

On Greek Dedicatory Practices: The Problem of *hyper*

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IN COMMUNICATING with the gods, whether by means of prayers, sacrifice, or dedications, one of the most common Greek formulae involved the preposition ὑπέρ. Individuals might present gifts to the gods *hyper* themselves and their family, their crops and livestock, their group and community, etc. Innumerable Greek decrees carry the formula ὑπὲρ ὑγιείας καὶ σωτηρίας (or similar). But perhaps because it is seemingly so familiar, little attention has been paid to its applications and meanings,¹ and mistakes in this field can lead to grave misinterpretations of Greek religious practices.² This article aims to clarify the various religious uses of *hyper*, and to draw attention to ambiguities associated with the formulae, with a view to

¹ M. L. Lazzarini, “Iscrizioni votive greche,” *ScAnt* 3–4 (1989–1990) 845–859, at 855–858, discusses *hyper* formulae briefly, focusing on *hyper soterias* and *hyper* animals and crops (and their variants). R. Parker, *Polytheism and Society at Athens* (Oxford 2005) 66–67, 95–97, and F. S. Naiden, *Smoke Signals for the Gods: Ancient Greek Sacrifice from the Archaic through Roman Periods* (Oxford 2013) 186–196, discuss sacrifices *hyper tinos*.

² According to schol. vet. Ar. *Ach.* 747b, every initiate at the Eleusinian Mysteries had to sacrifice a piglet ὑπὲρ ἑαυτοῦ. This is rendered by W. Burkert, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical* (Oxford 1985) 286, as “in his stead” (revised ed. *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*. [Stuttgart 2011] 426: “an seiner Statt”). This mistranslation introduces the suspect idea of ‘substitution sacrifice’, that is, the idea that an animal was sacrificed ‘in place of’ the person who brought it. On the problem of ‘substitution sacrifice’ see R. Parker, “Substitution in Greek Sacrifice,” in R. Gagné and P. Bonnechere (eds.), *Sacrifices humains: Perspectives croisées et représentations* (Liège 2013) 145–152.

shedding light on wider issues related to Greek dedicatory practices. The focus will be on dedicatory inscriptions, though sacrificial uses and literary attestations will also be mentioned where *hyper* had similar meanings and uses.

1. *hyper* a beneficiary

When the Greeks made offerings to secure the favour of the gods, *hyper*'s major function was to identify the recipients of the benefits associated with the offerings, the most common ones being the dedicators themselves and their family members. Such formulae were rare in the Archaic and early Classical periods, but became much more common from the fourth century B.C. An early example (probably incomplete) from Erythrae reads Ἀπόλλωνι Δελφινίωι Φανόδικος ὁ Φιλήτεω ἀ[ν]έθηκεν εὐχῶ[λὴν ὑ]πὲρ ἑαυτοῦ, “To Apollo Delphinios, Phanodikos son of Philetos dedicated (this) votive offering on behalf of himself.”³ Another dedication, from Athens, bears this verse: [Μ]ικύθη μ’ ἀνέ[θηκεν] [Ἀθ]ηναίηι τό[δ’ ἄγαλμα] / [εὐξ]αμένη δεκάτην [καὶ] ὑπὲρ πα[ίδων] [καὶ] ἑαυτῆ[ς], “Mikythe dedicated this statue to Athena, having vowed a tithe on behalf of her children and herself.”⁴ In the vast majority of such uses, *hyper* can be rendered ‘on behalf of’, ‘in the interest of’, or ‘for the sake of’ the persons named in the genitive. Its primary function was to specify the direction in which the *charis* associated with the offering should flow, as if to make sure that the gods would dispense their favours to the right persons. The need to indicate this to the Greek gods seems markedly different from early Christian dedications, many of which left both the dedicators and the beneficiaries anonymous.⁵

³ *I.Erythrai* 209 = M. L. Lazzarini, *Le formule delle dediche votive nella Grecia arcaica* (Rome 1976) no. 741 = *LSAG*² 344, no. 50, pl. 65 (ca. 510–500?). The statue base is broken at the bottom, so the text may not be complete and *hyper* probably does not identify only the dedicator. Lazzarini restores [ὑ]πὲρ ἑαυτοῦ [καὶ γενεῆς?]; cf. no. 784 = *DAA* no. 282 [Ο]νέτορ [τόδ’ ἠυπὲρ] ἠαυτοῦ καὶ γ[ενεᾶς] (ca. 500).

⁴ *IG* I³ 857 (ca. 470–450?) = *CEG* 273.

⁵ An example from Eleusis, recently published by E. Sironen, “Two Early

In many Greek dedicatory inscriptions *hyper* was followed only by the dedicator's family members without mention of himself/herself.⁶ Indeed it is far less common to find ὑπὲρ ἑαυτοῦ/ἑαυτῆς standing alone, indicating the dedicator himself/herself as the sole beneficiary.⁷ In healing contexts *hyper* may be followed by a body part, which might be depicted in an accompanying relief.⁸ Close relatives aside, individuals might dedicate on behalf of the group to which they belonged with such expressions as ὑπὲρ τῆς φυλῆς, ὑπὲρ τῶν συνεφήβων, ὑπὲρ τῆς κώμης, and ὑπὲρ τῆς πόλεως.⁹ All these were prayers 'on

Christian Inscriptions from Eleusis," in G. Reger et al. (eds.), *Studies in Greek Epigraphy and History in Honor of Stephenn V. Tracy* (Pessac 2010) 84: †καλλιεργία ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς κ<αλ> σωτηρίας ὧν οἶδεν ὁ Θε(ε)ς τὰ ὀνόματα<τα>, "This beautiful work (is dedicated) for the vow and safety of those whose names God knows." See similar Christian formulae in e.g. *Bull.épigr.* 1970, 383; *IG X.2.2* 410; *SEG XXXVII* 737. But L. Robert, "Dans une maison d'Ephèse, un serpent et un chiffre," *CRAI* (1982) 126–132, at 132 (repr. *Opera minora selecta* V 770–776, at 776), and "Documents d'Asie Mineure," *BCH* 107 (1983) 497–599, at 572 (repr. *Documents d'Asie Mineure* (Athens/Paris 1987) 341–443, at 416), suggested that a similar idea—the gods know—probably underlies Greek dedications that lack inscriptions.

⁶ E.g. *IG II²* 4372 ὑπὲρ τῆς γυναικός, 4400 ὑπὲρ τῶν παίδων, 4412 ὑπὲρ τῆς θυγατρός, 4588 ὑπὲρ τοῦ παιδίου, *XI.4* 1221 ὑπὲρ τῶν παιδίων; *SEG XLI* 1218 ὑπὲρ τέκνων [κ]ὲ τῆς οἰκείας κὲ Ἀλυμας οἱ ἀδελφοί, 1221 ὑπὲρ ἀ[v]εψιῶν, 1224 [ὑ]πὲρ τῶν τέκνων, 1232 [ὑπὲρ τῆ]ς οἰκίας; *TAM V.1* 453 ὑπὲρ ἀδελφῶν, 462 ὑπὲρ γυνεκός.

⁷ Standing alone: e.g. *I.Kanais* 37–38; *I.Delos* 2225, 2328; *IGBulg II* 487, 677; *IG II²* 4793.

