A Woman's Touch
Hygieia, Health and Incubation[1]

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In this paper, I argue that Hygieia has to be viewed as a full goddess in Greek religion and medicine, with a special focus on her position within the Asklepios cult. I will examine her identity, to which scholars attribute several labels like goddess, abstraction and personification. I further argue that Hygieia's role in performing incubation rituals gradually became as important as that of her mythological father Asklepios, by examining her representation and the meaning of the ancient concept of health (ὑγίεια).

Keywords: Hygieia; goddess; personification; ancient medicine; incubation ritual

Introduction

Modern medicine has its origin in the ancient world.[2] The oldest civilizations used magic and herbs to cure diseases, but they also used religion and rituals to free them from harm and to protect their health. The medical care of today has its roots in ancient Greece.[3] With the introduction of Asklepios and Hygieia into Athens, there sprouted a very important healing cult, that existed from about 500 BC until 500 AD. Incubation or temple sleep formed the core of the Asklepios cult, in which patients would visit an Asklepieion to be cured from their diseases. After performing several prepatory rites, such as offering, fasting, praying and purification, patients would be guided at nightfall to the temple, where they had to sleep on a bed (*klinē*) or on animal skins. During sleep, a god or hero would appear in their dreams and

[1] I would like to thank Prof. Assoc. Tomáš Alušík Phd. for the opportunity to revise my paper on Hygieia I presented at the Historicization Congress in 2011 (University of Bergen, Norway). Second, I would like to thank prof. dr. Emma Stafford (University of Leeds) for her valuable comments on my article. In closing, I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments.

[2] Martyn Evans, Pekka Louhiala and Raimo Puustinen, *Philosophy for Medicine: Applications in a Clinical Context* (Oxford/San Francisco: Radcliffe Medical Press, 2003), 114–115. Mesopotamia and Egypt influenced Greece, so medicine did not develop in a vacuum.

[3] Andrew D. Gregory, "Magic, Curses, and Healing," in Georgia L. Irby, ed., *A Companion to Science, Technology, and Medicine in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2016), 418–433, there 418–425.

cure them instantly by operation, touch, or given a receipt. After awakening, the patient was cured and healthy again and offered a votive to thank the god or hero.[4] Although Asklepios is the protagonist of this cult, Hygieia is also dominant, but plays a very unusual role in Greek religion, because of her unclear identity. She was mythologically connected to Asklepios in the fifth century BC as either his wife, sister or as one of his daughters. Mainly, as father and daughter, they became the most famous healing couple within the Graeco-Roman world.[5] Still, one of the main problems is her identity. She has been given several names within modern literature since the late nineteenth century. Terms like goddess, personification, abstraction, and extension of Asklepios are just a few of the labels given to her. It is an interesting question why modern scholars use different names for Hygieia, when ancient sources literally state that she is a goddess. To determine her identity correctly, we must examine ancient sources and modern literature. First, we look at how ancient sources describe Hygieia.

Ancient sources[6]

The number of ancient sources which describe Hygieia differ in time, geographical origin and medium. The poet and orator Likymnios described Hygieia around 420 BC as "Bright-eyed mother, highest queen of Apollo's august throne, desirable, laughing gently Health".[7] Next, Hygieia is mentioned right after Apollo and Asklepios in the *Oath of Hippocrates*, which was probably composed after the fourth century

4 Hedvig von Ehrenheim, *Greek Incubation Rituals in Classical and Hellenistic Times* (Liège: Press Universitaires de Liège, 2015), 18–23; Gil Renberg, *Where Dreams May Come. Incubation Sanctuaries in the Graeco-Roman World* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2017), 7–19.

5 M. Alcock, "Introducing Hygieia. The family tree," *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health, Volume* 57, Issue 6 (2003): 394; Emma Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues. Personification and the Divine in the Ancient Greece* (London: Duckworth and The Classical Press of Wales, 2000), 159; Vivian Nutton, *Ancient Medicine. Second Edition* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 37–38, 107.

6 This section was previously published in a slightly different version in Mark Beumer, "Hygieia. Identity, Cult and Reception," *Kleio-Historia*, nr. 3. (2016): 2–3. I have added extra sources here.

7 *Likymnios,* Fragment 769 in David A. Campbell, ed., *Greek Lyric V. The New School of Poetry and Anonymous Songs and Hymns.* Loeb Classical Library 144 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 35; P.M.H. Lardinois, J.H. Blok & M.G.M. van der Poel, eds., *Sacred Words: Orality, Literacy and Religion. Orality and Literacy in the Ancient World,* Vol. 8 (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2011), 220.

BC but there is no consensus about the exact date in scholarship. The first line reads as follows: "I swear by Apollo Iatros, by Asklepios, by Hygieia, by Panakeia, and by all the gods and goddesses, making them my witnesses, that I will carry out, according to my ability and judgment, this oath and this indenture".[8] Robin Lane Fox describes this problem in more detail, stating that since Galen, dates for the Oath have varied from 500 BC to the Hellenistic period circa 300–100 BC.[9] Next, Pausanias (115–180 AD) wrote a description of Greece which includes discussion of buildings and monuments he saw which date back to the Archaic and Classical periods'.[10] Pausanias mentions temples and statues, but also historical events, although he is much more reliable as an archaeologist since his archaeological data have been confirmed by modern excavations.[11] His historical stories are less reliable, because he sometimes quotes the work of previous authors like Herodotos indiscriminately.[12] The *Orphic Hymns* are a collection of hymns in which Hygieia often occurs. After a long discussion about the dating, there is now a consensus that this collection originates in the third century AD from Western Anatolia. In *Hymn to Hygieia*, Hygieia is not described as a goddess or personification. The first two lines say:

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8 Hippocrates, *Oath of Hippocrates*. See Owsei Temkin and C. Lilian Temkin (eds.), *Ancient medicine: selected papers of Ludwig Edelstein* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1967), 1, 55–63. The *Corpus Hippocraticum* is wrongly attributed to Hippocrates (ca. 460–370 BC).

9 Robin Lane Fox, *The Invention of Medicine. From Homer to Hippocrates* (London: Penguin Random House UK, 2020), 109–113. Besides the problem of dating, Lane Fox also addresses that there is also the problem of translation, as the Oath's Greek is not always straightforward.

10 See Peter Kranz, *Hygieia – Die Frau an Asklepios' Seite. Untersuchungen zu Darstellung und Funktion in klassischer und hellenistischer Zeit unter Einbeziehung der Gestalt des Asklepios* (Möhnesee: Bibliopolis, 2010), 1–6, who questions this thesis on the basis of this votive relief which includes discussion of buildings and monuments he saw which date back to the archaic and classical periods which includes discussion of buildings and monuments he saw which date back to the archaic and classical periods''. Kranz assumes that "Hygieia" has taken the place of another female deity and criticizes Pausanias' assumption of the Hygieia identification.

11 Maria Pretzler, *Pausanias. Travel Writing in Ancient Greece*, Londen: Bristol Classical Press, 2007), 12–13.

12 Pretzler, *Pausanias*, 55–56); Christian Habicht, *Pausanias' Guide to Ancient Greece*, Londen: University of California Press, 1998), 103, 133. This book includes discussion of buildings and monuments he saw which date back to the archaic and classical periods' view that Pausanias takes over uncritically Herodotos or quotes, is in opposition to the thought that Pausanias writes nothing about what other authors such as Herodotos have said.

"Queen of all, charming, beautiful and blooming, blessed Hygieia, mother of all, bringer of prosperity, hear me".[13] Finally, the *Hymn to Hygieia* is attributed to Ariphron of Sikyon, but was erroneously attributed by Sextus Empiricus to Likymnios. Although Ariphron is seen as a late Classical or early Hellenistic poet, his hymn will only be confirmed into the third century AD.[14] The source material consists of two inscriptions. One inscription from Attica was found on a stone[15] in Kassel and is dated in the third century AD. The second inscription is from Epidauros and is situated in the second or third century AD.[16] In the first line we read: "Health, most cherished of gods for men". Summarizing, we can state that Hygieia is described in varied ways in sources by different authors between the fifth century BC and the third century AD, which address Hygieia as a pivotal religious figure responsible for good health, preventive medicine and cures for various maladies. Hygieia has been described among other gods, as a noun with a capital H and without defining her as goddess or personification. Now, I will turn to modern scholarship, where I focus only on monographs.

Modern scholarship

In order to examine Hygieia correctly, I give an overview of previous scholarship before advancing on my own interpretation. Concerning Hygieia, we have a limited number of monographs concerning this figure. The first book was written by Hildegard Sobel in 1990 and is titled *Hygieia. Göttin der Gesundheit* (*Hygieia. Goddess of Health*). In her book, she aims to give a view of Hygieia over eight centuries, using archaeological material such as inscriptions and statues, and discusses items like hairdressing and different statuesque poses. She also describes the genesis of the Hygieia cult together with her mythological father Asklepios and acknowledges

[13] Jan N. Bremmer and Andrew Erskine, eds., *The Gods of Ancient Greece. Identities and Transformations* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 394. For an overview of the debate about the *Orphic Hymns* see Radcliffe G. Edmonds, "Who are you? A brief history of the scholarship," in Radcliffe G. Edmonds III, ed., *The Orphic Gold Tablets and Greek Religion. Further along the path* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 3–14.

[14] Lardinois, Blok & van der Poel, *Sacred Words*, 220.

