

Monuments for the King: Royal Presence in the Late Hellenistic World of Mithridates VI

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What was the Greeks' perception of the kingship of Mithridates, a ruler more or less from the fringes of a Hellenistic world once dominated by powerful kingdoms around the Eastern Mediterranean? Being a Classical Archaeologist, I was primarily associating royal self-representation or the dense monumental presence of Hellenistic rulers in the Greek centres of the Hellenistic period with this perception.¹ I wondered though if public monuments would give us information on specific Mithridatic aspects of royal ideology besides those stressed by the written sources (and from a period earlier than the Mithridatic Wars, when the antagonism between Rome and the Greek world and its ideological "embellishment" dominate our sources). Secondly, I was curious if these monuments might even provide us with information on how (and above all which) of these aspects were perceived by others and if this in turn might contribute to our understanding of an outsider's perspective, namely that of the "traditional" Greek world also affected by Mithridates' ventures.

But the evidence is disillusioning: we are confronted with an archaeological record that seems to be promising only at first sight. Apart from numismatic evidence and glyptic art, to which I admittedly will not pay attention in this article (neither are public monuments as such), only isolated and fragmentary evidence exists. Because of this, questions about the presence and appearance of Mithridatic monuments in the Greek world, the imagery chosen for them and, especially, the perception of their message can hardly be pursued. In addition, Pontic literary sources concerning royal self-presentation, for example, royal feasts, *pompai* or further types of royal communication are missing for the reign of Mithridates VI.

To address the – admittedly ambitious – questions outlined above the following remarks will be subdivided in two parts. The first will touch upon the literary, epigraphic and archaeological evidence for honours and donations for or by Mithridates on a more general level. In the second part, I would like to focus mainly on one specific monument – to be honest, the only one well enough preserved to be consulted – before summing up with some concluding remarks.

Honours for Mithridates and benefactions by Mithridates

The lack of extant monuments for Mithridates from the territory of the Pontic Kingdom is a considerable limitation for our understanding of the royal image. But the evidence for Mithridates' *euergesia* in his kingdom or beyond in the Aegean world is also scanty. No royal initiatives comparable to the donations of buildings by Hellenistic kings, so common in the 3rd and 2nd century BC, are known.² Besides donations in favour of the Delian gymnasium 116/115 BC,³ royal *euergesia* is mentioned in connection with debt relief and the donation of money or grain.⁴ The Mithridatic dedications of cuirasses to the Panhellenic sanctuaries at Delphi and Nemea⁵ are to be explained in connection with the Mithridatic Wars.

Compared to that, we are much better informed about others honouring Mithridates. Already in 116/15 BC Mithridates and his brother were honoured with statues on behalf of the *gymnasiarchos* Dionysios on Delos,⁶ a result of their donations in favour of the gymnasium already mentioned. From about the same time – and from Delos, too – we know of a dedication to Zeus Ourios for Mithridates and his brother Chrestos.⁷ Also in Delos, in 102/101 BC an architectural monument was dedicated by the priest Helianax (see below). Furthermore, two dedications in honour of Mithridates by the priest Dikaios, again in Delos (from the Serapeion, late 90's BC),⁸ and other fragments of inscriptions from Delos naming Mithridates can be added,⁹ as well as the dedication of an elaborate bronze vessel by the *eupatoristai* from the gymnasium, that reached Antium as Roman war booty.¹⁰ Moreover, inscriptions from Chios and Rhodos demonstrate the successful participation of the king (or, at least, of his horses) at equestrian games there,¹¹ and another inscription testifies to the honour of an eponymous *stephanephoria* awarded in Miletos in 86/85 BC.¹² Cicero finally mentions a statue erected in honour of Mithridates by the Rhodians *in celeberrimo urbis loco*.¹³

The concentration of monuments honouring Mithridates on Delos is obvious. As a traditional and Panhellenic stage for the self-representation of Hellenistic rulers, the island was a favourite place to erect honorary statues, monuments or buildings for or by members of the Hellenistic royal dynasties. From the period between 166 and 88 BC no less than around 50 royal portrait statues are known.¹⁴

It is remarkable, that the Mithridatic monuments on Delos – according to their findspots – apparently were not erected at the long established places preferred for royal monuments.¹⁵ Yet the fact that for the first time a Pontic king was markedly present in the context of an international centre, after only isolated donations by or honours to his predecessors Pharnakes I and Mithridates V,¹⁶ reflects the political importance of the king honoured in this way. At the same time, in addition to the fact of their mere existence, it is especially the imagery of such monuments that can serve as a prime source for royal ideology.