⁸ E.g. *TAM V.1* 324 ὑπὲρ τῶν μαστῶν εὐχὴν (relief depicting a pair of breasts), 461b ὑπὲρ παρωτίδων εὔξατο εὐχὴν (no iconography; παρωτίς a "tumour of the parotid gland," LSJ), 533 ὑπὲρ το[ῦ] ποδός εὐχαριστοῦσ[α] [ε]ὔχην (a leg is depicted between two standing figures), 534 ὑπὲρ τοῦ ποδός εὐχὴν (foot or lower part of leg); T. Drew-Bear, C. M. Thomas, and M. Yildizturan, *Phyrgian Votive Steles* (Ankara 1999) nos. 340 ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἰδίου σώματος εὐχὴν (no iconography), 526 ὑπὲρ ἰδίου σώμα[το]ς εὐχὴν (relief of an arm).

⁹ ὑπὲρ τῆς φυλῆς: e.g. *Agora XVIII* C109 (by supplement). ὑπὲρ τῶν συνεφήβων: e.g. *Agora XVII* C132. ὑπὲρ τῆς κώμης: e.g. *SEG LVIII* 1424; T. Drew-Bear, *Nouvelles inscriptions de Phrygie* (Zutphen 1978) 34 no. 1.3;

behalf of' or 'for the welfare/benefit of' the persons or groups concerned: all those named would supposedly benefit from the offering even though they had not made it themselves. That beneficiaries could be absent and far away is shown by sacrifices performed by Athenian magistrates on behalf of various groups of Athenians, their friends, and allies.¹⁰ From the Hellenistic period onwards we find individuals and cities making sacrifices or dedications to the gods on behalf of their king and queen (ὑπὲρ τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ τῆς βασιλίσσης) and sometimes other members of the royal family.¹¹ By channelling the *charis* to the *hegemones*, these offerings were expressions of goodwill towards the monarchs, and not prayers for monarchs who were in illness or trouble.

A related use of *hyper* can be found in inscriptions concerning religious subscriptions. Individuals could make donations for religious purposes—such as the construction or adornment of sanctuaries—*hyper* themselves and/or members of their family. Many entries in subscription texts from Hellenistic Delos re-

I.Prusa 23. ὑπὲρ τῆς πόλεως: *IGBulg* II 665, *IG* VII 3418, *I.Olbia* 83. C. Schuler, "Inscriptions and Identities of Rural Population Groups in Roman Asia Minor," in J. Davies and J. Wilkes (eds.), *Epigraphy and the Historical Sciences* (Oxford 2012) 63–100, at 80, notes that the formula ὑπὲρ τῆς κώμης was confined to rural Asia Minor, though the concern for a community's well-being was not.

¹⁰ E.g. *Agora* XV 293 ὑπὲρ τε τῶν πρυτάνεων καὶ τῆς βουλῆς καὶ τοῦ δήμου καὶ παίδων [καὶ] γυναικῶν καὶ τῶν φίλων καὶ συμμάχων; *IG* II² 1048 ὑπὲρ τε τῆς βουλῆς καὶ τοῦ δήμου καὶ παίδων καὶ γυναικῶν καὶ [τῶν φίλων καὶ συμμάχων], 1224 [ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ δήμου τοῦ Ἀθηναίων εὐδ[ο]ξίας τε καὶ σ[ω]τηρίας καὶ τῆς τῶν φίλων καὶ συμμάχων] [τῶν] αὐτοῦ. That dedications could be set up by one individual *hyper* another is illustrated in e.g. an Epidaurian cure inscription *IG* IV².1 121.54–68 (*iama* 7): Echedoros was given money from Pandaros (whose tattoos had been removed by Asclepius) to dedicate to the god at Epidaurus 'on his behalf' (ὑπὲρ αὐ[του]). Having failed to dedicate as entrusted, he was punished by acquiring Pandaros' tattoos.

¹¹ E.g. *IG* XII.8 156.B.22–23; *SEG* XLIX 876–877; *OGIS* 302–304; *IG* XII.3 468; *I.Delos* 1561, 2040. Sacrifices *hyper* emperors are discussed in S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and Power* (Cambridge 1984) 210–216.

cord contributions made by a donor ‘for himself and his wife and his children’, ὑπὲρ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τῆς γυναικὸς καὶ τῶν τέκνων (or similar).¹² The individuals named alongside the donor probably did not give the sums themselves; the donations were made ‘in their name’. This use of *hyper* overlaps with, and yet does not fall neatly into, what we have considered so far: in this context the sense is ‘in the name of’ rather than ‘for the benefit of’, but even in religious subscriptions there was probably still some vague hope of benefit for the individuals named.

Hyper could also introduce worshippers’ livestock, crops, and possessions. Roman Asia Minor, particularly Phrygia and to a lesser extent Lydia, provide an abundance of votive dedications made for the well-being of animals. Many of these were for oxen (ὑπὲρ τοῦ βοός, ὑπὲρ βοῶν),¹³ some for mules (ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἡμίονου),¹⁴ and some for herds of goats (ὑπὲρ αἰπολίου)¹⁵ or for herds in general (ὑπὲρ τῶν θρεμμάτων, ὑπὲρ τῶν ζώων, ὑπὲρ τῶν τετραπόδων, and ὑπὲρ τῶν κτηνῶν).¹⁶ In some contexts θρέμματα could apply to human beings, but its juxtaposition with children (τέκνα) in ὑπὲρ τέκνων καὶ θρεμμάτων and

¹² E.g. *I.Délos* 2619.a.6ff., 2627.5–6. The same practice of donating *hyper* someone is seen in secular subscriptions (such as for fortifications), on which see L. Migeotte, *Les souscriptions publiques dans les cités grecques* (Quebec/Geneva 1992), and recently A. Ellis-Evans, “The Ideology of Public Subscriptions,” in P. Martzavou and N. Papazarkadas (eds.), *Epigraphical Approaches to the Post-Classical Polis: Fourth Century BC to Second Century AD* (Oxford 2013) 107–121.

¹³ Singular: *TAM* V.1 509; plural: *SEG* XXXII 1273, LVI 1517, 1520, 1524; *MAMA* V 120, 152–153, 212, VII 303. See also *RECAM* II 61 ὑπὲρ βοιδίων.

¹⁴ *TAM* V.1 343.

¹⁵ Drew-Bear et al., *Phrygian Votive Steles* 305. The editors think that the fragmentary relief depicts a cow and a calf, but a goat and a kid are more probable according to the inscription.

¹⁶ E.g. L. Robert, *Hellenica* X (1955) 34 Διὶ Ἐναυλίῳ Ἑρις Μελιφθόνγου εὐξάμενος ὑπὲρ τῶν θρεμμάτων (*I.Byzantion* 20, with *SEG* L 664 on the epithet Ἐναύλιος); *TAM* IV.1 74 ὑπὲρ τῶν ζώων; Drew-Bear et al., *Phrygian Votive Steles* 609 ὑπὲρ κτήνους; *SEG* XXXIV 1214, ὑπὲρ τῶν κτηνῶν.

similar formulae suggests that young animals are meant:¹⁷ the well-being of both was a main concern for agrarian families.¹⁸ Just as pastoralists could pray for their livestock, farmers and vine-growers could pray for their crops with such formulae as ὑπὲρ (τῶν) καρπῶν,¹⁹ ὑπὲρ σίτων,²⁰ ὑπὲρ ἀνπέλων.²¹ The all-inclusive formula ὑπὲρ τῶν ἰδίων or ὑπὲρ τῶν ἰδίων πάντων may refer to all family members and/or all personal matters (including possessions, and possibly livestock and crops).²²

