

Celebrations

Sanctuaries and the vestiges of cult activity

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Front cover: Anthropomorphic terracotta figurine fragment from the Atsipadhes Korakias peak sanctuary (RM 6891; see this volume, p.50 fig.8)

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Celebrations

Selected papers and discussions from
the Tenth Anniversary Symposium of
the Norwegian Institute at Athens, 12-16 May 1999

Edited by

Michael Wedde

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Foreword

THE NORWEGIAN INSTITUTE AT ATHENS was inaugurated on May 8, 1989, as the fourteenth Foreign Archaeological School. Under the first three directors, the philologist Øivind Andersen (University of Oslo, 1989–1993), the archaeologist Erik Østby (University of Bergen, 1994–1998), and the philologist Synnøve des Bouvrie (University of Tromsø, 1999–2002), the Institute has earned its place in the scholarly community with a series of fieldwork projects, lectures, seminars, symposia, and publications, as well as contributing to the formation of a new generation of Norwegian archaeologists, historians, philologists and philosophers.

As part of extensive festivities with prominent guests from Norway, on May 12–16, 1999, the international symposium organized by Prof. des Bouvrie, *Celebrations. Sanctuaries and the vestiges of cult activity*, was held to celebrate the achievements of the Institute's first decade. Of the twenty papers presented at the symposium, eleven are included here, not always in the written form the oral presentation might have suggested that they would take. A natural, of sorts, selection operated upon the shape that this publication has received. Some participants chose to test-run new ideas and works in progress with a final form still some time in the future, others to air material from or intended for forthcoming publications, while the one or the other withdrew when their paper grew in scope beyond a framework such as the present. The result is a strong Bronze Age presence (six papers), followed by three classical contributions, one theoretical, and, as is by now a tradition at the Norwegian Institute, one paper with Nordic content. Whether the fruits of their research are printed here, or elsewhere, or still to appear, the twenty speakers contributed to making the occasion an extremely enjoyable affair, a rousing celebration of a small institution's first ten years.

Long in gestation, the volume appears, fittingly, during the tenure of the current director, the historian Knut Ødegård (University of Oslo, 2003–), as part of a series of pending publications witnessing to the presence of the Norwegian Institute at Athens in the study of Greece's rich legacy.

Michael Wedde

Traces of ritual in Middle Helladic funeral contexts including an assessment of geographical location

Maria Hielte-Stavropoulou

Introduction

RESEARCH IN SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY has helped to understand the structure of ritual as a rigidly performed sequence of activities involving gestures, words, and objects. Rituals and their performance may in many cases seem enigmatic, but studies on the theory of symbolism helps (Turner 1985:32).¹ By exploring the rituals of the African Ndembu, Victor Turner could map a rich structure of symbolism. An actual ritual procedure involves not only one symbolic object, but a series of them in a sequence.² Like a piece of music or a sequence of words, it must have a syntax. The combination and arrangement of the symbols form the message. Collectively enacted dramas have private and unconscious meaning (Keesing and Strathern 1998). A religious system may be seen as a 'cluster of sacred symbols' (Geertz 1957:424). Rituals are often sophisticated exercises in the meaning of words and sentences and display a subtle mechanism of elusive symbols (Gerholm 1988). The obvious aspects of rituals are formal actions (Rappaport 1979), with a compulsory air to them and a definite correct way of performance. To explain the practical reasons for the existence of rituals, I tend to Horton's straightforward definition (1982) as a means of acting on the world, bringing about and controlling things.

How then can we study ancient rituals of the Bronze Age? Of the hierarchy of sources, suggested by Ian Morris,³ only points 3 and 4 are possible options. Artistic

- 1 For example, the royal scepter is not only a phallic symbol (Freud) or only a symbol of the power of the state, but the combination of both is what makes it work; *i.e.*, that it has this double symbolism.
- 2 The symbol is the smallest unit of ritual (Turner 1967:19).
- 3 1. Direct observation/participation in the rituals; 2. Verbal testimony, oral or written, describing or explaining the rituals; 3. Artistic representations of the rituals; and 4. The material remains of rituals (Morris 1992:10).

representation of rituals (point 3) are found for instance on the Tanagra larnakes (coffins) from Boeotia, on the larnakes from Crete and the Ayia Triada sarcophagus, but they are all from the Late Bronze Age and in that sense too late for this study. That leaves us only with point 4, 'the material remains of rituals'.

Rituals during the Early Bronze Age on Mainland Greece seem mainly to have been conducted within the settlements, in open public areas and outside houses, as miniature vessels reveal. There are also traces of ritual inside some of the houses at for instance Eutresis in Boeotia (Goldman 1931) and at Lithares (Tzavella-Evjen 1984). Some of the buildings have been interpreted as possible sanctuaries because of the presence of hearths and zoomorphic figurines (Caskey 1990). There were also benches, that could have been used to display sacred objects, and deposit-bothroi filled with possible remnants from earlier rituals. Since relatively few burials from the inner Mainland have been found, we do not really know if rituals were also conducted in funeral contexts. The study of grave goods within Early Bronze Age tombs is hampered by their subsequent re-use (Pullen 1990). On the other hand, cemeteries on the fringe of the Mainland, the so-called R-graves at Steno on Leukas with connection to the Adriatic cultures⁴ or those on the seafront to the Cyclades as for instance, Aghios Kosmas in SW Attica⁵ and at Tsepi in the Gulf of Marathon,⁶ together with Manika on Euboia,⁷ give some indications of rituals but are outside the scope of this paper.

The Middle Bronze Age on the Mainland, the so-called Middle Helladic period (*ca.* 2050/2000–1680 BC),⁸ is marked by diminishing or total abandoning

- 4 The R-graves with partial cremations covered by 33 tumuli built like round platforms, often very near one another (Dörpfeld 1927). Most of these grave circles have so-called cremation areas, in some cases without human bones in. Some of them are now believed to be of a somewhat later date than the Early Bronze Age II period. Perhaps some date toward the beginning of Middle Bronze? In the neighbourhood have also been uncovered the so-called Familien-grab F in a rectangular enclosure and Familiengrab S, both complexes dating to the Middle Bronze Age. Can the neatly built platform-shaped round R-graves have functioned as a ceremonial area as well as a place for burials?
- 5 Of the 39 stone-built graves, many were provided with symbolic doorjambs and door openings (Mylonas 1959:65).
- 6 At Tsepi, 22 stone built graves with multiple burials where excavated in 1970 (Marinatos 1970). The graves had dromos and grave-openings, although new interments must have been lowered down from above by removing a cover plate. M. Pantelidou-Gofa continues the excavations (Pantelidou-Gofa 2000).
- 7 Manika with 189 chamber tombs (Sampson 1985).
- 8 Suggestions for an approximate chronology (based mainly on Rutter 1993:756): Helladic = the Bronze Age culture on the Greek Mainland. Early Helladic I–II *ca.* 3150 BC–2200/2150 BC; EH III *ca.* 2200/2150 BC–2050/2000 BC; Middle Helladic I–II *ca.* 2050/2000 BC–1750/1720 BC; MH III *ca.* 1750/1720 BC–1680 BC; Late Helladic I (Early Mycenaean) *ca.* 1680 BC–1600/1580 BC; LH II *ca.* 1600/1580 BC–.

of settlements at the same time as elaborate graves in the form of tumuli develop and dominate the landscape. There are signs that rituals have been conducted inside and around these monuments and at other graves, and one can speculate whether the ritualistic expression of religion during the Middle Bronze Age took place in the natural environment and around extramural graves instead of, as earlier, within settlements.

Grave architecture and contents of the graves have always been of great archaeological interest. But in concentrating perhaps too much on the artefacts found inside the graves, we may have overlooked information about what can have been going on at the grave openings and in the surrounding area; such information could perhaps have told us more about these prehistoric peoples' ideas of the Other world.

The first part of this paper will give brief samples of some possible indications for rituals found in Middle Helladic funeral contexts.⁹ Since most of these could have taken place in the open and humans—women, men and children—are the actors in rituals, the second part of the paper will present a conceptual model (fig. 1), of how to look at landscapes in a symbolic perspective.¹⁰

As representative sites for presenting possible indications for rituals, I will mainly use what is for me well-known material from Aphidna¹¹ and Vrana in East Attica. The cemetery of Vrana, with up to seven tumuli, was first explored by Spyridon Marinatos in the year 1970 and are notable for their grave structures. The material is unfortunately only available through preliminary reports by the excavator and others.¹²

Later, when considering the landscape, I will put special emphasis on Malthi in Messenia on the south-west Peloponnese. This site was excavated by the Swedish Messenia Expedition in 1933–1934 (Valmin 1938:5) and has—in my view unfairly—

9 For a more complete account I recommend to the reader Protonotariou-Deilaki 1990 and Nordquist 1990.

10 It is worth noting that study of nomadic hunter-gatherers has shown that the humans see themselves as a part of nature, an organism in the ecological system. Fredrik Barth (1980) has through his anthropological research found that nomadic hunter-gatherers did not have constructed rituals. The cyclic wandering around in the nature, with men a part of the ecological system, was a ritual in itself. But what about earlier agriculturalists if they, forced by environmental circumstances, returned to these older forms of subsistence?

11 Aphidna is a Middle Helladic tumulus excavated by S. Wide in 1894. In 1988 I received permission from the Greek Authorities to study the material, with the aim of re-publication. From 1994 I have invited a colleague, Dr Michael Wedde, to join me in this project.

12 The Vrana material is available through preliminary reports in Marinatos 1970a, 1970b, 1970c, 1972, Brook 1972 and Marinatos 1973. A final publication is planned by M. Pantelidou-Gofa. In preparing for my re-publication of the Aphidna material I first studied these preliminary reports on the neighbouring site of Vrana, which resulted in Hielte-Stavropoulou 1994.

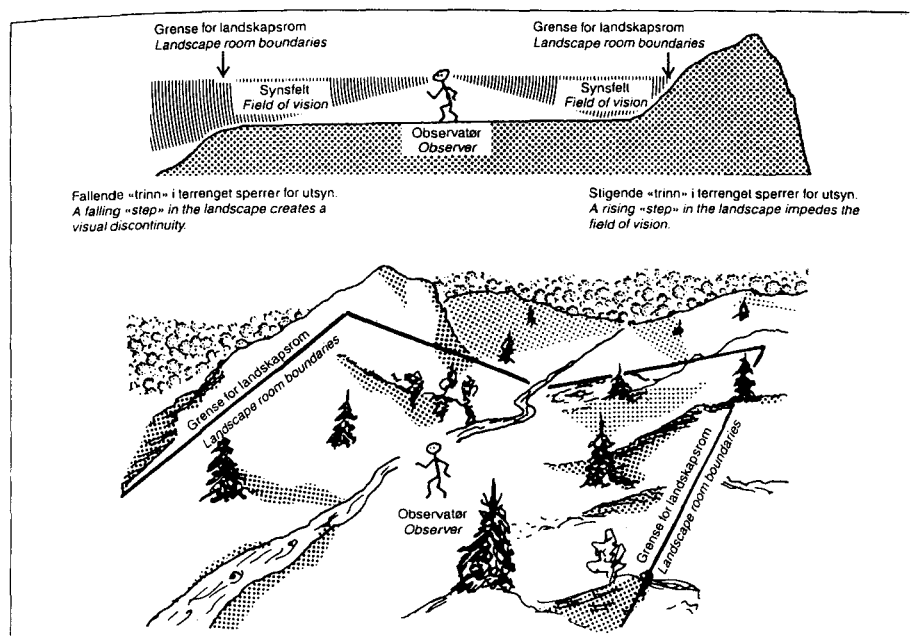


Fig. 1. Landscape rooms are constituted by continuous surfaces which appear as the 'floor', and by hill-sides or vegetation boundaries creating the 'walls'. Discontinuity in the surface 'floor' may also create edges that constitute room boundaries (courtesy of Gansum, Jerpåsen and Keller 1997).

been more or less overlooked ever since. This is in my opinion most unfortunate, even if some interpretations need to be reconsidered. To end today's concerns with the subsequent scientific negligence of the site, in spite of Malthi's extreme importance as being one of the few Middle Helladic settlements and the only completely excavated site of that period, a re-examination of Malthi's architectural remains and all the finds, especially the pottery, should be regarded as an urgent matter.

Indications of rituals

The first moments after death has occurred come the laments, the preparation of the body¹³ and vigil over the dead person. Through all these difficult stages the mourners are helped by the performance of certain death-rituals. Anthropological research has shown that people seem to feel reassured if they can release their grief

13 In lack of written evidences from Greece, we can borrow the words from the Hittite king Hattusilis I, ca. 1650–1620 B.C.: 'Wash my body, as is seemly; hold me to thy bosom, and at thy bosom bury me in the earth' (Gurney 1952: 168).



Fig. 2. The MH tumuli I & II at Vrana, with the 'altar' in the middle. Note the topography; the cemetery is placed in the border zone between the mountains and the grasslands/fields, on the southern slope of the Charadra creek (after Marinatos 1970d:pl. 8).

in a safe and ordered context through a mourning ritual that will allow them not to drown in horror and helplessness (Bell 1997:240).

As the greater and most expressive parts of rituals are impossible to detect by archaeological excavations,¹⁴ I will focus on some possible examples of material remains. To get some consistency in the presentation, I will try to present the different moments in the order they may have happened, starting at the grave entrance.

Thresholds and other borderlines between this and the other world

Thresholds are of great importance in rites de passage, when individuals pass from one zone to another. The entrance of the so-called megaron-shaped-grave

¹⁴ A most certain ritual but difficult to prove by material evidence, is the funeral procession. It must have been conducted because of the very necessity to transport the body to the grave, but for the Early and Middle Bronze Age we do not have any material evidence. To transport the corpse with some equipment creates the need for people to acting together, in other words, it formes a procession. For such magnificent procession as the *ekphora* in Geometric and Archaic times, when the bier was carried on a wagon drawn by two horses, accompanied by female relatives, professional mourners and armed men, there are no evidence before early Mycenaean times. The pair of horses laid down in the dromos of the tholos tomb at Marathon, probably *ca.* 1450–1425 BC, most certainly had drawn their owners to the grave (Stikas 1958).



Fig. 3. The central grave in Tumulus IV at Vrana. Note the vessel (for libations?) to the right in front of the 'threshold' in the entrance area. (None of the preliminary publications informs about this vessel, so our hope lies with M. Pantelidou-Gofa in her future publication of the 1970 excavation.) The burial chamber was divided in gradual stages by sidewalls into three inner compartments. Tumulus II (to the right on Fig. 2) and other graves had the same type of division (after Marinatos 1970d:pl. 23b).

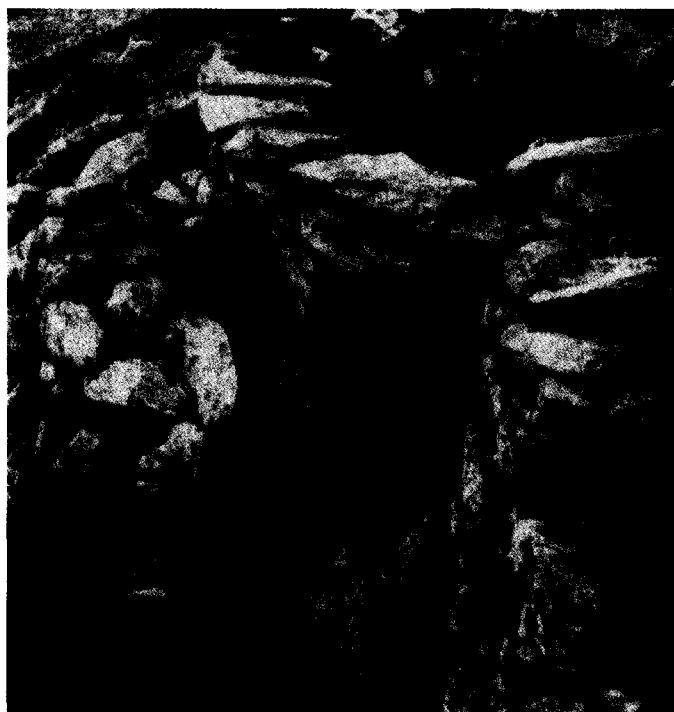


Fig. 4. The western outside wall of the inner circular enclosure in Tumulus I at Vrana. Note the two amphora necks standing ready to receive libations (after Marinatos 1970d:pl. 12b).

Fig. 5. The horse skeleton in Grave 3, Tumulus I at Vrana, without legs and shoulders (after Marinatos 1970d:pl. 15b).



in Tumulus II at Vrana is marked by a horizontal slab *ca.* 80 cm wide (to the right of the 'altar' on fig. 2) like a large doorstep of schist bordered by stones on either side. The central Grave in Tumulus IV also has a threshold arrangement at the entrance (fig. 3). Maybe also the horizontal schist slab outside the inner circle in Tumulus I, to the right of the vessels on fig. 4, can be interpreted as a 'symbolic' threshold leading to Grave 1. This grave was probably the central grave in the whole complex, resting inside this earth-covered well-built little circle, in company with an older deeper Grave 1a, with a placement in the direction between the feet of the deceased in Grave 1 and this 'symbolic' threshold.

Doors in the graves

The earlier mentioned 'symbolic' door openings (in note 5), with the prepared space in front of the graves from the Early Bronze Age, both at Aghios Kosmas and at Tsepi,¹⁵ were not intended to be used by the caretakers placing the body in the grave since it was obvious that the interment must have been lowered down from above.

15 *Supra* notes 5 and 6.

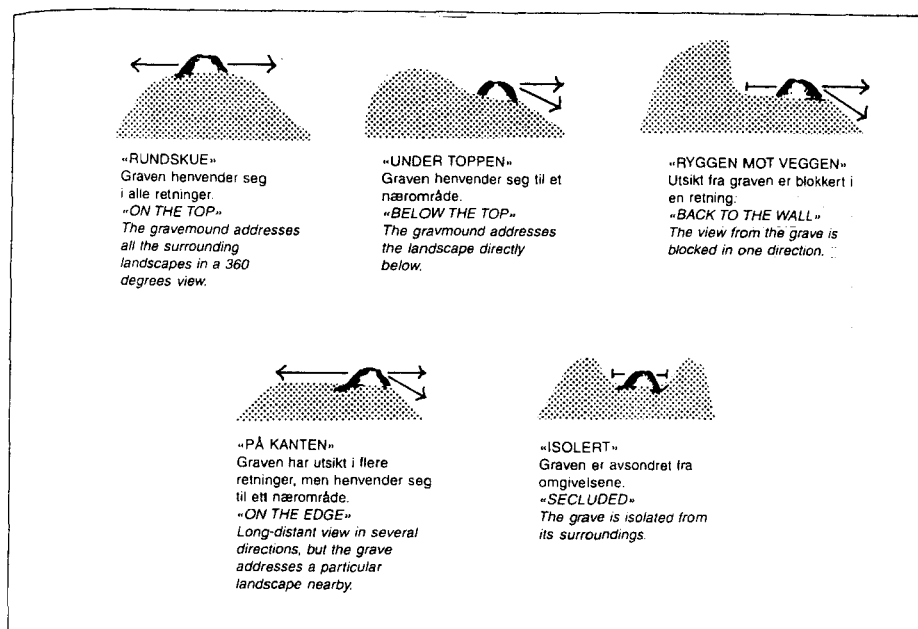


Fig. 6. Useful model in describing positions of architectural remains, for instance tumuli that may be located in a variety of ways. By mapping the view from the mounds and what is actually seen in that view, we can get an idea of what the mounds are addressing: a nearby area, the sea or the distant horizon (courtesy of Gansum, Jerpåsen and Keller 1997).

Examples from the Middle Helladic period: both Grave 1 within the inner circle and Grave 4 in Tumulus I at Vrana, have one of the walls (in the SW direction, by the feet of the dead) altered in what can be interpreted as a 'false door'.¹⁶ The other three sides were neatly built walls.¹⁷

The other graves at Vrana, in Tumulus II and Tumulus IV with impressive entrances, s. 2 and 3, did obviously not need any such imitation feature.

Some of the tumuli graves at Argos were quipped with 'symbolic' door openings (Protonotario-Deilaki, pers. comm.; *ead.* 1990a:figs. 7 and 25).

16 The most common examples of false doors are from Egypt. Although it was completely solid, the Egyptians believed that it would function as a real door for the spirit of the deceased, allowing him to leave the burial chamber at will in order to receive the offerings in the burial chapel (Spencer 1984:58).

17 When graves are totally sealed (as the referred examples from Vrana), the false door was the only imaginable way out for the spirit after the decomposition (Gräslund 1994:24).

Offerings

Grave goods are not so common in the early part of the Middle Helladic period (Nordquist 1990). Later in the Middle Helladic period, there are usually a jug and a drinking cup placed near the body. Other possible offerings, made of materials like leather, wood and textiles have not been preserved in the earth.

My estimates (based upon Blackburn 1970) show that of 532 Middle Helladic graves in 15 different cemeteries, only 142 graves, *i.e.*, 27%, had some kind of offering, mostly pottery. By analysing the distributions of grave offerings between the cemeteries, some interesting differences appeared. Large cemeteries, like Asine with 147 graves and Lerna with 221 graves, had 16.5% of the graves containing offerings. Middle-sized cemeteries, like Eleusina, Kirrha, Prosymna and Mycenae,¹⁸ had 30% with offerings. After that there is a big difference compared to the small cemeteries: Corinth with 13 graves have 70% with offerings and Aphidna with the 13 graves of a relatively early Middle Helladic date had 77% containing offerings.

However, these estimates can only be approximate since so many graves have been robbed of their contents.

Traces of fire

Valmin found traces of fire at Malthi, both inside and above the three graves in the "grave circle" (C3 on fig.8), in the Southern cemetery (1938:191).

At Aphidna, Wide found charcoal inside some of the graves (1896).

Altars (hearths)

The most significant sign of ritual activity involving sacrifices are the altars.¹⁹ The round structure between Tumuli I and II at Vrana on fig. 2, suggested to be an altar, is built of 33 large boulders. These impressive, neatly built tumuli, with the altar in the middle may be encircled either by foot or on horseback.²⁰

There seems also to have been free space inside the tumuli, around the graves with the little inner circular enclosure (fig. 4) in Tumulus I and also around the apsidal grave in Tumulus II (fig. 2). Perhaps these areas were opened and made

18 Eleusis (52 Middle Helladic graves); Kirrha (13 Middle Helladic + 28 Shaft Grave period); Prosymna (31 extramural, mostly pits) and Mycenae (81 small pits and 15 Shaft graves).

19 Altars represent the centrepiece of ritual worship. Prehistoric open-air rituals in Mesopotamia probably employed a natural rock or heap of pebbles or earth, but with the development of temples or shrines, more obvious altars were made of clay, stone or brick (Black and Green 1992:29).

20 Cf. Alexander the Great's behavior around the tumuli at Troy in 334 BC, on his way to start the campaign against the Persians. First he brought offerings to (what he thought was) Protesilaos' grave. Next, he visited Achilles' grave and after having greased the tomb stone, Alexander ran totally naked in a nightly torchlight procession around the grave, followed by his Thessalian cavalry (Diod. Sic. XVII,17; Plut. *Vit.Alex.* 15.7–9; Windfeld-Hansen 1989:83).

accessible for walking around, or perhaps even for dancing.²¹ That could also have been the case with the Early Helladic graves covered by round platforms at Steno on Lefkas (see note 4; Dörpfeld 1927). The Middle Helladic tumulus of Aghios Ioannis on SW Peloponnese was provided with both a horseshoe shaped structure (kenotaph?) and a small 'altar' with traces of fire (Pelon 1976:76).

The horse in Tumulus I at Vrana

Before suggesting rituals in this case, I need to state that the horse burial at Vrana (fig. 5) has caused some dispute. The excavation team appears to have found Grave 3 in Tumulus I empty except for a dismembered horse skeleton.²² Had the grave been totally cleared of its earlier interment(s) before the 'horse burial', or was it built to be a kenotaph with the horse corpse as a later intrusion? Petros Themelis has questioned its authenticity (Themelis 1974). He believes that it is a modern horse,²³ which has fallen down (or been pushed down) from above. But in that case there should have been some accumulated earth upon the bedrock under the skeleton, earth that would have slipped down through the cracks during the millennia, before the horse fell down.

James Muhly has suggested, as an explanation for the piece of slab that Themelis claims has been found under the skeleton of the horse, that after the dead person had been buried in Grave 3, the horse was slaughtered over the lid of the grave (1979:312). But what then of the total absence of a human skeleton within the Grave 3? Marinatos mentioned that the roofing slabs had fallen down on the horse and broken its spinal cord. That observation, but even more the fact that there does not seem to have been any layer of accumulated earth upon the rock bottom under the horse skeleton is for me an indication that the horse most probably is roughly contemporary with the other burials in Tumulus I, *i.e.*, of a clear Middle Helladic date. Maria Pantelidou-Gofa assisted Marinatos in the excavation, and her statement that 'on the bottom (...) without any intrusion of whatever deposit, lay the splendidly preserved horse skeleton' corroborates this.²⁴ Perhaps Themelis' reluctance to accept an ancient date when he wrote his article in 1974 stems from the uniqueness of the find, two-three years before the Middle Helladic horse-burials at Dendra were excavated in 1976–77 (Payne 1990:103). A Middle

21 Ritual dance is a powerful mean of self-surrender since it is easier to begin than to stop.

22 Marinatos mentioned nothing about any finds in this grave except for the horse, but Themelis draws our attention to some sherds that were found near the ribs of the horse; three coarse ware fragments of unknown date and one late Byzantine sherd (1974:243).

23 He thus questions the estimation of the paleontologist (Professor Melentis at the University of Athens), who after examining the horse skeleton gave his professional opinion that it is a *Equus przewalskii*, about 8 years old (in Marinatos 1970d:13)

24 Pantelidou-Gofa 1986. Translated by the present author.

Bronze Age date of the find is not so improbable, having in mind that horse-breeding had been an important component already in the Neolithic/Copper age tradition in Sredni Stog sites like Dereivka, North of the Black Sea, where the bones of horses make up over 50% of the faunal remains (Telegin 1986; Levine 1990).

Considering the horse to be sacrificed, there are also different opinions about the removal of the legs and shoulders. Taking into consideration that the estimated weight of the 'lintel', which had to be removed for an interment from above, is *ca.* 800 kilos, my suggestion would be that the most logical way must have been to push the horse through the narrow grave opening. For that manoeuvre, the legs had to be cut off. Perhaps the legs and shoulder was saved for some practical use?²⁵ Especially the legs must have been regarded as the most important and perhaps also magical part of the horse.²⁶ A ritual can have been conducted to induce the horse to share the eternal life with its master. For the time being we can compare with the dismembered skelton of a horse in Tholos tomb A at Archanes on Crete (Sakellarakis 1970) and some other examples from the Near East: a burial with a horse skeleton at Tell al-Aggul from MBA II and an equine or horse in a burial at Jericho in MBA I (Hrouda).

It is tempting to speculate that the missing legs and shoulders were after all sacrificed and burned on the so-called altar between Tumulus I and Tumulus II at Vrana.

Libations

The custom of libation, the pouring of a liquid as a drink-offering, is well known from other Bronze Age civilizations.²⁷ It is also one of the best-attested religious practices of the Mycenaean culture from the Shaft-grave period onwards (Hägg 1990:177).

The phenomenon of positioning vessels or parts of vessels outside the grave monuments, fig. 4, also seems to be repeated later, if at least one vessel in the entrance area of Tumulus IV can be shown to have functioned as a vessel for libations (fig. 3).

25 Shovels made of a horse's *scapulae* must have been more practical than those made of wood.

26 Before man was able to see the horse's movements on stills (it has only passed a century since the art of photography was invented), it not only looked as if, but also felt like, the horse was flying when galloping.

27 Libations accompanied all kind of sacrifice and offering in, for instance, ancient Mesopotamia (Black and Green 1992). The liquids were poured onto the ground, all around the sacrificer, from a cup, bowl or jug. It could also be poured on the head of the sacrificial animal, or into a second vessel or at a gateway (*cf.* the earlier-mentioned vessels found in open spaces at Early Bronze Age settlements in Greece).

Earlier and comparable analogies are to be found in the Babylonian ritual offerings where libations to the dead were poured down a clay tube inserted into the ground (Black and Green 1992).

As an example of a zoomorphic vessel, a fragment of a terracotta bovine figurine with pierced muzzle and faint indications of a funnel on the back was found in the fill of the tumulus at Aphidna. Its spouted shape and the find context suggest that it could have been used as a rhyton.²⁸

It is of course impossible to detect ritual activity in cases where offerings and libations had been deposited in vessels of perishable materials, like calabashes or cups made out of wood or bark, leather-bags *etc.*, so it can have been a custom much more widespread than we can determine.

A vessel from Grave Iota in Circle B at Mycenae was soaked with olive oil. There were also traces of flour in the same grave (Schnauffer 1970:6).²⁹

From the Classical period there are texts telling us about rites in the orgiastic religion of the Bacchae taking place directly upon the graves of dead members (Burkert 1997:38), grief and ecstasy coming together.³⁰

Deposits of offering remnants

Deposits placed in so-called bothroi are common. These are usually filled with charcoal, ashes, animal-bones and sometimes even human bones (from human sacrifices?).

Inside a grave at Elateia-Drachmani in Phocis there was a sacrificial pit filled with ashes, charcoal and charred matter (burned wheat), presumed to be from a funeral sacrifice (Goldman 1931).

Whether the contents in these pits were offerings in themselves or just sealed off garbage, too sacred to be thrown away, is uncertain.

Vessels for positioning food

At Aphidna, Sam Wide found large matt-painted bowls that seem to have been placed in an upright position just outside or a little above the mouth of the pithos graves, ready to receive offerings (Wide 1896).

28 For an illustration of the figurine from Aphidna see Wide 1896, pl. xx; also Hielte-Stavropoulou and Wedde 2002:fig 1 NM4705.

29 It seems that only water was used in Babylonian ritual offerings to the dead. In other rituals it was much more common to pour beer, wine, and sometimes milk, honey, oil or cream (Black and Green 1992:117).

30 An anthropological comparison from Africa, where much beer is consumed in the ancestor cult. To get drunk is like a duty. It looks like disorder but it helps actually to keep the order. When the participants get drunk, it helps them to behave in an orderly manner, which makes the ancestors, themselves through death in an already disorderly state, to accept communication with the living relatives.

At Drachmani we have a large Middle Bronze Age matt-painted jar, 60 cm in height, positioned above the earlier mentioned grave with the filled pit inside (Goldman 1931).

Other possible places for deposited offerings are in the elevated pithos in Grave 6 at Vrana. The pithos seems only to have the lower half preserved. Its upright and high position suggests that it was placed there to receive offerings since burial pithoi are generally placed on the side.

Traces of possible sacrifices and ritual activities in cemeteries have also been found at many other sites (Makkay 1992; Tucker Blackburn 1970).

Observations of the geographical setting of graves in the landscape

To help interpret how the graves are positioned in the landscape, figs. 1 and 6 show sketches developed from research in Norway on landscape archaeology.

The landscape in fig. 1 is seen as a room consisting of a floor, walls and the ceiling. Flat areas constitute the floor, while elements such as hills and mountain sides form the walls. The sky is the ceiling. Discontinuities in the surface 'floor' may also create edges that constitute room boundaries (Gansum, Jerpåsen and Keller 1997:14).

Cross-cultural research has shown that there are broad similarities between peoples from various parts of the world regarding their sacred sites. These holy places are connected with natural features of the landscape, such as mountain peaks, springs, rivers, woods and caves. Sacred places, in almost every case demand offerings, but also space for ceremony and ritual, including tombs.

How then will we define the relation between Landscape and Graves? By using the model in fig. 6, I began to be more aware of their geographical setting in the landscape. Burial mounds may be located in a variety of ways. For instance, the Vrana grave-complex (fig. 2) is in a BACK TO THE WALL position on fig. 6. Where did it 'look out', in other words, what is the site addressing? The view from the cemetery is blocked in one direction so the tumuli face the lowland at Marathon and the Petalian Gulf. Another main enquiry is from what distance the tumuli were visible. Simple field work has showed that in order to get to the tumuli at Vrana one has to walk slightly upwards for about a kilometer. The landscape may of course have changed, but today's topography with a slight undulating landscape hide the sight of the tumuli until only a few hundred meters.

The cemetery known as Grave Circle A at Mycenae, with its beginning from a supposedly Early Bronze Age date,³¹ is positioned BELOW THE TOP in our model on fig. 6, and it addresses the landscape directly below.

31 Protonotariou-Deilaki 1990b: 87, note 19.

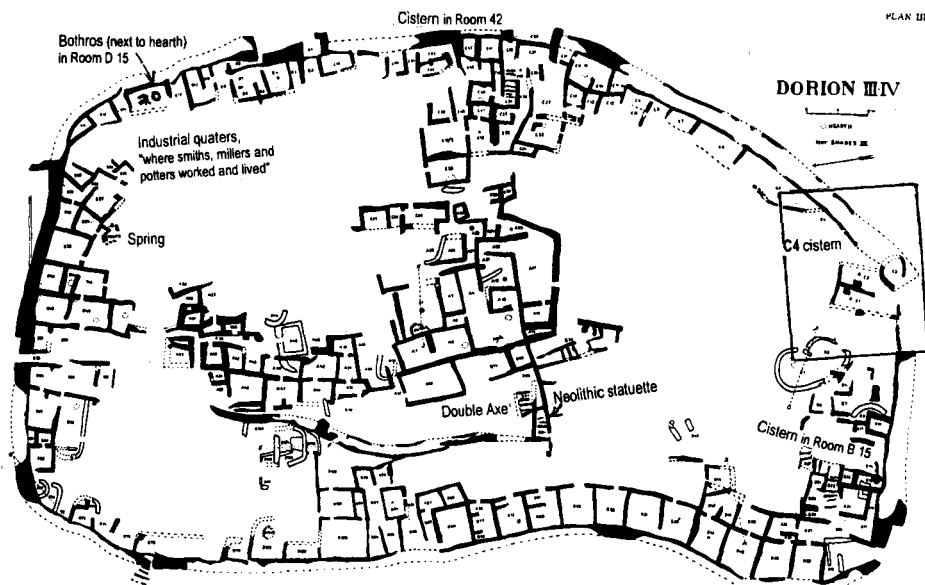


Fig. 7. Malthi, the ca. 140 x 80 m. (inside the walls) MH settlement with about 100 rooms, was excavated and fully published by the Swedish Messenia Expedition (Valmin 1938). Remnants of apsidal houses from an earlier habitation are on the plan marked with 'white, not filled in walls' (after Valmin 1938, plan III).

To take some examples listed by Cavanagh and Mee (1998:25–26), only 12% of the cemeteries with tumuli seem to be situated **on slopes**: Argos in Argolis; and two in Attika: Athens and Aphidna. About 30% are **at the foot of mountain-slopes or in valleys**: Dendra and Asine in Argolis; only one in Messenia/southern Triphylia: Chandrinou-Kissos; the Lefkas tumuli, the Early Helladic so-called R-graves but also the Middle Helladic so-called F- and S- graves; up in Thessaly the Middle Helladic cists and Late Helladic tumulus/built graves at Pharsala-Fetih Tsami; at Marathon in Attika, the Middle and Late Helladic tumuli cemetery at Vrana.

More than 50% of the Middle Helladic tumuli were located **on hill tops**, in prominent positions either **ON THE TOP** or **ON THE EDGE**, obviously meant to be visible. Most of them are in Messenia and in southern Triphylia:³² but there are also examples in Boeotia, Elateia-Drachmani and in Attika, the Middle Helladic tumulus at Thorikos located high up on a hill together with early LH tholos tombs. The Thorikos tumulus may also have been visible from the sea. The perhaps most

32 Samikon-Klidi; Tragana-Kapoureika; Leuki-Kaldamou; Milioti-Aghios Ilias; Pirgos-Tsouka; Pila-Vigles; Papoulia-Aghios Ioannis; Routsis (not specially prominent location); Valta-Kastraki; Peristeria Middle Helladic grave 313.

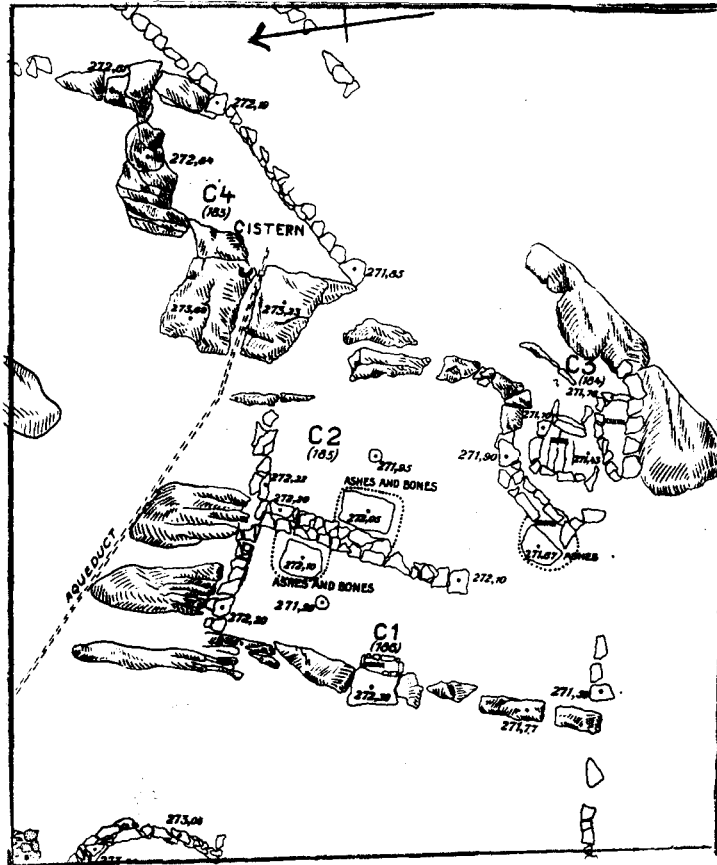


Fig. 8. Malthi; the 'sanctuary of the grave cult' between C1 and C2, the 'grave circle' C3, and the cistern C4 (after Valmin 1938; part of General plan I, measured and drawn by H. Finsen, A. Andrén and N. Valmin).

obvious of them all, also a landmark seen from the sea, is the early tumulus at Voidokoilia, on a prominent hill in the northern end of the Pylian Gulf.

Malthi as a case study

If we choose Malthi, fig. 7,³³ as a site to use the model in fig. 6, it is situated ON THE TOP at 280 masl and ca. 170 m above the surrounding landscape, with a 360

33 The excavation of this acropolis site was the main object of the Swedish Messenia Expedition directed by Natan Valmin (1938). Malthi remains one of the few completely cleared settlements in Greece, and has served as a model of a Middle Helladic town plan (Bintliff 1977: 504). Malthi appear to have dominated an important route across Messenia. There is a magnificent spring by the modern village Kokla to the west of the hill-site, and in the side valley running by the western edge of the Malthi ridge there is smaller springs.

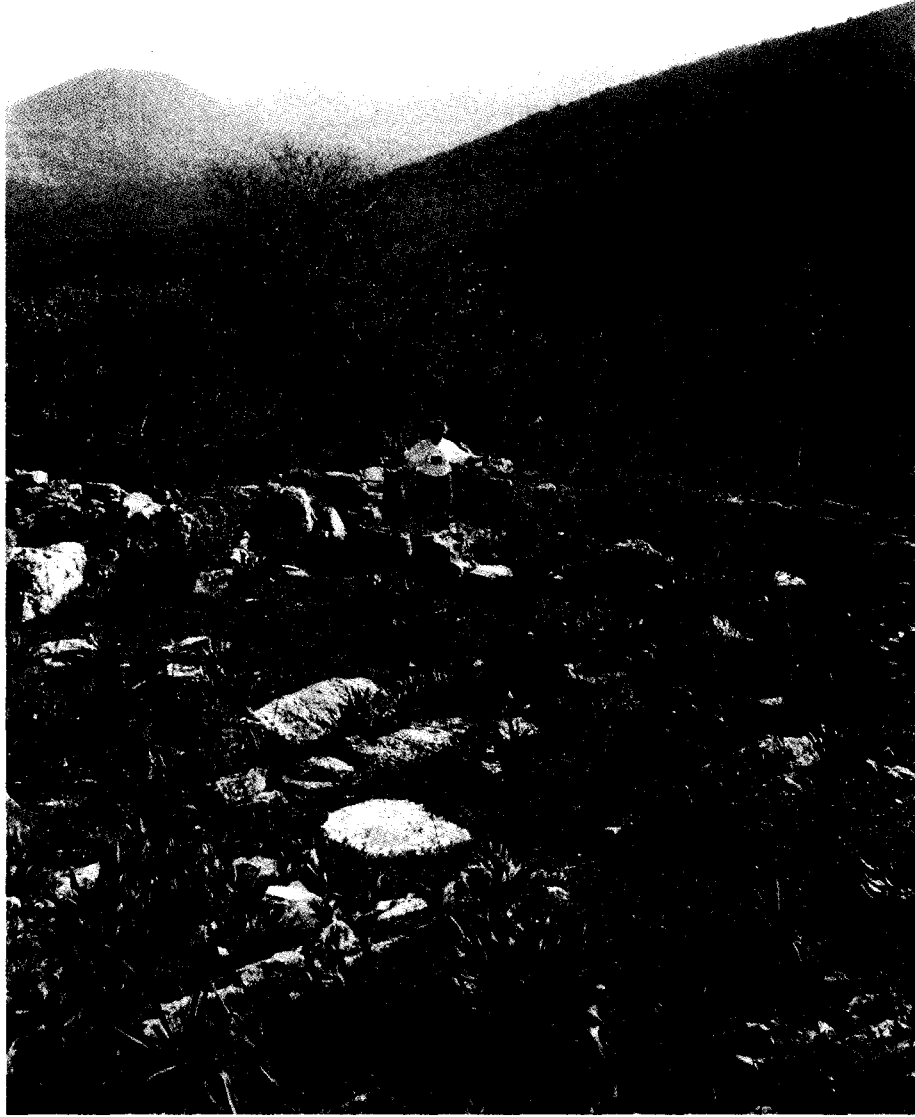


Fig. 9. The MH settlement of Malthi is situated ON THE TOP of a hill overlooking the south-east part of the Soulima Valley, but the 'sanctuary of the grave cult' has the position ON THE EDGE according to fig. 6. See also figs. 7–8 (photography by Nils Christophersen).

degrees view. The site is steep and easy to defend on three sides. The only natural access is from the south. The burials in the 'grave circle' at C3, in the 'sanctuary of the grave cult' (Valmin 1938:126) just on the right hand inside the Southern Gate, figs. 7, 8 and 9, were made ON THE EDGE, with a 'long-distant view in several directions, but addresses a particular landscape nearby'. This 'sanctuary of the grave cult' or else called 'double sanctuary' C1+C2, fig. 8, contained thick layers of ashes and charcoal with large and totally flat stones³⁴ that have been interpreted as a possible altars (Valmin 1938:126–131). The 'activity area' could have been sheltered by a light roof supported by columns on each side of the dividing wall. The stone wall seems to have had a somewhat similar T-shaped formation as on the little island of Nissakouli, also interpreted as a MH sanctuary with hearths/altars and with a similar wall in front of some graves (Choremis 1969).

The 'grave circle' C3 at Malthi had a central burial, with an 'adult male?' as the sole occupant.³⁵ The grave was described as having been initially encircled by a double border of upright slabs. This interpretation has been criticised and an alternative suggestion is that these circle stones actually were a part of a wall built in Late Mycenaean times (Darcque 1980). In that case, one may argue why they built an unorthodox roundel on a wall. On the photo of the grave (Valmin 1938: pls. XV, XXIX, taken during the excavation), at least the smaller inner circle of the grave looks genuine.

With the exception of a stone figurine, most probably Neolithic, which could have been brought in from elsewhere, the material from the site is to its greater extent Middle Helladic. As I said in my introduction, much of the excavator's interpretations have been called into question.³⁶ But the site's history can still in broad outline be re-constructed: after several phases of scattered buildings, a substantial village of integrated plan was founded, probably late in the Middle Helladic. Some of the houses seem to have been industrial quarters, stalls for the animals and storerooms. It remains to be shown if all parts of the walls date from the Middle Helladic, but those walls that constitute the back wall of houses (rooms) containing only MH contexts must be from the settlement's main period of occupation.

34 The eastern stone is *ca.* 0.95 x 0.85 m and the western one is *ca.* 1.25 x 0.85 on a distance of 140 m with the *ca.* 1.0 m thick and 4.0 m long wall in between.

35 Of the 48 graves found at Malthi, only 13 were of a LH date, according to the excavator. Of the 35 pre-Mycenaean graves, the oldest three, XXXVII, XXXVIII and XXXIV, are the ones in the 'Grave circle' listed as Early Bronze Age, but can as well be from an earlier part of the MH period.

36 Dickinson 1994:59–60: 'No significant feature like a fortification has been reliably reported (Darcque 1980:32–33 persuasively suggests, on the basis of the stratigraphy, that the fortified village at Malthi is not Middle Helladic but Late Helladic III).'

Among all the material in need for re-examination and publication, there are for instance a little clay figurine, 'almost certainly the head of a horse'³⁷ found in stairway B70 together with bones of horses (or perhaps in some cases 'mules') all in Middle Helladic contexts.³⁸ All this 'Adriatic' pottery ought to be classified. An interesting little piece is the 'bucranium' (Valmin 1938:334 and pl. XXV,45), once attached to a vase as is shown by the concave back side.³⁹

The large apsidal shaped hearth (1.75 m in diam.) in central room A1 from the LH period (fig.7, on the highest point of the hill-site with a 360 degrees view), is considered by Robin Hägg as a probable focus of cult (1968:46).

Discussion

The first part of this paper has discussed some of the material that gives indications for rituals in Middle Helladic funeral contexts. It seems clear that these people could have had a rich spiritual life, although too little remains to give us any detailed picture. However, hypotheses can be made using results from cross-cultural studies and anthropology. As an example, I will follow Gräslund (1994:18) and consider the 'false door' at Vrana. In pre-literate societies, newly deceased persons are often treated as if they were still alive and have the same needs as the living, receiving food and clothes. If they had a complex soul belief, the breath soul is thought to leave the body with the last sigh, while the free soul had to be taken care of as long as it remained in the dead body. With the total decomposition of the body (flesh) the free soul needs to get out of the grave, and the 'false doors' offer such an opportunity.

The horse at Vrana is another interesting indication of rituals during this MH period.⁴⁰ With new scientific methods available today, it ought to be quite easy to determine both the age, genus and type of horse. Comparing that with results from other horse-offerings could help to clear the question whether the Vrana horse was a sacrifice in a bloody ritual or not.

Clusters of tombs created a special limited area, a sacred place. The selection of a place and its positioning in the landscape, for instance a central grave which came to function as a ritual centre as well as a territorial marker, was not random.

37 Valmin 1938:334 and Pl. XXV, 52.

38 In Apsidal House A 45 'fragments of skull of horse or mule'. In fosse B16: jawbone of horse or mule, with bone-needle, spindle whorls, pottery *etc.*; A 38; a horse tooth in A 43-46; A 42 (Valmin 1938:58, 101, 103, 108, 138 and 161).

39 In the tumuli graves, both at Aphidna and at Vrana were found pottery with attachments that can be interpreted as horns.

40 The discussion of the horse's authenticity has been a forgotten issue for thirty years now while the horse rests under the glass roof covering the grave.

Having the models in figs. 1 and 6 in mind, a suggestion for future research would be to go out in the landscape and try to register at what distances and under what circumstances the tumuli are visible. Also, a more systematic survey could show what other factors could have determined their location.

As a last point regarding the tumuli, it is interesting to note that worships of the Mycenaean heroes at Olympia, Isthmia and Nemea were taking place at tumuli,⁴¹ places that later developed into great athletic centers. It would seem plausible that real and aggressive contests for the right to succession once took place around some of the tumuli.

41 Protonotariou-Deilaki 1990a: 83.

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DISCUSSION

E. Handelman: Excuse me for intruding again into an area I know so little about, but that begins to fascinate me. On the basis of the first two papers sacrifice appears as the dominant modality of what is being called communications between humans and deities. It strikes me that it may be necessary—and perhaps this has already been done—to extrapolate in the direction of cosmology, and to try and establish just what these relationships between deities and human beings were. Might we be speaking about a continuum between humans and deities, in which case sacrifice would perhaps have one kind of perspective? Or are we talking absolute difference? Are we talking about a kind of cosmology that could be called holistic in which ritual is the dominant mode of cosmic organization? Or are we talking about different spheres, rituals are one, and there others, and they exist in a relationship of equivalence to each other? On all of these instances my feeling is that is necessary to extrapolate beyond the hard facts of archaeology in order to get a sense of what the connection between gravesite, shaping the landscape, sacrifice as a way of transforming what is here in relation to what is not here, or maybe made closer, and so forth, may be. If sacrifice is the major medium of transformation, of linkage between human beings and gods, then it has a crucial transformative position in whatever cosmology might be extrapolated—if it has that position, of course. I would be curious to hear whether the experts here think that this might be the case.

M. Hielte-Stavropoulou: That is what I hope we can accomplish at this symposium.

R. Hägg: You have gathered together a quite impressive number of instances of vestiges of cult at Middle Helladic tombs and cemeteries that may possibly show that there were rituals being performed long after the funeral. Of course, this is one of the key issues, finding out whether these rituals were performed immediately after the funeral or long after. That has to be analyzed specifically in each case. Something that interested me especially were these possible horseshoe-shaped cult buildings, and one reason for that is that I think I see the reoccurrence of such buildings at cemeteries in Late Geometric times in Greece. It is a phenomenon that occurs in various periods. I think you are probably right in seeing them in this period, too. In this connection I want to mention something that is a bit enigmatic and that is the stone tumulus in the Middle Helladic cemetery at Asine. It has been thought of as a central tomb, a tumulus of which the center had been destroyed, robbed out. Maybe you could look at that also in the light of the rest of what you have to see if it could fit in your category.

M. Hielte-Stavropoulou: There are more structures of this kind but I did not have the time to look at them more closely.

N. Marinatos: Following the line of what Robin Hägg said, one of the important points of your contribution, I think, is that the cemeteries, and the installations related to them, go far beyond the temporary funeral. They have to do with a variety of rituals that regroup the community around the dead, periodically and at festivals. The best studied model for this kind of activity is pharaonic Egypt, but also post-pharaonic Egypt, the so-called Late Period, where you have whole installations around the cemetery, including the houses of priests who reside there, and who have been left considerable property in the legacy of the dead so that they can take care of the dead, provide food and offerings at regular intervals. You may also have a dimension of gods visiting the cemetery. Incidentally, we do this in modern Greece, too. On Good Friday right before Easter there is a litany from the church into the cemetery so that the dead can take part in

the ritual. I think you are quite right, and there is a lot of scope for investigating the cemetery as a focus of communal cult activity which goes beyond the funeral.

M. Hielte-Stavropoulou: I think that in general cemeteries have not been investigated as a complex. No complex models are made of the graves, the finds, the scatter of small graves in between.

S. Georgoudi: I would like to say something about the problem posed by Don Handelman. I am very sceptical because from historical Greece we have, for example, inscriptions and iconography, but we are not yet capable of saying what cosmological visions and conceptions the ancient Greeks had, or exactly what is the meaning of the sacrifice. I am very sceptical about interpretations when we have only archaeological remains. We can generate different hypotheses, but we cannot go further. The difficulty of judging in a culture like the ancient Greek, where we have much evidence from many domains, is very great. I would also like to add something to the problem of annual animal celebrations at the tombs because in Greece, for example at Athens, we know of visits to the tombs, we know of annual public celebrations, for example the feast of *Genesis* is both public and private at the same time. You are very right to say that perhaps this is a place where people met not only on the private level but also as a community on certain dates.

P. Pakkanen: I was very happy to hear these comments about the role of speculation and about the need to be aware of the criteria that lead to the possibility of speculation. When we deal with prehistoric material we have to have criteria upon which to base our speculation. What is important here is the role of the gatherings. This has been underlined quite often. Always when we have an important place where people gather together they might have had ritual, and the building around which they gather might have been of a ritual nature. It is a social phenomenon, which might include religious input. The same is true for the funerary context and around tombs. One must also keep in mind that the gathering could have been for more mundane purposes. In the lack of inscriptions or living evidence we must establish criteria before we speculate about the cosmological or the theological sphere.

D. Handelman: I appreciate the scepticism, but it is very much a matter of the kind of premises one begins with in the sense that it is no less extrapolative to begin with cosmological thinking as it is to begin with social thinking. There is no set order of priority in how data are perceived. Whatever order of priority is set, it has a tremendous influence on what one is prepared to say. Here I prefer the word 'extrapolation' to 'speculation'. This is my experience in all disciplines that I have some information about or that I work in myself. We are always calling for more information, because the more information we have the more numerous the possible lacunae of possibilities. It may be that what you are facing is indeed a wide variation of local possibilities in the overarching conception. I would also like to point out that cosmology is a way of organizing the world. If I say to you that it is very likely that there is no religion without ritual, then if ritual exists it must be practiced in order to exist. If ritual is practiced, it may be practiced individually, communally by some specialized category or class of people, and so forth. To me that seems no less outlandish than beginning with the notion of some kind of communal gathering generating social solidarity, and so forth. And I come back to one of the points I tried to make yesterday: if there no religion without ritual, and if ritual was—and this is likely the case—the primary means of trying to act on cosmos in certain ways that are positive, then it is no less speculative to begin with that kind of thinking than it is to begin with thinking of social gathering, communalism, generation of solidarity, and so forth.

H. Tzavella-Evjen: Alexandra Christopoulou excavated in the 80s the Middle Bronze Age cemetery at Chaironeia. It is not published, not a single word. I have seen it and I have her permission to mention it. It would fit very well into your landscape archaeology, it was sited against the Archontion hill and the Boiotian Kifissos was running nearby. Nowadays it is flooded and the highway is built over it, so don't go looking for the cemetery. At Chaironeia I found a Middle Bronze Age secondary burial, a cist grave of a 24-year old person, as I was told by the specialist, built within a strong wall which was associated eventually with Mycenaean pottery. This is the only case I know of secondary burial within a building. That definitely fits into a cult process and a belief of something—I cannot elaborate now, I have written extensively on that. I thought you might be interested in putting it in your record.

M. Hielte-Stavropoulou: Thank you very much. I did not mention the bones hidden inside these tombs. I was avoiding it. But there are lost of interesting features of this kind.

S. Des Bouvrie: You depart from social life and show an empathy with this world, and you compare it to the Sarakatsani. You might also profit from an article by Bruce Lincoln on the Scythian tribes who are moving around and never have a fixed place to raise a temple so to say. But when they bury their chief they are fixed and anchored. They can't move the burial so they have to return to that place. It is a fascinating article.

Experiencing ritual: Shamanic elements in Minoan religion

Christine Morris and Alan Peatfield

Introduction

RITUAL HAS ALWAYS been a popular subject of study in archaeology and anthropology. Early ethnographers relished the details of its drama, and early archaeologists found it a convenient explanation for those finds they could not explain. More sophisticated modern scholars ponder the symbolic complexity of its action, and debate its social function. And yet, in all of this, there has been relatively little focus on the experience of ritual. What was it like to do any given ritual? What sort of experience were the participants trying to elicit from themselves? How did they modify the infinite possibilities of human action to create that experience?

Philosophy and the body

Another fashionable subject in contemporary cultural studies, which has close affinities with ritual, is the body. Here we find many of the same problems. Though much scholarship on the body does proclaim the need to break free of Platonic and Cartesian mind/body oppositions, scholars still sustain implicitly the hierarchical dominance of the mind, in that the body is perceived of as being essentially a cultural category, constructed through language. The debate is focused on how descriptions of the body are socially and intellectually defined, and encoded. Even among those who do acknowledge the power of the body, such as Michel Foucault, a single sense, that of seeing, is typically attributed primary importance; hence the interest in the visual strategies of power, in display, in the image, in the gaze, and in the primacy given to 'viewing' the past (Porteous 1990, Tuan 1979).

Absent from such analytical discourse is the lived physicality, the being-in-the-world, or the multisensual experience of the whole body as opposed to the scholarly body (re)presented as text or metaphor. To address our interest in the experiences of ritual we must turn instead to another major theoretical approach,

that of 'embodiment', as developed in philosophy (Johnson 1987, Rorty 1979) and anthropology (Csordas 1990, Lock and Scheper-Hughes 1987, Lock 1993). This approach offers a more holistic engagement with the mind-body problem in that it locates what we experience as mind in and through our somatic encounters with the world. It lays emphasis on the 'concrete, the here-and-now presence of people to one another, and the full complement of senses and feelings through which they communicate with one another' (Strathern 1999:2), creating space for feeling and sensuous bodies (Asad 1997, Seremetakis 1994, Stoller 1989, 1997). It also recognises a complex interplay between our individual, experiencing bodies, the socially constructed, symbolic body, and the collective body politic, all of which are situated within and interpreted through their specific cultural context.

Minoan ritual action

In the study of Minoan religion the most significant recent advances have come from the notion of ritual action, a response to contemporary interest in the *performative* nature of religion. Two fundamental concepts have emerged. First, there is the idea that pictorial art presents a record, albeit idealised and symbolised, of enacted events, *i.e.* what was really done: processions, sacrifices, offerings, and libations (Cameron 1978, 1987, Hägg 1985). Secondly, Peter Warren (1988) has articulated the notion of ritual action as the structural force of Minoan religion—religion not as belief, but as performance. These concepts have allowed scholars to read much of the narrative and something of the purpose of Minoan rituals: epiphany, sacrifice, rites of passage, healing. We ourselves have commented on the ambiguous, polysemic nature of ritual action (Peatfield and Morris 1990).

Within all this, however, the relationship of action to experience remains problematic, essentially because it has never been systematically addressed. Take epiphany as an example. Minoan epiphany is defined as having two main forms: enacted and envisioned. This conforms to the two dimensions of action: external and internal. 'External' action is purely symbolic, done for the sake of form and tradition, to express ideas that are only ever intellectually defined. It is action as play-acting. Even the most superficial actor is aware, however, of the emotional power of drama, that what you do affects how you feel. The drama is not simple pretence, but a collective participation and creativity between actor and audience with the ability to effect transformations (Turner 1982, 1991, Schechner 1994). This is the 'internal' dimension of action: physical action can be used to affect emotional and psychological states, and to access altered states of consciousness, which transcend everyday realities. In other words: the holistic interaction of body, mind, and spirit creates a conduit to mystical experience.

Enacted epiphany is therefore relatively easy to understand—the role of the deity is performed by a human representative, who interacts with processions of worshippers, appears at windows, sits on thrones, receives offerings. But what about visionary epiphany? Study here has focused primarily on depictions, such as the gold rings, which we discuss in more detail below. On these rings, floating and flying images—figures, birds, butterflies and other insects—have been interpreted as *symbolising* the arrival of the deity; *i.e.* the vision is externalised into a depiction, an intellectual, rather than an experiential process. Where Minoan scholars do link the visionary process with the experiential domain of Minoan religion, they invariably describe it as ‘ecstatic’. And yet ‘ecstatic’ is assumed to be self-explanatory; it is never defined. Let us now look at the history of the ‘ecstatic’ within Minoan scholarship.

Minoan religion: Evans and ecstasy

‘Ecstatic trance’, ‘orgiastic frenzy’, ‘possession’—are all terms which can be found in discussions of Minoan religion from Evans onward (Evans 1930:68–9, 141–2, Nilsson 1950:275, Warren 1981). Yet the grounds for identifying the intense physical experience of trance behaviours as a component of Minoan ritual have not received critical discussion, and although there is a vocabulary of ecstasy, the nature of the trance state, the possible methods for achieving it, and its purposes all remain relatively unexplored.

The underlying model in most writers’ minds seems to be that of Dionysiac cult, and images of maenads in orgiastic frenzy spring readily to mind. Indeed Warren (1981) has presented an interesting argument for specific connections between Minoan and dionysiac cult in the form of Zagreus, but possession cults—from the Dionysiac to African Zar associations to possession by the Christian Holy Spirit within modern charismatic traditions—are only one of a range of possible models for ecstatic behaviours.

Evans too wrote of orgiastic dances, but he also shows an interesting awareness of the widespread and varied forms of ecstatic behaviours, particularly in the context of his discussion of scenes on Minoan gold rings. His haphazard but fascinating collection of comparative material does, for example, illustrate some of the prime methods for inducing trance. Drawing on the analogy of Vedic traditions, Evans suggested that the scenes of tree pulling showed the plucking of fruit, the juice of which ‘supplies the religious frenzy’ (Evans 1930:142). His specific interpretation may seem fanciful to us now, but it draws attention to the widespread importance of psychoactive or hallucinogenic substances in inducing altered states. The social context and intensity of such experiences may vary from the increased sociability generated by alcoholic drinks through to the opening of

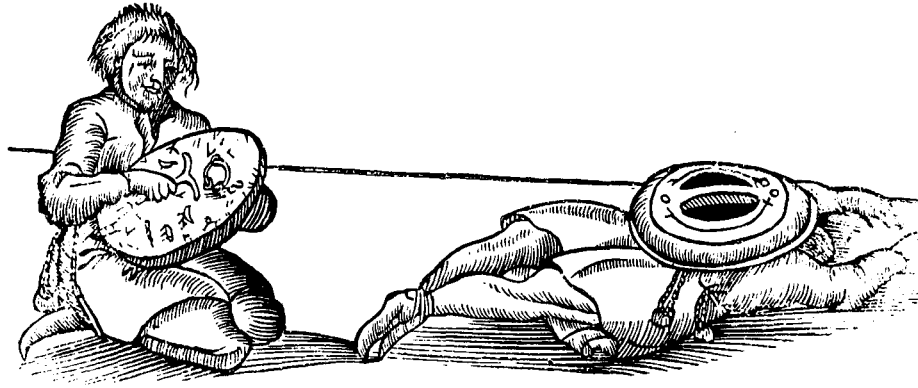


Fig. 1: Saami (Lapp) shaman in trance fallen beneath his drum. After J. Schefferus, 1673. *Lapponia* (Frankfurt).

channels to the other world by ingesting plants with powerful hallucinogenic properties such as ayahuasca, peyote and *Datura* (Balick and Cox 1996, Furst 1972, Harner 1973, Schultes and Hofman 1979, Goodman *et al.* 1995). The possible use of plant entheogens has yet to be fully explored for the Aegean Bronze Age, and we consider it unlikely that they did not have a role in both social and ritual contexts (see Hamilakis 2002:131 for the social dimension).

In a modern western context drugs spring all too readily to mind as conduits to altered states, but it should be stressed that such states can also be induced without the ingestion of hallucinogenic substances. Some of Evans' other *comparanda* show his awareness of the widespread importance of rhythmic movement and sound as methods for triggering trance states. He mentions in passing whirling dervishes (see also MacGillivray 2000:253, for the Dervish Academy at Tekke near Knossos), the musical accompaniment to the ecstatic prophecies of Old Testament prophets, and the drumming of the Saami (Lapp) shaman.

Comparing the Saami shaman with a Minoan image, Evans writes (1930:315):

... the Shamanistic soothsayer, after long chanting, accompanied by the pulsation of his troll-drum, has fallen in the same ecstatic state of possession, face downwards on the ground, 'swooning like a dead man', with the instrument over the back of his head and shoulders.

Evans' description refers to the state shown in a famous drawing of the Saami shamans from the seventeenth century AD (fig. 1), but his assumption—that the trance was one of possession—is incorrect. In fact the Saami shaman, in common with the majority of shamans, is engaged on a trance journey where he sees and communicates with spirits or ancestors; he is not a passive receptacle or medium, possessed by another.

Altered states of consciousness: methods and practice

Whereas Evans was able to call upon only snippets of ethnographic information to help him give shape and meaning to Minoan rituals, a vast amount of research relating to ecstatic or trance states is now available. These include anthropological case studies of trance-based rituals and neurophysiological studies of different states of human consciousness. There is also a strong popular interest in the subject as part of the western search for alternate forms of spiritual experience and self-actualisation. Such writings vary greatly in quality, but include some internationally recognised anthropologists who have chosen to cross the academic boundary from observer to participant—usually as a result of actual trance experiences during fieldwork—and in some cases become Neo-shamanic practitioners (e.g. participant: Paul Stoller [1989], Edith Turner [1992]; practitioner: Michael Harner [1990]).

A word first about terminology. Within Minoan studies ecstasy, trance, possession have tended to be used interchangeably and without further discussion. There is extensive scholarly debate concerning the definition and use of each of these terms (Atkinson 1992:310–311), but they are all characterised by the active use of the body to enter an *altered state of consciousness* (ASC): that is, a non-ordinary bodily state in which sensations, perceptions, cognition and emotions are modified. It may be useful to think of ASC as a term which describes a spectrum of related trance and meditational behaviours (Walsh 1989, 1990), rather than yet another reductionist frame of reference which undervalues the nuanced interplay of embodied experience and the cultural context through which the experience finds shape and meaning.

Shamanism is itself a contested term. Mircea Eliade, in his classic work, *Shamanism. Archaic techniques of ecstasy*, defined a shaman as an individual who uses the ‘technique of ecstasy’ (i.e. altered state of consciousness) to undertake a soul journey in the manner of Siberian and Central Asian shamans (Eliade 1988:499–500). Some scholars have argued that the term should be reserved for this ‘classic’ shamanic complex of the Siberian-Arctic region; while, at the other end of the spectrum, ‘shamanism’ has come to be used in a highly generalised way to refer to almost any belief in and communication with spirits (Bowie 2000:190–218, Price 2001:4–5). The case for a geographically restricted definition is undermined by the argument that ‘shamanism’ is in many ways an externally constructed (albeit useful) western and academic notion, or in Michael Taussig’s words ‘a made-up western category—an artful reification of disparate practices’ (cited in Atkinson 1999:307).

In suggesting the presence of shamanic traits within Minoan ritual we follow the view that a defining feature of shamanism is the use of the body as a vehicle for communicating with the extra-human or supernatural world by moving into an altered state of consciousness. We emphasise that shamanism is nevertheless diverse in its expression, purposes, and societal contexts, though the skills and powers organised around the central faculty of trance typically include healing, mastery of spirits, psychopompic activities, and divination (Blacker 1975:26). We also draw attention to two common misconceptions about shamanic practices. It is widely assumed that shamanism is characteristic only of non-complex and non-western societies, since the 'classic' accounts of such practices are known from the hunters and reindeer herders in Siberia or from native societies of Central and South America where psychotropic plants are extensively used for inducing altered states. Shamanic activity has a place both in both non-complex and in complex state societies, with the latter exemplified by the Maya, the *wu* in China and Japanese Shinto practices (Maya: Freidel 1992, Drew 1999; China: Poo 1998, Robinet 1997; Japan: Blacker 1975). While the religious traditions of the west have taken a very different path, Greek ritual practice (and, we would argue, earlier Bronze Age practice) does include clearly shamanic elements if only we are open to recognising them, as has been eloquently argued by Peter Kingsley (1999:129):

Nothing would be easier than to think these traditions never took root in the West, or to believe that if they did they were never of any importance for the history of western culture. But that's not the case.

Fasting, sensory deprivation or focusing, repetitive, rhythmic movement and sound (especially from rattling and drumming), and use of drugs are all recognised methods for inducing the altered state of consciousness. The *choice* of technique is culturally and historically situated, but the techniques *all* stimulate similar neuro-physiological changes in the human body. Researchers have, for example, drawn attention to the physical changes induced through drumming (Neher 1962), and to a spillover between the normally separate functions of the left and right lobes of the brain during the trance experience (Lex 1979). More recent research within the exciting new field of neurotheology has demonstrated that the altered states of mind described by ritual practitioners are associated with observable and distinctive neurological activity (D'Aquili and Newberg 1999).

These somatic changes facilitate the altered state of consciousness, and since the experience is rooted within bodily perceptions and sensations all humans with a normally functioning nervous system have the ability to access the altered state and there are strong experiential commonalities irrespective of cultural context. Although alien to most modern, western rituals which have tended to minimise (even denigrate) multisensual ritual experience, ecstatic behaviours within ritual

are known from a wide range of societies, past and present, and as spiritual experiences they are welcomed and highly valued (Bourguignon 1973, 1979:233–269, Lang 1997, Lewis 1989).

We briefly enumerate the universal bodily sensations experienced in the altered state of consciousness; we shall return to some of them later in relation to the Minoan evidence.

Bodily perception is strongly affected. There may be sensations of floating or taking flight, perceptions of body size and form are distorted—for example, the body may feel elongated, or feel very small or very large. The experience of being out-of-scale with the world around is sharply observed in the *Adventures of Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, who was familiar with accounts of the micro- and macroscopic properties of mushrooms (Rudgley 1993:49). Bodily transformation is also common with the sensation of changing wholly or partially into another form such as an animal.

Senses may feel sharpened or heightened, leading to strong sensations of smell and taste.

Time perception is altered: the participant's sense of elapsed time is distorted. For example, a long and complex journey may be undertaken in a relatively short 'real' or ordinary time.

Visual perceptions are altered. Vivid visual imagery is experienced with brilliant colours and pulsating, fragmenting patterns and images. Modern experimentation on trance subjects suggests that this entoptic imagery may follow a broadly common structure beginning with geometric forms and developing into full-blown iconic imagery and events in which the subject may participate (for applications to ancient art see Lewis-Williams 1998, Dronfield 1995).

At the purely physiological level then we may agree with Eliade that 'ecstasy is a timeless primary phenomenon' (1964:508). But, importantly, the experience takes its detailed content and interpretation from the cultural context; in other words the ecstatic ritual acquires meaning through a subtle interplay between physiological changes and the culturally defined worldview or set of beliefs and expectations. Thus the recognition of an underlying neurophysiological dimension to the trance experience is not a reductionist explanation of ecstatic behaviour, since individuals and communities select and process the products of their nervous systems and interpret their experiences in terms of cultural systems of knowledge (Atkinson 1992:311, Lewis-Williams 1998).

Minoan gold rings and ecstatic behaviour

What evidence is there for the ritual use of altered states of consciousness in Minoan culture? As we have already noted, Evans—using the complex imagery of

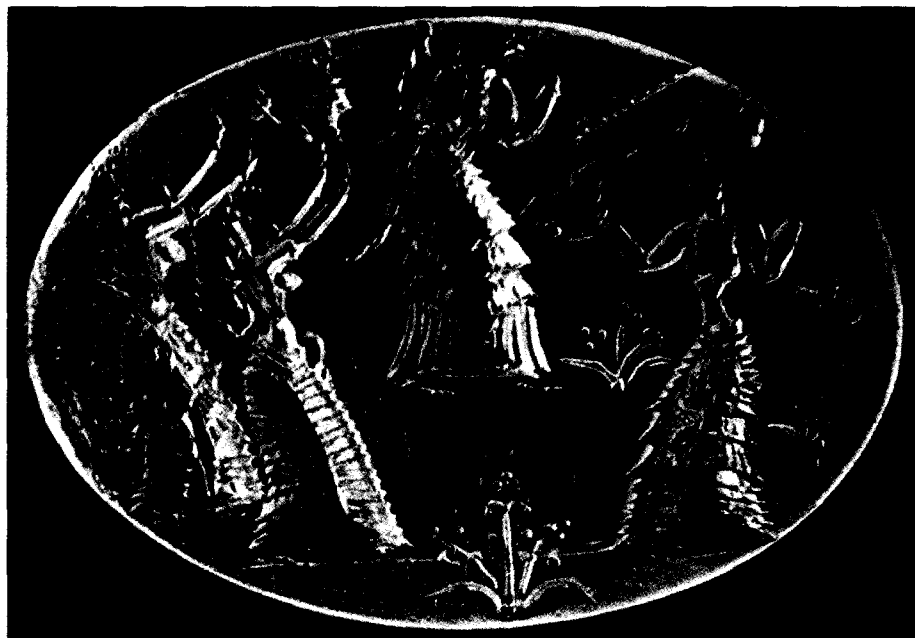


Fig. 2: Isopata gold ring.

gold seal-rings of the Second Palace period—first suggested that certain rituals which he termed ‘ecstatic’ served to summon the presence or epiphany of a deity (Evans 1930:67–73, 140).

The ritual actions performed in this context are pulling at a tree, hugging or embracing an object identified as a stone or pithos (Warren 1990), and a rhythmic movement of the body, usually described as dancing. These actions are understood as a performance intended to invoke a visionary epiphany. Thus a deity may appear as a small descending anthropomorphic figure, or the depiction may include a bird, butterfly and other floating images such as an eye; these have been interpreted as *symbolising* the arrival of a deity or as cult symbols confirming and defining the ritual context (Warren 1988:18, Marinatos 1993:177 [Isopata], 283n24). Although the language of ecstasy is used in connection with these images, the implications of ecstatic *experience* have not received the attention they merit, and the emphasis has remained on *symbolic* representation.

By shifting these images into a shamanic idiom, a rather different reading may be offered; one which centres on the body as the conduit to ritual experience and which argues that far from being purely ‘symbolic’ the iconic content represents the technique and experience of trance. We focus on the Isopata ring (fig. 2) to illustrate our reading, which does not claim to provide a ‘neat’ or single interpre-

tation of the scene, but seeks to open up the possibility of a different way of understanding the imagery on many Minoan gold rings. Following Evans, the technique of ecstasy on the Isopata ring has been described as 'orgiastic dance' implying violent and uncontrolled movement. But is this what is depicted? Figures with tresses of hair flying out away from the body (*e.g.* on the Knossos dancer and the bull-leaper fresco) illustrate the existence of an artistic convention for indicating vigorous motion. The tresses of hair on the four large figures on the Isopata ring are not shown in this way; only the small figure has possible flying tresses, perhaps implying swift descent and arrival at the scene. The graceful curve of the women's bodies and skirts is suggestive of movement rather than a body at rest, but in the absence of other somatic markers for frenzied activity, a more limited rhythmic movement or swaying might be suggested.

Most importantly, the three different body postures are very specific; they are repeated on other rings, and we now know that some of the same postures are shown on peak sanctuary figurines. The clearly defined shape of the postures suggests that they are purposeful in themselves—a point to which we will return in a moment. The technique of ecstasy may be described as comprising rhythmic movement or swaying in relation to defined body postures. From the numerous well-documented accounts of shamanic techniques, we might expect the use of drugs and music, though neither can be directly inferred from this image. The classic shamanic instruments are the drum and the rattle, the pitch of both being highly effective as sonic drivers for altering brain wave patterns. From our fairly limited knowledge of Minoan musical instruments we can at least observe that the sistrum (rattle) was known on Crete, most notably from the actual example from Archanes and the representation on the Harvester Vase (Younger 1998:65, 74–6, 78–80 for these and other examples). In addition, Warren has made the attractive suggestion that a pithos with a modified rim from Knossos was used as a drum (1981:166). In this content we might—very tentatively—offer the suggestion that the pithos with a lid or cover on the Archanes gold ring might be a drum over which the drummer has fallen into a state of trance.

Can we find firmer grounds for locating the rhythmic movement and special body postures within a shamanic idiom? Indeed, how might an artist meet the challenge of depicting an altered state of consciousness? Here we can draw upon the universal physiology of the experience which we have already described in terms of altered perceptions of the body itself, distortions of space and time, and powerful visual imagery.