Portraits and portrait statues

First of all, the portraiture of Mithridates has to be considered, since at least some of the portraits regarded as portraying Mithridates might have belonged to statues erected in public.¹⁷ Yet due to missing inscriptions or incomplete statues, as well as our lack of knowledge about their exact contexts and the occasions for their erection, the majority of portraits are of only limited value as sources. Moreover, even their identification as portraits of Mithridates – based essentially upon numismatic depictions – is not unproblematic.¹⁸

Generally accepted seems to be the identification of the well-known portrait in the Louvre showing the king with a lions' scalp.¹⁹ But controversy exists over several other portrait-heads often connected with Mithridates.²⁰ Besides two portrait-heads in Ostia and Athens²¹ and three from Delos,²² portraits in Odessa, from Pantikapaion,²³ and also one in Venice representing him as Helios²⁴ have to be mentioned. The depiction as a beardless young man, the dynamic movement of the head and the hair with emphasized strands and a diadem unites them all; their reference to the portrait of Alexander the Great (especially striking in the coinage) is evident and has been noticed long ago.²⁵ But apart from these iconographic elements, the portraits mentioned above differ considerably from each other and are only loosely related. The identification with Mithridates therefore remains, in my opinion, at least arguable.

And yet it might still be possible – even if not provable – that some of these heads are comparatively free versions of Mithridates' portrait. It also has to be taken into account, however, that they might show other dynasts or – and this applies to the North Pontic pieces – one of Mithridates' successors there.²⁶ Since some of them referred to descendents of Mithridates, strong resemblances in the portraiture can even be expected in order to emphasise dynastic legitimization.

So, only some general ideological aspects, already known from other genres like the coinage, can be detected in the preserved portraits assumed to be those of Mithridates. The emphasis on his youth and energy testify to an orientation towards the charismatic royal portraiture and the characteristic traits of the Alexander portrait. In addition one might mention that – hardly surprising – according to their findspots portrait statues of Mithridates have also been erected outside his own realm, at internationally frequented places such as Delos and Rhodos. But the outward appearance and iconography of these portrait-statues remain unknown to us.

The Prometheus-group from Pergamon

It would be even more desirable to be able to connect the well-known group of sculptures from Pergamon with Mithridates and his residence there from 88-85 BC, as has been proposed already by Kraemer and followed by oth-

ers.²⁷ The group shows Herakles with the portrait features and the diadem of a king, about to rescue Prometheus in presence of the reclining Caucasus. The subject with its reference to Caucasus could be applied to Mithridates, and also the dynamic depiction of Herakles – recalling the Louvre portrait – could be interpreted in this way. In addition, the group would be connected closely with the king's court: it was found in the sanctuary of Athena, i.e. in the *basileia* on the Akropolis of Pergamon. The sculptural group therefore could be interpreted as a highly political honorary monument, symbolising the liberation of the Caucasus-region by Mithridates as Herakles or his liberation of the Greek world (or only Pergamon?) from the Romans (with the eagle as the opponent of Herakles).²⁸

Yet this identification remains hypothetical. Not only the hairstyle with its small and tight curls obviously bears no resemblance to the known portrait-features of Mithridates, but also the date of the group (it is generally assigned to the middle of the 2nd century / around 160 BC) contradicts such an interpretation.²⁹ Consequently, the Pergamene monument has to be ruled out as a source for Hellenistic royal ideology, at least for that of Mithridates.

Therefore, the only monument offering some clear information on Mithridatic kingship is – thanks to its epigraphic record and the pictorial evidence inferable from it – the monument erected for Mithridates on Delos in 102/101 BC. I would like to give more attention to this monument, since it was erected outside the king's realm and therefore might offer insights into external perspectives on his person and kingship.

The monument for Mithridates on Delos

This unique monument,³⁰ measuring only 5 x 3.5 m, was erected in the sanctuary of the Samothracian Kabeiroi³¹, i.e. it was not located at or in the vicinity of one of the traditional places preferred for royal monuments.³² As a striking addition to the older sanctuary, the positioning of the building strongly influenced the outward appearance of the place: placed right next to the original main building (temple? or banquet hall?) and concealing a substantial part of its facade, it was a clear eye catcher and surely attracted the attention of visitors to the sanctuary (Figs. 1-2).