The range of possible beneficiaries reflects the fundamental feature of Greek religion that benefits associated with offerings could flow to a third party in absence, and this need not be a human being. It illustrates the spheres of life in which Greeks depended on divine favours, and bears out Socrates' advice that men should propitiate the gods in matters of agriculture no less than in war, and that sensible men would cultivate the gods "for the good of their fruits, crops, cattle, horses, sheep, and indeed for all their possessions," οἱ σῶφρονες καὶ ὑπὲρ ὑγρῶν καὶ ξηρῶν καρπῶν καὶ βοῶν καὶ ἵππων καὶ προβάτων καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων γε δὴ τῶν κτημάτων τοὺς θεοὺς θεραπεύουσιν (Xen. *Oec.* 5.20). In ancient societies where farming and animal husbandry constituted the main sources of livelihood, prayers for the healthy growth of crops and livestock were essentially

¹⁷ TAM V.1 322, with G. Petzl, "Ländliche Religiosität in Lydien," in P. Herrmann (ed.), *Forschungen in Lydien* (Bonn 1995) 37–48, at 42–43, pl. 6.1 (the relief represents a leg, a pair of eyes, and breasts). For the combination of human beings and animals see also e.g. IG VII 50 ὑπὲρ ἑαυτῆς καὶ τῶν τέκνων καὶ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς καὶ τῶν θρεμμάτων; CIG 4120 ὑπὲρ ἑαυτῶν κὲ τῶν ἰδίων τε[ε]τραπόδων; L. D. Loukouroulou, *Épigraphes tes Thrakes tou Aigaiou* (Athens 2005) 389 ὑπὲρ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ θρεμμάτων καὶ τῶν ἰδίων εὐχαριστήριον; SEG LVII 1330 ὑπὲρ ἀνθρώπων καὶ τετραπόδων.

¹⁸ Discussed in Robert, *Hellenica* X 35–36.

¹⁹ E.g. MAMA V 125–126; *Iznik* 1083, 1153, 1514.

²⁰ Th. Wiegand, *AthMitt* 29 (1904) 301 ὑπὲρ τῶν [καρπῶν καὶ] σίτων.

²¹ Drew-Bear et al., *Phrygian Votive Steles* 425 ὑπὲρ ἀνπ[έλων – – –].

²² E.g. *I.Délos* 2413; TAM IV.1 89; Drew-Bear, *Nouvelles inscriptions* 42 no. 10, 47 no. 23; Drew-Bear et al., *Phrygian Votive Steles* 134, 498, 522; SEG XLI 1214, 1216, 1219, 1226.

prayers for wealth and prosperity, and we would expect many more farmers, goatherds, shepherds, and cowherds all over the Greek world to have beseeched the gods for the well-being of their crops and animals.

It is surprising, then, that, despite the great importance of these activities in most Greek societies, dedications for crops and animals come predominantly from Asia Minor. Farmers feature often in dedicatory epigrams and oracular consultations,²³ but are much harder to identify in the epigraphic record of mainland Greece. A rare instance from Attica is a third-century B.C. inscription mentioning sacrifice to Dionysus “for the health and safety of the Council, the people of the Athenians, and the crops in the countryside,” ἐφ’ ὑγείαι καὶ σωτηρίαι τῆς βοῦλης καὶ τοῦ δήμου τοῦ Ἀθηναίων καὶ τῶν καρπῶν τῶν ἐν τεῖ χώραι. Oliver links this prayer for crops to the importance of the food supply to Athens’ survival during the Chremonidean War; yet this still does explain the absence of this formula in other periods of Athenian history when the food supply was equally critical.²⁴ Recently Schuler has explained the geographical imbalance of such epigraphic mater-

²³ Epigrams: e.g. *Anth.Gr.* 6.21–22, 31, 36, 40–42, 44–45, 53, 56, 79, 95, 98, 102, 104, 169, 225, 238, 258, 297. Oracular consultations concerning (περὶ) crops were quite common: e.g. E. Lhôte, *Les lamelles oraculaires de Dodone* (Geneva 2006) nos. 2, 76–79a.

²⁴ *IG II²* 668.8–10 (266/5 B.C.), with discussion in G. J. Oliver, *War, Food, and Politics in Early Hellenistic Athens* (Oxford 2007) 131, 212. Other rites for agricultural prosperity were not absent in Attica and elsewhere. E.g. according to the lexicographers, the *proerosia* were pre-ploughing sacrifices performed by the Athenians on behalf of all the Greeks for the maturity of future crops (*Suda* π 2420 s.v. Προηροσία: αἱ πρὸ τοῦ ἀρότρου γινόμεναι θυσίαι περὶ τῶν μελλόντων ἔσεσθαι καρπῶν, ὥστε τελεσφορεῖσθαι· ἐγίνετο δὲ ὑπὸ Ἀθηναίων ὑπὲρ πάντων Ἑλλήνων. A third-century B.C. calendar from Mykonos (*LSCG* 96) mentions a song for the crops, ὠδὴ ὑπὲρ καρποῦ, and sacrifices to Zeus Chthonios and Ge Chthonia ὑπὲρ καρπῶν (16, 24–25). Several dedications for animals are attested in Hellenistic Crete: these were addressed to the Kouretes “for larger cattle,” πρὸ καρταιπόδων, and inscribed with similar formulae: *I.Cret.* I XXV 3, XXXI 7–8, *Bull.épigr.* 2012, 343 (second to first centuries B.C.).

ials in terms of what he calls “regional epigraphic habit”: prayers *hyper* crops and livestock must have been widespread, but only certain regions had the practice of inscribing them permanently on stone.²⁵

2. *Hyper* benefits

While *hyper* in the above uses identifies the beneficiary without specifying the divine favour hoped for and/or attained (the safety or general well-being of the beneficiary is implied), the second kind of *hyper* explicitly names the benefit received and/or sought from the gods. These two types of *hyper* are closely associated insofar as the benefit (in the genitive) was often attached to its recipient (in the genitive). The most common benefits prayed for were ὑγίεια (‘health’) and σωτηρία (‘safety’, ‘deliverance’, ‘salvation’).²⁶ One individual, for example, dedicated to Apollo ὑπὲρ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ σωτηρίας καὶ τῶν ἰδίων ἀμπέλων ἐπὶ ἄκρᾶν, “for his well-being and that of his vines at Akra” (or “on hilltop”).²⁷ It can be hard to distinguish ὑγίεια from σωτηρία when they appear alongside each other, but sometimes they could betray rather different concerns. In northwestern Lydia in 276/5 one Argeios set up a stele to Apollo Pityaenos “for the health of himself and his wife and for the deliverance of his son Phanokritos, who was saved after being captured by the Galatians,” ὑπὲρ τε τῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ τῆς γυναικὸς ὑγείας καὶ τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ Φανοκρίτου σωτηρίας, ὃς ἀλοῦς ὑπὸ τῶν Γαλατῶν ἐσώθη (*TAM* V.2 881). This thank-offering combines different types of experiences and benefits: it was brought to the god for the well-being (ὑγίεια) of the couple

²⁵ Schuler, in *Epigraphy* 67–79.