A distinctive feature of the Isopata ring is the attenuated, almost non-human form of the human heads, which contrast powerfully with the supple, rounded body forms and indeed the elaborately flounced skirts of the participants. This strange convention occurs on other rings and seals, and writers on Minoan

religion have noted that this may have 'a religious significance'. If we think of the image as located within the trance experience, then the non-human or aniconic head could be read much more specifically as an artistic device for representing the shift of 'self', of both mind and body, into the altered state of consciousness.

In support of this interpretation, we can cite the commonly reported experience of trance participants, where the head feels as though it dissolves, explodes, somehow disappears or turns into a non-human (often animal) form, a sensation which may have a basis in the physiological factors of the trance state (Halifax 1982:80, Whitley 1992:101 fig. 10). Remembering that the enabling mechanism is the human nervous system, and that we are *not* therefore modelling Minoan experience on that of other cultures, we can convey the intensity of these bodily sensations and their focus on the head by reference to documented accounts.

A vivid account of a Haitian ceremony using drums goes as follows (Deren 1953:260):

My skull is like a drum, the singing is my very ear, inside my head—the bright darkness floods up through my body, reaches my head, engulfs me.

Amongst the !Kung San of Southern Africa energy (known as N/om) is activated during trance induced through rhythmic movement and rattling. Participants describe the sensation of this energy boiling up in their spines, and exploding in their heads (Lewis-Williams 2001:21, Katz 1982). In this case there are drawings in rock art of the experience—they show both distorted and therianthrope heads and energy streaming from the crowns of their heads (Clottes and Lewis-Williams 1998:25–26, Halifax 1982:80).

The distorted, non-human heads and the rows of dots around the heads of the otherwise elegant ladies on Isopata ring make sense in this context. They represent the bodily experience—the gathering of heat and energy up towards the head, sensations of it breaking open, and sometimes of transformation into other beings. If this explanation is correct, then we may have a framework for reading the distorted heads elsewhere in Minoan art, which allows us to locate the image within the experience and narrative of the alternate reality.

A second physiological dimension of the ecstatic state is its visionary content. The active engagement of physical sensations—so vivid that they may be experienced and accepted as being more real and significant than ordinary reality—is a major element of shamanic trance. The nervous system provides a common experiential basis, but the detailed content and interpretation of the imagery is culturally specific. Viewed within this shamanic idiom the images above and around the four women can be understood as elements of *experienced* vision rather than standing as external symbolic markers of ritual action. The descending figure is part of this visionary content but so too are the other images. We may note

some common elements in visions for which we may be physiologically predisposed; these include floating and flying images (*e.g.* birds, butterflies), eyes and masks, and rope-like images and small scrolls which are thought to arise from chemicals acting directly on the nerves. The floating images on the Isopata ring fit readily within this frame of reference, as do the depictions of and references to flight on a number of other rings. It should be stressed again that such shamanic imagery is produced through a nuanced interplay of physiological possibilities and cultural experiences and expectations. In other words participants learn to shape and interpret the potent images and sensations encountered in the altered state in terms of the ritual structures and world-view of their own society.

Postures and peak sanctuaries

If we are correct in identifying the Minoan gold rings as depictions of ASC, then clearly those states and the ability to enter them were accorded a high status in Minoan society. Scholarship recognises that religion, as presented in artistic media such as gold rings or frescoes, was very much a prestige activity in Minoan society, controlled by the palatial elite in the Second Palace period. Equally we recognise that this was not always so—religion appears to have been more accessible in the First Palace period (Gesell 1987, Moody 1987, Peatfield 1987, 1990). Is this likely to have been also true of ASC?

To address this question we turn to the primary evidence of First Palace period cult practice—the mountain shrines known as peak sanctuaries. Twenty-five-plus peak sanctuaries are distributed over Crete; they share consistent features of topography and votive material. Topographically, peak sanctuaries are set on prominent but accessible mountain peaks, close to upland areas of agricultural and pastoral exploitation. They also have strong visual links with the settlement areas from which their worshippers came, and with other peak sanctuaries (Rutkowski 1986, Peatfield 1983, 1990, 1994). The characteristic finds are large quantities of clay figurines of human beings, votive limbs, and animals. They seem to embody a rural nature cult arising out of the concerns of the peasantry—fertility of the earth and flocks, the continuity of their human communities. The special association of peak sanctuaries with healing is strongly attested by the deposition of votive limbs or models of human body parts. Such practices find obvious analogies in later Greek shrines to Asclepius and in modern Greek Orthodox offerings (*tamata*), as well as in practices elsewhere in the world, such as in the Shinto religion of Japan (Statler 1983:194). Overall, the Minoan offerings represent a sacred dimension to living in a mountainous marginal landscape.

Since the first peak sanctuary, Petsophas, was excavated in 1903, it has been recognised that the human figurines represent the worshippers themselves, rather



Fig. 3: Petsophas. Male terracotta figurine with arms to torso gesture. Ht 17.4 cm (HM 3405).

than deity images (Myres 1902–3). Thus it has been assumed that the standardised postures, in which the figurines are arranged, are associated with the acts of worship and offering. The most familiar of these worship postures, hands held to chest, is represented by the well-known male figurines from Petsophas (fig. 3). The first commentators on the peak sanctuary figurines also observed other postures, and suggested a possible gender distinction, with female figurines holding their hands up, or crossing their arms diagonally across the body.

This conventionalised image of peak sanctuary figurines and their postures has remained standard in archaeological literature, in which the same few figurines are repeatedly illustrated. It was not seriously modified by subsequent exploration of peak sanctuaries, because that exploration

has tended to be only briefly published and extremely selectively illustrated. If anything, attention becomes even more focused on the hands-to-chest gesture, perhaps because it tends to be better preserved.

The interpretations applied to the figurines were equally problematic. Even Bogdan Rutkowski, the pioneer of Minoan cult place studies, had relatively little to say about postures. He calls them gestures of supplication, or indicative of mortals addressing pleas to the divinity (Rutkowski 1986:87–88, 1991:52–56). In her synthesis of Minoan religion, Nanno Marinatos describes the worship postures as ‘attitudes of self-containment or respect, not display’ (1993:117). Significantly, she further describes the figurines as adorants. Such terminology—adoration, supplication—collapses description with interpretation, since the gestures are defined in terms of a presumed function. In addition, a variety of bodily postures are subsumed into this interpretative framework without addressing the possibility that the representation of distinct and different gestures could be significant.

The terminology of ‘supplication/adoration’ presupposes a form of ritual action familiar from Classical and Judaeo-Christian religions, and their emphasis



Fig. 4: View (looking south) of the peak sanctuary of Atsipadhes Korakias within the Kouroupas mountain range in the Ayios Vasilios valley.

on deities. The focus is on the external shape of the gesture or posture: hands folded in prayer, kneeling. Such actions mould the body within a structured environment and are conducive to creating a respectful and focused mood, but their primary purpose is supplication of the deity's mercy, and/or recognition and symbolic expression of the worshipper's moral need for that mercy. Ritual action, posture, is thus perceived of as having no meaning or significance beyond the externalised expression of devotion and supplication.

Atsipadhes Korakias

In 1989 we excavated the peak sanctuary of Atsipadhes Korakias in the Ayios Vasilios valley in west central Crete (fig. 4). Part of the purpose of the excavation was the detailed recording of the finds, in order to recover the spatial functioning of the sanctuary. A preliminary report of the excavation has been published (Peatfield 1992; see also Morris 1993, Morris and Peatfield 1996). In summary: the Atsipadhes sanctuary occupies the two natural terraces of the Korakias peak, Upper to the west, Lower to the east (fig. 5). The Upper Terrace seems to have been the main liturgical part of the sanctuary. Finds here were restricted to the eastern edge overlooking the Lower Terrace. On the east-west axis of the site was a small feature, hollowed into the earth and empty of finds. Around the feature was an exceptional density of figurine fragments, fragments of pottery, and, unique to this part of the



Fig. 5: Atsipadhes Korakias, showing Upper terrace to the west, and Lower terrace to the east.

site, small rounded pebbles (Peatfield 1992:68 fig. 8). It is likely that something once stood in this feature, probably as a focus of ritual activity. The Lower Terrace seems to have been the main area of congregation and offering. More than 50% of the *ca.* 5000 figurine fragments were concentrated in the rock clefts just abutting the rise to the Upper Terrace. The density of finds diminished rapidly the further east one moved.

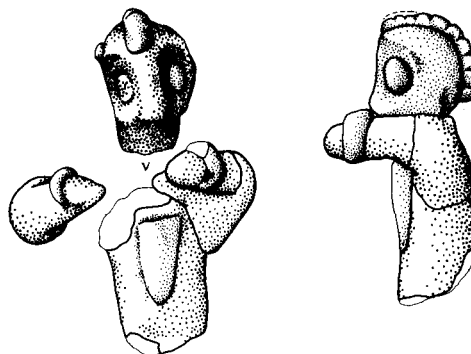
Within our study of the figurine postures two significant patterns emerged. First, there was a greater variety in the number of postures. Secondly, there was a distinct pattern to the spatial distribution of postures over the site. On the variety of postures: the hands-to-body posture has two main variations—hands-to-chest and hands-to-waist. Re-examination of figurines from other peak sanctuaries reveals that this variation is common. It should be noted to that both male and female figurines (fig. 6) are represented in this posture, undermining the suggestion that this gesture is strongly gendered (Morris 2001:249 with n. 18).

More significant is the discovery of figurines, again both male and female, whose arms are held away from the body in a variety of open postures. The most common posture embraces an empty open circle in front of the body, the hands held up symmetrically at head or chest level (fig. 7). In some, the arms are held more forward, but still curving up (figs. 8–9), a posture closely paralleled by that of two



Fig. 6: Female terracotta figurine fragment from Atsipadhes Korakias peak sanctuary, from the rock clefts between the Upper and Lower terraces. Arms to torso gesture (left arm preserved, and scar of right arm on chest immediately below pellet breast). Ht. pres. 6.3 cm (RM 6825).

Fig. 7: Anthropomorphic terracotta figurine fragment from Atsipadhes Korakias peak sanctuary, from open area on Lower terrace. Arms curving round in front of the body. Ht. pres. 7.6 cm (RM 6891).



of the figures on the Isopata Ring. Several other figurines also hold their arms up in front of the body, asymmetrically at head and chest level. We also have one example of hands held out to the sides.

On the spatial distribution: the hands-to-torso figurines are concentrated on the Upper Terrace and in the Lower Terrace rock clefts. The open gestures—figurines with arms up and away from the torso—are almost entirely confined to the outer semi-circle of find distribution on the Lower Terrace. It is clear therefore that the distribution is not random. Nor is it correlated to chronology or figurine manufacture, quality or fabric type. In the face of these patterns the common ritual interpretation of these postures as supplication or adoration seemed seriously inadequate. Our interpretative step was to consider these postures within the experiential domain of ritual action.

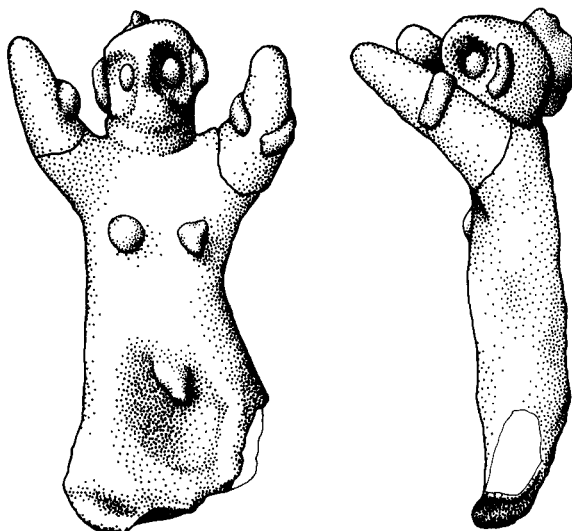


Fig. 8: Anthropomorphic terracotta figurine fragment from Atsipadhes Korakias peak sanctuary, from open area on Lower terrace. Arms raised forward and up. Ht. 13.7 cm (RM 6891).

Taoist energy postures

Posture is included among shamanic techniques for inducing trance. Just as the single repeated sound of the rattle or drum focuses the auditory sense, so fixed posture and rhythmic movement focuses the kinesthetic sense. Curiously, of all the shamanic techniques analysed by modern research for their neuro-physiological effects, posture is least studied, though J.D. Lewis-Williams has drawn attention to specific 'trance dance postures' (Lewis-Williams *et al.* 1996). Perhaps this is because western analytical thought finds it easier to accept externally administered stimuli such as sound or drugs, than the holistic implications of the body's potential to affect itself. It is therefore left to Eastern analytical traditions, particularly those which maintain techniques for manipulating the body for therapeutic and spiritual purposes, to provide some modes of understanding. Both Indian Yogic traditions and Chinese Taoist energy practices, known as *daoyin* or *chi-kung/qigong*, attribute to the body a systematic network of energy flows. Altering the posture creates specific energy matrices, which have therapeutic and spiritual effects (Cohen 1997, Frantzis 1993, Miura 1989). When one applies western terminology—changing posture alters blood flow, neurological pulsation, metabolism, differential thoracic pressures on the internal organs, biochemical and endocrine secretions, the bio-electrical field—then the notion becomes less esoteric (Kaptchuk 1983, Needham 1983).

The Eastern traditions are best known through their medical incarnations, such as Traditional Chinese Medicine and Indian Ayurvedic health practices. Less known in the west is that these same therapeutic methods also have profound spiritual implications, especially when combined with breathing techniques, and specific and free-ranging visualisations—all familiar shamanic techniques (Maspero 1981, Needham 1983, Robinet 1993). Scholars of Chinese religion have long recognised that these techniques owe their origin to the *wu*, Chinese shamans attested at least as early as the eighth century BC (Poo 1998, Paper 1995, Robinet 1997), and possibly as early as the Shang Dynasty of the Chinese Bronze Age (Chang 1993). Early texts even offer correlations between rain-making rituals and rituals for releasing flows of energy in the body—classic macrocosm/microcosm theory (Despeux 1989, Roth 1996). Similarly, much of the imagistic language of these techniques includes rising heat, opening heads, snake-like sensations, flying sensations—all familiar from the phenomenology of shamanic description (Schipper 1993).

One particular advantage of the Taoist models is that they represent an active, living tradition. Indeed K. Schipper's research observations of the trance and ASC experiences of *daoyin* in Taoist ritual were made as an ordained Taoist priest. Viewed from this experiential perspective, each of the three main variations of

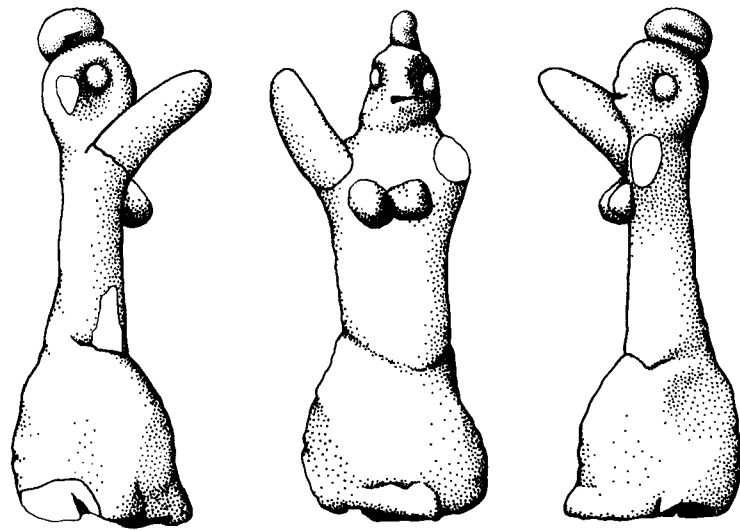


Fig. 9: Female terracotta figurine fragment from Atsipadhes Korakias peak sanctuary, from open area on Lower terrace. Arms raised forward and up. Ht. 13.4 cm (RM 6785).

Minoan peak sanctuary postures, hands-to-waist, hands-to-chest, and hands extending at head level, can be explained activating the three main power centres (called *dantien*) of the body, abdomen, heart, and head (B. Frantzis, pers. com.). Individually they have healing functions, the hands-to-waist being the strongest and most commonly used. Bruce Frantzis, another scholar ordained in a Taoist sect, further observed that Taoists could also combine these postures in a semi-circular arrangement at a communal ritual, in order to elicit oracular activity from a person located at the focus point (Frantzis, pers. com.).

Ecstatic body postures

The only anthropologist to take a specific interest in shamanic postures has been Felicitas Goodman. In her initial research on *glossolalia* (speaking in tongues) she observed that the trance was often initiated by a restricted posture. She then gathered a wide variety of postures from traditional and ancient cultures, and researched their trance and visionary effects, using large numbers of her students and colleagues (1986, 1990). While she was among the first to observe that the universality of the neurophysiological experience was given content only within a cultural context, she went on to group shamanic postures according to functional categories, such as, healing, oracular, metamorphosis, soul journey. Within this

categorisation, the hands-to-waist posture is the commonest healing posture worldwide. The hands-to-chest posture, nicknamed the 'Singing Shaman', is associated with particularly intense trance experiences and attributed a healing dimension.

Goodman is one of the anthropologists who has become a modern Neo-Shaman, and she has marketed the postures as a New Age method. Nevertheless among the second generation of researchers at Goodman's Institute, Robinette Kennedy, is taking an ongoing interest in Minoan ritual postures. Based on some experimentation in co-operation with her, we can make some preliminary observations about two peak sanctuary postures—the hands-to-waist, and the arms extended up and round.

The healing nature of the hands-to-waist posture, described in both the Taoist tradition and the ecstatic body posture research manifests in a profound sense of well-being and security. The tilted head observable in many of the figurines may be a deciding factor in the visionary experience, restricting as it does the connections between the spinal nerve and the cerebral cortex. The stretched throat, caused by the tilted head, seems to stimulate saliva production.

The physical difficulty, the intense pain of holding postures with arms away from the body for extended periods of time may be crucial to the intensity of the trance experience (as with !Kung San). Pain releases more endorphins and other biochemicals. Judging by the ethnographic descriptions of physically difficult postures, the more extreme the posture, the more intense the trance experience, including perhaps the sense of power and energy. Another feature of difficult postures is that they can release a kinesthetic impulse, manifested in a rhythmic shaking or swaying of the body. We have already observed that this may account for the curves given to the figures on the rings.

Minoan postures

Viewed in this way the Minoan ritual postures take on a much stronger and emphatic role within Minoan religion. Rather than being somewhat weak and generalised expressions of worship, they seem to have had a much more dynamic function to access the experiential domain of Minoan ritual action—the most obvious examples being true visionary epiphany through trance, healing through the sense of energy, and divination through psychological insight.

Perhaps significantly, in later Greece, the Cretans maintained a special reputation for mantic power (Kingsley 1999, Chaniotis 2000). Could that have been inherited in part from Minoan religious traditions? Furthermore, references to Keftiu remedies (in the Ebers papyrus) and incantations (London papyrus) suggests that the Minoans (identified as the Keftiu) were known by the Egyptians

for their knowledge of healing plants and rituals (Warren 1995). Such knowledge, combined with a Cretan landscape rich in medicinal plants, offers a link back to the healing role of plants and to their psychoactive properties and possible roles in ASC activity.

We introduced this discussion of peak sanctuary postures by observing that the figurines represent the worshippers, and that there are large numbers of figurines. This certainly suggests that the altered states of consciousness activated through the postures were, hypothetically at least, accessible to all worshippers at peak sanctuaries, during the high point of their use in the First Palace Period.

Elsewhere we have observed that the centralisation of the peak sanctuary cult in the Second Palace period, manifest in the reduction in the number of sites to those of the elite, palatial centres, was also accompanied by a change in offering patterns (Peatfield 1987, 1990). The predominant First Palace period offerings of clay figurines were replaced by a larger variety of Second Palace period offerings: beads, jewellery, stone vessels, bronzes. This supports the idea, apparent in the gold seal rings, that trance activity may have been monopolised by the Second Palace elite, as an ideological component in support of their hierarchy. The rings, with their visionary depictions, would be the visible sign, even badge, of that ritual ability and the status it bestowed, especially within the elite group. According to this narrative the figurines would then represent an earlier phase of wider and direct access to ecstatic ritual behaviour, in the context of peak sanctuary cult.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we have argued that the language and definitions of the scholarship of Minoan religion are embedded with western presuppositions about the mind/body relationship. Furthermore they foreclose understanding of Minoan religion within Classical and Judaeo-Christian theistic models. By re-introducing the body as an active element within Minoan religion, we have sought to re-establish that religion is an experiential, not merely intellectual process. This opens up new ways of exploring the interaction of religion and society in Minoan Crete. When ritual action is analysed only within the intellectual dimension, it is easy to assume its meanings are forgotten and unrecoverable. But as so often re-iterated in shamanic scholarship, the human body is universal. The active involvement of the body in the religious process means that, to quote Edith Turner, 'the frigidity of ritual action gives way to the orgasm of experience' (1992:163) and that the human body is itself the dynamic instrument of ritual.

Acknowledgements

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DISCUSSION

E. Thomassen: We have very little time but I think in view of the provocativeness and interest of this paper I will allow two questions.

D. Handelman: I also found it fascinating. I would like to draw your attention to two pieces of information that may be relevant to what you are doing. One is a book by Elliot Friedsen on people in Malawi. The book is called *Dancing prophets*. What Friedsen has discovered is that drumming generates certain harmonics which have a kind of multi-stable effect in the sense of generating possibilities of perception. Something like you would get by looking at a Necker cube. You look at it and its ground-figure relationship changes and another possibility comes into being, you can't hold that possibility, it disappears from your perception and so forth. This is a kind of intermediate effect between the central nervous system and the cultural interpretations that are given to this. But beyond this, what he discovered was that certain rhythms have a certain physical effect on the body, a feeling of the body like something pushing into the body, something moving around in the body, something extruding from the body, and that this was not a culturally specific phenomenon. That is, he, too, listening to the same rhythms, separated from the people, the prophets who were creating the entry of spirits into the body of their patients, he, too, felt, physically, intrusion, moving around, extrusion. Beyond this he also found that he could chart changes in the rhythms, changes in the harmonics among neighboring peoples, too, where they generated sort of complementary effects, that is, cultural differences which were related to these shifts in the way that the drumming rhythms were used. So, there is something here that is intermediate between the immediate shaping through the central nervous system and the culture. The other comes from a study done about 20 years ago on laughter, measuring laughter physiologically while jokes were being told among people who through previous interaction had some kind of social relationship. What this researcher, who was himself a physician, found was that on the physiological level or domain, the cognitive domain and the social domain, laughter shook up whatever there was to shake up. It shook up the person in all of these domains, which then settled into a kind of reorganization. He was coming to these conclusions before Chaos Theory began to put its tendrils into social thinking. I might add also that Plessner, the phenomenologist, did a very interesting book on laughing and crying, where he argued that in both of these modes one loses control over ones body, the body takes over. And the body then has its own duration, whatever it is, of acting through, working itself through these modes. I would assume that crying has something of the same kind of inner history as laughing does in terms of shaking the person up, and then into patterns of reorganization. You may find some connection between all of this.

A. Peatfield: Yes, that's very useful. Thank you. We will certainly include those ideas in our written paper. We are already aware of this idea of the sonic driving, but the idea that it changes and that this can change the effect is very useful.

H. Tzavella-Evjen: Have you thought about the Mycenaean Psi, Tau and Phi?

A. Peatfield: No, we haven't. We leave that to the Mycenaean specialists to pick up on our ideas and perhaps run with them.

Mycenaean religious architecture: The archaeological evidence from Ayios Konstantinos, Methana

Eleni Konsolaki-Yannopoulou

THE LH III A–B SANCTUARY at Ayios Konstantinos, excavated in the last decade, is situated on the east coast of the Methana peninsula in Troezenia (Northeast Peloponnese).¹ The continued investigation of the site has brought to light several Mycenaean buildings (fig. 1), mainly extending to the North and to the West of the modern church of Ayios Konstantinos and Ayia Eleni, which is located on the top terrace of a low hill.²

Room A, already presented and discussed in the past,³ forms part of a building complex lying immediately to the West of the church. Closely associated with Room A are Rooms B and C, extending to the North of it, whereas Room D, immediately to the South of it, is connected with another series of structures developing further to the West. A narrow passage by the north-east corner of Room C leads to Area F, which seems to have been a small enclosed courtyard bounded to the North by a poorly preserved wall, and flanked to the East and to the West by Rooms G and O respectively.

Room G is a large, megaron-like structure, facing Area F to the West. Apart from its main entrance, set on the west side, it has a second door opening at the east end of the north wall. That secondary entrance gives onto a passageway running East-West. This passageway is bounded to the North by Building W, which is aligned with Rooms G and O. Further to the East were uncovered a group of smaller, poorly preserved structures (Room Complex Y), resting on the roughly levelled bedrock.

1 I am grateful to Malcolm Wiener and the Institute for Aegean Prehistory for the generous financial support that enabled me to carry out the Ayios Konstantinos Research Project.

2 Konsolaki 1995, 1996, with pls. 40–42, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2003c, 2003d. See also Shelmerdine 1997:574f, with figs. 12–13, Whittaker 1997:164f, Mee and Forbes 1997:53, 128 (MS 13).

3 Konsolaki 2001.

Room O, lying directly opposite Room G, was also entered from area F. This is a very long room with no indication of internal partitions. Its original entrance was apparently on the west side, where there was a door opening, later blocked. Room O abuts against Rooms E and J, which form part of large building complex, also comprising Rooms S, U and V to the West of those, as well as Rooms H, Ia and Ib to the S, and the oblong space marked as Area L. This building complex frames the three sides of a large, roughly rectangular courtyard, designated as Area K. The floor of that courtyard preserved traces of lime-cement plaster. A rectangular cut block, embedded into the floor, was uncovered near the middle of that space. The large courtyard seems to have been approached from the West through a narrow passage by the south-east corner of Room U. That opening was blocked at a later time, probably in the Early Christian period, when Area K was used as a burial ground.

Of exceptional interest is Building Z, lying at a distance of *ca.* 10m to the North of Building W. This is a separate, free-standing structure, which has the form of a Mycenaean megaron orientated to the West.

Among all those Mycenaean buildings described above in brief, the structures that may be more or less securely assigned a religious function are the following:

1. **Room A** and possibly the adjacent **Rooms B** and **C**.
2. **Room G** and **Area F** in front of it.
3. **Room H** and possibly the adjacent **Room E**.
4. A religious function is also probable for **Building Z**, although this does not seem to have been its primary use.

Room A

A primary cultic function may be legitimately assumed for Room A (figs. 2-3), on grounds of its fixed installations, its general layout, and the nature of its deposit. Room A measures internally *ca.* 4.30m by 2.60m and is orientated to the East, its main axis running East-West. The position of an off-axis doorway is indicated by a long block, apparently serving as threshold, at the north end of the east wall. The gap at the east end of the north wall cannot be indisputably claimed as a doorway, because the Mycenaean layer was here disturbed by a large pit with mixed black soil, probably dug out during the construction of the church. The west wall of Room A consists of two different sections. The north section belongs to the south-east corner of Room H, lying at the back of Rooms A and B. The south section abuts against this corner and must have been constructed at a later phase.

Directly opposite the entrance there is a stone-built bench, which seems to have constituted the cult focus.⁴ It consists of a small, roughly square construction

occupying the north-west corner of the room, and of three low steps built against the north wall. The whole length of the bench is 1.80m. The square construction, which is 0.70m high and measures 0.60m across, is set with upright stone slabs at its east and south sides. The steps must be a later addition to the construction, as the first of those has partly covered the paving of the central area of the room. Apparently the original altar was restricted to the square construction only.⁵

A large number of terracotta figurines (*ca.* 150), mainly bovinds, were found deposited on the steps or in the immediate vicinity of the bench. The repertoire of the terracottas displayed a striking dearth of the common Phi and Psi female figurines, and a redundancy of certain types of group figurines that are rare or non-existent elsewhere, such as helmeted horseback riders,⁶ charioteers,⁷ oxcart drivers,⁸ and bull-jumpers or toreadors.⁹ One of the toreador groups that was deposited on the uppermost step of the bench stands out as a special item and may be proposed as a cult image.¹⁰ It represents an athletic human figure rising above

4 For a general discussion of benches and platforms in Mycenaean cult buildings, see Hägg 1998:105–10, Whittaker 1997:18–20, 26, 74f, 129–131, 137f.

5 The terminology used in the description of the cultic installations follows Hägg (1998:105f), who suggests that some of the benches and platforms should be termed 'deposition altars' for bloodless offerings. Hägg also makes a useful distinction between benches, which are placed against one or several walls, and platforms, *i.e.*, 'raised areas not connected with a wall.'

6 Konsolaki 1999, 2002:33 with fig. 11, 2003d:376f with figs. 5–9; *cf.* the ridden horse and the rider from the sanctuary of Aphaia, Pilafidis-Williams 1998:71f with pls. 3, 55; for ridden horses and riders found in the sanctuary of Apollon Maleatas, see Peppas-Papaioannou 1985:38, 86, 157f with pl. 18.

7 Konsolaki 1996:72, with pl. 41a, 2002:33, with fig. 10, 2003d:378–380, with figs. 13–19; *cf.* Pilafidis-Williams 1998:64–69, 129, 138f, with pls. 3, 53–54; for the chariot models found in the sanctuary of Apollon Maleatas, see Peppas-Papaioannou 1985:38–40, 87f, 142f, 158–161, 209, with pls. 19–21, 79; see also the chariot groups (one almost complete) found at Phylakopi, French 1985:252–58, with figs. 6.26, 6.27, 6.28, and pls. 43d, 44a.

8 Konsolaki 1996:72, with pl. 41b, 2002:34, with fig. 12, 2003d:380f, with figs. 20–22. This type of terracottas has been described as 'Driven Oxen' by French (1971:165f), who interprets them as ploughs; see also French 1985:258–60, with fig. 6.30 and pl. 44b–c; Tamvaki (1973:236–242, with figs. 17–18) also sees ploughing groups; Peppas-Papaioannou (1985:87f, 158, with pls. 20–21) agrees with that interpretation; Konsolaki (1996:72, 2003d:380) recognised oxcarts in at least two of the examples found at A. Konstantinos; Pilafidis-Williams (1998:67–71, with pls. 3, 54) also sees oxcarts in some fragmentary group figurines from the sanctuary of Aphaia; Crowel (1981:56f) dismisses the idea of oxcarts and follows French in her interpretation.

9 Konsolaki 2002:34f, with fig. 13, 2003d:337f, with figs. 10–12. French (1971:166f, 176f) describes this type of Mycenaean terracottas as Ridden Oxen and sees in them 'another scene of daily life.' For their interpretation as toreadors or bull-jumpers, see Jones 1956:124f, with pl. XVI 5, 6, Nicolaou 1964:51, with pl. 6, Tamvaki 1973:242, with fig. 18, Crowel 1981:53, Buchholz 1987:522, Konsolaki 1995:242, 1996:72. Pilafidis-Williams (1998:71–73, with pls. 3, 55) disagrees with bull jumping and proposes rodeo riders.

10 The criteria for distinguishing a cult image are outlined in Renfrew 1985:22–24.

the head of a large hollow (coiled) bovine and clasping its horns firmly with outstretched arms.¹¹ The iconography of the uncommon terracottas has been proposed to reflect the cult of a male divinity,¹² most likely Poseidon, who was closely associated with horses and bulls.¹³ The cult of Poseidon by the Mycenaean Greeks is already well established,¹⁴ and it was predominant in Troizenia during the later periods. That male divinity may have been venerated here together with a female companion,¹⁵ as seems to be indicated by the exceptional presence of a single Hollow Psi figurine,¹⁶ which was deposited on the second step of the bench, and by the pair of human figures mainly occupying the box of the Methana chariot models.

The assemblage of the bench also included miniature model furniture (two three-legged thrones of type B,¹⁷ three tripod tables,¹⁸ and part of a bed or stool), a fragment of a miniature model boat,¹⁹ three miniature vessels (a conical rhyton, a dipper and a flask), one monochrome and seven plain kylikes (mainly FS 267), one rounded alabastron (FS 85), one deep bowl (FS 284, Group B), as well as a

- 11 For hollow bovid figures (coiled or wheel-made), with no indication of a rider, found at other sanctuary sites, see: Demakopoulou 1982, Peppa-Papaioannou 1985:37, 81–85, 142, 154–156, with pls. 13–17, 79, French 1985:236–252, with figs. 6.15–6.24 and pls. 39–43, Kilian 1992:21, 23, with pl. 3 (animal-shaped rhyta?).
- 12 Konsolaki 1996:72, with n. 15, 1999:432, 2000:34, 2001:214, 2002:35f, 2003d:383; cf. Pilafidis-Williams (1998:140f), who suggests that bovid figures are to be seen as symbols of the male sex; Peppa-Papaioannou (1985:209) associates bovinds, and especially bulls, with fertility and prosperity.
- 13 For the connection of bull-leaping with Poseidon's festivals, see Farnell 1907:25f; cf. Morgan 1994:119f, connecting bull figures in Early Iron Age sanctuaries with Poseidon.
- 14 See, for instance, Vermeule 1974:60, 62f, 65–68, 83f, 110f; see also Chirassi 1968; Hiller 1981:110.
- 15 The name *po-si-da-e-ja*, presumably a female counterpart of *po-se-da-o*, appears in the Linear B tablet PY Tn 316, see, for instance, Chadwick 1985:196; at neighbouring Ancient Troezen Poseidon Basileus was venerated together with Athena Polias or Sthenias in the historical period, and the sanctuary of Poseidon Phyalmios outside the city walls was contiguous to that of Demeter Thesmophoros, see Paus. II, 30, 6 and 32, 8; cf. the dualism of the cult at Phylakopi, Renfrew 1985:373, 390, 433.
- 16 Konsolaki 2003d:381, figs. 24a–b. For a discussion of this type of female figurines see French 1971:126–28. French has already noted the occurrence of this special type at places with religious significance at Mycenae; see also the discussion of the Hollow Psi figurines from the sanctuary of Aphaia in Pilafidis-Williams 1998:14–16, 129.
- 17 Konsolaki 2003d:383, figs. 36a–b, 37a–b. For the typology and the symbolic significance of three-legged thrones see Mylonas 1956; for the thrones, occupied and unoccupied, found in the sanctuary of Aphaia, see Pilafidis-Williams 1998:73–76, 129, 139, with pls. 4, 56; LH III model thrones were also found in the sanctuary of Apollon Maleatas, Peppa-Papaioannou 1985:40, 88, 143, 161, 209f, with pls. 22, 79; for the thrones from the sanctuary at Phylakopi, see French 1985:260f with pl. 47e. For a general discussion of Mycenaean model furniture, see Polychronakou-Sgouritsa 2003.
- 18 Konsolaki 2003d:382, figs. 33a–b, 34a–b, 35a–b.

large triton shell, the apex of which had been deliberately cut off. As the bench alone would not have provided enough space for the display of all those terracottas and cult paraphernalia, we may assume the existence of some storage facilities (supplementary wooden shelves or niches) on the walls above.²⁰

Opposite the stepped bench there was a very low stone ledge,²¹ starting from the south-west corner of the room and running along the south wall. Its length was 3m and its width varied from 0.70m at its start to 0.40m at its termination. No terracottas were found on it and its pottery assemblage was meagre (few fragments of coarse ware only). Probably that ledge served as a shelf for the deposition of food offerings. The floor deposit of Room A contained a large number of limpet shells, as well as animal bones and few fish bones, indicating the offering of foodstuff.

The floor of the room was made of a layer of beaten earth mixed with gravel, strewn over the levelled bedrock. A small central area between the bench and the ledge was paved with limestone slabs of rather irregular shape, which formed a low platform or dais measuring *ca.* 0.90m across. The use of this platform is uncertain, but its central position in the room indicates that this feature, as well as the bench and the ledge on either side of it, functioned as attention-focussing devices.²²

By the south-west corner of the room was found an upper segment of a large coarse ware jar, resting on the floor with its neck turned to the ground (fig. 4). The pottery deposited in its vicinity comprised a large dipper, a plain two-handled cup, a straight-sided alabastron, and a rhyton in the form of a pig's head.²³ The miniature conical rhyton was also found nearby, *i.e.*, to the South of the bench. The presence of two rhyta in the proximity of the jar neck suggests its use as a device for libation.²⁴

19 Wedde 2003; *cf.* the two model boats from the sanctuary of Aphaia, Pilafidis-Williams 1998:76f, 139, 145, with pl. 56; a model boat was also found in the sanctuary of Apollon Maleatas, Peppa-Papaioannou 1985:40, 161f, with pl. 22.

20 *Cf.* the niches above the benches of the West Shrine at Phylakopi, Renfrew 1985:94–96, 112–116, with figs. 4.9, 4.10, 9.5, 9.6, and pls. 12, 15, 16b, 17d.

21 The term 'ledge' is here preferred, as this construction is essentially different from the bench described above, but it is connected with a wall and may not be referred to as a platform.

22 For the role of 'attention-focussing devices' in the cult, see Renfrew 1985:18f; the possibility of viewing this platform as a sacrificial altar is examined in Konsolaki 2001:216.

23 Konsolaki 2001:214f, with pl. LXVIIa–d, 2002:29f, figs 7–8. This rhyton is a close parallel of the fox-head rhyton in the Asmolean Museum, Oxford, reported as coming from Tiryns, see, *e.g.*, Lacy 1967:216, fig. 85c. Another animal-head rhyton from Tiryns is reported by Kilian (1981b:58, with n. 63; 1982:402, with n. 21 and fig. 15.1); for more examples and useful remarks on the distribution of animal-head rhyta of the Mycenaean period, see Dourmas 1968, with references to previous bibliography; for the animal-head rhyta found at Aphaia, see Pilafidis-Williams 1998:109f, 133, with pls. 21, 73; see also the animal-head rhyta from the sanctuary of Apollon Maleatas, Peppa-Papaioannou 1985:155f.

To the left of the doorway, in the south-east corner of the room, was uncovered a small hearth,²⁵ which was constructed from a few rough stones placed near the corner and paved with flat-topped stones, set rather irregularly at its bottom (fig. 5). A spit-rest of stone was still preserved *in situ*. Two fragmentary tripod cauldrons, another cooking pot, and part of a brazier with traces of burning were found in its vicinity. The fill of the hearth consisted of a thick layer of ash with burnt animal bones, which provided material evidence of burnt animal sacrifice.²⁶ According to Y. Hamilakis, the bone assemblage of Room A displayed a heavy preponderance of juvenile pigs, in contrast to the bone waste found in other rooms, which was dominated by sheep/goat.²⁷ The preference of pigs for burnt sacrifice and the parallel presence of a pig-head rhyton, most likely intended for blood libation,²⁸ seem to confirm the hypothesis that a close ritual connection between animal sacrifice and libation, as known from Crete, existed in the Mycenaean religion as well.²⁹

The closest parallel for Room A amongst the known examples of Mycenaean cult buildings is the so-called 'Temple' in the Cult Centre at Mycenae, which was also supplied with a central dais and had two stepped benches placed on the side opposite the entrance.³⁰ One more feature recalling the cult buildings at Mycenae was a half segment of probable 'Horns of Consecration' that was deposited on the second step of the bench of Room A, together with a group of votive terracottas (fig. 6). This object was made of hard fired, gritty clay, and was crudely modelled in the shape of a horn curving at its broad end to form a flat part, which was broken across (figs. 7a-b). Supposing that it could have been continued symmetrically to form another horn at the opposite end, as shown in the reconstruction drawing (fig. 8), we may view it as Horns of Consecration. The upper side of the area between the horns is concave and evenly chipped at the surface, as if a separate

24 Konsolaki 2000:34, 2001:214f, 2002:29f; for similar libation devices, see Åkerström 1988:201f, Hägg 1990; 1998:104f, with references to previous bibliography.

25 For the symbolic significance of the hearth in Mycenaean buildings, see Whittaker 1997:134f.

26 Cf. Lambrinudakis 1981:59; see also Kilian 1981b:53, 56; 1988:148. Hägg (1998:100–103) provides a thorough review of the existing evidence for animal sacrifice in Mycenaean Greece, but he prefers to connect the animal bones found at cult sites with the sacrificial meals than with the sacrifice proper. Animal bones were also found in connection with the hearths of Temples 2 and 3 at Kition (Late Cypriote IIC), which have been interpreted as sacrificial altars, see Karageorghis and Demas 1985:29–32, 258f. The hearth of the Methana shrine may be paralleled to that of Temple 3 at Kition, which was also placed near the entrance.

27 Hamilakis 2003.

28 Konsolaki 2001:215; cf. Laffineur 1986:83–86; 1987; see also Hägg 1990:183f.

29 Hägg 1990:183f, with n. 54.

30 French 1981:figs. 1, 4, 7; for a full treatment of the 'Temple Complex,' see Moore and Taylour 1999.

piece of clay (perhaps a stand?) was applied here. The flattened lower side could have been attached to a raw clay surface, most probably on the top of the square construction in the north-west corner of the room, which constituted the original altar. An altar of this form would be better at home in Crete, where there is ample documentation for the use of Sacred Horns in religious architecture.³¹ Similar finds are scarce in Mainland Greece,³² but a good parallel may be recognised in the painted Horns of Consecration crowning the rectangular bench of the Room with the Fresco at Mycenae.³³ Fragmentary examples of actual Horns of Consecration in stone have been found in the Acropolis at Mycenae,³⁴ in the 'Palace of Nestor' at Pylos,³⁵ in the palace at Tiryns (in the foundation fill of Corridor XIX),³⁶ and in the court of the site at Gla,³⁷ but a connection with cult buildings was by no means established. The current evidence does not allow us to consider the 'Horns of Consecration' as a factual emblem of the Mycenaean religion.³⁸ Nevertheless, its presence in the Methana shrine gains support, given that another item in the cult paraphernalia also deviated from the traits of the mainland tradition. As mentioned above, the deposit of the bench included a large triton shell which was modified at the apex, most likely to be used as a rhyton.³⁹ The triton shell is a well-known cult object in the East Mediterranean, particularly in the Minoan and Cypriot area,⁴⁰ but at mainland sanctuaries it is conspicuously absent, as are the Horns of Consecration.

The assemblage of Room A was of particular importance for identifying the level of the cult, as it contained, in addition to ordinary drinking and cooking vessels, an unusual vase of specialised form (animal-head rhyton), some miniature

31 *Cf.*, e.g., the altar depicted on the steatite rhyton from Gypsades, Evans 1901:fig. 2.

32 *Cf.* the clay horns found in association with a brick 'house altar' in Room 123 (Building VI) in the Lower Citadel at Tiryns, Kilian 1981b:58, with figs. 10–11, 1982:401, with fig. 11b.

33 See illustration in French 1981:fig. 13; see also Marinatos 1988:figs. 1, 3.

34 Hood 1986, with fig. 1 and pl. 5a–d.

35 Blegen and Rawson 1966:328f with figs. 238–239, 271 no. 9.

36 Kilian 1992:11 with n. 13.

37 Iakovides 1989:109, with pl. 40b.

38 For the main differences between the Mycenaean and the Minoan religion, see Hägg 1981a, 1984, 1985, 1992a:85f, 1996:601f, 611f.

39 Konsolaki 2000:34, 2001:214, with pl. LXVIIc and e, 2002:31f, with figs. 3 and 9; *cf.* Baurain and Darcque 1983:54f; Laffineur 1991:236, with n. 53; for the interpretation of triton shells as trumpets, see Evans 1901:141–43, with fig. 25; see also Renfrew 1985:327, 383.

40 Åström and Reese 1990, with further bibliography; *cf.* two essentially complete triton shells found in the East and West Shrines at Phylakopi, Renfrew 1985:327f, 383f with pl. 62; see also Lolos 1987:60ff, for a find of 13 triton shells in a storeroom for cult paraphernalia at Vroulia in Messenia, dated by its context to the Early Mycenaean period, when Minoan connections were still strong.

pottery, miniature model furniture, several chariot and oxcart models, theriomorphic and anthropomorphic figurines (including horsemen), one special item (bull-and-torreador figure), as well as some objects of intrinsic value (two lentoids of steatite and a rectangular steatite sealstone). This range of finds implies an official rather than a popular cult, according to the distinction and the criteria proposed by Hägg and Kilian.⁴¹ The admixture of foreign elements in a cult of the official level would not be an extraordinary phenomenon, albeit not so common in LH III as in the Early Mycenaean period.⁴²

Room B

Room B, lying immediately to the North of Room A (see fig. 1), has no wall bounding its east side. If there had been originally a wall with a door opening on this side, it must have been totally destroyed during the construction of the church. Alternatively this structure was completely open to the East.

Room B was also supplied with a hearth, set in the north-west corner.⁴³ A tripod cauldron found near the hearth attests to its use for cooking meals. Probably Room B served as a kitchen for the preparation of ritual meals consumed outside the building, perhaps in a courtyard extending further to the East, in the space now occupied by the modern church.⁴⁴ Fragments of tripod cauldrons and smashed kylikes found in the area to the South of the church seem to indicate eating and drinking in that space.

Room C

Room C, to the North of Room B, was entered from the East, but its north wall preserved another door opening, blocked at a later phase. Both entrances were supplied with stone thresholds. The floor of Room C was paved with rough stones, except for an area where a pit had been dug out and re-filled with earth. Within this pit was uncovered a small cist-grave containing an infant burial, as well as some remains of earlier interments.⁴⁵ The latest burial was furnished with a baseless askos FS 194, a small linear bowl and an early Psi figurine. Below the poorly preserved skeleton was found a Phi A figurine.⁴⁶ Two bronze rings and several

41 Hägg 1981a, 1995, 1996:601, 609, Kilian 1981b:56–58, 1990, 1992:13–21.

42 See above n. 38.

43 See illustration in Konsolaki 1996:pl. 42 a; *cf.* the non-central hearths in Tournavitou 1999.

44 *Cf.* Kilian 1981a:150, on ritual banqueting taking place in the courtyard outside the small cult buildings in the Lower Citadel at Tiryns; see also 1981b:56; for ritual meals recorded in Linear B tablets, see Chadwick 1985:201; *cf.* also Piteros, Olivier and Melena 1990.

45 Konsolaki 1996:73, with pl. 42 b, 2003c.

beads of various materials (glass, steatite, serpentine, fluorite, carnelian, gold) were also retrieved from the grave.

The use of the cist is dated by its contents to LH III A2-III B1, which means that it is contemporary with the use of the shrine. Its presence there raises intriguing questions that are expected to be answered when L. Little completes the study of the skeletal material and publishes her conclusions. According to the information she has given us so far,⁴⁷ the fill of the cist contained in addition skeletal remains of another infant and a foetus. The anthropological evidence, the rich furnishing with jewellery, and the presence of the female figurines probably reflect some apotropaic religious practices.⁴⁸ Perhaps that small cist-grave was purposefully set into the floor of Room C in order to serve for the ritual interment of infants in the vicinity of the shrine, in an effort to exorcise whatever was thought to have caused their premature death. The occurrence of a miniature stone axe in the fill above the grave is worthy of note.⁴⁹

Area F

Area F, to the North of Room C, was most probably a small enclosed courtyard, allowing controlled access to Rooms G and O. On the south side of this space, in front of the blocked entrance of Room C, there was a low bench constructed out of rough stone packed with earth (fig. 9). In the corner space by the west end of this bench was set a roughly worked boulder, which had a deep conical hollow cut into it and was vertically pierced through at the lower side. Below the piercing there was no receptacle, as the boulder rested on the floor of beaten earth. A certain similarity may be noted between this construction and the bench of Room XXXII in House G at Asine, next to which (also in the corner space) there was a bottomless jug placed upside-down, assumed to have played the role of a funnel for liquid offerings channeled into the earth.⁵⁰ A piece of a conical rhyton, two fragmentary Psi figurines and a bare head of a Phi that were found in Area F provide additional support for the interpretation of this feature as a cultic installation with a libation device.⁵¹

46 See description of Phi A and B female figurines in French 1971:116–120.

47 Unpublished paper, presented at the First international conference on the history and archaeology of the Argo-Saronic Gulf, Poros, 26–29 June 1998.

48 Cf. the apotropaic function of Phi and Psi figurines deposited at doorposts and hearths in the Lower Citadel of Tiryns, Kilian 1981b:56, 1988:148, with fig. 16; see also Hägg 1998:111.

49 Cf. Nilsson 1950:113f, with n. 4, on the use of stone axes for a religious or magical purpose.

50 Hägg 1981b:93, with figs. 3–4; 1990:180f, with figs. 5–6; 1996:610.

51 Konsolaki 2000:34, 2001:216, with pl. LXVIIIe and f; for more examples of similar libation devices see above n. 24.

Room G

Room G (fig. 10), which has a megaroid form, was entered from Area F through a doorway 1.30m wide, placed on-axis and supplied with a neatly dressed stone threshold. A large post hole dug out into the bedrock to the right of the entrance to Room G seems to indicate the existence of wooden columns elaborating its façade.⁵²

The megaron consists of a spacious hall measuring internally 7.30m by 5m. Three stone bases for wooden columns, the two of those set one next to the other in the west part of the room, were preserved. The roof must have been supported by two columns arranged symmetrically on the main axis running East-West. The original base of the western support was apparently replaced by a new one during a repair. The latter had the form of a short, roughly cylindrical pillar, and was embedded into a large pit dug out into the bedrock (fig. 11).⁵³ Within that pit were found some painted kylikes, a Proto-Phi figurine,⁵⁴ and a lentoid of serpentine with a bull representation. Pieces of charcoal and a layer of blackish earth in the upper fill of the pit seem to indicate that the area between the two roof supports was originally occupied by a central hearth, presumably destroyed during the refurbishing of the western column. Another hearth, perhaps subsequently constructed, was set in the north-west corner of Room G (see fig. 11). This one was made out of a few rough stones and upright slabs placed by the corner, and preserved a thick fill of ash containing burnt animal bones.⁵⁵

The north wall was interrupted at its east end by an opening with two broad steps leading up to an open space, which seems to have been a passageway lying at a somewhat higher level. Next to the steps, in the north-east corner of the room, there was a low rectangular bench-like feature, constructed out of rough stone packed with earth (fig. 12). Another fragmentary Phi B figurine was deposited on that bench, and few small fragments of animal figurines were found in its vicinity. A deep conical depression cut out into a small outcrop of the native rock by the outer corner of this construction may have served as a receptacle for libations.⁵⁶

52 Cf. the façade of Room 117 in the Lower Citadel at Tiryns, Kilian 1979:390, 1981b:53, with fig. 4; for the use and the decorative role of posts in Mycenaean architecture, see Hiesel 1990:225–228, with table 13; Wright (1994:58f) argues for a symbolic value of columns in Mycenaean culture.

53 Cf. a similar repair in House L at Korakou (LH III B), where the preserved stone bases indicate that one of the two posts located on the major axis of the room was replaced by a new one, set further to the North, when a larger central hearth was built over the earlier hearth, see Blegen 1921:80–83, with fig. 112; see also Hiesel 1990:49f, with fig. 38.

54 For a description of this type of female figurines see French 1971:112–116, with pls. 14–15.

55 Information about that bone assemblage is not available, as no zooarchaeological analysis has been conducted as yet.

56 Konsolaki 2000:34, 2001:216f, pl. LXIXa.

The arrangement of this feature can be paralleled to that of the bolster-shaped altar and its libation device in the Tsountas' House Shrine at Mycenae.⁵⁷ Its presence there, as well as the presence of a similar bench in the small courtyard (Area F) in front of the megaron, suggest a cultic function for Room G, although this may not have been its exclusive use.

A large projection of the native rock by the inner face of the south wall of Room G (mostly covered by the modern church) was deliberately cut to form a low, roughly rectangular podium (fig. 13). It is interesting to note that the position of this feature corresponds to that of the throne in the megara of Mycenaean palaces (at Pylos, Tiryns, and presumably Mycenae), which is recurrently to be found to the right of a person entering the main room.⁵⁸ The use of that low podium as a base for a ceremonial seat would not be improbable.

Close similarities may be noticed between Room G at Methana and Room XXXII of House G at Asine.⁵⁹ They have approximately the same dimensions, they are both divided into two aisles by two columns placed symmetrically on the major axis, and in both cases one of the corners is occupied by a stone bench with a libation device. In Room G at Methana this bench was set on the side opposite the main entrance and immediately to the left of a secondary entrance. No clear opening was recognised in Room XXXII, and both a north and a south entrance have been proposed. The published photograph of Room XXXII shows a clear discontinuity of the south wall near its east end and a straight edged termination before the south-east corner, which seems to indicate an off-axis entrance placed directly opposite the bench (*cf.* Room A at Methana). The possibility of a secondary entrance set on the north wall of Room 32, next to the bench (which would be to the left upon entering), is not to be excluded, as it would find a good parallel in Room G at Methana.

The floor deposit of Room G displayed a striking dearth of objects in use at the time of the collapse. This fact probably signifies that the building had a seasonal function, *e.g.*, it might have been reserved for festivities or ceremonies held on special occasions.⁶⁰ Ceremonial processions, starting from or ending at its second entrance facing the passageway to the North of it, might also have taken place.⁶¹

57 Mylonas 1977:19–21, with fig. 10 and pls. III–IV, French 1981:44f, with figs. 5–6.

58 See, for instance, Mylonas 1966:47, 55, 62–64, with fig. 16.

59 Frödin and Persson 1938:74–76, with figs. 53–54, Nilsson 1950:110–114, with fig. 31, Hägg 1981b, with fig. 1, 1996:609f.

60 Kilian (1992:20) argues convincingly for seasonal activities associated with the official level of cult at Mycenae, Tiryns and Phylakopi.

61 *Cf.* the processional road connecting the Cult Centre at Mycenae with the palace on the top of the acropolis hill, Mylonas 1983:140f, with fig. 107; for processions as an important part of Mycenaean ritual, see Hägg 1998:111f, 1995:389, Kilian 1981b:56, 1992:19f.

The cultic installations and the occurrence of female and animal figurines in the area of Room G raise the question of whether we have to do with a religious complex of double shrines (Room A and Room G), as was the case at Phylakopi.⁶² A duality also seems to be reflected in the fact that some of the terracottas contained in the assemblage of Room A occurred in pairs. If this hypothesis is correct, the two shrines may have been connected with an intermediate courtyard extending in the space now occupied by the church.

The two oblong buildings O and W, which flank either side of the passageway leading to Room G, contained mainly domestic coarse ware pottery and could have been used for the storage of provisions and equipment. Within and in the vicinity of the Room Complex Y, lying further to the East, were found a few discoid loomweights indicating a weaving activity in that area.

Room H

Room H, located at the back of Rooms A and B, originally communicated with Room E to the North of it through an off-axis entrance set at the west end of its north wall. This entrance was blocked at a later time. As the room has no other opening, it must have gone out of use after the door was blocked.

The floor of Room H was made out of beaten earth laid on the bedrock. The floor deposit was rich in food residues, comprising animal bones, sea shells and seeds. The pottery assemblage included no complete vessels. The sherd material of the destruction layer consisted of both coarse ware (cooking pots, dippers) and fine ware vessels (kylikes, deep bowls, stemmed bowls, *etc.*), mainly of LH III B date. Of special interest were two fragments of LH II pottery (Vapheio cups) that were found in the layer of soil overlying the bedrock.

The most important find made in this room was a small rectangular plaque of limestone with a very thin coating of plaster and some traces of painting (figs. 14a–b). The painting is better preserved on the narrow sides, where red bands are clearly visible. In the central area of the front side can be distinguished an oval space marked out in double outline and filled with a figure-eight shield in solid paint. To the right of it there are faint traces of what may have been a standing female figure. The affinity of this object to the well-known stucco plaque painted in the miniature style, which was found in the Tsountas' House Shrine at Mycenae,⁶³ suggests a religious character for Room H. This plaque was contained in the floor deposit by the south-east corner of the room, where there is a row of

62 Renfrew 1985; see also the classification of double sanctuaries proposed by van Leuven (1981:15–24), with objections raised in the discussion by Kilian (*ibid*:26); *cf.* Karageorghis (1976:57), claiming that the two first temples at Kition were used as twin sanctuaries.

63 Illustrated, *e.g.*, in Nilsson 1950:fig. 156; see also Mylonas 1977:pl. VI.

rough stones forming the quadrant of a circle (fig. 15). Taking into consideration the exceptional find made here, we may assume that these are the relics of a bench used for cultic purposes. The fact that access to this room was prevented when it went out of use, as if it had a special non-profane character that was to be protected from secular activities, as well as the fact that the bench in Room A was constructed directly behind the south-east corner of Room H, as if meant to continue a religious tradition, provide corroborative arguments for assigning Room H a cultic function, although clear vestiges of cult practice are here missing.

Room E

Room E (fig. 16), which originally communicated with Room H, was approached from Room J to the West of it through an off-axis entrance set at the north end of its west wall. The floor of Room E was made out of more or less flat stones, laid on the levelled bedrock. A circular stone base for a wooden column was set roughly in its centre.⁶⁴ The major components of the floor deposit were the fragments of a bath larnax similar to that found in the 'Room with the Fresco' at Mycenae.⁶⁵ This may have been used for ablution preparatory to religious rites, but otherwise Room E contained no objects of purely religious significance.

The rest of the structures framing the large courtyard (Area K) should rather be regarded as subsidiary rooms used for the practical needs of the sanctuary, such as the preparation of food and the storage of supplies and equipment. This function would not be necessarily irrelevant to the religious character of the site, as it might be related to communal feasting and other ceremonies taking place in the courtyard.⁶⁶ The rectangular cut block located in the centre of that space may also have played a role in a ritual. The destruction layer of those rooms contained cooking pots, basins, dippers, bowls and several kylikes of LH III A–B date, as well as ground stone tools and food residues (animal bones, sea shells, fish bones and olive pits). The floor deposit of Rooms Ia–Ib yielded in addition some pieces of molten lead, which do not come as a surprise, as these rooms are contiguous to Room D to the East, which is adjacent to the shrine and has been interpreted as a small workshop serving different needs of the sanctuary, such as mending ceramics with clamps of lead.⁶⁷

64 Cf. Room 117 at Tiryns, in the centre of which was preserved an impression of squared wood indicating the presence of a central support, see Kilian 1979:390, 1981b:53, with fig. 4.

65 French 1981:45, with fig. 11.

66 See above n. 44.

67 Konsolaki 1996:73, Demou *et al.* 2003; for the association of workshops with sanctuaries in the Aegean Bronze Age, see Hägg 1992b.

Building Z

Finally, Building Z (fig. 17), the large Mycenaean megaron lying further to the North, should be briefly discussed here, as its excavation has yielded some evidence for possible ritual activity. The preserved length of this structure is 18m and its stone-built walls stand to a max. height of 0.80m. Its main axis runs East-West and its entrance faces an open area to the West.

The megaron consists of a main hall (fig. 18), measuring internally 6.50 by 4.50, and an anteroom, in front of which seems to have extended a deep porch open to the West. A flat-topped stone found near the middle of the porch may have served as a base for one of the wooden columns presumably placed at its façade. An interesting find made in the area of the porch was a roughly worked block of andesite having some shallow circular depressions cut into its top surface (fig. 19). Its use as a *kernos* is highly probable. It was found in the debris of the destruction layer and the exact location where it would have been originally placed is not certain, but its findspot indicates some position in front of Building Z.

The doorways to the anteroom and to the main hall of the megaron were placed on axis and they were both supplied with stone thresholds. In the north-east corner of the anteroom there was a stone-built bench (fig. 20), but this was not associated with any finds of religious significance. The main hall was equipped with a central hearth, roughly rectangular in outline, which was paved with dressed stone slabs resting on the levelled bedrock. These were covered with a thick layer of ash containing a substantial quantity of food waste and some fragments of large cooking pots preserving traces of burning.⁶⁸ Two dislocated flat-topped stones of roughly circular form that were found in the immediate proximity of the hearth may have served as bases for wooden posts supporting the roof.⁶⁹ The south-east corner of the room was occupied by a bench-like feature (see fig. 18), the use of which is uncertain. The pottery assemblage of the megaron contained sherd material of both coarse and fine ware, the latter mostly painted kylikes of LH III A2–III B1 date. The small finds included two pieces of animal figurines, two beads of steatite, few steatite spindle whorls, a sphendonoid balance weight of haematite⁷⁰ and some pieces of lead clamps used in the repair of pottery.

A back room was attached to the east side of the main hall. Its three sides that have been preserved were framed internally by a low stone-built ledge. The

68 Cf. the square hearth of Megaron/Room 2 in the Cult Centre at Mycenae, which was also covered with a thick layer of ash, see French 1981:44, with fig. 3.

69 For similar examples of central hearths flanked by two column bases in megaroid buildings, see Tournavitou 1999.

70 For balance weights of this type, see, e.g., Petruso 1984:295f and ill. 2. For more examples and useful discussions, see also Petruso 1992, Lassen 2000, Ruiz-Gálvez 2000, Pulak 2000.

ceramic finds made in this area included plain and painted kylikes, part of an amphora, a juglet and a miniature rounded alabastron. Some steatite and glass paste beads, as well as a tiny bead of carnelian, were found stored in the alabastron.⁷¹ Probably this structure was used as a storeroom for the precious items and the equipment of the megaron, when not in use.

A purely religious function may not be proposed for the large Mycenaean megaron at Ayios Konstantinos, although its fixed installations, including two stone-built benches, and the occurrence of a possible *kernos* in its destruction layer imply some ritual activity. The megaron must have been closely associated with the shrine in its vicinity,⁷² and could have been occasionally used for ceremonies pertaining to the official level of cult.⁷³ The large open space around the free-standing building offers enough place for sports associated with religious events, or for a 'congregation' to gather. The impressive structure (Building Z) is very likely to have housed religious officials and to have functioned as an administrative centre. The proportions and the complexity of the Methana sanctuary would justify, if not dictate, the presence of religious officials. Building on the site seems to have been carefully planned and the whole sacred area appears very well organised, a fact which, in its own right, points to an upper-level administration. The involvement of a ruler in that sanctuary is not to be excluded,⁷⁴ provided that this was not a common local shrine, but a significant cult place interconnected with other Mycenaean sites in the Argolic peninsula and the Saronic Gulf, as I have suggested in a previous paper.⁷⁵

An additional dimension to be considered is the relation of this site to the leading LH centre of Troezenia at Magoula, Galatas (near Pogon), which was recently identified with Mycenaean Troezen on the basis of the amazing group of tholos tombs uncovered there.⁷⁶ The location of that shrine on Eastern Methana, at a long distance from the three main LH sites of the peninsula, indicates no close links

71 Cf. the conical bowl 68-1402 with its cache of beads, glass plaques and ivories, found in Room 19 of the 'Temple Complex' at Mycenae, Moore and Taylour 1999:17f, with fig. 5 and pl. 6.

72 Cf. Whittaker 1997:29-31, arguing for a connection between the megaron and the sanctuary at Phylakopi.

73 Cf. the much discussed religious function of the great megara in the Mycenaean palaces, Hopkins 1968, Dietrich 1973, Hiller 1981:117-119, Kilian 1992:17, Hägg 1995:389f, with references to previous bibliography in n. 23, 1996:607.

74 For the involvement of the ruler in religion, see Kilian 1992:13-21, Hägg 1995.

75 Konsolaki 2002:36. That paper raised again the question of a Mycenaean origin of the Kalaureian Amphictyony, suggesting that the LH shrine at Methana could have been a precursor of the later sanctuary of Poseidon at Kalaureia, which was also frequented by a broad range of celebrants.

76 Konsolaki 2003b. One of those tombs was exceptionally large (diam. of chamber 11.20m at the base) and may be assigned to a ruling elite.

either with the principal settlement site at Palaiokastro, isolated on the west coast, or with the other two Mycenaean 'villages' at Oga and Ayios Georgios, both on the east coast, but much further to the North.⁷⁷ Perhaps the large-scale religious establishment at Ayios Konstantinos was a major outlying sanctuary, such as *Pakijana* near Pylos, supported and controlled by the ruler of Mycenaean Troezen.⁷⁸ The results so far of the two research projects at Methana and Galatas attest to an exceptional prosperity of Troezenia in the Late Bronze Age, and Prehistoric Troezen is now emerging into the context of the NE Peloponnese as an outstanding regional centre.⁷⁹ The excavation at Ayios Konstantinos has not been completed as yet and hopefully future investigations in the wider area will provide more information about the use and the status of this newly discovered site, the importance of which cannot be underestimated.

77 Mee and Forbes 1997:52f, with fig. 4.5, 122-27 (MS 10, Palaiokastro), 146-148 (MS 67, Oga), 162 (MS 124, Ayios Georgios).

78 Cf. Hiller 1981:116-119 for the administration of Pylian shrines and the degrees of their dependence on the palace.

79 Konsolaki 2003b.



Fig. 1: Plan of the excavated structures at Ayios Konstantinos, Methana (drawing by N. Kalliontzis).

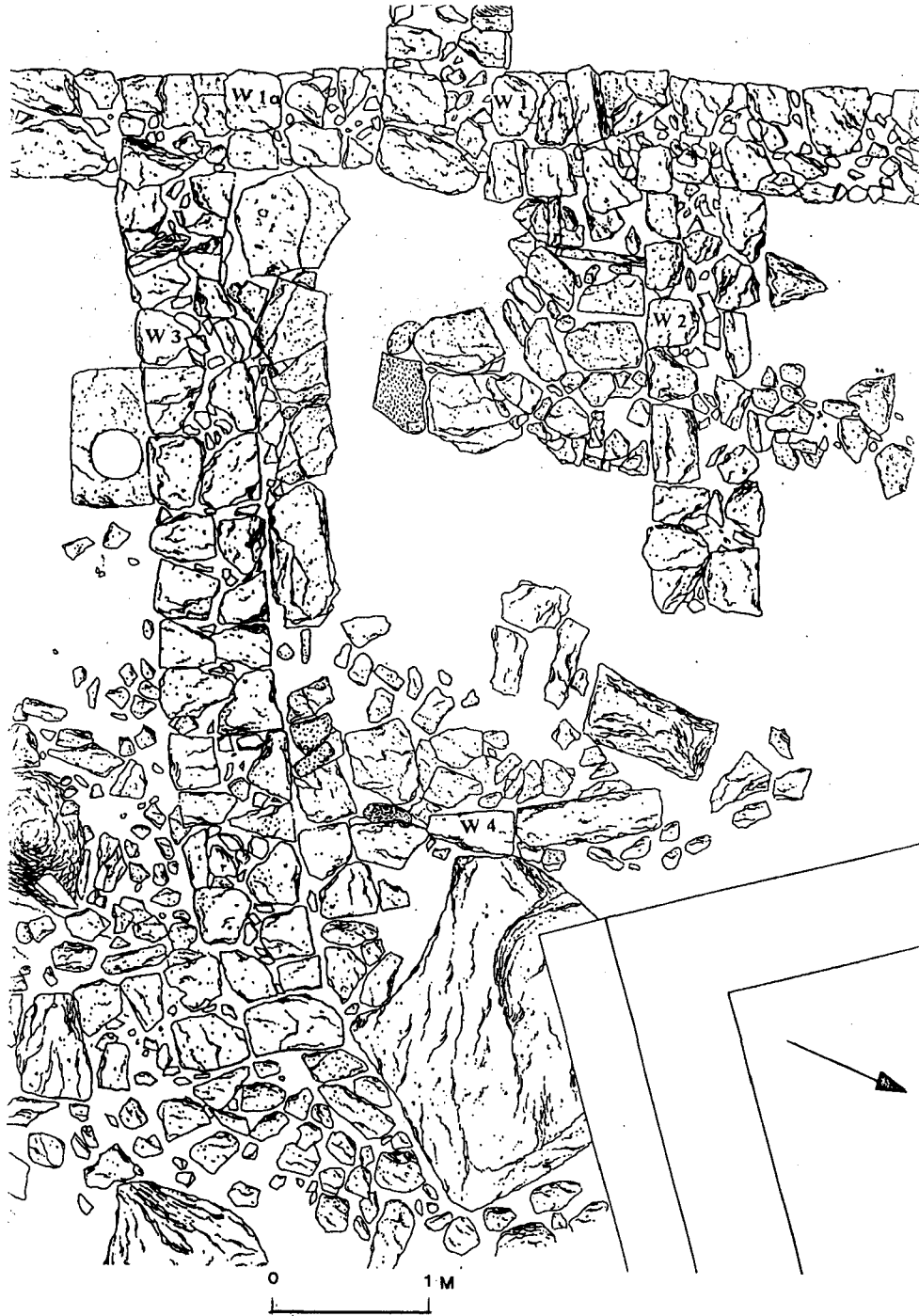


Fig. 2: Ground plan of Room A (drawing by N. Kalliontzis).



Fig. 3: Room A, from the East.



Fig. 4: The floor deposit by the south-west corner of Room A.



Fig. 5: The hearth in the south-east corner of Room A, with spit-rest *in situ*.



Fig. 6: Terracottas and Horns of Consecration (?) deposited on the bench of Room A.



Figs. 7a-b: Horns of Consecration (?) from Room A, front view and back view.

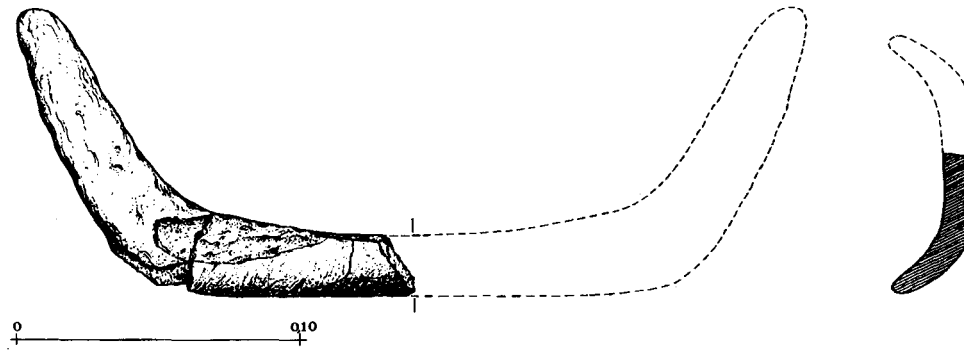


Fig. 8: Proposed reconstruction of the probable Horns of Consecration (drawing by N. Kalliontzis).



Fig. 9: Bench on the south side of Area F, from the East.

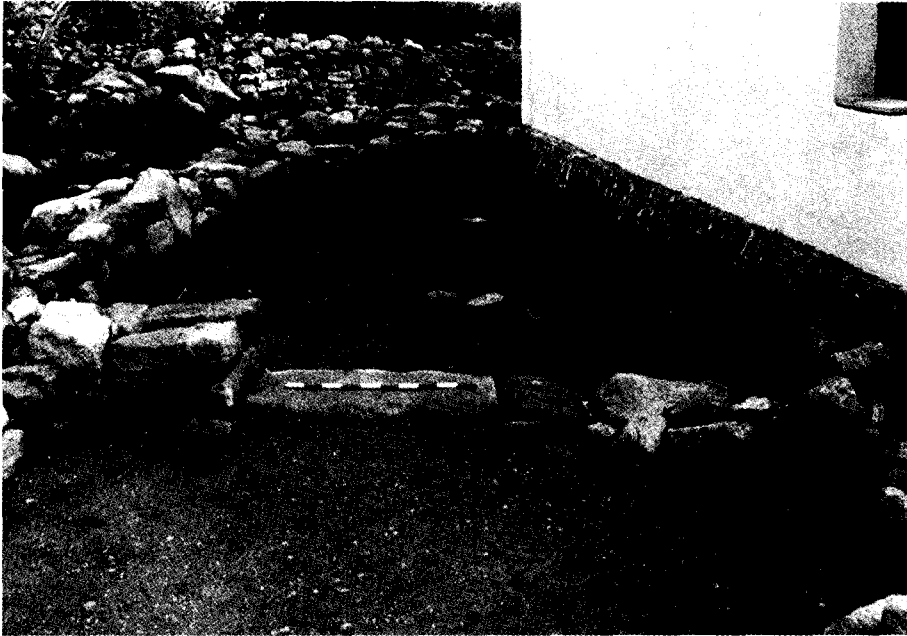


Fig. 10: Room G, from the West.



Fig. 11: Double column bases in the west part of Room G.



Fig. 12: Bench with libation device in the north-east corner of Room G.

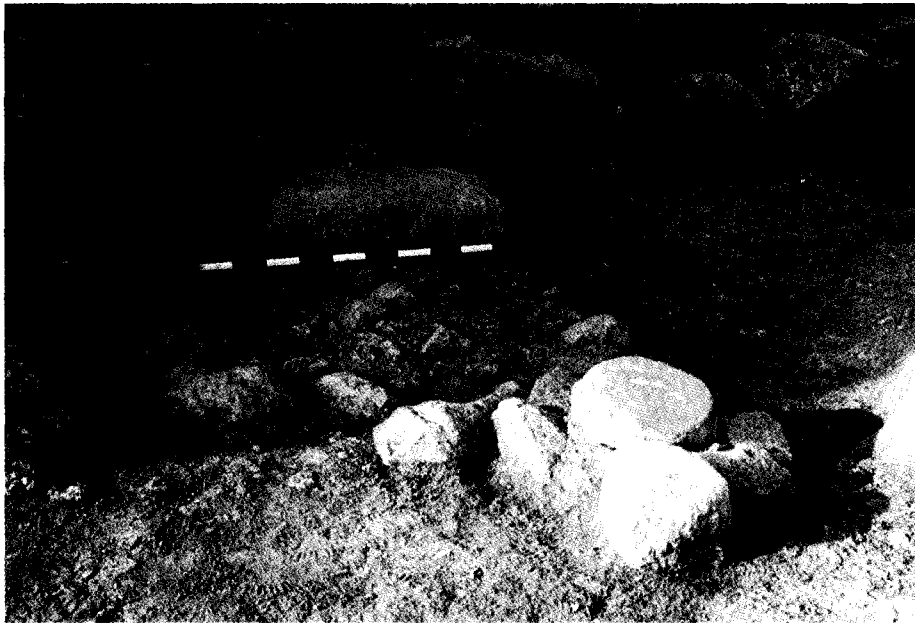
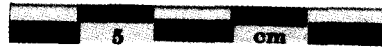
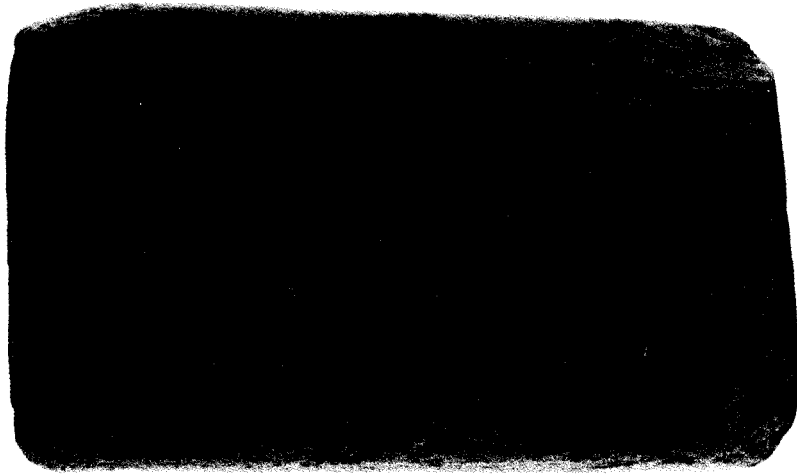


Fig. 13: Cut bedrock forming a *podium* on the south side of Room G.