[15] This stone would be taken by Greek-speaking soldiers in the Roman army as talisman to their garrison cities. The function as anthem would then fall away, because singing just before an attack seems unlikely. See H.S. Versnel, ed., *Faith, Hope and Worship: Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World.* Volume 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 210.

[16] *IG* IV² 1, 132. I accept the second and third century AD as date.

the separate cult of Athena Hygieia. The snake is also part of this book, due to the fact that and Asklepios were brought to Athens in the form of snakes. Her time frame is 400 BC until 400 AD. She does not describe the meaning of health itself in Antiquity. Hygieia. Sobel views Hygieia as a goddess and as personification, but favors the term goddess, although she also defines Hygieia as a cultic personification next to Tyche, Nemesis, Nike and Eros.[17]

The second book, *The Worship of Asklepios and Hygieia in Arkadia*, was written by Elpis Mitropoulou in 2001. She discusses only reliefs and statues that depict Asklepios and Hygieia. She describes the different poses and images and designates her as goddess.[18] The third publication was written in 2003 by Iphigeneia Leventi and is titled *Hygieia in Classical Greek Art*, which is based on her doctoral thesis (1992).[19] Here, Leventi refers to Hygieia as the Greek goddess of health, but also mentions the debate about her identity as goddess and personification since the nineteenth century. Next, the fourth book was written in 2005 by Sarah Brill and is also a doctoral thesis, entitled *Hygieia: Health and Medicine in Plato's Republic*. Health, by default, has proven to be as fertile a source of philosophical interest as it is enigmatic.[20]

The fifth book on Hygieia was published in 2010 by Peter Kranz and is titled *Hygieia – Die Frau an Asklepios' Seite. Untersuchungen zu Darstellung und Funktion in klassischer und hellenistischer Zeit unter Einbeziehung der Gestalt des Asklepios* (*Hygieia – The Woman at Asklepios' Side. Investigations into Representation and Function in Classical and Hellenistic Times including the Figure of Asklepios*).[21] He argues that, among the ancient deities, the figure of Hygieia remains remarkably poorly defined. With the exception of Athena Hygieia, Hygieia then left before the end of the fifth century BC, apparently neither having proven a cult image. But then it is attested not only as one among several female personifications – such as on the vases during the Meidias time – but we also know votive reliefs from the side of Asklepios. This book examines in addition to some supposedly early products of cult worship or pictorial representation of Hygieia, during the time of Meidias, their first appearance on Attic votive reliefs of the late fifth and fourth century BC and vases and reliefs as reaction to the introduction of the cult in 420/19 BC. The so-called Telemachos-

17 Hildegard Sobel, *Hygieia. Die Göttin der Gesundheit* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft ,1990), 1, 6–11.

18 Elpida Mitropoulou, *The Worship of Asklepios and Hygieia in Arkadia* (Athens: Georgiadis, 2001), 44–47, 49–53, 67–68, 81, 90.

19 Iphigeneia Leventi., *Hygieia in Classical Greek Art* (Athens: Archaiognōsia, 2003), 29–31.

20 Sarah Brill, *Hygieia: Health and Medicine in Plato's Republic* (PhD diss., Pennsylvania State University, 2005).

21 Kranz, Hygieia – *Die Frau an Asklepios' Seite*.

Monument from the early fourth century BC gives a very detailed description of the introduction and the origin of the Asklepios' cult (Fig.1). The inscription explains that Telemachos first set u which includes a discussion of buildings and monuments he saw which date back to the archaic and classical periods' the sanctuary and altar of Asklepios and Hygieia, the Asklepiadae and the daughters of Asklepios. Asklepios, who came up from Zea during the Great Mysteries, arrived at the Eleusinion where Telemachos, having sent for temple attendants from the god's home (on the Akropolis), brought him in accordance with the Oracle to the Akropolis in a chariot. Hygieia came along with him and thus this whole sanctuary was established when Astyphillos was archon in 420/19 BC. On the monument is an upright Asklepios, on his right a female figure seated on a table (Hygieia), and beneath her a dog. On the left is a smaller figure depicted, who raises his hands as if in prayer. This is likely Telemachos.[22] While Hygieia is not differentiated from other personifications on the vase paintings, she appears on the votive reliefs in matronly form first, then later as a youthful figure, where her appearance obviously is bound to no firm figure type – in contrast to Asklepios, because he has a more fixed iconography. Kranz discusses her status as goddess and personification within this context, where he follows Stafford. He concludes that in no way she could be a goddess next to Asklepios and therefore must be a (special) personification.

Sixth, in 2014, *Hygieia. Health, Illness, Treatment from Homer to Galen* was published as a catalog for the eponymous exhibition at the Museum for Cycladic Art in Athens by Nicholas Chr. Stampolidis and Yorgos Tassoulas.[23] In this publication, Hygieia is described as personification and goddess. Stampolidis states: "This is why, in the history of ancient Greek medicine, the gods – many possessing healing abilities – appear first and among them Asklepios, the foremost god of the art of healing. It is only much later that his daughter Hygieia appears and is personified, representing the system of those pre-Socratic philosophical observations and assumptions that keep the body physically and mentally balanced and therefore healthy".[24] Next, it is also stated that Hygieia is a goddess who is equally divine as Asklepios.[25]

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22 Ibid., 44.

23 Nicholas Chr. Stampolidis and Yorgos Tassoulas, eds., *Hygieia. Health, Illness, Treatment from Homer to Galen* (Athens: Museum for Cycladic Art, 2014);

24 Nicholas Chr. Stampolidis, "Preface," in Nicholas Chr. Stampolidis and Yorgos Tassoulas, eds., *Hygieia. Health, Illness, Treatment from Homer to Galen* (Athens: Museum for Cycladic Art, 2014), xx.

25 Anagnostis P. Agelarakis, "Veteran's Wounds: Traces of Ancient Greek Surgeon-Physicians," in Nicholas Chr. Stampolidis and Yorgos Tassoulas, eds., *Hygieia. Health, Illness, Treatment from Homer to Galen* (Athens: Museum for Cycladic Art, 2014), 76–85, there 85; Mario

The last book was published by me in 2015, titled *Hygieia. Godin of Personificatie?* (*Hygieia. Goddess or Personification?*) in which I examined Hygieia as personification and goddess. I concluded that Hygieia cannot be viewed as a personification, since this is a post-medieval term which does not relate to the Greek concepts of *prosōpopoiia* and *ēthopoiia* which are related to putting speech in the mouth of a character and are connected to theatre.[26] It is striking is that most publications do not pay attention to the ancient concept of health, other than Sarah Brill. We can further conclude that most monographs pay (briefly) attention to the debate about Hygieia's identity, where Kranz and Beumer are the most outspoken scholars, who have opposite views concerning Hygieia's identity. So, we still have to examine the identity of Hygieia, before which I first will examine the concept of *prosōpopoiia* and personification.

From *prosōpopoiia* to personification[27]

The concept of personification is a post-medieval term.[28] Although scholars agree that the term personification is not an ancient term, it does not mean that personification as a phenomenon did not exist in Antiquity.[29] For example, although the Greeks

Iozzo, "107. Anatomical Votive 3rd–2nd c. BC," in Nicholas Chr. Stampolidis and Yorgos Tassoulas, eds., *Hygieia. Health, Illness, Treatment from Homer to Galen* (Athens: Museum for Cycladic Art, 2014), 235; Kalliopi Bairami, "54 Statue of Hygieia 3rd c. AD," in Nicholas Chr. Stampolidis and Yorgos Tassoulas, eds., *Hygieia. Health, Illness, Treatment from Homer to Galen* (Athens: Museum for Cycladic Art, 2014), 171–172, there 172.

[26] Mark Beumer, *Hygieia. Godin of Personificatie?* (Assen: Boekscout, 2e druk 2016).

[27] The section about *prosōpopoiia* and personification was earlier published in a different version in Mark Beumer, "Hygieia. A New Conceptual Approach? Second Edition," *Kleio-Historia*, nr. 12. (2020): 45–60, there 51–57.

[28] Nicolette Zeeman, *The Arts of Disruption. Allegory and Piers Plowman* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 20.