²⁶ E.g. *IG* II² 1194.5–6 ὑπὲρ ὑγιείας καὶ σωτηρίας τῶν δημοτῶν, 1215.18–19 ὑπὲρ ὑγείας αὐτῶ[ν καὶ τῆς τοῦ δήμου] σωτηρίας; *Alt.Perg.* VIII.3 81 ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας εὐχαριστήριν; *SEG* XXXIII 1153 ὑπὲρ τῆς κόμης σωτηρίας; *IG* XII.4 541, 543 ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας τῆς πόλεως; Drew-Bear et al., *Phrygian Votive Steles* 336 ὑπὲρ προβάτων σωτηρίας; *MAMA* V 212 ὑπὲρ βοῶν σωτηρίας καὶ [τ]ῶν ἰδί[ων π]άντων; VII 303 ὑπὲρ βοῶν σωτηρίας; *I.Iznik* 1506 [ὑπὲρ] σωτηρίας καρπῶ[v].

²⁷ *IGBulg* I² 374. The marble relief depicts someone offering a sacrifice.

(who were not captured) and the deliverance (σωτηρία) of their son Phanokritos, taken prisoner but now released, and demonstrates the capacity of Greek offerings to look simultaneously backward and forward. Instead of erecting two dedications, for his son and for his wife and himself, Argeios economically combined his attempts to return and secure divine favours in a single stele.

As Argeios' example shows, nothing prevented individuals from praying for different benefits for different beneficiaries in the same offering. Thus at Mons Claudianus in Egypt, an architect Apollonios dedicated an altar to Zeus Helios great Sarapis "for the genius of the sovereign Caesar Trajan" (ὑπερ τῆς τοῦ κυρίου Καίσαρος Τραιανου τύχης) and "for the protection of all his (Apollonios') works" (ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτοῦ πάντων ἔργων).²⁸ While setting up an altar for the emperor's benefit, Apollonios did not forget to secure divine protection for his own (architectural) works. In the later period ὑγίεια and σωτηρία were occasionally replaced with ὀλοκληρία ('good health') and διαμονή ('continuance', 'permanence').²⁹ The use of διαμονή in prayers for ordinary individuals may have been due to imperial influence: dedicatory formulae for Roman emperors often used ὑπὲρ τῆς (αἰωνίου/ἀθανάτου) διαμονῆς, sometimes in conjunction with νίκη and σωτηρία.³⁰

²⁸ A. Bernand, *Pan du Désert* 38, with *SEG* XLII 1577: Διὶ Ἡλίῳ μεγάλῳ Σαράπιδι ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κυρίου Καίσαρος Τραιανοῦ τύχης, ἐπὶ Ἐνκολπίῳ ἐπιτρόπῳ καὶ Κουίντῳ Ἀκκίῳ Ὀπτάτῳ (ἑκατοντά)ρχ(ῳ), Ἀπολλώνιος Ἀμμωνίου Ἀλεξανδρεὺς ἀρχιτέκτων ἀνέθηκεν ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτοῦ πάντων ἔργων.

²⁹ E.g. *TAM* V.1 323 [ὑ]πὲρ τῆς ὀλοκληρίας [τῶν] ποδῶν εὐχὴν (relief of a pair of legs); *Iznik* 1131 ὑπὲρ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τῶν ἰδίων πάντων καὶ Π. Πουστουμίου Σεουηρανοῦ Ἀπολλόθεμι τοῦ ἰδίου πάτρωνος ὀλοκληρίας καὶ διαμονῆς Διὶ Σωτῆρι. Robert, *Hellenica* X 96–104, discussed the rare and late formula ὑπὲρ τῆς ὀλοκληρίας καὶ διαμονῆς substituting for the usual ὑπὲρ ὑγείας καὶ σωτηρίας; at 103–104 he discussed imperial influence on the use of διαμονή.

³⁰ E.g. *IG* II² 3404 ὑπὲρ ὑγε[ίας] καὶ νείκης κα[ὶ] διαμονῆς] τῶν Αὐτοκρα[τόρων] Μ. Αὐρηλίου Ἀντ[ωνείνου] καὶ Λουκίου Β[ήρου] Σεβ[αστῶν],

We find, used in relation to crops, ὑπὲρ εὐκαρπίας ('for good fruits'), ὑπὲρ ἀβλαβίας ('for freedom from harm'), and ὑπὲρ τελεσφορίας τῶν καρπῶν ('for the fulfilment of the crops').³¹ In the village of Nisyra in northeastern Lydia in the third century A.D., a dedication to Zeus Seleukios and the Nymphs Karpodoteirai ('Givers of Fruit') was set up according to divine command "for freedom from harm and the fulfilment of the crops" (ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀβλαβείας καὶ τελεσφορίας τῶν καρπῶν).³² In Mysia, the villagers of the Thracian village (Θρακιοκωμηται) prayed to Zeus Chalazios Sozon ('Protector from Hail') "for the fruitfulness and freedom from harm of their crops, and for the health and safety of their farmers and those assembling for the god and residents in the Thracian village," ὑπὲρ εὐκαρπίας καὶ ἀβλαβίας τῶν καρπῶν καὶ ὑπὲρ ὑγιείας καὶ σωτηρίας τῶν γεοκτεϊτῶν καὶ τῶν συνερχομένων ἐπὶ τὸν θεὸν καὶ κατοικούντων Θρακίαν κώμην.³³ As these two texts show, in addition (and sometimes as an alternative) to using *hyper*, worshippers could express the benefits hoped and/or thanked for with the gods' epithets, as if to reinforce the desired result.

There were other ways of expressing benefits in dedicatory inscriptions. To mention only one related formula, clauses like

5205 [ὑ]πὲρ νίκης καὶ σωτηρίας καὶ ἀθανάτου δια[μο]νῆς τῶν δεσποτῶν τῆς οἰκουμέ[νης] Φλ. Ἀρκαδίου καὶ Φλ. Ὀνωρίου τῶν ἀηττήτω[ν Αὐγούσ]-των.

³¹ *SEG* XXXVI 1155 ὑπὲρ εὐκαρπίας, and nn.32–33 below. See similarly with the preposition περί: *Bull.épigr.* 1956, 294 = *SEG* XIV 787 περί καρπῶν τηλεσφορίας; Drew-Bear, *Nouvelles inscriptions* 38 no. 3 περί τῶν ἰδίων πάντων σωτηρίας καρπῶν θελεσφορίας, "for the safety of all private affairs (and) fulfilment of crops."

³² *TAM* V.1 426. The phrase κατ' ἐπιταγήν is also used in relation to crops in e.g. *I.Iznik* 1153, 1506.

³³ F. W. Hasluck, "Unpublished Inscriptions from the Cyzicus Neighbourhood," *JHS* 24 (1904) 20–40, at 21–23, no. 4, with fig. 1. On Zeus as a weather god who could send and stop hail see A. B. Cook, *Zeus* III (Cambridge 1940) 880–881 (this inscription), 944, and H. Schwabl, "Zeus I. Epiklesien," *RE* 10A (1972) 372–373. This is apparently the only epigraphic attestation of Zeus Chalazios; Apollo Chalazios is reported in Thebes.

σωθείς ἐκ πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων κινδύνων (or similar) were often used in conjunction with a *hyper* formula, though the two could also be used independently. A Coan (merchant?) who “was saved from many great dangers” set up a thank-offering on Delos to Sarapis, Isis, Anubis, Apollo, and gods in the same temple for (the deliverance of) himself and his two children: Πρῶτος Πυθίωνος Κῶιος, σωθείς ἐκ πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων κινδύνων Σεράπει, Ἴσει, Ἄνουβει, Ἀπόλλωνι, θεοῖς συννάοις, ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν παιδίων Φιλουμένης καὶ Πυθίωνος.³⁴ This is an expanded version of the more concise *hyper soterias tinos*.

