesting sculptural pairing in an effort to add elaborate decorative features to the tomb as well as invoke a sense of loss for the viewers that passed by the grave. Dexileos's peribolos tomb is rather atypical in places, such as the architectural design of the monument, the triangular layout, the corner facing placement and the elevated erection of the central stele, all in an effort to attract attention and focus to this tomb in particular.²¹⁰ The image of the downward gazing siren pair plucking out a funeral dirge for the deceased creates an atmosphere of grieving appropriate for a grave site, instilling the idea that these people specifically should be mourned and therefore remembered correctly.

A later example of a free-standing siren from around 330-320 BC is very similar to the one found at the Dexileos monument and was first located near the Dipylon Gate in the Kerameikos (fig. 54).²¹¹ Once again we see the siren depicted as a young maiden with nude upper body, beautiful face and wavy tresses plaited behind her head. Similar to the Dexileos sirens this siren is portrayed as a musician with tortoise shell lyre under one arm and plectrum poised in the other hand. Unfortunately the wings on her back have been broken off, but it is still possible to see where they would have sat near the sides of the neck. This siren possesses the same short legs and webbed feet as the previous statue along with added details, such as relief feathers which emphasise the bird features of the mythical hybrid creatures in contrast to her human half.²¹²

Another free standing siren statue (from around 370BC) located in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston was originally found from Mount Pentelikon near Athens instead of the Kerameikos

²⁰⁸ Closterman 2006: 65-66.

²⁰⁹ Closterman 2006: 66.

²¹⁰ Closterman 2006: 67.

²¹¹ Attic siren statue, c. 330-320BC, National Archaeological Museum of Athens 775, Kaltsas 2002: 181 (fig. 54).

²¹² The human females features of this siren have also been extended down to the knees including genitalia, in comparison to the Dexileos siren.

cemetery but was also used as a funerary stele (fig. 55).²¹³ Although less intact than the previous two statues it is still easy to see the important features represented and emphasised with this particular siren. In contrast to the others detailed above this siren is portrayed in a posture of extreme grief typically demonstrated in relief on funerary stelae as one hand covers her breast and the other (now mostly destroyed) is raised to the side of her head. The expression of mourning portrayed through the siren's hand gestures is emphasised even more by the siren's face which appears to be contorted in grief with furrowed brows and puckered lips. Unfortunately due to deterioration and destruction over time it is possible to misinterpret the statue as a mourning maiden, however with a closer look there are the remains of the distinguishing features that make it a siren. The legs have been cut off at the knee with slight chisel marks on the thighs suggesting feathers and would have gone further down to form a transition to the bird legs, starting with slightly larger thighs at the waist, as demonstrated by the other siren statues and reliefs. At the back of the statue are the remains of a set of wings which had been repaired contemporarily with iron dowels.²¹⁴ Although there may be initial hesitation to identify this statue as a siren the distinguishing features of female and bird are still present. The similar posture and expression of violent grief typical in depictions of sirens in this context are also present, emphasising the loss felt by the family and friends of the deceased who erected the monument by providing a constant mourner at the grave site.

One final example of a free-standing siren sculpture from around 330BC has been found once again in the Kerameikos in Athens where it would have stood on top of a funerary monument (fig. 56).²¹⁵ A lot of this statue has been restored to provide the more complete piece that is found in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens today, including the feet, tip of the right wing and almost all of the left.²¹⁶ As with the previous statue the facial expression of this siren is contorted in misery and grief with furrowed brows, upwards gaze and pursed lips and although the arms are now missing it is evident from the presence of the left hand pressed to her head that she would have been in the act of tearing her long wavy hair in lamentation. As with the other statues sculpted in the round this siren has the upper body, (arms) and face of a beautiful young maiden while also having the distinctive features of a bird characterising her as the mythical hybrid. The restored wings of the creature fan out on each side of the body originating in the back and once again the bottom of the waist spreads out into wide, squat legs ending in webbed feet with a division at the knees. As with the mourning siren previously mentioned and those depicted in relief on funerary stelae these

²¹³ Attic marble statue, c. 370BC, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 03.757 (fig. 55).

²¹⁴ www.mfa.org/collections/object/weeping.siren-151075

²¹⁵ Attic marble siren statue, c. 330BC, National Archaeological Museum of Athens 2583, Kaltsas 2002: 195 (fig. 56).

²¹⁶ Kaltsas 2002: 195.

mythical creatures appear to add a sense of loss to the monument or grave site they are associated with.

An Attic white ground lekythos from around the late Archaic period demonstrates the portrayal of sirens on top of columns to represent a funerary stele (fig. 57.).²¹⁷ Two older men depicted in a similar fashion can be seen with their dogs on either side of a large siren accompanied by an equally large lyre standing on a relatively short Doric column. The fact that the men are paired with dogs and one leans on a cane indicate that the men are in an outside setting, possibly travelling somewhere, which could place this image in a cemetery and make the siren on top of a pillar a representation of a grave stele. Such a depiction would correlate with the idea of a passer by walking through a cemetery and gazing at the siren sculpture that plays a song for the dead.

Due to the evolution of the siren character over time, sirens depicted on stelae in classical Attic cemeteries, either in relief or freestanding have changed significantly from their Odyssean predecessors. No longer are the bird-women so closely associated with having a dangerous nature or causing death to passing sailors. Established features present in the sirens' original mythological context, seen on stelae, can remain embedded in the sirens' character like their beautiful, singing voices, charming nature and association with death without any connection to the dangerous or malevolent side of the Odyssean figures. Certain defining features of the mythical siren makes the figure a suitable candidate for a funerary setting, as will be discussed later, which artists can choose to emphasise in this particular context. The beautiful singing voice of the sirens that once lured sailors to their deaths can now be transformed to the creatures who forever sing a funeral dirge to the deceased in a benevolent way, just as the sphinx is adopted from her mythology to guard the deceased. Artistic depictions of the siren playing an instrument in her mythological context have been adapted for the freestanding sculptures to effectively communicate the idea that they are performing for the deceased and visitors. Defining features of the siren found in early art and literature in association with their mythology has evolved and is emphasised by artists in order to make them an appropriate crowning figure on a stele.

²¹⁷ Attic white ground lekythos, 500-480BC, London, British Museum 1842,0728.802 (fig. 57).

Featured here is an intriguing piece primarily due to its dating in the Archaic period rather than Classical like the other physical evidence that exists today. Unfortunately due to the constraints of this thesis it is not possible to go into detail over this particular problem, but it is fair to say that evidence of the use of sirens in such a way is present in other artistic depictions out of the cemeteries.

Literary Evidence of Sirens' association with Mourning and Cemeteries

The ancient evidence available in regard to the presence of sirens on funerary stelae and their connection to death and mourning in the Classical Period is not just limited to artistic depictions on vases and sculptures but can also be found in ancient literary accounts (however rare) such as those found in the works of Euripides and Plutarch.

In Euripides' *Helen* the playwright mentions the mythological sirens' connection with death and mourning, as Helen calls for someone to sing the 'strain of her threnody'.