[29] Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 5; Karl Reinhardt, *Vermächtnis der Antike. Gesammelte Essays zur Philosophie und Geschichtsschreibung*. Herausgegeben von Carl Becker. Unveränderter Nachdruck der zweiten, durchgesehenen und erweiterten Auflage (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), 8–9; Wolfgang Messerschmidt, *Prosopopoiia: Personifikationen politischen Charakters in spätklassischer und hellenistischer Kunst* (Köln: Bohlau Verlag, 2003), 1; Barbara Borg, *Der Logos des Mythos: Allegorien und Personifikationen in der frühen griechischen Kunst* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2002), 49; Amy C. Smith, *Polis and Personification in Classical Athenian Art* (Brill: Leiden • Boston, 2011), 11; H.A. Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art: The Representation of Abstract Concepts 600–400 B.C.* (Akanthus: Kilchberg/Zürich, 1993), 12.

did not have a proper term for religion, they were very religious.[30] The main focus is on archaic Greece which Reinhardt labels as the time of true, genuine and great personifications.[31] Different authors like Allan Shapiro, Emma Stafford, Amy C. Smith and Wolfgang Messerschmidt argue that *prosōpopoiia* is the only concept that is known as indicating something like personification.[32] Karl Reindhardt argues that the term personification without doubt is the humanistic translation of *prosōpopoiia*.[33] Demetrios of Phaleron defines this concept for the first time in the late fourth century BC as placing the private thoughts and arguments into the mouth of another person, which is actually not a person, because he is either died or cannot be understood literally as a person, such as countries, peoples, cities or abstractions. *Prosōpopoiia* refers to *ēthopoiia*, which means "mask" and appears in a dramatic context. *Prosōpopoiia* also has a wider meaning in rhetorical treatises in which *prosōpopoiia* means speaking with the voice of a character that is not actually present, real or imaginary and when a thing or condition is put up a "mask".[34] Still, this term is not identical with the meaning of personification.[35] The most comprehensive definition of *prosōpopoiia* is given by the first century AD retor Aelius Theon:

> "*Prosōpopoiia* is the representation of a character speaking words appropiate both to itself and to the known circumstances, e.g. a man about to leave home would say certain words to his wife, or a general to his soldiers about their dangers. Also, in the case of characters already known, e.g. Cyrus would say certain words as he marched against the Massagetai, or Datis after the battle of Marathon on meeting the King. Into this category of exercise fall also the figures of panegyric, persuasion (*protreptic*) and commission (*epistolic*). So, first of all one has to consider carefully what kind of character the speaker has, and the place and circumstances, and

[30] For this discussion see Nickolas P. Roubekas, "Thrēskeia: From Etymology to Ideology and the Academic Study of Ancient Greek Religion," *Journal of Hellenic Religion* 12 (2019): 39–59; Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion. A History of a Modern Concept* (Yale University Press 2013); Carlin A. Barton and Daniel Boyarin, *Imagine No Religion: How Modern Abstractions Hide Ancient Realities* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016).

[31] Reinhardt, *Vermächtnis der Antike*, 13.

[32] Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 12; Smith, *Polis and Personification*, 11–12; Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 3; Messerschmidt, *Prosopopoiia*, 1.

[33] Reinhardt, *Vermächtnis der Antike*, 8.

[34] Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 5–6; Messerschmidt, *Prosopopoiia*, 1; Reinhardt, *Vermächtnis der Antike*, 8–9.

[35] Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 5; Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 12.

> the subject matter proposed about which his words will speak; then one could try out the prepared speech, for different words are appropiate for different people, according to their age… This exercise is especially good for displaying character and feeling."[36]

A character is often wrongly equated to a person and refers to personal qualities, such as anger or jealousy. In the matter of Hygieia, character refers to health, but character is not a personal property, since a person who is not healthy is still seen as a person. Stafford cites Quintilian, who gives the most detailed description of *prosōpopoiia* as a "representation of characters", but encompassing also all literary and visual personifications.[37] Stafford also cites Hermogenes of Tarsos who differentiates *ēthopoiia* from *prosōpopoiia*. According to Hermogenes, *ēthopoiia* is the representation of the underlying character of a person. One speaks of *prosōpopoiia*, when a character is attributed to a thing, as evidence (*elenchos*) in Menander, or in Aristeides where the sea holds a speech to the Athenians.[38] This is really something else: with *ēthopoiia* words for a real character are created, with *prosōpopoiia* words are attributed to a character that does not really exist, thus *prosōpopoiia* is used to identify non-existent figures within the context of drama.[39] Hygieia does not fit this concept. In addition, Hygieia is a real figure for the Athenians who protects and restores health. Numerous inscriptions and votive reliefs are silent witnesses.[40] In Latin, *prosōpopoiia* is translated as *fictio personae* or *personae confictio*. Stafford argues that *personae factio* is the literal translation.[41] Also, *conformatio* and *personarum ficta inductio* are mentioned.[42] The term *personificatio* was first attested in the Middle Ages. What the Greek and Latin terms have in common is that they primarily designate dramatic or rhetorical processes in both Antiquity and modernity. Ancient literature did not coin any term for the

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36 Aelius Theon (*Progymnasmata*, ed. Spengel, *Rhetores Graeci* II, 115.11–28), cited in Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 6.

37 Contra Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 6.

38 George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Brill: Leiden/Boston, 2003), 84. The speech of the Sea to the Athenians in the works of Aristeides is no longer traceable. There footnote 43.

39 *Progymnasmata* 9.1–7.

40 F.T. van Straten, *Hiera Kala. Images of Animal Sacrifice in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Brill: Leiden • New York • Köln, 1995), 63–72.

41 Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 5.

42 Andreas Bendlin und Alan H. Shapiro, "Personifikationen," in Hubert Cancik und Helmuth Schneider, Hrsg., *Der Neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der Antike* (Stuttgart • Weimar: Verlag J.B. Metzler, 2000), 639.

representation of personifications in art; the terms used in literary theory did not apply to the visual arts. That is to say, the method under discussion here, of representing abstract concepts, political institutions and corporations, peoples, countries and cities well through the embodiment of a person in visual arts, was never seen by Greek and Roman authors as a problem of art theory. It was only in modern art history that the term personification found its appropriate use.[43] Stafford elaborated further on the linguistic dynamic between the Greek and Latin terms. She cites the following:

> "*Allocutio* is the representation of speech appropiate to the character and the supposed *personae*, so Andromache would have said certain words to the dead Hector. *Conformatio*, however, which the Greeks call *prosōpopoiia*, is when a thing is given a persona in which to speak, contrary to its nature, so Cicero gives words to the Fatherland (*patria*) and the Republic (*res publica*) in reproach. There is, moreover, *simulacra factio*, which the Greeks call *eidōlopoiia*, when words are given to the dead, as Cicero did in his *Pro Caelio*, giving words against Clodia to Appia Caecus."[44]

Although Hygieia is mentioned in several poems, she does not speak herself. If we accept Hermogenes' simple definition of *ēthopoiia* as a representation of the underlying character of a person, Hygieia can fit into this concept, since health is part of human life and because it is personified as a young woman. All the other ancient concepts and definitions cannot be applied to Hygieia. With this observation, the whole basis for the discussion concerning *prosōpopoiia* and Hygieia is shaky at best, but we first must examine the modern concept of personification further, to draw final conclusions.

Personification has several angles. Roscher, Deubner, Hastings and Shapiro consider personification in connection with inspiration.[45] Shapiro sees personification in literature only as a mental exercise to get a calculated effect, such as "Sondergötter"

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[43] Messerschmidt, *Prosopopoiia*, 1.

[44] Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 7.

[45] L. Deubner, "Personifikationen abstrakter Begriffe," in W.H. Roscher *Ausfürliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*. III Nabaothes – Pasicharea (Leipzig: Druck und Verlag von B. G. Teubner, 1897–1902), 2068–2169; James Hastings, "Personification," *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.* Volume IX Mundas-Phrygians (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1917): 781–803. The two main problems are the exact meaning of personification for man and the reconstruction of the psychological mechanism behind personification; Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 12.

or "Augenblicksgötter" and criticises Webster, who says that personified deities don't have their own identity such as the Olympians, but are only deified in times of great emotion. According to Shapiro, these figures often achieve both persistence and individuality.[46] Borg argues that Webster comes closest to the problem in viewing that man "is surrounded by things physical, animate, and invisible which are insufficiently understood. Personification is a means of taking hold of things which suddenly appear startlingly uncontrollable and independent [...] These all seem to have some kind of life and so are in some way human". His distinction between deifications, strong and weak personifications and "technical terms" represents a considerably differentiated concept compared to the one just mentioned, which above all has the advantage of not elevating every personification to be treated as a deity.[47] Karl Lehmann argues that when a personification receives a cult with prayers, sacrifices, hope and fear of suppliants, this is a real deity like other deities, which means that a distinction between personifications and gods is no longer needed.[48] Stafford adds cult statues and altars to this list.[49] Unlike Lehmann, Reinhardt claims that personifications of theater and fable were originally actual gods. Personifications of the stage were preceded by the god behind the mask, but Shapiro questions whether a distinction was really made between personified divinities and other gods.[50] The true origins of personification remain obscure, and the same goes for the question of whether gods emerged from personifications or vice versa, but I guess he tends to favour the process from personifications to gods, based on his remark that Greek and Romans "naturally made things and ideas into gods".[51] Reinhardt is sure that there is no single personification that is not demonstrably created after the model of the gods, be it as satellite or as follower, be it as an

[46] Shapiro accepts Nilsson's argument concerning the transformation from simple nouns tot living figures as mere intellectual process. The title *Sondergötter* is created by Hermann Usener. See Hermann Usener, *Götternamen: Versuch einer Lehre von der religiösen Begriffsbildung* (Bonn: F. Cohen, 1896), 75–79; Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 12; Robin Mitchell-Boyask, *Plague and the Athenian Imagination. Drama, History, and the Cult of Asclepius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 116; Deubner, "Personifikationen abstrakter Begriffe," 2069; Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 12.

[47] Barbara E. Borg, *Der Logos der Mythos. Allegorien und Personifikationen in der frühen griechischen Kunst* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2002), 53.

[48] Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 12. Lehmann means specific the fifth century BC.

[49] Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 2.

[50] Reinhardt, *Vermächtnis der Antike*, 8.