Figs. 14a-b: Limestone plaque with traces of painting found in Room H, front view and side view.



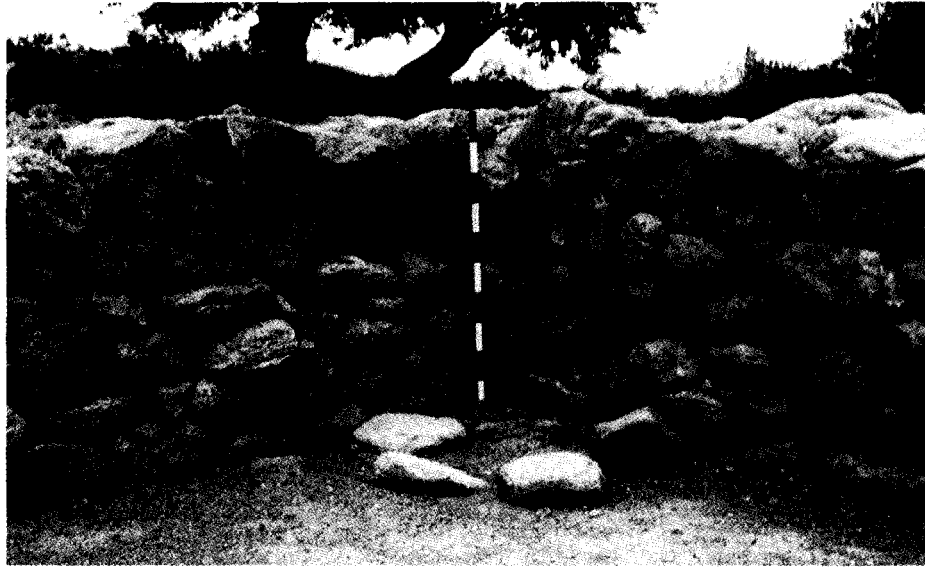


Fig. 15: The south-east corner of Room H.



Fig. 16: Room E, with the blocked entrance to Room H, from the North.



Fig. 17: Building Z (large megaron), from the West.



Fig. 18: The main hall of the large megaron, from the West.

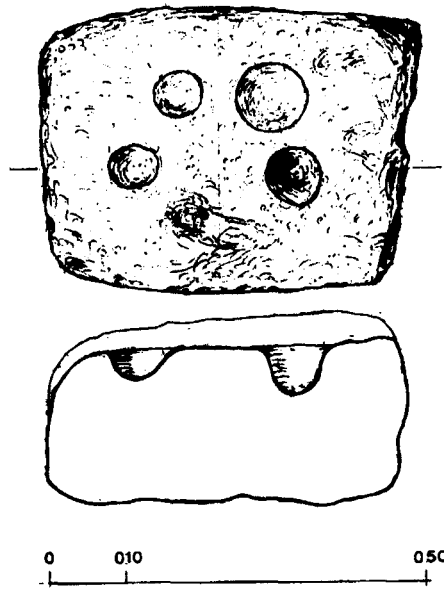


Fig. 19: Cut block of andesite with circular depressions (*kernos?*), found in front of Building Z (drawing by N. Kalliontzis).



Fig. 20: Stone-built bench in the anteroom of the large megaron.

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DISCUSSION

G. Albers: This magnificent find will probably cause us all to reconsider the evidence for Mycenaean cult. We must check our previous classifications of architecture and other aspects of the material remains of cult. Do you have fragments of large female terracotta figures?

E. Konsolaki: No. But the bull-jumper I showed is a coil-made, I would rather say, figure, than figurine. There are no female figures as the dominant deity in the Methana shrine should have been male.

G. Albers: There is a large amount of animal figures?

E. Konsolaki: We have a large amount of small animal figurines and one larger terracotta, which could, as I proposed in my paper, have played the role of a cult image: the bull-jumper. Its preserved length is about 17 cm, and the body of the animal is a coil-made cylinder. The altar is so small that it wouldn't need a very large cult figure. Maybe Methana followed a different tradition. The terracottas seem to deviate from what one usually finds in Mycenaean shrines. I rather see them connected to the wider Aegean area.

G. Albers: We have so little material that every new find constitutes a surprise. I recall that there is a context at Dimini with a large bull figure in what looks pretty much like a cultic context, but how to interpret it in the context of the material we have so far is another question. A last question: this context at Methana started in LH III A1?

E. Konsolaki: The structures that have been studied show that the emplacement was cleared of any previous constructions down to bedrock. There are sporadic sherds of Middle Helladic and Early Mycenaean date, for example from Vapheio cups and goblets. The site was inhabited from the Middle Helladic period, just as the site at Magoula. The preserved structures do not date earlier than LH III A. In fact I would prefer to say LH III A2. Some of the material, like the pig-head rhyton, may be dated to III A1, but I wouldn't date any of the buildings to III A1. As the structures project above the modern surface there is so little to dig with which to date them.

M. Hielte-Stavropoulou: Could it be that your site served as a cult-center for people passing by at sea?

E. Konsolaki: It appears to have been visited by people involved in maritime trade. In my previous paper (Konsolaki 2002) I connected it to a pre-Greek cult of Poseidon, suggesting this could have been a predecessor of Poseidon's sanctuary on Kalaureia and perhaps the seat of a similar religious league. I would see the Kalaureian Amphictyony originating from this sanctuary.

M. Hielte-Stavropoulou: Do you have any other Bronze Age sites on Methana?

E. Konsolaki: Yes, Christopher Mee and Hamish Forbes (Mee and Forbes 1997) have already published them in their survey of the Methana peninsula. They have given a very good description of what can be seen on the peninsula. The main prehistoric settlement was located on the acropolis of Ancient Methana on the west coast of the peninsula. Two other important sites are Ayios Georgios, in the northeast part, and Oga, on the east coast. Except for the acropolis, the main

sites lie on the east coast. The people living in the area during prehistory were turned towards the open sea.

C. Sugawata: You showed a very small fragment of wall-painting...

E. Konsolaki: You mean the limestone plaque. It is approximately 9.5 cm long, 5 cm wide, and 2 cm thick. The painting is mostly worn off, and all that can be recognized is the figure-of-eight shield. Perhaps some other photographic technique can reveal more.

Some reflections on Mycenaean ritual

Helène Whittaker von Hofsten

TO WHAT EXTENT religious beliefs can be inferred from the archaeological material is a question to which no clear answer can be given. It is, on the other hand, generally accepted that ritual activity can to a certain extent, dependent on the availability and nature of relevant data, be reconstructed with a fair degree of certainty from the material remains.¹

Mycenaean ritual activity has been discussed recently by Robin Hägg who concludes that animal sacrifice, libations, bloodless offerings, and communal feasting comprised the most important Mycenaean rituals.² The importance of animal sacrifice in Mycenaean ritual is generally accepted and has been deduced from the finds of animal bones in well-defined ritual contexts as well as from the evidence of the Linear B tablets from Pylos and the nodules inscribed with Linear B from Thebes which list animals intended for sacrifice and consumption at religious festivals.³ Animal sacrifice can be defined as the ritual killing of an animal in a cultic setting. Sacrifice is often understood either as an offering to the gods or as a form of communication with the supernatural through the sacrificial meal. Through sacrifice the proper relationship between the human and divine is affirmed.⁴ In many cases, the purpose of animal sacrifice is understood by participants as an act through which the gods are provided with nourishment.

Scenes associated with sacrifice have been identified on seals found on the Mainland. Several seals depict an animal victim lying on what can be identified as a sacrificial table.⁵ Seals which show an animal being led towards a small structure may also allude to sacrifice.⁶ It might be objected that the seals showing

1 Cf. Peatfield 1994:152.

2 Hägg 1998:99–113.

3 Killen 1994:67–8, Piteros *et al.* 1990:103–184.

4 For a clear and concise discussion of theories of sacrifice see Valeri 1985:62–70.

5 *Corpus der minoischen und mykenischen Siegel* I, 80; Marinatos 1986:13, fig. 1.

6 *Corpus der minoischen und mykenischen Siegel* I, 119.

sacrifice are likely to have been Minoan imports and therefore do not necessarily provide information about Mycenaean ritual. However, an analysis of the gold rings found on the Mainland has demonstrated that the Mycenaean were selective with regard to what they took over from Minoan religious iconography.⁷ This suggests that seals with depictions of sacrifice found on the Mainland were accepted as meaningful by the Mycenaean, even if they were Minoan in origin, and they can therefore be regarded as relevant to the reconstruction of Mycenaean ritual practice. Furthermore, a sacrificial scene is most likely to be identified on a wall painting from the vestibule of the palace at Pylos which shows a processional scene with male and female participants on two levels accompanying a bull. The bull is depicted as oversized, presumably in order to stress its ritual importance and the participants are carrying various objects, offerings or perhaps more likely the equipment and utensils needed for the ceremony.⁸ There is no reason to doubt the centrality of animal sacrifice in Mycenaean ritual, but many questions remain concerning the actual practice of sacrifice and the concepts associated by the Mycenaean with the immolation of an animal victim.

The Linear B tablets and nodules provide evidence for the existence of sacrifice on a large scale in connection with ritual banquets, which were presided over by the *wanax*, the Mycenaean ruler. The animals mentioned are sheep, goats, pigs, and cattle, and from the numbers of animals listed, it has been estimated that about a thousand people could have participated and been fed at these ceremonies.⁹ It seems very likely that sacrificial ceremonies involving a large number of people was the central act of public ritual activity. One of the most fundamental problems in the study of Mycenaean religion is the establishment of links between the information in the Linear B tablets and the archaeological remains of cult activity, and regrettably, it has not been possible to connect the information on religious ritual in the Linear B tablets with actual archaeological remains. Consequently, nothing is known about the locality of these rituals. The Linear B tablets from Pylos mention sacrificial ceremonies at a place called *Pakijana* which, it seems clear, must have been an important outlying sanctuary associated with the palace of Pylos.¹⁰ Most likely therefore Mycenaean sacrificial activity took place in as yet unidentified or unidentifiable open-air sanctuaries or perhaps they did not necessarily or always take place within a well-defined ritual space, but any suitable open area could be taken in use.

7 Niemeier 1990:165–170.

8 Lang 1969:pls. 119–120.

9 Piteros *et al.* 1990, Hägg 1995:390, 1998:103.

10 *E.g.* Un 2; Tn 316; *cf.* Chadwick 1976:84–101.

The sacrifice of a large quantity of animals followed by a ritual meal in which perhaps the entire population of an area took part has an obvious sociological dimension in that it promotes social cohesiveness. The organisation of sacrifice and ceremonial banquets on a large scale involves considerable expenditure and can be seen as evidence that public ritual was closely intertwined with the Mycenaean social and political system and, it is likely that this was an event which had significant social and political dimensions in providing sanctification for the prevailing social system. By conducting rites of sacrifice, the *wanax* could periodically reinforce his authority both by appearing in his role as religious mediator and by exhibiting his generosity through the distribution of sacrificial meat.¹¹ One of the Linear B tablets from Pylos speaks of the ceremony taking place at *Pakijana* on the occasion of the initiation of the *wanax*.¹² The nature of this initiation is obscure and it may have had definite political overtones as well as religious. One might further speculate that large-scale sacrificial rituals, sponsored by the ruler were particularly associated with political events as was the case in the Mesoamerican world.¹³ The depiction of sacrifice on palatial frescoes and on prestige artefacts such as seals underscores the sociological function of sacrificial activity. It has been suggested by Klaus Kilian that the oversize figure on the Pylos fresco may represent the *wanax*.¹⁴

Architectural remains of cult buildings have been discovered at Mycenae, Tiryns, Methana, and Phylakopi.¹⁵ At Mycenae several buildings were found associated comprising a Cult Centre while at Phylakopi there were two cult buildings, the West and East shrines sharing the same courtyard. The Mycenaean cult buildings are small structures and their most prominent feature are platforms, usually situated along the short wall at the further end from the entrance.

Fragments of wall paintings which have been recovered from the area of the Cult Centre at Mycenae suggest that processions with offerings comprised the most important ritual activity associated with Mycenaean cult buildings. Furthermore, animal bones were found in connection with the cult buildings at Phylakopi, the Cult Centre at Mycenae, Tiryns, and Methana, suggesting that animal sacrifice was also part of the ritual connected with Mycenaean cult buildings. The bone material corresponds to finds of bones from domestic contexts and consists predominantly of sheep and goats, but the bones of cattle and pigs were also

11 Cf. Killen 1994:70.

12 *pa-ki-ja-si mu-jo-me-no e-pi wa-na-ka-te* (Un 2).

13 Feinman 1988:74; cf. Killen 1994:72, Palaima 1995:131–132, Stavrianopoulou 1996:429–430.

14 Kilian 1988:300 n. 1.

15 French 1981; Kilian 1981, Konsolaki 1995, 1996, Renfrew 1985; see also Albers 1994 and Whitaker 1997 with further references.

represented at Phylakopi and Tiryns, and the bones of very young pigs were found in the main sanctuary room at Methana. The variety of bones from the Mycenaean cult buildings can also be seen to correspond to the animal species listed for sacrifice in the Linear B tablets. The occurrence of cooking ware and bowls in cultic contexts further suggests that the immolation of the animal was followed by a meal in which the sacrificial meat was consumed, while finds of drinking vessels, in particular kylikes and rhyta would seem to indicate the importance of drinking rituals and libations in association with ritual meals.¹⁶ If it is the case that the occurrence of animal bones in connection with Mycenaean cult buildings in fact does reflect the importance of animal sacrifice in the ritual activity associated with them, animal sacrifice followed by a ritual meal also took place when participation must have been restricted in some way to a small group of people.

Characteristic of all identified Mycenaean cult buildings is that they were not monumental structures, and only a limited number of people could have participated in the activities which took place within them. Although, open areas or courtyards were found in connection with the sanctuaries at Phylakopi, Mycenae, and Tiryns, these courtyards are of relatively small size and could not have been used for large gatherings, and it seems clear that Mycenaean cult buildings were not places of assembly for public worship. The Linear B tablets confirm the existence of a class of priests and priestesses.¹⁷ Since Mycenaean cult buildings have been discovered at major palatial centres, it seems most likely that they are to be regarded as part of official cult even if this cannot be definitely asserted in every case. It therefore seems a not unreasonable conclusion that only religious officials and perhaps important state officials were allowed to enter the Mycenaean cult buildings and participate in worship. It would accordingly seem very possible that if the ritual activity associated with Mycenaean cult buildings included animal sacrifice, both the process of the ritual itself and its conceptual content may have differed considerably from the sacrifices performed in connection with large public festivals.

It is, however, difficult to reconstruct from the material remains of the Mycenaean cult buildings the actual process of sacrifice. Particular installations where the animals could have been slaughtered have not been identified. This is the case at Phylakopi, Tiryns, and Methana. In the Cult Centre at Mycenae, a stone slab found in Tsountas' House Shrine was identified by George Mylonas as a slaughtering table, but this interpretation is very far from certain. In the courtyard in front of the Temple there was a round platform or altar with faint traces of fire. As animal bones were found in a pit nearby, it may have had some connection with

¹⁶ Cf. Moore 1999:84.

¹⁷ Hooker 1990.

sacrificial ritual, but the precise function of the platform is unclear. A seal from Mycenae which depicts a goat with a knife in its neck suggests that daggers or knives were the usual sacrificial instruments, as was the case in later Greek sacrifice.¹⁸ However, no such knives or other possible sacrificial instruments have been found in any of the Mycenaean cult buildings. Mace-heads in stone which may have been used in order to stun the animal victim before killing it have been found in cultic contexts on Crete.¹⁹ Examples of such mace-heads have been found on the Mainland, and a mace-head was reported among the finds from the Room with the Fresco Complex at Mycenae.

On the other hand, there is a good deal of evidence that food preparation took place within the sanctuaries. At Methana, there was a hearth in the south/east corner of the main room of the cult building; cooking ware and animal bones were found in association with it. Cooking ware and other household pottery were found in the vicinity of another hearth, located in an adjoining room. At Phylakopi, cooking ware was found in both the West and East Shrines. No hearth was found at Phylakopi, although it is possible that there was a hearth in the West Shrine underneath a later blocking-wall which was not removed. In the Cult Centre at Mycenae, there was a hearth in the Room with the Fresco Complex, in the vicinity of which a cooking pot was found. There was also a hearth in the Megaron which was found covered in thick ash mixed with animal bones. At Tiryns there was a hearth in the courtyard of both Room 117 and Room 110a. Moreover, stone tools which could have been used in connection with the preparation of food were found in several of the cult buildings. At Methana mortars and grinding stones were found in one of the rooms of the cult building. Mortars were found in both the Temple and House with the Fresco Complex at Mycenae. At Phylakopi querns and mortars were found primarily in the Courtyard of the sanctuary. The evidence would seem to show that the grinding of most likely some type of grain and the boiling of food, either of grainmeal into some sort of porridge or of meat, were regular activities of Mycenaean cult buildings.

However, it may be questioned whether the presence of animal bones in association with the cult buildings or the evidence for the preparation of food necessarily implies that animal sacrifice was part of the ritual activity connected with these buildings. Robin Hägg has emphasised the ambiguity of animal bones as evidence for sacrifice, as their presence may equally well derive from ritual meals rather than from sacrifice.²⁰ Colin Renfrew has suggested that although the animal bones and evidence for food preparation found at Phylakopi may represent prep-

18 Kilian-Dirlmeier 1990:158.

19 Hägg 1998:102, Mante-Platonos 1981:74–83.

20 Hägg 1998.

arations for cult offerings, the possibility that they are the remains of the domestic activities of the people who looked after the sanctuary should also be kept in mind.²¹

It will here be suggested that the evidence would also seem compatible with the ritual provision of food and drink for the deities worshipped in the cult buildings, and that the animal bones represent the remains of food offerings which had been brought into the sanctuaries. The evidence for the preparation of food would indicate that in some cases, if not necessarily at all times, the food was also prepared within the sanctuary, presumably by priests, before being presented to the deity.

The feeding of the gods as a ritual action is widely attested in ethnographic and archaeological literature. Ample textual documentation from the second millennium and in particular from the first half of the first millennium BC demonstrates that in ancient Mesopotamia, the gods were fed on a regular basis. Twice a day, in the morning and in the evening, meals on trays were placed on stands in front of statues of the gods within the temples.²² In present-day Bali food offerings which have often been prepared at home are carried to the temple where they are dedicated by a priest.²³ In India food offerings presented to cult image of the god are an essential part of the ritual activity in Hindu temples.²⁴

The presentation of food offerings to deities is also attested for later Greek cult practice. In the Greek practice of food offerings distinctions were made between those offerings which included the offering of meat from domestic animals and those which did not and were probably completely vegetarian in nature. Regarding the latter, it was customary for visitors at a sanctuary to present various types of food offerings to the gods. Tables within the temples, usually placed before the statue of the god displayed the food offered to the gods.²⁵ Food donations could be presented to deities at any time and consisted of such food as would have normally been consumed by the population. Meat from domestic animals, on the other hand, could only have been offered in association with the performance of a sacrifice in the sanctuary.

In Balinese practice, there is no particular emphasis on the slaughter of animals, and food offerings would also include vegetable and grain foods in addition to meat. In Mesopotamia, food offerings varied according to what was seasonably available. Although the ritual slaughter of animals did exist, meat was considered

21 Renfrew 1985:388.

22 Lambert 1993:191–201.

23 van Baal 1976:162.

24 Fuller 1988:52.

25 Burkert 1988:33, Gill 1974:119–120, Jameson 1988:966–967.

particularly appropriate only because it was expensive, and efforts were made to provide the best and most luxurious food for the gods. There is no particular word for meat offerings.²⁶

Among the objects found in Mycenaean cult buildings are small tripod portable tables. Several were found in the Temple in the Cult Centre at Mycenae, while fragments of a possible tripod table were found within the West Shrine at Phylakopi. These small portable tables have been interpreted as having served as receptacles for the liquid poured from a libation vessel, since they have sometimes been found associated with rhyta.²⁷ But they could equally well be interpreted as cult tables on which the food offerings or trays with food offerings were laid out.²⁸ In Mesopotamia, offerings of drink were made through libations. There is good evidence for the importance of libations in the Mycenaean cult buildings. Rhyta were found in Room 117 and Room 110 at Tiryns, in Room Alpha at Methana, and at Phylakopi. Rhyta were also found within the area of the Cult Centre at Mycenae, although from late and unspecifiable contexts; it seems likely, however, that their original contexts were from within the cult buildings. Triton shells found at Phylakopi and at Methana were most likely also used as libation vessels. It seems possible that the evidence for libations in the Mycenaean cult buildings should be associated with the practice of food offerings to the gods.

One might speculate that the provision of meals for the deities on a regular or daily basis by the priests attached to a sanctuary was a feature of Mycenaean cult. The evidence for food preparation associated with the cult buildings could suggest that this may have been the case. Several of the Linear B tablets from Pylos record various items of food delivered to sanctuaries or gods which could indicate that food was provided for use at sanctuaries by the palaces on occasions other than those of sacrificial banquets.²⁹ Accordingly an analogy with Mesopotamian practice where the ruler as well as the people through taxation made donations of food and drink to the temples could be hypothesised.

Moreover, on the analogy of later Greek cult practice, a connection between public sacrificial ceremonies and the presentation of food offerings to a deity within the Mycenaean cult buildings can also be suggested.

Although exceptions can be found such as the Epikourean conception of traditional religious ritual, the objective of most ritual activity is some form of communication with the supernatural and the establishment of links between the

26 Leichly 1993:237–242.

27 Hägg 1990:183.

28 As has been suggested for the one found in the megaron at Pylos by Gill 1974:135. See also Mylonas 1966:163.

29 Cf. Hägg 1998.

living worshippers and the divine sphere. With regard to Mycenaean sacrifice, it may be questioned whether the ritual focus was on the killing of the animal as an offering or on the communal meal in which the deity would have been believed to participate in some way. The iconographical evidence, although admittedly limited, would seem to emphasise the primary importance of the sacrificial act rather than of the meal. The Linear B tablets speak of giving to a deity indicating that the concept of offering was central to Mycenaean sacrifice.³⁰ It is possible that the essential meaning of Mycenaean sacrifice was communication with the other world through the death of the victim as was the case in Roman state sacrifice.³¹ Partaking of a meal consisting of an animal which had been consecrated to a deity will also have been regarded as a means of bringing the participants into contact with the divine.

On the other hand, the belief that the god more directly shares in the meal with his worshippers is common and is often marked through a particular ritual act when a portion of the sacrificed animal is reserved as the god's portion. For instance, this was the case with Hittite sacrifice where cuts of meat, bread, and various types of alcoholic beverages are set on an offering table in front of the cult statue of the deity.³²

In later Greek practice, burnt offering was the central feature of sacrifice. The god's portion consisted of the smoke and odorous fumes from the burning of an offering of the inedible parts of the animal on the altar. An analogous practice has at times been assumed without further argument also for the Bronze Age. However, Birgitta Bergquist has argued that burnt animal sacrifice as known from Greece in the historical period does not seem to have existed in the Mycenaean period. Her examination of the evidence for sacrifice in prehistoric Greece has demonstrated that no raised altar structures suitable for displaying and burning the god's portion, not to mention altars where the entire animal could be burnt can be identified.³³ On present evidence then the concepts which underlay Mycenaean sacrifice must have differed to some extent from those underlying later Greek animal sacrifice.

It has been suggested by Robin Hägg and Robert Laffineur that libations of the blood from the sacrificed animal were an important part of Mycenaean sacrificial practice.³⁴ Robert Laffineur has argued that the *Ayia Triadha* sarcophagus should be considered a Mycenaean work and consequently that the scenes painted on it

30 Brelich 1967:927–928.

31 Gordon 1990:204, Beard *et al.* 1998:36–37.

32 Collins 1995:77–92.

33 Bergquist 1988:21–34; *cf.* Burkert 1983:17.

34 Hägg 1990:183–184, Laffineur 1994:132–134.

refer to Mycenaean ritual. The painting shows on one of the long sides the sacrifice of a bull. The bull which is lying on a table has been killed. Below the table, a conical rhyton has been set into the ground and blood from the neck of the animal is dripping into it. On the other long side, several women are pouring some kind of liquid into a large two-handled jar. It has been suggested that this liquid is blood from the sacrificed animal.³⁵ If this is correct it would seem that some of the blood was allowed to pass directly into the ground while the rest was collected and was presumably used at a later stage in the ritual.

Robert Laffineur associates blood libations specifically with animal sacrifice in the context of funerary cult, but it is possible that it was a feature of Mycenaean sacrifice in general and the hypothesis that the draining of the blood of the sacrificed animal into the ground was the central symbolic feature of Mycenaean sacrifice and that the blood of the animal comprised the god's portion can be accepted at least as a plausible hypothesis.

In Greek sacrifice, commensality with the deity was effected principally through the burnt offering, even if, as pointed out by Jean-Pierre Vernant, the separation between men and gods was also emphasised by the rules regulating which parts of the animal were to be offered to the god and which parts could be eaten by the participants in the sacrifice.³⁶ It is clear, however, from both literary and epigraphical evidence that, in addition, at times considerable portions of meat from the sacrificed animal as well as of other food consumed at the sacrificial banquet were placed on the cult tables within the temple in front of the cult statue.³⁷ This type of food donations to the gods seems to have been a common, if not a completely regular, feature of Greek sacrificial practice, but it was evidently of very minor symbolic significance in comparison with the burnt offering.

On the afore-mentioned fresco from the vestibule of the palace at Pylos, one of the participants is carrying what can be identified as a tripod offering table on his shoulder. It therefore seems possible to suggest that in connection with Mycenaean public sacrifice, some of the meat was placed on the offering table, most likely on some form of wooden platter or in a pottery container, and presented to the deity as an offering within a cult building. Other items of food, such as barley and olives which are mentioned in the Linear B tablets, would also be included and the presentation would be accompanied by wine libations.

A seal from Naxos found in a tomb with pottery of the thirteenth and twelfth centuries can perhaps be seen as reflecting Mycenaean sacrificial ritual.³⁸ On the

35 Cf. Marinatos 1986:25–27.

36 Vernant 1979:47.

37 Gill 1974:124.

38 *Corpus der minoischen und mykenischen Siegel* V, 608.

seal, a knife, a conical rhyton, a jug and a two-handled jar as well as a small portable table are shown. These objects can be interpreted as equipment which can be associated with sacrifice, and each item can be seen to represent an important element of Mycenaean sacrificial ritual. The knife refers to the act of killing, while the conical rhyton, jug, and two-handled jar refer to libations which were an essential part of the ritual. If one accepts the depiction of sacrifice on the Ayia Triadha sarcophagus as evidence for Mycenaean sacrificial practice, one can see the two-handled jar and the conical rhyton as reflecting blood libations, while the jug and the portable offering table can be taken to refer to the god's portion of the sacrificial banquet. The figure with the spear can most probably be identified with the person of authority who presides over the sacrifice.

After the ritual presentation of food offerings to a god, the food may be disposed of in several ways. It may be left for the mice, but a very common procedure is that the food was later consumed by priests attached to the sanctuary. In Mesopotamia some texts show that attempts were made to maintain the claim that the gods themselves actually ate the food which was set before them. Other texts, however, indicate that in fact the food was consumed by humans, both priests and others. Regarding later Greek cult, it is clear from both literary and epigraphical evidence that the food offerings left for the gods were eaten by priests.

The Mesopotamian texts which refer to the god eating the food he is offered indicate an identification between the god and his cult statue. C.J. Fuller, in discussing Hindu ritual, has argued that there was a clear distinction between a deity and its image and that the purpose of food offerings in front of a cult statue is not to provide for the needs of deities, since they have none, but to act as if they did as a means of expressing devotion.³⁹ Providing deities with material needs of food and drink is a concrete way of showing respect and devotion. The same point has also been made by Walter Burkert with regard to Greek religion.⁴⁰

In the Hindu, Greek, Hittite, and Mesopotamian instances, the practice of food offerings is ordinarily intimately associated with the existence of a cult statue as the focus of ritual activity. However, an association between a cult statue and food offerings is not always the case. In many African religious practices, meat from the sacrificed animal is offered to a god or spirit in shrines which do not contain any cult statue.⁴¹ It has been suggested that the provision of food and drink for a divine being can be seen as a means of personifying the deity or as a means of entreating him to visit his shrine and accept worship.

39 Fuller 1988:52.

40 Burkert 1988:33.

41 Ray 1976:78–89.

Terracotta figures are a feature of several of the Mycenaean cult buildings, but it has not been possible to positively identify any of them conclusively as a cult image. In several cases the terracotta figures were found *in situ* and it is clear that they were placed on the platforms within the cult buildings. They can be typologically differentiated. One group consists of large figures which are monochrome. These have as yet only been found at Mycenae. Most of the other figures are smaller and have painted decoration. The figures found at Phylakopi and Tiryns can be said to belong to this group. Definitely male figures have been found only at Phylakopi. Andrew Moore has argued that the large monochrome figures from Mycenae are to be interpreted as cult celebrants and that their function is to be seen as the continuous representation of cult activity.⁴² This interpretation is supported by the fact that one of the figures in the Temple at Mycenae was found embedded in the plaster covering of the platform, and clearly constituted a permanent feature of the room. Since the find contexts of all types of figures within the Mycenaean cult buildings are similar, it should follow that they should be interpreted in the same way and that the function of the Mycenaean terracotta figures found in the cult buildings was to represent a permanent scene of offering and worship. It seems possible, however, that if these figures were used to create ritual scenes, certain of the figures may represent deities accepting worship. It would also seem possible that rather than being used for the perpetual enactment of offering and worship, the arrangement of these figures into ritual scenes was part of the regular ritual activity of the cult buildings. In the Temple at Mycenae, many fragments of terracotta figures were found in the small room on the upper floor. It is possible that the figures may have ordinarily been stored in this room and only have been taken out at those times when ritual activity took place. In the West Shrine at Phylakopi, two rooms behind the main sanctuary room may in a similar manner have functioned as storerooms for ritual objects when not in use. It can be suggested that the figures were arranged to form ritual scenes, perhaps in conjunction with other ritual activity such as processions and the presentation of offerings. This would also be compatible with the suggestion that some of the Mycenaean cult figures were carried in processions.

Andrew Moore has argued that some of the large monochrome figures from Mycenae carried hammer-axes and that they can perhaps be interpreted as cult officiants involved in some form of sacrificial activity.⁴³ If this interpretation is correct, animal sacrifice was symbolically represented in the Temple at Mycenae. From this, it is perhaps possible to draw the general conclusion that sacrifice did not actually take place in connection with the Mycenaean cult buildings, but rather

42 Moore 1988:219–228, Moore and Tylour 1999:93–102.

43 Moore 1988:221, Moore and Tylour 1999:79.

that its importance in Mycenaean cult activity was reflected through symbolic representation and the presentation of food offerings and libations.

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DISCUSSION

R. Palmer: Thank you very much for the pulling together of many aspects of the archaeological and the tablet information. I just wanted to mention that at Pylos also you have one set of tablets which list food offerings or food given to officials that are connected with cult. At Knossos you have the olive oil offering tablets which intersperse cult officials with gods and sanctuaries in the same list. So there may have been more of a smooth transition between giving to personnel and giving to gods for certain items, not meat.

D. Handelman: If you will permit me to intrude from another discipline and offer one other possibility. I think you have touched on an extremely important issue in symbolic anthropology by arguing that perhaps what was involved in Mycenaean sacrifice was a process of symbolic representation. There is the other position that sacrifice indeed is intended to act upon the world or act on the deities in very profound ways. That is, that destruction through violence is also the fount of creation, and that this may generate links between human beings and deities. In that respect it is interesting to me—simply as an extrapolation—that in the second transparency the size of the sacrificial bull might indicate how the sacrifice fills space and time in the relationship between human beings and deities. You've put your finger on the more implicit distinction between symbolic representation as expression and a ritual act that is intended to create new conditions, a momentarily different kind of relationship between human beings and deities. In that respect—extrapolating a bit further—the ritual meal then might involve indeed a transformation of the quality of the food itself. This is certainly the case in Hindu ritual.

N. Marinatos: Thank you for bringing so much together. You made a very nice synthesis. Each culture projects those elements that it considers important in relation to sacrifice. There is no question—and you have brought this out very lucidly—that we have a lot of evidence which relates the official structures of the Mycenaean world with common meals. We have it in the palaces, we have it in the tablets as Ruth Palmer said, where enormous quantities of food are sent away to the sanctuaries. Obviously these common meals are a way of binding the community together. You also pointed out that we have extreme difficulties with the Mycenaean world to identify what we think of as altars. Here we need to discuss a lot among ourselves what is an altar. For the Greeks an altar is a hearth. It is not the place where you slaughter the animal. It is where you cook parts of the animal. It is doubtful whether you have this kind of altar in the Mycenaean world. You have hearths. I have looked at them very carefully and I am not sure I understand how they function. They must have boiled something.

H. Whittaker: Yes, there are the cooking pots at Mycenae. They may have boiled some of the meat, or the grain to make some kind of porridge. This connects with the later Greeks for whom we have evidence of a porridge being boiled from grain and served along with the sacrificial meat.

N. Marinatos: So in the Mycenaean—and the Minoan—world we don't have this monumental altar, which of course the Greeks monumentalized because they deliberately wanted to make this the focus of the attention. It is an attention-focusing device. I want also to make some comments on the iconography which continue on that line. In Greek sacrificial ritual you very rarely have the killing of the animal depicted—there are a few exceptions, one in a Dionysiac context, another on a krater from Ruovo. What you normally have is the leading of the sacrificial animal to the altar. In the Minoan-Mycenaean world the animal is shown being stabbed and bled. Keeping in mind that the seals are amulets, which means another dimension of meaning has to enter into the discussion, one begins to speculate what the bleeding of the animal signifies—if the animal is considered a force to be overcome.

H. Whittaker: I am not sure they are amulets in every case. I would think that they are prestige objects connected with a particular status.

N. Marinatos: They are always amulets in the Near East and Egypt so I would tend to think that it is not too different here.

G. Albers: I just want to add to what Nannó Marinatos said. You mentioned that the Mycenaean altars aren't really altars in the sense that we would expect them to be. On the other hand, I also think that the Mycenaean sanctuaries are not really "temples" in the sense we would expect them to be. So the monumentalization of altars should go together with the monumentalization of the cult buildings towards the later Greek development. It seems to be a development within the Greek period. The installations in the Mycenaean sanctuaries, the courtyards in the sanctuaries, are somehow structures for display, and some sort of bringing in procession and burning of organic substances connected with the cult. We don't know how these altars functioned, but we should keep in mind that there may have been wooden structures on top. We must also keep in mind the suggestion that the slaughter of the offering did not actually take place at the altar but was done somewhere else, and that a second process was going on at the altar. If so, then the remains would suffice. But the conditions of excavation and the observations are not always very detailed. There are animal bones connected with those altars, not in large quantities. Very often they are unburnt. In Mycenae that would be an indication not of slaughter and burning of the animal but of portions of food including meat. This is just a modification of the interpretation, but I think that these installations are connected with the offering of food.

M. Jameson: One small elaboration on what you said: I am about 40 years out of date on this subject, but I studied it at one time quite intensively, when I was struck by the emphasis in Minoan art, including the Agia Triada sarcophagus, which I am quite happy to see largely Mycenaean in interest, on deposition as opposed to burning and destruction. It seems to me that the sacrifices use different means to convert or sacralize, to draw attention and emphasis to, the objects that are being treated. The burning, as you say, is characteristically historical Greek, whereas looking at the prehistoric art and the prehistoric furniture, the tables that you draw attention to, are prominent, you showed an animal trussed and lying on a table. I think this is not just an image but also an indication that by being deposited in a special place, in a special way, something is done to the animal. Of course this continues in historical times with the treatment of cakes and foodstuffs, and even in part with animal offerings.

N. Marinatos: Just a brief comment on what Michael Jameson said. Exactly right: the animal is displayed on a wooden table, and the wooden table means it is not a permanent fixture. It can be moved around at will. I have written about this but it is some time ago (Marinatos 1986). It

is very important to emphasize that the animal is being bled alive, and this holds true for both pictures shown here. On the Agia Triada sarcophagus the animal is bound, there is a bucket underneath which collects the blood. The goat we saw in the other image has a knife stuck in its throat. There are very good Near Eastern parallels for this.

Re-evaluating Mycenaean sanctuaries

Gabriele Albers

*On the occasion of his 75th
birthday to Jörg Schäfer*

Introduction

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL or other evidence for Aegean Bronze Age cult,¹ here precisely sanctuaries, cult activity, and religion of the Minoan and Mycenaean Ages, now as then confronts us with numerous open questions. Mainly because of the virtual absence of in any regard explicit written sources, the overall lack of factual knowledge applies especially also to the more substantial scholarly questions: as to what was going on at Bronze Age Aegean cult places; as to the meaning of the material and pictorial manifestations of the cult; and, consequently, as to the religious beliefs that were behind all that.² Further, the social setting and organizational patterns of sanctuaries and cults are still much open to discussion—a circumstance particularly conspicuous, also, in that even some new evidence from actual sanctuaries has more recently come up, adding to what was known so far; that the new observations do not combine, however, at all easily with the older

1 A short version in German of our main line of argument here also forms a contribution to the *Festschrift* for Jörg Schäfer: Albers 2001a. Thus, we wish to dedicate particularly our reappraisal, as in the following, of the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' to Jörg Schäfer. This is essentially the paper as presented at the symposium in Athens. However, in the subsequent and final discussions important questions were raised which we had not clarified in the oral version. For lack of space here comments, therefore, regarding esp. a) our perception of Mycenaean public communal cult, and b) our view on the questionable role of the Mycenaean palace, and in particular of the great court in front of the central megaron, as a location of communal cultic gatherings, have now been made in Albers 2001b. Also, an addendum is included below to explain more specifically our alternative hypotheses regarding the issue of at least four co-existing, major Mycenaean palatial sites in the Argolid (first mention of that problem made *infra* n. 66).

2 Cf. Hägg 1996:600f.

ones and thus do not prove, or at least not by themselves, entirely more conclusive.³

For further reflection on Minoan or Mycenaean sanctuaries and cult the present state of research hence permits, and in fact requires, that evidence commonly known and often referred to in various kinds of scholarly contributions is thought and talked about anew. On the basis of our work of some years ago the attempt shall thus be made, in the following, to reconsider for the Mycenaean sphere some aspects of the archaeological vestiges of what we here choose to term 'public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts'.⁴ In order, again, to recall certain aspects on which we intend to base our argument, a structured survey of the evidence may prove useful. To this purpose the evidence will be summarized by regions and, within the regional frame and as far as is possible, by the chronological periods commonly applied. For we are convinced that when further insights into Mycenaean society and eventually ideology are sought through archaeological observation, it is required to put the analysis on the regional level.

Finally, by speaking of Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts we exclude from our argument what may be termed 'private cult rooms' in houses as well as in palaces,⁵ and we also exclude 'nature sanctuaries' in the open country.⁶

As is well-known, the evidence for Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts—constituting the only category of Mycenaean cultic activity that *potentially* comes close to anything like 'temple cult', as it is commonly con-

3 *I.e.* first, the building complex yielding evidence of Mycenaean cultic activities at the site of Ayios Konstantinos/Methana: see E. Konsolaki's paper in this volume, and see below. Another discovery made recently on Crete raises entirely new questions as to the layout and function of built sanctuaries in settlement contexts of the final Minoan period, namely the Late Minoan (LM) III C 'temple complex' at Vasiliki Kephala excavated since 1994; for preliminary information see Rehak and Younger 1998:168f., fig. 8 (we also thank the excavator, T. Eliopoulos, for informing us in detail about those important findings in Athens in 1998).

4 Termed *Stadtheiligtümer* ('town sanctuaries') in our earlier study: Albers 1994:10. By speaking of 'public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts' we, however, here wish to use a more neutral as well as expanded term. For the Mycenaean sphere the phenomenon was first classified by Hägg (1968:57): identification of 'independent cult buildings' besides 'cult places in palaces and houses'; for this and later significant contributions by Hägg and others up to 1988, *cf.* Albers 1994:1–9 and refs. For our perception of Mycenaean public communal cult see now Albers 2001b.

5 Albers 1994:9f. (heading nr. 4); Kilian 1992:14–16 and refs.

6 In German: *Landheiligtümer*. A comprehensive publication of the archaeological material from a nature sanctuary is Pilafidis-Williams 1998, with analysis esp. 147–153. An overview of relevant sites, with a post-structuralist interpretation of the relationship rural cults/urban cults, has more recently been given by Wright (1994:65–76 and refs.; Kalapodi in Phokis to be added: Felsch 1981). Kilian (1992:23f.) tentatively views the nature sanctuaries as a new feature developing only in Mycenaean postpalatial times.

ceived⁷—is still remarkably scarce. The scarcity relates not only to the vast number of sites indicating Mycenaean settlement, and in many parts dense settlement.⁸ It also relates to the geographical area and to the timespan covered by genuine Mycenaean material culture.⁹ Further, it relates to the various regions which are to be considered nuclei of the Mycenaean cultural sphere: namely mainland regions of definite importance at the time—Attica, Corinthia, Achaea, Messenia, Laconia, and Boeotia as well as coastal Thessaly—are still virtually void of vestiges of such sanctuaries.¹⁰ Moreover, even in relation to palatial or other central sites which are themselves comparatively few in number, Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts appear scarce, as palatial sites like Athens, Pylos or Thebes have so far not produced evidence of the sort.¹¹ While that is certainly to be explained by, first and foremost, circumstances of preservation and/or extent

- 7 Arguments, esp. the lack of monumentality of the cult buildings, to avoid the term ‘temple’ for the sanctuaries under consideration have been put forward by Whittaker (1997:6, *cf.* 25f., 159); *cf. e.g.*, Hägg 1993:188. The question of Mycenaean ‘temples’ is now discussed in Albers 2001b.
- 8 Compare, *e.g.*, the map of Late Helladic (LH) III A2 to III B sites at the peak of Mycenaean settlement activity: Hope Simpson and Dickinson 1979:map 4; and the map of sites with secured evidence of Mycenaean cult places in settlement contexts (*including* cultic localities in palaces and houses): Albers 1994:pl. 1: sites underlined; to be added Ayios Konstantinos on Methana, be it an independent sanctuary or a mansion complex with cult facilities (see below), as well as the proposed ‘house sanctuary’ in the Mycenaean settlement at Dimini in Thessaly, with a large bovine figure in it: Adrimi Sismani 1996:1304, fig. 15. For the settlement pattern of the palatial period in the Argolid, Laconia, and Messenia see also the maps in Eder 1998:26, 91, 143 figs. 3, 13, 18.
- 9 For the Mycenaean territories see the map in Kilian 1988a:119 fig. 1. Depending on the conventional chronology or the scientifically based ‘High Chronology’, the absolute time-span of Mycenaean material culture comprises at least around 600 years, namely from the Shaft Grave period beginning in later Middle Helladic (MH) times beyond the final destruction of the palaces at the end of LH III B and through to LH III C Late: *e.g.*, Warren and Hankey 1989:136–169, 215, table 3.1.; *cf.* Maran 1990:185f. Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts, as far as is known up to now, do not appear before the LH III A1 pottery phase in the early fourteenth century B.C., at the earliest, and then only at Ayia Irini on Keos, there reviving however the tradition of an earlier, ‘Minoan’ sanctuary. Instead, the bulk of the evidence belongs to LH III B and III C, thus covering a time-span of ± 300 years: Albers 1994:table 1; for Ayia Irini as well as Phylakopi see below. *Cf.* also the characterization of the general situation of Mycenaean sanctuary sites by Wright (1994:38 and map in fig. 3.1 [Tiryns missing, though]).
- 10 *E.g.* for Laconia, Banou 1996:106f.; however, the assemblage at Amyklai has been re-interpreted by Wright (1994:65 and refs.); *cf.* also Eder 1998:97f., 136f. Evidence is further lacking for the southern Argolid: Jameson *et al.* 1994:368–72.
- 11 *E.g.* for the Theban ‘kingdom’, Aravantinos 1995:618f. We do not include the small cultic room 93/‘Sanctuary of the *Potnia Hippon*’ in the ‘Palace of Nestor’ at Ano Englianos/Pylos—*cf.* most recently Whittaker 1997:8–31, esp. 9f., 25, 179f. and refs.—in the group of cult buildings which we term public communal sanctuaries and refer to in the following: due to its location within the palace complex room 93 must, in our opinion, be viewed within the immediate functional and ideological context of the Mycenaean ruler at Pylos’ residence; *cf.* Albers 1994:9f. (heading nr. 4).

of excavation at the particular sites we shall, however, duly keep the point of relation of public communal sanctuaries to palatial sites in mind.

What secured evidence there is, then, comes from the Argolid on one hand, and thus from an obvious nucleus region of Mycenaean settlement and of palatial sites. On the other hand, and interestingly in the view of regional differentiation, the evidence accounts for two sites within the Cycladic islands' cultural sphere, namely Phylakopi on Melos and Ayia Irini on Keos: our argument in the following will therefore also emphasize that this circumstance ought *eo ipso* be viewed as one of several strong indicators for a dominant Mycenaean presence in the Cyclades.¹²

The Argolid

To speak about the Argolid first and in chronological order, the earliest secured evidence so far is the famous complex of the so-called 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' flourishing at least during the greater part of the LH III B period and down to its end (figs. 1–3). Thus, the 'Cult Centre' functioned together with the palace on the acropolis, as well as at the peak of the continuous enlargement that was effected on this prominent Mycenaean site in its entirety.¹³

Furthermore, cultic activities at Mycenae, however on a diminished scale in single cult rooms with associated courtyards, apparently went on in the area of the former 'Cult Centre' also in LH III C, hence after the final III B destruction of the site and the overall collapse of the Mycenaean palatial system.¹⁴ Those later activities, again, seem to have continued there for quite some time, namely down to the so-called 'Granary destruction' constituting the end of LH III C Middle.¹⁵

The only other not only palatial but, in fact, generally *settlement* site in the Argolid which has to our present knowledge produced evidence of a public com-

12 E.g. Marthari 1988:56f.: 'Der Wiederaufbau von Agia Eirene und Phylakopi trägt den Ausdruck mykenischer Gebietshoheit ...'; basically also Whittaker 1997:29–31, 63 (in contrast with Crete), 141 (for Keos). A different view has however been taken by Schallin (1993:188f., cf. 172–187).

13 For the various plans published so far of the LH III B 'Cult Centre' and adjacent 'Southwest Quarter' see Albers 1994:pls. 2–15; cf. also the plan in Mylonas 1981:14f. Precise location of the 'Cult Centre' within the greater settlement context: Albers 1994:14; internal chronology: *ibid.*:50f.; details of the evidence to be given below.

14 Taylour 1981:38, 42f., 53, plan 5: room with long walls hc and cb, pls. 172a, 178d, French 1981a:48, Albers 1994:51, pl. 17. Full account of the LH III C remains in the area of the former 'Cult Centre' and adjacent 'Southwest Quarter', as documented so far: *ibid.*:51f. and nn. 302–311, pls. 17–19, tables 4–10; and see now for vessel finds and their contents Tzedakis and Martlew 1999:131, 134f., 154f., 164, cat. nrs. 113, 118, 121, 139, 148.

15 As indicated by the presumed round altar in an open-air area: Taylour 1965, 1981:38, 43, pl. 4, section 1–2: 'tower' to the south of and adjacent to wall cb, pl. 172d, French 1981a:48, Albers 1994:52, pls. 9a, 18. The context and layout of the architectural remains surrounding the altar are, however, unclarified.



Fig. 1: Citadel of Mycenae, LH III B 2: situation of the 'Cult Centre', and road system in between the 'Cult Centre', palace, and main gate (from Albers 1994:pl. 2.)

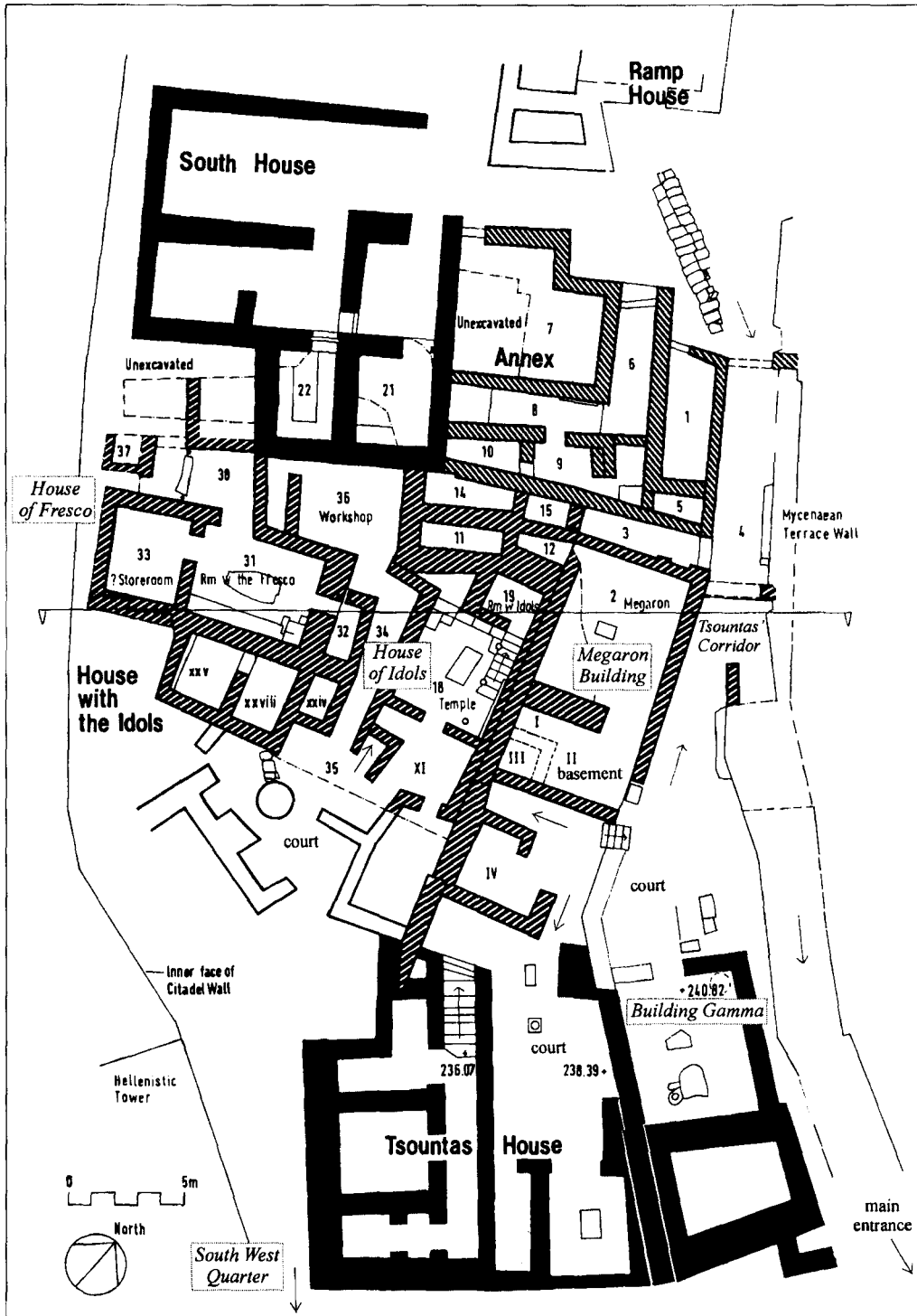


Fig. 2: The 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' (general plan from the British excavations): buildings, access, and passageways as mentioned in the text (based on French 1981a:42 fig. 1.)

munal sanctuary of the LH III B period, *i.e.* contemporaneous with the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' as well as with the local palace on the acropolis still in function, is Tiryns. At Tiryns, at least towards the end of LH III B cult activities were taking place in the *Untenburg* (Lower Fortress) and apparently in relation to one of the casemate chambers in the western fortification wall.

The so-called 'Cult Chamber' had been filled in during repair work done on the fortification in the early aftermath of the final LH III B destruction, and it was thus not in the realm of excavation.¹⁶ However, the finds in the narrow open space—the so-called *Zwinger*—in front of the casemate chamber and between it and the so-called 'House of the Priestess' to the east, as well as the evidence of the latter building itself, all in all strongly indicate that this area of the *Untenburg* was reserved for public communal cult at least by a later phase of LH III B.¹⁷ Another indicator for this is the circumstance that the three successive cult rooms established in the *Untenburg* since early III C—to be referred to immediately—were located in the same general area, thus being apparently intended to revive and continue the older tradition.

To compare with the situation at Mycenae, the area of public communal cult that is evident at Tiryns for the later LH III B period reflects, in terms of its basic purpose as well as the location in the lower citadel of the site, practically the same arrangement as that of the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae'.

Further, at Tiryns after the final LH III B destruction and collapse of the palatial system three successive small and basically free-standing cult-rooms 117, 110, and 110a (figs. 4f–h) were erected in the same area of the *Untenburg*.¹⁸ As remarked above, this circumstance of preserved location on the one hand strongly supports the fragmentary evidence for the former palatial period. On the other hand, continuity of public communal cult in that very locality of the *Untenburg*, if however within an altered settlement organization,¹⁹ is evidenced by the successive buildings right through to the end of the Mycenaean cultural era in LH III C Late.

16 Esp. Kilian 1980:178, 1981a:53, fig. 2, 1981b:166–171, figs. 22, 24a–b; Albers 1994:104–111, pls. 35–36a, 37–39, 44a, tables 4–10; *Mauerkammer Kw 7*; Whittaker 1997:180f.

17 For the 'House of the Priestess'/Building VI see the summary of the evidence in Albers 1994:111 and refs., pls. 36a, 37a, 44a.

18 Esp. Kilian 1980:178–81, 1981a:53–56, figs. 4–9; *cf.* Kilian 1978:460–465, figs. 14–15, 17–22, 1979:389–394, figs. 10–15; see also Kilian 1992:21–23, Albers 1994:104–111, 123 figs. 1f–h, pls. 35, 36b, 38, 40–43, 44b–45, tables 4–10, Whittaker 1997:8–31, 180f. We do not further refer here to the so-called 'provisional cult room' 119 of the immediate aftermath of the LH III B final destruction: Albers 1994:106, 108 and refs., pl. 40, tables 4–10, Whittaker 1997:181. For the new excavation results proving, however, continuity of the Tiryns central megaron into LH III C (!) see now Maran 2000, 2001.

19 Esp. Kilian 1980:173, 177–181, figs. 3–4; *cf.* Albers 1994:104f. and nn. 579, 585.

The situation at Tiryns in LH III C is again compatible with that at Mycenae, in that public communal cultic activities in the context of single cult rooms with associated courtyards were continued beyond the destruction of the former III B sanctuary and in the same general area within the lower citadel, against whose repaired fortification wall the late cultrooms were built.

For reasons published earlier, we now as then consider another discovery in the Argolid as evidence for public communal and not private house cult, as has variously been stated: namely the sanctuary formed by Rooms XXXI/XXXII which are architecturally bound into Building G in the Lower Town of Asine (fig. 4e)²⁰—Asine constituting perhaps a subordinate palatial, or at least another central, site within the settlement hierarchy of the Mycenaean Argolid.²¹ However, the cultic building belongs only to the latest LH III C Late phase of the Mycenaean era, thus relating chronologically to the latest Room 110a of the successive III C cultrooms in the *Unterburg* at Tiryns. No vestiges, on the other hand, of a LH III B public communal sanctuary as at Mycenae and Tiryns have been uncovered at Asine, and evidence is also lacking whether the late sanctuary had any predecessor of earlier III C phases. Nevertheless, we should like to maintain that the Asine sanctuary, whether there was a predecessor or not, by being located in the Lower Town as well as by certain other features, generally compares to the public communal sanctuaries at Mycenae and Tiryns.

New evidence for cult activities at least in the LH III B period, especially the finds of one complete specimen and fragments of more large female figures of the appealing painted type ('Type A' according to E. French²²), has come to light in the ongoing excavations in the citadel of Midea.²³ No related cult building could be observed so far, but the finds of religious objects stem from two greater areas within the lower citadel and close to the western, respectively the northern fortification wall: as each general locality is again compatible with the situation at Mycenae and Tiryns, and since this citadel more and more unequivocally proves to be another *major* palatial site in the Argolid, a built place designated for public communal cult

20 *Ibid.*:112–115, esp. 114f., 123 fig. 1e, pls. 46–47, tables 4–10, and refs. in n. 627 to the original (little detailed) excavation report by Frödin and Persson 1938. 'House sanctuary': esp. Hägg 1981b, *cf. idem* 1981a:39; most recently Whittaker 1997:10f., 163f. Arguments similar to ours *contra* a house sanctuary have simultaneously been put forward by Wright (1994:63f.); earlier, Kilian (1981a:56) as well as van Leuven (1981:20) had doubted the interpretation, and *cf.* later also Hägg (1996:609f.). Again, see however the latest evaluation of the Asine complex by Kilian (1992:23f.).

21 *Cf.* the map in Kilian 1988b:297 fig. 3.

22 French 1981b.

23 Demakopoulou 1999 and refs.; *cf.* (summarizing) G. Walberg, in Tzedakis and Martlew 1999: 124f.; see now esp. Demakopoulou and Divari-Valakou 2001.

is quite likely to have existed also in one of the particular settlement areas within the lower citadel of Midea.²⁴

In some distance from the Argolid on the Saronic gulf, finally, the newly discovered Mycenaean building complex at Ayios Konstantinos on the Methana peninsula at least in partial function undisputably housed cultic activities during the LH III B period, and apparently also already in LH III A2.²⁵ However, clarity is still lacking as to the structure's wider setting and hence functional context on the site, namely the layout and character of the settlement to which it supposedly belonged are as yet dubious: for the present, the situation of the cultic building in relation to the particular settlement area can therefore not securely be compared to that of the public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts of the Argolid. Moreover, the architectural layout of the building does not fit at all unequivocally in with the Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries' architecture as we know it so far.²⁶ Further investigation in special view also of the basic relevance of the new discovery at Ayios Konstantinos to the evidence under discussion here thus appears required.

To conclude from the structured survey for the Argolid we have at Mycenae, Tiryns, and Asine—for Midea it remains to wait and see—a pattern of sanctuaries serving purposes of Mycenaean public communal cult. In the case at least of Mycenae and Tiryns, those sanctuaries were in function during the greater, respectively the later part of LH III B as well as revived in III C, and they were thus always situated in a location within the lower citadel of the site and adjacent to the fortification wall. For Asine, the same observation is relevant so far only to the latest phase of LH III C, but with reservations as to whether the Lower Town was at all enclosed by a fortification wall.²⁷ Anyhow, to the extent the pattern described is concerned, the evidence from the named Argive sites can be viewed as being

24 Cf. now Demakopoulou 1999:204.

25 As maintained by the excavator. The following is based on earlier, preliminary information about the recent discovery and was presented in Athens with reservation as to the contribution by E. Konsolaki in the symposium: cf. for convenience Whittaker 1997:8–31, 164f. and refs., who includes Methana in her discussion of Mycenaean cult buildings in the LH III period, mentioning also a possible earlier, LH III A 1 date, *ibid.*:28 and n. 98; but see most relevantly E. Konsolaki's paper in this volume, as well as now Konsolaki-Yannopoulou 2001.

26 The major difference of the Methana structure in comparison with the other Mycenaean cult buildings in settlement contexts lies in the agglomerated, mansion-like layout (also N. Marinatos pers. com. in Athens) which comprises several rooms yielding evidence for cult activities; the rooms being however not arranged according to any clear-cut axial concept to form one single, freestanding or at least architecturally independent, rectangular building unit. As another indicator of a likely diverse function the lack so far of female figures as well as, with one exception, female figurines in any context of the Methana structure appears conspicuous.

27 Cf. Albers 1994:112 and refs. in n. 629.

virtually identical. When it comes to the respective layout, size, and other features of the sanctuaries, though, the picture from the outset demands substantial differentiation: and that is in our view, and as will be argued in the following, with the particular regard to the material manifestation and the socio-historical significance of the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' during the LH III B period.²⁸

28 Our reviewing the evidence of the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' as in the following is esp. based also on the contribution by Wright (1994) and precisely the account on 'Citadel Cult Centres', *ibid.*:61–63. As to that part of his highly instructive essay we, however, disagree with Wright on two major points which we should here like to clarify:

- 1) Most significantly (but not only) in the case of the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' we do not accept Wright's notion, *ibid.*:62, as to 'a secondary nature' of the location of the complex (*cf.* already Wright, in Dabney and Wright 1990:52; and in similar terms for Phylakopi, Renfrew 1985:390f.). Generally differently for Mycenae, Wright 1994:51: 'Architectural icons form a series of concentric rings of symbols that increasingly focus on the centre of Mycenaean ritual and authority, which is the megaron with its monumental hearth and royal throne.' That implies that by its very location the 'Cult Centre' ought to be part of such 'ring of symbols'. It cannot, thus, be at the same time described in a minimalizing way as Wright does, *ibid.*:62, namely that it was set '... literally at the bottom of the citadel, tucked behind the display of Grave Circle A and not obviously accessible ...' Rather, it would be a consequence from Wright's own line of argument that each element—'architectural icon'—within the 'series of concentric rings of symbols' around the Mycenae megaron had its proper and meaningful place, at the most so the fortification wall being the visually most obvious concentric ring and unquestionably of high symbolic value (although it is located even further away at the bottom of the citadel); and the 'Cult Centre' at least in its final concept is deliberately attached to that significant constituent of the overall layout of the site. Already Kilian (1992:17–20) has provided an account of the 'Cult Centre' which does not at all allow for a conjectured, remote setting within the Mycenae citadel.

A further point is linked to what has just been said but is not immediately relevant in the frame of this paper: namely Wright's notion as to an alleged 'lesser importance' of the 'Citadel Cult Centres' in relation to 'the cults in the megaron of the palace', *op. cit.*:61. Our different view in this respect is now explained in detail in Albers 2001; suffice it thus to comment here: Wright, *loc. cit.*, esp. argues that the lack of attention paid to the architectural adornment of the 'Citadel Cult Centres' demonstrates their being less important than 'the cults in the palace'. However, several elements of monumentality, architectural adornment and building material used in all the Mycenaean palatial architecture are evident in some of the public communal sanctuaries, too, and particularly so in the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae', as observed by Wright (*ibid.*:61f. and n. 94) and see below with fig. 3; *cf.* Kilian, *loc. cit.* This circumstance, again, ought to be taken as one among other indicators that the 'Cult Centre' was under the immediate control of and directly served the Mycenae palace, as will be argued in the following.

- 2) Our argument in the following will be as that we would not define all Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts as 'cult centres', but only the differentiated complexes at Mycenae and Phylakopi on Melos (and due to the probable regional significance *perhaps*, but not securely demonstrable, the sanctuary at Ayia Irini on Keos; see below). Thus, we fundamentally do not accept what is implied by Wright's account, namely that a cult centre as such was a generic component of every Mycenaean citadel and that the alleged 'Citadel Cult Centres' were equals in function and religious significance.

The 'Cult Centre of Mycenae'

Mycenae public communal cult in settlement contexts of the LH III B period at the only other site in the Argolid, besides Mycenae, yielding definite evidence, namely Tiryns, and further the revival and continuation of the cult in LH III C after the collapse of the palatial system, at Mycenae itself, at Tiryns, as well as at Asine in a late phase, took place in the context of single cultrooms mostly of smaller size and with a courtyard area in front of or also partially surrounding the cultic building. By contrast, the LH III B 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' stands out from the contemporary and later evidence as a unique complex of five separate buildings with associated courtyards, linked by corridors or passageways through upper stories, thus displaying a sophisticated spatial arrangement and clear-cut architectural as well as, in our perception, functional differentiation.

The entire complex is built in a quite complicated manner over three carefully prepared rock-cut terraces descending towards the citadel wall and covering at least 8 metres difference in height (figs. 2–3).²⁹ Access to the complex was provided through a main entrance which was apparently integrated into a major road system—we shall refer to it in more detail below. The entrance itself had been closed by a monumental two-winged wooden door constructed over a monolithic conglomerate threshold, thus indicating controlled access to the 'Cult Centre'; and it was approached via a staircase of representative character, fashioned of broad low steps and thereby designed for slow solemn, that is ceremonial, descent.³⁰ Wall frescoes in the immediate area of the entrance, though poorly preserved, further enhance its representative character.³¹

Descent from the main entrance down towards the courtyard on the first, upper terrace of the 'Cult Centre' which provided access to two of the cult buildings was effected over a long and at one point sharply turning ramp or corridor with a white stucco floor, the ramp/corridor being commonly understood as a representative passageway for ceremonial processions.³² From the courtyard on the first terrace, other corridors or passageways through upper-stories that were probably or at least possibly, as well as at least in part also decorated with wall frescoes, led further down to the two cult buildings and the courtyard on the lower terrace of the complex, and also to the so-called *Tsountas' House* with the associated

29 Cf. *supra* n. 13. In general and for convenience, since the published information on the excavation results in the 'Cult Centre' is so scattered, see in detail for the following Albers 1994:13–21 and refs., pls. 2–14; cf. the summarizing description by Kilian 1992:17–19.

30 Esp. Mylonas 1972:19, pl. 1; Albers 1994:15 and nn. 99–100, pls. 5, 7; see esp. fig. 3 here.

31 *Ibid.*:15 and n. 101; Kritseli-Providi 1982:19, 90f., fig. 1, pls. 27–28: Δ-1–3.

32 Albers 1994:16f., 122 and refs., pls. 4, 6–7: *Tsountaskorridor*. For the designations of the various buildings as used in the following, see *ibid.*:13f., pl. 5, table 2; cf. fig. 2 here.

courtyard.³³ The *Tsountas' House*, being of the Mycenaean 'Corridor House' type and constructed over the adjacent middle and lower terraces of the 'Cult Centre', was perhaps in partial function as well dedicated to cultic purposes.³⁴

With regard to the four definite cult buildings of the complex (figs. 4a–d, and see also figs. 2–3), although they do adhere to a certain basic concept as has been maintained in our earlier analysis, it is obvious that in detail they are all different.³⁵ Moreover, while H. Whittaker is generally right, in our opinion, to view Mycenaean sacred architecture in connection with domestic structures,³⁶ the design of each LH III B cult building at Mycenae is nevertheless apparently either more sophisticated than, or it significantly differs from, that of common houses: on the whole, each of the buildings is so far without a close parallel among either the other Mycenaean sacred or the profane architecture, and thus stands out as unique. To illustrate this we should only like to mention the representative long open façade of *Building Gamma* with its two low, *i.e.* again ceremonial, steps leading down into the main hall;³⁷ the wide main room of the *Megaron Building* with the low rectangular dais at its centre, the bent-axis entrance of the building and the basement section underneath the entrance room;³⁸ the staircase at one side in the main room of the *House of the Idols* leading to a religious store-room or possibly 'holy-of-holies' (?) at an upper level within the building, and the three pillars aligned off the long axis of the main room;³⁹ finally the peculiar arrangement of rooms in the *House of the Fresco*, the bent-axis entrance of the building, as well as

33 According to French (1981a:45), fragments of a procession fresco found in the fill of the *House of the Idols* (or 'Temple', as the entire building or its main room —'Room with the Platforms/Room 18' —have varyingly been designated by the British excavators; cf. Albers 1994:table 2) may come from the *Megaron Building* or from a room above the *House of Idols*; cf. Albers 1994:18 and n. 129, Kilian 1992:17 n. 90, Whittaker 1997:20 and n. 68. The procession theme is *perhaps* a valid indicator that the fresco rather not ornated a proper room in one of the two cult buildings, but the corridor/passageway leading alongside the *Megaron Building* into an upper storey above the *House of Idols* (and further, via the supposed staircase 'K', down to the lower terrace of the 'Cult Centre': fig. 2 here).

34 To be concluded from the evidence collected in Albers 1994:17, 28–30 and refs., pls. 4, 6–7, 13; see accordingly Kilian 1992:18.

35 Architectural features of all Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts summarized in Albers 1994:10, 121–127 and fig. 1, table 4, Whittaker 1997:17–26. Again, in this and the next paragraph we for convenience do not repeat refs. to the scattered published information on the excavation results in the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' up to 1988, but refer to our analysis as well as to Whittaker 1997.

36 Whittaker 1997:120–38, 144, also 159, 162.

37 Albers 1994:17, 22–25 and n. 122, pls. 10–11, Whittaker 1997:8–31, 166–68.

38 Albers 1994:26f., pl. 12, Whittaker 1997:8–31, 168.

39 Albers 1994:31–36, pl. 14, Whittaker 1997:8–31, 168–70; see now Moore and Taylour 1999.

the unique fresco covering the wall above and to one side of the platform in the main room.⁴⁰

The point we mean to make regarding the differences in architecture and architectural decoration equally applies to the fixed installations, and—as we cannot elaborate on the installations here⁴¹—to the movable equipment that was recovered within the cult buildings.⁴² Thus, first the painted stucco *pinax* from *Building Gamma* depicting a so-called Shield Goddess with two venerating priestesses or adorants and a portable altar in front of the goddess, is a unique find likely somehow relating to the cult practised in that building.⁴³

In the further case of the *Megaron Building*, whereas the main room by the time of the building's final destruction appears to have been empty of movable equipment, the two basement rooms were filled with a conspicuous assemblage of objects linked to ivory-working, and also with a few objects of religious character.⁴⁴ As, however, O. Krzyszkowska has recently confirmed there is altogether no reliable evidence that ivory was actually worked, or that materials of a near-by ivory-workshop were stored, in the *Megaron Building* or at any other locality within the 'Cult Centre':⁴⁵ in consequence, the assemblage in the basement rooms of the *Megaron Building* is bound to reflect a ritual motivation of depositing precious, or at least undiscardable, materials of a prestigious craft in a religious context.⁴⁶

The *House of the Idols* is evidenced as a ritual complex of highly individual character by the well-known assemblage of large terracotta figures perhaps serving an apotropaic purpose (French's 'Type B'; *supra* n. 22), and further the terracotta

40 Albers 1994:37–47, pls. 7–8, 14a, Whittaker 1997:8–31, 170–172, Marinatos 1988, Rehak 1992, Tzedakis and Martlew 1999:191–193; see now Moore and Tylour forthcoming, with new account of the stratigraphy (according to Krzyszkowska 1997:147 n. 15), and Cameron *et al.* forthcoming.

41 Internal and external installations of all Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts summarized in Albers 1994:127–34, table 5; *cf.* Whittaker 1997:17–26.

42 Movable equipment of all Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts summarized according to functional groups in Albers 1994:135–149, tables 6–10.

43 *Ibid.*:23 and n. 153; *e.g.*, Rehak 1984; good photograph in Demakopoulou 1988:189 (cat. nr. 163). A limestone plaque with a thick stucco coating from the newly discovered building complex at Ayios Konstantinos on Methana is said by the excavator to show traces of a painted figure-of-eight shield on one side, and thus to form a parallel to the so far unique find from Mycenae: see the paper by E. Konsolaki in this volume.

44 Albers 1994:26f. and n. 176, Krzyszkowska 1997:146f. and refs. For an apparent cultic nature of the pottery: Whittaker 1997:9 and n. 6; *cf.* Kilian 1992:17 and n. 90.

45 Krzyszkowska 1997:148f. and nn. 26, 28, Albers 1994:19f. ('Werkstattbereich 36'), 26f. (*Megaron Building*, basement rooms), 43–45 (*House of the Fresco*, back room 32/T5), and summary, *ibid.*:147f. and table 9—*contra esp.* French 1981a:45, 48 (as well as *ibid.*:125 [discussion of Hiller's paper]), who has been much quoted thereafter; *e.g.* Hägg 1992:30, 32, Whittaker 1997:23f.

figures of coiled snakes featuring the same general design as the human figures:⁴⁷ both kinds of figurative equipment are, again, confined to this particular cult building in which they were found not as isolated, single specimens but in considerable numbers, thus indicating that the cult practised in the building must have been specifically determined by the presence of those figures.

Finally, the adjacent *House of the Fresco* has yielded, apart from the unique fresco already mentioned, a human head as well as a lion figure of ivory which are each without a close parallel in the Mycenaean cultural sphere.⁴⁸ Also, the movable finds include a conspicuous number of large and smaller clay stirrup jars: stirrup jars and the handling of oil, in the main likely perfumed oil (?), must thus have fulfilled a significant requirement of the cult related to this particular building.⁴⁹ The further circumstance that in the small back religious store-room or possibly 'holy-of-holies' (?) of the building were, again, kept 'half-worked' items of ivory somehow matches this room of the *House of the Fresco* to the basement rooms of

46 Krzyszkowska 1997:148 n. 29. At least as regards the archaeological evidence that has come up so far on the mainland as well as the Cyclades, we more and more have the impression that it was *not* the case that Mycenaean workshop industry was to any extent (as in the Near Eastern model of temple economy) organized by and subject to the immediate control of religious functionaries—for Linear B see recently Antonelli 1995; but that business apparently constituted a supreme privilege of the palace (who by actual archaeological evidence also housed premises of prestigious workshop activities; Kilian 1984:41–43, fig. 4, 1987:24, 28, 32, figs. 2b, 3a–b, 5; also *e.g.*, Carrier 1996.) Instead, industrial production and workshop areas, among other activities and localities in Mycenaean settlements, were likely believed to depend to a high degree on divine protection, as can be deduced from the placing of religious items, esp. 'idols', at work places *etc.*: K. Kilian, quoted in Albers 1994:9 and n. 61. Thus, it can be hypothesized that workshop items—utensils, *e.g.* moulds, as well as raw or 'partly-worked' materials or finished products, or even irrecyclable things as evidenced at Mycenae (Krzyszkowska 1997:148)—were out of a *ritual* motivation also taken/sent into the sanctuaries, namely to further, and perhaps most efficiently, warrant divine protection of the craft (regularly or perhaps on certain occasions, *e.g.*, the need for a craftsman to accomplish an exceptionally ambitious task of manufacturing, or to make a thankful offering after having succeeded). To account, again, for the presence of workshop items in the assemblages only of some cult buildings and not in others, it could be surmised that the respective cult buildings served as abode or otherwise major cult place of a deity or aspect of a deity believed to be specifically in charge of the protection of a certain or several crafts. Further, to account for the ivory things of little practical use—left-overs and spoilt pieces—occurring in the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' together with products of practical, artistic or ideological value, such items could have gained their own religious meaning by being cultically offered with the specific aim to seek protection from failure in the manufacture, or something like that (all suggested explanations are, of course, purely hypothetical).

47 Albers 1994:32–36 and refs., Moore 1988; good photograph of one snake figure in Demakopoulou 1988:192f. cat. nr. 166; see now Moore and Taylour 1999.