'How shall I agonize forth my lament? – To what Muse draw nigh?
With tears, with death-dirges, or moanings of misery?
Woe's me, woe's me!
Come, Sea-maids, hitherward winging,
Daughters of Earth's travail throes,
Sirens, to draw me nigh,
That your flutes and your pipes may sigh
In accord with my wailings, and cry
To my sorrows consonant ringing
With tears, lamentations, and woes.
Oh would but Persephone lend
Fellow-mourners from Hades, to blend
Death-dirges with mine! I would send
Thank-offering of weeping and singing
Of chants to her dead, unto those on whom Night's gate close.'

(Eurip. *Hel.* 164-178)

Euripides' *Helen* was produced in 412BCE, quite a few years prior to the siren sculptures and reliefs referenced in this thesis (and when most of the stelae are said to have been used, beginning around 380BC).²¹⁸ It is therefore interesting to see the features of the siren figure that have been emphasised in this passage that are so closely connected to their portrayals on grave monuments, especially as there is no specific mention to this practice in this play.

As demonstrated previously, sirens depicted on stelae can be represented as if in violent mourning or in the process of playing a musical instrument. Both of these attributes are referred to in the

²¹⁸ Lattimore 1969: 262.

passage as they attend to the mourning Helen 'with tears of [their] own to give', recalling their role as marble mourners at the grave. It is also said that they join in this grief with harp, pipes and lyre which are all instruments that are shown to accompany the sirens in various artistic depictions, including on stelae and images on vases. As well as creating a strong connection between the sirens and their apparent ability to aid the grieving the audience is made aware of the creatures' possible association with Persephone and the underworld. In this passage Helen seems to call on the sirens so they can accompany the dirge provided by Persephone with a melody. This link further solidifies their connection to death and the role they fulfil through their song of comfort for the deceased and those who mourn them. As Helen is about to kill herself it would seem as if she was calling up the mythical figures of the underworld to join in her grief for her own death in an almost farcical way.

What is so interesting about the particular siren features mentioned and emphasised in this passage is the stark contrast to the creatures found in the Odyssean episode. Although the connection between sirens and their otherworldly musical prowess in singing (and by extension playing instruments) and reference to them as sea maids remains, gone are the scary connotations of their song and the death which they once caused and which surrounded them. Instead of being the frightening figures that dwell on an island in the middle of the sea luring sailors to their death these sirens appear to comfort the grieving Helen as if their enchanting, paralysing song could now be used to numb the pain of losing someone.

In Book Ten of 'Lives of the Ten Orators', Plutarch offers a late but interesting example of the sirens' link with fame through song in the life of the orator Isocrates, during which he also gives details about his death and burial. Isocrates is said to be buried with 'all his family near Cynosarges' tomb upon which had been erected six tables', as well as a 'column thirty cubits high on which was a siren seven cubits high as a symbol' (Plu. *Mor.* 10. 58) on top of the tomb of Isocrates himself. Both sets of monuments however are said no longer to exist (possibly having been destroyed). Writing in the 1st century BC Plutarch was recording the presence of a siren in a cemetery long after the period when they were created and used as grave markers in Attic cemeteries; however, his observations do provide a valuable ancient account of the sirens presence in this context.

In addition to Isocrates' own large monument there is also mention of 'a tablet nearby with poets and his instructors on it' (Plu. *Mor.* 10. 58). The section relating to Isocrates mentions him and his family having connections with poetry as well as his own profession as an orator. This adds an interesting element to the specific use of sirens as funerary markers as it is thought today that due to their associations with the Muses, song and omniscience, they were appropriate figures to be

depicted on the graves of poets.²¹⁹ Such a theory does make sense and may even be the case for Isocrates himself and his family, although since the other siren figures are found near graves not associated with poets or orators I think it is fair to say that this is not a general rule. Although it may be preferred among people of this profession it does not indicate exclusivity in its use.

In this passage Plutarch also provides information about the other family members who are buried alongside of Isocrates in what would seem to be a family burial plot recalling the peribolos tombs frequently used in Attic cemeteries during the Classical Period. Such a layout (with the exception of quite a few grave monuments and tomb stones missing) is reminiscent of Dexileos' family peribolos tomb, including the presence of a siren sculpture. As stated previously, among other sculptures in the round atop of stelae two sirens were erected in the tomb area, of which only one remains today. Therefore from the physical evidence that is available today in relation to Dexileos' tomb and the one detailed in Plutarch it would seem that crowning sirens on top of stelae was a feature implemented in peribolos tombs in the Classical Period, possibly as decoration along with the depiction of other mythological creatures, such as sphinxes.

²¹⁹ Ridgeway 1977: 160.

Sirens as 'Soul-Birds'

The concept of identifying the siren as a 'soul-bird' has been both challenged and supported by scholars over time, with persisting debate as to the true nature of the siren, specifically found in a funerary setting. Initial thoughts from scholars, around the early 1900s tended to view sirens as 'soul birds' which could be located in the Underworld and were strongly associated with the 'evil' side of death, relating to their characteristics and deadly nature in the *Odyssey*.

In 1902 Georg Weicker produced one of the seminal works relating to the nature of sirens in *Der Seelenvogel in der alten Litteratur und Kunst*, where among other theories he believes that the siren figure can be identified as the souls of humans in origin. He even goes so far as to suggest that they have vampiric proclivities, as evidenced by the emaciated dead that surround them in the *Odyssey* and their ability to charm.²²⁰ The thoughts on sirens posed by Weicker however have since been widely criticised by later scholars in their own works, particularly in regard to his belief that they are the souls of the dead. There has been some discord in the attempt to identify the hybrid sirens as soul birds in their funerary context because, as John Pollard later states, 'there is no evidence whatsoever that the soul was ever regarded as a bird by the Greeks, still less the dead' like the Egyptians.²²¹ Connections have been made between the *Ba* bird of Egyptian mythology that represents a part of the human soul that leaves the body at death, and has similarities in appearance with the siren hybrid, as Weicker himself suggests. This is a hard for some scholars to accept however as there is currently no evidence to create a solid link between the *Ba* of Egypt and the siren of Greece despite their similar hybrid appearance.²²² While Weicker focussed on the 'stark erotisch gefärbte Grundzug des Sirencharakters' and the proposed soul-bird possibility Ernst Buschor, another German scholar, posed that they were otherworld enchantresses.²²³

With his work published in the mid-1900s Buschor posited that 'the sirens which appear in musical contexts are of primary importance and represent most nearly the daemons' essential nature.'²²⁴ Buschor postulates that the mythical status of the sirens enabled them to a sing a song that only the

²²⁰ Pollard 1967: 141, Gresseth 1970: 203 'Weicker thought the Sirens were, both in literature and art, essentially representations of the souls of the dead.' 'Weicker had said that the home of the Sirens was the grave and the Underworld.' (Gresseth 1970: 204)

²²¹ Pollard 1967: 141, Irving 1990: 113 'It has been argued that all stories of transformation into a bird have their origin in a general Greek belief that the souls of the dead took the form of birds, but there is no reason to believe that the Greeks ever did hold such a belief.'

²²² Irving 1990: 114, Pollard 1967: 143 Emil Kunze, another scholar researching the origins of sirens believed that Weicker was wrong when supposing that the Greek Siren derived from Egypt.

²²³ Weicker 1902: 37. ('Highly erotic coloured feature of the siren.')