3. *hyper* the deceased

The third kind of *hyper* identifies a deceased person in whose name an offering was made. A rectangular base from Larissa from perhaps the fifth century B.C. bears this verse: Ἀργεῖα : μ' ἀνέθεκε ὑπὲρ πα[ι]δὸς τὸδ' ἄγαλμα· / εὔξατο : δ' Ἀγέ[τ]ορ φαστικῶι : Ἐνοδίαι, “Argeia dedicated me, this statue, on behalf of her son, but Hagetor vowed it to Enodia of the city.”³⁵ If it is correct to understand Argeia as Hagetor’s mother, the implication seems to be that her son had died before dis-

³⁴ *I.Delos* 2119 (undated). See also *I.Alex.Imp.* 6 ὑπὲρ Θεανοῦς τῆς θυγατρὸς σωθείς[ης] ἐγ' μεγάλων κ<ι>κινδύνων. Thank-offerings for rescue are discussed in C. Habicht, “Danksagungen Geretteter an die Götter,” *Hyperboreus* 7 (2001) 301–307, and “Weitere Weihungen Geretteter,” *Hyperboreus* 8 (2002) 340–344.

³⁵ *IG IX.2* 575; Lazzarini, *Le formule* no. 725; *CEG* 342; *SEG XXXV* 590 (dated ca. 450–425); C. Löhr, *Griechische Familienweihungen* (Rahden 2000) no. 63; *LGN III.b* s.v. Ἀργεῖα (3). But surrogate dedications in fulfilment of another’s vow could be expressed by formulae other than *hyper*: e.g. *IG I³* 659 [τ]ὸ π[α]τρὸς εὐχ[σ]αμένο], 705 [εὐχ[σ]α(?)μένον προγό[νον], 735 τὸ τέκνο εὐχ[σ]αμένο], 773 μετρ<ὸ>ς ἐπ[ευχ[σ]αμένες]; *IG IX.2* 1098 [μ]ατέρος εὐχολάν; Drew-Bear et al., *Phrygian Votive Steles* 465 Ἐπίτησις διὰ πα[ι]δίου εὐχῆν. See also Diog. Laert. 5.15–16: Aristotle had made a vow for Nikanor’s safety but died before being able to discharge it; in his will, therefore, he asked Nikanor to dedicate, upon his safe return, four-cubit stone statues to Zeus Soter and Athena Soteira in Stagira, in fulfilment of the vow made on his behalf, ἀναθεῖναι δὲ καὶ Νικάνορα σωθέντα, ἦν εὐχῆν ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ ἠὔξαμην.

charging his vow to Enodia; consequently it became necessary for the mother to perform this on his behalf. The mother made the dedication ‘in place of’ or ‘in the name of’ her deceased son. This is different from the above instances where ὑπὲρ παιδός (or similar, cf. n.6) refers to the act of dedicating ‘in the interest of’ or ‘for the well-being of’ the child named. The repayment of a vow was normally the obligation of the person who made it, but in cases such as death it might be undertaken by someone else. Underlying surrogate dedications is the Greeks’ concept that debts owed to the gods must be settled: not even death could erase them. The fear of owing the gods their due is alluded to in Plato’s *Republic*: Cephalus tells Socrates that the greatest use of money is in settling a debt, so that one need not fear going to the other world while owing any sacrifice to a god or money to a person (331B–C).

Some dedications were made ὑπὲρ τοῦ πατρός and/or μητρός;³⁶ but the lack of contextual information makes it difficult to know whether these were erected ‘in the name of’ deceased parents (who could not fulfill their vow), ‘for the health of’ aging parents (as in category (1) above), or for some other purpose. Some dedications mention that the father or mother had held certain public offices, with *hyper* taking on the sense of ‘in honour of’. In Hellenistic Lindos, for example, honorific dedications were set up *hyper* the dedicator’s father who had served as the priest of Athena Lindia and Zeus Polieus, ὑπὲρ τοῦ πατρός ἱερατεύσαντος Ἀθαναΐας Λινδίας καὶ Διὸς Πολιέως, sometimes with the addition of other gods.³⁷

³⁶ E.g. *Lindos* II 132 ὑπὲρ τῶς ματρός; 133 ὑπὲρ τοῦ πατρός; 145 ὑπὲρ τοῦ πατρός καὶ τῶς ματρός; Löhr, *Griechische Familienweihungen* no. 119 ὑπὲρ τῆς μητρός. Little is known about the individuals in these inscriptions, but all the statue bases appear to have supported the portrait statue of the parent(s) named, suggesting that these families must have been well-off.

³⁷ E.g. *IG XII.1* 813, 820; *Lindos* II 157, 168. Cf. other priesthoods or offices commemorated: e.g. *CIRB* 6 = Löhr, *Griechische Familienweihungen* no. 97 ὑπὲρ πατρός τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ Δεινοστράτο ἱερησαμένου Ἀπόλλωνι Ἰητρώ; *Clara Rhodes* 2 (1932) 196 no. 24 ὑπὲρ τοῦ πατρός φυλαρχήσαντος καὶ νικάσαντος Διοσκούρια καὶ γραμματεύσαντος βουλᾶ; *IGBulg* I² 21 ὑπὲρ τῆς

Nevertheless, without knowing the parents' life dates and the precise time of the dedications, it is difficult to tell whether these monuments were set up posthumously or during the parents' life-time.

As we have seen,³⁸ however, death need not be the only reason why an individual fulfilled a religious obligation *hyper* another. A late inscription from Gerasa in Syria illustrates another context in which an offering might be brought *hyper* another (*I.Gerasa* 53, A.D. 119/120):

ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ. ἔτους βπρ'. ὑ[πὲρ]
 τῆς τῶν Σεβαστῶν σωτηρίας
 Διογένης Ἐμμεγάνου ἱερασάμενος
 4 τῶν τεσσάρων ἐπαρχειῶν ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ
 τῇ μητροπόλει ἀγαλμα Δικαιοσύνης
 ὑπὲρ Εὐμένους τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆ πατρίδι
 ἀνέθηκεν, ὃ ἐπηγγείλατο ὑπὲρ τοῦ
 8 Εὐμένους ἀγορανομοῦντος.

With good fortune. In the 182th year. For the well-being of the Emperors, Diogenes, son of Emmeganos, priest of the four *eparchies* in Antioch the mother-city, dedicated a statue of Justice on behalf of his son Eumenes to the fatherland, which he promised for Eumenes' office of *agoranomos*.

This text is interesting for its successive uses of *hyper*. The formula ὑ[πὲρ] τῆς τῶν Σεβαστῶν σωτηρίας (1–2) was extremely common in the imperial period as a prayer for the general well-being of the Roman emperors and an expression of the dedi-

μητρὸς Γ<λ>υκέρως ζακορευούσης Δήμητρος. See recently J. Ma, *Statues and Cities: Honorary Portraits and Civic Identity in the Hellenistic World* (Oxford 2013) 170–173 (on statues commemorating the tenure of a priesthood or other offices by family members, attested on Rhodes and elsewhere), 175–177 (statues set up as memorials of the deceased, sometimes upon their wish or instruction). Contrast Jewish dedications 'for the memory of' the deceased: e.g. *IGLS* IV 1370 ὑπὲρ μνίας προγόνων. The phrase ὑπὲρ μνίας occurs also in *IGLS* IV 1636, but it is uncertain whether this was a dedication or a tombstone.