48 Albers 1994:41 and nn. 257–258; Krzyszkowska 1997:147 and n. 16; good photographs in Demakopoulou 1988:70f. cat. nr. 2, and Tzedakis and Martlew 1999:191,195, 203f. cat. nrs. 204–5. In general, see for the movable equipment in the *House of the Fresco* Albers 1994:41–47; see now Moore and Taylour forthcoming.

the *Megaron Building*—so this would be a similar aspect of the find assemblages in two buildings of the ‘Cult Centre’ which otherwise appear profoundly different.⁵⁰

We cannot deal here any further with the special features displayed by the ‘Cult Centre of Mycenae’,⁵¹ but should like to state in summary that the complex in its entirety apparently reflects an intricate organization of ritual space: namely, a deliberate arrangement of buildings and open areas designed and furnished according to differentiated cult function, and thus religious meaning. In the light of its material remains, the public communal cult practised in that special precinct at Mycenae during the LH III B period can therefore not be conceived as having been homogenous. Instead, as has been observed by others, it needs to be concluded from the evidence available that the cults either of different deities or perhaps rather of fundamentally different aspects of a most important deity, then possibly the *potnia* of the Linear B tablets, were represented in the complex, each with its own cult building and arranged side by side or perhaps even in a hierarchical order.⁵² In the latter case of a (at least not from the outset entirely unlikely) hierarchical order it could, again, be surmised that the higher ranking cults were located on the upper terrace which was reached first from the main entrance of the complex via the processional ramp, and the lower ranking cults could have been located on the lower terrace—but this would evidently be mere speculation.⁵³

All in all, we should thus like to maintain, first, that the LH III B cultic precinct at Mycenae was rightly given its designation by one of its excavators, G. E. Mylonas, in 1972:⁵⁴ as to the religious and social significance of the complex we apparently have before us on the western slope of the citadel, deliberately *separated from* but in function intimately *linked to* the palace on the acropolis—we shall

49 Albers 1994:41–47, with detailed comment *contra* the proposal that perfumed oil was actually produced in the *House of the Fresco*, and summary *ibid.*:147f. However, the common scholarly attribution of stirrup jars to the storage and handling of oil appears now quite questionable, as three stirrup jars together with various other vessels from the *House of the Fresco* had evidently contained *wine* (we thank E.B. French for pers. comm.): Tzedakis and Martlew 1999:152f., 189, 196, cat. nrs. 134–135, 180; and *ibid.*:128–135, 154f., 157, 187–205, cat. nrs. 112–118, 120, 133, 136–38, 140, 178, 181–208, for further vessels and their contents as well as other finds mainly from the same building, but also from the *House of the Idols* and other areas of the ‘Cult Centre’. Future analyses in the course of the project presented by Tzedakis and Martlew, *cf. op. cit.*:23, esp. also of stirrup jars ought therefore prove instructive.

50 Krzyszkowska 1997:147f. and refs., and *cf. supra* nn. 45–46.

51 Besides many more aspects adherent to the individual buildings and adjacent courtyards, the complex of the so-called ‘South West Quarter’ needs to be considered as having been linked in space and function to the ‘Cult Centre’: Albers 1994:48f. and refs., pl. 15; *cf.* Kilian 1992:18 (Kilian’s summarizing statement, *ibid.*:17, as to the ‘Vielfalt in den einzelnen Kultarealen’ of the ‘Cult Centre’ is quoted in full *infra* n. 59).

52 Boulotis 1987:153 n. 45; earlier and more cautiously, Kilian 1981a:56 (*cf.* Albers 1994:141). Kilian later however attempted a precise differentiation in terms of religious function (1992:18–20).

come back to this immediately—the *official cult centre* of the LH III B settlement of Mycenae in its entirety. Furthermore, we here see the need to expand the conception of the ‘Cult Centre of Mycenae’ and put it within the Argive regional frame: no other settlement in the Argolid has yielded evidence even approximately of the kind, namely of a built area for public communal cult that is to a high degree spatially and functionally differentiated, neither in the contemporary LH III B nor in the subsequent III C period after the destruction of the palaces. Thus, while there is always the uneasiness for the archaeologist that a future discovery might contradict his respectively her reasoning we, as the ultimate conclusion from the statements above, propose that the LH III B cultic complex at Mycenae constituted not only the central area of public communal cult in the context of that settlement itself, *but the cultic centre of the entire region of the Argolid*.⁵⁵

A major socio-political inference follows in our view inevitably from what we have argued so far: namely to identify Mycenae as a *regional* cult centre, *i.e.* as the centre of religion and cult in the LH III B Argolid, most plausibly requires us to perceive the citadel also as *the socio-political centre* of the region at the latest by that time.

The ‘Cult Centre’ is situated among other building complexes in the western part of the citadel which in function were probably all closely linked to the palace administration. The same general area further houses Shaft Grave Circle A which is commonly viewed as a locality designed in LH III B for ancestor cult.⁵⁶ The

53 (As to a potential hierarchical order, we have here been unable to trace the relevant ref. which we are sure exists.) A related approach is the proposed identification of genuine ‘double sanctuaries’ within the ‘Cult Centre of Mycenae’ (as well as at Phylakopi); however, we do not see supporting evidence for that: Albers 1994:7, 121f. and refs. in nn. 48–49. The most plausible, hence, appears to us the approach by Kilian (1992:19f.): ‘Eine Wertigkeit in Bauform, fester Ausstattung ist ablesbar, zu der die Anordnung an möglichen Prozessionswegen hinzukommt. Die Wahl von Freskenthemen wie die Altarformen scheinen spezifisch für *bestimmte Stationen des Kultes* bzw. für ihre jeweilige Funktion zu sein ... zusammen mit dem architektonischen Rahmen erlaubt das Spektrum der Paraphernalia eine weitere *Differenzierung der Kultbauten*’ (our emphases).

54 Mylonas 1972:27f. (cf. 38).

55 From what we argue in this present paper, together with our perception of Mycenaean public communal cult now explained in detail in Albers 2001b, we by using the term ‘cult centre’ do not, however, mean to imply that the particular location served to any substantial extent for large communal *gatherings* during religious ceremonies. Instead, a ‘cult centre’ in our perception and for later Mycenaean times is a built sanctuary serving public communal cult where the cult/cults of one or more deities had their *central premises*, in the sense that the somehow architecturally elaborated abode of a deity or abodes of various deities venerated ‘officially’ was/were located in the particular setting. Thus, the cult centre formed the holiest place connected with the cult of the respective deity or deities, in that the deity/deities was/were believed to actually reside—Whittaker 1997:144—or, at least, to be accessible for ultimate contact by the human sphere in the particular location. In short, the cult centre comprised the seat of one or more cults of one or more deities; cf. the statement by Wright 1994:75f. (quoted also *infra* n. 93).

access to the 'Cult Centre' by its main entrance reflects, as mentioned, a representative ceremonial approach via a major road system, this road system (fig. 1) ensuring most probably direct traffic in between the 'Grand Staircase' of the palace, on one hand, and the 'Cult Centre' as well as the main gate of the fortified citadel, namely the 'Lion Gate', with the adjacent area for ancestor cult, on the other hand.⁵⁷

That the palace, hence, was in direct control of the main citadel gate as well as of the area reserved for ancestor cult has been argued by others and is easily conceivable, in the light of what is known about the overall dominating role of the Mycenaean ruler's authority and organization of his palatial system.⁵⁸ With the 'Cult Centre' being located in the same general area of the citadel, and being integrated into the same major communication system, we see no reason whatsoever why this should not lead to a similar conclusion: namely that the palace/*wanax* was also in immediate control of the central cult area of the citadel.⁵⁹ His thereby being, again, in ultimate charge of the *regional* cult centre as argued above, strongly implies that the ruler of Mycenae with his palace administration was at the very top of the socio-political hierarchy, and that his citadel consequently was at the top of the settlement hierarchy within the LH III B Argolid.

Only a selection of other material aspects shall be mentioned that are each well-known and in our view together point to the same conclusion as regards a leading socio-political role of Mycenae: the in all respects extremely well-chosen, dominant but equally protected location of the site at the northern entrance to the Argolid;⁶⁰ the concentration (seen diachronically) in a unique number at Mycenae of the largest and most elaborate tholos tombs of the region;⁶¹ (*ditto*) the as well unique clustering of chamber tomb necropoleis around Mycenae, pointing to 'suburbs' sprung up in the immediate vicinity of the regional centre or, at least, to numerous villages directly related to Mycenae and ensuring the centre's agricultur-

56 More recently *e.g.*, Kilian 1988a:148, 1992:15, Wright 1994:59; *cf.* also Wright 1987:180–182, Stavrianopoulou 1995:432: 'Die religiöse Ideologie des Königtums manifestiert sich in der Verknüpfung von Ahnenkult mit dem Palast. Bei der Verehrung der Ahnen, d.h. der verstorbenen Mitglieder und Gründer der Dynastie, handelte es sich nämlich auch um eine Art von Vergöttlichung, die darüber hinaus dem Regierenden indirekt eine zusätzliche Legitimation verleiht und zu der Erhaltung des politischen Systems beiträgt.'

57 Albers 1994:14f., pl. 2; *cf.* the plan in Mylonas 1981:14f. For the close connection of the 'Cult Centre' to the palace, *e.g.* Kilian 1992:15: '... ist nicht zu verkennen, wie die architektonischen Organisationsprinzipien auf den Kern der Palastanlage gerichtet sind'; and see below.

58 *E.g.* (summarizing) Kilian 1987:32f., 1988b:291–302 and refs. ('*wanax* ideology'); for the 'Lion Gate', road-system, masonry, as well as 'hearth-*wanax* ideology', see esp. Wright 1994:51–54, 59f., ill. 3.6–3.7., and 1987:177–183. For the picture of a next-to-totalitarian societal system as evidenced by the Linear B texts, see conveniently Stavrianopoulou 1995:423–25 and refs.; see also Deger-Jalkotzy 1996, as to the character and failure of the system.

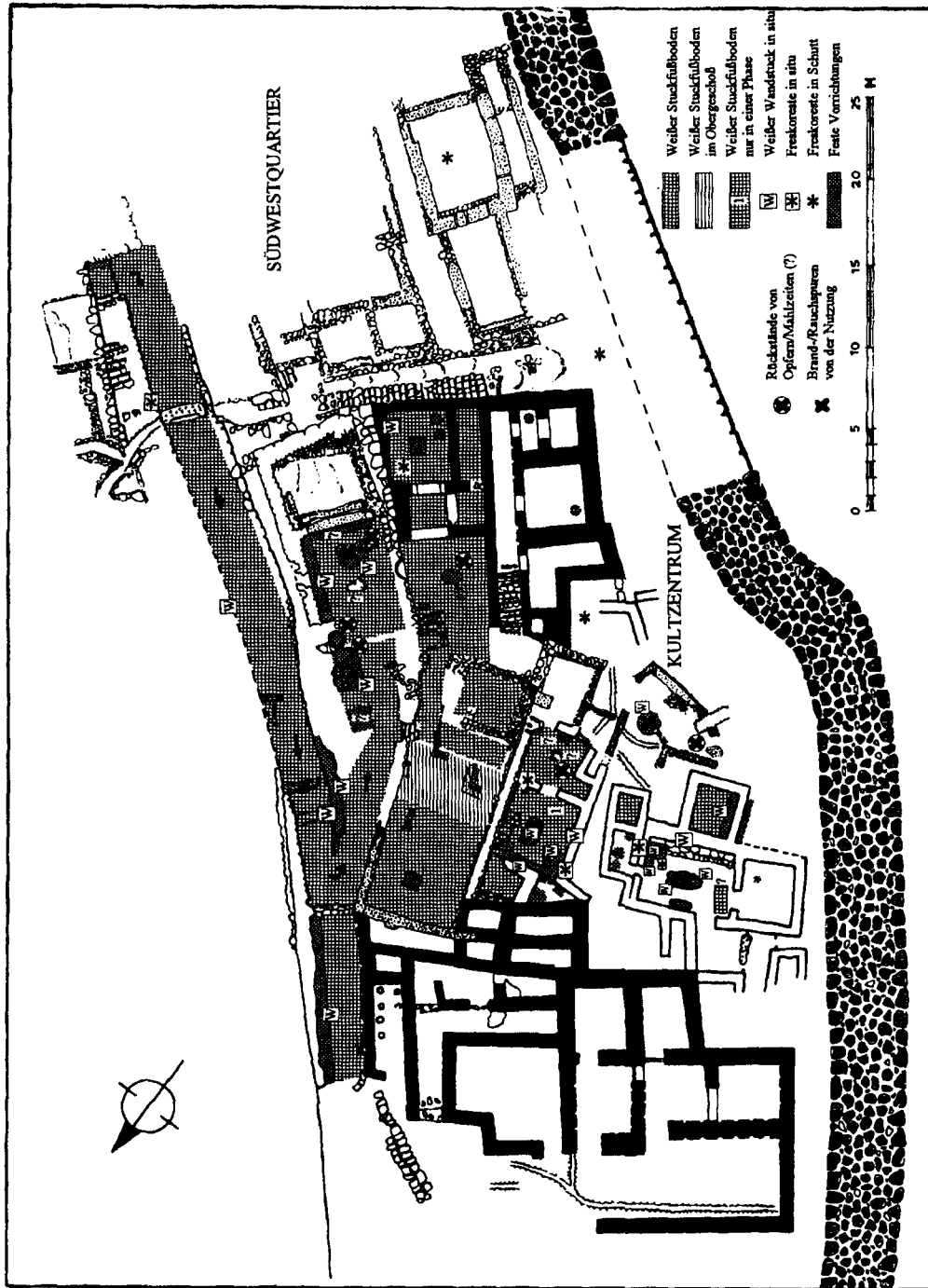
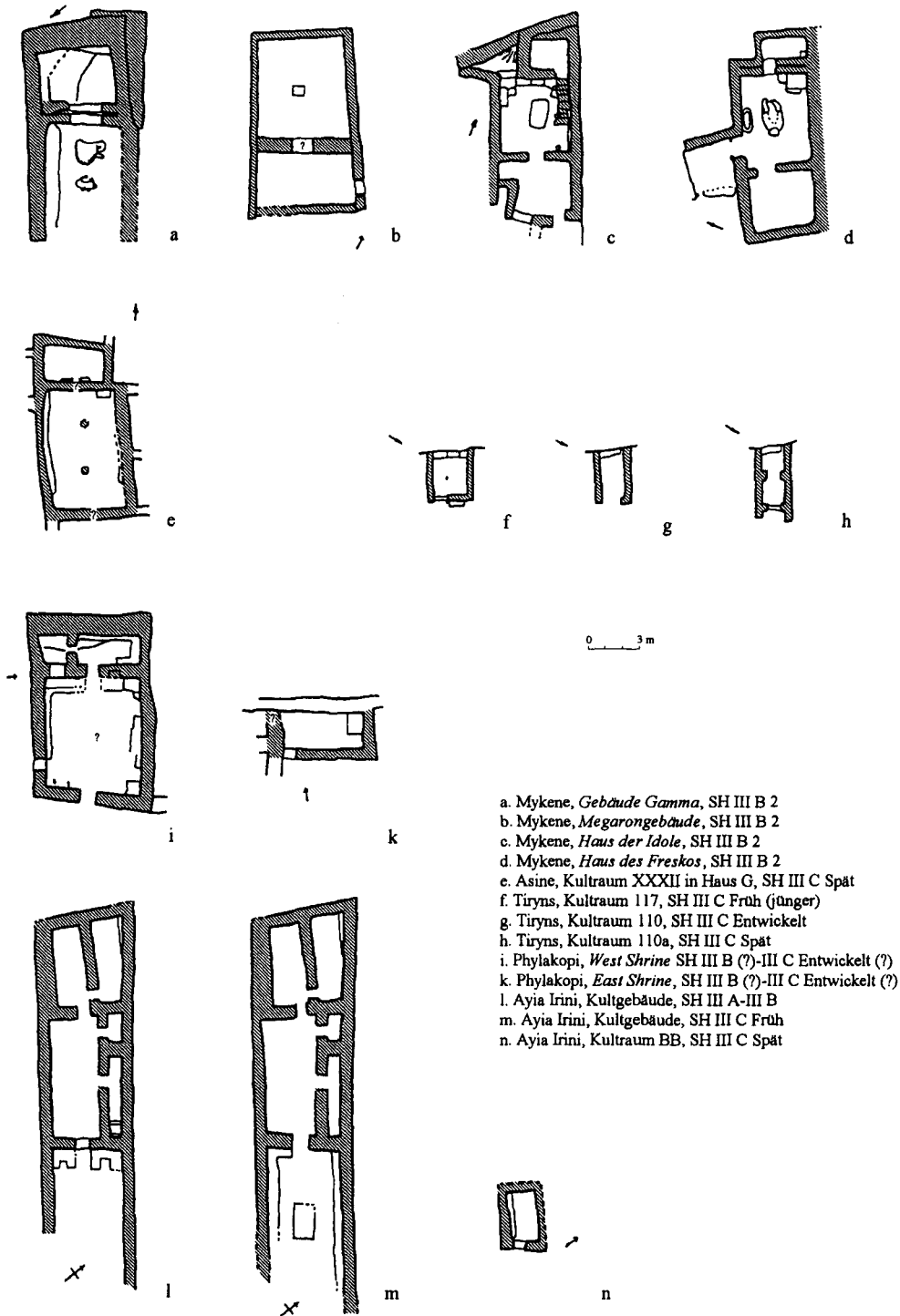


Fig. 3: The 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' (general plan from the Greek excavations): details of architectural design and adornment; fixed installations; organic remains from the cult (from Albers 1994:pl. 7.)



- a. Mykene, *Gebäude Gamma*, SH III B 2
- b. Mykene, *Megarongebäude*, SH III B 2
- c. Mykene, *Haus der Idole*, SH III B 2
- d. Mykene, *Haus des Freskos*, SH III B 2
- e. Asine, Kultraum XXXII in Haus G, SH III C Spät
- f. Tiryns, Kultraum 117, SH III C Früh (jünger)
- g. Tiryns, Kultraum 110, SH III C Entwickelt
- h. Tiryns, Kultraum 110a, SH III C Spät
- i. Phylakopi, *West Shrine* SH III B (?)-III C Entwickelt (?)
- k. Phylakopi, *East Shrine*, SH III B (?)-III C Entwickelt (?)
- l. Ayia Irini, Kultgebäude, SH III A-III B
- m. Ayia Irini, Kultgebäude, SH III C Früh
- n. Ayia Irini, Kultraum BB, SH III C Spät

Fig. 4: Cult buildings in Late Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries, main building phases only; a-d illustrate the different buildings in the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' (from Albers 1994:123 fig. 1.)

al wealth;⁶² the circumstance that the design and dimensions as well as the building material of the 'Lion Gate' were copied in one of the gates at Tiryns, indicating a leading role of Mycenae also in architectural fashion;⁶³ and other aspects (*cf. infra* n. 65).

Thus—if we are not mistaken—the often adduced perception of Mycenae as a *primus inter pares* in relation to the other Argive palatial sites⁶⁴ factually appears not quite to fit the picture. Rather, on the basis of the re-evaluation of the 'Cult Centre' as opposed to the other, contemporary or later Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts of the Argolid, Mycenae in our view needs to be re-evaluated as playing the part of a true *primus* (*viz. a prima*) on the regional level, thereby standing out *from*, and at the same time constituting the model site

- 59 Kilian 1992:17: 'Die Verflechtung mit dem Palastsystem einerseits wie auch eine Vielfalt in den einzelnen Kultarealen wird am Südhang des Burgberges von Mykene, im sog. Kultzentrum deutlich: hier seien besonders ausgeführt die Unterschiede in Ausstattung und architektonischem Rahmen, wie feste Einrichtungen, Bänke, Herde, Altäre, dann Freskendarstellungen, deren Themen in Räumen des Palastes wiederkehren, ferner Bewegliches wie Paraphernalia, Anteile von Tieropfern, bestimmte Geschirrsätze, die bei Kultaktivitäten zum Einsatz kommen. Nach dem derzeitigen Publikationsstand setzt sich das Kultzentrum von Mykene zusammen aus: Gräberrund, sowie Rampenhaus, das in den Prozessionsweg hinauf zur Großen Südtreppe am Palast überleitet. Dieser Weg erschließt die stucküberzogene Platzanlage vor dem sog. Tsountas-Heiligtum, Halle mit Raum Γ ...'; and *ibid.*:20, *contra* the vision of a cult centre largely independent from the *wanax*, arguing esp. from the 'statusbezogenen Bildthemen' in the *House of the Fresco* and the route for processions within the citadel; more recently Hägg 1995:387–390; Whitaker 1997:155f. For the nature of the *wanax* primarily as a religious figure, e.g. Palaima 1995:131–134 and refs.; Stavrianopoulou 1995:423–433 and refs. 'Dirigisme' of the (mainland) palatial administration on the cult: Hiller 1981:95f., 116f., 122. We also wish to draw attention here to the most important observation by T. G. Palaima, in the general discussion on 'rulership and polity', in Laffineur and Niemeier 1995:382, as to 'a huge amount of stuff that goes on even at the palace proper that never gets recorded': this should, then, certainly account also for the natural supremacy of the Mycenaean palace in the running of the public communal sanctuary.
- 60 *Cf.* the description of the setting by Wace 1964:3–6. On entering the Argolid from the north, the citadel remains invisible even until one reaches the last of the range of foothills (controlled without doubt by posts); and then makes her sudden appearance rising from the plain in full glory.
- 61 Distribution map in Mee and Cavanagh 1990:239 fig. 9; also e.g., Mee and Cavanagh 1984:50–53, Wright 1987, Pelon 1990.
- 62 Distribution map in Mee and Cavanagh 1990:232 fig. 3.
- 63 Müller 1930:70–73, Küpper 1996:41–46, Wright 1987:183, adducing further in this context the possible ornamental gate on the Larissa at Argos (however, see for the questionable evidence of the gate Eder 1998:46 and n. 102): '... Perhaps the public symbolism employed at Mycenae was part of a program of pronouncing the consolidation of power of her rulers over the general region of the Argolid. In such an instance, admittedly very hypothetical, the distribution of this form of power symbolism could be compared in general way to the use of monumental sculpture adorning the gates of Hittite centers such as Bogazköy and Alaja Hüyük.' Our present argument regarding the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' is definitely meant to make this statement by Wright less hypothetical.

for, the other Argive citadels at least by the time of LH III B.⁶⁵ The factors again, which at some stage in the history of development of the Mycenaean palatial society led to the dominant role of the rulership at Mycenae and then kept it up until the end of the palatial period, cannot be traced.⁶⁶ Not at least by *virtue* of her being in command of the regional cult centre, however, Mycenae as we see her was rather at the very socio-political and hence cultural-historical top in the Argolid. Or perhaps more likely, the two phenomena of Mycenae's ascent to the top and the consolidation of the regional cult centre at the site, then conceivably most immanently to the process, went together.⁶⁷

64 E.g. more recently, Kilian 1987:33: '... kleinere Herrschaftsbereiche während der späten Palastzeit ..., unter denen Mykene ... wohl die Rolle eines primus inter pares zukam'; Kilian 1988a:136; Kilian 1988b:296: '... a plurality of kingdoms rather than a single one', and map in fig. 3: Argos, Mycenae, Tiryns, and Midea (and further also Nauplia) equally signatred as 'centre', in accordance with the common view of four (or five) major Mycenaean palatial residences co-existing within extremely short distance from each other in the Argolid, guarding their territories by 'border fortresses' (Kilian 1987:33), and being of a certain independence from each other as well as in relation to Mycenae; and *cf.* the overview of scholarly hypotheses as to site hierarchy in Darcque 1998:110f. For the actual archaeological evidence at Argos which is without doubt obstructed or wrecked to the utmost by the ancient and modern re-occupation, see Eder 1998:45–49 and refs.

65 A status of Mycenae as model citadel could esp. account also for the very existence and the by Mycenaean standards and now as then visible (except at Argos, *supra* n. 64)—hardly surpassable strength of the fortifications of all the Argive major citadels: in our view, these served not in the first place as defensive measures of acute necessity due to severe threats from outside, but constituted a means of self-symbolism towards the commoners as well as of ostentatious competition between the respective *wanakes*—in military fashion, strategic *raffinesse*, and command of (most probably non-voluntary) work forces to execute ambitious palatial building programs; *cf.* accordingly Wright 1994:51. The actual requirements of defense were, instead, probably only intended to be met with effectively in the case of true danger, *in so far as the entire region was concerned*: that is, as emphasized most recently by Darcque (1998:111), the topographical arrangement of major and minor citadels in the Argolid reflects a sophisticated, well-planned system of strongholds set up in all the relevant strategic locations which controlled access to the region, thus warranting (presumably) utmost protection. Even the installation of a technologically ambitious device to secure water supply in the case of siege should reflect a regional rather than local measure to meet an actual increased need for defense: namely the mere circumstance that the well-known subterranean cisterns at Mycenae and Tiryns (*cf.* Küpper 1996:46f. and refs.) were built simultaneously in LH III B2 at two Argive citadels and according to a similar scheme (covered passages from inside the citadel through the fortification wall and down to a source of underground water outside the wall), should be taken as indicating that the measures ultimately derived from a one and only seat of central planning, that is Mycenae. In the Argolid the same could then account also for the construction of the fortification walls, in terms of development of engineering abilities, mechanical equipment, and knowledge of principles of statics: it is, in our estimation, highly likely that such work of specialists—see Küpper 1996—was organized, constantly refined, and kept available for demand on the regional, not local level, and that it thus operated under the ultimate supervision of the regional centre.

Cult centres of the Cycladic region

It is time to leave the Argolid and turn to the one other region which has so far produced substantial evidence of Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts, namely the Cycladic islands. Of the two relevant Cycladic sites, the settlement at Ayia Irini on Keos has, in our view, produced the earliest architecturally independent cult building of the entire Aegean region: the so-called Temple⁶⁸ was established already in MH times, and subsequently saw a definite flourish in LH II/LM I B when the unique nearly life-size terracotta statues were in use in the building; the iconography of the statues reflecting a strong—if, perhaps, not dominating—Minoan influence as is overall evident for Ayia Irini by that period.⁶⁹ With regard, however, to the MH origins of the Temple⁷⁰ little can be said

66 For the process, but not unquestionably the resulting pattern of Mycenaean political forces, see e.g. Wright 1995a:71–75. Cf. Kopcke 1995, Voutsaki 1995, Wright 1995b, Thomas 1995. Recent statements as to a socio-political leadership of Mycenae in the Argolid have also been made by Eder (1998:25f., cf. 32) and—after critical assessment in terms of methodology—Darcque (1998:111f.). A major problem adherent to our line of argument constituting the main argument of this paper is, as implied by Eder and Darcque, evidently the question what the relationship could have been between the at least four major palatial sites in the Argolid, respectively their rulers, in the case that they, at least in the later palatial period, were not the seats of rulership of independent Mycenaean *wanakes* over independent territories and of an equal status. And linked to that problem: the question why more than one palatial site existed at all in the Argolid, when there was at Mycenae an unequivocal central seat of rulership controlling the entire Argive region (equivalent to the single ruler's residence at Pylos). In order to refer to that important issue in a more prominent place of the text here, we include below an addendum by which we wish to explain more specifically our alternative hypotheses in regard of the named problem.

67 We are not quite sure whether we in this respect correctly adduce the statement by Wright (in Dabney and Wright 1990:52): 'Perhaps these developments at Mycenae during the LH III B period signal the convergence of ideology and political centralization such that the establishment of the cult center there was part of the final process of consolidating power in the hands of a single ruler.' What does Wright mean: a single *local* ruler (i.e. over Mycenae), or a single *regional* ruler (i.e. over the Argolid), or even a single *Mycenaean* ruler? (for our opposition, otherwise, to Wright's account regarding the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae', *loc. cit.* and esp. in his later contribution, cf. *supra* n. 28). Further, see in the above respect Wright 1994:58: 'Such an argument ... describes a cult institution of power and authority that reinforces the stability of the state, but it also demonstrates the priority of religion in the organization of the seat of power. Again this distinction needs emphasis since it is common in anthropology to view religion and ideology only as tools of state power'; also *ibid.*:59: '... the supernatural force that *supports* human authority' (our emphasis); Stavrianopoulou 1995:433: religion as 'Macht der Vermittlung zwischen den höchsten und den niedrigsten Schichten einer Gesellschaft'.

68 Esp. Caskey 1981, 1984, 1998, Albers 1994:116–119 and refs. in n. 655, 123 figs. 11–n, pls. 48–53, tables 4–10, Whittaker 1997:139–142. For the final excavation report in preparation cf. recently Caskey 1998:123 n. 1.

69 E.g. Caskey 1986:37f. and refs.; cf. Caskey 1998:128. In general for the 'town' at Ayia Irini and its significance, see recently Schofield 1998.

70 See now the preliminary synthesis by Caskey 1998:124–126.

on the basis of the evidence that is preserved, respectively has been published so far: namely, the design of the building and the remains of the presumed earliest cultic activities related to it are not known through unambiguous contextual observation. Thus, while the early founding of the building is undisputable the structure can, at present, not serve in any extent to trace aspects of the Middle Bronze Age cult in the Cycladic region and consider such as roots of the later, Mycenaean cult on the islands and the mainland.⁷¹

For the 'Minoan' phase of the *Temple*, the at least 32 or even up to 50 or more female terracotta statues that were then in use in the building ought to clearly indicate its cultic function by that time.⁷² However, with reservation as to the final excavation report in progress, it is far from clear what the specific character of the cult activities related to the building during the period was. In particular—apart from that they were perhaps even, in one way or the other, grouped in a second storey of the building—the iconography of the statues as well as the extraordinary large number in which they were found do not make an interpretation as figures of one or several goddesses very likely. Instead, most scholars are inclined to see in the statues priestesses or adorants depicted in veneration of an unknown kind;⁷³ and again there is at present no contextual observation, respectively documentation, of the overall material manifestation of the building and the cult practised in it during the LH II/LM I B period.

With regard to the evidence under discussion here, the Ayia Irini structure proves of particular significance in that it was revived as a cultic building, now of Mycenaean design, in the LH III A period (figs. 4l–m):⁷⁴ it thus constitutes the only Mycenaean public communal sanctuary in settlement contexts known so far which has yielded unambiguous evidence of a LH III A, precisely III A1, occupation phase, namely an actual floor level clearly dating from the period has been

71 Due to the circumstances of preservation/excavation—though observations as to platforms, benches and a hearth *are* conspicuous; *ibid.*:124f.—there is even as yet no absolute certainty that the *Temple* was dedicated to cult purposes during MH times; it *could* originally have been erected as a profane structure, to be reconstructed and modified into a cult building only by the later, 'Minoan' period of Ayia Irini.

72 Caskey 1986, 1998:126 (briefly).

73 Detailed discussion, *e.g.*, in Caskey 1986:35–43 and refs.; see also the interpretation by Dürk 1996. Whittaker (1997:140f., 150–152) assumes that the Kean statues functioned in a way—in her view as votaries—similar to the later Mycenaean large female figures (*i.e.* of French's 'Type A', *supra* n. 22), as occur in the public communal sanctuaries at Mycenae, Phylakopi, Tiryns, and Asine. Since we, however, see in the Mycenaean 'Type A' female figures depictions of one or several goddesses we would not agree with the equation proposed by Whittaker: Albers 1994:136–138; *cf. e.g.* Kilian 1992:21.

74 Detailed compilation from the various preliminary reports of the evidence of the Mycenaean periods of use: Albers 1994 (*supra* n. 67); see now the preliminary synthesis by Caskey (1998:126f.).

observed. The cultic use of the building continues, with several reconstructions and modifications, in LH III B as well as III C and through to the latest phase III C Late of the Mycenaean era. By that time, though (at least as to our understanding so far), the original building was given up and a small single cult room BB was erected on top of the remains of its predecessor (fig. 4n), room BB relating chronologically to the latest of the successive III C cult rooms at Tiryns as well as to the late sanctuary at Asine.⁷⁵

The layout of the Ayia Irini settlement, and thus the situation of the *Temple* in relation to the built-up area, during the time-span from LH III A to III C are not well known.⁷⁶ Also, the front part of the building had eroded away so that neither the specific access to the building nor the extent of the settlement towards the sea could be established. However, the cult building was probably always located relatively close to the sea which, then in place of an enclosing wall, likely constituted the boundary of the settlement at that side. All in all, the situation of the LH III A to III C public communal sanctuary at Ayia Irini thus appears compatible with what has been observed for the Argolid; Ayia Irini being, if not a palatial, at least *the* central site on the island as well during the Mycenaean period, and being probably also of regional significance beyond the restricted Kean hinterland.

Phylakopi on Melos by Mycenaean times saw the establishment of a palace with a megaron of mainland design in the centre of the settlement, as well as of a public communal sanctuary adjacent to, and partially built in, the line of the renewed fortification which surrounds the entire south side of the settlement towards the Melian hinterland.⁷⁷ A major road system runs in between the megaron, on one hand, and the sanctuary as well as the main gate of the fortified settlement, on the other hand,⁷⁸ and the situation of the sanctuary within the settlement compares altogether well with the Argive pattern.

75 A special point of interest would also be that the later of the two successive phases in which room BB at Ayia Irini was in use already dates to the Protogeometric period (refs. in Albers 1994:215 n. 657): in that case, namely, this particular small cult room would have seen continuity in the use of one and the same building between the latest phase of the Bronze and the earliest phase of the Iron Age. *However*, the so far commonly accepted, early chronological assignment of room BB to the LH III C Late pottery phase has now been refuted by Caskey (1998:127 and n. 16)!

76 Cf. Albers 1994:216 n. 659.

77 For refs. regarding the palace and megaron as uncovered during the first period of British excavations in 1896–99, see *ibid.*:179 n. 326. For the sanctuary see esp. Renfrew 1985; also Renfrew 1981, Albers 1994:53–103, 123 figs. 1i–k, pls. 20–34, tables 3–10, Whittaker 1997:8–31, 173–179, Kilian 1992:22, and esp. 1990. Having made the attempt to analyse—with extensive refs. to Renfrew 1985—the complicated stratigraphical situation within the sanctuary as documented in the final excavation report, we shall for convenience refer in the following mostly to our study.

78 Albers 1994:53f. and refs., pl. 20b.

As argued in our detailed analysis of the complex, we do not see the early date of foundation of the sanctuary in LH III A2, as maintained by the excavator, proven since no actual floor level clearly dating from a III A2 or even a III B period of use has been observed:⁷⁹ thus being perhaps established only in a later part of LH III B the sanctuary, with several severe modifications in relation to its original layout, continued in use through III C Early and probably into III C Middle. Unfortunately again, the exact date of the destruction of the local central megaron is unknown so that no correlation can be drawn between, precisely, the palace's latest period of use and the major destruction and subsequent revival of the sanctuary.⁸⁰ However, the sanctuary's major 'collapse', as it was labelled by the excavator and apparently occurring at some stage during the LH III C Early pottery phase, clearly resulted in the giving up of one part of the so-called *West Shrine* which constitutes the main cult building (fig. 4i); the subsequent revival of the cult took place within a much altered, somehow reduced as well as irregular layout of the *West Shrine* and the entire precinct.⁸¹

At least at some stage during its altogether complicated architectural development,⁸² the sanctuary of Phylakopi clearly forms a more complex structural ensemble within the immediate settlement area reserved for public communal cult. As a secondary building measure, to the original *West Shrine* was then added another structure, the so-called *East Shrine*,⁸³ which is erected against part of the entrance façade of the *West Shrine* as well as on a higher level. The *East Shrine* (fig. 4k) being a small single room with a bent-axis entrance and lacking a clear-cut fixed installation in its later periods of use, as well as any movable equipment that points to an individual cultic character of the room, may thus not to be perceived as a cult building by its own right, but rather an annex to the main building serving requirements of one and the same cult. Also, in view of the ambiguous stratigraphical conditions within the entire complex, the possibility cannot even *quite* be ruled out that the construction of the *East Shrine* was, in fact, to make up for the loss of the southern part of the *West Shrine's* main room in consequence of the severe destruction of that building (?).

79 *Ibid.*:90 and refs.

80 Renfrew 1985:401, *cf.* also 438.

81 In detail Albers 1994:69, with preceding stratigraphical analysis *ibid.*:63–68, 74–78 for the main room, 79–85 for the small back rooms A and B of the *West Shrine*, whose stratigraphical sequence cannot at all unequivocally be correlated with that of the main room, and pls. 21, 23, 33–34.

82 Which we can not conceivably deal with in any detail here; see esp. the summary *ibid.*:90–103, including an evaluation of the excavator's main hypotheses in relation to the actual evidence, and see also *ibid.*:55–62 for the street and courtyard.

83 *Ibid.*:86–93, 98–102, pls. 23, 33a, table 4.

Anyhow, all in all the complex does hence not appear, on one hand, to a degree internally divided that two separate cult buildings actually co-existed side by side or in a hierarchical order. On the other hand it is clear from the layout, including a passageway likely serving for ceremonial, *i.e.* processional approach towards the *West Shrine*, as well as several subsidiary rooms probably related in function to the cult buildings,⁸⁴ that the public communal sanctuary at Phylakopi formed a spatially and functionally differentiated precinct. Phylakopi again being a palatial site and therefore of major importance most probably not only in the restricted Melian island context, but in relation to a wider geographical area within the Cycladic region, to us thus makes the conclusion very likely that also the sanctuary constituted not only the main area of public communal cult of that settlement itself, but the cult centre of a greater region:⁸⁵ viewing the evidence from the site in its entirety, we therefore duly propose to identify Phylakopi as another regional cult centre within at least the more southern sphere of the Cycladic islands; and hence as an equal of, or at least a sound comparison to, the regional cult centre of the Argolid constituted by Mycenae as we have argued.⁸⁶

Conclusions

The re-evaluation of the presently known Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts, and the resulting proposed recognition of regional cult centres located at socio-politically leading sites in the various Mycenaean regions may, to some extent and in our view, supply us with means of explanation. *In the case*, namely, that Mycenaean public communal cult in settlements took place on the regional level and was determined by individual cult centres located

84 *Ibid.*:54–62, 102f., pls. 21, 23. The limited area covered by the recent excavations makes it, however, difficult to determine precisely: the borders of the cultic complex; how the passageway providing access to the complex was connected to the main road system of the settlement; the layout of the subsidiary rooms and their linkage by passageways to the cult buildings.

85 Another indicator for this ought to be seen in the two metal statuettes of the Levantine ‘Smiting-god’ or ‘Reshef’ type, as well as the face of gold sheet perhaps originally adorning a similar figure, which were actually found *in the sanctuary*: Renfrew 1985:302–310, 381, figs. 8.2–8.4, pls. 59a, 67–70; cf. Albers 1994:89, 99–103, 142–145, tables 3, 6. The minimum explanation for the occurrence of those objects in the particular find contexts should be, that one or several persons took them into the sanctuary who had direct or indirect access to a cultural sphere far distant from Phylakopi, or had relations to people with such access to foreign lands; or who was/were at least in the position to acquire from some source foreign items of material and/or ideological value. All in all, it needs to be pointed out here that the archaeological evidence of the Phylakopi sanctuary is strikingly rich in objects ultimately derived from foreign lands: (summarizing) *ibid.*:145–147 and table 8.

86 Cf. (in our sense here) Wright 1994:61: ‘... the Cult Centres vary among themselves in degrees of complexity; some, such as those at Mycenae and Phylakopi, show evidence of a constellation of different cults probably located in different shrines.’

at the leading palatial site or other leading site of the respective region this could explain, first and foremost, the altogether meagre evidence.⁸⁷

We *do* believe that the initially mentioned dearth of evidence in other nucleus regions of the Mycenaean sphere is, above all, due to find circumstances and extent of archaeological investigation. That means on one hand, that future discoveries should generally be possible and likely.⁸⁸ On the other hand it should be surmised that at known important Mycenaean sites which have been built over in the course of ancient and/or modern re-occupation, like *e.g.* Athens and Thebes, such sanctuaries existed but were destroyed by, or are hidden underneath, the later, ancient or modern constructions.

However, if we should be correct the possible future discoveries in other regions, in case they came up to the scale of the LH III B 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' or the sanctuary of Phylakopi at its peak, ought on principle be settled in the context of socio-politically leading sites of those regions, the sanctuaries themselves constituting regional cult centres. As well, sanctuaries to be discovered of that category ought conceivably belong to the final palatial period at the latest or, more generally (esp. in view of Phylakopi), to an era before the destruction of the local Mycenaean palace (or other premises of central control) and hence break-down of its all-authoritative administrative system. The number, however, not only of palatial or generally central sites but of *regionally leading* sites is to have been conceivably small, that is there ought have been one leading site per region. We by no means intend to get into the question where to draw the boundaries between socio-politically genuine Mycenaean regions—but it is to us somehow no surprise that only a few Mycenaean sanctuaries of the category of cult centres, namely the ones at Mycenae and Phylakopi (and perhaps Ayia Irini), have been discovered so far. And against this background, future observations of the kind may perhaps only come true by the mere coincidence of excavation in the right settlement areas, as has been the case so far, or otherwise through purposeful and well-planned investigation.

For another case, future discoveries of Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts may happen at minor sites, respectively at subordinate palatial sites as well as in postpalatial, LH III C chronological contexts. The archaeological evidence of such sanctuaries should then, theoretically, amount only to the simpler scale that is evident in the respective LH III C revival phase of the former regional cult centre at Mycenae, Phylakopi and perhaps Ayia Irini, as

87 As another explanation, the assumption has often been put forward that the settings of Bronze Age Aegean, and hence also Mycenaean, cultic observances were rather determined by open cult places/nature sanctuaries leaving few, if any, archaeological traces: *e.g.*, Hägg 1993:188; however, *cf.* the view of Kilian (*supra* n. 6).

88 *Cf.* the corresponding statement by Whittaker 1997:13f.

well as in III B and/or III C at the subordinate sites of Tiryns and Asine.⁸⁹ The limited spatial extent and 'insignificant' design of sanctuaries of that category—which is probably responsible that not more of them have been discovered so far, but future findings are in this case very likely—we would in view of what has been argued above then explain as follows: in the LH III B period those minor sanctuaries likely adhered to the model of the sanctuaries at the regionally leading sites, namely of the regional cult centres, only up to a pattern which can be perceived as being basic to Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts. Otherwise, their function was confined to the limited scale of public communal cult executed on a purely local level at the respective sites. Cultic events *beyond* the local scale, namely celebrations and festivities for the worship of major deities, as well as, possibly, of the regional ruler,⁹⁰ which must have been of importance also to the subordinate sites were, instead, cared for and controlled supremely and exclusively by the regional cult centre. In LH III C again, when (at *some* stage during the period) the palatial system had disintegrated, regional cult centres due to the changed social organization survived or came into being no more, and the continuation of Mycenaean public communal cult from then on took place only in sanctuaries designed for the basic issues of the cult.⁹¹

Those basic cult issues are maintained, in one way or the other and as far as can be inferred, by every Mycenaean public communal sanctuary in settlement contexts, be it the regional cult centre or a locally confined sanctuary at a subordinate site, respectively a cult place of the postpalatial era; and they are in our view constituted by the following, common and combined elements in the archaeological record:⁹²

-the location in the lower citadel, respectively the lower town, that is the spatial separation of the sanctuary from and at the same time its linkage in traffic and function to an eventual palace or other premises of central administration; or, in the postpalatial era, its linkage to the town centre;

89 We do not refer here any further to the problematic case of the structure at Ayios Konstantinos at Methana.

90 Kilian 1992:15: '... ein Teil der Kultvorgänge scheint auf den Wanax ausgerichtet'; Stavrianopoulou 1995:*passim* and esp. 430, 432f.

91 Kilian 1992:21: '... traditionsverharrende Aspekte ... besonders in religiösen Verhaltensweisen der "Überlebenden"', as against drastic changes in nearly all other aspects of Mycenaean conditions by LH III C; and Kilian in the following traces developments, in the sense of decline, of the postpalatial public communal cult. For the Mycenaean society in LH III C see esp. the various contributions by S. Deger-Jalkotzy, e.g. for convenience Deger-Jalkotzy 1995:375–377 and refs. For the archaeological evidence in the Argolid as well as in Laconia and Messenia see most recently Eder 1998:29–55, 86f., 92–99, 136f., 144–162, 195f., 199–201 and refs.

92 Cf. the list of 'salient features' of the so-called 'Citadel Cult Centres' in Wright 1994:61, and cf. Whittaker 1997:26.

-the situation close to the fortification wall or other boundary of the nucleus settlement area making, in our view, for an essential ideological component, namely the search to draw divine protection on the sensitive border of the earthly sphere of power; the border being even more exposed to divine interference, in the case that the earthly power symbolizes itself by an ostentatious stronghold (*cf. supra* n. 65);

-the basic association of a cult room and a courtyard area eventually containing a sacrificial hearth or altar, to provide for a clear-cut spatial and functional frame for the public communal cultic activities;

-finally the furnishing with large female terracotta figures, other figures and figurines, as well as with items of ceremonial and practical purpose that fulfilled basic requirements of Mycenaean public communal cult.⁹³

In the respect of the named components the Mycenaean public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts known so far are all essentially alike. What goes beyond the basic pattern and amounts to a spatially and functionally differentiated religious complex, that is to a genuine cult centre, appears to have developed in the realm of Mycenaean palatial society only at the very centres of rulership and administration. Regionally leading sites at the peak of the development of the palatial social organization should thus, *a priori* and among other features, be expected to house, or at least to be in supreme command of, also the central area of religion and cult of their region. *Vice versa*, the identification of a Mycenaean cult centre, by the archaeological remains and according to the criteria set out here, should unequivocally reflect the position of the particular settlement's local rulership at the very top of the socio-political hierarchy within the respective region.

Addendum

with special reference to the major problem mentioned *supra* n. 66 that is evidently relevant to our main line of argument in this paper, namely:

93 Kilian 1992:14 ('Dieser Anteil von Figurinen ...'), and 21, 24 for the 'idols'. *Cf. also ibid.*:19f. for special paraphernalia, as well as for only secondarily identifiable installations and equipment of actual cult rooms. With regard to the occurrence of most of the spectrum, including large female and animal figures, also in nature sanctuaries (if, however, in fewer numbers), Wright (1994:75f.) gives a modified view: 'Among other things the figurines may have symbolized the figures at Cult Centres and thereby provided a symbolic link to the seat of cult at the citadel centres ...' For distribution patterns of figures and figurines in public communal sanctuaries in settlement contexts, see Albers 1994:135–42 and chart, table 6; of large female figures in other contexts: Whittaker 1997:12f., 149–52 (large bovine or other animal figures should be included in the analysis; *e.g.* the figure in the proposed 'house sanctuary' at Dimini, *supra* n. 8).

-the question what the relationship could have been between the at least four major palatial sites in the Argolid, respectively their rulers, in the case that they, at least in the later palatial period, were *not* the seats of rulership of independent Mycenaean *wanakes* over independent territories and of an equal status; and linked to that problem:

-the question why more than one palatial site existed at all in the Argolid, when there was at Mycenae an unequivocal central seat of rulership controlling the entire Argive region (equivalent to the single ruler's residence at Pylos).

The following alternative *hypotheses* may each provide a possible, if however not presently provable solution to the issue:⁹⁴

1. The at least four major palatial sites in the Argolid, namely Argos, Mycenae, Tiryns, and Midea, co-existed in the later Mycenaean palatial period, with Mycenae constituting the central seat of rulership and controlling the entire Argive region, and the at least three other citadels were the seats of high-ranking members of a one and only royal family based at Mycenae (*e.g.*, of uncles, second *etc.* brothers, second *etc.* sons, or else of the Mycenae *wanax*; an original root of the royals at Argos, in view of the mythical tradition and the archaeologically manifest, prominent role of Argos during MH and early Mycenaean times,⁹⁵ would be included in the hypothesis). In that case, those high-ranking other royals could have been provided each with his own palatial residence established from old, because they were by tradition integral parts of the administrative body of the central rulership and in charge of high offices next to the office of the *wanax*-in-chief.⁹⁶

In short, there could have been a system of some sort of 'governors' seats' taking care of the central palace's affairs in its different Argive regional domains (including, possibly, also domains in the possession of Mycenae outside the Argolid); the tradition that the posts of such 'governors' were filled by second-ranking royals

94 Cf. here esp. Darcque's own preference—in view of the various scholarly hypotheses (*supra* n. 64)—of the “modèle” ougaritique, où plusieurs palais coexistent dans *un même territoire* et jouent *un rôle qui ne peut être que complémentaire ...*’ (1998:111f.; our emphases); and see his subsequently offered ‘solutions’ (*ibid.*:112). A major difficulty for any seeking to clarify the relationship between the Mycenaean palaces in the Argolid is certainly the (in comparison with Pylos, Knossos, and Thebes) extremely meagre amount of evidence from Linear B sources, as recovered so far from any of the Argive sites.

95 Cf. the statement by Darcque 1998:112.

96 To those subordinate royal offices the *wanax* title would then have been equally adherent, and they could have embraced esp. the warrant of requirements of defense (military organization/sub-commandership operating under the command of the region's *lawagetas* at Mycenae who perhaps, but not cogently, was also a royal) at the relevant strategic locations of the region (*cf. supra* n. 65); and/or of non-military administrative requirements like, *e.g.*, the supervision of the redistributive economic system in the region's various agricultural ‘provinces’, the organization of man-power for central palatial building projects, *etc.*

could account for them maintaining their own palatial residences (in whose refinement by standards set at the central residence at Mycenae they competed among each other).

2. The at least four major palatial sites in the Argolid co-existed in the later Mycenaean palatial period, with Mycenae constituting the central seat of rulership and controlling the entire Argive region, and the other citadels were the seats of rulers of territories outside the Argolid but in Argive, *i.e.* Mycenae's possession. In that case it would have to be surmised that the larger part of the Peloponnese other than the territories of the Pylian rulership actually formed domains of Mycenae; hence, that there existed only two centres of territorial power in the Peloponnese, namely Mycenae and Pylos, of which Mycenae would then have been by far the greater. In consequence of the then exceptionally large territory under its control, the rulership at Mycenae, as opposed to Pylos, would have been organized in a differentiated scheme: that is, several sub-rulers bearing the title of *wanax* but obligated to the *wanax*-in-chief at Mycenae would have been in charge of the administration of the vast territories commanded by Mycenae outside the Argolid; and in that function they could have maintained their own palatial residences in near distance to the seat of their chief.⁹⁷

In short, there could have been a system of some sort of 'vassals' seats' in charge of the central palace's affairs in its non-Argolid domains, with the 'vassals' being subjects to the immediate command of Mycenae and therefore regularly taking residence at the various citadels in the immediate neighbourhood of the central citadel (in the refinement of those other citadels by standards set at Mycenae they competed among each other).⁹⁸

3. The at least four major palatial sites in the Argolid co-existed in the later palatial period, with Mycenae constituting the central seat of rulership and controlling the entire Argive region, and the other citadels were the seats of rulers of independent territories of their own possession outside the Argolid.⁹⁹ While

97 In those residences, again, they could temporarily but regularly have lived during periods when their presence in the non-Argolid domains under their command was not compulsory and which they made use of to report to and correlate proceedings with the central administration.

98 A further—significant—reason for the regular gathering of such 'vassals' at their own temporary residences in the Argolid could have been that the centre of rulership at Mycenae provided for the courtly events (then presumably during the winter), as taken part in by all high-ranking subjects to the royal court in order to warrant their courtly life-style (which was probably not to any extent cared for in the non-Argolid domains the 'vassals' were in charge of).

99 In that case our line of argument would only hold in so far as the independent rulers of territories outside the Argolid would have chosen to gather (presumably in winter times) in the Argolid because the rulership at Mycenae provided for courtly events, according to the fashion dictated by Mycenae and not executable to any extent in the 'provincial' territories governed by those other Mycenaean rulers within the Peloponnese.

Mycenae could in that case equally have functioned as a religious centre, further elaboration as to this point would, however, have to be left to future discoveries: namely whether there existed in the Peloponnese other public communal sanctuaries up to the scale of cult centres which were under the domination of neither Mycenae nor Pylos.

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DISCUSSION

R. Palmer: I have not seen all the material brought together in such a way and it's extremely illuminating. My question has to do with Pylos: would we then expect a major common ceremonial cult centre in the lower town? We have references to *Pakijana*, which should be in the region of the town.

G. Albers: I didn't mention *Pakijana* because I wanted to base my argument exclusively on the archaeological evidence. I wanted to present a consistent picture on a certain basis. I should think that *Pakijana* would have been the common centre. It is possible that it was not necessarily located in the lower town. It could also have been somewhere outside. But it should have formed the one cult centre that was directly controlled by the Pylos palace. The ceremonies going on there would have represented the public communal cult under the leading action of the palace. I would not accept a function of the small Room 93, the so-called *Sanctuary of the Potnia Hippon*, in the palace area as one of the Mycenaean cult centres because it really is located in the immediate area of the palace. Of course there are plausible arguments for cult rooms of various sorts within the Mycenaean palaces, and especially for a state cult going on in the central megaron. But on the public communal level I think that also at Pylos there should have existed a cult centre somewhere in an area separated from the palace.

R. Palmer: I would agree with you on the shrine area 93, but it is so attractive because it is right next to a large open paved space.

G. Albers: Yes, but that is also the case, e.g., with the altar in the courtyard of the palace at Tiryns where we, otherwise, do have a cult area separated from the palace, i.e. in terms of location comparable to the 'Cult Centre' at Mycenae: so Room 93 within the palace area at Pylos does not really appear as an equivalent to those cult areas at Mycenae and Tiryns. At Asine we don't have the palace but I think there is, again, a certain pattern, namely in that the (late) cult room is located in the lower town. Phylakopi adds to this pattern of the public communal cult area being separated from the palace—but linked to it, of course.

H. Whittaker: All the Mycenaean cult buildings are relatively small, yet you refer to them as public communal sanctuaries. Don't you think that participation must have been restricted in some way?

G. Albers: Yes, that is a significant question. I would agree for what we know from Tiryns. Asine is a bit larger. But I think that especially the buildings in the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' are not that small in comparison to other Mycenaean buildings. I take the complex as a whole, so if the participants in the cultic proceedings were gathered all over the place it was not so small—compared, *e.g.*, to the space within Grave Circle A which is, of course, one coherent cultic space, but it should be comparable. On the whole, I find it very difficult to estimate from the square meters of an open area how many people took part in events going on in that area. Analogously, here in Greece I have the impression that many more people than may appear likely are involved in rituals taking place in very small chapels. So I don't think that the physical space is really a major point. It is certainly not valid in the case of, *e.g.*, the Near Eastern monumental temples: that is, when looking at those complexes more closely, actually not all of them have a large courtyard area in front of the temple, but there are obvious differences in terms of space. Taking the complex of the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' as a whole—not knowing, possibly, where the focus of the cult was or if there was a focus at all, or whether the activities rather took place all over the place in different parts of the complex—I don't think that the question of space is a big problem. Instead, the question to me is: where else should public communal cult at Mycenae be located? I don't think that it should be located in the main room of the megaron of the *wanax*, so if it existed at all there must have been an area of public communal cult somewhere else.

H. Whittaker: I agree with you that it is difficult to estimate how many people there would have been room for. Taking the 'Cult Centre' at Mycenae, it's my impression that the entrance through which the procession entered could be shut off. There seems to me to be very clear evidence that not everybody was allowed in.

G. Albers: Yes, I have mentioned that myself, and it is for me the reason to think that the 'Cult Centre' was in function when the palace actually made it function. It is not my conception that people went in there whenever they wanted to perform religious acts but that festivities, and whatever other communal cultic events there were, took place in the area. That people go to the temple whenever they feel a need to do so is our concept of going to church, but this may not have been the case with other religious concepts. We know of the other level of cultic activities which has been pointed out especially by Klaus Kilian, namely ritual acts performed in the realm of daily life: perhaps we should view only the evidence of such practices as factually reflecting the cultic acts of individual persons, or at least of single households.

H. Whittaker: I think that's true. There must have been quite a lot of cult activity connected to the household, for which we just don't have enough evidence. I rather suspect, actually, that these cult buildings are not all that important, or at least not of major importance in the entire picture of Mycenaean religion. I think that ceremonies that took place in the open air were perhaps the most important public rituals, whether they were sacrificial ceremonies or perhaps other types for which we have no evidence at all.

G. Albers: That view is a very common one and it is, in fact, the reason why I wrote this paper: *i.e.* reading especially the essay by James Wright in the volume *Placing the gods* (Wright 1994) I thought about that view, and I don't believe it. Wright traces a certain consistent system of spatial organization of the Helladic cult; and in the context of his entire argument from Middle Helladic times onwards he comes to describe the (late phenomenon of the) 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' as being tucked away and insignificant. But for this particular view I can't see the point when looking at the material evidence of the 'Cult Centre' itself. The complex is not very well preserved, and it also has had an altogether rather sad story of excavation. Further, the final publication of

most parts of the complex is still very much awaited. However, several elements preserved and especially the frescoes—if we may take frescoes as an indication of official design—also in my view (cf. Kilian 1992) definitely point to an official design of the ‘Cult Centre’.

H. Whittaker: I agree with you on that account. I think that the ‘Cult Centre’ and the other cult buildings were an important part of official cult, but I think that major public rituals possibly took place in the open air.

G. Albers: I know what you mean, but here we have the same basic problem: namely that so few cult places are presently known. I myself have not really analysed the evidence which we have so far of the other categories of Mycenaean sanctuaries; but for something like 30 years scholars have been stating that there is altogether so little evidence. Thus, at least for the sanctuaries I have been talking about I ask myself why that is so; and for now I believe that the scarcity of the evidence is to be explained by acknowledging the existence of Mycenaean cult centres. In case that, in the future, more Mycenaean sanctuaries of the kind should be discovered in new excavations, what I have said here may possibly not prove to be true. But for the moment we are facing the particular problem, and I wanted to suggest a solution.

H. Whittaker: There are different ways of looking at it.

M. Jameson: I wonder if I could make two points. One is that I think it is useful to make a distinction between public cults that are participated in by a large number of people and which involve a great deal of public show, such as the Panathenaic procession, for instances, and the sacrifices, and, on the other hand, the type of ritual that is extremely important publicly and communally, but is in fact restricted and perhaps even hidden, such as the ceremonies of cleaning and redressing the statue of Athena Polias on the Acropolis. I have short article forthcoming on this in a book called *Performance culture*, edited by R. Osborne and S. Goldhill. I think this issue can be applied equally to the prehistoric period. It does not have to involve many people in order to be important. Sometimes it is important to know that something has been done rather than actually to see it done.

G. Albers: Yes, you put it very nicely. I wanted to be critical as to estimating the number of participants in cultic or any kind of Mycenaean communal events. In fact, I consider the possibility quite likely that a large community gathered somewhere in another place to celebrate a certain festivity, possibly even outside the citadel walls, and that only priests and other officials in charge of the cult actually executed the particular rites inside the sanctuary precinct. The community outside would have known that they were doing it, and that would have been fine enough—as it has, e.g., been confirmed to me by a colleague for Egypt: there, it is also not the case that every member of the cultic community simply went into the temple, not to say close to or even into the adyton, but the commoners waited somewhere outside while the officials in charge of the cult did the necessary things. I think, that would be quite a model also for the Mycenaean case.

M. Jameson: Might I add a second point, rather a naive question, I fear. I am somewhat puzzled why prehistoric specialists are so cautious about seeing anything going on in the megaron. It seems to me as, in a sense, an outsider looking at the complex at Mycenaean palaces that this is the largest room, it has a large hearth, in some places at least it has a fixed throne or seat, and it is hard for me to see how a person coming upon this would not say that this is a place for important public goings-on.

G. Albers: You mean that it is evident that cult was going on in the megaron?

M. Jameson: Yes.

G. Albers: I really think so, too. The article by Wright puts this very strongly. But I think that there is a difference between the cults. In the megaron, I would locate the cult that kept the state going, and perhaps also the house cult of the *wanax*. But I don't think that festivities which brought the people of the entire region together are likely to have taken place in the megaron—or not all of those festivities, at least. Why would the 'Cult Centre of Mycenae' have existed at all? We should not paint the picture in black and white but should, instead, attempt to trace the different levels of cultic action, not necessarily social levels but levels of religious activities: *i.e.*, certain festivities would have been celebrated in one place, and other festivities in another place. I am not a specialist at all, but I think what is known from later Greek times would analogously imply that there were many different contexts of religious activity also in the Mycenaean age.

M. Jameson: I would suggest that perhaps the *xenia* must have been extraordinarily important in the Mycenaean world. The ruler entertains others, the people he favors, people who are subordinate or equal to him from other places. Where does this happen? Surely it happens in the megaron and it surely involves much ritual and celebration.

M. Wedde: Another surprising point: when we speak about the megaron at Mycenae we refer to the megaron that has actually been excavated, when on the top of the hill all that existed is so badly destroyed that we do not know and cannot exclude that there were important buildings on that part of the site. This is of interest given the hypothesis of Klaus Kilian that the megaron of the Mycenaean was a double complex. The main megaron at Mycenae may well have been on the top of the hill. This is of course part of the Aegean archaeologist's reluctance to proceed beyond the scraps and rubbish that he/she excavates—very little of the complete picture.

G. Albers: It cannot be excluded that at Mycenae we have only the little megaron preserved. At Tiryns and Pylos we have both the large and the little megaron. At Mycenae there is, however, the evidence of the grand staircase leading to the one megaron we have, and this perhaps indicates that we rather have the large megaron here. On the whole, I believe that we cannot overestimate the significance of Mycenae. Of course, the significance of the other Mycenaean palaces in the Argolid is definitely to be considered but Mycenae, at least in the LH III B period, in my view must have been something more. The problem is also that the site due to the steep ravine is much eroded on the side of the megaron. But imagining what it must have been like in its original layout, and considering the appearance of the citadel together with the evidence of the tholos tombs and other outstanding features, the site in my opinion represents the highest level of the design of a central settlement that was possibly reached in Mycenaean times.

On the road to the godhead: Aegean Bronze Age glyptic procession scenes

Michael Wedde

Introduction

THE PRIMORDIAL ROLE of the procession in human ritualized activity—regardless of the underlying belief system—needs hardly be stressed.¹ It serves not only as the prosaic means of transporting officials and celebrants between two points on an itinerary, but also constitutes both a performance in itself, and a transitional zone between two psychological states. Funerals are often accompanied by processions, designed both to honor the deceased, and to broadcast the grieving entity's economic/social/political clout. In the secular sphere, processions of gift bearers, frequently claimed by the receptor to be the envoys of vassal states pledging obedience to the ruler, of prisoners and booty captured on the battle field, of exotic goods from distant lands, form a major component in state propaganda. In artistic representations the festive garb, the ritual paraphernalia, the gifts, the sacrificial animals, the succession of chariots or warriors or participants serve to identify a scene as a depiction of a procession, and allow, occasionally, the modern beholder to reconstruct elements of the cult and to suggest hierarchical stations for certain actors. The non-religious depictions are often replete with identifications of origin for envoys, prisoners, exotica, permitting additions to reconstructed political histories. In short, the procession constitutes one of the more eloquent images in a culture's pictorial repertoire.

If not already a component of their ritual behavior patterns from times immemorial,² their position on the western fringe of the Near Eastern theocratic world would have provided the Minoans and the Mycenaeans with the incentive to make extensive use of the procession. The architecture itself of their palaces is sufficiently

1 Abbreviation used in the notes: *CMS* = *Corpus der minoischen und mykenischen Siegel*; *HM* = Herakleion Museum; *NM* = National Archaeological Museum, Athens; *OAM* = Oxford, Ashmolean Museum.

indicative: large stairways, long corridors, (restored) state rooms in the *piano nobile*, courtyards with raised runways, and theatral seating arrangements provide the scene. Fragments of wall paintings, frequently from the spaces through which the processions would pass, at Knossos, Agia Triada, Tiryns, Thebes, and Pylos, provide tantalising, albeit severely damaged and heavily restored, glimpses of the inherent splendor.³ To these may be added an amorphous cluster of depictions on finger rings, seals and sealings, that, although incapable of providing a synthetic view, offer a plethora of details leading to a richer—although hypothetical—image.⁴

Yet, in a parallel to research into Greek religion, where, in the earlier twentieth century, the procession received much interest, but faded from view despite the recent focus on ritual,⁵ so, too, in the study of Bronze Age Greece, the above-mentioned discoveries led to some interest in the phenomenon, only to recede despite a scholarly orientation towards religion as ritual action.⁶ As a result, the major textbooks on the subject do not offer comprehensive treatment of processions.⁷ While the present paper does not propose a detailed study of the procession in Minoan and Mycenaean religion, it does attempt to place this aspect of ritual in

- 2 Processions from settlement to tomb area can be postulated from Prepalatial times onwards at the Mesara tholoi. There are pavements at the tombs of Koumasa, Platanos, Apesokari, Agios Kyrillos, a possible, although unproven, site for dancing. Cf. Branigan 1970:132–135, 1998:21–22.
- 3 Cf. Immerwahr 1990:*passim*.
- 4 See also the fishermen on the ECyc stand from Phylakopi (Sakellarakis *et al.* 1994:53 ill. 13), the gift-bearers on the MM III–LM I steatite rhyton fragment HM 426 from Knossos (Evans 1928:752 fig. 486, Nilsson 1950:183 fig. 87), and the officiants on the LM III Agia Triada sarcophagus (Long 1974:pls. 6, 15, 19, Sakellarakis *et al.* 1994:213–215 ills. 97–98) for representations of processions.
- 5 Graf 1996:54.
- 6 Part of the reason therefore may be sought in the non-publication of a much-awaited doctoral dissertation, which, it may be surmised, would have both become the standard textbook on the subject and led to further studies by other scholars. For glimpses of what this dissertation would have offered, cf. Boulotis 1987.
- 7 Evans 1930:719–757. Persson 1942 treats at least three rings with scenes of procession but avoids the subject. Picard 1948 contains disparate mentions but no overview. Nilsson 1950 does not discuss processions at any length (in fact the word does not even appear in the index), surprising in view of Nilsson 1951 (originally published 1916). Vermeule 1974:48–49. Warren 1989:14 (dance), 20, 22 (robe ritual), 24, 26 (flower rituals), 30, 34, 35 fig. 19. Marinatos 1993 contains scattered references (far more than the single entry in the index would indicate). In fact, since the pages by Arthur Evans, Marinatos 1986:32–35 is the only book-length study of those surveyed to propose a section on processions. Among shorter studies, Niemeier 1989 identifies one of his six groups of glyptic representations as depicting processions, but, with other purposes in mind, does not dwell on the subject. Cf. Hägg 2001 on Mycenaean, Burkert 1985:56, 99–102 on Greek processions. Also Hiller 1984 on the *te-o-po-ri-ja* procession in Linear B.

its proper place within the catalogue of glyptic themes, and within the chain of ritual acts that constitute this repertoire. It argues that the corpus of glyptic procession scenes is greater than those depictions which most frequently feature in the scholarly literature, and that a book-length study of Minoan and Mycenaean religions is incomplete without a separate chapter on processions. In doing so, it places the procession as motif within the framework of previous work by the present writer on Minoan-Mycenaean glyptic image clusters.

After attempts by earlier scholars to classify (Greek) processions according to their typological characteristics, resulting in a plethora of types,⁸ a recent contribution has proposed a much simpler view according to which processions can be divided into two categories.⁹

Centripetal processions proceed from within the political unit (polis) to a, or the, central shrine. They are group-orientated (phratry, clan), and therefore allow no personal encounter with the deity. A typical example is the Panathenaic procession.¹⁰

Centrifugal processions depart from the political center, traversing wild space on its way to an external shrine.¹¹ This form leads to personal encounters with the deity, as in the typical instance, the Dionysiac revelry.¹² The Eleusinian Mysteries constitute a special form, with an asymmetrical structure, since after the highly collective journey from A to B, and the intensely personal events at B, there can be no return to A because for the *mystai* all that is A has totally changed.¹³ An extreme form exists in the Bakkhic experience, which while originating in the polis never reaches a sanctuary, nor has any precise ritual.¹⁴

With some slight adjustments this classification would be valid for the Bronze Age as well, since some processions clearly moved from two points within or around the palace (centripetal), while others transported the community out from the center to the peak (or rural) sanctuaries (centrifugal).¹⁵ However—and in spite

8 Cf. especially Nilsson 1951.

9 Graf 1996:56.

10 Graf 1996:57–59.

11 Among many examples, one may retain processions from Argos to the Argive Heraion, which not only serve to move the celebrants from the *polis* to the shrine, but to reinforce the Argive claim to ownership of the intervening plain, visibly stated through the extra-mural sanctuary. Cf. Morgan and Whitelaw 1991:84–86, 106–107, 108.

12 Graf 1996:60–61.

13 Graf 1996:61–64.

14 Graf 1996:64.

15 For the present purpose it is of little concern whether the participants of the procession proceeded in ‘procession mode’ from palace to peak sanctuary, or whether part of the journey was undertaken in ‘transport mode’.

of the imperfect knowledge of Minoan and Mycenaean processions—such a classification appears too simple. If a procession is defined as the movement of people and objects from A to B within the context of a ritual activity (mainly religious but not excluding secular variants), it is obviously articulated around three main components: the space traversed, the participants, and the goal (locus B).¹⁶ These components generate sufficient variables to render it questionable whether processions should be distinguished merely on their centrifugal or centripetal movement. A second componential triad¹⁷ adds the sartorial and millenary particulars of the participants, the various paraphernalia carried, and the nature of the gifts to the deity, suggesting further scope for distinction—if the available evidence admits to it.

From the inception of Aegean archaeology scholars recognized procession scenes not only on fragments of wall paintings, but also on a range of finger rings, seals and sealings. While the use of the procession was discussed, and a major study completed but never published, it was not until the seminal paper of W.-D. Niemeier that an attempt was made to unite the glyptic representations as an image type.¹⁸ Niemeier's 'erste Gruppe', although labeled 'Minoisch-mykenische Kultszener: menschliche Verehrer mit oder ohne Kultbauten, ohne Götterdarstellung',¹⁹ contains essentially 'menschliche Verehrer, die sich zumeist in einer exzerpthaft wiedergegebenen Prozession einem Kultbau nähern.'²⁰ The classification includes: two and three women approaching a construction, two, three and four women in undefined space, a man and a woman in undefined space, a man or a woman in front of a construction, as well as slight variations on these themes (a man and a goat in front of a construction, a man among five pillars). As it is the fate of all classifications to encounter criticism and suffer the slings and arrows of proposed modification ('improvements'), so too that of Niemeier.²¹ The Niemeier classification is interpretation-based: inclusion in a group is warranted if a scene corresponds to the classificatory concept.²² Structurally, the included scenes may exhibit substantial differences, but these are subordinate to the theme. This does not exclude that a number of inclusions form structural sub-groups (and are frequently ordered in the figures to suggest this). However, the classification by interpreted theme (and particularly by identifying depictions of deities) leads to a system that places images of similar structure in different groups. An alternative classification based on the pictorial structure tempered by image content not only

16 Cf. Graf 1996:56 for the three components.

17 Not considered by Graf 1996.

18 Niemeier 1989.

19 Niemeier 1989:168 caption to fig. 1.

20 Niemeier 1989:167.

results in different groupings, but questions several identifications of deities. It will thus be argued below that the procession scenes are far more numerous, and that they form one of the more complex groups of images in the corpus of Minoan-Mycenaean glyptic ritual scenes: a problematic canonical, many variants, and a close relationship with several other groups.

A methodological excursus

Central to the present attempt to classify the procession scenes is the concept of the cluster.²³ A cluster is defined as a group of representations that congregate around a common master-type,²⁴ the physically non-existent ideal form of the message, the conceptual image subjacent to the creative act. All members of a cluster share a pictorial structure,²⁵ the system which rules how the various components (human figures, architectural elements, animals, vegetation, cultic objects) are organized within the confines of the two-dimensional space.²⁶ The support is divided into zones which, according to the pictorial structure, are defined as authorized to contain a restricted range of components. The components themselves are divided, on the basis of their nature and positioning, into primary features, which impact on the cluster-forming process, secondary traits, neither universal nor irreplaceable, and incidental additions, which may play a non-negligible role for the individual image, but do not recur systematically. Each image of a cluster stands in a relationship of varying distance from the master-type and from the other members of the cluster population, so that one

21 The present author's writings (Wedde 1992, 1995a, 1995b, 1999, Thomas and Wedde 2001:5–9) on Minoan and Mycenaean ritual glyptic scenes are largely inspired by Niemeier 1989. The object is to propose a carefully argued and explicated methodology, the systematic application thereof resulting in a competing classification. The classification will not only argue in favor of certain groups based on image structure and content, but also examine rival structures and their consequences for the classification and interpretation of the representations. Any criticism of Niemeier's paper is not to be understood as a rejection of same but as the results of approaching the material from a different methodological angle. The final product (project title: *Talking hands*) is not conceived of as an 'improvement' on Niemeier 1989 (or selected pages of Nilsson 1950 or Marinatos 1993, to mention but two other key works in the history of research), but rather as a study of method and its impact on the resulting narrative.

22 The scenes are interpreted as depicting (rephrased from Niemeier 1989:figs. 1–6 to show pattern): 1. Adorant with/without construction, no deity. 2. Adorant with deity appearing from above. 3. Adorant and deity in same size. 4. Adorant with seated goddess. 5. Adorant shaking tree/leaning on baetyl with appearance of deity. 6. Depictions of deities.

23 On this method, cf. Wedde 1992, 1995a, 1995b, 1999, 2000:18–23.

24 The 'icon' in the terminology of Crowley 1989:208–211.

25 Termed 'iconographical schemata' by Sourvinou-Inwood 1989:242, 247.

26 'Iconic space' in Sourvinou-Inwood 1989:242, 247.

individual can be designated the paradigm case, the most trenchant statement.²⁷ The variability inherent in any pictorial system depending on a multitude of artisans and artists to translate into images religious concepts (such as invocation, manifestation, adoration, *etc.*) for which single dogmatic models do not exist, leads to a vast scatter of individual representations that hover around a number of master-types. The relationship which each item of this scatter entertains with one or more master-types may be defined as canonical, variant or marginal. Images that respect the master-type to the greatest degree form a group of canonicals. Varying degrees of variation on one or more axes at the level of the zone (omission, addition, content) result in variants.²⁸ The marginal is a depiction that either combines building blocks from the pictorial structure of more than one cluster, placing it *à cheval* on cluster borders, or does not contain sufficient information to allow an unquestionable assignation to a cluster.²⁹

By virtue of its imaginary nature, the master-type does not constitute the key to an objective framework for a classification: the cluster approach is a construct of the modern beholder, and reveals nothing of how the creators of the documents conceived of their interrelationship. It is merely a methodological scaffolding over which to drape a narrative that purports to reconstruct—in the present case— aspects of the religions of the Minoans and the Mycenaean. That this is so may be illustrated by reference to the entry point into the cluster, the paradigm case.³⁰ The chosen paradigm case determines the further shape of the cluster in terms of canonicals, variants and marginals. Here—unavoidably and regrettably—the scholar has tremendous impact:³¹ the objective typology is a myth. A typology results from conscious (and subconscious: the scholar's 'hidden agenda') choices during the classificatory process (that of which notice is taken, and that which is ignored/filtered out): if a typology is true, it is true to its maker and to whoever elects to swear by it.

27 The 'prototypical' in Crowley 1989:208–211.

28 Although not analysed to any greater extent, morphologically the members of Niemeier's six groups behave in a similar fashion. There is a subtle internal play, a gradation beginning from the first image of the group and traveling through the group members, a canonical and its variations. But the interpretation-based approach causes abrupt shifts to wholly differently structured images.