²²⁴ Pollard 1965: 142.

dead could hear as ‘afterlife Muses’.²²⁵ I agree that this is an appropriate, however rudimentary concept, assimilating the defining features of the sirens established in the *Odyssey*, through their powers over song and strong association with death.

In 1911, Maxime Collignon also identified the sirens at one stage (particularly when featured atop of funerary stelae) as *l’âme du mort* (‘souls of the dead’) who had not fulfilled their destiny and therefore haunted the necropolis becoming a sort of vampire or ‘demon of death’ preying on other souls.²²⁶ I believe this particular theory to be untrue and that by the time the siren is represented in cemeteries they have become sufficiently disconnected with their previous ‘evil’ proclivities present in the *Odyssey*. Rather they are now utilised more for their singing abilities (associated with mourning) and mythical status. They are used in a similar way to how the sphinx is featured prominently on Archaic stelae more as a protection for the deceased rather than a scourge on the Theban people as seen in their most familiar mythology and tragedy. Over time the image of the mythical siren changes and the features appropriate for a funerary context are emphasised and those that are not suitable are either played down or forgotten for that particular representation, which is made primarily possible because of the fluid nature of mythology and such creatures.

There is a general belief that sirens (after the episode found in the *Odyssey*) dwell in the Underworld alongside other mythological beings and hybrids who no longer roam the earth of heroes. In Plato’s much later *Republic*, the Myth of Er outlines Er’s journey to the Underworld shortly after he died as he is able to go through each step and become reanimated to retell what happened. Along the way he comes across the Spindle of Necessity in which several circles rotate around each other in a representation of the cosmos where the sirens are also featured, alongside the Fates.

‘And on the top of each circle stands a siren which is carried round with it and utters a note of constant pitch and the eight notes together make up a single scale.’

(Plat. *Repub.* 617b).

The singing abilities of the sirens are once again persistent and appear to become an identifying feature as they sing in chorus. Once again there is no mention of the dangerous or scary nature of the creatures that occurs in the *Odyssey*, although the fact that they are now found in the Underworld with other mythological beings plays on their mythical nature. In relation to the idea outlined in Plato, theories have been suggested by scholars of the later sirens’ singing powers. Instead of paralysing a sailor out of his senses it has been thought that residing in the underworld

²²⁵ Buschor 1944:12.

²²⁶ Collignon 1911: 79.

the sirens use their voice and song in a way to communicate with the deceased which the living are deaf to. Rather than luring victims to a horrifying death, wasting away on an island the enchanting powers of the sirens are used to seduce the souls to the 'pleasing' afterlife.²²⁷ The song is used to communicate with the soul on another plane and maybe to placate the deceased through their transition as well as to soothe the mourning.

²²⁷ Pollard 1965: 141 'Here on earth a faint echo of that music reaches us and appealing to our souls through the medium of words reminds them of what they experienced in an earlier existence.'

3. Reception and Use of Siren Stelae in Classical Attic Cemeteries

‘Attracting an Audience’

One of the main purposes of creating and displaying a grave marker at an individual or familial burial plot is to identify the deceased laid there to relatives as well as those that pass by through the cemetery. For the purposes of this study there has been a focus on Attic cemeteries, the Kerameikos in particular, being the principal cemetery in Athens, which had become a ‘sculptural showcase for the families’ that erected monuments to their deceased during the 4th century BC.²²⁸ As the roads besides the graves must have been the busiest in and out of the city beautiful and impressive grave markers were not only viewed by the grieving but also by spectators who passed through. The location of cemeteries close to the city gates meant that grave stelae were set up in an area that was accessible to a wide range of people who entered and left the city.²²⁹ The act of placing a marker or monument on a grave is not only used to identify the deceased but it is also a way to invite the passer-by to admire and marvel at the character this person must have possessed in life, with flattering dedications, depictions and beautiful sculpture. In this way the memory of the deceased carries on even after they die, through the strangers who can observe who is buried and what is said about them. Obviously not all those who make their way through the cemetery would stop to look at every grave stone they see, especially if it is only a way of getting from one place to another, therefore the presentation of the marker is an important feature. There are important steps that must be considered when trying to gain the most attention for a tombstone, whether that is to recognise the wealth of the family, the virtue of the deceased or any other such reason.²³⁰

The size of the monument is a primary factor, especially when demonstrating the wealth of the family, through elaborate presentation and catching the eye of the viewer. Large peribolos tombs with multiple stelae and sculptural decoration, displayed like that on the tomb of Agathon and Sosikles are one way to attract the eye of the viewer while also indicating the wealth of the family to erect such a monument, as well as the virtues of the state that they choose to represent.²³¹ A variation in sculptural decoration can also aid in capturing interest, with stone lekythoi and

²²⁸ Boardman 1995: 114.

²²⁹ Leader 1997: 684, Kurtz & Boardman 1971: 92.

²³⁰ Garland 2001: 107 ‘A peribolos, whatever else it might have been, constituted a status symbol, both intended and adapted to display wealth to maximum effect.’

²³¹ Closterman 2007: 634 The importance of the depiction of the family in the 4th century as well as the values of the state will be discussed later on in this section.

loutrophoroi, *naiskos* stelae with relief scenes as well as rosette stelae and sculptures in the round.²³² Those wishing to gain attention to their monument could not just rely on a display of several markers, however; it was also helpful to have the markers demonstrate a high level of artistic skill as well as fine detail, extravagance or beauty that would intrigue the viewer to look closer, like a piece of art in a museum.²³³ An admiration for the visual qualities of a monument prompts the viewer's curiosity to find out more about it, 'especially who dedicated it, why, what it represented and who made it.'²³⁴

Freestanding siren sculptures that appear perched above of tall stelae could also be used to draw attention to the burial plot along with other sculptural decoration. Dexileos' family peribolos presented a range of monuments in order to identify the deceased and family buried there including a pair of lyre playing sirens separating Dexileos' heroon from the rest of the peribolos. Not only is the passer-by attracted to the range of monuments erected, in size and style, with images and names of the deceased depicted but they are also confronted with the striking image of the mythical hybrid. The remaining physical evidence available today of the four intact Attic freestanding siren stelae presents well-sculpted renditions of mourning that when viewed in a funerary setting would not only be aesthetically pleasing but also add a sense of loss to the atmosphere.

The most efficient and likely way for a monument or grave marker to be viewed by someone walking through the cemetery is its proximity to where the most traffic passes by. The closer to the main thoroughfares a cemetery lay, the higher the possibility the grave markers would be seen and admired by many people. This idea is particularly evident in the layout of the Kerameikos with high concentrations of burials, markers and monuments situated on either side of the Sacred Way and the Street of Tombs.²³⁵ Unfortunately due to the popularity of such choice locations, crowding becomes a problem motivating those burying loved ones to make their offerings stand out from those surrounding them, creating more elaborate and beautiful sculptures to draw attention from viewers in this sense.²³⁶ An 'eye catching layout and coordination of the best angles' also aided in capturing the viewer's attention and drawing them in closer to particular sculptures.²³⁷ Variation in typical display also creates interest as it splits itself away from the norm, as demonstrated by Dexileos of Thorikos' mini-precinct which is roughly triangular in plan and unusually positioned

²³² Closterman 2007: 634.

²³³ Day 2010: 29.