³⁸ E.g. *IG* IV².1 121.54–68 (n.10 above).

cator's goodwill and loyalty to them. The second *hyper* clause (6), though also identifying a third party (the dedicator's son) for whom the dedication was set up, is rather different in meaning and function: Diogenes was setting up a statue 'on behalf of' or 'in the name of' his son, who was appointed *agoranomos*. What is alluded to is the imperial practice of *summa honoraria*: magistrates would erect a monument, undertake public work, or pay a sum 'for' holding a particular office, ὑπερ τῆς ἀρχῆς or ἀντὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς,³⁹ here for Eumenes' office of *agoranomos*, ὑπερ τοῦ Εὐμένους ἀγορανομοῦντος. It is unclear whether Eumenes had promised the monument but could not fulfill it, or whether his father had promised to do so on his behalf should he become *agoranomos* (as the third *hyper* clause seems to suggest, that is, if it is correct to understand ἐπηγγείλατο as referring to Diogenes' announcement).⁴⁰ Both cases are possible: such an obligation was normally announced and discharged by the office-holder, but it could also be performed by a family member on his behalf.

A comparable text from Laodicea in Syria shows a woman undertaking various constructions on behalf of her husband in return for his appointment as a council member, ὑπερ Νεικάτορος ... ἀντὶ τῆς βολῆς, and for (the general well-being of) her children, ὑπ[ερ τέ]κνων <α>ὐτῆς, with the two *hyper* clauses conveying rather different concerns.⁴¹ In Laodicea, as in the Gerasa text, the dedicator was fulfilling a religious obligation 'on behalf of' or 'in the name of' a family member, a duty in-

³⁹ On *summa honoraria* see L. Robert, "Études épigraphiques," *BCH* 60 (1936) 190–207, at 196–197 (with further examples); *Études anatoliennes* (Paris 1937) 339–341. Robert (1936) 196: "au titre de telle magistrature" (ὑπερ τῆς ἀρχῆς) or "en échange de telle magistrature" (ἀντὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς).

⁴⁰ Cf. the formula ἐξ ἐπαγγελίας ἀνέθηκεν in *I.Gerasa* 10, 15, 121–122, where the office-holder appears to be the one who both promised the dedication and fulfilled it.

⁴¹ *IGLS* IV 1259, discussed in Robert, *BCH* 60 (1936) 192–197: Ἀπολλωνία Ζη[-] ὑπερ Νεικάτορος Τερτύλλου τοῦ αὐτῆ[ς ἀνδρός], ἀντὶ τῆς βολῆς τὰς ἐ[ξ/ἔ][ξω] θυρίδας ἐθύρωσε καὶ ε[ἰς] εἴκοσι μεσόστυλ<α> ὑπ[ερ τέ]κνων <α>ὐτῆς τὰς βαθ[μίδας] ταῖς <λ>ιθοστρώτο<ι>ς ἐπέθηκε(?).

curred by the tenure of an office. The final *hyper* in the Gerasa inscription has a vaguely causal sense, and may be translated as ‘on account of’, ‘for the tenure of’ or ‘for the appointment of’ (not ‘for the benefit of’ or ‘in honour of’) Eumenes as *agoranomos*, though there is probably a vague sense of benefit for the individual named and a desire to commemorate his tenure of the office.

Used in a myriad of formulae, *hyper* requires a slightly varying translation if we are to spell out its precise meaning in a given context, but we can also pass over the differences by rendering it vaguely as ‘for’. In fact the Greek *hyper* functioned like English ‘for’: one can expand or abbreviate its meaning as one wants. Its pervasive and wide-ranging applications probably lie in part in its flexibility and imprecision. Despite the frequent use of *hyper*, other prepositions might also be used in the same sense, the most common being περί with genitive.⁴² Perhaps because of the confusion and/or the combination of the two, we sometimes find the form ὑπερί.⁴³ Other prepositions include ἀντί (with genitive, ‘for the sake of’), ἔνεκα/ἔνεκεν (with genitive, ‘on account of’, ‘for the sake of’), ἐπί

⁴² E.g. Drew-Bear, *Nouvelles inscriptions* 29 no.1 περί τῶν ἰδίων σωτηρίας, 35 no. 2 πε[ρ]ὶ τῆς κ[ώ]μ[ης] σ[ω]τ[η]ρίας, 38 no. 3 περί τῶν ἰδίων πάντων σωτηρίας κ(αὶ) καρπῶν θελεσπορίας; Drew-Bear et al., *Phrygian Votive Steles* 601 περί ὄμου; *SEG* LVI 1523 περί ἐαυτοῦ κὲ τῶν ἰδίων, 1608 περί τέκνων [κὲ τῶν?] εἰδίων [πάντων], 1613 [π]ερί βῶν σωτηρίας.

⁴³ Drew-Bear et al., *Phrygian Votive Steles* 588 ὑπερί ὑπ[αρ]χόντων; *SEG* LVI 1518 ὑπερί β[οῶν]. The formula ὑπερί εὐχῆς (καὶ σωτηρίας) appears in e.g. *IG* XII.1 911, *TAM* IV.1 370, *MAMA* IV 120B, 120(a). Further examples are cited in *Bull. épigr.* 1968, 541, and S. Şahin, *ZPE* 38 (1980) 184. The form is hardly ever explained, except in E. Nachmanson, “Syntaktische Inschriftenstudien,” *Eranos* 9 (1909) 30–81, at 74: “ὑπερί aus ὑπέρ und περί kontaminiert,” and the commentary of H. Grégoire, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques chrétiennes d’Asie Mineure* (Paris 1922) no. 2 (ὑπερί εὐχῆς τῶν χωρίων καὶ...): “l’existence de cette préposition, née de la ‘contamination’ de περί et de ὑπέρ, est certaine.” Grégoire, *Recueil* no. 40, reads ὑπερεὶ εὐχ[ῆς] –], and he wondered “la graphie ὑπερεὶ est-elle due à l’analogie de ὡσεὶ, ὡσανεὶ, ὡσπερεὶ?”

(with genitive, ‘with reference to’, or with dative, ‘for the purpose of’), and χάρις (with genitive, ‘for the sake of’).⁴⁴ Whether to use *hyper* or other formulae was a matter of personal choice, exercised perhaps completely randomly and without conscious thought.