29 On the marginal, *cf.* especially Wedde 1995b:275–278.

30 This is just as valid for Niemeier 1989, although here discussions of method are kept out of the reader's sight. The first image in each of Niemeier's six groups constitutes something of a paradigm case, but on the higher level of interpretation, rather than on the lower one of image structure.

31 *Talking hands* will further examine this issue, particularly the 'doors' not chosen and the paths not taken.

Two further aspects impact on the clusters and the interpretations that they generate. In the first class of images examined here the oft-noted phenomenon of 'quotations' plays a particularly forceful role.³² Variant B can be considered a quote of the Canonical, with the omission of the construction. Variant C stands in a similar relationship to Variant A.³³ A number of marginals are included in the *Scenes of Procession* as single-figure quotes of paraphernalia-bearers because of the presumed improbability of their belonging to a different cluster. Similarly, a group of single figure depictions are included among the marginalia because of a (perceived) thematic appurtenance. While not sufficient to warrant identical cluster assignments due to incompatible image structures, linkages across cluster borders increase the range of possible contexts for a given gesture, garment or object, and thus impact on the interpretation. For example, the gesture 'hand raised to forehead' cannot be interpreted solely on the basis of its appearance in the *Scenes of Manifestation*, at the moment the deity appears as a small floating figure, but must be studied across the entire range of occurrences—which include *Scenes of Adoration* and *of Procession*.³⁴ Another example is provided by bearers of batons/staffs, persons of high status that must be studied holistically rather than according to individual scholar's predilections.³⁵

Scenes of Procession

Scenes of Procession in Minoan and Mycenaean glyptic imagery are defined as depictions of mortals in generally single-file movement across the support. Occasionally the participants proceed towards a construction in a classic end-stopped composition.³⁶ In such cases no direct interaction with the construction (or the element which occupies the zone) is shown, beyond a gesture, a from-a-distance acknowledgement.³⁷ The key component is the linear movement, generally signal-

32 Niemeier 1987:167, Warren 1989:30.

33 This is true for only some of the members of Variants B and C since these clusters also contain scenes with figures that have no corresponding 'complete' image in the Canonical and Variant A (men in hide skirt, bearers of gifts and paraphernalia, dignitaries).

34 On this problem, cf. Wedde 1999:914–919. For the definition of the *Scenes of Manifestation* (scenes in which a deity appears as a small floater to the adorant [thus partially aligned on Niemeier's Group 2, but also comprising almost all of his Group 5]) and *Scenes of Adoration* (the seated deity receives homage from the adorant [including all of Niemeier's Group 4]), cf. Wedde 1992.

35 On such figures, cf. the comprehensive studies in Hallager 1985, Niemeier 1987, Younger 1995.

36 An 'end-stopped composition' is defined as an image that is closed off to one or both sides by a construction or large vegetal element so as to preclude a continuity beyond the surface of the support. Without 'end-stopping' at either end (or at the tail end if there is a construction at the other) it cannot be ascertained that the image does not constitute a quotation from a more complete representation.

ed by the in-profile aspect of the figures. Some figures turn their upper torso frontally towards the beholder, but without losing the sense of dynamic movement (as opposed to scenes involving stationary movement, ‘wiggling on the spot’, that has been understood as dancing).³⁸ This paratactic arrangement of in-profile figures one behind the other enables the recognition of depictions with linear movement but no destination as procession-scenes. While a web of interconnections aid in identifying down to single figures in non-defined space as quotations from scenes of processions, the core of the cluster stresses the multiple participants.³⁹

Methodologically, the *Scenes of Procession* are of particular interest since the canonical expression—scenes depicting three figures moving towards a construction—does not contain conclusive proof that a procession is depicted (beyond the fact that they are treated as such by the literature).⁴⁰ The confirmation is provided by certain members of Variant B. Furthermore, the designated canonical is not the only possible entry point into the cluster, since undoubted procession scenes appear severally in Variants B and C.⁴¹ These could arguably constitute a potential canonical. The choice of canonical is founded on a basic trait of processions: the multiplicity of participants, and on the concept of pictorial structures, *i.e.* building blocks of different nature and value.⁴²

Canonical: three figures moving towards a construction.

Variant A: two figures moving towards a construction.

Variant B: three figures in the field, no construction; includes men dressed in hide skirt, dignitaries.

37 Due to the small size of the support and the limited opportunities for inscribing empty space, the difference between movement towards a construction and arrival at/interaction with the same is often minimal. The *Scenes of Supplication* studied *infra* offer a contrast that illustrates the opposition.

38 Cf. *infra* ‘An excursus on dance’.

39 The size of rings and seals preclude the *mise en scene* of more than four or five figures at the most, making all glyptic procession scenes by definition quotations from a more expansive master-image, *e.g.* a wall painting—with the caveat that no wall paintings remain, even in fragments, depicting the full range of actions that the glyptic corpus (as it is understood here) associates with processions.

40 It is assumed that figures depicted in profile on a row are shown in movement towards a target, represented or outside the picture surface. Such an assumption excludes any depth to the image, on the insufficient reasoning that partial overlap suffices. ‘Three women moving in a row towards a shrine’ could also signify ‘three women abreast in front of a shrine’. This becomes especially true if one adopts the stance on gestures of C. Morris and A. Peatfield, to wit, that they are means of inducing ecstatic trance (*cf. e.g.* Morris 2001, Morris and Peatfield, this volume). Performing any one of the gestures that Morris and Peatfield have identified as trance inducing would impact on the reading of an image as a procession scene, since the process of attaining a state of trance requires a stationary (and frequently uncomfortable) posture.

41 None of these scenes are included in Niemeier 1989. In the listings *infra* this is noted by the absence of a reference to *op. cit.*

Variant C: two figures in the field, no construction; includes men dressed in hide skirt, carriers of ritual paraphernalia, dignitaries.

Marginals: Tiryns *Genii* ring, single figures bearing gifts or ritual paraphernalia.⁴³

CANONICAL

1. Mycenae Chambertomb 71 silver finger ring with partially preserved gold bezel.⁴⁴
2. Pylos palace Room 98 clay sealing.⁴⁵
3. Aidonia gold finger ring Beta.⁴⁶
4. Mycenae Chambertomb 55 gold finger ring.⁴⁷
5. Aidonia gold finger ring Gamma.⁴⁸

Three female figures moving across the support towards a construction compose the canonical image. The construction varies in shape and complexity on each member, but in terms of its function within the pictorial structure, it remains constant: the focus towards which the women are moving. In each case it is a shrine.⁴⁹ Of interest are: the rocks upon which stands the shrine on Aidonia Beta (#3), perhaps suggesting a peak sanctuary—a reading that must explain the paving over which move the women;⁵⁰ the doubling of the shrine behind the women on Aidonia Gamma (#5), which coupled with the paving suggests a more complex sanctuary layout. The women perform several gestures. The central woman on Chambertomb 71 (#1) performs an approximation of the ‘adoration gesture’ (G4, if not G5).⁵¹ Similar gestures are performed by all three women on Chambertomb

42 The number in the listing corresponds to the illustration. The illustrations have been scanned (and, if necessary, retouched) from the following sources: CMS ([photocopies] 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 14–23, 25, 32, 36–39, 41–59, 62, 65–67, 72–73, 75, 77–79, 81, 83, 85–87, 89–90); Niemeier 1989 (1–2, 4, 6, 8, 11–13, 26–31, 33–35, 68–71, 74, 76, 82, 84, 88); Nilsson 1950 (40); Marinatos 1986 (80, 91); Marinatos 1993 (60–61, 63–64); sketch by author from Demakopolou 1996 (24).

43 The analyses which follow are by necessity short. A more detailed examination of sartorial and millenary fashions, gestures, targeted constructions, and depicted space in general will have to follow in *Talking hands*. The notes provide data on the following pattern: ‘Museum number. Date. CMS number (if applicable). Niemeier (N) 1989 number (if applicable). Further references (if necessary).’

44 NM 2972. LH II–III. CMS I nr. 108. N1.2. Persson 1942:59 suggests that the lower half of the ring was engraved directly onto the silver and has corroded.

45 NM 8479. LH III B. CMS I nr. 313. N1.6. Probably from gold ring.

46 Nemea 549. LH II. CMS VS.1B nr. 114. Krystalli-Votsi 1989:38–40, pls. 5α, 7, Demakopolou 1996:49 nr. A17.

47 NM 2853. LH II–III. CMS I nr. 86. N1.1.

48 Nemea 548. LH II. CMS VS.1B nr. 115. Krystalli-Votsi 1989:40–42, pls. 5δ, 8, Demakopolou 1996:50 nr. A18.

49 It is generally agreed that the construction is a shrine. The suggestion by Evans 1901:184 caption to fig. 58 that a sacred gateway is depicted has not been retained.

50 Paved route ascending to shrine, paving at the peak sanctuary, depicted in a paratactic decomposition into constituent components.

55 (#4), and by the second two women on Aidonia Beta (#3), but in these latter two cases and on the Mycenae ring (#4) a vegetal element is raised.⁵² The slightly backward-leaning stance of the women on Aidonia Beta could suggest the swaying of dance,⁵³ whereas the second two women on Aidonia Gamma (#5) appear to be engaged in chatter.⁵⁴

VARIANT A

6. Eleusis West nekropolis Grave Ηπ3 steatite precious metal ring mould.⁵⁵

7. Aidonia gold finger ring Alpha.⁵⁶

8. Mega Monastiri Grave Gamma gold finger ring.⁵⁷

9. Knossos clay sealing.⁵⁸

10. Kato Zakros House A clay sealing.⁵⁹

51 The references to gesture-types refer to Wedde 1999:914 with pl. CCX.

52 On Chambertomb 71 (#1) the first two women hold a vegetal spray in the lowered hand as well. On Aidonia Beta (#3) each woman holds a flower of a species difficult to determine in her right hand. Krystalli-Votsi 1989:38 suggests a lotus in the bud stage. The second and third woman have raised it above her head, while the first holds it with the back of the hand against her hip—a posture imposed by the tree on the rocky outcrop of the shrine, which is forced to lean in above this woman by the limits of the support. Vasilikou 1997:35 hesitates to see flowers, suggesting, due to the weight of the object, a club or hammer, and refers to Papapostolou 1977:79 and pl. 42 (= CMS VS.1A nr. 177). The reading as flowers seems preferable. Persson 1942:60 reconstructs 'branches or some similar objects' in the lowered hands on Chambertomb 71. Mayer 1892:190 n.5 and Persson 1942:57 claim the human figures on Chambertomb 55 (#4) to be men (or eunuchs in Persson's case). At the time of writing the National Archaeological Museum is closed in preparation for the 2004 Olympic games, prohibiting autopsy, but studying the black and white photographs in CMS and in Vasilikou 1997:34 fig. 18, and a splendid color rendition in Sakellarakis *et al.* 1994:289 ill. 84, confirms the presence of breasts on at least the first two. According to Tsountas 1900:9, the third woman on this ring holds a knife in her lowered hand, but comparison with the lowered hands on the other two women on Sakellarakis *et al.* 1994:289 ill. 84 indicates that it is the stalk of the vegetal element, from which the artist has omitted to cut the leaves (*cf.* CMS I nr. 86). The forearm has been cut slightly longer, pushing the branch to the edge of the bezel. This observation leads to a second: the first woman is likewise to be reconstituted as holding a branch in her raised right hand—again the edge of the ring intervenes (*cf.* Tsountas 1900:9). The elbow of this arm, in turn, obliges the artist to omit the left horn from the horns of consecration which would conflict with it (*cf.* Evans 1901:189).

53 Krystalli-Votsi 1989:38 opts for ritual dancing for Aidonia Beta (#3) and refers to Papapostolou 1977:74 with pl. 38 nr. 28 (= CMS VS.1A nr. 176, here #72). *Infra* this reading for the Khania-Kastelli sealing is rejected.

54 Krystalli-Votsi 1989:40 interprets the scene as a ritual ecstatic dance.

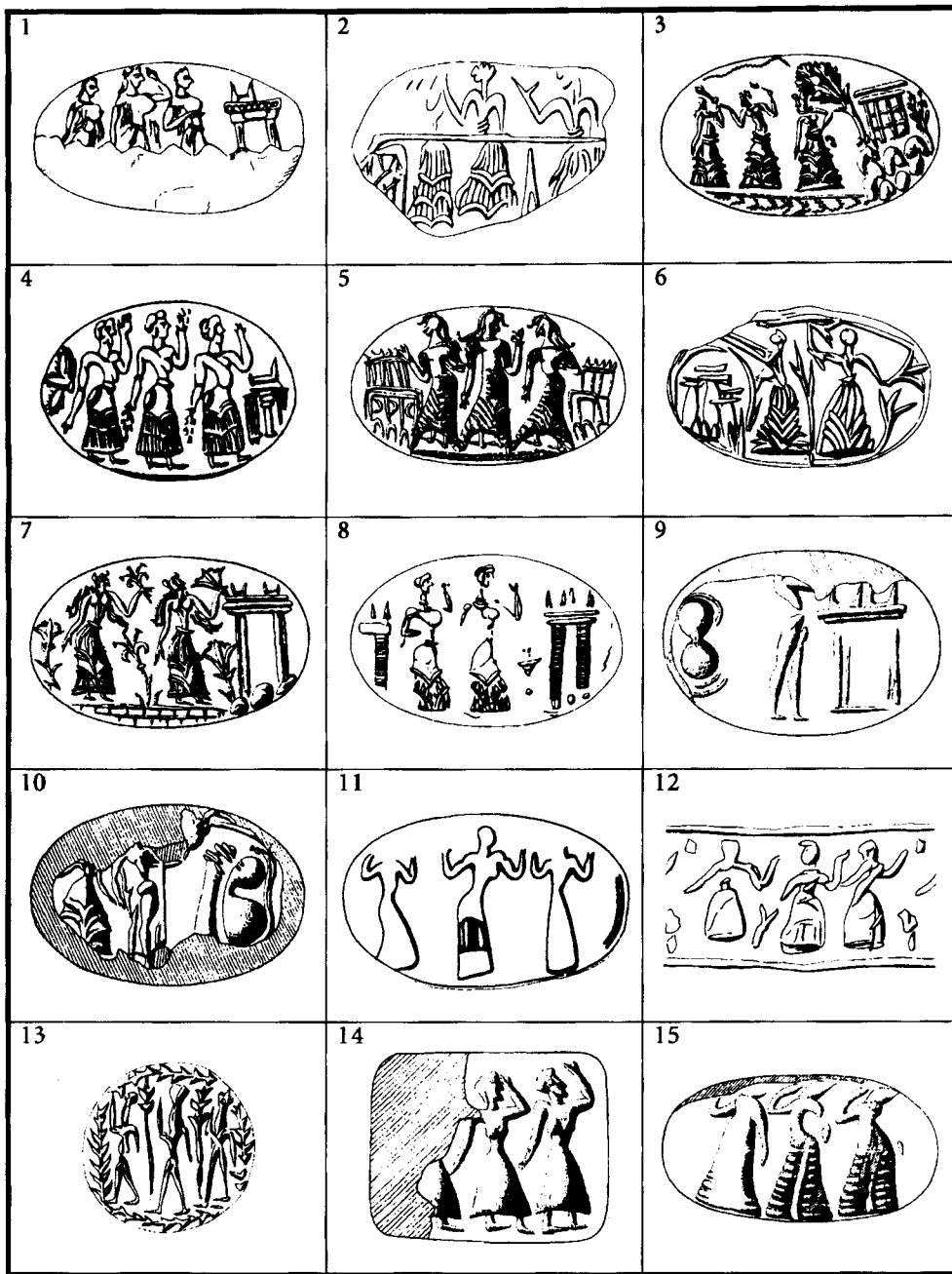
55 Eleusis no inv. nr. LH II–III context. CMS V nr. 422. Mylonas 1975:306 and pl. 64.

56 Nemea 550. LH II. CMS VS.1B nr. 113. Krystalli-Votsi 1989:35–37, Demakopoulou 1996:49 nr. A16. See also CMS VS.1B p. 468 (= col. pl. 2) nr. 113.

57 Volos M107. LH III A1–B1 context. CMS V nr. 728. N1.3.

58 HMs 378. LM I. CMS II.8 nr. 272. N1.9.

59 HMs 1135. LM I B. CMS II.7 nr. 5. On the date of House A, see I. Pini in CMS II.7 p. XV.



Variant A repeats the pictorial structure, the vegetal elements and the gestures of the canonical but reduced the number of adorants to two.⁶⁰ All three constructions towards which the women move appear to be built on rocks (that behind the women on Mega Monastiri [#8] is cut off by the limits of the support). The Eleusis mould (#6) is rather summarily cut, but it appears tolerably clear that the flowers held by the second woman, and at least two of the three vegetal elements interspersed between the women, are lilies.⁶¹ A lily is also held by the second woman on Aidonia Alpha (#7), and another grows in front of her. The first woman raises a papyrus flower; a further two grow left and right of the women.⁶² The flowing movement of the Aidonia women over the paved surface suggests dancing to some beholders.⁶³ Both women on Mega Monastiri perform Gesture G4. A flower grows between the shrine and the first woman.⁶⁴ The Knossian sealing (#9) is a tentative inclusion: the figure-eight shield may be a mere object, but given the frequent existence of mortals or deities behind such shields (#17–19) the scene may be attributed to this cluster.⁶⁵ The scene from Kato Zakros (#10), depicting a man and a woman in front of a pillar, a figure-eight shield and a bow adheres to the pictorial structure of Variant A, while placing the interpretational aspects on a different level.⁶⁶

VARIANT B

11. Mycenae Lower town clay sealing.⁶⁷

- 60 Krystalli-Votsi 1989:35 argues that Aidonia Alpha may depict only part of a scene.
- 61 Mylonas 1975:306 identifies the object in her raised hand as a bird, perhaps a dove, while that in her lowered hand is not analysed beyond a designation as 'offering.'
- 62 Vasilikou 1997:35.
- 63 Krystalli-Votsi 1989:35.
- 64 Were it not for the two birds fluttering inside the shrine on the Dendra Grave 10 gold ring (NM 8748. LH I–II. CMS I nr. 191. N1.5), the representation would have been assigned to Variant A, indicating the linkages between various clusters in specific, and in pictorial language in general. Niemeier 1989:168 fig. 1 includes it in his first group.
- 65 If incorrectly classified here, it is not a procession scene at all, but rather a supplication scene and should follow on #90 *infra*.
- 66 It should be noted that the most eloquent scenes of the Canonical and Variant A groups date to Late Helladic III—with the exception of the LH II Aidonia rings. Adhering to a strict chronological order (where a date is secure) would appreciably alter the classification, and the order in which the members appear in the listings, with no gain in clarity. Doing so would also necessitate assuming that the absence of early scenes of master-type quality is real, and not a result of the vagaries of deposition and recovery. Since the classification constitutes a typological order imposed upon the extant material by an external modern beholder, with little or no relationship to original Minoan and Mycenaean thought patterns, this *en toute somme* slight inelegance is suffered in quasi-silence.
- 67 NM 7629. LH II–III. CMS I nr. 162. N1.21.

12. Benaki gold roll seal.⁶⁸
13. Mycenae Akropolis steatite lentoid.⁶⁹
14. Knossos Archive Deposit rectangular clay sealing.⁷⁰
15. Malia Maison Δα lead ring bezel.⁷¹
16. Nerokourou serpentine lentoid.⁷²
17. Knossos Doorway south from Hall of the Colonnades clay sealing.⁷³
18. Knossos Room of the Warrior clay sealing.⁷⁴
19. Knossos Room of the Seal Impressions clay sealing fragment.⁷⁵
20. Mycenae Chambertomb 103 rock crystal lentoid.⁷⁶
21. Kato Zakros House A clay sealing H8.⁷⁷
22. Agia Triada clay sealing T135.⁷⁸
23. Mycenae Lower Town clay sealing.⁷⁹

The frequent use of quotations and *pars pro toto* compositions in Minoan and Mycenaean glyptics suggests that one possible variation on the canonical theme is the omission of the structure to concentrate on the human figures. The recurrence of gestures present in the Canonicals and Variant A confirm the connection as a form of linkage. The Mycenae Lower town sealing (#11) depicts three women moving from left to right with their hands raised. The same gesture is performed by the middle woman on Aidonia Beta (#3).⁸⁰ The figures on the Benaki (#12), Mycenae Akropolis (#13) and Knossos Archive Deposit (#14) seals and the Malia ring (#15) have all one hand raised, the other lowered, as, for example, on Aidonia Alpha (#7). The highly stylized rendition on the singular Nerokourou lentoid (#16) does not allow certainty as to gestures. The vegetal elements that surround the three men on the Mycenae Akropolis lentoid (#13) suggest a connection to the instances of flowers and branches among the Canonical and Variant A representa-

68 Benaki 2080. LH. CMS V nr. 197. N1.20.

69 NM 5409. LH III. CMS I nr. 42. N1.29.

70 HMs 668. LM I. CMS II.8 nr. 265. N1.19. Evans 1935:608 fig. 597Ab restores four women, reproduced by Niemeier.

71 Agios Nikolaos 11384. MM III–LM I. CMS VS.1A nr. 58.

72 Khandia A3208. MM III–LM I. CMS VS.1A nr. 186.

73 HMs 260, 271, 361. LM I, but in LM III A or B context. CMS II.8 nr. 276. Cf. Gill 1965 R60 + 63, pl. 15 no. R63, with Evans 1930:313 fig. 205; Younger 1988:pl. 24.7, 1995:157 cat. nr. 7 with pl. LLe.

74 HMs 362. LM I. CMS II.8 nr. 277. Evans 1930:313 fig. 204.

75 HMs 1639. LM I. CMS II.8 nr. 278.

76 NM 4927. LH II–III. CMS I nr. 132.

77 HMs 44/10 etc. LM I B. CMS II.7 nr. 15. Hogarth 1902:78 nr. 8, fig. 6, pl. VI.8.

78 HMs 485/1-5. LM I B. CMS II.6 nr. 9. Levi 1925–26:138 nr. 135, fig. 151, pl. XIV.

79 NM 7631. LH III. CMS I nr. 170. Cf. the Knossian steatite fragment referred to in n. 4 *supra*.

80 This gesture G13 is very similar to G15, often considered an ‘epiphanic’ gesture, performed by deities. Cf. especially Alexiou 1958.

tions. As noted above, the connection with processions is not guaranteed for the items hitherto discussed. Confirmation is provided by the next three images. The three Knossian sealings with warriors behind figure-of-eight shields (#17–19), the first with a lightly dressed male bringing up the rear (?),⁸¹ successfully evoke a procession.⁸² On Chambertomb 103 (#20) the two women are preceded by a man in a hide skirt, a garment with undoubted associations to processions. The three men in a hurry on the Kato Zakros sealing (#21) and the two men accompanying the woman on Agia Triada T135 (#22, probably the most obvious procession scene in the entire glyptic repertoire) are likewise clad in the hide skirt.⁸³ Finally, the Mycenae sealing (#23) appears to depict three men bearing offerings in outstretched hands.⁸⁴

VARIANT C

24. Aidonia gold ring Delta.⁸⁵
25. Agia Triada clay sealing T122.⁸⁶
26. Knossos 'House of the Frescoes' limestone cushion seal.⁸⁷
27. Gournia steatite lentoid.⁸⁸
28. Agios Ioannis (Knossos) steatite lentoid.⁸⁹
29. Ashmolean steatite lentoid.⁹⁰

- 81 Interpreted by Younger 1988:78 cat. 65 as an *aulos* player.
- 82 It cannot be excluded that the Knossian warrior sealings (#17–19) have more in common with the file of warriors on the Akrotiri miniature wallpainting (Doumas 1992:58 ill. 26, 60–61 ill. 28) and the Warrior Vase from Mycenae (Sakellarakis *et al.* 1994:232 ill. 5), but a martial component is not unknown in processions (e.g. the Panathenaic).
- 83 The hide skirt is discussed *infra* n. 115.
- 84 Probably in a bowl as on the steatite fragment referred to in n. 4 *supra*. Two curious images are best relegated to a footnote. A lentoid from Crete (BM [GR/R] 1874.4-5.4. LM II. CMS VII nr. 130) depicts three men moving from right to left. The first crouches; the second strides, probably helmeted, towards him, raising his right hand as if to tap the first in the back of the head; the third stands still, performing a similar gesture to the second, while holding a sword behind his back. On the second lentoid, from Tragana Grave I, near Pylos (NM 8404. LH II–III. CMS I nr. 263) the armed man, here with a spear, has dispatched the helmeted one, who is shown head downwards, feet up, and stabs the crouching man in the back. Although these two representations formally fill the requirements of Variant B, their contents exclude a reading as scenes of procession. Their internal connection is noted by CMS VII nr. 130.
- 85 NM BE 1996/11.2. LH II. Demakopoulou 1996:71 nr. B2. The designation as ring Delta is used here as the object belongs to the same context as rings Alpha, Beta and Gamma (*cf.* Krystalli-Votsi 1989), but was illegally removed from the excavation and offered for sale in New York in 1993, whence it was repatriated, *cf.* Demakopoulou 1996:17–20.
- 86 HMs 486/1-4, 489/1-2. LM I B. CMS II.6 nr. 13. Levi 1925–26:130 nr. 122, fig. 138, pl. XIV.
- 87 HM 1288. *Terminus post quem non* LM I B. CMS II.3 nr. 17. N1.23.
- 88 HM 395. LM I. CMS II.3 nr. 236. N1.24.
- 89 HM 1607. Undated. CMS II.3 nr. 169. N1.25.



30. Ashmolean steatite lentoid.⁹¹
 31. Ashmolean steatite lentoid.⁹²
 32. Sklavokambos Room 1 clay sealing.⁹³
 33. Cabinet des Médailles steatite lentoid.⁹⁴
 34. Midea haematite lentoid.⁹⁵
 35. Perdika (Aigina) steatite cushion seal.⁹⁶
 36. Kato Zakros House A clay sealing 188.⁹⁷
 37. Kato Zakros House A clay sealing 186.⁹⁸
 38. Kato Zakros House A clay sealing 187.⁹⁹
 39. Kato Zakros House A clay sealing.¹⁰⁰
 40. Copenhagen steatite(?) lentoid.¹⁰¹
 41. Malia Maison Δα steatite lentoid.¹⁰²
 42. Agia Triada clay sealing T124.¹⁰³
 43. Kato Zakros House A clay sealing H6.¹⁰⁴
 44. Agia Triada clay sealing T125.¹⁰⁵
 45. Kato Zakros House A clay sealing H10.¹⁰⁶
 46. Kato Zakros House A clay sealing H10.¹⁰⁷
 47. Agia Triada clay sealing T126.¹⁰⁸
 48. Sklavokambos Room 1 clay sealing.¹⁰⁹
- 90 OAM 1938.1146. LM I. Kenna 1960:126 nr. 253, pl. 10.253. N1.27.
 91 OAM 1938.1147. LM I. Kenna 1960:126 nr. 252, pl. 10.252. N1.28.
 92 OAM 1938.1009. LM I. Kenna 1960:129 nr. 284, pl. 11.284. N1.26.
 93 HMs 642. LM I. CMS II.6 nr. 267. This is a tentative inclusion given the fragmentary nature.
 94 Paris Cabinet des Médailles N4429. LH. CMS IX nr. 164. N3.7.
 95 NM 8771. LH II–III. CMS I nr. 195. N3.11.
 96 Aigina 2187. (Considered in CMS to be possibly post-BA). CMS V nr. 11. N3.12.
 97 HMs 18/2. LM I B. CMS II.7 nr. 12. Levi 1925–26:180 nr. 188, fig. 226, pl. XVIII.
 98 HMs 18/1. LM I B. CMS II.7 nr. 14. Levi 1925–26:179 nr. 186, fig. 224, pl. XVIII.
 99 HMs 44/9. LM I B. CMS II.7 nr. 13. Levi 1925–26:180 nr. 187, fig. 225, pl. XVIII.
 100 HMs 64/2, 71/2. LM I B. CMS II.7 nr. 11.
 101 Copenhagen, National Museum 1361. LM I–II. CMS XI nr. 238. Nilsson 1950:157 fig. 65.
 102 HM 1457. LM I B (on the date *cf.* CMS II.3 p. xxxvi). CMS II.3 nr. 146.
 103 HMs 592. LM I B. CMS II.6 nr. 10. Levi 1925–26:131 nr. 124, fig. 140, pl. IX.
 104 HMs 71/1, 2. LM I B. CMS II.7 nr. 7. Hogarth 1902:77–78 nr. 6, fig. 5, pl. VI.6.
 105 HMs 441/1–28 *etc.* (256 different sealings). LM I. CMS II.6 nr. 11. Levi 1925–26:131 nr. 125, fig. 141, pl. XIV. The vertical lines to the right are probably part of a construction, suggesting that this image could be classified as a Variant A, among which it hardly fits content-wise (it would also require assuming the presence of a second construction to the left).
 106 HMs 17/1 *etc.* LM I B. CMS II.7 nr. 16. Hogarth 1902:78 nr. 10, pl. VI.10. Levi 1925–26:158–159 nr. 10.
 107 HMs 17/2. LM I B. CMS II.7 nr. 17. Hogarth 1902:78 nr. 10, pl. VI.10 [not same representation as previous].
 108 HMs 583. LM I B. CMS II.6 nr. 12. Levi 1925–26:132 nr. 126, fig. 142, pl. IX.

Variant C contains a large number of variations on Variant A, quoting the two human figures without reference to architectural elements. As in Variant B, the members are divided into two groups, one reduced to figures snipped out of the standard scene, the other showing the actors dressed for the occasion and/or carrying ritual paraphernalia. Eight members (#24–31) constitute straight-forward inclusions. Aidonia Delta (#24) depicts two women with one hand raised to the face, the other lowered and holding a papyrus flower (the first) and a lily (the second), a pendant to Aidonia Alpha (#7), but with the flower switching hands. The next six are simpler compositions, two women or a woman and a man, performing gesture G4 or G5 almost always in empty space. In most cases there is clear indications of movement. The Sklavokambos sealing (#32) depicting two women is a tentative addition to the group and is reconstructed to allow inclusion here on the basis of what remains of the image.

The inclusion of the next three seals (#33–36) in a cluster depicting—by definition—mortals only may appear controversial. The Cabinet des Médailles and Midea lentoids and the Perdika cushion seal have been assigned by Niemeier to Group 3 depicting ‘in gleicher Größe dargestellte Gottheiten und Adoranten’.¹¹⁰ The method employed here explodes this group (as it does Niemeier’s Group 6).¹¹¹ The main argument for including these three in Group 3 is the gesture, both arms raised, believed to be an ‘Epiphaniestitus’.¹¹² Of the documents discussed *supra*, Aidonia Beta (#3) and Mycenae Lower town (#11) indicate that mortals are just as comfortable employing it. The Cabinet des Médailles scene (#33) could be a quote from the Mycenae sealing, while the left woman’s posture is close to the central woman on Aidonia Beta. The raising of branches on the Midea (#34) and Perdikka (#35) seals is not only depicted on Aidonia Beta, but also on the Eleusis mould (#6).¹¹³ It is therefore argued that the Cabinet des Médailles and Midea lentoids and the Perdika cushion seal are Variant B *Scenes of Procession*, rather than belonging to Group 3 ‘in gleicher Größe dargestellte Gottheiten und Adoranten’.

Four sealings from Kato Zakros and two lentoids from Crete depict a pair of men clad in leather skirts proceeding with greater or lesser clarity across the picture surface (#36–41).¹¹⁴ Reference to the three-man version discussed above (#21), and to the men appearing with one or two women (#22, 20) firmly place these in the context of processions. While bearers of objects are common participants in processions on wall paintings (to the extent that these can be reconstructed), they are rare among the glyptic scenes, comprising the two axe-bearers from Agia Triada (#42) and the axe- and garment-bearers from Kato Zakros (#43),¹¹⁵ in

109 HMs 611. LM I B. CMS II.6 nr. 261.

110 Niemeier 1989:171 fig. 3. The present author is much less sanguine than Niemeier in identifying depictions of deities. His admirable *theophilia* is well illustrated in Niemeier 1987.

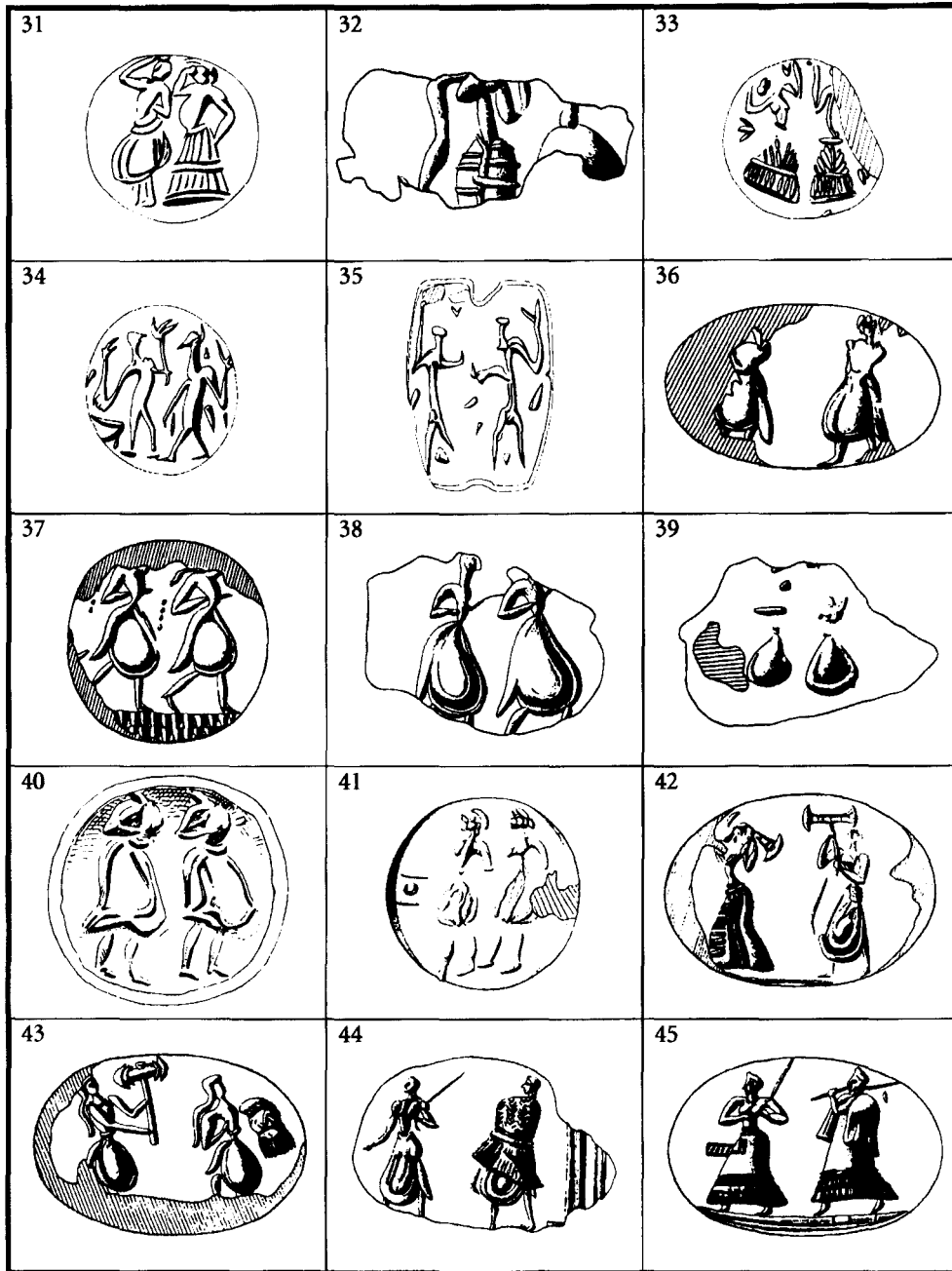
addition to a series of single figures placed among the marginals. The final group is composed by four sealings from Agia Triada and Kato Zakros (#44–47) depicting a dignitary dressed in a cape, and in three instances shouldering an axe-like implement, escorted by a subordinate, again in three cases holding a baton. The final sealing (#48) shows, it is suggested here, two such dignitaries, clad in the leather skirt and the cape, rendered in a very rudimentary style.¹¹⁶

111 Of the 12 members of Niemeier's third group, two may be immediately reclassified: the Avgos gold ring (HM bronze 970. Undated. *CMS* II.3 nr 305. N3.3. It is argued that the rivets of the hoop, intruding into the picture surface, led the artist to shift the tree into the middle of the composition, and the epiphanic small deity to the right), on which the deity to the right is, as sensed by Niemeier (1989:171), still in the air, justifying an assignment to the *Scenes of Manifestation*, as a variant; and the Agia Triada sealing T137, which is assigned to the *Scenes of Adoration* (HMs 576. LM I. *CMS* II.6 nr. 5. N3.4. Levi 1925-26:139 nr. 137, fig. 153, pl. IX. Again the rivets attaching the hoop to the bezel intrude into the image. and, as on the Avgos ring, have been camouflaged as the tree, shifting the seated goddess to the right. *CMS* II.6 nr. 5 draws the parallel with the Avgos ring on this point). Also in this second instance are the two interpretations close: Niemeier (1989:172) suggests that the female figure right is depicted in the moment of seating herself on the rock. Of the other ten, only three—within the framework of the methodological approach employed here—distinguish themselves from the rest as members of a possible separate cluster: the Berlin ring (Berlin 30219,512. LM I–II. *CMS* XI nr. 28. N3.1), the Knossos sealing from a gold ring (HMs 114, 115, 168/1–2. LM I. *CMS* II.8 nr. 269. N3.2. Evans 1935:602 fig. 596), and the Khania-Kastelli sealing (Khania 1024. LM I. *CMS* VS.1A nr. 180. N3.5). All three appear to depict a 'confrontation' between two figures, vehicled around a pictorial structure consisting of a construction, a superior entity, and an inferior entity. Only on the Berlin ring is the structure mirrored fully in the image. On the Knossian sealing it may be argued that the construction is to be sought on the damaged right side (Niemeier 1989:171 n. 43). The Khania sealing is problematic: the male figure stands in front of a huge squill, which may appear at the foot of a shrine (*cf.* the Agia Triada T138 sealing [#68]), while behind the female figure there appears a line—part of a construction? (Niemeier 1989:172, following Papapostolou 1977:85, reads a goddess and male adorant). Among the remaining seven members, a direct 'confrontation' can only be surmised for three, the steatite lentoid (OAM 1889.289. LM. Kenna 1960:141 nr. 375 and pl. 14.375. N3.8.), and two steatite lentoids of unknown provenance (NM 10492. LM. *CMS* I Suppl. nr. 133. N3.9; and NM 10493. LM. *CMS* I Suppl. nr. 134. N3.10). In the first case, the woman on the left appears to perform the epiphany gesture to the woman on the right, with a pole/tree separating the two. On the other two it is only the feet that clearly speak of a 'confrontation'. On the Armenoi Grave 15 serpentine lentoid, the scene may be no more than a quotation from a Variant A scene (Khania no inv. nr. LM III A–B. *CMS* V nr. 244. N3.6).

112 Niemeier 1989:171–172. *Cf.* Alexiou 1958.

113 Further parallels for the gesture among mortals—in Niemeier's view, with which the present author agrees, but other scholars may not—*cf.* the central woman on the Vapheio ring (NM 1801. LH II. *CMS* I nr. 219. N5.3) and the left woman on the Isopata ring (HM precious metal 424. LM III A1. *CMS* II.3 nr. 51. N5.9).

114 In this context one may mention the Kato Zakros House A clay sealing H7 (HMs 70. LM I B. *CMS* II.7 nr. 18) depicting two men face to face. While a hierarchy is implied it does not cross the divine/mortal divide since both are wearing a hide skirt. A 'confrontation' is in itself not an indicator that a mortal is in the presence of a deity.



MARGINALS

49. Tiryns gold 'Genii' finger ring.¹¹⁷

50. Knossos limestone lentoid.¹¹⁸

51. Agia Triada clay sealing T123.¹¹⁹

52. Agia Triada clay sealing T127.¹²⁰

53. 'Knossos' limestone lentoid.¹²¹

54. Agia Triada clay sealing T129.¹²²

55. Kato Zakros House A clay sealing.¹²³

56. Kato Zakros House A clay sealing.¹²⁴

57. Agia Triada clay sealing T120.¹²⁵

115 Hogarth 1902:77 nr. 6 claims the double-axe floats in front of the left figure, while Evans 1925:434 and Nilsson 1950:157 affirm that he is shown in adoration of the axe. Brandt 1965:2 follows but sees a female adorant. Niemeier 1986:79n113 establishes that the axe is being carried; cf. the new illustration in *CMS* as opposed to, e.g., Nilsson 1950:157 fig. 64. Verlinden 1985:147 tends towards the axe being carried. Marinatos 1993:136 still has the two figures 'in the presence of a large double-axe'. The uncertainty as to the sex of the two figures, expressed by Nilsson 1950:157, Niemeier 1986:78, disappears when faced by the absence of securely identified female wearers of the hide skirt—*contra* Marinatos 1993:135, who does not distinguish between the fleece skirt of the Agia Triada larnax (Long 1974:pls. 6, 15, 19, 30, 31) and the hide skirt. Her claim that the small size of an intaglio precludes rendering the shagginess (Marinatos 1993:135) is refuted by the Vapheio 'dancing woman' (#58; the *CMS* catalogue entry ignores the garment entirely) and the Kenna carnelian lentoid (*CMS* VIII nr. 146), which offer two different approaches to what is clearly a fleece skirt of the type depicted on the Agia Triada larnax and the Akrotiri miniature wall painting. Morgan 1988:98 commits the same error in claiming that figures on the miniature wall painting, the larnax, the Vapheio amygdaloid, two seals from Knossos depicting female figures wearing the Minoan 'snake frame', and the very fragmentary miniature wall paintings from Agia Eirini (*op. cit.* 94 fig. 61d) wear hide skirts: all except the 'snake frame' ladies clearly wear fleece skirts, while the Knossian 'snake frame' ladies wear the usual flounced skirt—for these latter, cf. Hägg and Lindau 1984. Televantou 1994:216 (male garment type Γ) remains non-committed: 'δέρμα ἢ προβιά'. Sapouna-Sakellarakı 1971:122–123 treats the two types as a single one, and suggests wolen imitations rather than skins. Otto 1987:17 fig. 11 (caption) interprets both figures on the Kato Zakros sealing as priestesses, but the sex of the second figure remains obscure.

116 The vestimentary information to be gleaned from #36–48, in particular, and the whole cluster population in general, in terms of hierarchies, to which should be added gestures and the use of batons, staffs, sceptres, axes and other implements, will have to be treated elsewhere.

117 NM 6208. LH I–II. *CMS* I nr. 179.

118 HM 200. LM. *CMS* II.3 nr. 8. N. Platon, at *loc. cit.*, suggests a woman with naked breast, I. Pini (*ibid.* p. xlix nr. 8) questions this.

119 HMs 532, 535, 601–603. LM I B. *CMS* II.6 nr. 26. Levi 1925–26:130 nr. 123, fig. 139, pl. XII.

120 HMs 585. LM I B. *CMS* II.6 nr. 29. Levi 1925–26:133 nr. 127, fig. 143, pl. IX.

121 HM 143. LM. *CMS* II.3 nr. 170.

122 HMs 1677. LM I B. *CMS* II.6 nr. 31. Levi 1925–26:135 nr. 129, fig. 145, pl. XII.

123 HMs 1132. LM I B. *CMS* II.7 nr. 26. Levi 1925–26:181 nr. 191, fig. 229, pl. XVIII.

124 HMPin 84. LM I B. *CMS* II.7 nr. 25. Hogarth 1902:89 fig. 32.

125 HMs 534. LM I B. *CMS* II.6 nr. 24. Levi 1925–26:129 nr. 120, fig. 136, pl. XII.

58. Vapheio sardonyx amygdaloid.¹²⁶
 59. Knossos Room of the Stone Drum clay sealing.¹²⁷
 60. Malia Maison Δβ sard amygdaloid.¹²⁸
 61. 'Vathia' haematite amygdaloid.¹²⁹
 62. Vapheio onyx amygdaloid.¹³⁰
 63. Knossos haematite amygdaloid.¹³¹
 64. Knossos green jasper amygdaloid.¹³²
 65. Myrsinokhori (Routsis) Tholos 2 fragmentary glass amygdaloid.¹³³
 66. Cretan carnelian three-sided prism.¹³⁴
 67. Mycenae Lower town Chambertomb 27 agate amygdaloid.¹³⁵

By their very nature, marginals scatter along the edges of a cluster or are caught between two clusters. In the present case, only the first entry (#49) constitutes a true marginal in that it combines the seated figure from the *Scenes of Adoration* with the line of adorants, in this case Minoan *genii*, from the *Scenes of Procession*. The remaining entries on the listing depict single figures that can be understood with certainty (#50–51) to belong to the cluster while not providing the necessary structural information, or that are thematically linked to the procession, and could be conceived as quotations (#52–54), or that lack the thematic aspect, but could function as quotations (#55–56), or that possess strong thematic links to the whole concept of the procession (#57–65).¹³⁶ Gift-bearers, so prominent in wall paintings as to constitute the idea of the procession, are conspicuously absent from the glyptic material. Only two obvious candidate appear, the Agia Triada male figure carrying a quadruped (#52),¹³⁷ and the 'Knossos' female figure with a bird (#53).¹³⁸

126 NM 1789. LH II. CMS I nr. 226.

127 HMs 133. LM I. CMS II.8 nr. 258. Evans 1935:414 fig. 343b.

128 HM 1456. LM I B (on the date, cf. CMS II.3 p.xxxvi). CMS II.3 nr. 147.

129 HM 85. LM. CMS II.3 nr. 198.

130 NM 1798. LH II. CMS I nr. 225.

131 OAM 1938.1049. MM III–LM I. Evans 1935:413 fig. 342. Younger 1995:163 cat. nr. 43, pl. LIVg.

132 OAM 1938.1050. MM III–LM I. Evans 1935:405 fig. 336. Younger 1995:163 cat. nr. 44, pl. LIVh.

133 Khora 2726. LH II A–III A1 context. CMS VS IA nr. 345.

134 Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antiken-Abteilung FG 50. LM I–II. CMS XI nr. 20.

135 NM 2446. LH III. CMS I nr. 68.

136 These single-figure marginals also serve to illustrate that attempts to eliminate totally the modern beholder's subjective input from pictorial analysis through recourse to a structuralist approach (however simple) will always reach a point when the scholar does intervene. The thematic/interpretational approach of, e.g., Niemeier 1989 thus serves as a companion to the structural. It should also be noted that single figures can also be quotations from other compositional patterns, *i.e.* other clusters.

137 Marinatos 1993:169 and 170 fig. 162 interprets the man as a god, the animal as a griffin. The wings cannot be made out with certainty, and the griffin is not an automatic indicator of divine nature (cf. Thomas and Wedde 2001:9).

The two Kato Zakros sealings (#55–56) are very tentative inclusions, and depend on the Agia Triada sealing (#54): the woman is here understood as a mortal leading a reluctant goat in the procession.¹³⁹ While the Agia Triada sealing T120 (#57) is very tentatively included, the woman depicted on the Vapheio amygdaloid (#58) wears the fleece skirt associated with religious acts, with the vigorous movement and the presence of the baton finding echoes in various securely assigned representations. Finally, the series of amygdaloids depicting ‘priests’ (#59–65) are included among the *Scenes of Procession* marginals not only by virtue of their thematic appurtenance, but also of their being frequently depicted carrying religious paraphernalia (mace, axe) or a gift/sacrificial animal (the bird on #58).¹⁴⁰ The Berlin ‘talismanic’ stone (#66) depicts a female figure carrying a papyrus flower with both hands, vaguely related to the adorants with flowers of the cluster (e.g. #4–7). A final inclusion, the Mycenae amygdaloid (#67) depicts a striding male, with an object behind his back, possibly of prestigious nature.¹⁴¹

Scenes of Supplication

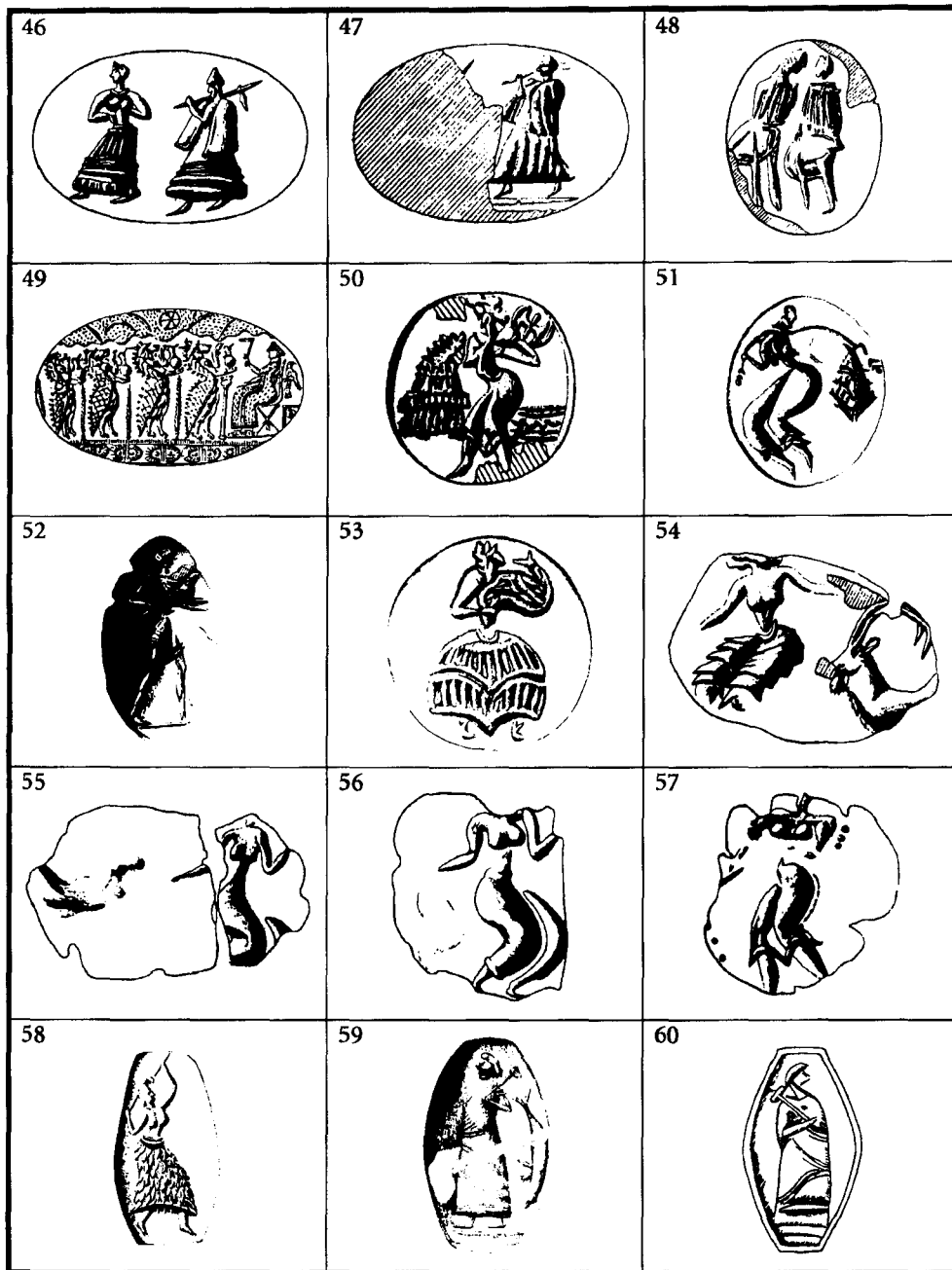
A significant omission from the above listings is an important component of Niemeier’s first group, his numbers 8–10 and 12–17, depicting a single figure in front of a shrine or an altar.¹⁴² An argument based on the quotations and the *pars*

138 Marinatos 1993:156 and 157 fig. 139 opts for a goddess—another case of a scholar of greater *theophilia* than that mustered by the present author. On the problems of identifying deities in the glyptic imagery, cf. Thomas and Wedde 2001:5–9.

139 For a reading as a seated goddess in a scene related to Agia Triada sealing T128 (HMs 584. LM I. CMS II.6 nr. 30) and to the Khania-Kastelli sealing (Khania 1501–1526. MM III–LM I. CMS VS.1A nr. 175), both depicting a seated woman with a goat in front of her, cf. Hiller 2001:301 II.A.4 and pl. XCIII.18b (where it is juxtaposed with the Khania sealing as XCIII.18a). The Agia Triada T128 and the Khania sealings belong to the variants to the *Scenes of Adoration*. Agia Triada T129 can only with difficulty be considered as depicting a seated woman—the CMS reading as a ‘stark bewegte’ figure is preferable.

140 On the priests, see Marinatos 1993:127–129, Davis 1995:15–17. The scenes with a male figure with ‘captives’ on the Athens Agora grave VIII gold ring (Agora J5. LH III A1–2 context. CMS V nr. 173), and on the Khania-Kastelli sealing (Khania 1559F. LM I. CMS VS.1A nr. 133) could suggest a processional context, possibly in connection with human sacrifice. There still remains to be determined the position of the woman carrying a sacrificial animal (studied by Sakellarakis 1972, but note the necessary amendment resulting from a correct drawing of CMS II.7 nr. 23). A discussion here would exceedingly lengthen the present paper as it would be imperative to include the ‘Animal familiar’ theme (Crowley 1992:26) and other scenes depicting anthropomorphic figures and animals, a task for another occasion. Likewise not included are Niemeier 1989:figs. 1.11 and 6.11–19, all with a single figure. Further thought is required before deciding to follow Niemeier on 6.11–19 (depictions of deities) or to opt for a different reading.

141 This image illustrates the difficulty in classifying images containing a single figure. Its inclusion as depicting a possible procession participant is based on the pose and the object held in one hand, arguably related to those wielded by the left figure on #44–45.



pro toto approach would justify their inclusion. However, it should be noted that several of the anthropomorphic figures are engaged in an activity involving the construction (placing something on it, touching it or something on it, performing an act at it): they are not merely depicted approaching it. This observation forms the nucleus of a separate pictorial structure: sacred marker + anthropomorphic figure + paraphernalia + vegetation, where the third and fourth element may be lacking, especially if the image is incomplete.

Canonical: single figure in front of construction, placing object on, or touching, it.

Variant A: single figure in front of construction, no contact.

Variant B: woman with two children in front of construction.

Marginals: as canonical or A, but with additional elements.

CANONICALS

68. Phylakopi ivory lentoid.¹⁴³

69. Myrsinokhori (Routsis) tholos carnelian lentoid.¹⁴⁴

70. Idaian Cave rock crystal lentoid.¹⁴⁵

71. Mycenae gold ring.¹⁴⁶

The Phylakopi lentoid (#68) illustrates the contrast between a supplication scene and one of procession at its starkest: if the woman participated in a procession the journey from A to B is completed, she has entered into direct intercourse with the construction at B, placing a squill on the altar. The woman has stepped across the line separating 'in-the-throes-of-arriving' and 'initiation-of-sacred-rites', a line for the embodiment of which through empty space the size of the support generally does not provide adequate room.¹⁴⁷ On the Myrsinokhori lentoid (#69) the female adorant is depicted placing two lilies between the horns of consecration on the altar, or inhaling their fragrance subsequent to doing so,¹⁴⁸ while on the Idaian lentoid (#70) she is pouring a libation from a triton shell over the horns of consecration and the vegetal element between them.¹⁴⁹ On the con-

142 Niemeier 1989:168 fig.1.

143 NM 5877 A. LH II. CMS I nr. 410. N1.15.

144 NM 8323. LH II. CMS I nr. 279. N1.16.

145 HM 24. LM. CMS II.3 nr. 7. N1.17.

146 Inv. nr. unknown to author. LH. Evans 1901:182 fig. 56. N1.14. In Evans' personal collection (*op. cit.* 182 n. 1); at time of writing projected CMS volume for OAM not available.

147 This absence of space could suggest that the leading woman on the Eleusis mould (#6) and the Aidonia Alpha ring (#7) are depicted in the moment of transition. For classificatory purposes it appears preferable to accentuate the divide.

148 Women depicted in procession-scenes frequently carry a flower: the Myrsinokhori intaglio suggests one purpose for this.

struction depicted on the Mycenae ring (#71) a vegetal element stands between the horns, and the adorant is touching the construction.¹⁵⁰

VARIANT A

72. 'Ligortyno' serpentine lentoid.¹⁵¹

73. Agia Triada clay sealing T136.¹⁵²

74. Knossos Little Palace clay sealing.¹⁵³

75. 'Knossos' agate lentoid.¹⁵⁴

76. Aplomata grave B cushion-shaped agate.¹⁵⁵

77. Khania-Kastelli clay sealing.¹⁵⁶

78. Agia Triada clay sealing T138.¹⁵⁷

79. Agia Triada clay sealing.¹⁵⁸

80. Kato Zakros clay sealing.¹⁵⁹

A single figure next to—but not touching—a construction (or to the element that is placed in the zone normally occupied by the construction) forms a variant to the canonical. The close parallels in the pictorial structure to the canonicals argue against a reading as procession-scenes. The adorants are shown either in direct interaction with the structure (#72, 73, 75) or in contexts that do not find more convincing readings (#74, 79, 80).¹⁶⁰ The Khania-Kastelli sealing (#77) depicts the woman reaching out to touch the construction.¹⁶¹ An argument from pictorial structure is invoked for including the Aplomata seal (#76)¹⁶² and the Agia Triada T138 sealing (#78)¹⁶³ in the cluster.

149 Nilsson 1950:153 sees a woman 'apparently blowing a triton-shell trumpet.' Younger 1988:37, 77 cat. nr. 61 with pl. XXIV.3 identifies her as an adolescent girl. N. Platon, in *CMS* II.3 nr. 7, interprets the woman as offering the triton shell.

150 Note the feet pointing to the right, suggesting that the woman has performed her ritual act and is moving away.

151 Paris Cabinet de Médailles. Dépôt du Louvre. AM 1844 (=A 1166). LH. *CMS* IX nr. 163. N1.12.

152 HMs 487/1-3. LM I B. *CMS* II.6 nr. 3. N1.10. Levi 1925-26:139 nr. 136, fig. 152, pl. XIV.

153 HMs 418. LM I. *CMS* II.8 nr. 273. N1.8.

154 Athens private coll. no inv. nr. LM II-III A1. *CMS* VS.1A nr. 75. The gesture G5 (fist to forehead) performed by the woman is also performed by the man and woman on the Ashmolean lentoid (#31), in the absence of movement, raising the possibility that the latter could be a quotation from a *Scene of Supplication* involving two adorants. In the absence of firmer indications it appears preferable to read it as a *Scene of Procession*. For G5 performed in movement, cf. Agia Triada T122 (#25).

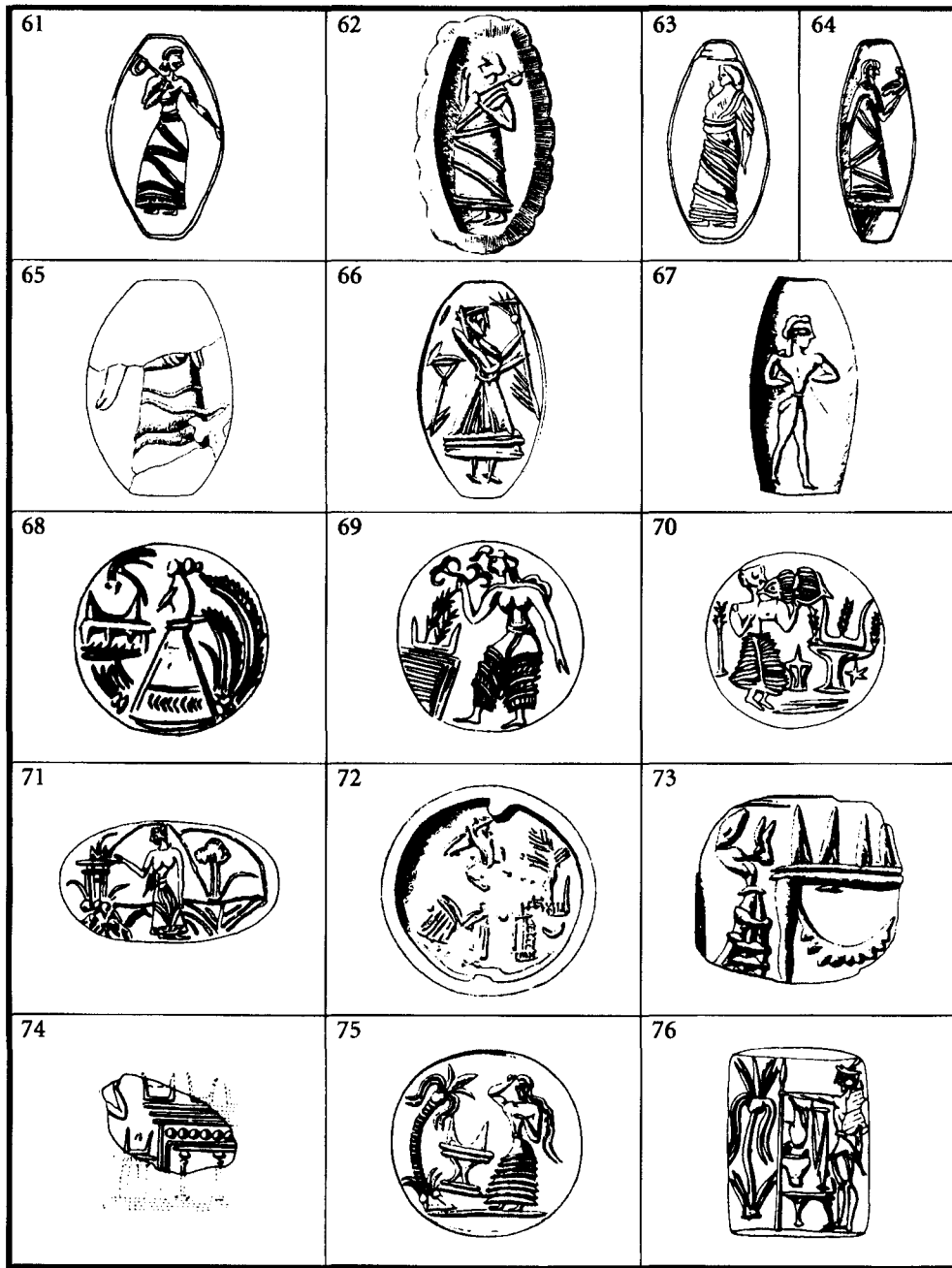
155 Naxos no inv. nr. LH III C. *CMS* V nr. 608. N6.9.

156 Khania 1025, 2027, 2055, 2059, 2090-2092. LM I. *CMS* VS.1A nr. 176. N6.2.

157 HMs 523. LM I. *CMS* II.6 nr. 2. N6.3. Levi 1925-26:140 nr. 138, fig. 154, pl. VIII.

158 HMs 544. LM I. *CMS* II.6 nr. 25.

159 Marinatos 1986:55 fig. 45. Not in *CMS* II.7.



VARIANT B

81. Agia Triada clay sealing T140.¹⁶⁴
 82. 'Mokhlos' steatite lentoid.¹⁶⁵
 83. Knossos steatite lentoid.¹⁶⁶
 84. Mycenae Lower town (grave) agate lentoid.¹⁶⁷
 85. Agia Triada clay sealing T119.¹⁶⁸
 86. Agia Triada clay sealing T119.¹⁶⁹

Four images depict a woman with two girls, either in front of a construction or in non-defined space. It is here argued that they form a variant to the female adorant approaching a construction, and therefore depict mortals.¹⁷⁰ The small figures also appear left and right of the seated deity on the Mycenae Ramp House ring,¹⁷¹ but this depiction's eclectic composition counsels caution in resorting to it as proof for their divine status.¹⁷² The wing-like extension on either side of the head on the Mycenae 'woman with little helpers' seal (#84) may appear non-anthropomorphic but are not ubiquitous for the image type. The two Agia Triada

160 The Little Palace sealing (#74) is too fragmentary to allow certainty, but what remains is close to Agia Triada T136 (#73). From the size of the construction it is evident that the number of figures to the left were restricted. On the Agia Triada sealing (#79) the author see part of a tree to the right of the woman, thus creating a scene rather similar to Agia Triada T138 (#78). The Kato Zakros sealing (#80) is a doubtful inclusion, primarily on the image structure rather than from a direct reading of the object to the right.

161 Niemeier 1989:181, 182 fig. 6 classifies the Khania-Kastelli sealing in his Group 6, depictions of deities. He feels the woman is shown turning away from the construction (in opposition to adorants on 168 fig. 1.1–6), and that her gesture is similar to that of the central woman on the Arkhanes ring (175 fig. 5.2), which he reads as a deity (a reading disputed by many, including Wedde 1992:188–190).

162 Some scholars understand the male figure as a deity: Niemeier 1989:183, Marinatos 1986:23 fig. 12, 1993:173 with 174 fig. 174. Whittaker, this volume, suggests a priest in charge of the sacrifice. Vermeule 1974:39, 58 understands the male as a warrior.

163 Niemeier 1989:181, 182 fig. 6.3 reads the woman as a deity.

164 HMs 505 *etc.* LM I. CMS II.6 nr. 1. N6.4.

165 HM 148. LM. CMS II.3 nr. 218. N6.5.

166 HM 1411. LM. CMS II.4 nr. 136.

167 NM 6235. LH III (?). CMS I nr. 159. N6.6.

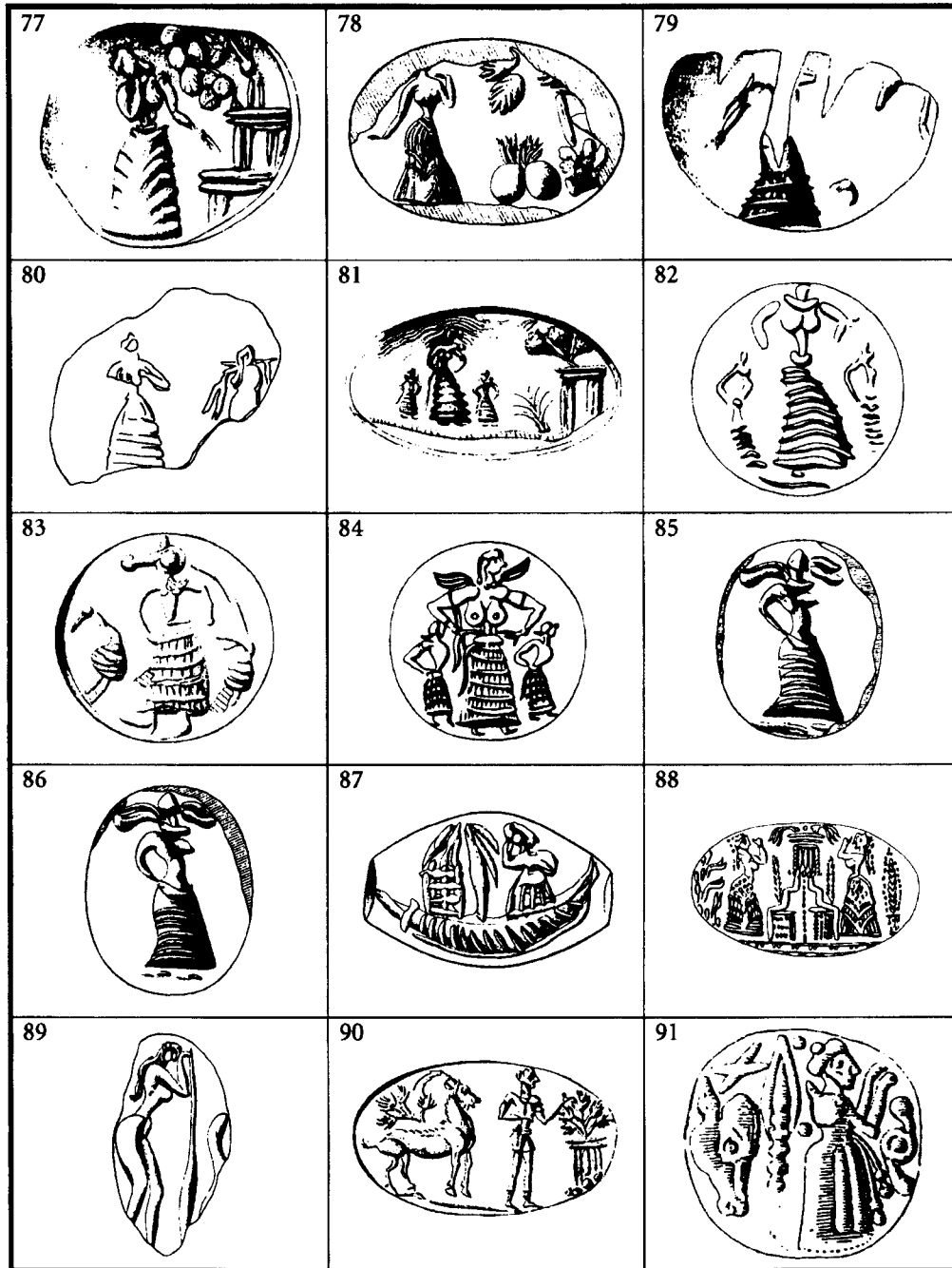
168 HMs 607, 609. LM I B. CMS II.6 nr. 22.

169 HMs 536, 537, 604, 605, 606, 608. LM I B. CMS II.6 nr. 23.

170 Niemeier 1989:181 and 182 fig. 6.4–6 claims the female to be divine. The recourse to the gesture, hands on hip, while attested for a deity on the Kato Zakros House A manifestation scene (HMs 47/1-3. LM I B; CMS II.7 nr. 1. N2.5), is not necessarily valid for the gold ring from Mycenae Chambertomb 91 (NM3179. LH II–III. CMS I nr. 126. N5.1) since a reading as deity for this figure is far from assured. Marinatos 1993:188 with fig. 194 and nn. 68–69 reads a high priestess.

171 NM 992; LH II. CMS I nr. 17. N4.1.

172 Wedde 1992:190–191.



sealings (#85–86) are here considered quotations from an image such as the Mycenae lentoid.¹⁷³

MARGINALS

87. Makrygialos serpentine amygdaloid.¹⁷⁴

88. Mycenae Chambertomb 91 gold ring.¹⁷⁵

89. Khania-Kastelli clay sealing.¹⁷⁶

90. Mycenae Chambertomb 84 gold ring.¹⁷⁷

91. Cretan lentoid seal.¹⁷⁸

The Makrygialos seal (#87) belongs to the small group of images depicting Minoan cult boats in which the watercraft is modeled on contemporary ship building practices, as opposed the group of fantastical craft.¹⁷⁹ But the palm-tree, construction and female figure duplicate the Variant A structure. The Mycenae ring (#88), in terms of pictorial structure a *Scene of Pyramidal Hierarchy*,¹⁸⁰ arranges the elements as mirror images along a central axis, vegetation + adorant + construction. The Kastelli sealing (#89) has been interpreted as the goddess of navigation with a steering-oar at the bow or stern of the craft,¹⁸¹ but also as an adorant invoking the deity in front of a sacred pole,¹⁸² in which case the scene should be read as a *Scene of Supplication*.¹⁸³ The Mycenae Chambertomb 84 ring (#90) shows a man touching the 'sacred tree' in the enclosure, a scene comparable to the Myrsinokhori lentoid (#69), but for the addition of the goat and a second vegetal element.¹⁸⁴ The Cretan lentoid (#91) depicts a female figure in a posture identical to that on the Agia Triada T136 sealing (#73) but with additions that suggest a sacrifice scene.¹⁸⁵

173 Verlinden 1985:144 reads a woman dressing for these and the Mycenae seal (#84), a reading not valid for the other three members of the group.

174 Agios Nikolaos 4653. LM I. CMS VS.1A nr. 55. N6.8. Wedde 2000:339 cat. nr. 907.

175 NM 3180. LH II–III. CMS I nr. 127. N1.7.

176 Khania 2117. LM I A. CMS VS.1A nr. 143. Wedde 2000:340 cat. nr. 909.

177 NM 3148. LH II–III. CMS I nr. 119. N1.13.

178 Evans 1928:33 fig. 15 (Evans dates to MM II on p.33), Marinatos 1986:43 fig. 26.

179 For the distinction, and the corpus, cf. Wedde 1997, 2000:173–199.

180 Cf. Wedde 1995a.

181 Boulotis 1989. Followed by Wedde 2000:340 cat. nr. 909.

182 Hallager and Vlasaki 1984:1–6.

183 The parallel drawn by Hallager and Vlasaki 1984:4 with the Ashmolean gold ring (OAM 1938.1127. LM. Evans 1901:170 fig. 48. N2.1) could suggest a quotation from a *Scene of Manifestation*, but the absent floating deity, the single most important element for recognizing such a composition, argues against doing so.

184 The goat may be understood as a sacrificial victim (cf. Marinatos 1986:12, Whittaker, this volume). This scene is to be contrasted to the Agia Triada woman with goat (#54).

Excursus on dance

Scholars have frequently invoked dance to explain the impression of rhythmic swaying or prescribed postures or ecstatic movement imparted by many figures in the corpus of Minoan and Mycenaean ritual glyptic imagery.¹⁸⁶ While it is quasi-certain that dance played a substantial role in cultic actions, elements of dance choreography do not in themselves contain sufficient classificatory eloquence to warrant a role in the cluster formation process. For, while figures that most scholars would without discomfort describe as ‘dancing’ can be identified in most of the isolated clusters, the instances sweep across all considerations of pictorial structure, and leave large numbers of figures that some may understand as ‘dancing’, others as engaging in stereotypic, ‘ritual’ postures, and others yet as mere movement (walking, running, *etc.*). Even allowing for a catch-all definition, ‘ritually significant posturing with codified gesticulation’, wide enough to allow touching and clutching objects, and thus bordering on the anarchy of modern avant-garde dance, would not contribute to a carefully reasoned classification—unless ‘dancing’ (in this wide sense) was raised to the superordinate principle of all Minoan and Mycenaean ritual representations and the clusters studied here and elsewhere deemed to form separate contexts within an overall ritual dance performance.

Before ignoring for the present purpose the scenes garnering more universal suffrage as depictions of dancing, it may be noted that scenes in which all the actors are dancing (in the widest sense) are few, and do not form a typologically distinct group (let alone a cluster in the sense in which the word is employed here). It is far more often a question of one or the other participant who could be described as engaging in dance-related ‘posturing with codified gesticulation’. In the *Scenes of Procession* only the Aidonia Beta (#3) ring among the canonicals, possible Aidonia Alpha (#7) in Variant A, the Mycenae Lower town sealing (#11) in Variant B, Aidonia Delta (#24), the Ashmolean lentoid (#30) and the Cabinet des Médailles lentoid (#33) in Variant C could be understood as scenes of dance, with it being necessary to distinguish, on the one hand, rhythmic swaying, from, on the other, a hieratic, stiffer movement with both arms raised on the Mycenae sealing (#11). Once a search for possible candidates has begun it is not possible to avoid contemplating the Agia Triada sealing T135 (#22): the central woman appears to ‘strut her stuff’, while the men could be waving their staffs in rhythmic movements. Among the single figures, the woman in the fleece skirt with the staff raised behind her head on the Vapheio amygdaloid (#58) is a certain (?) candidate for a

185 Marinatos 1986:43 is more specific: ‘the woman must be the ministrant of the cult which involves sacrifice expressed as hunting.’