[51] Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 12–13. Reinhardt follows this argument. See Reinhardt, *Vermächtnis der Antike*, 7–8.

ancestor or descendant, or as an enemy and opposed or as always, whether with or without cult and by virtue of which, be it poetic on speculative genealogy.[52] Despite this problem, Shapiro argues that we can rightly label gods as personifications, in that they were felt to embody the essence of the abstraction. Philologists speak further of strong and weak personifications: which figures are completely deified with associated mythology and what figures remain one-dimensional and appear once and develop no further?[53] Deubner sees an evolution of individual active gods to personifications as a last stage of development and says that gods are abstract concepts.[54] In Roman religion he sees the reverse process, from concepts to gods and calls Hygieia someone who has reached a full divine personality and should be studied separately.[55] In Roman Antiquity, Clark argues that personification is a psychological process that plays an important role in the development of religious concepts; the emergence of non-living and non-material abstract objects, which have to do with body and soul.[56] Today this evolutionary vision of religion is no longer acceptable.[57] Hastings argues that although Salus is mentioned, she cannot yet be identified with Hygieia.[58] Lind, Clark and Williams consider personification from religion, which is the most important aspect to understand personification.[59]

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52 Reinhardt, *Vermächtnis der Antike*, 21.

53 Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 14–15.

54 Deubner, "Personifikationen abstrakter Begriffe," 2069

55 Ibid., 2070. This would mean that Hygieia no longer can be seen as a personification, but as goddess which coincides with Lehmann's argument.

56 Clark uses this idea too in her book *Divine Qualities.* See the following section about religion.

57 Franz Boas (1938 en 1940) has shown by the theory of linguistic relativity that the way people think and observe the world, is being influenced by language and is therefore unique.

58 Hastings, "*Personification*," 796. Salus is seen here as partner of the old god Semo Sanctus dius Fidius. Inscriptions dedicated to Semo Sanctus are found in the part of the Quirinalis that first was named Collis Salutaris. The cult of Salus is therefore far than the foundation of her temple in 302 BC by dictator. C. Junius Bubulcus. Salus is viewed here as Salus Publica and cannot be seen as the Salus, who is later identified with Hygieia. For recent studies about Hygieia and Salus see Martin A. Marwood, *The Roman Cult of Salus* (Oxford: BAR International Series 465, 1988), 151–152 and Lorenz Winkler, *Salus. Vom Staatskult zur Politischen Idee. Eine archäeologische Untersuchung* (Heidelberg: Verlag Archäeologie und Geschichte, 1995), 142–155.

59 L.R. Lind, "Roman Religion and Ethical Thought: Abstraction and Personification," *The Classical Journal*, Vol. 69, No. 2 (Dec., 1973 – Jan., 1974): 108; Anna J. Clark, *Divine Qualities. Cult and Community in Republican Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,

Lind puts the origin of Roman abstract thoughts within religion and specific to the personification of abstractions and mentions a chronological order of Roman personified abstractions, in which Salus is the counterpart of Hygieia.[60] This conclusion of Salus is consistent with the fact that Asklepios and Hygieia were moved to Rome in 293 BC, because of a plague epidemic.[61] Deubner posits that Hygieia has strongly affected Salus which explains the fusion of Hygieia and Salus which eventually took place.[62] Clark also discusses Salus, but here as divine quality that in the last three centuries of the Roman Republic is used as a self-reflection to understand their own society.[63] Clark says that the examined "qualities" are recognized as real deities and so are also honoured in temples during festivals.[64] Clark refers to Hygieia who was recognized by Deubner as a complete personalized deity.[65] Burkert, Stafford, Smith, Borg and Kranz consider that personification stems from anthropomorphism, which tends to envisage (nature) phenomena, situations, things, places and abstractions as human. The grammatical gender of nouns results in male and female figures, which are human, divine or mythical.[66] Stafford analyses the concept of personification, which descends from the Latin *persona* and *facere* and says that no Latin term exactly corresponds to "personification".[67] Borg, Shapiro and Stafford view personification as the presentation of an inanimate subject or abstract concept in the form of the animated figure, usually in human form. The outcome is a fictional person and for everyone recognizable as such.[68] Stafford cites

2007), vii; Jonathan Williams, "Religion and Roman Coins," in Jörg Rüpke, *A Companion to Roman Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 143–163, there 156.

60 This Salus has to be a completely different goddess than the Salus described by Hastings and thus of later date.

61 Livy 10.47.6–7

62 Deubner, "Personifikationen abstrakter Begriffe," 2070.

63 Clark, *Divine Qualities*, vii.

64 Ibid., 13.

65 Ibid., 35.

66 Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical* (Singapore: Ho Printing Singapore Pte Ltd, 1985), 185; Smith, *Polis and Personification*, 2; Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 3–4); Borg, *Der Logos der Mythos*, 49; Emma Stafford, "'Without you no one is happy': the cult of health in ancient Greece," in Helen King, ed., *Health in Antiquity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005, 126; Kranz, *Hygieia – Die Frau an Asklepios' Seite*, 48.

67 Emma Stafford and Judith Herrin, *Personification in the Greek World. From Antiquity to Byzantium* (Ashgate: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 3.

68 Borg, *Der Logos der Mythos*, 49; Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 4; Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 12.

Martin Persson Nilsson who argued that thanks to Homerization, archaic Greek personifications "come to assume their distinctive character in that they mediate between the individual gods and their spheres of reality". He sees a progression from the appearance of personifications in poetry to their representation in visual arts, when they finally obtain their own cults towards the end of the archaic period.[69] At the same time, a new period of re-demonization of the Olympian gods occurred, which allowed deeper layers to surface.[70] Shapiro criticizes Nilsson, because Homer did not tell us *how* he visualized them with few exceptions.[71]

Stafford next discusses other types of personification. The first is *literary personification* within the context of poetry and drama which is problematic due its definition. Because the Greek language does not make a distinction between animate and inanimate, and which has no such convention as the initial capital for a proper name, Stafford asks where the line can be drawn between an abstract noun and its personification. At the least explicit end of the scale, a noun can be described as personified if it is qualified by a verb or adjective denoting human action, feeling or status, a use of personifying language which might be termed "light personification".[72] A second stage is represented by statements which explicitly attribute abstract ideas to a deity, like Hygieia to Athena.[73] Concerning visual arts, Stafford observes the problem that here is no room for ambiguity between personification and abstract: the artist either represents an abstract in human incarnation, or the idea must be expressed without recourse to anthropomorphism at all. Degrees of "personifiedness" are not in question. Rather, the major problem with visual representations is that of identification: how do we recognize a personified abstraction in sculpture or painting? The figures familiar to us from the Classical tradition are identifiable by their armoury of attributes or particular style of (un)dress, but few of these attributes, however, were in fact acquired before the Hellenistic period. Stafford finds the striking thing about the figures of the period 600–400 BC catalogued in Shapiro's *Personification in Greek Art* to be their similarity – the vast majority appear in the form of idealized young women with no distinguishing aspects, only identifiable if accompanied by an inscription. In addition to the problem of identification, the status of visual representations on the scale of scale of "artistic device-cult figure" is not more definitionally secure than that of their literary counterparts. Some figures may be inspired by a narrative known from literary sources, so any allegorical significance

[69] Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 25.

[70] Reinhardt, *Vermächtnis der Antike*, 13.

[71] Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 20.

[72] Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 9.

[73] Ibid., 10.

is already built into the narrative context, as in the case of Sleep and Death carrying Sarpedon off the battlefield. Others may have an explanatory function, expressing ideas that are not easily portrayed in visual form. Shapiro argues that the personality of the artist is perhaps a more decisive factor than practical considerations, such as intelligibility.[74] Stafford then points to various methodological problems of various visual arts, when it comes to their use of evidence for cult of potential figures. Many possible identifications of personifications in free-standing sculpture and architecture remain speculative because of the absence of the kind of narrative context available to help identification in vase painting or relief sculpture. Even where identity can be established, however, it is a debatable point whether the existence of a statue of a personification is indicative of her cult, since the notions of survival mean that adequate information about a work's original context is often not available. According to Stafford, more often literary sources can allow us to identify the subject of a statue and its sculptor, but not further to determine the status of the figure: if a statue is not specifically the cult image of a shrine, then the question arises of whether it embodies the divine. Stafford argues that the relationship between the gods and their representations was a matter of discussion even in Antiquity. Common sense would suggest that different observers would have had differing opinions on the subject, but even a single person's response to a particular statue is likely to be beyond the reach of modern scholarship to reconstruct.[75]

Personifications in the poetic literature and visual arts, then, present considerable identification problems and are not necessarily indicative of actual worship of a figure. For more direct attestation of cult, we need to turn to other forms of material evidence and to various genres of prose literature written in the Roman period. Usually, it is rather the case that a personification has some subsidiary representation in the sanctuary of a major deity – as Hygieia has statues, and occasionally altars, in shrines of Asklepios. But the main problem with archaeological sources is again that of identification, since we need almost every time literary sources to confirm the archaeological data. Stafford argues that there is one kind of evidence that is reliable for determining the cult of a figure, namely epigraphy, especially dedicatory inscriptions that describe cult personnel like priestesses. There are also a few financial inscriptions which helps us to identify certain cults.[76] Finally, Stafford discusses the question why so many personifications are female, which is caused by their linguistic gender, but this does not satisfy Stafford. She also examines the sociological and iconographic context in which these personified abstracts are developed. Why

[74] Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 14; Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 16.

[75] Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 14–15.