The Heroon-like construction of the Ionic order opened with a *distyle in antis*-facade (with a widened distance between the two columns) to the south, i.e. towards the open square of the sanctuary (Fig. 3). Its opened front must have invited the sanctuary's visitor to enter the building, to linger there (in the shade) and to appreciate and contemplate the sculptural decoration adorning mainly its inner walls.³³ It consisted of a display of thirteen portrait-busts inserted in round shields: one of them in the *tympanon* of the facade, and twelve along the inner walls of the building (three along each side wall and six along the back wall; Fig. 4).³⁴ An inscription mentioning the name of the person depicted supplemented each portrait-bust, an invaluable source

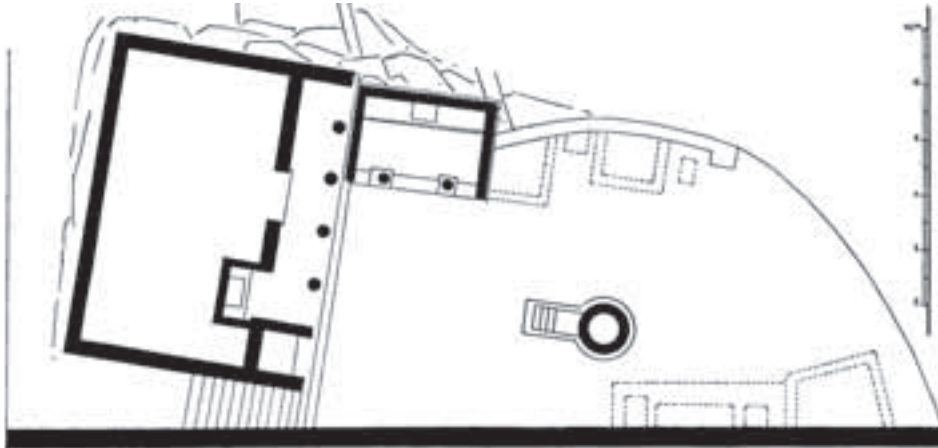


Fig. 1: Plan of the sanctuary of the Kabeiroi with the monument for Mithridates VI (Chapouthier 1935, fig. 107).

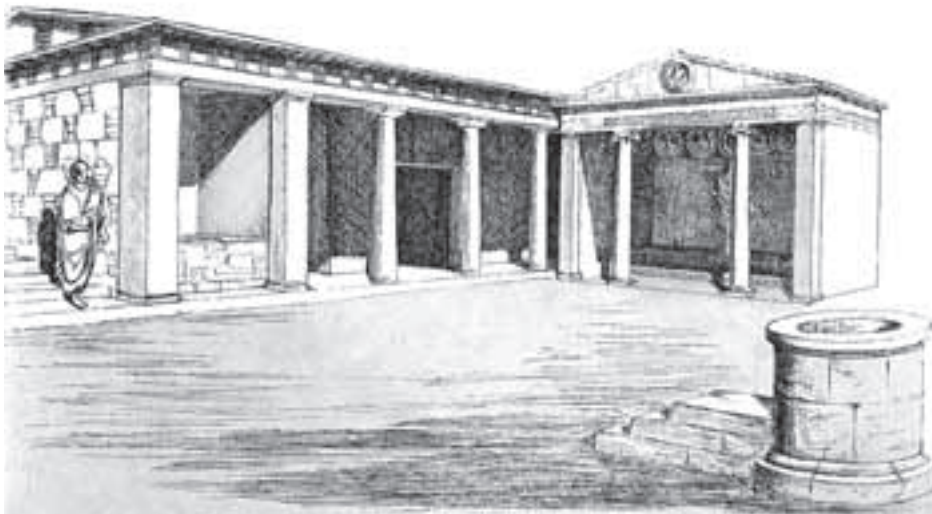


Fig. 2: The monument for Mithridates VI on Delos in its reconstructed setting (Chapouthier 1935, fig. 108).

considering the loss of most of the separately worked and inserted portrait heads. Finally, for the perception of the sculptural decoration the moulded bench (H: approx. 60 cm) running along the inner back wall of the building may have been of importance. Yet this bench not only served for seating (if at all). It is also usually considered as the location of an inscribed statue base mentioning Mithridates,³⁵ that, in turn, is commonly connected with a frag-