If the various uses and meanings of *hyper* seem more or less clear, it is less easy to uncover the precise circumstances in which the prayers and/or offerings were made. Broadly speaking, we may distinguish between two main kinds of offerings associated with *hyper*: precautionary ones made to maintain the beneficiary’s present well-being (or ‘low-intensity’ offerings), and those induced by crises when someone was sick or in trouble (‘high-intensity’ offerings).⁴⁵ Where *hyper* is followed by a plural noun (ὑπὲρ τῶν παιδίων/τέκνων, ὑπὲρ βοῶν), a generic noun (ὑπὲρ τῶν κτηνῶν/τετραπόδων/ιδίων) or family members combined with livestock (ὑπὲρ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ θρεμμάτων καὶ τῶν ιδίων), the original prayers were probably precautionary, made for the health and safety of the whole group, and not when any single one was at risk. Yet this cannot be taken as a general rule, as we cannot exclude the possibilities that some calamity might have affected all of them or that different needs and experiences might have been combined in a single formula.⁴⁶

The interpretative problems presented by these formulae can be illustrated with a few examples. In the fourth century B.C., at Hermonassa on the north coast of the Black Sea, someone brought a dedication on behalf of his wife to Apollo the Healer,

⁴⁴ E.g. *Gonnoi* II 173 ἀντὶ τέκνων; *Anth.Gr.* 6.149 νίκης ἀντὶ τῆς ιδίης; *TAM* V.1 535 σωτηρίας ἔνεκεν; *IG* II² 223, 354, 410 ἐφ’ ὑγείαι καὶ σωτηρίας; F. T. van Straten, “Gifts for the Gods,” in H. S. Versnel (ed.), *Faith, Hope and Worship* (Leiden 1981) 65–151, at 136 no. 41.1 ἐπὶ τοῦ ιδίου σώματος; Strab. 3.1.9 and 17.1.6, τῆς τῶν πλοῖζομένων σωτηρίας χάρις. Note also πρό with genitive in the Cretan dedications mentioned in n.24, πρὸ καρταιπόδων.

⁴⁵ This distinction between ‘low intensity’ and ‘high intensity’ rituals was used originally by J. Van Baal, “Offering, Sacrifice and Gift,” *Numen* 23 (1976) 161–178.

⁴⁶ As in *TAM* V.2 881 (quoted 624 above).

Δημοφῶν Ἐργίνο ἀνέθηκεν ὑπὲρ τῆς γυναικὸς Ἄκιος Ἀπόλλωνι Ἰητρῶι. Was this an acknowledgement of his wife's recovery from some affliction, or was it a 'low intensity' offering intended to build up favour with Apollo in his role as healer?⁴⁷ Equally ambiguous are such texts as Ἀσκληπιῶι Ἀρχίδαμος Κνίδιος ὑπὲρ τοῦ υἱοῦ Συμμάχου and Κράτης ὑπὲρ Εὐφράνορος Σαράπι, Ἴσι when we are given no further contextual information.⁴⁸ Another interesting instance comes from fourth-century Athens: a couple dedicated "in fulfilment of a vow to Asclepius on behalf of their children, on behalf of Hediste, Sosikles, and Olympiodoros," Μειδίας καὶ Δαναῖς εὐζάμενοι Ἀσκληπιῶι ὑπὲρ τῶν παιδίων ὑπὲρ Ἡδίστης καὶ Σωσικλέους καὶ Ὀλυμπιοδώρου.⁴⁹ Given that Asclepius had already granted a favour (presumably concerning the children's health), why should the couple be so specific as to name each of their children with a second *hyper* formula, as if ὑπὲρ τῶν παιδίων were not sufficient? Doubtless they wanted to thank Asclepius for the favour received and at the same time bring each of their children to the god's attention again, so as to place them under his continued protection. If the original prayer was precautionary, as Parker suggests, made for the health of the whole group and not for healing when one was sick, we have yet to consider how and when the parents decided on the right moment to discharge the vow. Might they have waited until their children reached a certain age (say, their tenth birthday), or until they could afford the expenses? Or might their original vow have

⁴⁷ *CIRB* 1037 = Löhr, *Griechische Familienweihungen* no. 92 (a base for a bronze statue); Löhr entertains the possibility that this was associated with healing.

⁴⁸ *IG* XII.4 497 (fourth century, Cos), cf. 548 (third century, Cos). Similar interpretative problems arise from *IG* II² 4412 Ἀσκληπιῶι ἀ[νέθηκε] ὑπὲρ τῆς θυγα[τρὸς] Θεαν[οῦς] (a small marble base).

⁴⁹ *IG* II² 4403 = R. Parker, "Dedications. Greek Dedications," *ThesCRA* I (2004) 269–281, at 278–279, no. 54 = Löhr, *Griechische Familienweihungen* no. 148. On dedications *hyper* children (plural) in fulfilment of a vow see also *IG* II² 4400, 4481; *I.Kourion* 61; *SEG* XXXIII 1003.

been time-restricted ('if our children are well for the next two years, then...')?

As the last Athenian example shows, many dedicatory formulae with *hyper* were associated with vows. This was indicated usually by εὐξάμενος/εὐξαμένη and occasionally εὐχολή in the early period, and by the noun εὐχή from the fourth century on.⁵⁰ Some late inscriptions have εὐχῆς ἔνεκεν,⁵¹ κατὰ εὐχήν,⁵² and sometimes ὑπὲρ ὧν εὐξάμην ('for what I vowed').⁵³ A similar idea seems to have been expressed by the related formula ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς, common in Christian dedicatory inscriptions.⁵⁴ It is fair to assume that, where the aorist participle εὐξάμενος (and/or χαριστήριον/α) is used, the offering was a response to some divine favour already attained.

The plain εὐχή, however, allows some room for alternative interpretations, as strictly speaking εὐχή can mean a prayer, a vow, or a votive offering.⁵⁵ One Menandros dedicated "on behalf of his oxen to Zeus Limenos (in fulfilment of?) a vow," ὑπὲρ βοῶν Διὶ Λιμνην[ῶ] εὐχήν. Another individual dedicated "on behalf of all his private matters to Zeus Alsenos (in fulfilment of?) a vow," ὑπὲρ τῶν ἰδίων πάντων Διὶ Ἀλσηνῶ εὐχήν.⁵⁶ Could any of these have been presented to the gods

⁵⁰ Dedicatory formulae related to vow fulfilment are studied in Lazzarini, *Le formule* 98–101. On vows and 'votive religion' see e.g. Burkert, *Greek Religion* 68–70 (*Griechische Religion* 111–113); J. Rudhardt, *Notions fondamentales de la pensée religieuse et actes constitutifs du culte dans la Grèce classique*² (Paris 1992) 187–202; S. Pulleyn, *Prayer in Greek Religion* (Oxford 1997) 16–38.

⁵¹ E.g. *IGBulg.* III.1 1070, III.2 1685; *I.Iznik* 1320.

⁵² E.g. *TAM* IV.1 59, V.2 1260; *SEG* XLIV 637; *IG* VII 225; *I.Délos* 2127, 2311.

⁵³ E.g. *SEG* XLI 1012; see also P. Herrmann and H. Malay, *New Documents from Lydia* (Vienna 2007) 98 περὶ ὧν εὐξάμην.

⁵⁴ E.g. *IG* V.1 974; *SEG* XV 141, XXX 535–536, XXXI 587, XXXIV 584, XXXV 643, XXXVII 464, 502, LVI 1678 ὑπέ[ρ] εὐχῆς κὲ σωτηρίας.

⁵⁵ LSJ Suppl. s.v. εὐχή I.b understands the noun without a verb in dedicatory contexts as 'votive offering'.