[76] Ibid., 16–17.

personifications should be predominantly female is still an unsolved matter and Stafford argues that it's more than just an accident of grammatical gender due to cultural influences.[77] Despite all these problems, Stafford argues that worshipping figures like Hygieia is the best evidence that people believed in the real divine power of personifications. Walter Burkert views the relationship between deity and abstract as a two-way process in which the boundary between concept and name is fluid and agrees with Nilsson that only the process of Homerization can clear up the demarcation here. Further, Cicero stated that people not only could worship "those who have always lived in heaven", but also "those qualities through which an ascent to heaven is granted to man: lntellect, Virtue, Piety, Faith (*Laws* 2.19.9)".[78]

Models of personification

It is clear that there are many angles that connect personification to each other. Shapiro discusses three models of Thomas Bertram Lonsdale Webster, Edmond Pottier and Vasiliki Papadaki-Angelidou to determine if a figure is a personification or not.[79] The models are now viewed more closely. Shapiro repeats that it's difficult to identify personifications, since by definition, the name must still be in current usage as a simple noun. How do we know if the poet thought of an abstraction as personified or not? When a personified deity had an established cult, we are sure to label them as personification. When there is no cult, Webster offers three other criteria: 1. A figure may have been given a genealogy; 2. The personified figure may be coupled with a known individual or divinity; 3. A verb or adjective denoting human activity or feeling may be used for the abstraction. This criterion fits perfectly with Stafford's concept of "light personification". Shapiro then adds a fourth criterion, namely that a figure who is represented in the visual arts we may presume was recognized as a personification and had probably been personified first by the poets. Hygieia meets all the criteria. Her mythological parents are Asklepios and Epione or Eros and Peitho and she has Panakeia, Iaso, Podaleirios and Machaon as siblings.[80] The daughters of Asklepios would be a later addition of Asklepios' elevation to deity, in which Hygieia is understood as a representation of te benefits

77 Ibid., 28.

78 Ibid., 2, 20, 23.

79 Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 26–27.

80 F. Croissant, "Hygieia," In *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, vol. 5.1, Herakles-Kenchrias et addenda Epona, Galateia, Helios, Helios (in peripheria orientali), Helios/Usil. (Artemis-Verlag, 1990), 554. For Eros en Peitho see Apostolos N. Athanassakis,

that Asklepios brings in a context, where he is absent. Compton sees Hygieia as well as deity and extension of characteristics and as representation.[81] Mikalson views the daughters of Asklepios as personifications of Asklepios' qualities, all integrated into the cult of Asklepios and receiving sacrifices, hymns, invocations and ceremonies.[82] Second, Hygieia is foremost coupled with Asklepios with whom she shared temples and was also depicted. Third, Hygieia means health and healthy as an adjective form and fourth, Hygieia was painted by the Meidias painters on Greek vases.

Then, Edmond Pottier distinguishes ten categories of personifications that fall partly within the format of Shapiro:

1. Physical conditions: e.g. Hygieia, Geras.
2. Social goods: e.g. Eunomia, Eirene.
3. Ethical and moral qualities, e.g. Harmonia, Eris, Eudaimonia.
4. Metaphysical ideas: e.g. Themis, Ananke.
5. Geographical features: e.g. Nemea, Arethusa.
6. Natural phenomena: e.g. Helios, Eos, Nephelai.
7. Products of the earth: e.g. Oinos, Opora.
8. Types of individuals: e.g. Neanias, Komarchos.
9. Collective groups: e.g. Nymphai, Horai.
10. Social enjoyments: e.g. Komos, Pandaisia, Dithyrambos.[83]

This model shows many weaknesses. First, the categories are not well defined. Hygieia (health) can also be a social good. In addition, not all examples are as abstract as claimed by Shapiro. Man has seen sun, wine and water and these are not *per se* "intangible"' Shapiro says: "To the early Greeks, these and other natural phenomena were in some sense animate beings, and to represent them in human guise was a natural transformation". If these natural phenomena are all living things, there is no need to add more personality, and personification is therefore no longer needed. Shapiro claims for abstractions that the criteria of invisibility and elusiveness in the field of anthropomorphism can be applied to this concept.[84] This is the

and Benjamin M. Wolkow, *The Orphic Hymns. Text, Translation and Notes* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 54.

81 Michael T. Compton, "The Association of Hygieia with Asklepios in Graeco-Roman Asklepieion Medicine," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, Vol. 57(2002): 312–29.

82 Jon D. Mikalson, *Ancient Greek Religion. Second Edition* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2010, 46; *IG* XII 4, 1, 286; *IG* XII 4, 1, 287; *IG* XII 4, 1, 344; *IG* XII 4, 1, 71.

83 Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 26

84 Ibid., 26–27.

question in health matters. Although health is not tangible, the person or a doctor determines whether the patient is sick or not through diagnosis.

Papadaki-Angelidou offers a different model for personification. She distinguishes twelve categories, which makes clear as with Pottier how subjective such categorization is.[85]

1. Cities and places.
2. Political life: e.g. Boule, Demokratia.
3. Agonistic: e.g. Agon, Olympia, Eutaxia.
4. Intellectual activities: e.g. Tragodia, Ilias, Sophia.
5. Ethical ideas: e.g. Dike, Arete.
6. Psychological affects: e.g. Aidos, Metanoia, Lyssa
7. Relations between people: e.g. Eris, Philia.
8. Well-being or its absence: e.g. Chrysos, Limos.
9. Time: e.g. Aion, Nyx, Kairos.
10. Members of the circle of Aphrodite: e.g. Eunomia, Eukleia.
11. Members of the circle of Dionysos: e.g. Methe, Opora.
12. All others (Miscellaneous): e.g. Athanasia, Geras.

The model is limited because it cites obvious examples. Sophia is a striking choice, as Sophia (wisdom) is more synonymous with the category name, whereas Iliad and Tragodia are the results of the process of writing a poem or play. Numbers 10, 11 and 12 are strange choices. Hygieia fits under "8. Well-being", but it is mentioned together with Chrysos (gold) and Limos (famine). The presence of gold is strange, since the link between health and famine is more obvious. In conclusion, these models of personification are not static instruments, because its categorization can differ.[86] Remembering Lehmann, who argued that these figures are no longer personifications when they received cult, prayers and offerings and became full deities, Hygieia can be viewed as a full deity which concept, I now will explore.

Hygieia as a deity

The debate about the concept of deity is far less complex and shows more consensus. I agree with the concept of Greek deities[87] as immortal beings and are depicted as male (god) or female (goddess). They feed on nectar, ambrosia and smoke

[85] Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art*, 26, footnote 47.

[86] Ibid., 126.

[87] Deities are also described as synonyms with gods which I will follow here.

(incense), while observing mankind as invisible but omnipresent beings and can share functions with other gods which can overlap, because gods don't have a monopoly on certain qualities.[88] Further, gods need a cult, prayers, offerings and are able to fulfill expectations from their worshippers, otherwise they are "empty" gods.[89] Mythology is not required. I further distinguish between Greek and Olympian gods, because not all deities live on Mount Olympos.[90] Also, the Olympians consists of twelve more or less the same gods.[91] Reinhardt sees that when the Olympians had risen above that which is restricted in terms of location and have achieved canonical validity, they begin to combine themselves in a new way, in which they are bound to time and space.[92] Especially Sonder/Augenblicksgötter take their place and purpose between the already existing gods.[93] Hygieia can on the one hand be viewed as Sonder/Augenblicksgöttin and on the other hand she cannot, since her worship did not cease to exist after 420 BC.[94] Although Hygieia has no mythological narratives, she is connected with gods like Apollo, Asklepios and Athena. Reinhardt views the appearance of Athena Hygieia as re-demonization/deification.[95] According to Robert Parker and others, the fifth century BC was a century of religious renewal. This century is characterized by the introduction of new cults, where "new gods" were imported into Athens. There are three changes that can be observed in the fifth century BC: first, the introduction of minor cults, second the addition of new epithets to ancient deities and third, the introduction of "foreign divinities".[96]

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88 Sarah Iles Johnston, ed., *Ancient Religions* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 19–20.

89 I follow here ecological anthropologist Roy Rapport, who distinguishes between Ultimate Sacred Postulates (the divine) which are in essence "empty" which identify the intangible and immaterial cause of the palpable happenings that create Dominant Symbols (knowable, tangible, and specific events). See Roy Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 272–73; Paul Cassell, "Rappaport, Revisited," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion*, Vol. 26, No. 4/5 (2014): 417–21.

90 Louise Brut Zaidman and Pauline Schmitt Pantel, *Religion in the Ancient Greek City* (New York: Cambridge University, 1992), 177.

91 For a discussion see Charlotte R. Long, *The Twelve Gods of Greece and Rome* (Leiden/New York: Brill, 1987), 139–143.

92 Reinhardt, *Vermächtnis der Antike*, 19.

93 Ibid., 19.

94 Ibid., 20.

95 Ibid., 21.

96 Robert Parker, *Athenian Religion. A History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 153–158.

An example of the expansion of minor cults is the cult of Athena Nike, whose altar has adorned the Akropolis since the mid-sixth century BC. However, this cult only emerged around 450 BC, in celebration of beating the Delish-Attic Sea Alliance in Persia. Other examples of religious renewal are the building of temples to Poseidon in Sounion and the Nemesis of Rhamnous between approximately 450 and 430 BC.[97] The second innovation is characterized by adding new epithets to existing gods, because the Athenians found it quite common for deities to unite them with abstractions. Examples are deities such as Artemis Aristoboule, Artemis Eukleia and Zeus Eleutherios. Finally, "foreign divinities" were introduced, which the Greeks called *xenikoi theoi*. This term cannot simply be translated as "foreign divinities", along with the modern understanding of the term "foreign" because for an Athenian, a man of Epidauros was also a *xenikos*. The crucial division is not between non-Greek and Greek deities, but between the deities traditionally honoured in public cults and the rest. According to Herodotos, the gods are the same everywhere, just with different names. Examples of such deities are Dionysos, Bendis, Pan and Asklepios.[98]

In addition, Hygieia has several healing goddesses as equivalents in other cultures, like the Egyptian Isis Medica, Isis Salutaris and Isis-Hygieia whose functions correspond to those of Asklepios and Hygieia.[99] Next, the Babylonian Gula can be equated to Hygieia regarding her iconography and healing capacity.[100] Then, we have several Roman goddesses like Bona Dea who was worshipped as Bonae Daea Hygiae, due to her healing functions.[101] Second, there is a connection with Minerva, the Roman counterpart of Athena who was worshipped as Minerva Medica and is the equivalent

97 Parker, *Athenian Religion*, 154.

98 Zaidman and Schmitt Pantel, *Religion*, 88–89, 128–132, 197–207; Carl Kerényi, *Dionysos. Archetypal Image of Indestructible Life* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 160–175; Simon Price, *Religions of the Ancient Greeks* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 52–53, 77–78, 168–169.