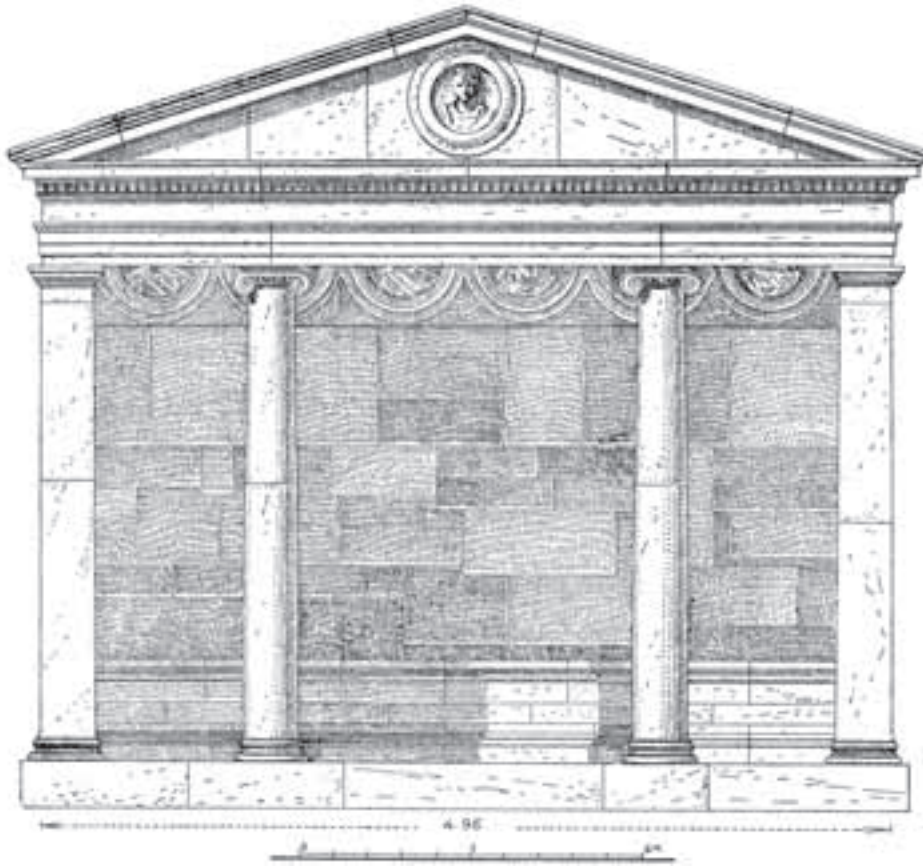


Fig. 3: The façade of the monument for Mithridates VI (Chapouthier 1935, fig. 56).

mentary cuirassed statue found in the sanctuary, showing him as a victorious commander.³⁶ A second, but free-standing inscribed statue base (H: 65 cm) indicates that at least one further statue of unknown appearance stood inside the building, probably in front of its western wall.³⁷

It was, however, the remarkable portrait-medallions that caught the attention of archaeologists and historians after the publication of the monument in 1935. Identified by the partly damaged inscriptions they can be examined as a complex portrait gallery, composed on the patron's initiative. Unfortunately, the iconography of the portraits is revealed by only one, heavily mutilated piece.³⁸ The portrait assigned to Diophantos clearly is part of, at least in the rendering of the hairstyle, the late Hellenistic portrait-tradition so well known from Delos. Furthermore, the parts of the busts still preserved show that all individuals wore a cuirass or cloak.³⁹

Who were these individuals? It is rewarding to give a list of the illustrious mixture of individuals on display. The most prominent place – in the tympanon and therefore dominating the façade – was occupied by an unknown

person from Amisos.⁴⁰ The portraits on the inner walls are, according to the generally accepted reconstruction: on the western wall (from the left) Gaios, son of Hermaios, from Amisos, *syntrophos* of Mithridates; an unknown person and secretary (*epi tou aporetou*) of Mithridates; and Dorylaos, son of Philetairos, from Amisos, nephew of Dorylaios Taktikos, an officer at Mithridates' court, *synthrophos*, commander of the lifeguard (?) and supreme commander (*epi ton dynameon*).⁴¹ On the opposite eastern wall a member of the court of the Arsakid king Mithridates II;⁴² again an unidentified person (inscription lost); and Papias, son of Menophilos, from Amisos, *philos* and physician of Mithridates.⁴³ The northern back wall includes: Diophantos, son of Mithares, from Gazioura; Ariarathes of Kappadokia, nephew of Mithridates and enthroned as ruler by him; the Seleukid king Antiochos Epiphanes; Asklepiodoros, father of Helianax, from Athens; again an unidentified person (inscription lost); and, finally, an official of the Arsakid court.⁴⁴ To sum up, depicted on the walls were leading functionaries and courtiers of Mithridates, but also foreign officials and even kings.

Yet how can this heterogeneous and – considering other monuments of the Hellenistic world – somehow irritating compilation (think of the court physician or the unique⁴⁵ combination of Greeks and Parthians in one monument) be interpreted?

The main inscription on the architrave is of central importance for our understanding of the monument.⁴⁶ It mentions the Athenian Helianax, son of Asklepiodoros, priest of Poseidon and the Kabeiroi at Delos, who erected the monument (in the inscription mentioned as *naos*) together with the *agalmata* and *hopla* (the portrait medallions?) *ek ton idion* on behalf of the Athenian and Roman people to the gods of the sanctuary and king Mithridates Eupator. The name of Helianax is also mentioned in each inscription belonging to the portrait medallions and on both statue bases, i.e. his person is connected to each part of the whole ensemble. Thus, the construction is neither a donation from the king himself, nor initiated by the inner circle of the Pontic court at Sinope. Therefore it does not represent *a priori* an ideological monument of the ruling Pontic dynasty. I would propose that, as a dedication by an Attic-Delian priest, it rather permits us to gain insights into an outsider's perception of – or even expectations towards – the king and his kingship (that, of course, in turn surely should have taken into account facets of his official image). But how can these be described?