⁵⁶ *SEG* LVI 1520 = Drew-Bear et al., *Phrygian Votive Steles* 498.

prospectively instead of retrospectively, with εὐχή referring to the prayer made at the time of bringing the object? As Pulleyn points out, the Greeks did not normally pray empty-handed, but would accompany their prayers with a cultic action or an offering, usually a libation or a sacrifice.⁵⁷ Yet nothing prevented worshippers from bringing a durable gift when making a request, while promising another one should it be granted, as long as they could afford to do so. In healing contexts, it has been suggested, anatomical dedications could have been offerings preliminary to treatment instead of thank-offerings for cures already effected.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, attestations of the phrase ἀποδιδόναι εὐχὴν, ‘to discharge a vow (which one had made)’, in some late inscriptions make it more likely that the plain εὐχή was an abbreviated way of saying ‘(in fulfilment of) a vow’.⁵⁹

The processes of making a vow, attaining the prayer, and fulfilling the promise, normally left implicit in most offerings, are in some inscriptions spelt out by the formula εὐξάμενος καὶ ἐπιτυχών. A late dedication from Thrace was set up ‘for the safety of Roimetalkos and Pythodoris from the danger in the war against the Koilaletai, having made a vow and obtained it, as a thank-offering’, θεῶι ἁγίωι ὑψίστωι ὑπὲρ τῆς Ῥοιμητάλκου καὶ Πυθοδωρίδος ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ τὸν Κοιλα[λ]ητικὸν πόλεμον κινδύνου σωτηρίας εὐξάμενος καὶ ἐπιτυχών Γάϊος Ἰούλιος Πρόκ<λ>ος χαριστ[ήρι]ον.⁶⁰ More ambiguous in fact

⁵⁷ Pulleyn, *Prayer*, esp. 8–13.

⁵⁸ W. H. D. Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings* (Cambridge 1902) 191; van Straten, in *Faith* 102–103, 150–151, with doubts in Parker, *ThesCRA* I (2004) 279.

⁵⁹ E.g. G. E. Bean and T. B. Mitford, *Journeys in Rough Cilicia* (Vienna 1970) 249 εὐξάμενος ἀπέδωκεν τὴν εὐχὴν; *SEG* XXIII 763 εὐξαμένη τὴν εὐχὴν ἀπέδωκεν; *Iznik* 1141–1142 εὐχὴν ἀπέδωκεν; *TAM* V.1 243 εὐχὴν ἀπέδωκα, 319 ἀπέδω[καν] τὴν εὐχὴν (a confession stele); L. Robert, *Hellenica* VI (1948) 105–107 no. 42 [ἀπέδ]ωκα τὴν εὐχὴν.

⁶⁰ *IGR* I 777. The formula εὐξάμενος καὶ ἐπιτυχών is attested in dedications mostly in Thrace and Moesia Inferior, and some in Asia Minor: e.g. *IGBulg* III.2 1784, 1888, IV 2134; *TAM* V.1 455; *SEG* XXXIV 1214; W. Ameling, *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis* II (Tübingen 2004) 149.

are dedications without εὐξάμενος/εὐξάμενη or εὐχή (or similar),⁶¹ and those which depict a body part without any accompanying inscription.⁶² The brevity, ambiguity, and sometimes absence of these dedicatory formulae leave the precise details difficult to reconstruct.

Prospective and retrospective offerings are also often confused and muddled because of the continuous nature of gift-exchange: gifts and counter-gifts between men and gods could, and ideally would, form a constant cycle, so that it is not always clear which party first initiated the process. However interesting it may be for historians to uncover the precise context of dedication, in fact the distinction between prospective and retrospective offerings ceases to be meaningful when a gift is considered, not as an isolated act, but as part of a continuous series of interactions between the Greeks and their gods.⁶³

The distinction drawn above between ‘low-intensity’ (precautionary) and ‘high-intensity’ (crisis-induced) offerings is in fact not always clear-cut. It can be blurred and fluid since the moment a divine favour was granted was also very likely the moment of transition from a high- to a low-intensity situation.

⁶¹ Consider e.g. *Lindos* II 153: in the second century B.C. a general named Kleisimbrotidas, son of Antigonos, together with Timokrates, son of Aretakritos, set up a dedication to the gods “for the safety of Kleisimbrotidas (i.e. himself) who was general over the territory,” ὑπὲρ Κλεισιμβροτίδα στραταγήσαντος ἐπὶ τῆς χώρας. Was this dedication set up before the general went to battle or after his safe return, and/or is it a commemoration of his generalship?

⁶² Anatomical dedications without inscriptions: e.g. Drew-Bear et al., *Phrygian Votive Steles* 27, 30, 34, 35, 40, 42–43, 46, 64–65 (with illustrations). The examples cited here have survived more or less intact, but of course there remains the possibility that some inscriptions were obliterated and that some stelai were not completed for dedication.

⁶³ On reciprocity between men and gods see A. J. Festugière, “Ἄνθ’ Ἔθν,” *RSPH* 60 (1976) 389–418; J. M. Bremer, “Reciprocity of Giving and Thanksgiving in Greek Worship,” in C. Gill et al. (eds.), *Reciprocity in Ancient Greece* (Oxford 1998) 127–137; R. Parker, “Pleasing Thighs: Reciprocity in Greek Religion,” in *Reciprocity* 105–125.

A confession stele from the area of Ibrahim in Lydia tells how one Diogenes had made a vow on behalf of his ox but failed to discharge it. Consequently his daughter was punished with respect to her eyes, and he set up the stele to appease the god: Διὲ Πειζηνῶ Διογένη[ς] εὐζάμενος ὑπὲρ τοῦ βοῦς κὲ μὴ ἀποδοῦς ἐκολάσθη αὐτοῦ ἡ θυγάτηρ Τατιανὴ ἰς τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς· νῦν οὖν εἰλασάμενοι ἀνέθηκαν.⁶⁴ His ox must have been cured of some illness by the god, who then withdrew his favour by making Diogenes' daughter sick instead. Whether Diogenes simply forgot or intentionally evaded his debt, his neglect of the promise shows that once his prayer was granted, it became less important to him to fulfil the vow. What was originally a high-intensity offering had become, after his ox was saved, in some sense a low-intensity one. Worshippers who duly discharged their vow after a crisis might often have both the past and the future in mind: their thank-offering could acknowledge a past favour and, at the same time, the hope that their present fortune might last, so that it was crisis-related and precautionary at once. This dual nature of offerings can be illustrated with Herodas' Fourth Mime: two women bring a cock and a pinax to Asclepius in gratitude for being cured, and pray that they may come again with their husbands and children in full health bringing larger offerings.⁶⁵ Whether an offering was high- or low-intensity or both, therefore, can be a matter of perspective: it depends on where we focus our attention (the original prayer, its answer, vow fulfilment, a new request) and which direction we look (backward and/or forward) in a continuum of human-divine interactions.

Seemingly simple to translate, *hyper* formulae often leave their

⁶⁴ G. Petzl, "Die Beichtinschriften Westkleinasiens," *Epigr.Anat.* 22 (1994) no. 45 = *TAM* V.1 509 = L. Robert, *Nouvelles inscriptions de Sardes I* (Paris 1964) 30.

⁶⁵ Herod. 4.11–20, 86–88; parallels cited in W. Headlam, *Herodas: The Mimes and Fragments* (Cambridge 1922). See also Aristid. 45.34 Keil: the hymn to Sarapis is described explicitly as a thank-offering for past favours and a supplication for the future.

readers baffled on closer scrutiny, given their frustratingly vague, uninformative, and ambiguous nature. So much is left implicit that it can be difficult for historians to pin down the nature of the original prayer (precautionary or crisis-induced), the context of offering (prospective or retrospective or both), and, if precautionary, how individuals decided when to discharge their vow (if one was involved). We therefore have to concede the impossibility of discovering fully the precise details behind these formulae. They assume a degree of knowledge that was not felt to require further specification or explanation: what is unclear to us must have been clear to their divine recipients. Seen thus, Greek dedications are perhaps not so markedly different from the anonymous Christian texts after all: the gods knew.⁶⁶

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