99 Ferdinand Peter Moog, "Zum Kampf der frühen Christenheit gegen die Isis Medica – Bruch und Kontinuität von Traditionen im Übergangsfeld von Heil und Heilung," *Würzburger Medizinhistorische Mitteilungen*, Band 28 (2009): 256–275; Walter Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 1987), 15–16; R.E. Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman world* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971), 192; Renberg, *Where Dreams May Come*, 344, 367.

100 Barbara Böck, *The Healing Goddess Gula Towards an Understanding of Ancient Babylonian Medicine* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2013), especially the second chapter "The Healing Goddess Gula: A Portrait," 7–44.

101 H.H.J. Brouwer, *Bona Dea. The sources and a description of the cult* (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 346–348.

of Athena Hygieia.[102] Finally, Salus and Valetudo are closely related to Hygieia within Roman religion. I will elaborate on Athena and Salus, because they are the most discussed figures in relation to Hygieia. Plutarch mentions Athena Hygieia who told Perikles in a dream to heal his workman, who fell from the Propylaia:

> "A strange accident happened in the course of building, which showed that the goddess was not averse to the work, but was aiding and co-operating to bring it to perfection. One of the artificers, the quickest and the handiest workman among them all, with a slip of his foot fell down from a great height, and lay in a miserable condition, the physicians having no hope of his recovery. When Pericles was in distress about this, the goddess appeared to him at night in a dream, and ordered a course of treatment, which he applied, and in a short time and with great ease cured the man. And upon this occasion it was that he set up a brass statue of Athena Hygeia, in the citadel near the altar, which they say was there before. But it was Phidias who wrought the goddess's image in gold, and he has his name inscribed on the pedestal as the workman of it."[103]

The shrine of Athena Hygieia on the west side of the Akropolis is very important in the celebration of the Panathenaia. According to Aristeides, the altar of Athena Hygieia was set up by the very first Athenians.[104] Robert Garland argues that the most important healing sanctuary belonged to Athena Hygieia until Asklepios made his appearance in Athens.[105] A further explanation is that the Homeric gods were no longer sufficient and that they are unable to satisfy the population, so that new deities have to appear.[106] Hygieia is occasionally associated with Amphiaraos, specifically in Oropos, his principal place of worship. She appears several times alone

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[102] Susan Deacy and Alexandra Villing, (ed.), *Athena in the Classical World* (Leiden, Boston and Cologne: Brill, 2001), 138–139.

[103] Plutarch, *Pericles* 13.8 in Bernadotte Perrin, *Plutarch's Lives. With an English Translation by Bernadotte Perrin*. The Loeb Classical Library, vol. III (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 45.

[104] Jennifer Neils, *Worshipping Athena. Panathenaia and Parthenon* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), 29, 47–48.

[105] Garland, *Introducing New Gods. The Politics of Athenian Religion* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1991), 132.

[106] Robin Mitchell-Boyask, "The Athenian Asklepieion and the End of the 'Philoctetes,'", *Transactions of the American Philological Association* Vol. 137, No. 1 (Spring, 2007), 94; Sobel, *Hygieia*, 9–10; Jane Ellen Harrison, *Prolegomena tot the study of Greek Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1961), 343.

or together with this hero.[107] Hygieia as daughter of Asklepios is sometimes also depicted together with Hypnos and Oneiros within incubation cults.[108] Pausanias says that the fourth part of the great altar of the Amphiareion was shared with Aphrodite, Panakeia, Iaso, Hygieia and Athena Hygieia.[109] Stafford claims that the sharing of the altar by Hygieia affects the Athenian cult after Amphiaraos was transferred from Oropos to Athens after the Battle of Chaironeia and where Hygieia would have a place in the Athenian Amphiareion in 330 BC and beyond.[110] Deities indeed could displace each other. Another example is Apollo displacing Gaia as an oracle deity.

Another context which is relevant, explains that people could stay healthy by living sensibly.[111] Athena is also the goddess of wisdom and thus a logical connection. Robert E. Bell adds that Hygieia is mainly the goddess of physical health, but that her function also includes mental health and that she also can be associated with Athena Hygieia.[112] A third idea is according to James D. Warren, who argues that it is Athena who learns Asklepios has brought back the dead to life.[113] Finally, Michael T. Compton offers a fourth explanation, namely that ancient conceptions of health and illness do not distinguish between mental and physical ailments.[114] Thus, Athena Hygieia and Hygieia easily can be associated with each other. Previous ideas go against the concept that the relationship between Athena Hygieia and Hygieia is merely coincidental, because Asklepios cult has not been introduced before the end of the fifth century BC and Hygieia did not appear previously as a separate figure in literature or art.[115] Wroth indicates that Athena was given the epithet "Hygieia" to strengthen her medical skills. This would be a correct assumption when the declining satisfaction about deities is considered. The goddesses could exist separately from one another. Stafford gave more convincing argument for a clearer distinction between Athena Hygieia and Hygieia, when she quoted Lewis Richard Farnell.

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[107] Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 157.

[108] Renberg, *Where Dreams May Come*, 677–688.

[109] Pausanias 1.34.3. (Quoted in: Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 157.

[110] Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 157.

[111] Ferdinand Sturmans, *Asklepios en Hygieia* (inaugurele rede, Katholieke University Nijmegen, 1979), 5. This is of course an anachronistic modern concept of health.

[112] Robert E. Bell, *Women of Classical Mythology. A Biographical Dictionary* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 1991), 249.

[113] James D. Warren, "Classical pathways to western medicine," *BC Medical Journal*, Vol. 48, No. 8, (Oct. 2006), 382.

[114] Michael T. Compton, "The Union of Religion and Health in Ancient Asklepieia," *Journal of Religion and Health*, Vol. 37, No. 4. (Winter 1998), 305.

[115] H.B. Walters, "Athena Hygieia," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 19. (1899), 167.

Farnell posits that around 330 BC, sacrifices still were offered to Athena Hygieia. This contradicts the claim that the Hygieia from the Telemachos monument is a development of Athena Hygieia[116] and that after 420 BC no further mention is made of Athena Hygieia, as previously argued by Robin Mitchell Boyask.[117] Farnell himself does not mention the year 330 BC. It appears that his position is based on the celebration of the Panathenaia. It is indicated that all the dedications to Athena date from a later period after 420 BC, but he does not give a clear argument.[118] Stafford qualifies this with the fact that in 330 BC offerings to Athena Hygieia were made during the *Lesser Panathenaia* as attested by an inscription recording the tax levied on the newly recovered territory of Oropos.[119]

Now we look at the Roman Salus. Martin A. Marwood distinguishes four aspects of Salus. First, there is the quality of Salus as a state deity with a major sanctuary on the Quirinal Hill, which was later worshipped as Salus Publica. Second, there could have been a personal Salus. Third, we have Salus as the Romanized form of Hygieia. Salus as Hygieia owned a Latin equivalent, both as a simple condition and, though rarely located, as a goddess in Valetudo. Finally, there is the quality reflected in literary sources, which was at first not identified as a cult, namely *salus* as equivalent of the Greek term *soter* (saviour). This aspect has been evidenced throughout the ruler cult of Julius Caesar, although the evidence for this argument is shaky. Marwood argues that it is more likely that this meaning of *salus* played a pivotal role in later imperial ideology and was part of propaganda concerning Salus Augusti. All these aspects are interrelated to each other.[120] Marwood also describes Latin dedications to the syncretic goddess Salus-Hygieia, in which she is revered together with Aesculapius.[121] Lorenz Winkler examines Salus as goddess of the overall condition concerning the Roman state, focusing on the well-being The general concept of salvation or well-being, which also played a major role in relation to individuals, was transferred to the state and worshiped as a deity in a personified form. Winkler argues that Salus' iconography is either hard to grasp or in the range of Hygieia, because the mutual identification is insecure. Still, Winkler examines Hygieia in her Greek and Latin form as Hygia in relation to her equivalent Valetudo. Of course,

[116] Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues*, 155. Stafford refers to Lewis Richard Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896–1909), I 317–318.

[117] Mitchell-Boyask, "The Athenian Asklepieion," 94.

[118] Lewis Richard Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896), 317.

[119] *IG* II^2 334.8–10; Stafford, "Without you no one is happy" 124.

[120] Marwood, *The Roman Cult*, 1–2.

[121] Ibid., 71–73.