186 Ulanowska 1993, Cane 2001. See relevant further literature quoted there.

dancer. In other words: identifying some scenes as depicting dancing, while excluding others, probably says more about the individual modern beholder than about dance in Minoan and Mycenaean ritual.¹⁸⁷ Rhythmic movement probably constitutes a significant activity in a procession, but must be deemed subordinate to the clustering process.¹⁸⁸

Summary discussion

The principal importance of gathering and classifying all representations of processions, and quotations from such scenes, on finger rings, seals and sealings, lies in the greater richness of information offered by the glyptic documents, compared to the remains of wall paintings. The large scale compositions, as attested by the fragments, appear to prioritize the gift bearer, whereas the glyptic scenes offer a holistic view: context, simple adorants, hierarchically superior participants/officiants, bearers of ritual paraphernalia, bringers of sacrificial animals (?), dignitaries. The small support, and the findspots scattered throughout the Minoan and Mycenaean realms, coupled with the realization that these scenes constitute voices from at least two religions, not a single system of belief, place a questionmark to attempts at reconstructing a 'typical' Minoan or Mycenaean ritual procession. Yet it would be equally false to create checklists for each religion, a presence/absence matrix for the various types of scenes—said types being analytical tools of the modern beholder rather than categories of ancient thought. The evidence is skewed in favor of such sites that have produced archives of sealings, such as Agia Triada and Kato Zakros, or a large number of graves, such as Mycenae.

While statistics are the Pavlov's dog of image classification and analysis, it should not go unnoted that the *Scenes of Procession*, with some 66 members, constitute the largest separate cluster in the Minoan and Mycenaean glyptic repertoire. How many different factors, from cultural to depositionary/recovery-related, have been involved is impossible to establish. Certain is however that despite its size, working with the cluster rapidly becomes a study of absences—the gift bearers being only the most obvious. Whereas there are clear traces of a hierarchy among the participants (in the cluster-encompassing, fictitious, modern reconstruction of a procession), the certainty that the upper-most echelons are all present remains elusive: the documents are too few; too little is known about millenary and sartorial hierarchies; insignias of rank, be they depicted on glyptic supports, or extant

187 It is symptomatic that the scene most frequently cited as depicting dancing, the Isopata ring (HM precious metal 424. LM III A1. CMS II.3 nr. 51. N5.9), has recently been questioned: Cane 2001:42–44.

188 A more detailed study of dance must be eschewed in the present framework.

as artefacts, cannot be ranked internally, both due to their low numbers and their sprinkling through time; favored provenances (Agia Triada, Kato Zakros) may not necessarily provide evidence valid for the centers of power.

For all this study's necessary summariness, it is, nonetheless, suggested that the isolation of the *Scenes of Supplication* from the *Scenes of Procession* offers two further moments in the ritual action that was the Minoan and Mycenaean religions. It is argued that four of the clusters analyzed to date depict separate acts, in 'cartoon-form' as it were, in the endeavor of mortals to gain an audience with the divine sphere.

1. The *Scenes of Procession* depict the movement from the secular to the sacred realm, that is the lieu where past experience indicates that the divinity is liable to manifest her/himself. The evidence suggests that this is a communal activity.
2. The *Scenes of Supplication* appear to form the first step upon arrival, the initial offering of a gift, placed on an altar. The pictorial formula involves a single mortal, but it cannot be excluded that the action is repeated.
3. *Scenes of Manifestation* depict the moment the deity manifests itself as a small floating figure. Variants to this cluster combine two stages, both the appearance of the deity and the ecstatic acts that precede this.
4. *Scenes of Adoration* document the activities of the adorants at the feet of the manifest and enthroned deity.

A reconstruction such as this must be riddled by loopholes and inconsistencies caused as much by analytical shortcomings as by absences and ambiguities in the available data. This is particularly obvious in the reconfigurations that occur repeatedly: when the gift is offered the absence of gift bearers is forgotten, the possible sacrificial animals no longer appear, and the paraphernalia are elsewhere; when the deity is being adored the dignitaries have vanished into thin air and any suggestion (via the floating divine figure) that the deity is male is conveniently ignored. Some of these analytical *gaffes* can be smoothed over by arguing for the insertion between Step 2 and 3 of full-blown sacrificial scenes, not accounted for in the present scheme, but well-known and -studied.¹⁸⁹ Yet the enduring impression is that of the siren-calls of the many unexplained mysteries beckoning the modern beholder back to the drawing-board.

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189 Marinatos 1986.

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Note: CMS V Suppl. 3 appeared too late to be consulted for this paper.

The cult of Athena Alea at Tegea and its transformation over time

Mary E. Voyatzis

Introduction

AS A RESULT of the recent Norwegian excavations at the sanctuary of Athena Alea at Tegea (1990–1996), we are better able to understand the developments at this site over a period of many centuries from the tenth century onwards (fig. 1). Although there are still gaps in our knowledge as well as tantalizing evidence of even earlier activity at the site, we can now, in any case, draw some more specific conclusions about developments at Tegea and the deity honored there over the centuries.

In this paper, I propose that one can distinguish four main phases of development at the sanctuary of Athena Alea at Tegea:

Phase I: an early Iron Age phase, which spanned the period from the late tenth century through the mid-eighth century and was most likely a pre-architectural stage.

Phase II: a Geometric expansion phase from the late eighth through the mid-seventh centuries BC, during which time two consecutive apsidal buildings were built and masses of votives dedicated.

Phase III: the first monumental phase in the Archaic to Classical periods (600–395 BC), when a monumental stone temple was built and in use.

Phase IV: a late Classical phase when the second temple was built, designed by Skopas of Paros, and in use from *ca.* 350 BC till the end of antiquity. It was no doubt the most impressive monument erected at the site.¹

The results of the Norwegian campaign at Tegea are currently being prepared for final publication. The author is responsible for the publication of the majority of small finds uncovered in these excavations; the other principal investigators and specialists are in the process of writing their respective sections as well. It is therefore conceivable that some of the conclusions presented in this paper will ultimately be changed or modified in the final publication. It is the author's inten-

tion, however, to take a broader view of the cult over time and to synthesize the developments at the site against the backdrop of our knowledge of other Greek sanctuaries. A general model of sanctuary growth is thus presented, one that is flexible enough to allow for any fine-tuning in the conclusions of the final report on Tegea.²

In the analysis below, evidence for cult activity is presented for each of the phases. The author uses the following definition of *cult*: 'a system or community of religious worship and ritual, especially one focusing on a single deity or spirit.'³ It is important to keep in mind, however, that while a cult may focus on a single deity, the evidence suggests that a deity is typically not static over time at any given site. Rather, the nature or perception of the god is fluid and tends to undergo transformations over the centuries. The cult at the sanctuary of Athena Alea at Tegea reveals such development and may provide a model of cult development to be applied to the study of other Greek sanctuaries.

Phase I: the Early Iron Age

The recent Norwegian excavations at Tegea have brought to light this very important phase, which up until recently was essentially unknown at the site. We can now date the earliest secure evidence for cult activity at Tegea to the late tenth century and possibly even earlier. Although Mycenaean evidence has been uncovered at the site (both in the bothros and in the eighth century temples), this analysis begins with the early Iron Age Phase at Tegea, since the Mycenaean remains are invariably mixed with later material. It is thus not yet clear what sort of activity was going on at Tegea in the Late Bronze Age.⁴

- 1 The Germans were the first to excavate the site in the 1880s, Milchhofer 1880:52–69, Dörpfeld 1883:274–285. The French took over the site *ca.* 1900 in a couple of campaigns by G. Mendel and Ch. Dugas. See Mendel 1901:241–281, Dugas 1921:345–445. The site was briefly excavated by the Greeks in 1908 (Romaioi 1909:303–316) and then again, more recently in 1976–1977 (unpublished). Since 1990, the Norwegian Institute at Athens has been carrying out an international excavation project at Tegea. This project has been funded by various agencies to whom we are most grateful, including the Norwegian Research Council and the Swedish Research Council of Humanities, the Norwegian Institute at Athens, the National Geographic Society, the University of Arizona, and the Samuel H. Kress Foundation. For a more complete history of the investigations at Tegea, see Voyatzis 1990:20–28, Østby 1986:75–102, Østby *et al.* 1994:89–94 and Nordquist and Voyatzis forthcoming.
- 2 The results of the Norwegian campaign will be published in the *Monographs from the Norwegian Institute at Athens* in two volumes: Volume I deals with the excavation of the temple and Volume II focuses on the excavation of the northern sector.
- 3 The definition comes from the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (Boston 1981).

The earliest stratified evidence from Tegea was found in the bothros, or sacred pit, located in the pronaos area of the later fourth century temple, and sealed below the metal workshop of late eighth century date (fig. 1). Underneath the surface layers of the bothros, eight distinct strata have been identified. They contain masses of pottery sherds, some miniature pots, as well as small bronzes (discs, rings, sheets), terracottas (wreaths, figurines, *etc.*), glass beads, a bit of gold, and animal bones, both burnt and unburned, mixed in with the finds.⁵

The ceramic remains from the bothros range in date from Protogeometric/'Laconian Protogeometric'-Late Geometric (*ca.* 925–750 BC). The strata of the bothros allow for the reconstruction of a stratigraphical sequence in this area.⁶ In the lowest level (Layer 8), the material consists primarily of Late PG/early EG sherds with some Mycenaean material mixed in as well. There is also a fair amount of 'Laconian Protogeometric' (or 'Laconian PG') in this layer (fig. 2). Layer 7 consists mostly of EG and 'Laconian PG' sherds, with some PG and Mycenaean mixed in. Layer 6 contains EG, MGI, and 'Laconian PG,' with some earlier material as well. The layers continue to include later material as they proceed to the top of the bothros, with the topmost level (Layer 1) containing a small amount of LGI-II material.

Of particular note is the large amount of 'Laconian PG,' which had previously been found almost solely in Lakonia. This distinctive type of ceramics, best represented at Amyklai (in Lakonia), spans the later tenth, ninth and early eighth centuries and is characterized by horizontal ribs or grooves, distinctive rectilinear ornament, often in two superimposed registers, an unusual repertoire of shapes, and often a shiny, metallic glaze. The discovery of this material at Tegea in association with standard PG-LG, allows for an analysis of the development of Laconian PG from *ca.* 950–750 BC.⁷

The finds from the Early Iron Age Phase at the sanctuary are significant because they indicate that cult activity was in all likelihood taking place in this vicinity from the late tenth century. This is reflected in the pottery, small finds, and animal

- 4 For Mycenaean pieces from the temple area, see Voyatzis 1990:64–65, Voyatzis 2002, Østby *et al.* 1994:117–119. For Mycenaean remains from the bothros, see the forthcoming publication (*supra* n. 2).
- 5 Burnt bones begin in Layer 4 (dated to 875–800 BC) from what we can tell. For a general description of the bothros, see Voyatzis 1997:349–350.
- 6 *Ibid.* Dr. G. Nordquist is responsible for publishing the results from the excavations of the bothros (and the pronaos and cella areas generally) in the forthcoming NIA publication (*supra* n. 2). Dr. Nordquist believes that the material was dumped in the bothros periodically from somewhere nearby, presumably from the early altar, which has not yet been found.
- 7 Coulson 1985:29–84, Cartledge 2002:71–77, Coldstream 1968:213–215. We are unable to trace the development of 'Laconian PG' from Laconian sites in the same way since it is essentially the only type of pottery found in the region till the eighth century.

bones, and also in the oily nature of the soil. The particular identity of deity is rather more difficult to infer for this period, however. Indeed, it is doubtful that one can see a clear correlation between the small finds and the nature of the deity worshipped at any early Iron Age site. In any case, it appears that the cult was probably expressed in the open air during this phase. Much of the ceramic material is Lakonian in style, indicating strong connections with this southern region during the early Iron Age. It is even conceivable that the region of Lakonia (informally) extended this far north to include Tegea in the Early Iron Age.⁸ The possibility for earlier (Mycenaean) activity at the site is also strong, though further excavation is needed to confirm this suggestion. Continued excavation would also serve to enhance our knowledge of the nature and extent of early Iron Age activity at the sanctuary.

Phase II: the Geometric expansion

During this phase, we have the earliest architectural evidence from the site. Excavations inside the cella of the fourth century temple have yielded the remains of two, superimposed, apsidal buildings of wattle and daub of eighth century date (fig. 1).⁹ On the basis of the associated finds, the earlier building can be dated to 720–700; it is small, narrow, apsidal, wattle and daub, and has no stone foundations. The later one can be dated to 700–680/670; it is a longer, wider, wattle and daub structure and also lacks a stone socle. The remains of its northern anta wall were found as well as evidence for several phases of use. During the last season of excavation, in a trial trench, evidence for the surface of a third, even earlier building, possibly of mid-eighth century date, was uncovered. There is also the possibility of some sort of a transitional temple, dated to 675–625. The evidence for this building is meagre, however, consisting only of a stone platform in the apse area on top of the latest Geometric temple and below the Archaic temple, and some distinct cuttings in the northern section wall.¹⁰

In addition to the temples, there is evidence for a metal workshop, used in conjunction with the late eighth century temples. The workshop was found in the pro-naos area of the fourth century BC temple, on top of the bothros (fig. 1). The remains consist of a series of clay-lined pits, soot, charcoal, and scraps from bronze working. An analysis of these bronze scraps is currently being carried out at the Demokritos Laboratory in Athens.¹¹ The finds from the workshop consist of Late

8 Voyatzis 1999:144.

9 Nordquist 2002, Østby *et al.* 1994:98–107, Biers 1996:20, fig. 1.5, 116–117.

10 Østby 1997:79–107, Østby *et al.* 1994:103.

11 For a preliminary account, see Østby *et al.* 1994:103–104.

Geometric-Early Protocorinthian pottery, and various small objects. It is interesting that the location of the bronze workshop is situated directly on top of the sealed bothros and in front of the eighth century temples. The location of the workshop so close to the temples indicates that the manufacture of small bronze objects occurred within the sacred precinct and suggests that this activity must have been an integral part of the cult in the eighth century.

The votive material from Phase II comprises an extensive collection. The bronze objects are the most abundant of all categories of votives and include animal and human figurines, jewellery (pins, rings, beads, fibulae, pendants, *etc.*), sheets, shields, plaques, *etc.* (figs. 3–4). There are also objects of iron, gold, other metals, terracottas, glass, bone/ivory, and other materials.¹²

The ceramic evidence from Phase II consists primarily of sherds of Late Geometric through Middle Protocorinthian date (*ca.* 750–660 BC). The late eighth century pottery now reveals a stronger Argive character and the Laconian influence/imports appear to be less than in Phase I (fig. 5). There are many distinctive miniature vessels found in the phase as well.¹³ One sees a growing amount of Corinthian influence in the pottery in Phase II, with respectable amounts of EPC through MPC imports and imitations found inside the apsidal temples.¹⁴

During this phase, the cult reveals more recognizable and tangible elements, such as the two modest, apsidal temples, masses of votives, and a local bronze workshop. The evidence reflects greater wealth in the community and suggests a unity of purpose among its worshippers, with a more coordinated effort to honour the deity in a visible way. I maintain that the identity of the local goddess, Alea, is also becoming clearer in this phase. I have argued elsewhere that votive objects may reflect something about the nature of the deity worshipped at a given site, and in particular at this site. In the main, the dedications suggest that the local deity possessed attributes of a goddess of fertility, a mistress of animals, and, also, a protectress of the town.¹⁵

Increased economic development is suggested by the existence of an on-site metal workshop, where small bronze votives were manufactured to supply worshippers with gifts for the goddess. The apparent increase in Argive connections, reflected in the LG pottery (as well as in the other finds), could suggest a conscious movement away from association with Lakonia, which was becoming an increasingly powerful and aggressive neighbour.¹⁶

12 *Ibid.*, 117–119, Voyatzis 1990:Chs. 4–6, 2002.

13 Hammond 1998.

14 For the eighth and seventh century pottery from Tegea, see Østby *et al.* 1994:126–131, Voyatzis 1990:Ch. 3, 2002.

15 Voyatzis 1990:269–73, Østby *et al.* 1994:134, Voyatzis 1998:133–147.

Phase III: the Archaic-Early Classic period

During Phase III, the first monumental stone temple was built and in use at the site. Our knowledge about this phase has been greatly enhanced by the work of Erik Østby, who, in 1986, identified the remains inside the cella as belonging to the Archaic temple, and not a Byzantine church, as the early French excavators had thought.¹⁷ Subsequent excavations at the site, under Dr. Østby's direction, have served to confirm his identification of these remains as the two rows of foundation walls of the interior colonnade of the late seventh century temple (fig. 1). This temple was probably built around 625–600 and had a long life, until 395, when it burnt down. Its construction represents a major transformation of the site, since it was the first monumental building at Tegea. Østby offers a reconstruction of it as an early Doric temple, made of wood, mudbrick and some Doliana marble. It rested on stone foundations with the same East-West alignment as the earlier eighth century temples and the later fourth century temple. It probably had a peristyle of 6 x 18 columns and a double row of columns on the inside of the cella. When it was erected, this building must have been considered 'state of the art,' but, by the end of the fifth century, it may well have seemed somewhat old-fashioned in terms of its size, proportions, and materials.

The votives dating to this phase were found primarily in the area to the north of the temple, where the Norwegian team also conducted extensive excavations. They consist of an abundance of bronze and lead jewellery items and statuettes, bone and ivory pendants, terracotta figurines, miniature vessels, and pottery of Archaic and Classical date (figs. 6–7).¹⁸ In the Archaic period, the sanctuary extended into the region to the north of the temple, where there is considerable evidence for offerings, animal bones, and simple, modest architectural constructions, such as huts. This material is currently being evaluated and we hope to learn more about the use of the northern area when the study is completed.¹⁹

In terms of the worship of Athena Alea, one could argue that the cult was now expressed in a more impressive and tangible form in this phase, with the erection of a monumental temple, and an apparently greater connection between the local goddess, Alea, and the Panhellenic deity Athena.²⁰ The dedication of the late sixth century bronze figurine of an armed Athena at the site could be seen to represent

16 Voyatzis 1990:144.

17 Østby 1986:75–102, Østby *et al.* 1994:89–141.

18 *Ibid.* 117–139, Voyatzis 1990:Chs. 4–6, 2002, Hammond 1998.

19 This region was excavated by J.-M. Luce, C. Tarditi, and K. Ødegård. See preliminary report in Østby *et al.* 1994:107–117. It appears that when the fourth century temple was being constructed at the site, large amounts of fill from the Archaic temple were dumped in the northern area.

20 Jost 1985:368–70, Voyatzis 1990:269–273.

this synthesis (fig. 7).²¹ It is also arguable that in this phase Tegea comprised a united community (a *polis*), responsible for building the temple and maintaining the cult place.²² The sanctuary would thus have provided a major economic, political, social, and religious focus for community as a whole.

Phase IV: the Late Classical period (350 BC–end of antiquity)

During the early part of this phase, *ca.* 350 BC, the famous marble temple in honour of Athena Alea was built at Tegea, replacing the Archaic structure, which burnt down *ca.* 395 BC. Skopas is credited with designing the building, and, since he was one of the most famous sculptors/architects of the period, it may have been considered a major triumph to commission him for this project at Tegea. According to Pausanias (8.45.5), this was the greatest temple in the Peloponnese in terms of its size and its entire construction. It must have been thought another ‘state of the art’ building at the site, with internal Corinthian capitals, Doliana marble, elaborate sculptural decoration, *etc.*²³ The remains of this building can be seen at the site today, though they clearly do not do it justice.

On the basis of the many studies on the Classical temple, we know a number of facts about this building. It had a front ramp, facing east, and a rather unusual side ramp, facing towards the north. Its superstructure was built entirely of Doliana marble; it had a peristyle of 6 x 14 Doric columns, which reveal *entasis*. There were two rows of Corinthian half columns inside the cella. The building had a low entablature and was longer than most fourth century temples, probably because it incorporated basic elements of the plan of the Archaic predecessor, on top of which it was built.²⁴

The construction of the fourth century temple coincided with the flourishing of the *polis* of Tegea. Around the same time, there is also evidence for the building of the city walls, *ca.* 370, the *agora*, the theatre, the stadium, and various other buildings typical of a Classical Greek city. Scholars tend to agree that the sanctuary of Athena Alea was included inside the city walls when they were constructed.²⁵

In terms of cult practices, we assume that there was a continuation of earlier ritual practices based on the established formula. From what we can tell, this phase had a long life, extending into the early centuries of the Christian era, when the

21 Dugas 1921:359–63, no. 58.

22 Heine Nielsen 1996, Voyatzis 1999:143.

23 Dugas *et al* 1924, Norman 1984:169–194, Pakkanen 1998:8–9.

24 *Ibid.*

25 For the *polis* of Tegea, see Heine Nielsen 1996:280–285. For the location of the city walls see Voyatzis (1999:143) *contra* Callmer (1943:115).

temple fell out of use. What is important for us to keep in mind is that the elaborate fourth century temple represents the culmination of many centuries of developments at Tegea. As we saw above, the site began as a modest local cult place in the early Iron Age and was transformed over the centuries. By the Archaic period, it had become a major regional shrine with a fine, monumental temple, and, by the late Classical period, it must have been one of the premiere sanctuary sites in the Peloponnese. The building of the fourth century temple coincides with the flourishing of the city-state of Tegea and, in many ways, symbolically expresses the achievements and status of this *polis* in tangible and monumental form.

Other Greek sanctuary sites

The sanctuary of Athena Alea at Tegea is located in the Peloponnese in the region of Arkadia. In this section, we briefly examine how other sanctuaries in this region compare to Tegea in terms of developments over time. We also look at Greek sites generally, to see if we can determine any pattern for the Phases I–IV, as identified at Tegea. One wonders if sanctuary development in the Greek world was so idiosyncratic at each site that no overall patterns can be discerned, or if it is conceivable that Tegea could provide something of a model for helping us to understand developments at other Greek sanctuaries as well.

Tegea is a rather unusual site in Arkadia in terms of its evidence for early cult activity.²⁶ Very few other sites have yielded early Iron Age (Phase I) remains. Most Arkadian sanctuaries reveal evidence for modest cult activity in the eighth or seventh century at the earliest (*i.e.*, Phase II), in the form of votive offerings. These include Lousoi, Mavriki, Gortsouli, Asea, Petrovouni, Alipheira, Orchomenos, and Bassai. There are as yet no examples of architecture from eighth through early seventh century Arkadian sanctuaries besides Tegea. Temples typically begin to be constructed in Phase III in Arkadia. In the late seventh century we have examples from Gortsouli, Asea, and Bassai, and in the sixth century, from Mavriki, Lousoi, Orchomenos, Pallantion, Kotilion, Petrovouni and Gortsouli (second temple). During Phase IV, there is rebuilding of older structures at some sites, such as at Bassai, Lousoi, and Petrovouni; there is also occasionally some new building, where previously there had been no evidence for earlier temples, such as at Alipheira (the Asklepeion) and Lykosoura. Tegea thus seems advanced in terms of architectural developments compared to other sites in Arkadia, but this may be due in part to its location, on a fertile, mountain plateau in southeast Arkadia, its proximity to Argos and Sparta, and its growth in relation to these major *poleis*.²⁷

26 For developments at Arkadian sanctuaries generally, see Voyatzis 1990:28–61, 1995:271–283, and 1999:132–140.

Viewed within Greece overall, Tegea's development seems more typical, although one continues to see a great variety of patterns in the excavated remains of sanctuary sites. Phase I is the most elusive but probably existed at more sites than we know. Early Iron Age activity is becoming increasingly better documented and understood as investigations continue in the Greek world. During this period, there was likely cult activity in open-air altars at Samos, Amyklai, Olympia, Isthmia, the Argive Heraion, and other sites.²⁸ Phase II is well-represented at most major Greek sanctuary sites and reflects a period of significant expansion throughout the Greek world. Recent scholarship by A.M. Snodgrass, F. de Polignac, C. Morgan and others show the importance of this formative phase in the development of Greek society.²⁹ There are masses of eighth century votives and pottery uncovered at these sites and often, early, modest temples, most of which are tied to a community of sorts. Evidence for activity in this phase can be seen at many sites, such as Artemis Orthia (Sparta), Argive Heraion, Samos, Olympia, Delphi, Delos, Eretria, Thermon, Perachora, Tiryns, *etc.* Those sanctuaries which develop into panhellenic sites (*i.e.*, Olympia, Delphi, and Delos) tend to be slower in acquiring temples, but they still yield large numbers of votives.

During Phase III we typically see the erection of the first monumental temples in sanctuaries throughout the Greek world. This construction is often linked to political developments in communities (such as the rise of the *polis*, *etc.*) or, in the case of panhellenic sanctuaries, to exceptional religious importance. Examples of early monumental temples are found at Corinth, Isthmia, Thermon, Argive Heraion (Argos), Artemis Orthia, (Sparta), Olympia, Samos, Corfu, Athens Acropolis, *etc.* Phase IV is often characterized by a rebuilding at sites for various reasons (destructions, natural catastrophes, enlargements of sanctuaries, *etc.*) in the Classical-Hellenistic periods, but, sometimes, temples are built for the first time in this period. Phase IV sites include Nemea, Argive Heraion, Epidauros, Olympia (temple of Zeus), Athens Acropolis, *etc.*³⁰

Although the exact dates for these phases vary from site to site, and in some cases, not every phase is present, one can still see a relatively consistent pattern of development at all of them. In terms of growth, the typical model at most Greek sanctuaries is that of a *temenos* and simple altar at first, and later, an expansion of the sanctuary to the west, with the addition of a temple in this western part.³¹

27 Voyatzis 1999:150–153.

28 Coldstream 1977:317–340; see now also Mazarakis Ainian 1997. In some cases there is also evidence that modest buildings were associated with early Iron Age cult activity (*i.e.*, Nichoria).

29 Snodgrass 1980, de Polignac 1995, Morgan 1997:168–198.

30 Lawrence 1996:106–150.

31 Bergquist 1967:112–114.

There are also indications that the manufacture of bronzes (and objects of other materials) was occurring within sanctuaries from the Bronze Age onwards, suggesting that there was an important link between cult activity and production of offerings at many sites.³²

Perhaps the clearest distinctions can be seen between *polis* and panhellenic (or interstate) sanctuaries.³³ The latter frequently had a much wider clientele and attracted pilgrims for a variety of reasons (athletic contests, oracles, or specific festivals), but one can, in any case, observe similar stages of development as at the *polis* sanctuaries. In the case of the state sanctuaries, important components for their growth as well as for the growth of the community were the laying claim to land and the unification of people around a common deity, who protected their interests. In both state and panhellenic sanctuaries, however, we often see the evolution from a modest local shrine to a very visible, monumental and tangible cult by 600 BC or so (Phases I–III). The strength and importance of the cult must have played a role in this development, as did the needs of the worshippers, the geographical location of the site, and the political setting. The nature of the deity also seems to evolve and to acquire more recognizable, uniform traits during these early phases. By the Classical period (Phase IV), the purpose of building (or rebuilding) was to create a temple that would impress and endure, and many of the temples did both long after they fell out of use. Even as ruins, these structures have continued to impress and inspire people through the ages.

Conclusions

As we saw above, the cult of Athena Alea was expressed in different ways over the course of 1000 years, probably beginning as a cult primarily of a local fertility deity at a modest site, and evolving into the worship of a Panhellenic city goddess at a monumental sanctuary. Similar sorts of developments can be observed throughout the Greek world, though, as we saw, there is great variation.

In general, we could say that Phase I began sometime after the eleventh century, following the collapse of the Mycenaean civilization, when religious developments appear to have been much more regional and idiosyncratic than in the Late Bronze Age. In this period we have limited evidence for small-scale, local cult activity at a number of sites in the Greek world. By Phase II (in the eighth century), sanctuaries were being established or enlarged, and modest temples were being erected at many sites. The poems of Homer and Hesiod were composed and provided a clas-

32 Rutkowski 1986:194–195, Mattusch 1977:357, Huber 1991:137–154, Rostocker and Gebhard 1980:347–363, Risberg 1992:33–40.

33 Snodgrass 1980:55–58, de Polignac 1995.

sification of the gods, indicating a divine nature or essence. The archaeological evidence from the early sanctuaries, however, suggests that the religious world of eighth century Greece was more complex in nature, blending old and new elements in a variety of ways. In Phase III we see the construction of the first monumental temples all over the Greek world. In Phase IV we have the rebuilding of these monumental temples on an even grander scale at many sites, but, in a few cases, temples were being acquired for the first time in the Classical to Hellenistic periods.

The archaeological evidence suggests that the perception of the deity worshipped at any given site changed over time. This evolution was expressed in the physical layout of the sanctuary as well as in the nature and extent of the votive offerings. Ultimately, the expression of the cult was shaped by the needs of the worshipping groups, exposure and adherence to panhellenic models, and the endurance of local religious beliefs and requirements.

In sum, while it is clear that there is no 'one size fits all' formula or model that can suit all Greek sanctuaries, it is important to note that these religious sites underwent transformations over the centuries and that the cults were expressed differently at different times. These expressions reflect, to a certain extent, the customs dictated by the times, the varying degrees of conformity to panhellenic models, and the existence of regional preferences. Despite these variations and the resulting idiosyncrasies evident in the cults, there are some common patterns. The most basic pattern discernable at the majority of Greek sites is a development, in various phases, from a modest shrine on honour of a broadly defined deity into a monumental sanctuary in honour of a specifically defined deity, over the course of many centuries. I thus conclude that the recent Norwegian excavations at the sanctuary of Athena Alea at Tegea provide us with ample evidence to create a good working model of Greek sanctuary development during the first millennium BC.

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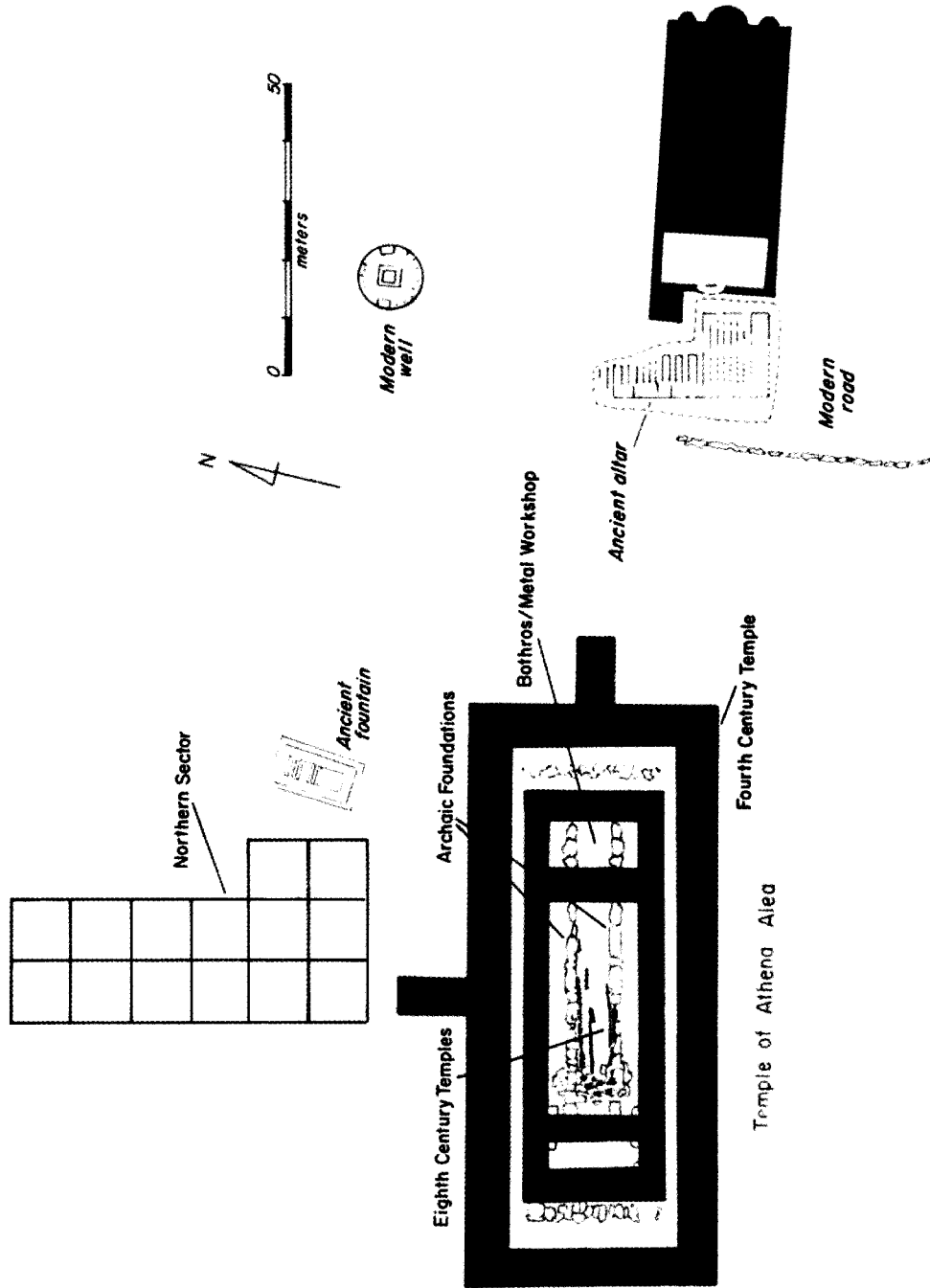


Fig. 1: Plan of the sanctuary of Athena Alea at Tegea with the remains of the two eighth century temples indicated inside the fourth century cella (drawing: L. Kain).

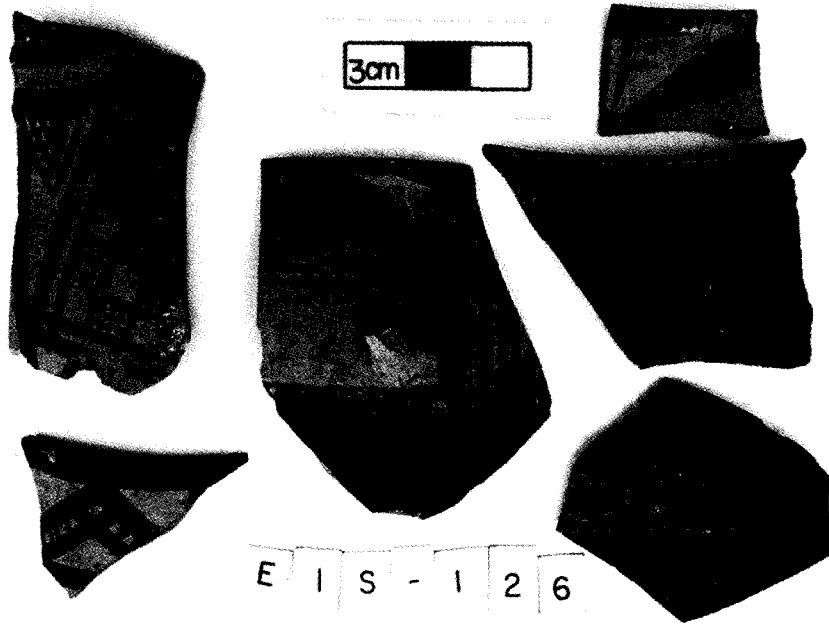


Fig. 2: Laconian Protogeometric sherds from the bothros within the pronaos (photo: D. Carlson).
The Tegea Museum.

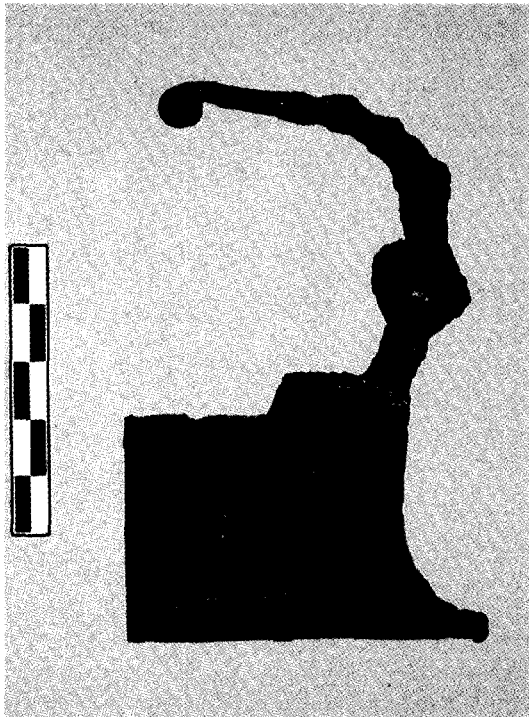


Fig. 3: Geometric bronze fibula from the
cella (photo: D. Carlson).
The Tegea Museum.

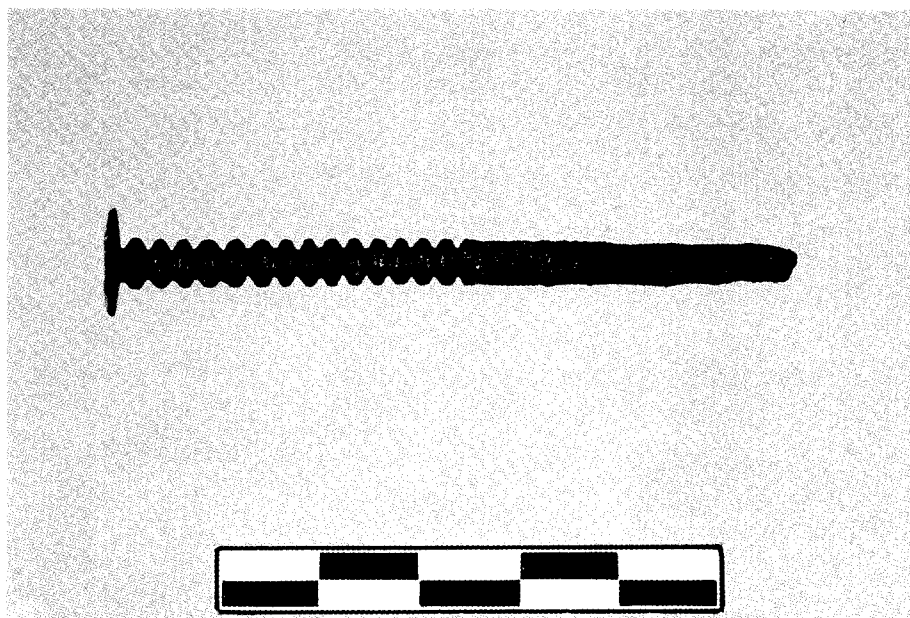


Fig. 4: Geometric bronze pin from the cella (photo: D. Carlson). The Tegea Museum.

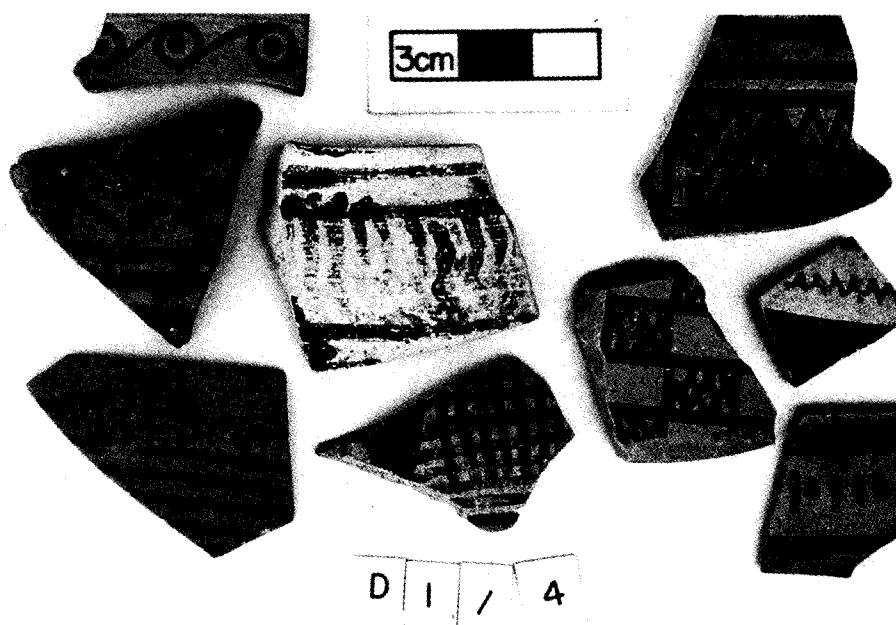


Fig. 5: Late Geometric sherds from the cella (photo: J. Bakke). The Tegea Museum.



Fig. 6: Archaic lead female figurine from the northern sector (photo: D. Carlson).
The Tegea Museum.



Fig. 7: Archaic bronze figurine of Athena (photo: M.E. Voyatzis; see Dugas 1921:359–363 no. 58.). National Museum of Athens.

DISCUSSION

D. Handelman: I'd like to come back to the very beginning: the use of cult. Your use of cult seems to presume community, and I would think that community presupposes social organization. So I would like to know what the evidence is for social organization, community, and therefore cult. Or is the social construction you're using one that assumes that given a temple, in order to support that temple in various ways there had to have been a community and therefore social organization? What is the logic of your thinking?

M. Voyatzis: In the eighth century we start to see a movement towards the *polis*, the city-state. We can actually see a number of sanctuaries. Not all sanctuaries are connected to a *polis*. Panhellenic sanctuaries such as Olympia, Delphi and Delos do not have *poleis*— and often they do not have early temples at all. The places where a *polis* is established—in later periods very clearly with stoas, a stadium, and temples, and so on—there are often signs of cult activity already in the eighth century. We can trace that pretty well to Argos, Sparta, Corinth, where there is also evidence from cemeteries and other constructions that there was a city-state of some sort. Tegea is in an interesting position because it is in Arkadia, which is not thought to be a center of *polis* development. However, it is on the crossroads between Lakonia and Argos, it is on the eastern frontier, and it seems to have been more advanced than some of the western parts of Arkadia. Tegea was exposed to more standard conventions. I think that the early appearance of temples and the community are very closely linked—regardless of whether you call the community a *polis* or a town or whatever. You need to have a certain amount of community involvement. Alternatively, if you have a Panhellenic sanctuary, you could have a number of different communities being responsible. In those cases we usually see only later architectural development.

D. Handelman: But in the case of Tegea, do you have direct evidence for the existence of a *polis*?

M. Voyatzis: At this stage we do not have eighth century evidence anywhere else than around the temple, but we have not excavated anywhere else. However, as we speak there is a survey project [the Norwegian Arcadia Survey, directed by Dr. K. Ødegård] planned for the summer, which will be looking for this kind of evidence: the *polis*, the people who are using the sanctuary. We want to go beyond our focus on the temple and find out who were the people frequenting the site. From the later period we have remains of the town wall, the *agora*, etc.

D. Handelman: What you might find then is the development of what you're calling a cult along the way, and not necessarily early evidence for the existence of it.

M. Voyatzis: I think the cult was there before there was a formal community. In Phase I there was a small cult. As we continue we have the community becoming more closely knit.

D. Handelman: In the initial phases of the temple it attracted a variety of worshippers, but that doesn't then presuppose a cult. It presupposes a collection of worshippers without any necessary social relationships between them in the early phase.

M. Voyatzis: I think we can tell from the material remains—especially in the early phase—that it is consistent.

D. Handelman: Okay.

S. Georgoudi: Many years ago I studied the sacred cattle of Athena Alea on the base of a fourth century inscription in the local dialect. It contains the expression *ἱερά πρόβατα* but not in the sense only of sheep. There are officials such as the *ἱερομένεμοι* who organize all of that. I studied this inscription in the context of transhumance. This inscription, and others, show a pastoral activity not only of the sanctuary (these animals are the property of the sanctuary), but also economic activity in the sense that other, profane, cattle could pass on the sacred land on the payment of a fine. I would like to know if we have found any traces capable of showing this kind of activity of the sanctuary.

M. Voyatzis: At the moment I can't think of any relevant evidence.

M. Jameson: I did not hear mention of cattle bones.

M. Voyatzis: There are cattle bones. In the bothros deposit I'm not sure, I would have to check my notes, but in the cella there were cattle bones.

M. Jameson: It would be surprising if there were none.

A. Peatfield: I was very struck by the tremendous evidence you have for Lakonian connections in your material. Do you think that in light of E. de Polignac's suggestions about territorial definition and so on that we may be perceiving here a Lakonian territorial definition behind part of the foundation of the sanctuary?

M. Voyatzis: I think that de Polignac is absolutely on target with his discussion about sanctuaries being located on the edge of territories. I don't know about the Tegea sanctuary being an original Lakonian foundation—that I would have to think about some more—but I think that it lay on the frontier of these two areas, and that in the eighth century it became clearly more separate from Lakonia. There was a conscious effort to distinguish themselves. Throughout history we have the evidence for battles between Sparta and Tegea. I think that in the earlier stages it was not clear and that Tegea may even have lain in Lakonian territory. This needs to be further explored—this is why Phase I is just so fascinating.

C. Sugawata: In the Phase II you have a female deity, abundant jewellery votives, and also nude female figurines. In Phase III there suddenly appears a fully armed goddess. What do you think about this shift?

M. Voyatzis: My personal opinion is that we have a local deity who becomes associated with Athena, possibly because of shared traits going back at least to eighth century, and possibly earlier. By the sixth century we have a visible connection between Athena and Alea, if not before. We do have other evidence of local deities being merged with Panhellenic deities, for example in Sparta Artemis Orthia—although that merger may be later, and Aphaia on Aigina. I think there was a desire to conform, to become more standardized so that people would understand and recognize, identify the code, the message being given when they came to visit. From the eighth century we have evidence for the armed male figure, shields, and so on. But if we trace Athena back to the Bronze Age, I am not sure we can say she is armed all the way back.

Designs of ritual: The City Dionysia of fifth-century Athens

Don Handelman

THE STUDY OF RITUAL must address the meta-level of designs through which particular rituals are organized.¹ Rituals are schemes of practice and action that are designed culturally to accomplish a variety of purposes less easily done through other means. Designs of ritual organize the practice of ritual into coherent and continuous patterns. Without design, ritual structures and processes could not exist. The idea of design itself depends on logic. I am not referring to the logic of philosophy and mathematics, but rather to the logics of phenomena. The logics of phenomena refer here to the principled ways in which certain social phenomena are intentionally ordered and disordered as practice (and practiced as ordering and disordering). A given ritual is activated, first and foremost, by the practice of its logic(s) of organizational design. In this work I will be concerned primarily with the design that I call *modelling*; though some mention will also be made of the design of *presentation* (I have discussed these in detail in Handelman 1998).²

My focus here is on rituals that are designed culturally to change the world outside these events some way. This is a key issue in ritual studies since it implies that ritual must have a special ontological status in the world that enables ritual to act on that world. In the case of rituals that model, that impact on the world outside themselves, their ontological status is to be designed as worlds unto themselves.

Ritual was one of the signal inventions of humankind, in that people *imagined* the conditions through which they became causal agents in relation to cosmic forces, however they conceived of these. Rituals were designed, one could say, in a great variety of social orders to deliberately change members of society, the

1 I am indebted to Hans Dieter Betz, Synnøve des Bouvrie, Christiano Grottanelli, David Shulman and Ithamar Gruenwald for their comments on an earlier version of this essay.

2 There I argue for doing away altogether with the term 'ritual'. However, here I continue to write of ritual for the sake of convenience.

relationships of society to cosmos, and so forth. The logics of ritual design then become a crucial issue in understanding how ritual can make change within itself through its own operations.

This emphasis on logics of design is intended to focus attention on the internal organization of ritual. I want to get away from the dominant notion in anthropology that all ritual is first and foremost representation—an expression of, a reflection of, social and cultural order. Of course, these orders invent rituals, but at least certain forms of ritual are invented intentionally to act on the very orders that create them. Such rituals, then, seem to have a relative autonomy from the orders that create them. This epistemological autonomy may be a necessary condition for the ritual to impact on the society outside itself. The design of a ritual may have a systemic organization that is crucial to enabling change to be made within the ritual itself. So, too, sequencing may be important in the practice of a ritual design intended to make change through its own practice.

The bulk of this paper is devoted to the City Dionysia of fifth-century B.C.E. Athens. In my analytical terms, the design of the City Dionysia is modular, combining modules of modelling and presentation. Nonetheless one can identify strands of causal design in the Dionysia that braided together many of the modules, and, so, shaped the festival systemically. In my view, the designs of City Dionysia were intended in large measure to make certain changes in its participants. I precede the discussion of this ritual with a brief exposition of what I intend by modelling and presentation.

Designs of ritual

Ritual phenomena tend to be relatively closed phenomenal worlds that totalize themselves. If so, then a major epistemological issue is how rituals organize themselves within their totality. If the structure of intentionality of a 'little world' of ritual is to transform someone or something within itself, through its own operation, how might this little world be designed to accomplish this? Put differently, if the lived-in world is a totality, what sort of logic of design does it take to intentionally *change* this totality? My sense is that it takes another totality, a differently designed world, to operate on the first. However, the first world, the lived-in world will be the cosmological foundation-for-form of the second world. The second totality, then, is constructed and organized as a ritual that is a micro-cosm of the first totality. I call such a microcosm an event or ritual that models the lived-in world.

The ritual that models the lived-in world has the following characteristics. The ritual selects cosmic principles and themes of the lived-in world outside the ritual for use within the ritual. This specialized microcosm of ritual is aimed intention-

ally at the broader lived-in world. Yet, this little world or model of ritual has a high degree of autonomy from the lived-in world because it is constituted within itself through directives and relationships that give it a mandate to continue to operate once it has been started. In other words, a functioning, totalizing world is built into the ritual; and so the autonomy of the ritual is a function of its design.

The ritual that models the lived-in world is purposive, establishing relationships between goals and the means to accomplish them. Put otherwise, the structure of intentionality of the model is teleological—its goals are integral to its own existence. (This, indeed, is why the model exists.) Thus, the change or transformation that the model is intended to make is directed. Such a ritual of modelling previews a hypothetical condition of the future that will be made to come into being through the operation of the ritual; and it provides procedures to actualize this act of the cultural imagination. Therefore, the ritual of modelling has predictive capacities—it contains its own futures within itself. Indeed, this kind of ritual has stipulated control over processes of causality (however these ideas are culturally constructed).

The model's capacity for prediction and its control over causality are necessary in order that the correct outcome is produced. To ensure that this occurs, the ritual should regulate itself to a degree, so that it monitors its own progression and progress towards the accomplishment of its goal. In systemic terms, this can be described as processes of feedback, through which the ongoing progression of the ritual sequence is effected by the ongoing progression of the ritual sequence.

The ritual that models has built into itself incompatible, contradictory, or conflicting states of existence, that it has to synthesize or solve through its own practice. Thus a ritual of healing changes the sick patient into a healthier one; a ritual of fertility turns the infertile into the fertile; a ritual to renew the cosmos turns entropy into regeneration, and so forth. Put otherwise, this kind of ritual does transformative work within itself. It does not simply symbolize or validate change that has taken place elsewhere through different means. By transformation I mean here that one kind of person or phenomenon is made over into another—the change is understood as an essential one in the being of the person or in the condition of the cosmos.

Transformation may require that uncertainty is introduced into the presumed stability of the person or phenomenon that is to be changed. This constitutes the destabilization of certainty, as if a question mark were placed within the person to be changed, opening that person to interior change. This may be understood as dangerous, since taking someone or something apart is to tamper with ontological premises as to how the cosmos is constituted. However, not any outcome of transformation will do. Quite the opposite. Such rituals are designed to produce the

correct or desired outcome. Therefore, care is given to checking the direction and progression of the ritual while it is in progress.

In comparison, rituals that present the lived-in world have a radically different logic of design. We know them best, perhaps, from modern national and civic events. Their comparative directness of themselves in display is striking. Their hallmarks are declaratives or imperatives, but rarely interrogatives. They are statements and mirror-images of the lived in world. They tend to a plenitude of orderliness, the product of the oversignification of exactness and replication in detail. Their expositions may well be vivid and vibrant, and they excite emotion and evoke sentiment. Yet it is questionable whether they have the capacities to make controlled change in the lived-in world.

The contrast drawn here is between rituals that are predicted as intentional causal schemes in terms of their internal design of controlled transformation, and rituals that are predicated as proclamations of social order whose effects (intended or not) on the lived-in world are very uncertain. In contrast to the uncertainty that is within (and controlled by) the design of the ritual that models, the uncertainty in the ritual of presentation is located at the interface of the ritual and the lived-in world. (Thus, when the ritual of presentation generates uncertainty, this is not controlled by the event itself. Instead, external intervention may well be needed to restore stability.) The ritual of presentation holds up a mirror to the lived-in world, selectively reflecting versions of the latter with greater clarity and precision than is usually available outside such ritual. These rituals deal in the substantiation of affirmation. They are, in the main, societal icons. The ritual of presentation may be of profound significance, but it is comparatively simple in the logic of its design, in its constitution and operation, and so in the kinds of goals it can accomplish.

In my theoretical perspective, the respective designs of modelling and presentation are associated with different kinds of social orders, broadly conceived—tribal societies on the one hand and state societies on the other. All social orders are concerned to make change occur in controlled and predictive ways; and so to have a shaping influence on things to come. The means through which they try to make change are directed through a great variety of modalities of organization. Rituals of modelling were such a great invention in the archaic history of humankind precisely because they tried to control futures when other means were not available. However, my concerns here are not historical as such. I merely point out that humans are active beings in how they relate to their environment, to disease, to futures, to social relationships, and so forth. In tribal social orders, rituals of modelling are crucial to these endeavors and to so many more.

State orders, as they developed historically and in the modern age, have used proto-bureaucratic and bureaucratic means of modelling to do what ritual is intended to do in tribal orders. I will not enter into this here. Ritual, in state orders,

becomes more presentational in its logic; more concerned with mirroring social order in selected ways in order to make certain impressions on a public than in being used as an agent to act on the world in predictive, controlled ways. I am not saying that there is a neat division of labor in how the logics of ritual design relate to different kinds of social order. I am saying that there are strong tendencies in the directions I am outlining.

Braided causalities: the City Dionysia of fifth-century Athens

I have argued that one must attend to the logics of ritual design in order to comprehend what any given ritual form is capable of accomplishing. I suggested that in order to make change happen in the world, to deliberately reconstitute this world (however it is understood), the rituals concerned will be put together as intentional causal schemes, organized teleologically and systemically.

Modeling highlights the significance of sequencing in ritual action in the sense that what comes before may effect and affect what comes after, or, may enable what comes after to emerge in relation to what comes before. However, the segments of a ritual sequence may themselves be organized as autonomous or relatively autonomous segments. That is, they may be *modular*. In turn, each ritual module may have its own internal logic of design, of organization; and the module may keep this when it is coupled to others. Or, of course, in becoming connected to other segments of the ritual, the internal logic of the module may be altered.

Thus a ritual composed of segments may have an overarching logic of design, of intentionality that is continuous throughout, or it may move through a series of different logics that are related to the various segments of its over-all composition. In turn, a segment that is organized to do something in particular may then have a different internal logic of design from the segments to which it is coupled. Or, perhaps the arrangement and organization of segments may point to their high degrees of autonomy from one another. Their conjunction, then, may reflect the happenstance or the particular circumstances—historical, social, political—of their co-presence in a particular configuration of events that have relatively little to do with one another.

Nonetheless, my working premise tends to be the following: events that are brought into conjunction with one another (for whatever reasons) tend to effect one another in ways that then alter the culturally stipulated relationships between them. The emergent relationships between these events (as these events become segments or ‘parts’ of a more comprehensive ritual complex) have little to do with the reasons and reasoning that brought them into conjunction in the first instance. Therefore knowing the social-historical conditions and/or the etymological derivations that indicate how the connections among ritual ‘parts’ were forged in the

first instance will tell us little of how they operate in relation to one another. In the same vein, postulating the evolution of a phenomenon will tell us next to nothing about the logic through which its practice is constituted and how it operates, whether today or 2500 years ago.

In terms of the study of ritual, the most productive starting-point for analysis is likely the one that is the most comprehensive—if we assume that all of the events that are located within a ritual complex are related to one another, then we can think about conceptualizing their interrelationships, and so, perhaps, rethink what the ritual complex was or is about. If, however, our concern is mainly or only about a particular event in the complex, then we are less likely to consider further how this event is connected to others; what the status of the event is in relation to others; and whether its logic of design contributes something significant to the over all ritual complex. Nonetheless, if a ritual complex is characterized by modularity, then each module should be analyzed separately as well as all of the modules of the ritual complex together.

These kinds of problematic seem to me especially germane to the study of the 'festivals' of ancient Greece. Nonetheless, in keeping with the study of literary genres, tragedy, the satyr play, and comedy are studied separately from one another. Sacrifice (such a prevalent phenomenon in the ancient world) is much its own subject of study, and so forth. The study of the festivals of classical Athens—like the Anthesteria and the City Dionysia—slips easily into the analytical mode of the event as representation.³ In other words, into the analysis of symbolism that is grounded in cultural and social orders outside of the event itself, yet often without attended to the logic of design of the very event whose symbolism is under discussion. Such a perspective bypasses and ignores the very ritual within and through which symbolism is shaped and gains significance. (See Handelman 1998:xxi–xxix, for other aspects of these issues). First and foremost, the symbolism in an event relates to the very ritual context within which it appears. This relationship is

3 Padel's (1995:169) comment that 'Before the fourth century, Greeks have no separate category, "metaphorical", is fascinating in relation to causality and representation. She continues, 'We cannot speak of a relationship, or slippage, between literal and metaphorical, concrete and abstract meanings... These are not two meanings "fused" together, for they have not yet been seen as distinct from each other... Mental, you might say, *is* physical.' (Emphasis in original). Our own conception of metaphor is close to that of symbol as representation, symbol as something that stands in place of something else, thereby symbolizing or representing that which is absent. If metaphor as a category was absent in fifth-century Greece, then, for example, seeing and saying were indeed doing, no less than, for example, sacrificing. If the recognition of metaphor was absent, what did this say about representation? This suggests that whatever was done within ritual had implications of causality, bringing into being whatever was denoted. Put otherwise, action signified itself recursively as action, rather than being 'symbolic' in our conventional sense. In my terms, then, ritual necessarily modelled the world in terms of cause-and-effect relationships.

the reason that the event is conceived and practiced as it is. We then can ask how the event is related to cultural and social orders, thereby addressing how the symbols involved are related to and represent these orders. Nonetheless, in order to do this, we must consider the logic of design of the event which, in my terms, imagines, generates, and regulates the configuring of symbolism and its practice within the event. In the first instance, therefore, it is the event, the ritual, which must be addressed analytically, rather than utilizing the broader social and cultural orders to do this for us.

This kind of work seems distinctly lacking in studies of ancient Greece. Of course, the event or ritual, or the module for that matter, may well be organized in a way that highlights selective representations.⁴ The City Dionysia, I think, combined modules of systemic, causal modelling on the one hand, and modules of presentation on the other; though the 'length', as it were, of the causal relationships varied. Or, perhaps it is more accurate to say that causal relationships were braided with one another in a dense web of causality. Among these, the dramas of the Dionysia constituted profound moments of causal change that were the innards (the *splanchna*, as it were) of the whole ritual complex, and that were intended to transform the interiors of the spectators. (Though the entire ritual complex was much concerned with the opening of interiorities to one another, and to their interpenetration.) To a significant degree, one may argue that the festival modelled the State, cosmologically, politically, and socially; and that it was through this modelling that the State was able to act on itself through a variety of modalities during the festival.

My discussion here of the City Dionysia of Athens is intended to put these kinds of issues on the scholarly agenda. Neither a classicist nor a scholar of Greece, my approach is schematic. The issues, nonetheless, are serious. Perhaps through ideas of making change systemically, of sequencing and modularity, the City Dionysia will begin to receive the more holistic attention it deserves.

The City Dionysia in fifth-century Athens

I will recapitulate certain of the organizational preparations for the festival, followed by the order of segments that can be considered integral to the City Dionysia, discussing the implications of the designs of these segments and their relationships to one another. In this regard it is more accurate to speak of strands of causality braided together to constitute systemic modelling among festival modules, than it is to treat these modules as integrated into a seamless unity of

4 Or, in my analytical terms, presentations or re-presentations. See the introductory section of this paper.

ritual. I will identify five strands of causal design that were crucial to shaping the modelling of the State in the Dionysia. But I also will point to segments of presentation within this configuration.

Preparations for the City Dionysia

Of the festivals of classical Athens the City Dionysia is best known among scholars for the enactment of tragedies and comedies composed especially for this occasion, and performed only *once* (during the festival) within Athens itself. The festival was held during the early Spring. The previous summer the *archon eponymous*, the civic head of the city, chose three poets to write the tragedies for the festival. Each of the three poets composed three tragedies and one satyr play (I refer to the four plays together as a group or tetralogy). The three groups of plays competed with one another. It is likely that the prize was awarded to an entire group of four plays, rather than for the excellence of a single play. In addition the *archon* chose five poets to write comedies which again would compete with one another in the festival. The criteria that he used to make his choices are not known. The State chose three protagonists, actors, each of whom would play the central character in a full group of four plays composed by one of the poets. The three protagonists were assigned to the three poets by lot (Pickard-Cambridge 1953:84, 94–95). It is less clear how the five protagonists who acted in the comedies were chosen. The order of appearance of the three groups of tragedies was also decided by lot (Pickard-Cambridge 1953:100).

Each poet, tragic and comedic, was granted a chorus paid for by the State, though much of the financial burden for training, lodging, and costuming each chorus (the members of which sang and danced during the play) was borne by the *choregos*, a wealthy citizen chosen by the *archon*. In the dramatic competitions—tragedy and comedy—awards were given to the playwright for the best play (in tragedy, likely for the best group of plays), and to the protagonist and *choregos*.⁵

During much of the fifth century, following the reforms of Kleisthenes, the State was divided into ten tribes.⁶ The officials of the entire State (like the *archon*

5 The winners were given the honor of having their names inscribed on the official list of Athenian victors. This included the names of victors in the Olympic competitions—in other words, the list that contained the names of those who had made great contributions to the *polis*.

6 Under the Kleisthenic reforms, the new administrative centres for each group of local inhabitants were assigned among thirty new *trittyes*, each of which included the three-fold division of Attica—city, coast, hills. Then the *trittyes* were assigned by lot to the ten tribes. Thus, each tribe contained members from all three areas of Attica. (Male) citizens gave up their patronyms and took demotic names (Manville 1990:189–192). Each tribe, then, was representative of the major sectors of the population of the State; and the tribes were thought of as equals who constituted the State.

eponymous) were often selected by lot, and were expected to administer their respective spheres of operation impartially, transcending, as it were, the tribal lines of division built into the social organization of the State. The administrators reported to the Council of Five Hundred (*boule*) which contained fifty members from each tribe. The Council met regularly to debate issues of the day and to take decisions; and reported in turn to the popular assembly (*ekklesia*) which all citizens were eligible to attend and to participate in.

According to Pickard-Cambridge (1953:96–99), the judges for the dramatic contests were chosen in the following way. The Council drew up a list of names from the ten tribes. Apparently the *choregoi* were present and had a say in this listing of names. The names selected from each tribe were placed in a common urn, which was sealed by Council officials and by the *choregoi*. The ten urns were put in the Acropolis. Before the dramatic contests were to begin, the ten urns were placed in the Theatre of Dionysos, and the *archon* drew one name from each, thereby ensuring that a representative of each tribe would participate in the judging. The judges then swore an oath to render an impartial verdict. It is not clear whether at the end of a competition the judges ranked the groups of plays (in tragedy) or inscribed only their choice of winner. In any case the logic is clear. The tablets of the ten judges were placed in an urn, from which the *archon* chose five to decide the winner (or, perhaps the *archon* kept choosing tablets until there was a majority vote) (Pickard-Cambridge 1953:99, Walton 1980:76). Indeed, the use of lots and the selection of victors were techniques that highly complemented one another on a single continuum of decision-making that may be likened to ‘divination’.

The use of lots and the method of choosing of judges are commonly explained as techniques of the State for avoiding favoritism and corruption. This point is substantial; yet it obscures how the State modelled itself through the festival. Within this model the State constructed itself as superior, judicial, and impartial in relation to its parts, the tribes. Within the festival model, the level of the city-state encompassed the incipient divisions built into itself. Though this may appear self-evident and teleological, it is precisely the latter that must be stressed. It is the encompassing and therefore hierarchical relationship of city to tribe that enabled the city to withstand symbolic division as a threat to its unity.⁷ These divisions were especially exacerbated in the dithyramb competition, based on the unit of tribe; and perhaps in the tragedies themselves, whose themes often drove the private sphere of the household (and the relationships between the sexes) against the rock of state (Humphreys 1983:69–75). The division of the holism of the State

7 Handelman 1998:116–135, analyzes the Palio of Siena as an example of how processes of division may be organized to generate unity.

into tribes was prominent in the architectonics of seating, indeed of presence within the theatre of Dionysos, as I discuss further on.

In terms of modelling, the use of chance in selection may point to a configuration quite different from one that emphasizes ethics. This depends on how seriously Attic Greeks took their cosmos and, of course, their gods. By most accounts, they did.⁸ By most accounts, too, chance played a small role in ancient Greek conceptions of an organic cosmos characterized by the connectivity and interdependence of its elements. In these organic worlds nothing was arbitrary—there was a necessity for everything that existed (Sambursky 1987:159–164). Cause was related continuously (and so, intergenerationally, historically) to effect, even as effect turned into cause. Dionysos, then, was a causal force. The festival model was dedicated to his *presence*, to making him present in the city; and the use of lots and urns speaks to the intervention of the deity. The victors in the dramatic competitions were chosen finally, in this sense, by Dionysos. Within the model, outcomes may have had divinatory qualities, perhaps no less than the entrails of sacrificial animals.

Thus far, I have focused on preparations of the city or state level of organization. However, one major competition of the festival was contributed by the lower, encompassed level of tribes. This was the contest of lyrical choruses, the dithyrambs (Pickard-Cambridge 1962). Each tribe contributed men and boys to constitute its two choruses and a *choregos* to finance them. However, many of the rules of allotment and judging that held for the dramas likely applied to those of the dithyrambs (Pickard-Cambridge 1953:99).

In these procedures of allotment, two strands of causality may begin to be discerned in the organization of the festival model, though their effects would only be felt during the Dionysia itself. The first was put into place by the adjudicating apparatus upon which the contests necessarily depended. The adjudication mech-

8 Nonetheless, not a few scholars state that Athenian democracy secularized society; and so that religion supplied no more than institutionalized frameworks within which new, secular expressive forms—like that of tragic poetry and theatre—emerged (e.g. Friedrich 1998:272). Thus, rituals atrophied under democratic conditions, and became no more than an expressive genre, at the best used to mobilize demonstrations of Durkheimian-like solidarity. Such thinking itself expresses the bias of literary analysis that favors the study of Greek tragedy as a literary genre, while turning the capacities of ritual into a narrow and restrictive caricature of its spectrum of designs, cultural and analytical (see Friedrich 1998:275, for such a perspective). Such perspectives deny the existence of effective, transformative power in any ritual design, in order to strengthen the cachet of literary genre. Considering Greek tragedy as a special form of ritual would be more rewarding and less ideologically obfuscating for the relationship between tragic theatre and the ritual designs of the Dionysia, and the relationship between them and the State. I should add that it was less likely for ritual to be secularized so long as the ancient Greeks perceived themselves to exist within a holistic, organic cosmos, as Louis Dumont (1977) has argued more generally.

anism connected the goals of the competition to their outcomes. The judging caused the contests to be enacted, so as to reach those goals specified in the premises of the contests. On the organizational level of the festival, attaining these goals were the effects of the contests. Teleology was crucial to these segments, since the goals embedded in the outset were those realized in the end. Moreover, the adjudication of the performances produced verdicts that, in a strong sense, brought the enactments themselves into line with those goals. Those performances judged the best then became those that were closest to the goals of the adjudication. Put otherwise, the verdicts of the judges (as well as the method used to produce these) *looped back* recursively to reproduce the goals of the contests that were embedded in the premises of the festival model. Perhaps the outcomes modified the goals themselves from year to year. In any case, the segments of drama and of dithyramb in the Dionysia were organized *systemically*.

The second strand of causality related the lower level of the tribes to the upper level of the State, looping them together. Within the festival model the lower level of tribes took apart the State symbolically during the dithyramb contest, while this opposition was contained by the pristine impartiality of the higher State level. In this way the State level, the whole, would be reproduced through the opposition among its parts, the tribes. Put otherwise, within the festival model the state *caused* the opposition among its tribes to reproduce its own encompassing power. Simultaneously, as the State set in place a micro-system for generating opposition within itself inside the model in order to cause certain changes to happen—through victory in contests—it also set in place its own reproduction through these very changes. These two loops of causality—the teleological relationship between goals and effects through the dramas on the one hand, and that between levels of the State on the other—were intertwined, each braided with the other, generating that which I would call a *web of causality* which was crucial to the performance of the festival.

The plays in the contests were introduced to the public in the *proagon*, held during the week preceding the festival. In the *proagon* the playwrights introduced the subjects of their plays, and the actors, choruses and *choregoi* (Walton 1980: 75). Formally, the *proagon* may appear outside the festival itself. Yet, in terms of the coming argument, the symmetry between the *proagon*, the preview before the festival and the review, the inquest that was held after the festival is significant (e.g. Parke 1977:135, Henderson 1990:287). I will discuss this further on. The relationship between *proagon* and inquest constituted a third causal loop of the model, braided through the other two.

Dionysos

The City Dionysia was held under the auspices of Dionysos, and the dramatic contests were held in his theatre near to his temple. Dionysos is often described by scholars as the god who dissolves boundaries, perhaps as the god who best transforms relationships between selfness and otherness, opening ways for the mimetic self to become other within its own interiority. Dionysos could be characterized as a god of self-transformation, the god whose interiority is characterized by transformation (*metabole*). My concern here is how Dionysos was characterized within the festival model of the Dionysia; and for this there are at least indicators of his transformative capacities.

Myths of Dionysos say that he was twice-born, once from a human mother and once from his father, Zeus, thereby spanning and containing within himself multiple possibilities of gender. In Orphic myth he was sacrificed by the Titans, taken apart, and cooked. In this sacrifice the middleness of his interiority, his innards (*splanchna*) which contained the seat of emotion/cognition, were exteriorized and exposed to public viewing and knowledge. However, the Titans inverted the correct ritual order for cooking the body parts, inadvertently giving birth to human beings from the ashes of Dionysos' body (Bruit Zaidman and Schmitt Pantel 1992:173). Just as human beings are born from the exteriorized remains of Dionysos so too they contain his potentialities within themselves. Thus he resonates within them and takes them apart within themselves by filling their interiors with madness—thus, his female followers (the maenads or *bacchae*) in myth and to a degree in life, and, in a dionysic mode, not a few of the characters in the tragic theatre of the City Dionysia. *Mania* as a form of transformation was especially connected to him (Schlesier 1990:93).

The theatre of Dionysos

Two aspects are especially relevant here—the structuring of areas of the theatre complex, and the seating arrangements for the spectators (who were by all accounts more spectator/participants than they were viewer/listeners). As I will discuss, regions of the theatre complex put in place a fourth strand of the causal web. As well, the structure of seating in the theatre placed the spectator/participants within the braiding of levels between State and tribes inside the festival model.

There is little doubt that Dionysos was present in his theatre during the festival, in the form of his wooden figure usually kept in his adjacent temple. Elsewhere (in the deme theatre of Ikarion), Dionysus was the preeminent spectator, and humans took second place (Wiles 1997:29). The deme theatre at Thorikos was located

between the temple of Dionysos and the altar. 'The statue of the god inside the temple is thus the honorific spectator, and the play must seem to be given for his benefit as much as for the audience.... in Athens the temple [of Dionysos] lay beneath the playing area, and for performances the statue was moved to the centre of the auditorium in order to view the play performed in the god's honour' (Wiles 1997:33). So, too, Dionysos and his priest had pride of place in the audience (Padel 1990:340).

The theatre of Dionysos itself modelled central spaces of the city. The *agora*, the centre of meeting and commerce, had once functioned as a theatre. In classical times, argues Padel (1990:337), the theatre had certain analogies to the *agora*—'both were meeting places, where male citizens felt, and saw themselves as, part of the civic body; where important speeches were set before them.' Within the festival model, the *agora* entered the theatre, and the theatre inside the city encompassed the *agora* within the city, but now under the auspices of Dionysos. The theatre thereby contained the city and was capable of exposing the interiority of the city and of its citizens. In a further sense, the imaginary of the theatre exteriorized potential turmoils that could be generated by life in the city; by the competitive and aggressive character of interaction in the public domain; by the highly public character of such interaction that often was played out before mass audiences (Humphreys 1983:68).⁹

Writing of the deme theatre at Epidaurus, Wiles (1997:41) comments that, 'the harmonious proportions of the theatre are related to the Asclepian premiss that the elements of a sick body are in a state of disharmony, and that a cure for the spirit is necessary for a cure of the body.' The logic of design of this theatre (and perhaps that of Dionysos in Athens) was that of a medium for the evocation of 'illness', together with its attendant emotions (within the body politic); and, so, for ritual 'healing' of some kind (*i.e.* Des Bouvrie 1993:96). Yet, *contra* Aristotelian catharsis, this healing effect may have been more in the way of a preparation for everyday life than its cleansing. I will expand briefly on this point at the end of this essay. The important point at the moment is that the theatre of Dionysos (and that which took place within it) likely was designed to *act on* the worlds of Athenians, to deliberately shape these worlds in certain ways. The theatre had a deliberate *causal* thrust in its design.

In this regard, the north-south axis of the theatre is significant. Wiles (1997:57) comments that, 'The line which runs through the centre of the auditorium where the priest [of Dionysos] and the statue [of Dionysos] were located, through the centre of the *orchestra* and through the central doorway points to the great sacri-

9 Humphreys (1983:68) points to audiences of 'several thousand in the Assembly, 500 in the Council, 201 in the smallest jury.'

ficial altar some forty metres beyond... The performance is physically located between the god and the sacrifice in his honour.' This axis line also transversed the focal middleness of the *thymele* upon which, Wiles (1997:76) suggests, libations were poured, thereby locating Dionysos (as god of wine) at the symbolic centre of the performance, one which may have had associations with an earth-navel (omphalos). In Wiles' view, the floor of the *orchestra* may have been a midpoint on the vertical axis between the gods of the underworld and the Olympians. These centripetalities also may have had associations with the prevalent idea of the human body as microcosm, with its middle as the seat of feeling/thinking (Padel 1992). This trajectory of thought would place Dionysos within each human body in the theatre, within its middleness, opening this to his transformative powers (*contra* Winkler 1985:51). Within the festival model of the Dionysia the spectator/participants were placed within a cosmic, causal nexus that was intimately related to the structure and topology of the city. The relationships of this nexus opened them to the power of Dionysos. Through this nexus flowed the braided loops of causality.