²³⁴ Day 2010: 64, Day is predominantly referring to the reception of monuments dedicated in sanctuaries but I think quite a few of his observations are quite apt for the representation and reception of sculpted grave markers as well.

²³⁵ Day 2010: 28.

²³⁶ Day 2010: 28 Greenburg 2001: 1; 'Crowding of burials and mounds has often made the interpretation of the excavated finds difficult.'

²³⁷ Day 2010: 32.

facing toward the northeast in the corner where the two streets meet, instead of its adjacent paths.²³⁸ Located on the corner of the Street of Tombs the tomb appears to face into itself with surrounding walls; however it is eye catching with its raised stele depicting a relief of Dexileos on horseback along with other decorative sculpture alongside documentation of the deceased, including sirens playing instruments.²³⁹ The aim of this tomb is clearly to attract as much attention as possible from spectators who would be made to admire the young man who has fallen in battle and the family which remembers him or are buried there themselves.²⁴⁰

²³⁸ Closterman 2006: 68.

²³⁹ Closterman 2006: 68 'The height of the stele on its structural support, and the unusual angle at which it was positioned, must have made Dexileos's stele eye-catching.'

²⁴⁰ Dexileos is in fact not buried in his familial burial plot instead he is to be found in the communal burial site for fallen soldiers in the *Demosion séma*.

Inscriptions and Epitaphs

Inscriptions and epitaphs are not only utilised on funerary monuments to identify the deceased, or specific generations of a family or specifically acknowledge those who dedicated the sculpture, but also to address the viewer or mourner. As demonstrated on a stele from around 575-550BC, the viewer of the monument is personally addressed as if the deceased or his family are directly communicating with the passerby:

‘Let everyone, whether townsman or stranger from abroad before he pass mourn
Tet(t)ichos, valorous man who died in battle and yielded up his tender youth,
lamenting this, proceed to worthy tasks.’²⁴¹

This particular piece is from the Archaic period, when soldiers are still commemorated privately, and probably dedicated by the family to the young man who died in battle.²⁴² Not only are the positive attributes of the deceased emphasised through the inscription but the viewer who happens to stop and read the text is invited to mourn the loss of such a young man losing his life for the state. Through this action the deceased himself receives recognition for living a pious and honourable life (as related in the inscription) as a form of everlasting consolation for their death.²⁴³ If the viewer does spare a thought of pity for the deceased they are also offered wishes to attain a good thing as thanks.²⁴⁴ Such addresses to passers-by are more common in the Archaic period although they are still present in Classical stelae in cemeteries.²⁴⁵ Inscriptions that directly address the viewer of a monument are slightly confronting as the stranger that reads such an epitaph is communicated with as if talking to the deceased themselves despite, more often than not, having never known them.²⁴⁶

‘O passer-by on the road, having other intentions with your mind, stand and pity,
while you look at the marker of Thraso.’²⁴⁷

A connection is made on a personal level between the viewer, the monument and the deceased which invokes the sense of mourning and one more person remembers the family’s lost loved one in the most favourable way possible. The ‘address to the passers-by covertly shows that the monument-memorial has been erected so that the deceased’s presence may be felt among the

²⁴¹ Inscription on base of Tetichos statue, Epigraphical Museum, Athens c. 575-550BC, fig. 203, Richter 1961: 158.

²⁴² Richter 1961: 158.

²⁴³ Tsagalis 2008: 39.

²⁴⁴ Richter 1961: 158.

²⁴⁵ Leader 1997: 685.

²⁴⁶ Alexiou 2002: 174, Tsagalis 2008: 258.

²⁴⁷ Tsagalis 2008: 46 CEG 28, c. 540-530BC, Attica.

living' and written in such a format that it guides the viewer's reading and influences their opinion of the deceased.²⁴⁸

'As you pass by, take pity.
This is the pillar and marker of a daughter
Who left the flower of her youth,
When she died,
Her father's only daughter.'²⁴⁹

Such a technique of guiding a passer-by's viewing experience of epitaphs could also extend to the use of sirens as a funerary monument in the way that they add atmosphere and emotion to the viewing. As demonstrated previously sirens sculpted in the round can be portrayed as musicians (possibly a representation of singing a dirge) or in an intense expression of mourning. Depictions like this can affect the way someone views a monument as it is a reflection of those that have erected the piece in honour of the deceased and adds a sense of gravitas to the situation. The idea of the epitaph addressing a passer-by and the particular portrayal of the forward-gazing siren invites the viewer to mourn the deceased and subsequently spread the memory of a loved one to one more person.

²⁴⁸ Tsagalis 2008: 153.

²⁴⁹ Tsagalis 2008: 47, CEG 174B, c.475-450BC, Sinope.

The Appropriateness of the Siren figure in a Funerary Setting

The features unique to the siren that lend themselves most favourably to be used in a funerary setting are the combination of feminine and mythical elements as well as their strong associations with bewitching song in mythology, having the ability to enchant the listener into a trance and death.

The fact that the siren is a feminine figure (and distinctly so when depicted throughout Attic cemeteries with upper body and breasts displayed) aids in their successful portrayal as a mourner in relief and free-standing sculpture. As has previously been discussed women were prominent in funeral processions as they loudly lamented the death of their family and friends and have frequently been depicted in Attic vase-painting expressing their grief for the deceased.²⁵⁰ The typical pose of women violently mourning, with arms raised to the chest to beat it and ripping out her hair, is easily recognised in art and sculpture and is able to be effectively communicated by the siren with her human arms and face. Having the siren sculpted in this manner whether it be freestanding or in relief is extremely appropriate for a funerary setting as it not only adds to the atmosphere of grief associated with a cemetery but also provides a constant mourner for the deceased.

As previously demonstrated the siren figure can be depicted in a posture of violent grieving with hands raised to head and chest with face contorted into an anguished expression (at times varying in degree). They can also be seen with an instrument through in their role in the *Odyssey* as singer and musician as if playing a dirge for the deceased when their families are unable to. Through the erection of such a monument the family and friends of the deceased provide a constant mourner at the grave when no one else is present. When sculpted in relief the sirens can be seen mourning above images of the deceased and their relations, not only adding a poignant note to the scene but also remind the passer-by that these people should be grieved for in this way.

The mythical status of the siren also makes it an apt figure to be represented as a funerary marker as it straddles the line between the underworld and the plain we inhabit as the living, 'communicating with the invisible mythical world they would reside in'²⁵¹. The dual-bodied depictions of sirens and sphinxes lend themselves even more to the idea of straddling the two worlds, 'by virtue of their paradoxical middle-ground characteristics which are eminently suited to be mediators between "worlds."'²⁵² The image of the siren provides a consolatory effect for those who mourn as the figure can create a link between the world we live in and the underworld in which the deceased now

²⁵⁰ Shapiro 1991: 637.

²⁵¹ Hoffman 1994: 74.

²⁵² *Ibid*

resides.²⁵³ The wings of the siren aid this effect as they could theoretically fly between the two worlds similar to the *Ba* bird of Egypt utilising its wings to fly from the body of the deceased to the upper shafts of the tomb.²⁵⁴ For this idea one might draw a parallel with the angel found in Christian graves, allowing a connection between the deceased and the mourner through this heavenly image. The presence of the siren also indicates that this deceased person in particular is special to have the link created through their funerary marker. Reliant on personal beliefs it reminds the viewer (especially pertinent to the grieving) that the deceased has not just passed away from this earthly plain but has moved onto the afterlife, whether that be later with the angels residing in heaven or earlier with the sirens and other mythological figures in the Underworld.²⁵⁵ The figure presented in front of them (whether in relief or free-standing) provides a visual image to this link and the mythical connection created.