Winkler looks also into the concept of *salus*, which as goddess was connected to several values and personifications, but the latter is uncertain.[122] Next, Winkler examines the new image of Salus under Vespasian, who was emperor between 69 to 79 AD. In the second century AD, Salus Augusta was replaced by Salus Augusti, who developed her own imagery on coins due to the civil war in 69. Here, she is depicted holding in her left hand a patera which feeds a snake. This element is adopted from the Greek Hygieia. This image was also struck on coins during the republic by Acilius Glabrio, who had depicted Valetudo with a snake. Hygieia was associated with Valetudo in the republic as Hygia in its meaning as personification, but was adjusted to Salus Augusti who was revered as a goddess.[123] Next to Salus Publica, who was responsible for the general well-being of the state, stood Salus as personal goddess, which coincides with Marwood. Here, Salus represented the physical and mental state, to which Valetudo represented the pure physical health.[124] Before the Flavian dynasty (69–96 AD), there was no relation between Asklepios and Hygieia and Salus Publica, because the well-being of the state had its own content and representation with Salus Augusta who had no relation with Hygieia. Only from the first century AD onwards do we spot a gradual substantive and iconographic equivalence between Hygieia and Salus Augusti. This affected the relationship with Asklepios, because for example, Vitruvius and Livy could speak of Aesculapius and Salus, when others recognized Asklepios and Hygieia. During the Flavian dynasty, it was not possible to distinguish between Salus Publica or Salus Augusta and Hygieia/Hygia, nor between the private worship of Salus and Hygieia, who were only worshipped together with Asklepios. From 69 AD onwards, we see a more ritual dynamic of the process in which both figures blend into each other or syncretization. This ritual dynamic between Hygieia and Salus was for now a one-way street, where the private Salus could not affect Hygieia. Salus herself would eventually transform into a pure health goddess herself. The only distinction is that Salus was still worshipped independently from Asklepios. A more dominant level of ritual dynamic is located between Hygieia and Salus Augusti and Salus Publica, which worked both ways from Hygieia to Salus Augusti/Publica and reversed. Also, before the Flavian dynasty, the distinction between the state-oriented Salus and the Greek Hygieia was clearly understood in the Greek East. Two inscriptions from Pergamon and Corinth attest to that.[125] Contrasted to the state cult of Salus Publica and the propaganda concerning imperial health, was the worship of Asklepios and Hygieia, which mostly were

[122] Winkler, *Salus*, 11–13.

[123] Clark, *Divine Qualities*, 153; Winkler, *Salus*, 90, 142.

[124] Winkler, *Salus*, 90–91.

[125] Ibid., 142–144.

never worshipped separately and had a specific political significance. This changed in the first two centuries of the Roman Empire, when the Asklepios cult became more and more popular, due to the desire for more personal contact with the gods and the quest for healing cults. This trend accelerated in the second century with a visit of the emperor Hadrian to Pergamon. Before, the cult of Asklepios/Aesculapius and Hygieia/Hygia versus the state cult of Salus in the Roman Republic and the Principate (27 BC – 284 AD) were still opposite to each other. The cult of Salus was part of the state polity, whereas the cult of Asklepios and Hygieia gave room for emotions and religious needs, where the gods accepted the personal sufferings of their worshippers, without having to fulfill a political role. The Aesculapius/Hygia cult and the Salus cult were performed separately from another until the third century AD. Still, as argued, their iconography changed from the Flavian dynasty onwards. Aesculapius and Hygia gained more political importance, when they were depicted on the reverse of coins depicting Vespasian. Hygia appeared as Salus Augusti, and after the second century AD, the depiction of Aesculapius and Hygieia on coins increased, and were more and more depicted together alone on coins and medallions. Their political position was further enhanced when statues of Aesculapius and Hygia were placed within the Capitoline temple of Jupiter in Rome which showed a close connection to the Capitoline Trias (Jupiter, Juno and Minerva). In this temple, votives for the salvation of Augustus were offered and which were addressed to the Capitoline Trias and Salus Publica. People prayed for the health of the emperor, where Hygia/Salus Augusti and Aesculapius were also portrayed. During the reign of Trajan (98–117 AD), Hygia, Salus Augusti and Salus Publica were depicted. The Flavian dynasty can truly be viewed as a turning point from where the production of coins and medallions increased on which Aesculapius and Salus-Hygia were depicted. Ultimately, the identity of imperial health – Salus Augusti – with the well-being of all – Salus Publica – which formed the main content of the Salus ideology in the second and third century AD, has been equated with Hygieia/Hygia and with Salus as well as the dominant equivalents of Hygia which integrated into the Salus ideology together with Aesculapius.[126]

Personally, I follow the argument that Hygieia obtained her own regional cult in the seventh and sixth centuries BC, but that Hygieia really became famous when she was brought to Athens around 420 BC. The Telemachos Monument from the early fourth century BC, as mentioned above, confirms this theory. Furthermore, Hygieia is appointed her own altar in the Asklepieion next to Asklepios. In addition, there is already a cult of Athena Hygieia in 420 BC that would fade after the arrival of Asklepios and Hygieia, but there is still a small revival, when in 330 BC during

[126] Ibid., 144, 149–155.

the *Lesser Panathenaia*, people still sacrificed to her. The cults of Hygieia and Athena Hygieia may have overlapped each other, so that Athena Hygieia as a separate figure was no longer needed. The introduction and development of the cult of Hygieia can be placed in the idea that the fifth century BC was a century of religious innovation, where old gods getting new epithets, minor cults became more important and "new" deities entered Greek religion. In 293 BC, Hygieia and Asklepios were introduced into Roman due to a plague. Here, as discussed above, she was thus eventually equated with Salus in her different forms as abstraction and personification of health and well-being of the state and Valetudo, but also can been seen as equivalent to healing goddesses as Gula, Isis Medica, Isis Hygieia, Bona Dea, and Minerva Medica. I therefore accept Hygieia as the Greek goddess of physical and mental Health and as Olympian goddess, when speaking about Athena Hygieia. Now we have established her status as goddess, I will now examine the concept of health.

Health in Antiquity

In Antiquity, health (ὑγίεια) was understood as a multi-layered concept. First, there is the biomedical meaning of health, which explains ὑγίεια as a healthy body and mind, a medical product and a kind of cake that was sacrificed.[127] In Hippocratic medicine, ὑγίεια has a double meaning as adaptation between the personal and the components that create the composite and adaptation between the personal and the external environment of which it is part. Within the *De natura Hominis*, ὑγίεια consists of a harmonious mixture (κρῆσις) of the humores (black bile, yellow bile, blood and phlegm).[128] The modern term which comes best near is "homeostasis", which has the function of keeping internal balance. This mixture works best when opposing forces, such as cold/warm and moist/dry, are combined in a fixed combination with mucus and bile. Although Galen's contribution to Hippocratic medicine in regard to the active properties of matter, hot, cold, wet, and dry matter, is generally recognized, his work is at the same time not undisputed.[129] He has

[127] Maria Pantelia (project director), LSJ (*The Online Liddell-Scott-Jones Greek-English Lexicon*) s.v. ὑγίεια, 1842. http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/lsj/#eid=109154 (visited, 1 July 2021).

[128] Helen King, *Hippocrates Now. The 'Father of Medicine' in the Internet Age* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 23–24.

[129] Vivian Nutton, *Galen. A Thinking Doctor in Imperial Rome* (London and New York: Routledge, 2020), 1, 16, 83, 119, 130; Rajkumari Ajita, "Galen and his Contribution to Anatomy: A Review," *Journal of Evolution of Medical and Dental Sciences*, Vol. 4, Issue 26 (2015): 4511–4513.

often been criticised for his logic mistakes and for the casual, some might say untrustworthy way in which he could slide from plausibility to certainty. For example, he admits his own debts to others (except Hippocrates) much less often than his differences of opinion. As a result, it is not always clear what exactly can or cannot be attributed to Galen.[130] Second, he persisted in the Hippocratic misconception that the body fluids were composed of an equilibrium of four humors and the rationale of medicine was to restore any disease-causing imbalance.[131] A final example concerns Galen's over-optimistic position that he over-estimates the aptitude of empirical experience and testing to verify theories, since he falsely supposes that they have verified his own false theories.[132] The Pythagorean physician Alkmaion of Kroton (ca 500 BC) conceptualized ὑγίεια as political metaphor, which combines two concepts: *isonomia* (ἰσονομία) and *monarchia* (μοναρχία). *Isonomia* represents the uniformity of various forces in the body, especially *monarchia*, where one of those forces in the body predominates. In this case, gods do not yet play a role in any intervention, unlike Hippocratic medicine.[133] Second, there is the mathematical understanding of *ὑγίεια* by Pythagoras as synonym for the number six.[134] Third, there is the political dimension, in which ὑγίεια is connected to warfare. Hector, in the Iliad, speaks to his troops after a long day fighting: Let it be thus, highhearted men of Troy. Let that word (μύθος) that has been spoken now be a strong (ὑγιὴς) one." This view is connected to Plato, who spoke about the healthy polis. Finally, there is a philosophical view on ὑγιὴς, where Presocrats in the sixth century BC described health as a theory of micro- and macro cosmos. This theory holds that man consists of the same components as the macrocosm. There is a balance between these components that must be shielded from an imbalance, the basis of non-traumatic disorders. Man is therefore dependent on his diet, but also on external factors, as a result of which he can become ill or die.[135] In conclusion, I connect primarily the biomedical and mental dimension of ὑγίεια to Hygieia, but is clear that the ancient

[130] Nutton, *Galen*, 3, 107.