The north-south axis also passed through the *skene*. Padel (1990:358) argues that the *skene* (the backdrop, a painted house with doors in front of which the actors performed) 'and what it stands for, is an image of the unseen interior of a human being.' The *skene*, then, contained a doorway into the hidden interiority and the horizons of possibility of selfness and otherness that, contracted within the cosmic nexus, opened into a continuum that stretched from Olympia to the inner recesses of the human soul.¹⁰

In my view, this cosmic nexus within the theatre was activated through sacrifice—and here the north-south axis aligning god and altar is central. In general, my understanding of sacrifice is that of simultaneous destruction and creation (Kapferer 1997 goes into this logic in depth). Sacrifice is a creative act, the turning of one thing or being into something else, a quintessential act of transformation. It should be obvious, for example, that it is the very act itself of sacrifice that transforms and endows the entrails of a sacrificial animal with divinatory power. The animal gives the gift of its death so that another configuration of life will come into being. (This is why the sacrificial animal so often must willingly assent to its own death—otherwise the gift of death is not created.)

Sacrifice was so prominent in Greek public and household life. Any significant event or transition was preceded by sacrifice. Sacrifice seemed to open the way into another kind of activity, into another mind-set—perhaps sacrifice created the

10 Padel compares the door of the *skene* to the open mouth of the mask, the mask's open door through which speech comes from one's hidden interiority; again, a relationship of the microcosm of the human body and macrocosm.

opening through which something else, something other, could come into existence, whether this was self-transformation or the transformation of otherness (Handelman 2002). Thus the presence of Dionysos in his theatre could not be taken for granted. The way to his presence had to be activated, and this likely was done through sacrifice. My guess is that within the theatre his presence was most required within the performance space, the region of the cosmic nexus of middle-ness, of the human and the divine, of microcosm and macrocosm. Henrichs (1993:40) states that, 'If it was true that Dionysos was perceived in antiquity essentially as an epiphanic god who revealed himself in concrete physical manifestations,' then, 'to accept Dionysos was tantamount to being in the presence of the god...' If so, then the presence of Dionysos in his theatre was crucial to the activation of the latter, just as sacrifice was crucial to bringing Dionysos to his theatre.

Sacrifice was the fourth strand of causality within the festival model. Sacrifice opened cosmic levels to the innerness of audience selves. The effects of this opening intertwined with the casual strand that connected the goals of the festival to its outcomes, to the judges and their verdicts.

Within the space of performance, transformative possibilities were activated in order to effect changes in the spectators. For this to be happen, the performers and the spectator/participants had to be opened to the dionysian, to the presence of the deity within them. In the alignment of god and altar, transformation came into being between the deity and the sacrifice to the deity—that is, within the space for performance. The drama was more than the dramatic—it was ritual that took dramatic form for particular purposes within the Athenian context. Indeed, unless the drama is understood as ritual (or as segments within more comprehensive ritual), its broader import will not make itself present.

The seating of the spectator/participants is especially interesting here (see Winkler 1990:38-43, 1985), since within the model it was a topological analogue of the causal braidings that I have been discussing. Apparently there were thirteen wedges of seats—the most exterior, 'border' wedge on each side for non-citizens; ten wedges for the ten tribes; and the middle wedge for the *boule*, the ruling Council of 500, comprising fifty councillors from each tribe, and for the ephebes, the soldiers (and citizens) in training, also recruited from the ten tribes and seated accordingly.¹¹ The contrast between the middle wedge and those of the tribes on each side is striking. Within the city the tribes competed with one another in many public domains; and the division into tribes constituted lines of potential fracture that crosscut levels of governance, civic organization, the military and the generations. Hypothetically, were the city to be taken apart symbolically, these divisions

11 The tribes were the units of military organization on the battlefield, and the war dead were buried according to tribe.

would predictively define the city in pieces. Therefore these divisions were a relatively safe way of generating fission within the *polis* (as well as putting it together from its parts). Within the middle wedge, but close to the performance area sat the priest of Dionysos with the figure of the deity, the highest officials of the state, and the judges. Winkler (1990:39) describes the seating as 'a kind of map of the civic corporation, with all its tensions and balances'—the ten tribes, the governing Council, and the ephebes, the coming generation of citizens and warriors. Moreover, this was an embodied map, especially salient within the festival model, one that demonstrated how the tribes joined together to supercede themselves within the Council and ephebes; and how the Council and ephebes potentially could fission into the tribes.¹²

This mapping of the body politic emphasised the overarching value of middle-ness in its layout, in keeping with the significance of this value in the design of the performance space. The middle wedge with the deity at its tip transected the middle of the performance area—the *thymele* and *skene*—pointing towards the sacrificial altar which in turn pointed back towards the deity in the audience. This was the symbolic axis of the generation of transformative power, activated by sacrifice to Dionysos and realized through dramatic performance. This axis, with its focus on the deeply encompassing innerness of middle-ness, spread out on either side from the central wedge, balancing the incipient instabilities of the tribes on either side (and of the non-citizens at the borders). But this axis was tipped with the volatile, epiphanic presence of Dionysos the dissolver of boundaries, and led directly to the cauldron of possibilities in the performance area.

Within the theatre the stability of the State level, of the central wedge, led inexorably into the fluid instability of transformation within performance space, opening the spectator/participants to the effects of the drama. Given the organization of the wedges, the directionality of the central wedge, and the structuring of the performance area, there was no stability on any level within the theatre, except for the judging of outcome which pinched off the uncertainty and volatility of opening the spectators to transformation. This closing looped back recursively to reproduce the encompassing qualities of the State level that were embedded in the use of lots to choose the judges.

12 Estimates of audience size at performances by scholars vary greatly, from 12,000 to 20,000 and more. The number of (male) Athenian citizens during the fifth century B.C.E. has been estimated at around 40,000. The dramas were, by any account, great ritual performances that had to be thronged, if the plays were to act on and move the spectators. Other ritual dramas of the ancient world did not necessarily require an audience (or much of an audience) to be effective—the important point was that these rituals were performed (*i.e.* Fairman 1974).

The sequence of segments in the City Dionysia

In myth, Dionysos was a wanderer who brought his cult to Athens. The City Dionysia, which lasted five or six days, began in the early Spring with the entry into Athens of Dionysos (Winkler 1985:29). His wooden figure was taken from its permanent place in his temple to the last location he passed through before entering Athens on his original journey. Sacrifices were performed for him there, and his figure travelled by night into the city, accompanied by priests, the leaders of the city, and ephebes, the young men who were undergoing their training as hoplite infantry. The journey was called 'Bringing in from the sacrificial hearth' (Parke 1977:127), or 'the leading in from the sacred hearth' (Goldhill 1990:99). This references to hearth, an interior and generative location (whether of household or of city), may imply Dionysos' emerging from deep within himself, while the sacrifices performed for him may have opened the city to him.

Dionysos re-entered his temple near the theatre. Yet his entry into Athens was not simply a repetition of the last phase of his originary journey. In Deleuzian terms, every repetition is a first time in that the originary contains within itself all future renditions or versions of itself, and the differences amongst them (Deleuze 1994). The first time contains within its own logic of organization the capacity to generate all possible variations of itself. Therefore every ritual performance is originary, since it contains the generative force of the first time. It is not a re-enactment.

Near the beginning of the festival the *proagon* (Preliminary to the Contest) introduced the plays. Considering that the performance of the plays constituted the practice of ritual, and that each play was performed only once, the *proagon* filled the crucial function of outlining the thematic shapings that these rituals were to take in a given year, without entering into the dramatism that had such an impact on the spectators.

The Great Procession (*pompe*) likely was held after the *proagon*. Carrying symbols of Dionysos, the citizenry processed through the streets, escorting numerous bulls to be sacrificed to Dionysos at his temple (at the great altar beyond the performance area). In the Great Procession the people of the city presented themselves to themselves. This self-presentation of the city preceded other modules of more particularistic presentation, which I discuss shortly. This may have been followed by a night-time revel for Dionysos, a *komos* (which itself may have been part of the procession). The revel involved the license of inversion in the streets of the city, as men, drinking wine, sang and danced in the the streets. Goldhill (1990:99) comments that the 'combination' of procession, sacrifice, and celebration was typical to the organization of Greek ritual practice. I emphasize the sequencing of these occasions. The formalism of the procession precedes the

license of the revel. The sacrifice is mediatory of and transformative for this change, but in the sense that the sacrificial acts transformatively *open or create the way* for other events that evoke, overturn, and expose the undersides of values of Athenian cultural order. These sacrifices turned the Athenian world dionysian—a world in which the forbidden and the normative savaged one another without bounds, a world of madness and murder, of the killing of children by their parents, and other themes that likely were anathema to the daily public life of the city. The sacrifices to Dionysos opened the interiors of the citizens to the presence of the deity who dissolves boundaries, just as the sacrifice at the sanctuary outside the city opened Athens to his coming. The sacrifices framed through transformation what was to come in the entire festival.

The modules of the City Dionysia that I would call presentational—those that were not implicated in the teleological making of change (as the *proagon* and the Great Procession were)—preceded the rituals of dramatic performance. These presentational modules are described as ‘civic rituals’ or words to that effect. Goldhill (1990:114) phrases their relationship to the city as a deep involvement ‘with the city’s sense of itself’. Nonetheless, one should ask why these presentational modules came *before* the dramatic modules. Why not after? Why not between tragic and comedic performances, and so forth? What were the sensibilities that positioned these modules of presentation? It is insufficient to treat the sequencing of modules (in fact, any kind of sequencing) as if these units were simply strung together, one after the other like political pearls on a necklace of historical circumstances. Attention must be given to the logic of this ordering, in relation to what came before and what came after. Often, what comes before frames, in the Batesonian sense (Bateson 1972, Handelman in press), what comes after.

One of these presentations, likely the first, was the pouring of ritual libations by the ten generals, one from each tribe, the military leaders of the Imperial State. Libations signified beginnings (Bruit Zaidman and Schmitt Pantel 1992:38-39). Here, this beginning occurred within the frame established, first, by Dionysos entering the city, and then, by the sacrifices to the god. The emphasis was statist and civic, yet there was also an implicit thrust of entering the city from its exterior (as Dionysos did to establish the master frame for the entire festival). The business of these ten (who were elected annually) was the conduct of Athens’ incessant warfare which in the main took place elsewhere. There is a sense here of components of the city, often located elsewhere, reagggregating, flowing centripetally inward. The ten generals not only represented the ten tribes but they constituted and united them in the ritual of libation. Thus the city also opened itself to its own exteriority.

The tribute that Athens received from its allies was displayed in the performance area. Clearly presentational, this was 'a public display of the success in military and political terms of the city. It used the state festival to glorify the state' (Goldhill 1990:102). That which belonged to Athens not only flowed into the city but was shown there demonstratively. So, too, the absence of those who had left the city forever was made present in the performance area.¹³ The orphaned sons of warriors killed in battle paraded into the performance area in full hoplite dress. They were raised and educated by the State, and they appeared in the Dionysia when they were ready to become fighting men. This, too, was a presentation, a declaration of how the city turned its generational losses into intergenerational continuity; in other words of the State's continuity through time, perhaps the only clearcut measure of its ongoing survival. All of these modular ritual moments in the performance area celebrated the unity of the city-state through different modes of presentation. They were statements of the imperative ramifications of political and economic power. In these public declarations there was no room for question marks or doubts. The ritual events that followed—the dramatic contests—did quite the opposite. Nonetheless, they also nestled within the systemic causal nexus that I outlined—the sacrifices to Dionysus and the architectonics of the performance space and seating plan for the spectator/participants.

Except for the pouring of libations, these civic rituals were not essential to the logic of practicing the City Dionysia. By this I mean that these rituals, hypothetically, could have been omitted from the Dionysia without altering its overall ritual logic. The civic rituals were didactic devices but not transformative ones. By contrast, the tragic and comedic plays could not be separated from one another without destroying the logic of transformation in the festival. (Or, for example, as a problematic in the logics of sequencing, one could ask as to the consequences for the festival if the comedies had preceded the tragedies.)

I am not making light of the problem of maintaining unity in classical Athens. This issue was embedded in the very conception of the State as the aggregation of its citizens, the State that was always represented as 'the Athenians' rather than as Athens (Manville 1990:6)—as a collectivity more than as a meta-construct. The very existence of the democracy depended on the public participation of its citizens; yet the other side of vigorous participation was the generation of conflict and, potentially, the fragmentation of the *polis* in ways unforeseen by its constitution and democratic institutions.

From this perspective, the numerous contests that were integral to city life may be seen as simulations of the generation of conflict that contained this within

13 For a discussion of how absence is turned into presence, see Handelman and Shamgar-Handelman 1997.

predictable divisions and outcomes. Contests were the simulated generation and control of disorder—the practicing of conflict and the experiencing of its resolution, the remaking of order. Contests then and now necessarily are organized systemically in terms of causal logic. The contest is teleological—its goal is embedded in the premises and conditions of its existence. So, too, are the autotelic procedures and/or rules for reaching this goal, and the decision as to when the goal has been reached. In other words, the contest causes change to be done through its own operation. Certainly the contests of the Dionysia can be discussed in these terms.

This is also the structure of not a few of the tragedies—change is made to happen within the protagonist, and the consequences of this change ramify, exposing cultural nerves nakedly and painfully. This too is the structure of Dionysos himself—he penetrates the interior of the city and then the performance area, just as the tragedies performed under his aegis penetrate the interiority of their protagonists. In his penetration, Dionysos dissolves boundaries within and between persons. Thus the contents of different categories, previously separated, are made to come together, often to clash, to smash into one another and break themselves upon one another. This is a condition of ‘madness’ whether this is made explicit or not—the blurring of difference, of realities within the person, of interior and exterior turned inside out (within the person, within social order), and the inability to cease the relentlessness of these processes of destruction that, once unleashed, bore into being as tragedy should bore into the participant/spectators.

This brief discussion of contest is germane to the subsequent segments of the City Dionysia—the contest of the dithyramb choruses, and those of tragic and comedic performances. The sequencing of these contests is far from certain, but it is probable that the dithyramb preceded the dramas, and that tragedy (and the satyr play as the last of each tetralogy) preceded comedy (Walton 1980:62).¹⁴ The sequencing of these contests reproduced the architectonics of the seating of the spectators/participants. The temporal and the spatial were tightly woven through one another. The dithyramb stressed the competition between the ten tribes, each of which was represented by a men’s and a boys’ chorus, echoing the tribal divisions in the audience.¹⁵ The dithyramb (Pickard-Cambridge 1962:1, 5, 25) was the

14 Each day of drama may have begun with tragedy which was followed by comedy, rather than the performance of all the tetralogies, followed by all the comedies. In either instance, the sequence of tragedy, satyr play, comedy, would have been maintained.

15 Surely it was not happenstance that many of the youth of the tribes—those between boys and men—in transition to adulthood and citizenship, served and identified with the city-state as ephebes, as hoplites-in-training, and sat in the section reserved for city officials and judges of the competition; while the boys’ and men’s choruses of the tribes competed in performance.

first of the competitions, following on the presentations and declarations of the absolute unity and centrality of the State level of organization.

Divisions became prominent as members of the audience identified with their tribes within the festival model.¹⁶ In the audience the middle wedge of the State level gave way to the adjacent and more peripheral wedges of the tribes. However, the contest was adjudicated by judges chosen by lot who had taken oaths to and who represented the impartial State. This mirrored the seating of the judges in the central wedge, close to the performance area. Architectonics and action together produced a thick recursive weave of the context through which the transformation of emotions gained power.

Tragedy, the next contest, put the State back together again as a unity. Once again this mirrored the seating of the audience—that is, the focus in the performance area shifted from the segmented tribes to the middle, the unifying wedge of the State level of organization in the model. In the audience the adjacent tribes came together, supporting their own middleness, themselves as the State, in relation to transformations through tragedy. The distinctions between tribes as separate units were enfolded again within the State level.

My use of transformation points once more to the deliberate making of controlled change, though this depends on an understanding of these tragedies (and the other dramas) as rituals designed to do this (see Parke 1977:134). There is no inherent difficulty in this perspective from the point of view of anthropological studies of ritual. Ritual processuality often (though not necessarily) has a strong performative dimension. In the case of Attic ritual dramas, the performative (as read through literary interpretations of the texts of the dramas) continues to be at the forefront of scholarly thinking. Left aside is the likelihood that these ritual dramas were deliberately *designed* to act on and to transform the interiors of the spectators as the *polis*.

This is the reason I refer to the bulk of the audience as spectator/participants. They were not the object of the tragic drama, but rather the subject of the play. In this sense, the spectator/participants *were* the drama. The dramas were causal designs intended to transform the emotions of the audience, to exteriorize and to experience the cultural psyche of Athenians (as they lived through this themselves), just as Dionysos opened the city to his presence; just as, for that matter, one peered into the innards of sacrificial animals for divinatory purposes. The dramas effected affect. The theatre of Dionysos was designed to do this through the relationship through sacrifice of the deity to the performance area; and through the organization of the performance area and audience. Des Bouvrie (1993:103)

16 See Winkler's (1985) argument that the dithyrambic competition strengthened solidarity within and identification with the Kleisthenic tribes.

comments that, 'tragedy presented a recognisable universe... but beyond that it aimed at effecting an emotional disturbance in the audience, which was generally acknowledged in Antiquity.' Not unlike Dionysos himself, the god coming from the outside, clothed in strangeness, driving madness into and deeply within those who rejected him (Zeitlin 1993:152), the cauldron of performance space generated emotions that resonated with the innards of the spectator/participants, a goodly proportion of the citizenry of Athens.

One cannot argue that the performance of Attic tragedy was constituted as a linear, causal sequence. Nonetheless, tragedy may be thought of as a configuration of interacting themes that *caused* Athenians to be moved deeply within a spectrum of desired emotions. Moreover, whether these effects had been achieved was checked (at least to a degree) at the end of the festival through the judging and perhaps through the inquest. From this perspective one may argue that the effects of the performance of tragedy within the nexus of the Dionysian theatre was indeed transformative for the interiors, the middleness, of the spectator/participants. The thematics may have been explicit, while the emotions they affected may have been more diffuse, overlapping, and interpenetrating. Yet, so long as the performance of themes had their affects within the desired spectrum of emotions, stretching and whorling feeling states into frightening shapes, tragedy would have been effective. *The tragedies were scripts for rituals of the transformation of emotions that cathected highly sensitive themes in the Athenian cultural psyche.* In turn, perhaps the tragedies (and the other dramas) were remolded incrementally from year to year by the verdicts of the judges and by the responses of the citizens. Perhaps these rituals of dramatic transformation were themselves shaped in ongoing ways by State, tribe, and citizen.

Transforming the emotion-body (which no less was mind) through sets of rituals may have been a major concern of fifth-century Athenians. In this regard it is worth mentioning that Classical Greeks thought hard about the relationships between elements of speech, music, and emotional effect. Stanford (1983:65) comments that, 'the emotional effects of rhythm [in speech] were a subject of intensive study in Greece since the fifth century.' The emotive qualities of rhythm were explained in the same way as was music. 'The emotions being movements in the *psuche* are sympathetically affected by the vibrations of sounds. Rhythm could have a stronger effect than melody, since the heart-beat is essentially rhythmical' (Stanford 1983:66). Greek physicians, he notes, 'compared the rhythm of the heart, with its systole and diastole, to that of a metrical foot. They were speaking of the regular pulse. But one can extend the analogy. The dochmiac rhythm that occurs at most of the major climaxes [in tragedy] resembles the irregular heart-beats of a highly excited person' (Stanford 1983:67). He adduces that in the timbres or tone-colors of Greek, 'the poets had, as it were, a whole range of instruments to call on

for musical and emotional effects, like a modern composer-conductor with a symphony orchestra. Their single instrument, the human voice, was so versatile that it constituted a whole orchestra of wind and percussion instruments in itself' (Stanford 1983:68).

The appearance of tragedy within the performance area, following on the dithyramb competition among tribes, put the audience back together as a unity of spectator/participants. Simultaneously, the performance of tragedy took the spectator/participants apart within their own middleness as individuals, through its nuanced exposure of the interiority of different lines of potential fracture and dismemberment of relationships in Athenian society. There should be little doubt that tragedy (and all the other dramatic performances) were intended to act on, to make change happen within each spectator/participant, and in the audience as a whole.

Contra aristotelian poetics, tragedy likely was intended to be less cathartic than it was to create pain in the innards of the audience. Tragedy was predicated on the protagonists' absence or lack of knowledge, so that every attempt to elude or to unravel this absence self-enclosed its knots of pain, making these tighter and tighter, until one's entrails strangled themselves. Tragedy signified itself, enclosing the Athenians within worlds of mythic reality that explored the terrible potentialities hidden within the everyday life of protagonists and its consequences; transforming the emotions of the spectator/participants. Recursively, tragedy created tragedy; or, perhaps tragedy emerged from within tragedy, the unseen taking shape in the performance area just as it did in the middles of the spectator/participants (see Padel 1990:361).

The sequencing of segments was crucial to shifting the audience from the self-totalizing modularity of tragedy within the festival model. The final drama of each tetralogy was the humorous satyr play. The satyr play had been described as 'tragedy at play' (Sutton 1980:141). The satyr play had the structure of a tragedy in miniature, in terms of its form, language, length, and mythic themes; but it was expected to have a happy ending (Sutton 1980:141, 158). Sutton (1980:159) comments that, 'the satyr play is subversive to tragedy, insofar as an essential aspect of satyric humor consists in travestyng tragedy and inviting the audience to laugh at what tragedy takes seriously.' As a tragedy in miniature the satyr play positioned the protagonist within the suffocating self-enclosures of suffering, yet then shaped these as unreal, as indeed belonging to a world distant from the audience.

Looked at in terms of the organization of the festival model, and of sequencing within this, the satyr play becomes the way out of the totalizing self-signifying worlds of tragedy. The satyr drama dissolved tragedy's incorporation and encompassment of the world of mundane reality within the world of myth. And it opened a bridge from the tragedy to the comedy.

The comedies were strongly grounded in the everyday life of the State, positioning their scenes in the settings of the city; taking incident, gossip and scandal, as their subject matters; satirizing and criticizing the rich, the powerful, and the political; and offering useful advice and criticism about issues of the day (Henderson 1990:293). Henderson (1990:297) comments that the comedies 'created a comic version of the city itself, where the partisan comic troupe reproduced the demos in festive caricature and the competitors for its favor in the guise of traditional figures of mockery.' Comedy shifted the dramas further from the self-enclosing mythopoetic worlds of tragedy and their revelations of disasters lurking to happen within everyone, into the hurly-burly of the actuality of Athenian life. Almost the last in the sequence of segments in the festival model, the comedies put the spectator/participants back into city life, still within the theatre yet only a short step to the end of the festival and to daily existence outside of the theatre. Yet something crucial is missing from this formulation, since the most terrifying possibilities probably were those of mundane life and not of the mythopoetic realm. I return to this point in the concluding lines.

There likely was a parallel shift occurring within the interiority of the spectator's self. The tragedies penetrated and transformed the hidden, interior feelings of the spectator's self-sensibilities and security of selfness. They shaped the subjectivities of the audience through the terrifying possibilities of mythopoesis. Against such penetration, for example, that of dionysian-like madness, there was no defence. (Still, I suggest that the terror of such unexpected explosions in the everyday public life of citizens was even more frightening, given its consequences for social relationships.)

Through their humor the satyr plays began to shape the more private terrors of tragedy, towards the return to mundane life. The comedies developed these processes more fully, encouraging the spectators to feel and to think critically about the explosive conditions and qualities embedded in the density of interaction in city life, and of their own roles which could suddenly become threatened in this (see Henderson 1990:312). Now, the theatre no longer encompassed the city—the city had emerged from the theatre and now encompassed the latter as just one more eminent location in the cityscape.

The transformation of emotion through the performances and sequencing of the dramatic contests is the fifth strand of causality within the festival model. It was braided tightly with all of the other causal strands; and it caused the realization of one of the major goals of the festival, the verdicts of the judges and the awarding of the prizes for victory in the competitions. The verdicts and awards closed that which I have called the first strand of causality within the festival model which was initiated by the choice of judges by lot. The closing of this strand braided with and

led also to the closing of the second strand of causality initiated by the *proagon*—this closing took place in the inquest, the final segment of the festival model.

The inquest was held within the theatre in the format of the *ekkklesia*, the popular assembly, presided over by the Council of Five Hundred, perhaps together with the awarding of the prizes. As I noted earlier, all citizens could participate in the assembly. Apparently thousands would attend the inquest. Just as the verdicts of the judges evaluated the accomplishments of the performances—their relative success in transforming the emotions of the spectator/participants—so the performances of the *archon eponymous* and the other officials who were responsible for the entire City Dionysia were evaluated by the citizenry, as was the behavior of the spectator/participants (Pickard-Cambridge 1953:66-69, Parke 1977:134-135, Padel 1990:339). There is some indication that there were rules established by the *demos* regarding the content of performance, at least for the comedies (Henderson 1990:287-288). These too would have been open to plaudit, complaint, and discussion. The awarding of prizes and the inquest of the festival were the responses of the citizens to the very events in which they themselves had participated. These were reflexive moments through which citizens critiqued rituals that they themselves (or their representatives) had created, and in the process they both involved and distanced themselves from their own inventions. I would expect the outcomes of the competitions and the discourse of the inquest to effect the ways in which the festival was practiced the following year and after, just as previous Dionysias had effected its organization and practice in any given year. This would demonstrate just how systemic and reflexive were the practices of this festival.

The City Dionysia as ritual

If the City Dionysia is understood as a series of coupled modules, especially modules constituted in part with transformative capacities, then this festival offers the opportunity to pose an unusual problem concerning the design of ritual. The problem might be addressed to a hypothetical, native designer of rites, and could be phrased something like this. Let us say that we desired to create a ritual medium with the following parameters. Great masses of urban dwellers should be enabled to participate, yet at times within limited space that could not support extensive physical movement. The ritual medium should act on the emotions of these participants and even change them profoundly for short periods in fairly predictive ways. The ritual medium also should have the reflexive capacity to check its success to a degree. Moreover, it should be sufficiently flexible to respond to ongoing, changing, social conditions in its own environment. It should include as well moments during which its sponsors would make unequivocal, straightforward statements about their own worth.

What, then, would our ritual look like? Our hypothetical designer might very well suggest a modular logic of different ritual segments, themselves containing various logics of design, yet capable of being coupled to one another. This parceling out of design functions within separate modules would build flexibility into the ritual—thus some of the modules could be made to respond to ongoing shifts in social conditions outside the ritual. Other of the modules could then specialize in making change within the participants—a form of drama might be suggested as a way of doing this, of focussing the attention of participants on a fixed space of performance, with little moving about. The modules would be connected to one another with the kind of sequencing that would introduce degrees of feedback and self-correction into the entire ritual. And, finally, modules designed in terms of a logic of presentation would enable the sponsors of the occasion to make unquestioning pronouncements about the institutions they represented.

The entire ritual design might well look something like the City Dionysia with its relationships between Dionysos, sacrifice, and city; between *proagon* and inquest; between dithyramb and city; as well as those within the interiority of tragedy (in relation to itself); and those of the sequencing of the dramas, tragedy – satyr play – comedy. So too, modules of presentation (the showing of tribute; the march of the war orphans, and so forth) declared the power and character of the Athenian state.

Something like this hypothetical approximation, with the overall flexibility of its modular organization, enabled the City Dionysia (for whatever the reasons by which it was put together over time) to work as it did for a period of its history. Yet such an understanding is only possible if we take seriously the capacity of certain logics of ritual organization to make change happen in fairly systemic ways and contrast these with other logics of ritual that have other capacities.

Let me point to one other facet of this complex that I mentioned at the outset, but that becomes more outstanding, given the above. During much of the fifth century, the City Dionysia contained ritual content that was performed annually once and only once. Of course I am referring to the dramas. When the dramas are understood as ritual, one speedily realizes that certain of our criteria for identifying ritual—like the criterion of repetition (Moore and Myerhoff 1977:7)—are utterly shallow in their significance. Instead we begin to perceive the possibilities of ritual as an *experimental* mode; a mode shaped within certain structures of design which may have varied relatively little from one annual performance to the next, yet which did indeed vary in its contents. These contents—stories, dramatizations, and performances of tragedy and comedy—were tried out on and in the spectator/participants, and were judged for how well they did the tasks of shaping and transforming the emotions of these participants. The dramas were varied through the experimental sensibilities of the playwright poets who were indeed

writing scripts for rituals of interior transformation. Some succeeded better than others; the more conservative and the more innovative may have clashed; and so forth—yet some degree of change was deliberately built into the very design of these modules of the Dionysia.¹⁷ Within these modules, ritual became malleable, responding actively from year to year to changes in the social environment, not only through its modules of presentation, but also through those of drama. In this malleability of rite there is a basis for rethinking common sensically accepted notions of what ritual is.

The City Dionysia and the transformation of emotion

The transformation of emotion within spectator/participants was crucial to the rituals of fifth-century dramatic performance.¹⁸ Yet I have hinted that there likely was something more to the sequencing of tragedy and comedy than catharsis through the experiencing of mythopoeisis, followed by a parodic return to the hurly-burly of everyday life.

As I commented earlier, tragedy tied the protagonists into ever-tightening knots of interior agony which could not be disentangled and from which there was no escape. My sense is that these kinds of painful transformations of emotion would have blossomed deep within the spectator/participants. Many of these terrifying mythic disasters began within the relatively private nexus of kin relations. The dramas exposed these venues to the public gaze and feeling of the spectator/participants, and may have served as exemplars of what occurred with no less disastrous consequences in the daily public lives of Athenian citizens. If so, then tragedy became the mythopoetic base, but also the prologue for comedy.

Athenian comedy was not done in fun. Comedy related the interpersonal cruelty that emerged from the intense and intensely public interaction among Athenian citizens in numerous fora. The disasters in the making that could not be foreseen, could not be corrected once they exploded and surfaced. These loci of pain in the innards of protagonists were not fated, but emerged through the very processes of living that made Athenians just that.

Comedy returned spectator/participants to their daily lives with a vengeance—with the comprehension and apprehension that the most terrifying of all were the potentials for human destruction generated through the relationships of mundane life. Wherever citizens turned, their lives were replete with the potentials for disas-

17 For an example of a ritual from New Guinea that seems designed for individual and group catharsis, see Schieffelin (1976); and for another that highlights the potential malleability of ritual, see Lindquist (1997) and the comments by Handelman (1999).

18 I am indebted to David Shulman for many of the thoughts in this section.

ter. That each drama was performed only once during the Dionysia points to how thematics could be varied in relation to the variabilities of life.

Comedy was an *intensification* of tragedy. In comedy the self-enclosing and self-sealing character of tragedy opened up into the immediacy of the uncertainty of mundane life. So many citizens interacted intensely and in large numbers with one another in public fora that no one could be assured of not putting a foot wrong, leading to disastrous social ruptures. Yet in everyday living, unlike the mythopoetic, this collapse of the surety of knowledge had to be engaged with in order that social life continue to exist. Both tragedy and comedy were experiential preparations for living that intensified from the former to the latter, as the innards of audiences were drowned with the pain of what each of them might have to endure (and that some had endured).

The transformations of self that the spectator/participants underwent prepared them, perhaps with trepidation, for the sudden eruption of dionysian-like wildness and madness that erupted through the very living of life that could not be avoided or curtailed. The intensification of embodied interior pain presaged what some audience members would experience, perhaps even in the most mundane of ways. In these respects the ethos of the City Dionysia was indeed dionysiac, and an imminent refraction of Athenian daily life.

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The pilgrimage to Olympia. Settings and sentiments

Synnøve des Bouvrie

Introduction

IN THE PRESENT article I wish to explore some central aspects of one of the most prominent festival centres in the Ancient Greek world, Olympia, the sanctuary that held a crucial position within Hellenic civilisation over a time span of more than a thousand years. Responding to changing conditions Olympia answered the need for a central cultic space and attracted the entire Hellenic world.¹ Religious urges, competition for political power and personal prestige, the wish for exciting festivity, and the search for profit may have been all involved in the mass celebrations. These living events have cooled down leaving fragments of buildings, objects, and documents.

However in making sense of the material and documentary remains which have reached us we should expand our historical methods focusing on religious, political, demographic or economic questions and include an anthropological perspective. It is within such a framework of inquiry we may try to understand the pilgrimage and settings of Olympia. In doing so I will concentrate on the period of most intense activity at this grand and venerable cult site, the first half of the fifth century BC (Herrmann 1973:173ff., Weiler 1985–86, Mallwitz 1988:98, Hitzl 1995:9ff.).²

Being a site where the dominant divinity of the Hellenic world was honoured and common time reckoning was established, Olympia was not just the centre of the Hellenic world, some static map for mortals and immortals to orient themselves, it was the stage of complex symbolic processes.³ It attracted participants

1 E.g. Kunze 1972, Herrmann 1973, Weiler 1985–86, Sinn 1991, Morgan 1990:47–105, Morgan 1996, Kyle 1997, Ulf 1997a.

2 Earlier periods may have had their specific developments, the early Archaic in creating arenas for competing petty kings and aristocrats, while the Hellenistic period offered opportunities for social display to wider social groups (Meier 1993). The Roman period created new arenas, in particular in Asia Minor engaging semi-Greek élites in status enhancing displays (Pleket 1978, Nijf 1999–2000).

from near and far in a common awe of the god, and its prestigious athletic events exerted a magnetic pull with extraordinary power. At the same time the arrangements produced distinctions between Hellenes and non-Hellenes, between winners and non-winners, as well as between men and women.

Theoretical framework of pilgrimage

The most prominent symbolic process was of course the penteteric pilgrimage to Olympia. Being a special kind of journey 'pilgrimage' can have a wide range of meanings.⁴ Starting from the general concept of a strenuous journey—the pilgrim beginning 'in a familiar place, going to a Far Place, and returning to a Familiar Place, theoretically changed ...'⁵—we may turn to anthropological studies. These have been particularly stimulated by Victor and Edith Turner's theory of pilgrimage with its central aspect of 'communitas,' an idea which at the same time proved the most controversial.⁶

Against the Turners' emphasis upon the idea that pilgrimages create a levelling of identities into spontaneous 'communitas'⁷ several anthropologists have noticed the divisive and competitive mood characterising pilgrimages. Pilgrims may

- 3 I apply the notion of symbolic processes in the sense it has been developed during the last 35 years, especially in the work of Victor Turner, Barbara Babcock, Sherry Ortner, and others. Among the basic properties of symbols I would like to emphasise the power to order the cultural world of a community or to draw members of that community towards a magnetic centre, charging concepts or action with value. Symbols being omnipresent aspects of social life, they may be given extraordinary attention during symbolic processes, phases in the life of the community when ordinary life is suspended in celebration.
- 4 Within classical studies the theoretical work about the phenomenon may not be widely known, cf. Siebert 1973, Motte 1987, and Morgan 1990. Dillon's monograph only refers to one theoretical study on pilgrimage from 1950 (Dillon 1992:xv n. 5). In his review Fritz Graf criticises Dillon for taking 'a term [pilgrimage] from a very specific phenomenon of Christian worship ... and export[ing] it rather thoughtlessly into a very different religious culture' (Graf 1997:195). The Christian associations adhering to the everyday meaning of the word are perhaps felt more strongly in countries with dominant Catholic traditions. Renate Schlesier likewise criticising Dillon for applying the term does not seem to be aware of its anthropological use either (Schlesier 2000:145 n. 2). More responsive to anthropological issues are Rutherford 1995 and Frankfurter 1998. I prefer to use 'pilgrimage' while it is developed as an anthropological term as well and widely applied to non-Christian or Islamic contexts, especially in Hindu contexts, cf. Bharati 1963–64, Messerschmidt and Sharma 1981, Mokashi 1987, Sax 1990–91, 1991, Galey 1994, Coleman and Elsner 1995. Some anthropologists use the terms 'pilgrimage' and 'sacred journey' indistinctly e.g. Myerhoff 1978, 1977, Werbner 1989, Morinis 1992, Gothóni 1993. The entry 'pilgrimage' does not yet figure in the 1968 *International encyclopedia of the social sciences*, edited by David Sills. It is however included in recent encyclopedias (Barnard and Spencer's *Encyclopedia of social and cultural anthropology* from 1996 and Smelser and Baltes' *International encyclopedia of the social and behavioral sciences*, vol. 17 from 2001).
- 5 Turner 1974:195, cf. Morinis 1992:15, Rutherford 1995:276, Coleman and Elsner 1995:6, Eickelman 1996:423.

congregate as a homogenous group but also as competing and conflicting constituencies.⁸

Studying pilgrimage cults of Southern Africa Richard Werbner too analyses the impact of conflict. The fact that a number of more or less independent groups come together at an inclusive regional pilgrimage centre does not mean that conflict and strife are abolished and pure solidarity is created, the cooperation of the community suggested by Émile Durkheim. However, he stresses an important point, the fact that social conflict does not exclude ritual collaboration.⁹

However countering the general scepticism towards a cooperative function of pilgrimage¹⁰ Simon Coleman and John Elsner claim that pilgrimages first of all can be viewed as a specific, bounded and identifiable phenomenon, apart from the

- 6 Turner 1974, Turner and Turner 1994 [1978]. Their view has been criticised as being too much inspired by the pilgrimages of the major world religions by *e.g.* Morinis 1992:8f., Gothóni 1993:104f., Galey 1994:262f., and especially Eade and Sallnow 1991:3ff. More sympathetic are *e.g.* Yamba 1990:11, and Coleman and Elsner 1995:201. Not only may pilgrimages fail to promote 'communitas,' they may lack the aspirations towards transcendence as well, *e.g.* Galey 1994:290.
- 7 'A relational quality of full unmediated communication ... communitas is spontaneous, immediate ... it does not merge identities: it liberates them from conformity to general norms, though this is necessarily a transient condition if society is to continue to operate in an orderly fashion.' As such it is opposed to 'social structure, the patterned arrangements of role sets, status sets, and status sequences consciously recognized and regularly operative in a given society and closely bound up with legal and political norms and sanctions' (Turner and Turner 1994:250ff., *cf.* Turner 1974:186). Yet Victor and Edith Turner have made a number of interesting observations and distinctions of pilgrimage processes, which nuance this broad generalisation considerably, *e.g.* 'The social mode appropriate to all pilgrimages represents a mutually energizing compromise between structure and communitas' (Turner 1974:207f.).
- 8 John Eade and Michael Sallnow observe that complex discourses are found about a sacred centre, various groups of actors holding competing views of the sacred power and meaning of the place. They in fact define pilgrimages as 'above all an arena for competing religious and secular discourses' (Eade and Sallnow 1991:2, *cf.* 5). As an example we may adduce the Saint Besse pilgrimage in the Alps studied by Robert Hertz in the early 20th century (MacClancy 1994:36). In the concrete case of this pilgrimage the competition reigning between the communities celebrating the saint was manifested in the radically different notions of the saint's identity.
- 9 Werbner 1977:197. Commenting on the High God—Mwali or Mwari—cult of Southern Africa Werbner asserts 'ritual collaboration is no *deus ex machina*, and does not resolve or redress conflict between communities or congregations ...' However, at this particular regional cult the aim is to make peace at the sacred site, and 'though quarrels do sometimes break out, it is forbidden to disturb the peace of the shrine' (*op. cit.*:197).
- 10 A reaction to the perhaps undue stress upon 'competing opinions,' and in particular to Eade and Sallnow's (1991) way of dismissing pilgrimage as a meaningful category of study altogether.

everyday social processes and conflicts of society.¹¹ They draw attention to the fact that pilgrimage sites first of all constitute the sacred for the visiting community.¹²

Often a deity will be the image of this ideal, while 'the pilgrimage center may house ideals of national identity ... the identity of ethnic groups or regional cultures.' The power of a pilgrimage shrine to attract devotees is its 'spiritual magnetism' (Preston 1992:33). Different shrines may exert various kinds of 'attraction or authority,' oracular powers or particular cult objects and so forth (Frankfurter 1998:22).¹³

What is important is to realise that pilgrimages are complex processes, staged in a landscape, the pilgrimage 'field.'¹⁴ An aspect of this is their relationship to markets and fairs, offering secular services and attractions.¹⁵

At a more fundamental level we should realise that pilgrimages may be understood as the individual's experience, but there are many examples of ritual journeys being undertaken by a group, which are generally supportive of social identity.¹⁶ It is the collective aspect of the Olympian pilgrimages that is, I think, important.¹⁷ Such mass pilgrimages often take the form of processions 'transform-

- 11 Coleman and Elsner 1995:200ff. Pilgrimages centre on movement, they 'act as embodiments of myth-history, allowing adherents to reinvok elements of their faith in words, images and physical actions' (*op. cit.*:205).
- 12 Coleman and Elsner 1995:208f. *Cf.* Morinis' definition: 'the pilgrimage is a journey undertaken by a person in quest of a place or a state that he or she believes to embody a valued idea' (Morinis 1992:4f.).
- 13 Several classifications and typologies have been offered, those centring on the goal (Morinis), or the organisational order (Turner), and other qualities. *Cf.* Morinis' typology: devotional, instrumental (e.g. providing cure), normative (performed as part of a ritual cycle at major life passages or calendrical rituals), obligatory, wandering (without predetermined goal), or initiatory (1992:10–14). Pilgrimages may vary considerably, and the 'devotional' is just one type among others.
- 14 Preston 1992:40, 45. *Cf.* Turner and Turner 1994 [1978]:22, Turner 1974:226.
- 15 Turner suggests that 'As the pilgrim moves away from his structural involvements at home his route becomes increasingly sacralized at one level and increasingly secularized at another. He meets with more shrines and sacred objects as he advances, but he encounters more real dangers ... [and] he has to pay attention to the need to survive and often to earn money for transportation and he comes across markets and fairs, especially at the end of his quest, where the shrine is flanked by the bazaar and by the fun fair,' Turner 1974:182f., *cf.* Turner and Turner 1994 [1978]:22. 'Pilgrimage is a circulation of people, ideas, symbols, experiences, and cash [*sic!*],' Preston 1992:41. Others stress the mercantile aspect as well, e.g. Eade and Sallnow 1991:25.
- 16 Frankfurter 1998:21f., Coleman and Elsner 1995:206, *cf.* Myerhoff 1974 and 1978.
- 17 Raphaël emphasises the political function of some pilgrimages referring to ancient Greek festivals (Raphaël 1973:21). There are other polarities: pilgrimages tend to be performed as voluntary personal acts or as obligation, each tending in the course of time to be transformed into the other (Turner 1974:174f.). However, individual journeys, as the Muslim obligation of a pilgrimage to Mecca, may still create 'a heightened awareness of belonging to a larger whole' (Turner 1974:177).

ing movement from a functional, physiological act into a cultural performance.¹⁸ Related to this collective movement is a general tendency for pilgrimage sites to be located on peripheral places far from political centres, as Victor Turner has pointed out.¹⁹ Often a number of shrines are organised into a network of overlapping cults, hierarchically ordered, or along circuits of shrines (Frankfurter 1998:18ff.).²⁰ The arrangement of space and time in general is an important aspect of pilgrimage.²¹ There is a tendency to interweave physical arrangements with cosmological notions in a symbolic complex.²² A prominent feature is the connection of the festivities with calendrical and astronomic phases.²³

An important aspect of pilgrimage is the fact that pilgrim shrines may be arranged with varying catchment areas.²⁴ There may be a differentiation between shrines, those assembling local communities, clusters of communities in a region, or all members of a given faith, regional cults being intermediate between local and universal (the well-known christian, buddhist or muslim) cults.²⁵ Local and regional cults are often woven together in complex relationships of interdepend-

18 Morinis 1992:15.

19 Turner 1974:193. This observation he relates to the notion of marginality or liminality as represented in van Gennep's theory of *rites de passage* (Turner 1974:195ff.). Cf. Cohen 1992:51. Morinis observes that 'It is conventional to refer to sacred places of pilgrimage as centers, and from a social and especially a cultural point of view, the image of the center is valid. But centrality is only one spatial concept that is tapped in locating the sacred place in relation to its fields. Geographically, the sacred place is actually seldom central. Most commonly, the journey takes the pilgrim to the top (mountain peak), edge (seashore, forest), or beyond (desert, uninhabited region)' (Morinis 1992:19).

20 There may also be a pilgrimage circuit in which each shrine has its place as a specific station (Werbner 1977:xx).

21 In a perhaps unduly schematic statement Victor Turner suggests that 'it is worth mentioning that the limen of pilgrimage is, characteristically, motion, the movement of travel, while that of initiation is stasis, the seclusion of novices in a fixed sacred space. The former liminalizes time; the latter space. Time is connected with voluntariness; space with obligation' (Turner 1992:29-47, 39). I think time as well as space are elaborated upon in both forms of symbolic action.

22 In many ancient civilizations the religious topography of pilgrimage shrines 'replicates the major modes of cosmological classification, translating a cognitive into a spatial arrangement of parts.' Turner 1974:224. Cf. 'Indigenous categories tend to merge geographical and non-geographical aspects of sacred journeying' (Morinis 1992:2, cf. 19).

23 'There is a time element of movement that creates frequency and repetition of journeys through space. Pilgrimages are often timed to occur within monthly, annual, seasonal, or other cycles ... Symbolism is involved here. So, too, is the relationship of pilgrimage movements to other cycles and movements, such as those of the day, sun moon, seasons, and so on' (Morinis 1992:16).

24 'The geographical area from which the majority of pilgrims are drawn to a particular shrine' (Turner 1974:178f.).

25 Turner 1974:179, cf. 224. Regional cults have been the object of special study by Richard Werbner and others (Werbner 1977, 1989).

ence.²⁶ Examples within Near-Eastern and Mediterranean cultures are provided by Dale Eickelman²⁷ and Emanuel Marx.²⁸

Among the different types of pilgrimages there are, then, those that are more exclusive, attracting or welcoming only a restricted membership and furthering its specific interests, often a specific social or ethnic community, and others that are more inclusive, appealing to human beings as such.²⁹ We may, thus, distinguish between pilgrimages supportive of social identity and those tending towards universality.³⁰ This distinction seems to be related to the range from collective to individual participation.³¹ Likewise there is a spectrum from communal to general human concerns.³²

- 26 A local cult is, in Elizabeth Colson's terms, 'a cult which primarily functions to serve the particular interest of a territorial community on a regular basis,' as opposed to a 'cult serving a wider constituency on an *ad hoc* and non-exclusive basis,' where delegations may 'go for consultation with an oracle or other universalistic cult' (Colson 1977:119–120).
- 27 Dale Eickelman has studied the complex cult forms of Islam in Morocco: while the muslim tradition upheld by the central urban communities preaches the universality of God, who is not in need of any mediator, local communities adhere to *maraboutism*, the belief in the holy men, 'living or dead, who are thought to have a special relation toward God which makes them particularly well placed to serve as intermediaries with the supernatural and to communicate God's grace (*baraka*) to their clients,' creating a relationship analogous to patron-client ties (Eickelman 1977:6f.).
- 28 Complex social processes are observed in the religious activities of Bedouins in Southern Sinai by Emanuel Marx. Pilgrimage is practised in a cult of saints and holy tombs. The saints are mediators between man and God in a local form of Islam as 'a link between local societies and the "wider society"' (Mark 1977:30).
- 29 Pilgrimage centres with more restricted catchment areas tend to be more bound up with the sociopolitical structures, while cult centres with a wider catchment area are more inclusive. Analysing African pilgrimage shrines Turner distinguishes between shrines set up *outside* settlements and those *within* them. This distinction he relates to opposed types of cults: *earth* cults vs. *ancestral* cults respectively and *fertility* vs. *political* rituals (Turner 1974:184). According to Victor Turner 'ancestral and political cults and their local embodiment tend to represent crucial power divisions and classificatory distinctions within and among politically discrete groups, while earth and fertility cults represent ritual bonds between those groups The first stresses exclusiveness, the second inclusiveness' (*op. cit.*:185).
- 30 Studying the Mwali- or High God-cult in Southern Africa, Werbner suggests that like the earth cults studied by Turner, which strive for greater inclusiveness, its ritual does not represent 'the various political divisions each with their conflicts Its theology directs attention to ... the order beyond that of the congregation or any single community Its macrocosmic conceptions are ... of such a kind that communities can continue to define their broadest consensus through them irrespective of their differences, hostilities and competition' (Werbner 1977:xxx).
- 31 Religious practices may develop from particularism to greater universalism independent of other social developments (Werbner 1977:xxiii). Werbner suggests that there may be an increase in inclusiveness. According to Turner 'the *communitas* spirit presses always to universality and ever greater unity,' Turner 1974:179. (*cf.* Morinis 1992:28, n. 2).

Reverting to the concrete aspects of a pilgrimage centre we may notice Coleman and Elsner's observation that people may gather upon arrival. At this moment pilgrims are directed by the arrangements of the sacred site into some kind of collective experience. There is a ritualisation of movement at the site itself, through topographic and artistic elaboration, resulting in a coordination and integration of pilgrim behaviour. Even though pilgrims may arrive with widely varying ideas and expectations they are in some sense orchestrated into conformity at the site. This "constraining" function of sites' is an aspect which can be studied empirically on the physical lay-out of the sanctuary, its settings.³³ From other sources we may infer the orchestration of prescribed sentiments.

Olympian settings and sentiments

With this overview of theories of pilgrimage we may look once more at Olympia, and consider its topography, its symbolism and its nature as the stage of social processes. Belonging to those pilgrimages with a wide catchment area the central cult at Olympia gave comprehensive access to pilgrims of *Hellenic* origin but excluded non-Hellenes, manifesting a genuine regional cult.³⁴ Olympia's special status as the supreme athletic festival was universally acknowledged (Pleket 1975:61).³⁵ Whatever the realities of material rewards and professionalism, it is clear that the athletes aspired first of all to honour and glory (Pleket 1975:79, Buhmann 1975:24ff., Kurke 1993).

The very name of the celebrations, *Olympia*, refers to Zeus Olympios,³⁶ the deity symbolising supreme authority in the Hellenic world (Vernant 1974:106ff.). It

- 32 Even though the professed mission of the journey may be spiritual, the pilgrim's goal can be the acquisition of greater wealth, political power or prestige. A Muslim's pilgrimage to Mecca may convert wealth (signalled by the fact that the pilgrim could afford the journey) into social prestige (Morinis 1992:20).
- 33 The way 'the pilgrim's movement could be guided and converted into an ordered progression ...' (Coleman and Elsner 1995:209, 212). Cf. '... in the final stages, the route itself becomes a sacred, sometimes mythical journey till almost every landmark and ultimately every step is a condensed, multivocal symbol capable of arousing much affect and desire. ... No longer is the pilgrim's sense of the sacred private: it is a matter of objectified, collective representations which become virtually his whole environment ...' (Turner 1974:197f.).
- 34 Due to this particularism the cult cannot be claimed universal nor can the Eleusinian mysteries which, although concerned with a more universal spiritual well-being, required a knowledge of Greek. The *Olympia* excluded the unfree as well (Crowther 1992:36, cf. Pleket 1974). On the panhellenic contests as an exclusive arrangement see Coleman 1997:177, cf. Timpe 2000. For the provenance of non-Greek votive offerings see Louis Dyer, who reminds of the fact that 'only at Olympia were non-Greeks completely out of court,' suggesting a central ethnic magnet (Dyer 1905:310). For votive offerings indicating regional and supra-regional connections see Mitsopoulos-Leon 2001 and Maass 1992. For the development of the sanctuary in relationship to Elis see Siewert 2001:247f.

refers to Mt. Olympos as well, the peak level within the metaphysical topography, thus mapping out the cosmic world on earth. It signals the status of the god who assembles the Hellenic community in their most inclusive cult. Olympia also embraced the wide span of time, offering the central chronological measuring standard for the Hellenic tribe.³⁷

The sanctuary being located in a sacred grove, a space outside the everyday world,³⁸ its lay-out was carefully designed: in the centre the meeting point between mortals and immortals, the altars of Zeus Olympios and Hera,³⁹ the hill of Kronos rising beyond them, with its associations of primordial time, the chaotic-paradisiac age of Kronos.⁴⁰ His cult in Olympia was the only really old Kronos cult.⁴¹ The *kotinos*, or wild olive branch, may have evoked primordial time as well, an era before the tree was cultivated.⁴² Until Oinomaos' rule Kronos' hill was covered with massive snow, which was dissolved afterwards, according to a passage in Pindaros (Pind. *Ol.* 10.51, cf. Jouanna 2002:110).

Pindaros tells how Herakles established the sanctuary and named Kronos' hill: 'at this primaeval rite (πρωτογόνῳ τελετῶ) the Moirai were present and Time (χρόνος) who is the only one to put unfailling truth to the test.'⁴³ Pindaros men-

- 35 Paus. 5.10.1; Strabo 8.3.30–31; cf. the *proimion* of Pindaros' *First Olympian Ode*, and *Ol.* 4.3, *Ol.* 5.5., *Ol.* 6.63 πάγκοινων. According to Francis Cairns, who has studied the ranking according to epinician poetry, there was a considerable distance between the Olympian and the Pythian games while the distance between these two and the remaining crown games was almost 'unbridgeable' (Cairns 1991:98). The monetary rewards offered to victorious athletes in Athens suggests the distance: 500 dr vs. 100 dr to the Olympionikes and the Isthmionikes respectively (*IG I²* 77, cf. Morrissey 1978). The intense elaboration of myths endorsing claims to Olympia in the Archaic and Classical periods is studied by Ulf 1997b. The fact that a period of hard training in Elis seems to have been required may have been motivated by the wish to enhance the prestige of the *Olympia* (Crowther 1991:166).
- 36 The name Olympia as designation of the sanctuary can be traced to the middle of the seventh century, cf. Siewert 1991, Rausch 1998.
- 37 Miller 1975:215. The list of *Olympionikai* was however not written down until Hippias of Elis about 400 BC, cf. Körte 1904.
- 38 Cf. Graf 1993:28f. studying oracular groves suggests that these locations were considered an exceptionally pure space. Sources in Birge 1984:nrs. 414–432.
- 39 Alike Moustaka suggests that her temple was originally dedicated to Zeus, see Moustaka 2002, followed by Sinn 2001.
- 40 Pausanias refers to the antiquarians of Elis who tell that Kronos was the first to hold the kingdom of heaven, others tell how Zeus defeated Kronos (Paus. 5.7.6–10).
- 41 Paus. 6.20.1; Dion Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.34.3f. Versnel 1993:99, cf. Siewert 1992:116, for regulations of sacrifices for Kronos, Mallwitz 1988:91, sources Mey and Olshausen 1999. The comic poet Kratinos gives Kronos the epithet πρεσβυγενής (Cratinus fr. 240 Edmonds; Plut. *Per.* 3.3).
- 42 Leduc 1996:264f. Theophr. *Hist. pl.* 4.13.2; Paus. 5.7.7, the tree originated with the Hyperboreans and grew first by the Alpheios, Paus. 5.14.3, 5.15.3; Suidas s.v. 'κοτίνου στέφανος.'
- 43 ἐξελέγχων μόνος ἀλάθειαν ἐτήτυμον, Pind *Ol.* 10.49–55.

tions how Herakles honoured the Twelve Gods at the same occasion.⁴⁴ According to Stella Georgoudi the Twelve Gods were symbolically associated with primordial time, ‘un passé qui instaure et inaugure.’⁴⁵ The sanctuary of the mother of the gods was nearby, the somewhat anonymous divinity simply referred to as Meter. Pausanias reports Zeus’ birth from Rhea (5.7.6), and Pindaros mentions ‘the venerable Idaian grotto’ (Ἰδαῖόν τε σεμνὸν ἄντρον, *Pind. Ol.* 5.17f.). This has been interpreted as a replica shrine of the Cretan ‘Idaeian grotto’ in Olympia,⁴⁶ alluding to the birth of Zeus on Crete, which would complete the overall atmosphere of primordial beginnings.

Entering the shrine and proceeding towards Zeus’ altar the celebrants passed the tomb of Pelops, his myth being connected with the origin of the great celebrations. A native neither of Peloponnesian origin nor of any other Hellenic city, the hero was a foreigner,⁴⁷ and this trait of Pelops’ mythical identity suits well a hero who is lifted above particularistic local-patriotic concerns of any specific tribe.

Hieromenia and Ekekheiria

The pilgrimage for the *Olympia* was inaugurated with the proclamation of the ‘sacred truce.’⁴⁸ However, although expressions as εἰρήνη, ὁμόνοια and φιλία are found in ancient oratory as the aim of the Olympic festival, these notions do not seem to have been the essence of the celebration and are not found in the central witnesses of Pindaros, Herodotos, or Thoukydides.⁴⁹ Aristophanes’ *Lysistrate*

44 *Pind. Ol.* 5.5. For the altars of the Twelve Gods at Olympia: Apollodoros 2.7.2.

45 Georgoudi 1996:63. She concludes that the symbol of the Twelve Gods is associated with ‘harmonie et cohésion’ (*op. cit.*:74, 64).

46 It has however been difficult to locate the shrine archaeologically, see Hampe 1951.

47 Butterworth 1966:184f. Gantz 1993:530–545. Coming from the far East and being the son of the mythical Tantalos, king of Sipylos, he is rooted in a ‘nowhere’-place. His exotic origin is emphasised while his bones are preserved in the shrine of Artemis Kordax, according to Pausanias, an epithet referring to the ‘native’ Phrygian dance (Paus. 6.22.1). He is most frequently localised in far off Lydia or Phrygia (*Pind. Ol.* 1.24; Paus. 5.1.6., *cf.* 5.13.7. Hermann 1980:61, *RE Suppl.* VII 849ff. Hermann’s historical explanation of Pelops’ ‘Lydian/Phrygian/Paphlagonian’ origin, as due to Mycenaean migration does not take account of the symbolic effect of this element of the tale, just as Dionysos is both Theban and ‘Lydian/Phrygian,’ the latter being an expression of the liminal qualities of his cult. Nagy 1986 analyses the myth in Pindaros’ poem in relationship to ritual. I am not sure the diachronic interpretation with the distinction he makes between older and younger myths is illuminating. All versions are synchronic as far as they are realised in one ritual setting, in this case the telling by Pindaros, and perhaps elsewhere. For the strategic and manipulative use of different versions see Ulf 1997b. Hansen 2000 demonstrates the folk narrative character of Pindaros’ versions.

48 According to Brodersen the *ekkekheiria* (ἐκεχειρία), during the sacred period literally meant ‘keep hands off,’ *i.e.* ‘free of weapons’ (Brodersen 1991:12, *cf.* Muth 1979:168ff.). Frisk 1960:476, *s.v.* ἐκεχειρία, ‘Zustand in dem die Hände zurückgehalten werden.’

chastising the warring parties in fact implies the pervasive state of enmity while reminding them that in fact they are ξυγγενεῖς (Ar. *Lys.* 1128–34).

Rougemont concludes that *hieromenia* did not proclaim a general celebration of peace, but offered a practical arrangement, a temporary convention of protection (ἡ δεδομένη τοῖς ἀγωνισταῖς ἀσυλία καὶ ἀσφάλεια, Plut. *Arat.* 28) for the benefit of the pilgrims to enable the normal procedure of the festivals.⁵⁰ The very fact that the celebrants of the *Olympia* were protected by such immunities, according to tradition instituted for the common benefit (κοινὸν ἀγαθόν, Paus. 5.20.1), indicates that the participants were not necessarily friendly disposed towards each other. The number of votive memorials of victory over Hellenic neighbours is another indication of the situation (Semmlinger 1974, Jacquemin 1991).

The sanctions protecting the sacred truce were regulated in the so-called Ὀλυμπιακός νόμος, including enforcements and fines upon the violators (Thuc. 5:49.1, cf. Lämmer 1982–83:57). *Olympia*, then, was not necessarily the focus of spontaneous brotherhood, although communities might formally pledge mutual friendship confirming their agreement in *Olympia*. Epigraphic evidence offers some insight into these conditions.⁵¹

After the Persian wars the Hellenic *poleis* seem to have attempted at establishing a ‘court of arbitration’ in *Olympia*, as suggested by an inscription which settles disputes between Boeotians and Thessalians and between Athenians and Phocaeans (Siewert 1981).⁵² The arrangement itself seems however to have been rather short-lived.

49 Raubitschek suggests that the notion of peace and panhellenic brotherhood can be dated to the end of the Peloponnesian war, as an ideology emerging in the writings of Lysias and Isokrates and may derive from Hippias the historian of *Olympia*, Hippias *FGrH* 6 F 2 Jacoby (Raubitschek 1985).

50 Rougemont 1973:101. Cf. Lämmer, ‘... eine öffentlich verkündete und formal vereinbarte *Unantastbarkeit* von Personen, Territorien oder Gegenständen anlässlich religiöser Feste einschließlich der dabei stattfindenden Wettkämpfe,’ (Lämmer 1982–83:49). ‘Die *Ekecheiria* war kein “Ideal,” sondern eine Übereinkunft!’ (*op. cit.* 66).

51 E.g. the pledge (φράτρα) concluded under severe sanctions between Anaitoi and Metapioi, probably communities in the neighbourhood of Elis, dating to the Archaic age (Virgilio 1972). According to the conditions of the pledge it was left to the discretion of the ἱερομαῖοι whether some breach had occurred and to the πρόξενοι and μάντιες to expel the offenders from the *Olympian* altar.

52 According to Siewert it is probably due to this fact that the umpires, formerly called *diatateres* were named *Hellanodikai* (Siewert 1992:115). Alternatively the name emerged early in the sixth century (Siewert cited in Ulf 1996:266).

Panegyris

The great Olympic as well as the other panhellenic festivals were concentric circles of interests widening from the holiest sacrifice to fairs and markets, conventional distinctions between sacred and profane being unsuitable to describe the phenomenon of a *panegyris*.⁵³

Furthermore, the cultic procedures at *panegyris* seem, I suggest, to have been orchestrated into a subtly woven pattern of 'prescribed' sentiments following the course of the celebration.⁵⁴ This may, I think, account for the fact that no theatre seems ever to have been built in Olympia.⁵⁵ Given the overwhelming number of theatres which have been built in the Hellenic world, it is significant that Olympia did not have one, while the extraordinary longevity of the *Olympia* suggests that the absence of a theatre cannot have been just an accidental omission.⁵⁶

It must be an indication of the fact that cult forms of Dionysiac inversion and reversal were felt to be inappropriate at the most revered of sanctuaries and this fact adds to the impression that the overall symbolic atmosphere was one of austerity and ideal forms. In Philostratos' *Life of Apollonios* the *Olympia* are compared with the *Pythia*, the former suppressing the musical and theatrical shows of the latter as inappropriate and unworthy (ἀνάρμοστα καὶ οὐ χρηστὰ, Philostr. VA 6.10). In fact Ploutarkhos mentions the tradition that ivy was debarred from the

53 Analysing the phenomenon of periodic markets de Ligt and de Neeve conclude that the development of urban centres not necessarily excludes the periodic festival markets (de Ligt and de Neeve 1988:394, cf. Chandezon 2000).

54 For the illuminative parallel in the modern Olympics I refer to John MacAloon 1984. MacAloon has observed a system of 'performative genres' in the celebration of modern Olympic games. In the core of the opening rite the values of human cooperation and mutual respect are revived, other genres surround the ritual celebration in concentric circles, the drama and festival of the competitions, the spectacle of profane show surrounding the arrangement: rite, drama, festival and spectacle each appealing to a specific mood and fascination.

55 According to John Ferguson 'one of the strangest features of Olympia' (Ferguson 1989:57). Minos Kokolakis has collected sources for the informal intellectual and artistic performances held at Olympia (Kokolakis 1987–88). Usually the absence of a theatre is explained with the obvious fact that no musical contests were included in the programme without further comments as to the reason for this (Vendries 1999:270, Miller 2001:78). The expression 'theatron' in Xen. *Hell.* 7.4.31 refers to the spectators' bank at the stadion (Kontis 1958:9, Mallwitz 1981:104).

56 Larmour focusing on the fact that both drama and athletic contests contain the element of *agon* argues that 'the two phenomena are fundamentally connected' (Larmour 1999:2). Certainly, along the syntagmatic axis celebrations followed a certain sequence of preparations, procession, 'spectacle,' sacrifice, banquet and closure. The pervasive element of competition in 'spectacle' performances emphasises their paradigmatic relationship: dramatic and athletic performances were interchangeable in the 'spectacle' phase. At a deeper level the two main performance genres sprung from widely different 'fascinations' or culturally 'prescribed sentiments,' just as there is a fundamental difference between musical contests of an Apollinic, encomic mood and tragic or comic drama, with their Dionysiac fascination.

Olympic sanctuary, adding the suggestion that the reason for this may be the circumstance that the plant is 'symbolic of bacchic revels and female possession rites.'⁵⁷ At Olympia liminality did not take shape as a mood of disruption. Perhaps the symbolic centre did not tolerate the entertaining aspect of theatre, while other regional sanctuaries, e.g. Epidauros, Isthmia or Delos, did.⁵⁸

The pilgrimage process

The structure of the athletic festival at Olympia has been seen as an initiation pattern. The athletic contests however did not engage initiands, but adolescent and adult males⁵⁹ in a celebration we may better understand if we take into account its processual dimension. First there is the journey to a distant place. Attracting participants from the whole Mediterranean, including the Euxine, Olympia served the function of a collective regional pilgrimage. Whatever the original arrangements may have been, possibly with participation restricted to the Peloponnese, in the historical period the catchment area was in fact the entire Hellenic world. The peripheral location of Olympia responds to the characteristics of a regional pilgrimage centre, which is usually located at some distant site, out of reach of important secular powers, and necessitating a more or less arduous journey.⁶⁰

After gathering in Elis the host of disparate delegations set out on a last pilgrimage procession from Elis to the Altis, orchestrated into a new, however ephemere and festive, community. The evidence for such a communal procession from Elis to Olympia is not extensive, but there are indications for its existence. Pausanias mentions 'τὴν πομπικὴν ἔσοδον' in the Altis (Paus. 5.15.2; 6.20.7).⁶¹

Being received in the sacred centre the pilgrims had to cope with a process of restructuring, a transfer from the familiar to the foreign, from local to regional

57 Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 112. Pausanias mentions an altar for Dionysos shared with the Charites, lying close to the *temenos* of Pelops, and beside it are altars for the Muses and Nymphs (Paus. 5.14.10). These manifestations seem to point to symposium ritual. Another altar, which lay outside the Altis was not old according to Pausanias, and dedicated by private individuals (Paus. 5.15.4). The relationship between Olympia and Dionysos may have been entertained by the Elean matrons, see Mitsopoulos-Leon 1984.

58 Nemea never did have a theatre either (Larmour 1999:183). Corinth has a long tradition for comic performances and the atmosphere at Isthmia (the theatre dating from ca. 400 BC, Gebhard 1973:26), may have been less austere than in Olympia (or Nemea, Larmour 1999:5). The theatre at Delphi seems to have been used for musical contests (Fontenrose 1988).

59 On the age classes of the participant boys see Crowther 1988, Petermandl 1997.

60 On the difficulty of access to Olympia see Men. Rhet., *Peri epideiktikon* 1.366f., cf. de Ligt and de Neeve 1988:397. Morgan observes that some of the early shrines which have continued into historical time, among which Olympia, 'were established close to routes of communication and in areas marginal to the palatial world' (Morgan 1996:57). Beate Wagner-Hasel has studied the development of inter-regional sanctuaries, especially Delphi in the context of trade-routes (Wagner-Hasel 2002:168).

deities, from initial disorder to a new ritual order. It may be argued that the panhellenic cults of Zeus and Apollon acted as ‘Great gods,’ who were all-inclusive as opposed to the local manifestations of these gods or the particularistic gods and heroes and in each independent *polis* or *ethnos*.⁶² An oracular shrine or *stomion* attributed to Gaia/Themis is known from Olympia (Paus. 5.14.10) as well as Delphi. We may compare this arrangement to the opposition between ‘ancestral and political’ vs. ‘earth and fertility cults’ (Turner 1974:185, see above note 29). The latter are generally interpreted as a residue from an earlier age, a trace of an original fertility cult.⁶³ We should not however take refuge in ‘fertility’ magic and genetic explanations without examining a functional one. Georgoudi underscores in her study of Gaia that this goddess is not associated with fertility and motherhood. She seems to be the representation of the civic space or ‘home,’ with its metaphoric associations with nurturing and caring, someone’s ‘father- or motherland’ (Georgoudi 2002:123). I would suggest that the existence of Gaia and Themis at the panhellenic centres may have evoked the positive associations of the common ‘homeland’ of the Hellenes, as well as their common morality⁶⁴ and that opaque figures as Gaia and Themis may have played a role of enhancing the inclusive function of the pilgrimage shrine. Philippe Borgeaud argues that the *Meter* or *Meter theon* cult should not be conceived of as a fertility cult either.⁶⁵ Precisely by being ‘anonymous’ *Meter* expresses a universal power and can evoke a ‘primordial’

61 Muth 1979:177 assumes a procession ‘wahrscheinlich’ taking place, Buhman 1988 suggests a procession without offering evidence, Mallwitz 1981:112 indicates a ‘Feststraße’ on his plan. Siewert 1992:116 assumes that the inscription related to physical arrangements of roads and lodgings refers to ‘the great procession from Elis to Olympia before the opening of the games’ (Wacker 1997:116). Hugh Lee suggests the route (Lee 2001:10f., 28f.). The gathering in Olympia cannot, I think, be analysed according to the centripetal/centrifugal dichotomy proposed by Graf (Graf 1996), the dichotomy being relevant in relation to particularistic *polis* cults and applying to the relationship between cultic space and civic centre.

62 If the Isolympic celebrations in Naples were a faithful copy of the *Olympia* themselves we may assume that the pilgrims swore oaths to Zeus and Apollon, thereby binding themselves temporally to a common ritual anchorage. See the text of the *Italika Sebasta Isolympia*, Dittenberger and Purgold 1966:nr. 56, line 48. Cf. Siewert 1992.

63 Paus. 5.14.10. Weniger 1905:29, Vegas-Sansalvador 1991:147f. Sinn 1996a:19ff.

64 See Rudhardt 1999. It is noteworthy that there did not exist something like a sacred spring in Olympia, a feature which is well known from pilgrimage centres such as Delphi, Eleusis and a number of oracular cults, in particular those of Asklepios. One wonders whether this absence might mean that Olympia was not concerned with the inner well being of the individual as these ‘problem solving’ cults.

65 As is the tendency, e.g. Robertson 1996 (nor necessarily as an orgiastic cult). The *Meter* temple in Olympia was built about 400–390 (Mallwitz 1972:160, Roller 1999:161). W. Fuchs has argued for the view that Dionysos figured on the pediment, replacing Atthis, the persona of *Meter* at this stage being a fusion between the ancient Rhea and the more recent Kybele (Fuchs 1956:163).

and all embracing divinity guaranteeing established truth, justice and prosperity (Borgeaud 1996:28, 51).⁶⁶

Symbolic settings at the stadion, Demeter Khamyne

At this point we may briefly consider the curious settings of the stadion: the altar of Demeter Khamyne. The priestess of Demeter Khamyne was the exception to the rule that excluded mature women from the *Olympia* (Paus. 6.20.8–9; 21.1), and the arrangement that she was present at the male *agones* seated by the altar of Demeter in the stadion has caused puzzlement among scholars and elicited a variety of interpretations. The cult epithet is etymologically interpreted as ‘having her bed on the earth’ or ‘having the earth as her bed.’⁶⁷ Generally Demeter is referred to as the general power of fertility and fecundity and the priestess’ presence accepted without any further explanation.⁶⁸ However, social arrangements may often be couched in metaphors from the natural world, being an instance of the general tendency of rituals to cover the ‘sacred’ truths. As Mary Douglas has emphasised, when ‘appeals to nature’ are made in support of social arrangements, culture is certainly involved.⁶⁹ A general reference to ‘fertility cult’ does not therefore offer a sufficient explanation. Alternatively a genetic explanation has been offered: the location of the altar of Demeter Khamyne where her priestess attended the male events was the continuation of an earlier *temenos* which the rearrangement of the stadion had intruded upon (Weniger 1905:30f.).⁷⁰

66 The fact that a Meter cult was established for example in the heart of the Athenian political centre, suggests rather a divinity evoking the overarching authority of the polis community (Solon fr. 36.4 West). Meter may shade into other female divinities, such as Ge or Themis, and Demeter borrowing mythical or iconographic fragments from their persona (Borgeaud 1996:38). In Athens Meter received, according to Borgeaud, elements from Anatolian Kybele in the middle of the fifth century, a crucial period of the development of democracy, and during the Peloponnesian war (Borgeaud 1996:38f.). The ancient Meter was so empowered with renewed symbolic charge. The icon of the mistress of lions and the myth of her cosmic wrath are apt at evoking the sense of a formidable power. The Anatolian Meter is attested from the early sixth century BC in the Peloponnese, in Lakonia and Arkadia, and in western colonies from Sparta and Asian Minor (Genière 1986).

67 Derived from *χαμαί* and *εὐνή* (Vegas-Sansalvador 1991). Vegas-Sansalvador offers different explanations of the name: chthonic, fertility and healing—together with Iasios, and in connection with horses at the nearby hippodrome. For the ‘khameunai’ priest called Selloi or Helloi in Dodona see Hom. *Il.* 16.234f.

68 E.g. Delcourt 1947:67, Vegas-Sansalvador 1991:147, Mouratidis 1990:103.

69 Douglas 1982:5: ‘... the ultimate justifying ideas which tend to be invoked as if part of the natural order ... are evidently not at all natural but strictly a product of social interaction.’ Cf. Moore and Myerhoff 1977:8, Bourdieu 1992:81.

70 Cf. Weniger 1917–18:5f. followed by Sinn 1996b:61, 2000a:78 fig. 13.

Apart from the question whether the topography was as Weniger supposes, which is not substantiated,⁷¹ it is doubtful whether such a special arrangement would have been accepted merely as a reverence to the past.⁷² People are capable of transforming rituals quite radically if previous arrangements do not satisfy any more. The hypothesis of the persistence of cultic traditions does not, then, seem convincing. Moreover, a conspicuous sight such as a single woman within view of the huge host of men certainly had some meaning other than antiquarian awe. After all, this reverence to the goddess could have been expressed at another moment of the year and without placing the prohibited category of spectators most prominently before the eyes of the 'offended' men.

Still, the priestess' presence may have had some positive meaning. Parallel cultic practices suggest that Demeter was involved in initiatory performances, notably those including races.⁷³ This function is epigraphically attested in several regions of Hellas and Makedonia and overlaps with the role played by related divinities and heroines (Hatzopoulos 1994:46f.).⁷⁴ In Lete in Makedonia an inscription dedicated to Demeter is suggested by Miltiadis Hatzopoulos to refer to a similar practice (Hatzopoulos 1994:44–53). He suggests a relationship between Demeter and a divinity called 'Kale' ('la Belle Déesse') who is attested near the *gymnasion* at Thera (*IG XII:3.380*; Hatzopoulos 1994:50, 60). Hatzopoulos adduces fragments of inscriptions from the sanctuary of Demeter-Kala Thea south of Lete in Makedonia concluding that this goddess protected initiatory foot races for girls as well as boys (Hatzopoulos 1994:54–61).

Possibly the altar of Demeter and her daughter located in the *gymnasion* in Elis was associated with similar activities (Paus. 6.23.3). As to the origin of the epithet 'Khamyne' it may refer to a detail of ancient cult practice.⁷⁵ Pausanias tells the

71 The only indication for the existence of the *temenos* of Demeter Khamyne Weniger adduces in fact is Pausanias mentioning the priestess' presence at the male *agones*, involving a circular argument! *cf.* Scanlon 1984:81.