Characteristics of the sirens found in the *Odyssey* and other early literary texts are embedded in the figures presented as statues in classical Attic cemeteries. In the *Odyssey* the sirens enchant Odysseus with their song, singing of the honour and valour he earned fighting at Troy as well as promising that if he listens to their song he will leave 'happier and wiser' (*Od* 12.84-91). Just as the musical sirens promise to spread the *kléos* (glory) of Odysseus because of his heroic deeds so do the funerary sirens offer to forever sing the glory of the deceased, standing over or near their grave site. The sirens have therefore been chosen because of their mythological background and abilities that have been transmuted to fit in with a funerary setting. They are still connected with death (seen in the *Odyssey*) but their relationship to it (and to the dead) has changed to a more beneficent one. While the particular portrayals are seemingly interchangeable it would appear that sirens depicted with instruments would invoke the memory of the Odyssean encounter and their musical talents more effectively than those depicted in the violent throes of grief. Sirens featured on funerary stelae, either in the round or in relief, promote the grief of the mourners for the deceased as well as the idea that their memory will be remembered by all who pass and view the tomb.²⁵⁶

The portrayal of the siren could also take on a similar role to that of a bard or poet (also found in the *Odyssey*) who spreads the glory and honour of heroes.²⁵⁷ This concept can be especially be identified in relation to the heroon of Dexileos who has been honoured as a fallen warrior in battle through his own funerary stele and is accompanied by a pair of sirens, plucking out a dirge on their lyres. In this

²⁵³ Irving 1990: 119.

²⁵⁴ Irving 1990: 120 'Their powers of flight enable them to reach places normally denied to men.'

²⁵⁵ The same effect could occur when sphinxes were used on Attic stelae in the Archaic period despite the fact they had the role of 'guard-dog' rather than mourner.

²⁵⁶ Grossman 2001: 4. 'Tombs themselves may have served as memory aids for lament singing.'

²⁵⁷ Ridgeway 1987: 405.

context the viewer of such funerary monuments is reminded of the deceased's similarity to Homeric heroes who died gloriously in battle, which also recalls the Archaic stelae of the past that emphasise a man's athletic prowess through their heroically nude and youthful portrayals. Unfortunately not enough evidence survives today to sufficiently support this idea in relation to the other three freestanding Attic siren stelae listed above. It is fair to say however through the connection of the images of the heroic fallen warrior and the sirens, the viewer can imagine Dexileos' as a hero deserving of the *kléos* conferred upon him from the sirens' song.

The presence of a siren promises to spread the *kléos* of the deceased and consequently grant them immortality by keeping the memory of their life and deeds alive. As the sirens presented are made of stone, unable to actually commit the person's actions to song, it is up to the viewer of the monument to recall the mythical abilities of the siren and understand the metaphor represented through the statue. Prior understanding of the sirens and their musical abilities would imply that such connections and associations are being made by the viewer of the tombstone for the deceased, recognising them as someone whose deeds should be remembered. It is important for the deceased not only to be remembered by family and friends but also acknowledged by those passing by the cemetery who might stop to inspect a statue or inscription. The role of the tombstones or grave monument in the Kerameikos during the Classical Period is not necessarily just to record the details of a deceased individual but it is also important to draw attention to that monument in particular through statuary and decoration. Sirens featured on top of stelae not only fulfil this role by attracting the focus of those that pass by but also engage the viewer to think about the role of the siren and subsequently the deceased they are singing or visibly mourning for.

Conclusion

Ever since their original literary encounter featured in the *Odyssey*, the sirens have continued to pose challenges for authors and artists attempting to interpret them. As evidenced throughout Chapter One, a strong focus was consistently placed upon the siren's enchanting singing powers which could paralyse a man's very will and lead to his eventual death. It is this power and association with death in early accounts that tend to connect the later sirens with a dangerous nature, commented on by German and French scholars in the 1900s. These scholars identified the creatures as evil spirits that haunt the necropolis, continuing to prey on weary souls. Despite this initial association with death, however, over time the sirens were utilised in art in a purely decorative sense and relatively disassociated from the 'heaps of rotting corpses' mentioned in the *Odyssey*. Sirens can be safely identified in art (due to contextual images depicting the creatures and their famous encounter with Odysseus) as having a bird's body and female head; this depiction evolves over time to eventually emphasise the human features in contrast to the bird elements including breasts, stomach and arms. As they share similar bird-woman features, it has been suggested by scholars that the harpy and siren can be difficult to distinguish from each other. However, after analysing a selection of artistic depictions of the creatures separately, it appears that there are significant differences. Therefore, it is safer to assume that a Greek image of a hybrid possessing a bird's body and female head is more likely to represent a siren.

Having identified the defining features of the mythical siren in Greek art and literature and how they are typically depicted, Chapter Two looked at the presence of sirens in Classical Attic cemeteries, and the legislation and transitions that may have affected their appearance at this particular time. Ancient supporting evidence in art and literature confirms the use of sirens in a funerary context as well as their apparent popularity during this period. The presence of this mythical creature in cemeteries has led to the assumption by scholars that it is a 'soul-bird', either as a reincarnations and spirits of the dead, similar to the role of the Egyptian *Ba* bird, or as a being that inhabits the underworld and haunt the grave, retaining some of her evil nature from her Odyssean predecessors. I do not believe this to be the case, as by the Classical Period the mythological sirens depicted in art became far enough removed from their initial dangerous nature as depicted in the *Odyssey*. I do think it is fair to say, however, that the sirens found in relief and perched atop of funerary stelae have retained their seductive nature and strong association with song and music. Artists emphasised these defining features and in this way the song they sing is one of mourning in the form of a dirge and not an attempt to lure victims to them. This concept is particularly evident, not only through

their portrayals in a funerary context as musicians but also through their expression and posture of intense grief, similar to other depictions of women mourning.

In consideration of the evidence so far compiled, Chapter Three analysed the reasons for the utilisation of the funerary monument in Classical Attic cemeteries and stelae featuring sirens in particular. Multiple funerary monuments with elaborate sculpture and detailed artistry can be seen in relation to a family's peribolos tomb in order to draw the most attention from passers-by entering and leaving the city. Inscriptions on stelae which directly address the viewer and invite them to mourn further underneath the concept that the funerary monuments were not only used to identify the deceased associated with a grave marker. At times, stelae and other sculptures did not diligently record all those buried in the area and were instead used to emphasise certain generations and showcase the family's wealth and values in accordance with *polis* values. In this sense, freestanding siren stelae can be used as decorative sculptures to attract attention to a particular grave, as evidenced by the Dexileos peribolos tomb.