[131] Ajita, "Galen and his Contribution to Anatomy," 4513.

[132] R.J. Hankinson, "Epistemology," in R.J. Hankinson, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Galen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 178.

[133] Helen King, "Women's Health and Recovery in the Hippocratic Corpus," in Helen King, ed., *Health in Antiquity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 150–151; Nicholas Vlahogiannis, '"Curing' Disability," in Helen King, ed., *Health in Antiquity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 180.

[134] LSJ s.v. ὑγίεια, 1842.

[135] James Longrigg, "Presocratic Philosophy and Hippocratic Medicine," *History of Science*, volume 27, number 1 (1989): 1–39.

concept of health comprises more than just body and mind. Therefore, she represents a broad spectrum of different meanings, portraying and protecting health in the Graeco-Roman world.

Hygieia in incubation scenes

After this long analysis, we can argue that Hygieia can be viewed as the Greek goddess of physical and mental health who has her own cult and was recognized as Asklepios' most important daughter and companion. Together they were brought into Athens to fight the epidemic in the fifth century BC, after which they were transported to Rome to combat the plague in 293 BC. From that moment on, their cult grew gradually into a very popular cult, especially after the first two centuries of the Roman Empire, where they eventually were equated with Salus and Valetudo and found their counterparts in Aesculapius and other healing goddesses. Central to their cult was the healing ritual incubation or temple sleep, in which patients were cured by healing gods in their dreams. Although Hygieia didn't heal patients herself, she is often depicted besides or behind Asklepios on votive reliefs, touching his shoulder. This would suggest her secondary position, which can be strengthened by her role as goddess of health. Still, I argue that we should interpret these depictions on a different way, namely that she supported her father's role as healing deity, restoring their state of health. Since Hygieia's role in incubation has not been studied enough in my opinion, I offer here a small exposition of votive reliefs depicting incubation scenes which depict Hygieia. I will use the Leventi and Renberg catalogues to select the relevant votives.

First, we have a votive relief of pentelic marble (ca. 400 BC), found behind the theatre of Piraeus, which could have been the location of the Asklepieion at Piraeus.[136] We see Asklepios bending over a lying woman, which is covered by a skin. On the left, we see adorants with a child, possible relatives of the woman. Leventi argues, that on the right, we see Hygieia resting on her left leg, although this figure could also be identified as Epione or Iaso. Leventi identifies this scene as an incubation scene.[137] Renberg disagrees with Leventi, keeping this question unanswered.[138] The second example is a votive relief of pentelic marble (390–380 BC)

[136] For a discussion on the Piraeus Asklepieion, see Renberg, *When Dreams May Come*, 183–189, there 186, footnote 168.

[137] R 13. Piraeus Museum 405 (Plate 15) in Leventi., *Hygieia*, 131–132.

[138] Figure 29 Cat. No. Ask.-Peir.1 (Peiraeus Mus. 405) in Renberg, *Where Dreams May Come*, 635.

found near the church of Agia Triada in the Kerameikos area. On the left, we see two figures, possibly the patient's wife and a temple servant, who helped the male patient wrapped in his himation lie on a couch with a piece of cloth or on animal skin. Next to the couch, we observe Asklepios extending his right hand over the patient's hand. Next to Asklepios, we see Hygieia resting on her right leg. Her arm is at her side. This scene is identified as an incubation scene where Asklepios is about to cure the patient by touch.[139] Finally, we observe a votive relief from the Athenian Asklepieion made of pentelic marble (ca. middle fourth century BC). Unfortunately, most heads are broken off or weathered. In this temple depicted with the Ionian column, we see Asklepios at the front and next to him Hygieia, facing left and touching the left shoulder of Asklepios. In front of the left column, we see Epione on a cult table. The temple and the stoa possibly allude to the main buildings on the South Slope of the Akropolis, namely the temple of Asklepios and the Doric Stoa, functioning as an incubation hall.[140] When we combine these votive reliefs with the aforementioned texts which mention Hygieia, we may conclude that indeed Hygieia played a very important role in Greek religion and medicine and was the everlasting support of Asklepios, when curing patients. Because without Hygieia there would be no health to restore and protect. They are dependent on each other. They share each other's functions.

Conclusions

In conclusion, we can argue that modern scholarship shows personification as an anachronism when the concept is applied to Greek religion. In the general definition of personification, religion and ritual are not mentioned, and it is therefore strange that personification is applied to figures such as Hygieia. In addition, the models outlined above are open-ended and highly subjective, with the exception of Webster. The problem is that a post-medieval understanding and antique religion do not go together. In addition, the concepts of *prosōpopoiia* and *ēthopoiia* cannot be applied (with exception of Hermogenes). Further, Hygieia can be regarded as (light) personification for several reasons. First, the noun ὑγίεια means health and is female in gender. Second, ὑγίεια as Hygieia is depicted as a young woman. Third, health can be described as adjective, for example "healthy people". Fourth, Hygieia must be a weak personification since she has no mythology. Next, I follow the arguments of Lehmann and Stafford and others that when a personification receives

[139] R 19. Athens, NM 2373 (Plate 18) in Leventi., *Hygieia*, 137; Figure 33 Cat. No. Ask.-Ath.2 (Athens NM 2373) in Renberg, *Where Dreams May Come*, 638.

[140] R 37. Athens, NM 1377 (Plate 27) in Leventi., *Hygieia*, 143.

a cult with prayers, sacrifices, cult statues, altars, hope and fear of suppliants, this is a real deity like other deities. This means that the distinction between personifications and deities is no longer valid. The worship of personifications was therefore not a problem in Antiquity. At that time people already made a distinction between gods and personifications, and they knew well what this meant for the worshiper and for the worshiped figure himself. Not only did the deities who lived in heaven deserve worship, but also those who could ascend to heaven. Then, the significant role of religion and ritual has to be reintroduced, since Hygieia is worshipped withing the Asklepios cult. When figures like Hygieia are recognizable within a religious or ritual context, they must certainly be viewed as deities. The Hygieia cult played thus a very important role in Greek religion and medicine and as partner to her mythological father Asklepios, to protect the health of the Greeks, first in Titane, then Athens which continued in Rome and the rest of the Graeco-Roman world. Her connection with Asklepios strengthens her position and vice versa. She has a place within the most important triad of healing gods, together with Apollo and Asklepios. As Athena Hygieia she had to protect the Athenians against a terrible epidemic and had counterparts in Salus, Valetudo, Minerva Medica, Gula, Isis Hygieia, Isis Salutaris, and Bona Dea Hygieae, which confirmed her role as goddess. She became more important when she was identified and associated with Valetudo and Salus as Salus-Hygia or Hygia within Roman religion together with Aesculapius. The cult of Salus elevated her status and rapidly increased her popularity in Roman Antiquity. She was worshipped from the seventh century BC until the fifth century AD and even today we have inherited her name in our word hygiene and preventive medicine. Health in Antiquity was as important as it is today. It is the gentle touch of this friendly goddess that inspired Asklepios and the people to worship her, also when she entered the Roman world as Hygia. She represents a broad concept of health, primarily from a biomedical perspective, but also with a political, mathematical and philosophical dimension. I therefore conclude that Hygieia became as important as Asklepios in their communal cult, especially within Roman religion where they are mutually dependent on each other in exercising their profession as healing deities. This has been shown by ancient texts, epigraphy, comparative mythology, and votive reliefs, which were created after a successful incubation experience.

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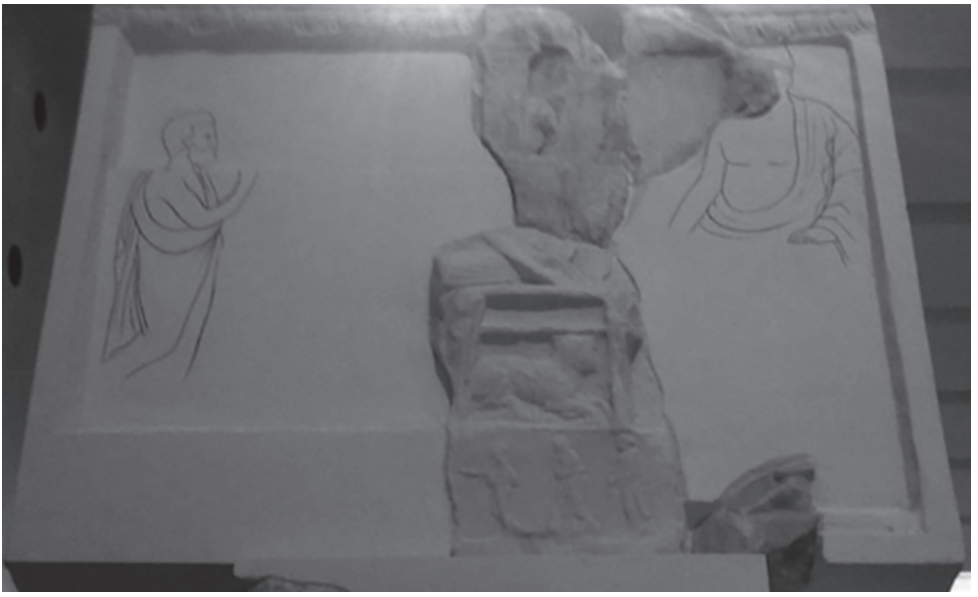

Fig. 1. Telemachos Monument. Athens, Acropolis Museum, ref. no. 5611. Photo by author.