An approach to the imagery of the monument

Considering the date of its erection the monument obviously does not represent any resistance to Rome. On the contrary, the inscription on the architrave includes the people of Rome besides the *demos athenaion*. Therefore, it is in complete accordance with the status of a "friend and ally of the Roman people" as claimed by Mithridates in the tradition of his father until 89 BC.⁴⁷

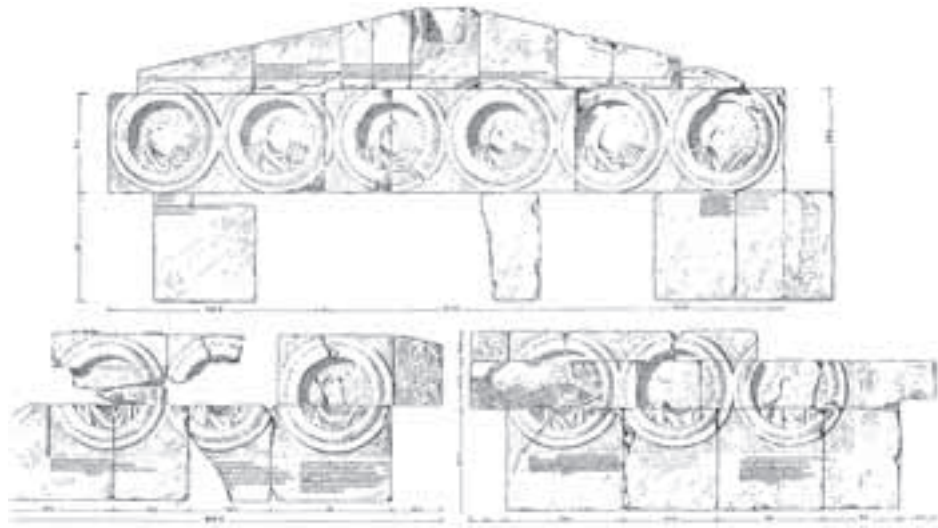


Fig. 4: The portrait-medallions of the inner walls (Chapouthier 1935, fig. 36).

The monument has usually been interpreted with direct reference to the literary tradition and numismatic evidence. Both emphasize the Greek-Persian character of his kingship as a central aspect of Mithridates' identity and ideology, especially obvious in the roots of the Pontic dynasty. Correspondingly the Delos-monument with its portrait gallery is regarded as an expression of the Greek and Persian background of Mithridatic kingship.⁴⁸

But the literary sources first of all emphasize the king's claimed origin from the Achaemenid dynasty (Kyros and Dareios) and (on his mother's side) from Alexander the Great and Seleukos.⁴⁹ Yet neither of these illustrious ancestors, nor any dynastic predecessors of Mithridates are included among the portraits. Apparently, a reference to the Persian-Greek roots of the kingdom and its dynasty was not intended. The monument was not one of the dynastic monuments so well-known in Panhellenic centres since the late Classical period, which portrayed the central figure and his ancestors as a genealogical legitimation of the central's figures rule.⁵⁰ All the individuals depicted are contemporaries of Mithridates, and a blood-relationship as a possible *leitmotif* is not discernible.

Since a Greek-Persian dynastic interpretation or reference to the dual background of Mithridates finds no explicit proof in the monument and therefore should be ruled out as its underlying message, I would like to take a second closer look at the portrait gallery from a different point of view. Obviously, the monument was not intended to present a uniform group of individuals, but rather suggested a certain variety and a deliberate heterogeneity, that must have caught the eyes of the ancient visitor too. The only common ground is the virtually omnipresent reference to Mithridates (in inscriptions and the statue), a message that might already be the principal statement.

This assumption takes added shape when confronted with the written sources concerning the royal court at Sinope. The depiction of two Parthians and a Seleukid recalls the allied, or rather allegedly allied, nations mentioned by ancient authors already early for the reign of Mithridates.⁵¹ Marriages of the Pontic kings with the Seleukids also indicate special contacts.⁵² On the other hand, the accumulation of – first of all Greek – courtiers and officials among the portraits (e.g. the court physician!) makes one think of the royal court characterised by Orosius for the later years of the reign of Mithridates and outlined by E. Olshausen.⁵³ Olshausen was able to show the considerable internationality of the Greek-dominated Pontic court during the reign of Mithridates: almost two-thirds of the court-elite were Greeks of various provenance, in addition to Romans, Kappadokians, and Thracians. Also noticeable is the colourful variety of functions and titles of these multiethnic courtiers and officials, among them *philoï*, generals, judges, philosophers, orators, physicians and even perfumers.