The specific portrayals of sirens on funerary stelae, either playing an instrument or with an intense expression of grief, provide a constant mourner at the grave site as well as inviting the viewer to do the same in memory of the deceased. Changes in legislation to the externalised expression of grief may have increased the desire to retain an element of mourning in a funerary context. Sirens sculpted in relief in the upper register of stelae during the Classical period add emotion to the piece where the deceased is portrayed underneath, in a typical posture of mourning for women with one hand raised to the head and the other to their chest in extreme lamentation. The sirens' dual appearance, including feminine features, lends itself most favourably to this role and successfully conveys the grief felt by the family who erected the monument.

The siren's status as a mythological creature and her depiction in a funerary context provides a visual connection between the viewer, whether passer-by, friend or family, looking at the stelae and the deceased who now resides in the underworld. The dual-bodied depictions of the sirens lend themselves even more to the idea that they straddle two worlds, possessing wings that would presumably aid their traversing between this plane and the next. Through the representation of the siren, a reminder is presented to the viewer of the possibility of an afterlife where mythological creatures and the deceased dwell.

Certain defining features of the sirens originally established in the *Odyssey* have become embedded in their character, particularly evident in relation to their presence in a funerary context. The concept of the siren once promising to spread the glory of heroes lost its malevolent connotations. Instead the siren featured in the cemetery was a visual representation to the viewer of a tomb

monument that the sirens will sing the glory of the deceased forever and that this particular person is deserving of such honour attached to their name. The deceased is therefore placed in the most favourable light possible to the viewer and will be remembered and honoured by one more person in this way.

This thesis has demonstrated the evolution of the siren figure from her original literary appearance in the *Odyssey*, throughout her varied depictions in art and up until her appearance in Classical Attic cemeteries for a relatively short time. By analysing the evidence available from ancient authors and portrayals as well as contemporary research related to this topic it is possible to establish the use of sirens on funerary stelae. Due to certain features of the siren, their presence and specific representation in this setting appears appropriate to the needs of ancient Greeks at the time. This knowledge furthers our understanding of their thoughts and attitudes towards death and its connection to mythology. This research has focussed on the sirens' presence in a funerary context in particular, attempting to provide further explanations in an area that is currently lacking in information. The clarification and distinction between the harpy and the siren in art and literature specified in this thesis also aids the identification of the siren through their defining features.

In order to further this field of study more research into the character of the sirens over time is required, hopefully shedding more light on evidence concerning their presence in Attic cemeteries during the Classical Period specifically. The true extent to which sirens were used in a funerary setting remains unclear, especially due to the difficulties in safely identifying the deceased associated with siren stelae when attempting to establish any trends that may be present. A larger variety of current research on this topic would aid in evaluating the research available so far and garner a refreshed outlook on the appearance and specific use of sirens in Attic Classical cemeteries in general.

Appendix

Fig. 1. Phineus and the Harpies

Attic red-figure hydria-kalpis, Attributed to the Kleophrades Painter, c. 480BC
 Malibu, The J Paul Getty Museum 85.AE.316, LIMC Harpyiai 9

Fig. 2. Phineus and the Harpies

Attic bell krater, c. 450BC
 The National Archaeological Museum of Ferrara, Italy, 20294, LIMC Harpyiai 12

Fig. 3. Boreades chasing the Harpies
Würzburg, Wagner Museum L 164
LIMC 14

Fig. 4. Harpies and the Boreades
 Louterion, c. 620BC
 Berlin, Staatl. Museum F. 1682, LIMC Harpyiai 1

Fig. 5. Harpies and the Boreades
 Apulian red-figure amphora, c. 360BC
 Ruvo Italy, Museo Jatta Pl. 60, 2, LIMC Harpyiai 17

Fig. 6. Odysseus and the Sirens
Corinthian black-figure aryballos, c 575-550BC
New York, MMA 01.8100

Fig. 7. Odysseus and the Sirens
Attic black-figure Oinochoe, c. 520BC
Berlin, Staatl. Museum 1993.216

Fig. 8. 'The Siren Vase'
Attic red-figure Stamnos, c. 475-460BC
London, The British Museum 1843.1103.31

Fig. 9. Odysseus and a Siren
 Attic black-figure Lekythos, c. 500BC
 Athens, National Archaeological Museum cc958

Fig. 10. 'Musical Sirens on a Cliff'
 Attic black-figure Oinochoe, c. 525-475BC
 New York, Private collection: Callimanopoulos, Beazley Archive 351329

Fig. 11. Terracotta black-figure hydria
Attic, attributed to the Painter of London B 76, c. 560-550BC,
New York, MMA, 45.11.2

Fig. 12. Sirens and Sphinxes
Late-Corinthian neck amphora, attributed to the Tydeus
painter, c. 570-560BC
Paris, Musée du Louvre, E 640

Fig. 13. Black figure Plate with Gorgoneion, Sphinx, and Sirens
Attic black figure plate, attributed to the Gorgon painter, c. 590-580BC
Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, 48.215, Padgett 2004: 308

Fig.14. Round-Bodied Pyxis with Bearded Siren
Corinthian round-bodied pyxis, attributed to the Chimaera painter, c. 570BC
Malibu, J. Paul Getty Museum, 88. AE. 105, Padgett 2004: 287

Fig.15. Siren Aryballos
Late Corinthian Aryballos, Calauria painter, second quarter of the 6th century BC
Wellington, Victory University Classics Museum, 1950 A5

Fig. 16. Hydria with Siren decoration under handle
 Late Corinthian hydria, attributed to the Tydeus painter
 mid-6th century BC
 Dresden, Staatl. Kunstsammlungen 135, Padgett 2004: 7.

Fig. 17. Decorative Sirens
 Corinthian tripod pyxis, the Dodwell Painter,
 c. 600-575BC
 London, The British Museum, 1851,0507.7

Fig. 18. Hydria with Siren neck-handle
 Bronze hydria, Rhodes, c. 460BC
 London, The British Museum, 1927,0713.1

Fig.19. Bronze Hydria with Siren Handle
 Attic bronze hydria, c. 440-430BC
 Private Collection, Padgett 2004: 300

Fig. 20. Three sirens playing instruments, repeated images on exterior
Terracotta black-figure kylix, Boeotia, c. 5th century BC
New York, MMA, 57.12.5

Fig. 21. Terracotta Jug in the form of a Siren
Terracotta jug, c. 500BC, Sicily, Agrigento
London, The British Museum, 1846,0512.14

Fig.22. Askos in the Shape of a Siren
Bronze askos, first half of the 5th century BC, South Italy
Malibu, J. Paul Getty Museum, 92.AC.5

Fig. 23. Terracotta Scent-bottle in the form of a Siren
Terracotta scent bottle, c. 550BC, Rhodes, Kamiros
London, The British Museum, 1860,0201.49

Fig. 24. Mummified scribe Ani with his Ba
Book of the dead, 19th Dynasty
El Mahdy 1989: 13

Fig. 25. Upraised arms of the Ka
El Mahdy 1989: 13

Fig. 26. Bronze Crossed Arms with Ba Bird
Egypt, late XVIII Dynasty, c. 1400-1350BC
John Huntington Art and Polytechnic Trust 14.556
Cooney 1968: 267

Fig. 27. Ba bird hovers over deceased on Sarcophagus

Sarcophagus of Tash Penkhonsu, Ekhmeem, Egypt,
late Ptolemaic period c. 150BC

Christchurch, Canterbury Museum EA 1989: 13

Photo taken by A. Oldfield

Fig. 28. Mummified Hori accompanied by his Ba

Papyrus of Hori, Egypt, 21st Dynasty c. 1085-935BC

The Charles W. Harkness Endowment Fund 21.1032,

Cooney 1968: 266

Fig. 1 North side

Fig. 2 East side

Fig. 3 South side

Fig. 4 West side

Fig. 29. 'Harpy tomb' Reliefs originating from Xanthus, 1838

Limestone Sarcophagus, Xanthus, c470-460BC

British Museum, 1848. 10-20.1

Fig. 30. Close up image of 'harpy' from south side of tomb
Limestone Sarcophagus, Xanthus, c470-460BC
London, British Museum, 1848. 10-20.1

Fig. 31. Illissos Stele
Marble grave stele of a youth, Found in the bed of the Illissos river bed, Athens, c. 340BC
Athens, National Archaeological Museum of Athens
869

Fig. 32. Gable of a Tomb
Limestone tomb gable, Xanthus, c. 480BC
London, British Museum, 1848, 1020.23

Fig. 33. Attic Funerary Stelae Reconstructions
 Drawings by L.F. Hall, Richter 1961: 3

Fig. 34. Sphinx and Cavetto Capital
 Sphinx statue, found in the Themistoklean Wall, c. 575-560BC
 Athens, Kerameikos Museum, Richter 1961: 15

Fig. 35. Stele of Youth and Girl with Crowning Sphinx
Marble stele with base, shaft and finial, Attica, c. 530BC
New York, MMA 11.185

Fig. 36. Funerary Naikos Stele

Marble stele, found near the Dipylon gate, Kerameikos, third quarter of the 4th century BC

Athens, National Archaeological Museum 737

Kaltsas 2002: 198

Fig. 37. Remaining finial and head of figure on Stele

Athens, National Archaeological Museum 1146

Clairmont 0.776

Fig. 38. Grave Stele depicting Siren and Loutrophoros

Attic marble stele, found at Kalyvia, c. 370BC
Athens, National Archaeological Museum 896,

Kaltsas 2002: 181

Fig. 39. Marble Stele of Sostratos
Attic marble stele, c. 375-350BC
MMA, NY, 08.258.41

Fig. 40. Stele of Stephanos with dog and crowning sphinxes
Classical Attic Tombstone Catalogue 1.214
Athens, National Archaeological Museum 2578

Fig.41. Stele crowned by roof sima with loutrophoros-hydria, sirens and sphinx
Classical Attic Tombstone Catalogue 1.862
Berlin, Pergamon Museum 1492

Fig. 42. Siren stele with recessed moulding for image of the deceased
 Classical Attic Tombstone Catalogue 0.841
 Piraeus Museum 1471

Fig. 43. Siren stele with woman and young girl
 Classical Attic Tombstone Catalogue 1.797
 Athens, National Archaeological Museum 4006

Fig. 44. Siren stele
 Classical Attic Tombstone Catalogue 1.210a
 Athens, National Archaeological Museum 2545

Fig.45. Naiskos stele with crowning siren
 Classical Attic Tombstone Catalogue 3.932
 Athens, National Archaeological Museum 3657

Fig. 46. Stele with crowning double Sirens
 Classical Attic Tombstone Catalogue 2.208
 Berlin Pergamon Museum 755

Fig. 47. Prothesis Scene

Attic black-figure pinax (plaque), Sappho painter, Athens, c. 500BC
Paris, Louvre Museum MNB 905

Fig. 48. Prothesis Scene

Attic archaic black-figure terracotta funerary plaque, c. 520-510BC
New York, MMA 54.11.5

Fig. 49. Crowning Sirens and Mourning Women
 Classical Attic Tombstone Catalogue 3.397
 Piraeus Museum 228

Fig. 50. Crowning stele with Siren and Mourning Women
 Classical Attic Tombstone Catalogue 1.393
 Copenhagen Ny Carlsburg Glyptotek 205 IN1527

Fig. 51. Mourning Woman (slave) statue
 One from a grave monument at Menidi in Attica,
 4th century BC
 Berlin, Pergamon Museum 499

Fig. 52. Lyre playing Siren Statue
 Marble Siren Stele, Kerameikos near the Dipylon Gate, Athens,
 c. 370 BC
 Athens, National Archaeological Museum 774

Fig. 53. Dexileos of Thorikos Funerary Stele
 Marble Stele, Kerameikos, Athens, c. 394BC
 Kerameikos Museum, Athens, 1130

Fig. 53a. Reconstruction of Dexileos's Peribolos Tomb

Fig. 54. 'Lyre playing' Siren Statue
 Marble Siren Stelae, Kerameikos near the Dipylon Gate,
 Athens, c. 330-320BC
 Athens, National Archaeological Museum 775

Fig. 55. Weeping Siren Statue
 Marble Siren Stelae, Mount Pentelikon, near Athens,
 c. 370BC
 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 03.757

Fig. 56. Lamenting Siren Statue
 Marble Siren Stelae, Kerameikos, Athens, c. 330BC
 Athens, National Archaeological Museum 2583

Fig.57. Black-figured Lekythos with Travellers and Siren
Archaic Greek Black-figured lekythos, c. 500-480BC
London, British Museum 1842,0728.802
Collingnon 1911: 80

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Apollodorus, *The Library*, trans. J. G. Frazer, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1921

Apollonius of Rhodes, *Argonautica*, trans. R. Hunter, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993

Callimachus and Lycophron, *Alexandra*, trans. G. R. Mair, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1921

Euripides, *Helen*, trans. A. S. Way, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1930

Euripides, *Helen*, trans. R. Lattimore, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969

Hesiod, *The Shield, Catalogue of Women and Other Fragments*, trans. G. W. Most, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2007

____ *Theogony, Works & Days, Testimonia*, trans. G. W. Most, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006

Homer, *The Odyssey*, trans. R. Fagles, New York: Penguin Books, 1996

Nonnus, *Dionysiaca*, trans. W.H.D. Rouse, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. A. D. Melville, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008

Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, trans. W.H.S. Jones, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935

Plutarch, 'Lives of the Ten Orators' in *Moralia* vol. X, trans. Fowler, H. N. , Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969

Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. D. West, London: Penguin Books, 1990

Secondary Sources

- Aasved, M.J. (1996) 'The Sirens and Cargo Cults', *Classical World* 5: 383-392
- Alexiou, M. (2002) *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*, Oxford: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers
- Boardman, J. (1995) *Greek Sculpture: The Late Classical Period*, London: Thames & Hudson
- Burton, D. (2005) 'The Gender of Death', in E. Stafford & J. Herrin (eds.), *Personification in the Greek World: From Antiquity to Byzantium*, Burlington: Ashgate, 47-67
- Buschor, E. (1944) *Die Musen des Jenseits*, Munich: Bruckmann
- Carter, J. C. (1974) 'The Tomb of the Siren', *American Journal of Archaeology* 78: 131-139
- Challis, D. (2008) *From the Harpy Tomb to the Wonders of Ephesus: British Archaeologists in the Ottoman Empire 1840-1880*, London: Duckworth
- Clairmont, C. W. (1993) *Classical Attic Tombstones*, Kilchberg: Akanthus
- Closterman, W. E. (2006) 'Family Members and Citizens: Athenian Identity and the Peribolos Tomb Setting', *Helios* 33: 49-78
- _____ (2007) 'Family Ideology and Family History: The Function of Funerary Markers in Classical Attic Peribolos Tombs', *American Journal of Archaeology* 111 : 633-652
- Collignon, M. (1911) *Les Statues Funéraires dans l'art Grec*, Paris: E. Leroux
- Cooney, J. D. (1968) 'Siren and Ba, Birds of a Feather', *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 8: 262-271
- Day, J. W. (2010) *Archaic Greek Epigram & Dedication: Representation and Reperformance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- El Mahdy, C. (1989) *Mummies, Myth and Magic*, New York: Thames & Hudson
- Fellows, C (1843) *The Xanthian Marbles; Their Acquisition and Transmission to England*, London: John Murray
- Gantz, T. (1993) *Early Greek Myth*, London: John Hopkins University Press