These sources allow us on the one hand to reconstruct a Mithridatic Kingdom embedded in an international network and being a member in the concert of the eastern Greek powers and their adjacent kingdoms. On the other hand, they verify a dominating influence of Greek educated circles at the king's court (undoubtedly promoted by the king himself), and, in correspondence, a cosmopolitic Hellenistic court culture open to ambitious men from all over the Greek world.

But the Delos-monument must not be understood just as an image gallery merely suited to illustrate these sources. On the contrary, its interpretation as an independent and contemporary source finds indirect – i.e. not explicitly formulated – confirmation in the literary and epigraphic sources. While Olshausen was able to extract such a picture from a variety of scattered evidence, we may consider the monument with its peculiar compilation of portraits as a contemporary reflection of Mithridatic kingship.

Attempting a conclusion

But how can these observations – admittedly focussed on the Delos-monument – contribute to our understanding of Mithridatic kingship or even its perception in the Greek world? To begin with the dedicating priest Helianax, the dedicated monument first of all is a personal statement of loyalty to Mithridates, which also suggests a certain relationship to the king. In this respect we may understand Helianax's donation as a kind of self-ascertainment of his nearness to the illustrious circle around the king (or at least a claim of such a position). At the same time, the monument aimed at increasing the prestige of Helianax himself not only on Delos, but certainly also at the Pontic court. In this regard the building *ek ton idion* is a particularly ambitious project, outreaching the honorary statues common in the late Hellenistic period by far.

But the Delos monument should not be interpreted as a genuine and explicit formulation of official Mithridatic ideologies created by the king or members of the royal inner circle. It is neither a reference to a special philhellenic initiative by the king, nor does it communicate aspects of the Greek-Persian dualism of his kingship so prominent in our sources.

The monument is rather a testimony to its time, when the Pontic Kingdom was, above all, a resourceful late Hellenistic kingdom. For the visitor to the sanctuary, contemplating the monument with its unique and heterogeneous portrait gallery, it might have evoked the impression of a specific Hellenistic quality of internationality and cosmopolitan Greek ambience. This in turn aimed at associating the international prestige and recognition of Mithridates and his rule, an important pillar of Hellenistic kingship, especially with the Greek world.

Here the initiator of the monument, Helianax, in his capacity as a non-Pontic elite exponent of Greek culture is again involved. Obviously, these traits of Mithridatic kingship viewed by him as especially worthy to be emphasised and praised, were – in his opinion – also suited to be presented to the international visitors of the Greek island of Delos. Last but not least this message was further underlined by his own credibility as a Delian priest from Athens.

So the monument reflects – and only at this point we may be approaching my initial optimistic idea – for ancient contemporaries perceptible qualities of Mithridatic kingship. Vice versa, monuments like the one erected by Helianax underline these qualities and verify a certain influence of them on the perception of Mithridates in the Greek world.

Notes

- 1 See for example the comprehensive works Hintzen-Bohlen 1992; Bringmann 1995; 2000; Ameling, Bringmann & Schmidt-Dounas 1995; Kotsidu 2000.
- 2 The extension of the refuge of the Sanctuary of Artemis at Ephesos by Mithridates (Strabon 14.1.23) hardly resulted in any building initiatives, but should be seen as a merely symbolic act (in the tradition of Alexander the Great).
- 3 Reflected by the honorary statues for Mithridates and his brother Chrestos, erected by the *gymnasiarchos* Dionysios, son of Neon, in response to a donation to the gymnasium: *IDelos* 1560 = Ameling, Bringmann & Schmidt-Dounas 1995, 229-230, no. 191.
- 4 Donation of one hundred talents to support reconstruction works in Phrygian Apameia after an earthquake (Strabon 12.8.18); a package of donations promised to the Athenians in 88 BC (Ameling, Bringmann & Schmidt-Dounas 1995, 81-82, no. 36).
- 5 Ameling, Bringmann & Schmidt-Dounas 1995, 94-95, no. 48 (App. *Mith.* 112).
- 6 *IDelos* 1560.
- 7 *IDelos* 1561 = Kotsidu 2000, 456-457, no. *336, fig. 77-78 (marble stele?, Serapeion C).
- 8 *IDelos* 2039; *IDelos* 2040.

- 9 *IDelos* 1566 = Kotsidu 2000, 458-459, no. *339 (small marble pillar, Mt. Kynthos); Kotsidu 2000, 456, no. *335 (block from an architrave, Serapeion); *IDelos* 1564 = Kotsidu 2000, 457-458, no. *337 (statue base, Serapeion C); *IDelos* 1565 = Kotsidu 2000, 458, no. *338 (statue base), as well as, maybe, *IDelos* 1568 (from the Asklepieion: McGing 1986, 92, n. 20).
- 10 *IDelos* 1567 = Kotsidu 2000, 459-460, no. *340 (original Delian provenance hypothetical).
- 11 McGing 1986, 92, n. 21 & 23.
- 12 Kotsidu 2000, 399, no. 281.
- 13 Cic. *Verr.* 2.2.159.
- 14 Erciyas 2006, 154-155.
- 15 Preferred places were the area of the sanctuary of Apollon, the *dromos* between South-Stoa and the Stoa of Philippos, but also the area between Dodekatheon and the Agora of Theophrastos, see Kotsidu 2000, 519-520.
- 16 Donations: Ameling, Bringmann & Schmidt-Dounas 1995, no. 35 (Pharnakes I); nos. 190 and 316 (both Mithridates V); honours: Kotsidu 2000, nos. 43 and 147 (golden wreaths and statues of Pharnakes I and his wife Nysa).
- 17 This might also have been the case with the statues of Mithridates VI presented in Rome during the triumphs of Pompeius (statue made of silver; Plin. *HN* 33.151; of gold: App. *Mith.* 116) and Lucullus (gilded bronze statue; Plut. *Luc.* 37).
- 18 On the portraiture of Mithridates in general, see e.g. Smith 1988, 99-100 & 121-124, and Højte in this volume.
- 19 Smith 1988, 123, pls. 51, 52.1-2; Erciyas 2006, 148; McGing 1986, 99-101; see Højte in the following chapter (indicating a possible earlier date).
- 20 McGing 1986, 99-101; Smith 1988, 99-100; Erciyas 2006, 151 & 154-158.
- 21 Smith 1988, pls. 52.3-4 (Ostia); pls. 53.1-2 (Athens).
- 22 Smith 1988, pls. 54.6-7 ("Inopos-head"); pls. 55.1-3 (NM 429, from the sanctuary of Apollon) and 55.5-7 (Horned King, from the Dodekatheon).
- 23 Smith 1988, pls. 54.1-3 (Odessa); pls. 54.4-5 (Pantikapaion).
- 24 Krug 1969, 189-195.
- 25 Demonstrated in particular by Kleiner 1953.
- 26 Erciyas 2006, 158 (possibly successors, imitating the portrait of Mithridates).
- 27 Kraemer 1925, 202-203; Kleiner 1953, 88; Erciyas 2006, 151-154.
- 28 McGing 1986, 100.
- 29 Hintzen-Bohlen (1990, 145-156) and Fröhlich (1998, 262-264, no. 5 with older literature) argue against an identification with Mithridates, favouring instead a member of the Attalid dynasty.
- 30 For a comprehensive discussion on the Delian monument: Chapouthier 1935, 13-42; Risom 1948, 204-209; and recently Erciyas 2006, 135-146.
- 31 Chapouthier 1935, 79-92; Bruneau & Ducat 1965, 221-222, no. 93 (sanctuary of the Samothracian gods); 222-223, no. 94 (monument for Mithridates).
- 32 The cults of this sanctuary chosen for the monument – and therefore its erection there – have been associated with Mithridates and the Pontic Kingdom by Ballesteros-Pastor (2006), arguing for a specific significance of this location. Such an importance of the gods venerated in the Delian sanctuary in the Pontic Kingdom as well seems to contradict the study by Olshausen (1990, 1879) which mentions only isolated Pontic evidence concerning the Dioskouroi, and (1990, 1904), which points out the lack of numismatic and epigraphic evidence on a Pontic cult of the Kabeiroi (despite the place name Kabeira).