- Garland, R. (1982) 'A First Catalogue of Attic Peribolos Tombs', *Annual of the British School at Athens* 77: 125-176
- _____ (2001) *The Greek Way of Death*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press
- Goldstein, S. M. (1990) 'Egyptian and Near Eastern Art', *Bulletin (St. Louis Art Museum)* n.s. 19: 1-52
- Gresseth, G. K. (1970) 'The Homeric Sirens', *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 101: 203-218
- Grossman, J. B. (2001) *Greek Funerary Sculpture: Catalogue of the Collections at the Getty Villa*, Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Trust
- Harrison, J. (1960) *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, New York: Meridan Books
- Heubrek, A. & Hoekstra, A. (1989) *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey: Volume II Books IX-XVI*, Oxford: Clarendon Press
- Hoffman, H. (1994) 'The Riddle of the Sphinx: A Case Study in Athenian Immortality Symbolism', in I. Morris, (ed.), *Classical Greece: Ancient Histories and Modern Archaeology*, London: Cambridge University Press
- Irving, P.M. (1990) *Metamorphosis in Greek Myths*, Oxford: Clarendon Paperbacks
- Kaltsas, N. (2002) *Sculpture in the National Archaeological Museum, Athens*, Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum
- Keen, A. (1992) 'The Dynastic Tombs of Xanthos: Who Was Buried Where?', *Anatolian Studies* 42: 53-63
- Knight, V. (1995) *The Renewal of Epic: Responses to Homer in the Argonautica of Apollonius*, Leiden: E. J. Brill
- Kurtz, D. C. & Boardman, J. (1971) *Greek Burial Customs*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press
- Langridge-Noti, E. (2003) 'Mourning at the Tomb: A Re-evaluation of the Sphinx Monument on Attic Black-figured Pottery', *Archäologisches Anzeiger*: 141-155

- Leader, R. E. (1997) 'In Death Not Divided: Gender, Family, and State on Classical Athenian Grave Stelae', *American Journal of Archaeology* 101: 683-699
- Levin, D.N. (1971) *Apollonius' Argonautica Re-examined: The Neglected First and Second Books*, Leiden: E. J. Brill
- Lewis, S. (2002) *The Athenian Woman: An Iconographic Handbook*, London: Routledge
- Loraux, N. (1986) *The Invention of Athens: The Funeral Oration in the Classical City*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press
- LIMC = *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, 8 vols (1981-2009), Munich: Artemis Verlag
- Murgatroyd, P. (2007) *Mythical Monsters in Classical Literature*, London: Duckworth
- Murray, M. A. (1972) *The Splendour that was Egypt*, London, Sidwick & Jackson
- Nugent, P. (2008) 'The Sounds of the Sirens: "Odyssey"', *College Literature* 12:45-54
- Padgett, J. M. (2004) *The Centaur's Smile: the Human Animal in Early Greek Art*, New Jersey: Princeton University Art Museum
- Pollard, J. (1952) 'Muses and Sirens', *Classical Review* 2:60-63
- _____ (1965) *Seers, Shrines & Sirens*, New Jersey: George, Allen & Unwin
- _____ (1977) *Birds in Greek Life and Myth*, Plymouth: Thames and Hudson
- Pucci, P. (1998) *The Song of the Sirens: Essays on Homer*, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield
- Richter, G. M. A. (1961) *The Archaic Gravestones of Attica*, London: Phaidon Press
- Ridgway, B. S. (1977) *The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press
- _____ (1987) 'Ancient Greek Woman and Art: The Material Evidence', *American Journal of Archaeology* 91: 399-409
- Roberts, J. (2007) *The Oxford Dictionary of the Classical World*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Seaford, R. (1995) *Reciprocity and Ritual: Homer and Tragedy in the Developing City State*, New York: Clarendon Press

- Shapiro, H. A. (1991) 'The Iconography of Mourning in Athenian Art', *American Journal of Archaeology* 95: 629-656
- Smith, C. (1892-1893) 'Harpies in Greek Art', *Journal of Hellenistic Studies* 13: 103-114
- Stears, K. (1995) 'Dead Woman's Society', in N. Spencer, (ed.) *Time, Tradition and Society in Greek Archaeology*, London: Routledge
- _____ (2000) 'The Times They Are A-Changing: Developments in the Fifth-Century Funerary Sculpture', in G. J. Oliver, (ed.) *The Epigraphy of Death: Studies in the History & Society of Greece and Rome*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press
- Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (1991) *'Reading' Greek Culture*, Oxford: Clarendon Press
- Svenborg, J. (1993) trans. J. Lloyd, *Phrasikleia: An Archaeology of Reading in Ancient Greece*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press
- Tritsch, F. T. (1942) 'The Harpy Tomb at Xanthus', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 62: 39-50
- Tsagalis, C. (2008) *Inscribing Sorrow: Fourth Century Attic Funerary Epigrams*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter
- Tsiafakis, D. (2004) 'Fabulous Creatures and/or Demons of Death', in J. M. Padgett (ed.) *The Centaur's Smile: the Human Animal in Early Greek Art*, New Jersey: Princeton University Art Museum
- Tonks, O. S. (1907) 'An Interpretation of the So-Called Harpy Tomb', *American Journal of Archaeology* 3: 321-338
- Towne-Markus, E. (1997) *Masterpieces of the J. Paul Getty Museum, Antiquities*, Los Angeles: Thames & Hudson
- Toynbee, A. & Koestler, A. (1976) *Life after death*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson
- Vermeule, E. (1979) *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry*, Los Angeles: University of California Press
- Vernant, J-P. & Doueiri, A. (1986) 'Feminine Figures of Death in Greece', *Diacritics* 16: 54-64
- Vernant, J-P. (1991) *Mortals & Immortals; Collected Essays*, Jersey: Princeton University Press

- Wakeley, E (1966) 'The Harpy Tomb Frieze – A New Interpretation' Summary from the Sixty-Seventh General Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America, *American Journal of Archaeology* 70: 182-198
- Weicker, G. (1923) *Der Seelenvogel in der Alten Litteratur und Kunst*, Leipzig: Druckund Verlag von B. G. Teubner
- Wellmer, A. (2000) 'The Death of the Sirens and the Origin of the Work of Art', *New German Critique* 81: 5-19
- West, M. L. (2005) "Odyssey' and "Argonautica" *Classical Quarterly*, n.s. 55: 39-64