- 33 Although the main inscription on the architrave refers to the building as *naos*, it is not a religious building in the strict sense of the word. Neither the inscriptions nor the architecture of the building provide firm evidence for cultic worship of Mithridates, i.e. a ruler-cult. This is further supported by the lack of concrete traces of cultic activities (Erciyas 2006, 139). The term “*naos*” therefore refers mainly to the architectural appearance in a more general sense, not the specific function of the building as place for the cultic worship of Mithridates.
- 34 Chapouthier 1935, figs. 36-39 & 43; Risom 1948, fig. 3 & pls. 1-4.
- 35 *IDelos* 1563; Chapouthier 1935, 38, fig. 49; Risom 1948, 206. The inscription also mentions his *arete* and his *eunoia* towards the Athenian people.
- 36 The connection of the well-known cuirassed statue in the Delos museum (no. A 4173; Marcadé 1969, pl. 75) with the inscribed statue base supposedly erected in the building mentioning Mithridates has been challenged by Marcadé (1969, 331) who objects that the cavity of the base and the partly preserved plinth of the statue do not correspond. In addition, he assigns a second fragmented cuirassed statue to the monument (Delos Museum A 4242; Marcadé 1969, 331-333, pl. 75). The existence of an additional cuirassed statue from the same context and the lacking fit of the first statue with its supposed base eliminate the necessity to unite statue and inscribed base and have led to the suggestion that both sculptures do not portray Mithridates at all but rather high-ranking Pontic officers (even if the statue A 4173 is clearly over life-size): Marcadé 1969, 331; Stemmer 1978, 139, nr. 139; F. Queyrel, in Marcadé (ed.) 1996, 198, no. 89. But even if we leave the two fragmented statues unconsidered, the inscription of the statue base *IDelos* 1563 mentions the name of Mithridates in the accusative also used in the medaillon-inscriptions to identify the persons depicted. In analogy we should expect a statue of Mithridates in the context of the monument, even if the statue itself may be missing.
- 37 Chapouthier 1935, 39, fig. 51 (in contrast to *IDelos* 1563 without mentioning Mithridates).
- 38 Risom 1948, Abb. 2; Gross 1954, figs. 4-5; Erciyas (2006, 140) considers the mutilation and destruction of the portrait-heads as an act of “*damnatio memoriae*”.
- 39 Interpreted as Roman cuirass, *paludamentum*, and toga (for Greeks and Parthians!) by Gross 1954, 110 & 112-113 and followed e.g. by McGing 1986, 99-91 and Strobel 1996, 148, n. 20. However, the costume of the persons depicted in the medallions as well as the military garb of the statues connected to the monument have also been identified – more probable in this context – as a late Hellenistic cuirass and Greek cloak: Vermeule 1959-1960, 32, no. 1; Marcadé 1969, 320-321; Stemmer 1978, 139, n. 472; Marcadé (ed.) 1996, 198; Fröhlich 1998, 213-214, no. 5.
- 40 *IDelos* 1569; Chapouthier 1935, 36. The proposal of Erciyas (2006, 142) that the pediment portrait shows Mithridates himself finds no support in the accompanying inscription.
- 41 Gaios: *IDelos* 1570; Chapouthier 1935, 32, no. 1. The son of Antipatros: *IDelos* 1571; Chapouthier 1935, 32, no. 2. Dorylaos: *IDelos* 1572; Chapouthier 1935, 32, no. 3.
- 42 Erciyas (2006, 142) argues for the Arsakid king himself, although the inscription mentions the king in the genitive case and the depicted person in the accusative, as is usual in the inscriptions on the monument.
- 43 Member of the Arsakid court: *IDelos* 1581; Chapouthier 1935, 33-34, no. 10. Papias: *IDelos* 1573; Chapouthier 1935, 34, no. 12.

- 44 Diophantos: *IDelos* 1574; Chapouthier 1935, 32, no. 4. Ariarathes: *IDelos* 1576; Chapouthier 1935, 33, no. 5. Antiochos: *IDelos* 1552; Chapouthier 1935, 33, no. 6. Asklepiodoros: Chapouthier 1935, 33, no. 7. Official of the Arsakid court: *IDelos* 1582; Chapouthier 1935, 33, no. 9.
- 45 Erciyas 2006, 142.
- 46 *IDelos* 1562; Chapouthier 1935, 34-35; Sanders & Catling 1990.
- 47 *App. Mith.* 10, 12, 14, 56; the Dikaios-inscription *IDelos* 2039 (94/93 BC) also mentions *demos athenaion* and the Roman people. For Mithridates' father, Mithridates V, as a friend of Rome: *App. Mith.* 10.
- 48 For instance by Erciyas 2006, 142-143.
- 49 *Just. Epit.* 38.5, 38.7 (speech of Mithridates); *App. Mith.* 112. It goes without saying that these claims – already enunciated in a similar way by Mithridates' predecessors – mainly had a legitimising and ennobling, i.e. ideological, function and were not meant to proclaim a historical truth, see e.g. McGing 1986, 13.
- 50 E.g. in Delphi the Daochos-monument or in Delos the monument of the *progonoi* of Antigonos Gonatas.
- 51 The literary sources mention various allies of Mithridates, whether real ones or just claimed ones: Parthians, Medes, Armenians, Thracians, Scythians, Sarmatians, Bastarnai, Iberians and even Seleukids and Ptolemies: Memnon, *FGrH* 343 F 1, 22.4 (even if they seem to have a slightly different understanding of the alleged alliance: *FGrH* 343 F 1, 29.6); *App. Mith.* 13, 15.
- 52 Strobel 1996, 187.
- 53 *Oros.* 6.4.6; Olshausen 1974, in particular the catalogue of names.

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Abbreviations

- IDelos* A. Plassart, F. Durrbach et al. 1926-1972. *Inscriptions de Délos* 1-7. Paris.
- IOSPE* B. Latyshev 1885-1916. *Inscriptiones antiquae orae septentrionalis Ponti Euxini Graecae et Latinae*. Petropolis (reprint Hildesheim 1965).