72 *Cf.* Vallois who assumes that some foot races *originally* were dedicated to Demeter (Vallois 1926:316f).

73 According to Jeanmaire an initiatory cult under the goddess' protection should be at the root of the Eleusinian mysteries, Demeter being the *kourotrophos* of Demophon (Jeanmaire 1939:296f.). The hymn to Demeter mentions battles or contests in honour of the young Demophon. *Cf. Hymn. Hom. Cer.* 266ff.; Jeanmaire 1939:343, Calame 1977:408. Inscriptions from Attica mention Demeter *kourotrophos* (*CIA III,1:372, 373*), and other cases are collected by Price (Price 1978:190f.).

74 In Sparta and Messenia inscriptions have been found referring to female *poloi*, indicating a relationship with cultic races, dedicated to Demeter and Kore (*IG V:1.1444, IG V:1.594. Cf.* Hatzopoulos 1994:50 nn. 7–8).

75 Jeanmaire 1939:415ff., who assumes that the etymology of her name may be related to a tradition that Spartan initiands were couched on 'stibades', covers of foliage on the ground (*cf.* Plut. *Lyc.* 16.1.4; at the *Hyakinthia*, Athen. 4.138f).

myth that Cretan Herakles with his companions, the Kouretes, slept on heaps of *kotinos* leaves, presumably on the earth (Paus. 5.7.7). Since cult epithets may refer to ritual practice,⁷⁶ and the ancient lore about the Kouretes seems to be a web of mythical and ritual traditions, it is not inconceivable that the epithet 'Khamyne' preserves a detail of initiation practices.⁷⁷ The presence of the priestess of Demeter Khamyne may then have evoked the symbolic 'growth' of new generations of men. Demanding immense physical effort, the pilgrimage centre celebrated the lofty ideal of vital male strength, under the auspices of the goddess of growth, the *kourotrophos* Demeter Khamyne.

Sacrifice at Olympia

Having outlined the overall symbolic settings at the pilgrimage centre we should look at the cultic events with their sacrificial arrangements and sequence. Since we are exceptionally well informed about the sacrificial programme in Olympia, compared with much that is told about ancient cult celebrations, it may be worth while to examine the way the sacrifices in Olympia ran through several phases. Of course we encounter a difficult question, that of the validity of the late evidence (*e.g.* Pausanias) for earlier periods. However, we may try to reconstruct the sacrificial programme as a complex of interrelated elements, the most prominent of which being of course the relationship between the central 'Voropfer und Opfer' (Eitrem 1977). I will however include a wider range of cultic acts into the overall sacrificial programme of the *Olympia*, following Victor Turner, who stresses that it is necessary to understand 'sacrifice as a process within a process within a process ...'.⁷⁸

76 Examples of epitheta referring to ritual practice are Apollon Daphephoros and Dionysos Omestes (Burkert 1977:285 = 1985:184). Other examples of epithets referring to cultic practices, as Demeter Megalartos, 'of great loaves,' goat-eating' Hera, or 'Karneia garlanded Apollo' are discussed by Robert Parker in 'The problem of the Greek cult epithet' (Matin P. Nilsson-lecture given at the Swedish Institute at Athens 8 November 2001. I am most grateful to the author for providing me with a copy of this lecture).

77 Burkert assumes the existence of cult associations of young warriors on Crete, celebrating the birth of Zeus on Mount Ida (1985:261f., *cf.* Jeanmaire 1939:427–444, Bremmer 1978:23ff.). The *Hymn from Palaioikastro* celebrating Zeus Diktaios as the 'Greatest Kouros' may be evidence for the existence of such a cult association of *kouroi*, which is considered the equivalent of *kouretes* (*Insc. Cret.* III.2.2, West 1965:155f.). In other regions colleges of Kouretes and similar men's associations, operating with age distinctions and contests, are attested (Strabo 10.4.16 = Ephoros *FGrH* 70 F 149). In Ephesos however the title refers to leading officials in the polis (Strabo 14.1.20). *Cf.* Luria 1963:31ff., 1928.

78 'In the first place, I have come to see sacrifice neither as a single act or event nor as an intellectual structure perhaps further reducible, as Lévi-Strauss has done for totems, to deep-lying rules, but as a process with several stages (one common sequence runs invocation-consecration-immolation-communion). The whole process, furthermore, may be a phase in a protracted social drama or crisis, with secular as well as ritual moments' (Turner 1992:89).

Leaving at home their particularistic deities and heroes, to which each *polis* and *ethnos* kept exclusive access, the pilgrimage centre Olympia embraced all (male) Hellenes irrespective of polis affiliation in an overarching cult of Zeus. There is an account of the festive mood at the opening of the celebration, which is particularly interesting because it is descriptive but in a sense prescriptive as well, the staging of a joyous 'rendez-vous.' Philostratos, sketching the origins of the *diaulos* foot race, in passing suggest the specific mood of the cultic phase: 'Whenever the *theoroi* of the Hellenes were welcomed, the runners ran a stadion length from the altar and back again, announcing that *Hellas had arrived in joy*.'⁷⁹ This announcement may express the sentiments appropriate to the occasion.

What I would draw attention to is the way the sacrificial programme may have modulated sentiments into a specific order of 'prescribed' moods. Symbolic phenomena do not only categorise the world, they may contribute as well to transforming the affective state of the community in important ways. Of course we cannot possibly register empirically what was happening to the audiences attending the celebrations. There are however indications that a modulation of sentiments was an element of the programme.

On the eve of the *Olympia* the women of Elis used to lament Akhilleus at his grave in the *gymnasion* at Elis (Paus. 6.23.3, 24.1). Women were excluded from the games at Olympia, but the fact that their lament was held on the occasion of the male celebration indicates that this cultic gesture should be included into the Olympic ritual programme, even if the male celebrants were elsewhere. Akhilleus being the most prominent war hero in the Greek *imaginaire* this lament set the tone and established the warrior as a central symbol of the celebration. While recreating the categorial distinction between women and men, the lament contributed still more to infusing the celebration with symbolic sentiments. Akhilleus being a panhellenic hero his inclusion into the programme contributed to disconnecting the athletes and their company from their particularistic polis heroes and loyalties, and preparing them for the ritual acts to follow.

The introductory rituals and sacrifices, taking the oath at the image of Zeus Horkios near the Bouleuterion (Paus. 5.24.9–11), aimed at guaranteeing the proper performance of the athletic contests. Pausanias' report on the impact of the Zeus image with its double thunderbolt may give some impression of an atmosphere of awe, the celebrants being scared into accepting common rules (Lonis 1979:25). We may however concentrate on the central rites in order to capture the meaning of the *Olympia*. According to a scholion on Pindaros the central sequence comprised

79 Philostr. *Gym.* 6 'Ἐπεὶ δὲ Ἡλεῖοι θύσειαν, ἔδει μὲν καὶ τοὺς ἀπαντῶντας Ἑλλήνων θύειν θεωρούς. ὡς δὲ μὴ ἀργῶς ἢ πρόσοδος αὐτῶν γίγνοιτο, ἔτρεχον οἱ δρομεῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ βωμοῦ στάδιον οἷον καλοῦντες τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν καὶ πάλιν εἰς ταῦτόν ὑπέστρεφον οἷον ἀγγέλλοντες, ὅτι δὴ ἀφίξειτο ἡ Ἑλλάς χαίρουσα. Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν περὶ διαύλου αἰτίας.

the sacrifice for Pelops followed by that for Zeus.⁸⁰ In the central passage *Ol.* 1.90–93 Pindaros tells that ‘Pelops rests on the bank of the Alpheios,’⁸¹ having a *amphipolon tumbon* near the *polyxenotatoi bomoi*.⁸² The offering for Pelops is presented as *haimakouriai*, a blood sacrifice of a black ram performed at night,⁸³ followed by the *hekatombe* sacrifice at daylight including the burning of thighs to Olympian Zeus (Paus. 5.13.8; Lucianus, *Bis accusatus* 2; Weniger 1904:144). Some remarkable details are given by Pausanias, who tells that Pelops is honoured above the other

80 πρὸ τοῦ Διὸς αὐτῶ θύειν, Sch. Pind. *Ol.* 1.149a, cf. Sch. Pind. *Ol.* 3.33.

81 *Alpheou poroi klitheis*. Gunnel Ekroth, concludes then that Pelops was honoured with a *theoxenia* (Gerber 1993:142, cf. Ekroth 1999:153f.). However even if allusions to a symposium resonate in the passage, the primary meaning of *klitheis* in the immediate context of *tumbon* (92) is of course ‘resting/buried,’ cf. Hom. *Il.* 10.350 (*en nekuessi klitheten*), Thuc. 2.34, cf. Verdenius 1988:40ff. on the passage. As to *memiktai* the reference to a symposium is even weaker, the subject being a person, not a beverage. Pindaros frequently employs *meignusthai* as a metaphor for a variety of ‘connections’ (e.g. *Nem.* 1.18, *Nem.* 4.21, *Nem.* 9.31, *Isthm.* 3.3, *Isthm.* 7.25, cf. *Pyth.* 10.41), *haimakouriais memiktai* thus meaning ‘he is honoured with blood offerings.’

82 The Scholion to Pind. *Ol.* 1.150a discusses the identity of the recipient of this altar, suggesting Pelops as well as Zeus. Ekroth assumes that the tomb as well as the altar are Pelops’ where he received *enagizein* sacrifice and where an ordinary *thusia* took place (Ekroth 1999:165), referring again to Gerber who assumes, on aesthetic grounds a parallel between hospitable Hieron and Pelops, wondering however about the ‘tautology’ in the juxtaposition of *amphipolon tymbon* and *polyxenotatoi bomoi* both (presumably) underscoring Pelops’ hospitality (Gerber 1993:144). Krummen too prefers to take *polyxenotatoi* as qualifying the altar of Pelops, although she is in doubt, and argues that in case the epithet had to be understood as belonging to Zeus, Pindaros would have made this explicit (Krummen 1990:160f.). We should however not expect too meticulous precision from Pindaros. And without reducing the praise lavished on the recipient of the poem, Hieron, we may as well argue that the hospitable altar is Zeus’. Sicking argues, equally on aesthetic grounds, (without however mentioning the altar or its epitheton) for a parallel between Hieron and Zeus (Sicking 1983:66). William Slater, although emphasising a symposium atmosphere, suggests that the altar ‘presumably [is] the Zeus altar’ (Slater 1989:491). Verdenius ascribes the altar without further comment to Zeus (Verdenius 1988:42). The lack of identification of the *bomos* does not need to cause any problem if we assume the superlative to be an allusion to Zeus, who elsewhere is called the *megistos* father in whose Altis the banquet space is laid out as distinguished from Pelops’ ancient grave mentioned some strophes earlier (Pind. *Ol.* 10.45). The ode under discussion is introduced with a massive superlative, *ariston*, and equivalent priamel, identifying Olympia and Kronos’ son. The superlative qualifying *bomos*, therefore, I suggest, may be taken as a restrictive adjective, ‘the most hospitable anywhere [*i.e.* Zeus],’ locating Pelops’ tomb more precisely, *near* that altar, after the rather vague ‘on the ford of the Alpheios’ (Pind. *Ol.* 1.93). We are of course in doubt, because neither a possessive pronoun, ‘his,’ *i.e.* Pelops’, nor a definite article, ‘the,’ *i.e.* Zeus,’ is expressed. I would on these grounds suggest that the epitheta *amphipolon* ‘frequented’ (‘tended by cultic worship’ Verdenius 1988:41) and *polyxenotatoi* ‘visited by/entertaining most guests [of all altars],’ may create a distinction between the non-hospitable grave of Pelops [because polluting] and the hospitable altar of Zeus (cf. *Ol.* 3.17 *Dios pandokoi alsei*), thus removing the tautology.

83 Pind. *Ol.* 1.90ff.; Sch. Pind. *Ol.* 1.146a,d explaining *haimakouriai* as the Boiotian expression for *enagismata*; Paus. 5.13.2; 6.21.11; Pelops’ grave is mentioned in Pind. *Ol.* 10.24, cf. Burkert 1972:111f., 1983:98.

heroes as Zeus is honoured above the gods of Olympia (Paus. 5.13.1), while their rituals are mutually exclusive: a taboo on eating the meat from the animal sacrificed to Pelops weighed on those who wished to enter [the] Zeus [area, celebration] (Paus. 5.13.3, the text simply states *para ton Dia*). According to Eitrem and others this passage means that the contact with Pelops affected the celebrants with impurity (Eitrem 1977:80, Parker 1983:39, Boehringer 2001:37ff.). This is of course the emic meaning of the situation, in an etic interpretation the taboo created a clear-cut separation. However the sense of pollution certainly implies contrasted sentiments as well, the feeling of unease *vs.* the sense of ease. The impression left by Pindaros and Pausanias is that the sacrifice to Pelops was an act of renunciation and avoidance, and even if we assume that the sacrificial victim was eaten there cannot have been a copious banquet on the meat of one ram.⁸⁴

Pausanias mentions that the only wood used for the sacrificial pyre in Olympia is the white poplar, *leuke*, a tree Herakles brought from the borders of the Akheron (5.13.3, 14.2; Schol. Hom. *Il.* 13.389, *cf.* Cook 1925:467f.). The leaves present a sharp contrast with its dark upper side and a bright underside. This tradition may be ancient, in the second half of the fifth century Olympia issued a coin decorated with an eagle carrying a white poplar leaf (as identified by Seltman 1948:73f., *cf.* Blech 1982:97f. n. 78, Murr 1969:20ff.). Its quality may have conveyed the association with boundaries or marginal situations, such as the boundary between the living and the dead,⁸⁵ extending the contrast between dark Pelops and bright Zeus.

The Pelops – Zeus relationship however is an example of a general pattern: a building complex of the hero shrine as an annex to a temple dedicated to the god frequently combined with athletic contests (Clem. Al. *Protr.* 2.25St. Pfister 1909:495ff., Brelich 1958:94–106, 1988). Both Olympia, Nemea and Isthmia as well as other sanctuaries manifested this complex.⁸⁶ This supports the assumption that the rites for hero and god constitute a cultic programme and must as such be approached as elements of a system, not as an accidental cult residue.

While it is impossible to trace a sharp distinction between gods and heroes in the ancient sources or in the archaeological evidence,⁸⁷ in specific conditions a contrast is created. As far as is possible to know the rite involving the hero preceded

84 William Slater who argues vigorously for the view that the cult of Pelops included dining concludes 'that Pelops would have been invited to dine together with some of the annual officials of the Zeus/Pelops meat' (Slater 1989:491).

85 Plinius the Elder characterises the poplar dedicated to Hercules as 'bicolor' (Plin. *HN* 12.2.3). I think Arthur B. Cook 1925:471f. may be right in labelling the white poplar 'a tree assigned to the limbo between the Upperworld and the Underworld ... a Borderland tree.'

86 Often it is assumed that the god's cult overlaid an older hero-cult (*e.g.* Rohde 1925:152, Eitrem 1977:468, Kyrieleis 1990:181), sometimes however the hero cult does not seem to be very old (Ulf 1997a:49). Where the cult may be old, as may be the case with Hyakinthos, we still need an explanation why his cult was continued and incorporated into a ritual programme.

the offering to the god in the context of athletic festivities (Eitrem 1977:3) constituting a structure which we should attempt to understand. According to Gunnell Ekroth the normal practice of sacrificing to heroes was *thusia* including festive dining.⁸⁸ There are however cases in which heroes receive *enagisma* offering, for example blood offerings in which case the blood of the victim was not included in the ritual dining but poured out at the shrine of the recipient.

The cults of the heroes at the panhellenic centres of Isthmia and Nemea seem to share some of the characteristics of hero shrine-temple-athletic-contest complex. Their myths certainly are of a gloomy type, memorising the young hero's fatal accident. Both sites have yielded sacrificial material suggesting cult practices of the type we are investigating. For Isthmia the evidence of sacrificial material does not date earlier than the Roman period (50 AD),⁸⁹ but mention of a tomb cult for (Melikertes-)Palaimon is made in Pindaros,⁹⁰ and there is evidence from the Classical period for the cult of (Opheltes-)Arkhemoros as well.⁹¹ At the sanctuary at Nemea a baby boy from the Hellenistic period has been found (Miller 1980:192). Nocturnal rites for Palaimon are mentioned by Ploutarkhos (Plut. *Thes.* 25.4.), but their age is uncertain. Philostratos mentions the sacrifice of a black bull and *enagismata*, *sphattein*, suggesting a blood sacrifice (Philostr. *Imag.* 2.16). Pausanias

87 Ekroth 1999:270ff., Boehringer 2001:37ff. The foundation for the widely accepted polarity of chthonian vs. Olympian powers or cults parallel to the distinction hero vs. divinity seems to be weak (Ekroth 1999:279, 284, cf. Schlesier 1991–92, earlier Nock 1944). According to Brelich a pervasive characteristic of heroes is their connection with death, their cult frequently concentrating on a grave and ritual lament (Brelich 1958:80, cf. Rohde 1925:i 150ff.). According to Ekroth heroes may be drawn closer to the dead in case they are offered *enagismata*, entailing some kind of destruction and renunciation of the sacrificial offering and emphasising the status of the recipient as dead (Ekroth 1999:70–73, 203f.).

88 Ekroth may however go too far in identifying hero cults as ordinary sacrifice, assuming a *thusia* wherever the term *thuein* occurs, neglecting the fact that this term may be the 'unmarked' term of the pair *enagizein*—*thuein* (cf. Rudhardt 1992:214, 251; earlier Jean Casabona has come to similar conclusions, Casabona 1966:85, 204, cf. Scullion 1994:97). As an example may serve Athenaios' description of the *Karneia*, in which he qualifies the whole celebration as *thusia* lasting for three days including a sacrifice for Hyakinthos (Ath. 4.139d), while Pausanias informs us of an *enagizein* offering for Hyakinthos (Paus. 3.19.3; cf. Eur. *Alc.* 449ff.; Sch. Theoc. *Id.* 5.83b).

89 I would like to thank Prof. Gebhard and Prof. Miller for generously providing me with their articles (Gebhard and Reese forthcoming, Miller 2002). Oscar Broneer presents however a votive inscription on a halter from the second half of the sixth century dedicating it to 'Inoides.' (Broneer 1972:176, 1976:52).

90 On the cult of Melikertes/Palaimon see Pind. *Isthm.* fr. 6.5 (1) Snell; cf. Paus. 2.1.3, 7; 1.44.7f.; Eur. *IT* 271; for the myth see Eur. *Med.* 1283ff.; Hawthorne 1958, 1972:218–221, Bonnet 1986:57–63, Piérart 1998, Gebhard 1993, Gebhard and Dickie 1999.

91 The fate of Opheltes/Arkhemoros, and the aitiological myth of the Nemean games seems to have been told in E. *Hypsipyle* fr. 60: especially 98a–111 Bond 1963; cf. Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.6.4. Miller 1988, 1992.

mentions a cypress grove for Arkhemoros, a tree associated with death and officials dressed in black cloaks (Paus. 2.15.2, *cf.* Miller 1992:81, Murr 1969:125).⁹²

There are indications that the same was the case in Delphi at the tomb of Neoptolemos near the temple of Apollon.⁹³ According to myth Neoptolemos suffered a lamentable fate, being murdered, and in Pindaros' *Seventh Nemean* ode we hear of 'the Delphians being extremely distressed by the murder of Neoptolemos,' an expression possibly betraying a cultic atmosphere.⁹⁴ The question of Neoptolemos' cult in Delphi is extremely complicated. On the one hand there are sources which may indicate that his cult was interwoven with the *Pythia*,⁹⁵ on the other hand the fact that he is never mentioned in a Pythian ode, in contrast to Pelops, may be significant.⁹⁶

Whether Pelops follows this pattern of the young hero killed and honoured in athletic celebration is not easy to determine. A large number of competing myths and legends were told in Olympia (Burkert 1988:35, Ulf 1997b). It is however not implausible that different tales were evoked at different occasions.⁹⁷ The myth of Pelops' 'first death,' in the cauldron would be the analogous tale, and since his shoulder seems to have been on display (Paus. 5.13.4ff.), his lamentable fate may have been woven into the cultic programme.⁹⁸ Alternatively the tragic events were told how Pelops lost his immortality, according to Pindaros, after his father Tantalos deceived the gods (Pind. *Ol.* 1.65f.). Oinomaos' fearful crimes may have been the focus of attention as well, since in all probability 'the ruins of his palace' were 'still visible' in the very centre of the cultic space, inviting storytelling in the course of the celebration (Paus. 6.20.6f., *cf.* Rambach 2002:131 identifying the

92 The meaning of black as a sign of mourning appears from the myth about Theseus signalling death by hoisting black sails (Diod. Sic. 4.61, 4–7, Plut. *Thes.* 17.4). It is often stated that the same dress of mourning was tradition in Olympia. However, according to the *Etymologicum Magnum* s.v. 'Hellanodikai' these arbitrators were dressed in a purple garment, *porphyris*, a custom which does not antedate the second century BC (Blum 1998:101).

93 Pind. *Nem.* 7.34–8 (dated 461); *cf.* Pind. *Pae.* 6.60f., 117ff.; Schol Pind. *Nem.* 7.62a, 68a; Pherekydes *FGrH* 3 F 64 Jacoby (Schol Eur. *Or.* 1654f); Euripides, *Andr.* 1264 (dated 430–420) νεκρὸν κομίζων τόνδε, [Neoptolemos] καὶ κρύψας χθονὶ *cf.* 1240 θάψον πορεύσας Πυθικὴν πρὸς ἑσχάραν. Paus. 10.24.6 καὶ οἱ κατὰ ἔτος ἐναγίζουσιν οἱ Δελφοί. *Cf.* Fontenrose 1960, Delcourt 1965:38–50, 1966, Roux 1976:197, Fontenrose 1974:397ff., Bremmer 1978:9, Nagy 1979:118–141, Woodbury 1979.

94 Ἰβάρυνθεν δὲ περισσὰ Δελφοὶ ξεναγέται. ἠρωταῖς δὲ πομπαῖς θεμισκόπον οἰκεῖν ἔοντα πολυθύτοις εὐώνυμον ἐς δίκαν, Pind. *Nem.* 7.43, 46ff. Richard Seaford argues that by the fifth century, in Pindaros' and Euripides' time, Neoptolemos had a prominent cult in Apollon's sanctuary, a shrine nearby the god's temple (Seaford 2000:39, *cf.* Chirassi-Colombo 1977, Loscalzo 1998, *cf.* 2000:60). The nature of the cult and its place in the rich cultic calendar in Delphi is the object of intense debate. Emilio Suárez de la Torre suggests that Neoptolemos was the centre of an ephebic performance at the festival of the heroes (Suárez de la Torre 1997:172).

remains of an early Iron Age building with 'Oinomaos' palace,' which was 'struck by lightning').

This pattern of lamentable fates of young heroes may have been widespread. In Amyklai Hyakinthos, who was accidentally killed by Apollon, was lamented dur-

- 95 If Heliodoros' *Aithiopika* should present some authentic material, Neoptolemos' cult might have been part of the *Pythia* (cf. Suárez de la Torre 1997:173f.); the character Kharikles informing the Egyptian Kalasiris that the Ainians, the most prominent tribe in Thessalia and genuine Hellenes, send a deputation every four years to the *Pythia*, and that they do so in honour of Akhilleus' son Neoptolemos, the *reason* being, he explains, that Neoptolemos was murdered at the very altar of Pythian Apollon. The protagonist, who is the leader of the Ainian deputation, claims kinship with Akhilleus (Heliod. *Aeth.* 2.34f., 4.5, for historical discussion of the Ainians see Woodbury 1979:127f.). If we take into account that the entire tendency of the novel is to exalt genuine Hellenic ethnicity, contrasting it with non-Hellenic foils (either sub-Hellenic oriental or super-Hellenic Aithiopian), that it is crowded with Homeric and classical citations or allusions and thoroughly imbued with central cultural symbols (Akhilleus!), this might be an argument for seriously considering the *Aithiopika* as a source. In the expression 'the greatest of heroes Neoptolemos' (Heliod. *Aeth.* 3.10) resonates Pelops' status as the most important of heroes in Olympia (see below). On the other hand we cannot know to what extent the novelist may have transformed the details of the ritual, for example creating a dramatic climax centred on the Neoptolemos rite, and for that reason placing the *enagismos* for Neoptolemos *after* the sacrifice to Apollon in the 'description' of the Pythian festival (Heliod. *Aeth.* 2.35). The procession includes a *hekatombe* of black oxen, whose *akra* are burnt on the altar! (Heliod. *Aeth.* 3.1, 3.5), an exaggeration of what would have been normal procedure (a single black animal as an exceptional offering, a holocaust likewise as a restricted procedure). The celebration presents abundant festivity with parading young women and men, music and dance performances (Heliod. *Aeth.* 3.2f., 10) reminiscent of the latter phase of the *Hyakinthia* with its joyous festival activities and display (see above). After this Neoptolemos celebration the Pythian games are terminated (Heliod. *Aeth.* 4.1). Maybe an image of the *Theoxenia* as mentioned in Pindaros' poems is combined with the *Pythia*. The religious festival parade may have been a *topos* in the novel in order to highlight the superhuman perfection of the protagonist lovers, Xenophon's *Ephesiaka* introduces Habrokomes and Anthia at the great procession of Ephesian Artemis (Xen. *Eph.* 1.2). As a whole the *Aithiopika* may have been composed by an author who lived distant from the exact details of the cultic programme at Delphi, but who gathered central items of the Pythian celebration from the classical tradition and felt free to embellish them in his 'description.' The Amphiktyonic inscription in Delphi mentioning the value of 'an oxen to the *heros*' is difficult to assess as referring to a Neoptolemos rite (Rougemont 1977 = *CID* I: no. 10, cf. Lefèvre 2000 = *CID* IV: no. 1). Several suggestions are made as to which hero is meant, and, the passage is even interpreted as 'a hero oxen,' that is the 'leader oxen of the procession,' with reference to the *bous hegemon* mentioned in Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.29. Mommsen 1887:226, and Rougemont 1977:114 think the passage refers to the *Pythia*, Lefèvre 2000:36 does not.
- 96 That Palaimon is mentioned in a fragmentary Isthmian ode only, and Arkhemoros is absent from any Nemean ode (while he is mentioned in a fifth century source, Euripides, see above) may be due to the hazards of textual transmission. This might as well explain Neoptolemos' absence from the Pythian odes, which does not exclude his role in the *Pythia* altogether.
- 97 It is therefore not helpful to discuss the priority of certain 'versions,' as Nagy does (Nagy 1986). Köhnken explains the 'correction' as a rhetorical pretence suitable to the performance (Köhnken 1974). See in addition Hansen 2000 for a folk-narrative perspective.
- 98 Burkert 1972:114, 1983:99, cf. Nagy 1986:80, Köhnken 1974.

ing the *Hyakinthia*, the celebration that gathered the Spartan community, according to the local historian Polykrates, as recorded by Athenaios.⁹⁹ According to Pausanias the Spartans used to perform an *enagisma* offering to Hyakinthos (ἐναγίζουσι, Paus. 3.19.3), before offering (θύσια) to Apollon, followed by athletic contests in later phases of the ritual. Michael Pettersson has carefully studied the rhythm of the cultic programme which did not only comprise a contrast between *enagisma* and *thusia* for hero and god respectively, but entailed a whole series of prohibitions vs. permissions with their accompanying sentiments (Pettersson 1992:57ff.): the abandoning and subsequent wearing of crowns, the prohibition followed by permission to eat bread, the taboo on singing the *paian* followed by singing. The most remarkable feature however are the details on the accompanying sentiments, in Polykrates' phrasing as recorded by Athenaios, a sequence of mourning for Hyakinthos, *penthos*, followed by joy, *khara*, and abundant mass festivity. During the *penthos* phase the Spartans dined with restraint *eutaxia*, ('order and gravity,' Pettersson 1992:26, cf. Bruit 1990), the subsequent *panegyris* offered a *thea poikile*, 'colourful spectacle,' with boys engaged in music performances, parades on adorned horses, chorus song and dancing, girls luxuriously dressed competing with decorated horse carts, the whole city is in a condition of action (*kinesei*) and festive joy. A clear contrast to the restraint and mourning of the preceding rite for Hyakinthos. The hero-god complex then is responsible for the modulation of the ritual programme affecting (perishable) objects, behaviour and sentiments, none of which will leave traces in archaeological material.

It may be due to accidents of historical record that similar details are not widely known from other cult descriptions. This may however make us cautious about drawing conclusions on the basis of meagre informations from brief epigraphic or sober literary sources, and *a fortiori* from archaeological evidence. It is precisely the minutiae of the living performance, with its manipulations of symbols, orchestrating of behaviours and modulation of sentiments, that gives us the clue to understanding the celebration.

Various interpretations have been offered for the hero-god-athletic contest complex. Henri Jeanmaire interprets these unlucky young heroes as the prototypes of initiands (Jeanmaire 1939:340ff.). This may have been the case earlier, but the celebrations in which they are embedded are definitely collective rites, not just initiation ceremonies. Walter Burkert, referring to the etymology of the Nemean

99 *FGrH* 588 F 1 Jacoby (Ath. 4.139d-f); cf. Eur. *Alc.* 445-451; Sch. Theokr. *Id.* 5.83bd; Paus. 3.19.3-5. Athens may be another instance. Here the fatal events causing the death of Androgeos are equally related to athletic events (Paus. 1.1.4; cf. Hesych. p. 578 s.v. εὐρυγύνη ἀγών). According to Jeanmaire Androgeos was celebrated on the occasion of the *Theseia* (cf. Jeanmaire 1939:340f. without sources. For the myth see Plut. *Thes.* 15; Diod. Sic. 4.60).

heros Archemoros, his name sounding like 'Anfang des Todes,' suggests that the sports event represented a 'Vor-Spiel des Krieges' (1988:38f.).

Gunnel Ekroth suggests that the *enagisma* rituals for heroes include situations of crisis, for example violent death, pollution and danger, resolved with the appeasement of the deceased with *enagismata*.¹⁰⁰ She includes parallels with the blood offerings presented to the winds and the sea before departure on a voyage, in which cases it is obvious that they aim at controlling imminent danger. The same may be the case in the taking of oaths (Scullion 1994:95f., Ekroth 1999:198), but here we should definitely abandon the individualistic perspective and seriously include the reality of communal responsibility. Oath taking per definition includes two parties, taken in a situation which is of course potentially fraught with strife. Similar blood rituals are prominent in extraordinary situations such as the *sphagia*, in the immediacy of battle (Scullion 1994:95f., Ekroth 1999:216ff.). The ordered hoplite attack is a collective action *par excellence* and the *sphagia* with their elusive recipients may likewise be understood as an instance where dissolution of group solidarity threatens and the internal cohesion of the warrior group is put to a critical test (Vernant 1988).¹⁰¹

Although the classification of chthonic *vs.* Olympic is not warranted, it is possible then to identify certain powers involved in renunciatory rites, a prominent characteristic being their ambivalence,¹⁰² powers which are prepared to spend blessings as well as prone to anger (Scullion 1994:94).¹⁰³ Zeus Polieus, in his cults at Kos and in Athens is an instance: he is worshipped in a renunciatory mode followed by a banquet sacrifice and he has connections with agriculture (Scullion

100 The author discusses several literary examples (Ekroth 1999:65–68, 206ff.). She thinks that, once the crisis was removed, these offerings became institutionalised (Ekroth 1999:73ff., 197, 261f.). However Ekroth suggests that these regular offerings 'may have begun as a response to a particular situation,' but their institutionalisation 'can also be seen as an attempt to control a potentially difficult situation in advance through sacrifices' (Ekroth 1999:269). However, it is difficult to assume that after a crisis, 'sacrifices of this kind continued to be standard ritual ...' or 'a reminder of the bloodshed' (Ekroth 1999:207, 269) for no other reasons than memorial. Such an interpretation adopts the emic perspective, the meaning to the ritual community, who normally offers an exegesis for their practice which may not be the real motive for the performance of the ritual, seen from the etic perspective. In any case the memorial celebration is bound to have been felt meaningful to the actual participants.

101 Following Arthur D. Nock both Scullion and Ekroth suggest to call these blood rites 'heilige Handlungen,' as opposed to normal practice, or 'high intensity' *vs.* 'low intensity' sacrifice, a terminology proposed by van Baal, the marked term being signalled by *e.g.* black colour and abnormal treatment of the victim or libation (Scullion 1994:95, Ekroth 1999:266f., Nock 1944:158).

102 'Ambivalence is not, however, unrelieved nastiness, so that forms of worship reflecting assurance or cautious assurance of chthonian good will need not surprise us' (Scullion 1994:118). For the perceptions of the 'chthonians' in Athenian drama, see Henrichs 1991, who observes a polarity within these powers themselves simultaneously manifesting 'Zorn und Güte, Fluch und Segen, Gedeihen und Verderben, Hungersnot und Nahrungsfülle' (166).

1994:85f., 89f., 100, Ekroth 1999:197). We may however observe that the divinity's epithet suggests that not only the fertility of the soil is at stake but the well-being of the community as such. In the Athenian ritual a strange myth of guilt and appeasement after barrenness is involved (Burkert 1972:153–161, 1983:136–143). Another example are the Erinyes/Eumenides whose ambivalence is expressed in their very names. The Erinyes are associated with curses, that is feud, their special force being to provoke revenge, while as Eumenides they are benign, as is illustrated by Aiskhylos' *Eumenides* (Scullion 1994:91).

Examples from the Hebrew Bible adduced by Scullion demonstrate a relationship between the opposition of renunciatory *vs.* participatory offerings and that of impurities or offences *vs.* well-being in a celebratory atmosphere, offering 'a close parallel' for the type of sacrificial programme we are exploring (Scullion 1994:101f.). Those powers who demand destruction of a victim or other anomalies, for example exceptional libations, seem then to be associated with the pervasive need to avoid crisis, calling for rites averting evil, in mild or dramatic forms. Here it may again be appropriate to remind of the fact that when analysing the efforts made to avoid crisis and promote well-being, we should do so not within an individualistic perspective, focusing on the individual's anxieties, but within the perspective of the community. If renunciatory rites were performed collectively in advance of dangerous enterprises, we should not forget the fact that it is the participants as a collective body that are affected by the sacrifices.

The examples suggest Victor Turner's analysis of sacrifice. Drawing attention to the fact that sacrifice is a complex phenomenon, Turner underscores its personal as well as social aspects, and in particular its capacity of transforming.¹⁰⁴ As a social phenomenon sacrifice has an impact upon the relationship between members of a community,¹⁰⁵ repairing or preventing social schism. Turner assumes two basic types of sacrifice: those that serve the prophylactic aim of preventing social

103 For a collection of revengeful heroes, who may turn benevolent see Foucart 1918. Cf. Aesch. *Supp.* 24ff. opposing the gods above, ὕπατοι θεοὶ τοῦ βαρῦτιμοὶ (punishing severely *LSJ*) χθόνιοι θήκας κατέχοντες.

104 'Most sacrifices ... are intended to transform the moral state of those who offer them ...' (Turner 1992:111). Turner's focus is upon 'its existential rather than on its taxonomic, structural, or other cognitive capacities' (*idem* 100).

105 'Almost any way of structuring a society—tribal, feudal, oriental despotic, bureaucratic, and so on—into hierarchical or segmentary arrangements of corporate groups, levels of authority, statuses, and roles produces conflicts, either through defects in social engineering or through the disparity between men's aspirations and their achievements, leading to frustration, jealousy, envy, and covetousness, and other "deadly sins" of social structure. Ritual concepts such as pollution, purification, sacrifice, and the like emerge from the recognition that social groups, in the course of time, get increasingly clogged by these negative sentiments But human society as a whole has been around long enough for it to have developed all kinds of cultural means for periodically striving to cleanse the polluted generic bond ...' (Turner 1992:96).

schism and those that heal schism in atonement and abandonment. While 'prophylactic' forms 'prevent or guard against pollution or inauspicious interventions',¹⁰⁶ in forms of 'abandonment' renunciatory offerings dominate.¹⁰⁷ At the personal level these kinds of sacrifice are directed to the interiority, promoting psychic concentration, while subsequent forms of festive sacrifice are by nature social in character. Specific metaphysical powers may be invoked which may contribute to transforming mental conditions and inducing an atmosphere of abandonment.¹⁰⁸

Arriving at this point I would suggest that in the Greek ritual complex both may be involved, subtly modulated in an extended programme.¹⁰⁹ The hero-divinity polarity with its contrasting *enagisma*-before-*thusia* sacrifice may be a manifestation of a sacrificial complex of abandonment, more specific, the crucial need to heal social schisms potentially breaking into the celebration, while purifications may be prophylactic gestures. Aitiological myths telling a tale of tragic death demanding atonement seem particularly appropriate to orchestrate and channel collective sentiments.

Victor Turner adduces in fact ancient Greek practices and beliefs and interprets the powers of the underworld as associated with 'decay and excrement' (Turner 1992:96), a view which would explain the involvement of the dead and tombs in rites of abandonment. These powers may be metaphors for sentiments of gloom and guilt accompanying a social meeting of people ridden with strife, while ritual gestures may be invented in order to heal these sentiments and to help transform the participants.¹¹⁰ The gestures of renunciation may prompt the community to give up antagonisms and ease the individual's preparedness to communal and solidary participation in the joyful celebration to follow. What may be going on are

106 Turner 1992:107.

107 'Sacrifice [of abandonment] is one very important means of restoring the flow To give up is often painful. Here to give up in sacrifice is a necessary piece of social surgery. For the Invisibles the sacrifice would be a gift; for men, an atonement' (Turner 1992:105); 'Renunciatory sacrifices stress the interiority of the act: prophylactic sacrifices, the performative, institutionalized details' (*idem* 112).

108 In the case of the dark powers with their ambivalent character this interpretation makes eminent sense: the fact that they are to be appeased but at the same time are expected to send their blessings supports their function as interiorising forces, transforming the individual mentally. Turner adduces as an example 'morally active ancestral spirits and personalized powers of nature' (Turner 1992:95), who threaten the living until the latter, through renunciation and spiritual introversion, are reconciled with these powers and among themselves.

109 The slaying of the bull for Zeus Polieus in Athens and at Kos including a sequence focusing upon blame and 'collective responsibility,' with its concomitant aitiological myth and exegesis (Sculion 1994:85-87), may be a symbolic expression of the prevailing mood of the occasion. For an interesting discussion of the mentality of countering (collective) anxiety by renunciation see Versnel 1977.

complex processes which, as Turner suggests, aim at moulding the individual members of a community, the Many, into the communal One.¹¹¹

The community assembling at Olympia was of course not an existing coherent social body, let alone a community characterised by solidarity. Still they defined themselves as an ethnic group, with a well defined boundary excluding all non-Hellenes. While focusing on the extremely arduous achievements and the immensely high demands the arrangement imperceptly created boundaries between those who were entitled to compete and those who were excluded.¹¹² And while single participants and communities engaged in fierce rivalry they were transformed through the collective evocations, sacrificial gestures and moulded sentiments. We may assume that their aggressive energy was fused into an orchestrated experience of some sense of common cultural and historical identity.¹¹³

At least by the turn of the sixth century the dispersed Hellenic *poleis* and *ethne* converged from an 'us' integration (local groups distinguishing themselves from non-Hellenic groups) towards a 'we' integration' (focusing on an overarching shared identity, Malkin 2001).¹¹⁴ As such the pilgrimage assemblage was in need of creating some form of bonding, in ethnic identity.¹¹⁵ It did so by engaging in death symbolism as well as symbols of rebirth. 'Death symbols indicate the end of a bad era; birth and growth symbols, the hopeful beginning of a good one' (Turner 1992:95f.). The uncanny dark celebration of Pelops gave way to the bright and joyous festivity of Zeus, the renunciatory dark offerings sent to the realm of the

110 'The Invisibles are prompted to action. Some Invisibles, such as African creatures of witchcraft or the Greek powers of the underworld, the chthonic deities, are held to increase the disturbance These have to be placated, bribed to go away. One does not eat with them in communion. They are given the wholly burned offering, the totally immolated sacrificial object. They are the powers of the "joyless sacrifice," as the Ibo understand it and what Jane Harrison called the "rites of aversion" The Invisibles of the Ibo joyful sacrifice, of Harrison's "rites of service," are the powers of joyful order, who seek from men repentance and atonement and the restoration of the basic social bond ...' (Turner 1992:104).

111 Turner 1992:95, *cf.* 112.

112 For the sources mentioning exclusion of non-Hellenes Hdt. 5.22; Aeschin. 1.138; Philostr. *Gym.* 25, *cf.* Muth 1979:180. For the exclusion of slaves Crowther 1992. For the exclusion of *xenoi* from more restricted cults see Butz 1996. For the historical tradition of instituting funeral games for historical persons functioning as communal forces see Lynn E. Roller. In this tradition 'the involvement of the community with the athletic festival was often further emphasized by restricting participation to citizens of the particular city' (Roller 1981:11).

113 I envisage a process like that of the Palio festival of Siena as analysed by Don Handelman, where the intense rivalry of the *contradas* is subsumed under the overarching authority of the Virgin (Handelman 1982:168ff.).

114 For the gradual way Hellenic 'Ethnogenesis' came about, see Ulf 1996:266ff.

115 '... transforming the group as a whole, and its main individual members, from a social state of mutual antagonism to a social state of *communitas*' (Turner 1992:95).

dead were followed by the communal meal. The 'bad era' was evoked in the Pelops ritual. The gloomy rituals of mourning, the 'heilige Handlungen,' helped transform the pilgrimage body from aggressively affronting their fellows into humbly cooperating in ritual communality and commensality in the service of the belief in their religious destiny. Initially promoting their individual poleis by establishing separate 'communal houses' in the panhellenic sanctuaries,¹¹⁶ they coalesced into a stronger sense of unity after the Persian wars, creating an overarching Hellenic ethnic consciousness. The athletic contests added a forceful magnet in the service the celebration of a common ethnic core. The 'good era' was summoned by associations of growth in crops or human beings displayed in the stadion settings and the festive performances of vital force, celebrations of renewal, expressed in the *phyllobolia* of the victors and the epinikion, the glorification of the 'eternally youthful males.'¹¹⁷

Conclusions

If Delphi was the 'navel' of Hellenic culture, the theological centre from which new settlements departed and verbal council was gathered, Olympia was its cosmic and ethnic centre,¹¹⁸ the space where a cognitive order was upheld, and the cosmos was laid out from Olympos through the human world to the realm of heroes, where Kronos' primordial age was linked to the present age along the string of Olympiads. While the oracle in Delphi blessed colonial missions on departure to the new world (Malkin 1987:17-31), Olympia regularly brought their descendants temporarily back to the old world.

Departing from their particularistic and exclusive polis shrines they travelled on pilgrimage to the inclusive sky of Zeus, the guarantor of *oikos* and *polis*, and of universal social values. Familiar powers as Gaia and Themis reminded them of

116 So the dedications commonly labelled '*thesouroi/naioi/oikoi*' should be called, according to Louis Dyer, who wonders why this tradition disappears after the Persian wars (Dyer 1905:209). These panhellenic sanctuaries were areas for conspicuous display by the wealthy inner circle of the Hellenic community (Hölscher 2001), in contrast to a sanctuary like Cape Tainaron visited by the poor and outsiders (Sinn 2000b).

117 I will further develop this in a separate paper in S. des Bouvrie (ed.) *Myth and symbol II (Papers from the Norwegian Institute at Athens 7)* forthcoming.

118 It is difficult to agree with Irad Malkin who in an otherwise subtle article states 'there never was a Greek center' (Malkin 2001:14). Possibly he adheres too much to Fredrik Barth's 'there is no core ethnicity' (*op. cit.* 12). Barth has been criticised for being equally sceptical of 'culture.' I refer to Richard Shweder's argument, that whereas 'culture' does not imply passive and uncritical adoption of a homogenous set of values, there are still 'community-specific ideas about what is true, good, beautiful, and efficient,' and while they may be contested, 'only enough has to be shared for a people to recognise itself as a cultural community' (Shweder in Borofski, Barth, Shweder *et al.* 2001:437, 439).

their common 'mother land' and their overarching normative order. This symbolic magnetism was strengthened by the quest for supreme glory. The magnetic pull of the contests secured the perennial ritual collaboration between fiercely competing communities still condemned to celebrating their common destiny.

Proceeding from Elis in procession they reached for sacrificial communality. During the dark hero-phase the participants indulged in the desolation of mutual humility and disarming abandonment, during the divine phase brief jubilation of 'communitas,' however ephemeral, was celebrated. They were not driven towards *homonía*, they met due to an ingrained urge for ethnic identity, this cultural urge going beyond social solidarity or political cooperation.

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Sacrifice: Ritual murder or dinner party?

Einar Thomassen

THE TYPICAL LAYOUT of an ancient Greek sanctuary indicates the kind of activity for which it was designed. The temple building itself, which frames the cult image of the deity, is further encircled by a wall—the *temenos*—in order to make room, within the sanctified space, for the open-air altar on which burnt-offerings are made. The sanctuary is designed for sacrifice.

‘Sacrifice,’ the word generally used to translate the Greek *thusia*, was by common consent the essential form of worship in ancient Greece. The word also happens to be one of the most intractable terms in the theory of religion. The various attempts over the last one and a quarter century to explain what sacrifice is form a long list:

Sacrifice has been categorized as a gift (an offering), a means of communication between the profane and the sacred, an attempt to establish reciprocity between the human and the divine realms (most often expressed by the formula, ‘I give in order to get’), an expiation, a substitution, and a reenactment of primordial events,

to quote *The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion*, which here lists the more classical theories.¹ In addition to all these conflicting general theories about sacrifice, dissenting voices can also be heard which reject the notion of sacrifice altogether as a meaningful cross-cultural concept: “‘Sacrifice’ is only a word, a lexical illusion,” says Jean-Louis Durand in an article about ancient Greek sacrifice (Durand 1989:89). ‘What exists,’ he goes on to say, ‘is the *thusia*, and it is to be considered as such in terms of its own organization, territory, and boundaries.’ At the other extreme is Walter Burkert, himself a prominent authority on Greek religion, who in his *Homo Necans* and subsequent works has described sacrificial killing as ‘the basic experience of the “sacred”’ (1983:3).² Animal sacrifice is, according to Burkert, not only a universally found phenomenon in traditional

1 *The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion*, gen. ed. J.Z. Smith, San Francisco 1995, s.v. ‘Sacrifice.’

2 Cf. also Burkert 1976, 1979 esp. 54–56, 1981, 1985 esp. 55–66, 1987.

cultures, it is also basically the same phenomenon everywhere because it expresses an innate characteristic of the human species: in the ritual of bloody sacrifice *homo sapiens* is revealed to himself as the ape that kills for food.

This approach adds a further difficulty still, which is that 'sacrifice' becomes *the* religious phenomenon *par excellence*, putting at stake the whole taxonomy of our concepts in the theory of religion. If Burkert is right, other religious phenomena must somehow be subsidiary to or derived from the ritual of animal sacrifice.³ The situation is confusing. It calls to mind the proverbial story of the group of blind men who, confronted with an elephant, tried to define the whole of the animal on the basis of the part that each of them happened to feel with his hands. In this case there is even doubt that we are dealing with the same animal. Does the Greek *thusia* really belong to the same species as the *nak* of the Nuer?

In this paper I shall limit my observations on this complex issue to a discussion of two recent positions in the study of Greek sacrifice. Both of them represent highly influential current frontline scholarship on Greek religion as such, besides offering the greatest interest for the general theory of sacrifice in the history of religions. The first is the position of Walter Burkert, the other that of the so-called Paris school represented by Jean-Pierre Vernant and his collaborators. Their approaches are very different, and my main concern will be to describe this difference and to try to understand how it may be accounted for.

In a direct encounter with Burkert some twenty years ago, Vernant himself succinctly summed up the difference between them by saying: 'Sacrifier, c'est fondamentalement tuer pour manger. Mais, dans cette formule, vous mettez l'accent plutôt sur *tuer*; moi, sur *manger*.' (Rudhardt and Reverdin 1981: 26). Burkert and Vernant both recognize, as anybody must, that the ritual of Greek animal *thusia* embraces the ritual killing of the victim in front of the altar as well as the communal consumption of the meat afterwards. Beyond this, however, there is a difference in perception and emphasis between them, and this difference is apparently related to more fundamental methodological issues.

When the Paris group approaches sacrifice, which it does in particular in the volume *The cuisine of sacrifice among the Greeks* (Detienne and Vernant 1989), the ritual is perceived as a statement. By sacrificing, the performers make a declaration about who they are. It is a collective statement about group identity: it says that humans are distinct from gods as well as from animals, that pastoral and agricul-

3 Cf. Burkert, in Hamerton-Kelly 1987:212. This is also the situation we find ourselves in with the other theory of sacrifice which has received a great deal of attention in the last couple of decades, that of René Girard (*La Violence et le sacré* [Paris 1972], *Le Bouc émissaire* [Paris 1982]), who identifies the scapegoat as the essence of animal sacrifice; on this view, sacrifice is a mechanism for diffusing violence, a mechanism which in turn becomes the universal key for explaining religious rites and myths in general, as well as human society as such.

tural civilization is distinct from the savagery of hunting tribes, and that Greeks are distinct from barbarians. It is through the eating that all these things are expressed. The sacrifice unites humans and gods in a shared meal, but at the same time it sets them off from one another: mortals eat the decaying parts of dead animals while the immortal gods receive the perfumed smoke of the burned bones, elements which are associated with the life itself of the victim, the life which has been separated from its body by the act of immolation. Hesiod's Promethean myth expresses these ideas: the commensality of gods and humans in the primordial age was broken by the rebellion of Prometheus. After this rupture, humans had to work hard constantly to produce food in order to stay alive. In the sacrificial rite they demonstrate their dependence on corruptible nourishment and their inferiority to the gods at the same time (Vernant 1989a).

On the other hand the sacrificial meal also signals the distance between humans and wild animals: humans eat the products of their hard work of cultivation—domestic animals and wheat, prepared by the help of fire. Wild animals eat their food raw. Animals of prey hunt their food and kill them as enemies, whereas humans eat animals they have bred themselves and which in a sense are also their companions in the labour of civilization—most prominently of all the ox.

The performance of sacrifice thus effects the distinction of humans, gods and wild animals, and classifies these categories in a hierarchical system. The classification is constitutive of the self-understanding of the civilization of the Greek city state. Deviant attitudes such as Orphic and Pythagorean vegetarianism on the one hand, and Dionysiac *omophagia* on the other, stand out as the positions of aberrant sects, which by their refusal of normal sacrifice not only transgress the boundaries between humans and gods, in the case of the Orphics, and those between humans and wild animals, in the case of maenadism, but also undermine the ideology of *polis* civilization. They are the exceptions, which by the very fact of their marginality confirm the rule (Detienne 1989:5–8).

Moreover, sacrificial practices are also a way of identifying cultural otherness. Herodotus describes the sacrifices of Egyptians and Scythians as a way of delineating their difference from the Greeks. Because the Egyptians construct the relationship of gods, humans and animals differently from the Greeks, they will not in their sacrifices use utensils touched by a Greek, considering them unclean (Hdt. 2.41; Detienne 1989:3).

The Scythians, who choke their victims to death and do not accord the gods their proper shares, thereby show themselves as primitive and uncivilized (Hartog 1989). On the other hand, the Ethiopians eat at the table of the sun meat that does not have to be cooked, but which grows spontaneously from the ground; they still share that commensality with the gods which the Greeks have lost (Hdt. 3.17; Vernant 1989b).

We cannot here discuss the many details in the Paris group's analyses. What interests us is the type of analysis they offer. Their approach is to treat the sacrificial ritual as the focal point of a symbolic system representing the self-understanding of Greek culture. The symbolism is elucidated through the study of ideas found in texts. Hesiod's *Theogony* becomes the charter myth for sacrifice (especially for Vernant), in a fashion which is not unlike the way that myth and ritual have been traditionally correlated by historians of religion: the ritual becomes a reenactment of a foundational myth.

Without detracting anything from the stimulating insightfulness of these analyses as far as they go, it may nevertheless be objected that they are not entirely satisfactory as interpretations of *rituals*. When rituals are studied as webs of significations, there is always the risk that we lose sight of the qualities that make them just rituals—the qualities of the physical, the corporeal, the kinaesthetic, the sensory. In general I believe that studies of rituals can be observed to have proceeded in two basic directions. If rituals are symbolic acts, one trend has been to concentrate on the symbolic, losing sight of the act, the other to focus on the act and disregard its symbolic intent. The Paris group, reading Greek sacrifice as a text, comes close to this first type of onesidedness. Going back to Vernant's statement about the difference between him and Burkert, we might therefore venture to correct him by saying that it is not actually the eating itself that he accentuates in his interpretation of sacrifice, but the significance that the Greeks attributed to eating. More accurately still, it is not so much the symbolism of eating that forms the focal point of their analyses, as that of the preparation of the meal: the carving and the cooking.

Burkert on the other hand, who focuses on the killing, wants to take us to a level which is below the symbolic. For him, sacrifice is in our guts. If animal sacrifice is a sacred act, it is because it is a killing, and killing becomes something sacred because it arouses anxiety, an anxiety about the extinction of life which is specific to the human species. This anxiety was activated at the hunting stage, when humans learned to kill to feed themselves, and it maintained itself after they became pastoralists. By ritualizing the killing, including giving back parts of the dead animal to where it was thought that its life came from, humans found a way of simultaneously expressing and overcoming this anxiety.

So in the beginning was *die Angst*. Regardless, however, of how one may try to describe and identify the psychological mechanisms involved, it seems clear that Burkert's approach is to trace back human rituals to biologically programmed patterns of behaviour. Killing for food activates one such pattern, which manifests itself in the most common form of animal sacrifice. Food sharing, giving of gifts and submission to the stronger are other patterns, which are also activated, not only in animal sacrifice but in other forms of sacrifice and religious rituals as well,

and which there may be given greater prominence. The issue then is ritual: 'In principle,' he says, 'ritual reflects a preverbal state of communication, to be learned by imitation and to be understood by its function. It seems to be more primitive and may be more ancient than speech; it clearly has analogies in the behavior of animals' (Burkert 1996:19).

It is this distinction between the verbal and the preverbal which forms the more fundamental difference between Burkert and Vernant. If Burkert highlights the killing in sacrifice, it is because he focuses on the ritual as a nonverbal physical act; by concentrating on the eating (or, rather, on the cooking), Vernant on the contrary sees ritual as a symbolic system on the level of language. The difference between them thus seems to correspond to the basic cleavage of approaches to the study of ritual that we mentioned earlier. Could it be, though, that both are somewhat one-sided? After all, both killing *and* eating are indispensable parts of the normal Greek sacrifice (leaving out holocausts and unbloody offerings). Also, rituals are physical acts *and* have ideological meaning at the same time. Could it not be that it is the combination of these two features and the relationship between them that should command our attention?

Rituals are, of course, essentially something we do with our bodies. In this regard, a distinction can be made between rituals and *ritualization*. Ritualization is what we do when we perform acts with increased deliberation and emphasis—acting ceremoniously, as we say. It is a mechanism for focussing attention and enhancing presence, and apparently constitutes a universal faculty in the human species. Ritualization is something we may engage in spontaneously when we move or speak. *Rituals* on the other hand are institutionalized and socially recognizable forms of ritualization. There are other distinctions too which seem to impose themselves: ritualizing behaviour must, it seems, be distinguished from body language in general—gestures, grimaces, *etc.*—because ritualization implies a greater degree of conscious deliberation in the performance of the act. Human consciousness also seems to intervene to make ritualization in our species distinct from what is called ritualized behaviour in animals. If self-consciousness is constitutive of human ritualization, we seem to be dealing here with a different phenomenon from that of genetically programmed communicative behaviour in other species.

I realize that we are touching upon some thorny issues here, and I do not propose fully to resolve them. But I do wish to emphasize the self-conscious quality of human ritualization. When we ritualize, we create a distance to our own actions, we objectify them, invite them to be looked at. Ritualizing acts are asking to be seen and understood, they make statements claiming attention. There is an interplay of body and sign in ritual which appears to be quite peculiar. Ritualization turns the body into a carrier of message, but at the same time the message is incarnated in

flesh and blood. On one level, this interplay takes the form of an interchange between acts and words. Verbal formulae seem to be an essential ingredient in ritual. In ancient sacrifice, for example, the verbal component had its place in the form of the invocations and prayers uttered by the sacrificer on behalf of all present in the moments before the killing takes place. 'No sacrifice works without prayer,' Pliny says (*NH* 28.10). The use of language verbalizes the acts which are performed and make explicit in words the fact that these acts have significance and what their significance is. At the same time, however, the use of language itself is ritualized, the performative quality of speech is enhanced—the words are doing things. The interchange of acts and words in ritual corresponds in turn to a dialectic of acting and signifying on the level of both the acting and the speaking themselves. Just as ritual enhances the performative quality of speech, it also highlights the symbolic significance of the acts. Ritual joins doing things with words with saying things with acts.

Now if it is a property of ritualization, and hence of rituals, to fuse the physicality of acts with the ideality of signification, we seem to face some serious problems when we try to explain the origins of specific ritual acts. For in so far as these acts are ritualized they are already on the level of signification, *i.e.* of language. In that case, they will be under the law of the arbitrariness of the sign, and culture-specific. The ritual acts must then be interpreted in the same way as the utterances in a specific language. In fact, this is the position of the Paris school, and which found its clearest expression in the statement of Jean-Louis Durand quoted at the beginning of this paper: there is no such thing as sacrifice in general, only *thusia* exists. On the other hand, however, if rituals also make use of the body in order to produce effects for which bodily sensation is essential, it does not seem unreasonable to assume that these effects will depend on a certain number of constants in the makeup of the human body. The ritual use of meals, a universal phenomenon, is an example of this. The sensual pleasure of eating, which undoubtedly is biologically conditioned, adds to the effectiveness of rituals. The symbolism of the meal, which contains a universe of social significations relative to the culture and the situations in which it occurs, is underpinned by providing gratification of bodily appetites. By this means, the ritual meal also creates an acute sense of presence and inclusion for each of the participants. There is no reason to think that something of the same may not also be the case with ritual killing. Killing an animal is, after all, an emotional affair. Without exaggerating the notions of violence and existential *Angst* connected with it, it may be recognized that the slaughter of an animal is quite normally an act accompanied by some measure of psychological tension. Because of this tension, it is an act which is easily ritualized and associated with taboos in most societies, and especially those based on pastoralism. Long after the introduction of Christianity in Scandinavia, for example, farmers continued to

ritualize slaughter: it should take place on certain auspicious days of the year. Before cutting the throat, one would utter: 'Not out of hate, but for food' ('Ikkje for hat, men for mat'), or the name of Jesus would be invoked over the victim. Pregnant women were barred from watching the killing, as were strangers. The bones might be buried in some inaccessible place (Lid 1924). Similar customs can be attested all over the globe.

Rituals necessarily involve physical acts which create sensation and excitement—pleasure and pain, emotional tension. These are essential in order to make the ritual effective. This observation leads to the question whether it is the ritual, or more precisely, the ritualizing impulse, that with some degree of arbitrariness selects certain acts which it can make use of in the construction of a ritual programme and thereby endows them with significance, or on the contrary there are certain acts whose inherent qualities are such that they are spontaneously ritualized. To speak in Burkertian terms: does ritualization arise as a means of controlling anxiety, or is the anxiety, and other types of psycho-physical reactions, associated with certain acts, more like the raw materials employed in the service of ritualization, because of their potential for arousing emotion? This sounds like a chicken-and-egg question, and to me it seems that we are here reaching the limit of what we are able to resolve.

What does seem clear, however, is that any given ritual is a complex matter. A particular ritual act will always be inscribed into a system involving the syntactic linking of acts in a sequence on the one hand, and on the other a paradigmatic repertoire of alternative forms as well as of semantic variations in the signification of each act. With regard to the immolation act itself, for instance, there is morphological variability in the type of animal that may be sacrificed, and semantic variability as to the interpretation which is most prominent: offering, expiation, or divination (*i.e.* communication). All the classical theories of sacrifice may find their restricted justification in this context. These variations on the paradigmatic axis may also provide the basis for a morphological classification of sacrifices, a thing which has been done frequently. The syntax of ritual is perhaps more interesting, however. Ancient Greek sacrificial ritual exhibits a characteristic sequence of acts which is culture-specific and no doubt must be understood as a consecutive whole. In its most common form there is the procession to the sanctuary, the sacralization of the victim by the sprinkling of water and grains, the invocatory prayer, the actual killing, the carving of the carcass and the division of the portions, the roasting and the boiling, the distribution, and the eating. This type of linking is not necessarily found in comparative rituals elsewhere. The ceremonial procession, for instance, is not universal. But it seems to have been a crucial element in ancient Greece, probably the most represented scene of all in sacrificial iconography (*cf.* van Straten 1995). The procession is a celebration of the worshipping

community, a self-display, denoting, one might suggest, a sense of civilization enclosing the act of ritual killing. Moreover, the linking of the ritualized killing with a meal, though admittedly common, is not found everywhere. It is possible to find ritualized slaughter as an independent act, as well as ritual meals which are ritually unconnected with the slaughter of the meat eaten in it. So there seems to be no necessary link on a more basic human level between killing and eating. If the Greeks joined sacrifice and dinner parties, both in public and privately, this seems to tell us more about aspects of Greek culture and society, than about human nature as such. In general, therefore, the syntactical combinations of ritual elements need to be studied in their cultural specificity.

However, there is, I would suggest, a syntactical deep structure in ritual which they all have in common. And that is the way they relate the physical to the symbolic, by turning bodies into symbols and symbols into bodies. As the ritual proceeds, there is an alternation between elements which emphasize the symbolic and ceremonial with those which highlight the physical and experiential. The sacrificial procession, and the following invocation, represent the first of these aspects, in its purest form, whereas the eating most unequivocally caters to sensual gratification. Between these two poles of the ritual fall the killing, the carving, the roasting and the boiling. These are undeniably physical and emotional operations, but ritualized and set in the framework of the ritual sequence, they become heavily charged with symbolic significance as well. In this context, their symbolic value as well as their physical intensity are both simultaneously enhanced. To what extent these acts should be considered to have generated the ritual itself, because of their inherent qualities, rather than, as we said, to have acquired their qualities by the fact of being parts of a ritualized sequence, we cannot tell. All we can say is that the ritual works.

In conclusion, the different approaches to Greek sacrifice of the Paris group and of Walter Burkert exemplify a basic division in the study of all ritual: that of seeing ritual as a symbolism on the level of language on the one hand, and that of concentrating on the sub-linguistic physicality of ritual on the other. The essential challenge in ritual studies, however, is to try to transcend this dichotomy, and to see ritual as something existing in the interface between semiosis and bodily functions, and even, perhaps, between culture and nature. In that regard, a distinction should be made between rituals, which are cultural constructs, and ritualization, which is that form of human behaviour where the bodily functions and sign-production meet and which underlies institutionalized rituals. The constitutional ambiguities of ritualization are not fully appreciated, I feel, by either Vernant or Burkert, and in that respect their approaches both remain somewhat onesided.

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DISCUSSION

S. Georgoudi: Because I agree with you, I can only offer two informations. First, the term 'Paris School' does not exist in Paris or in France. This is a phantasma created in other countries. We were never one thing, a 'Paris School'. Second, we wrote this book 20 years ago. I agree completely with you that it contains a one-sided theory because we placed the accent only on the eating. Not only that, but, for example, we completely forgot that in sacrifice there is a kind of violence. We thought about the distinction cooked/raw, but this is an artificial distinction. It is not a valid distinction in the Greek context. For many years, some of us, when studying sacrifice in the Greek *poleis*, understood very well that this kind of theory was very one-sided. At the time we wrote the book we wanted to express something different to the theories that had existed for many decades. At the moment we wrote it, the book was something new. Now I think the time has come for an auto-critique, from the beginning to the end.

E. Thomassen: Well, I used the term 'Paris Group' for practical reasons, rather than listing all the names. It would be very nice if you could write a follow-up. Call it *Twenty years after* or something like that.

E. Gebhard: I am curious about the sacrifices where you do not eat. The paradigm you were discussing dealt with the standard process, but many sacrifices did not involve eating the victim. Holocaustic sacrifices, for instance. In what way would these change your... —or would it in fact influence the schema you were discussing?

E. Thomassen: I was operating on a level above, beyond that kind of discussion, but I think you have to understand the variations on the paradigmatic axis as a system. To understand one type of ritual I would assume that you would also have to understand the other, and why these options co-exist within the system. So in one situation you can have communal eating, whereas in another situation you do not have that. Of course this is correlated with notions about various types of gods, the chthonic and the olympian. This is probably more complicated than that.

E. Gebhard: Yes, those distinctions have been blurred in recent studies. I know you were speaking in a theoretical vein, but the whole idea of sacrifice seems to be linked with ingesting in some way.

E. Thomassen: I would think that a normal type of sacrifice is a very social ritual whereas rituals where you do not eat have a different social function. One way to regard this sequence of acts would be to see it as a reinforcement of social belonging, so that each time you take part in that sacrificial sequence you reaffirm your membership in the community, you make a declaration of belonging here. As a sort of reward at the end you are fed. And you eat together. That sort of mechanism does not come into play when eating does not occur. That ritual must have a different function. But it would still have to be seen in connection, as part of a system, where you can choose for various purposes between one type of ritual and another.

S. des Bouvrie: Thank you very much for your interesting lecture. I think you touched upon a very important point: the question of how culture is created. If there is this difference between the bodily involvement of the participants at the sacrifice, and on the other hand the significance that can be verbalized, then I think you are right in proposing some combination between the two. I have the impression that what we call sacrifice involves two kinds of modes of relating to the world. We are relating consciously to the world in a verbal way, in a logical, analytical way. You might connect it with the left hemisphere of the brain. We are also relating to the world in a non-verbal way, what psychologists describe as insight or intuition. This is a very well-known phenomenon to psychologists, but we are not so prepared to speak about it. The three-dimensional mode of relating to the world and to each other, which is connected with images, with feeling, with empathy, with contrasts, we are not very used to thinking about it, but we can think about what Freud has called 'primary process'—he called it dream processes, but psychologists have recognized that these are processes that go on all day, all the time in our daily way of relating to the world. It seems that in culture processes these right hemisphere functions of imagery, of emotional involvement, of creating similarities and contrasts, are more focused upon. This might explain why in these spheres both imagery and emotional stimulation are prominent, and also this contrast that we know very well from rites of reversal, inversions. I feel it is very important to think of these processes of bodily involvement. I think you are also right in thinking that sacrifice might be a cultural elaboration upon an emotion that I would think is universal: the excitement of seeing some animal die—or a human being—that has been grasped by groups in order to express the unique excitement of meeting the divine. Life and death is something very exciting and intimate—just as the meeting between mortal and divine is a very important contrast.

E. Thomassen: I agree with you.

E. Sikla: Thank you for an excellent lecture. So far the discussion has rightly focused on the killing and eating of an animal. Archaeological literature is full of references to simulacra of sacrificial animals: in a variety of archaeological contexts we find animal figurines that function as simulacra. I would like to hear if you think that this kind of sacrificial offering is part of what you described, or whether you see a semantic difference.

E. Thomassen: The simulacra would be votiv offerings, so they would not be offered as part of a sacrificial ritual. They would be individual oblations, brought by a single person or a small group to the temple. That kind of ritual would be a completely different kind from the sacrificial ritual. I think that the Greeks utilized the killing as a way of making an exciting ritual and an important statement on special occasions, to manifest group identity, to conclude oaths, *etc.* For them I think the ritual killing would be an important signal in very many of these significant ritual contexts. Where I would agree with Walter Burkert is that I would not see this selection of ritual killing as an element in a ritual sequence as something necessary. They could have used something else to achieve the same effect. After all, other societies use other forms to excite people. We do not do sacrifices but we have other means of producing effective rituals. One point I was trying to make is that for a ritual to work you can't just make statements. That's where the Protestant Reformation went wrong. You can't just tell people things, you have to do things, and you have to excite people, and you have to make them use their sensory organs to experience religion. These things can be achieved by various means.

G. Albers: Thank you very much for this highly instructive paper. One is right, as you confirmed, to have feeling that the way Walter Burkert approached animal sacrifice cannot contain all that animal sacrifice and ritual are. I have a small question: you mentioned the labels commonly given, either the approach of Walter Burkert or of the Vernant group—if you were to give a label to the combined approach, the approach you have outlined, what would that label be?

E. Thomassen: Now this is not a manifesto! These are just notions that I have developed working on other types of material. It just struck me one day as I was reading these theories that see ritual as a form of language—and this has been the dominant approach to ritual, in the form of the myth and ritual school or in a more sophisticated form of structuralism, Edmund Leach, for example, in his communication theory of ritual—that they do not explain why people have to do these things. Why don't they just say it? For instance, when people get married, why don't they not just make a declaration? Why do they have to do things like putting rings on their fingers and so on? Ritual theory has to explain the doing of ritual as something unique and a form of expression that cannot be reduced to ordinary linguistic practice.

N. Marinatos: But Burkert does try to explain why we do things. This is exactly his approach, he does try to explain why these ritual acts are effective: because they come out of inborn blueprints. He does give an answer, actually.

E. Thomassen: That's where I am not so sure...

Symbolism in rites of transition in Iron Age Norway

Siv Kristoffersen

IN RITUAL CONTEXTS religious and social elements are interwoven in complex relationships. The following paper will focus on social elements in mortuary practices and burial rites. I will not deal with the ritual in itself. Rather, the ritual will be regarded as some kind of outer frame, within which hidden processes are taking place, on a more unconscious level. One of these is the construction of social identity. I will further relate aspects of social identity expressed in the burial to perceptions of afterlife within the northern heathen religion. The paper refers to a doctoral dissertation.¹

I will apply the perspective of social construction on a group of Migration Period burials from south and west Norway (fig. 1). The Migration Period covers the fifth and sixth centuries AD. In the chosen group of burials objects decorated with the Nordic animal art are found (fig. 2). In the early phase of the Migration Period the art form is heavily influenced by provincial Roman metal work. The earliest pieces are probably made by craftsmen from the workshops in the provinces, widely and rapidly dispersed after the collapse of the Roman Empire. This classical inspired art is then, by local craftsmen, rapidly changed into a genuine Germanic expression, concerning motives, forms and composition. This process is often related to the creation of Germanic identity, and regarded as a need for material expression of identity in a period of alienation from the strong Roman influence.² Typical for this art form are the highly stylised animals entirely covering the surface of an object (fig. 2). The art is found over the entire northern Germanic area, down to the Lombard in Italy, but reaches its highest quality, concerning craftsmanship as well as artistry in the northern countries, as exemplified in the relief brooch from Kvåle in Sogn (fig. 2). The main questions in my dissertation concerned the social context of the animal art. In order to answer these questions,

1 Kristoffersen 2000b; see also Kristoffersen 1999a, 1999b, 2000a.

2 Näsman 1998:108, Hedeager 1996, Kristoffersen 1995.

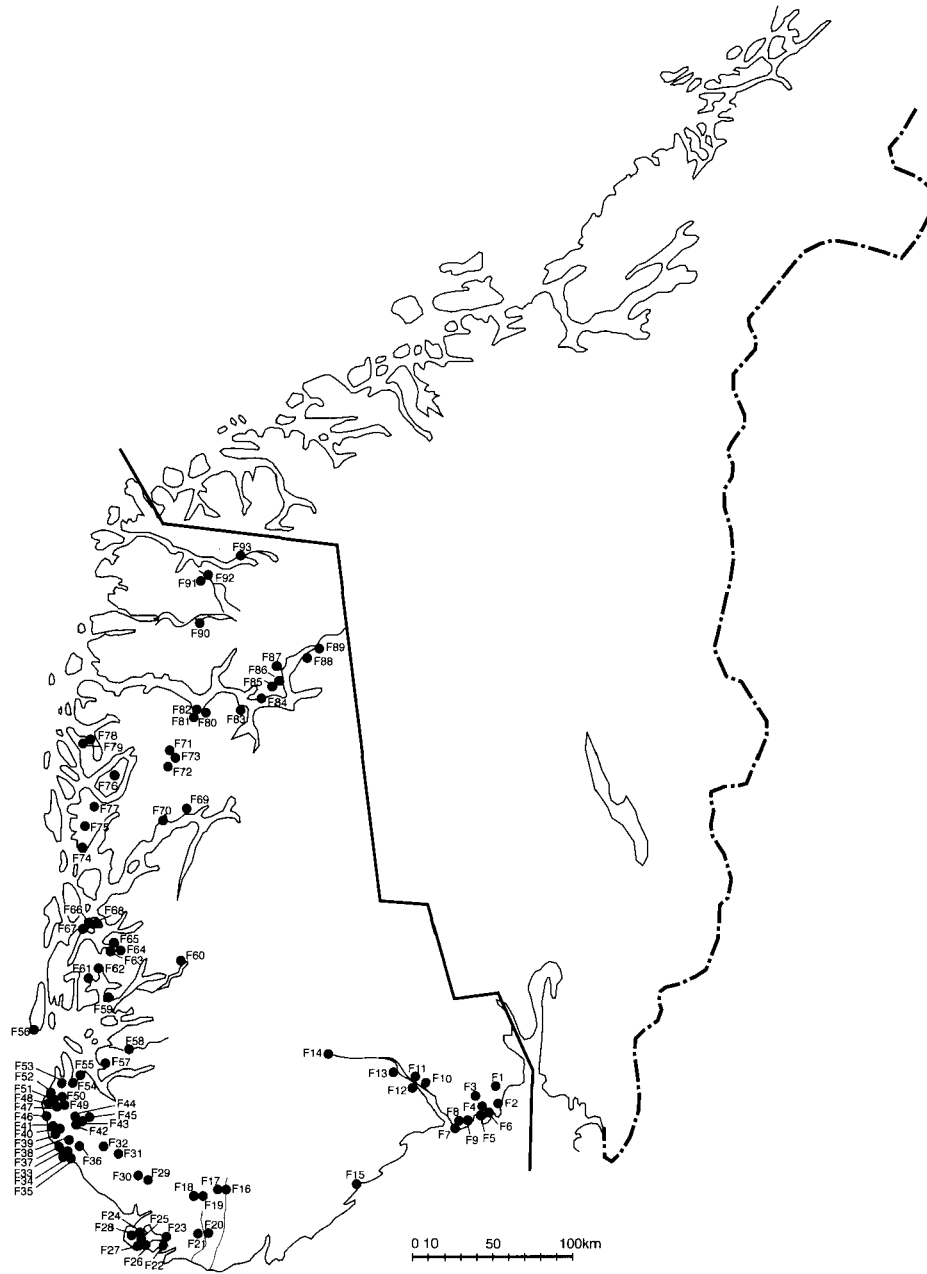


Fig. 1: Distribution of finds with objects decorated in Nydamstyle and Style 1 in southwestern Norway. Drawing by Ellinor Hoff, Bergen Museum.



Fig. 2: Relief brooches in Style I. Left: F90, top right: F32, bottom right: F85. See numbers on map in fig. 1. Drawings by Siv Kristoffersen. Scale 3/4.

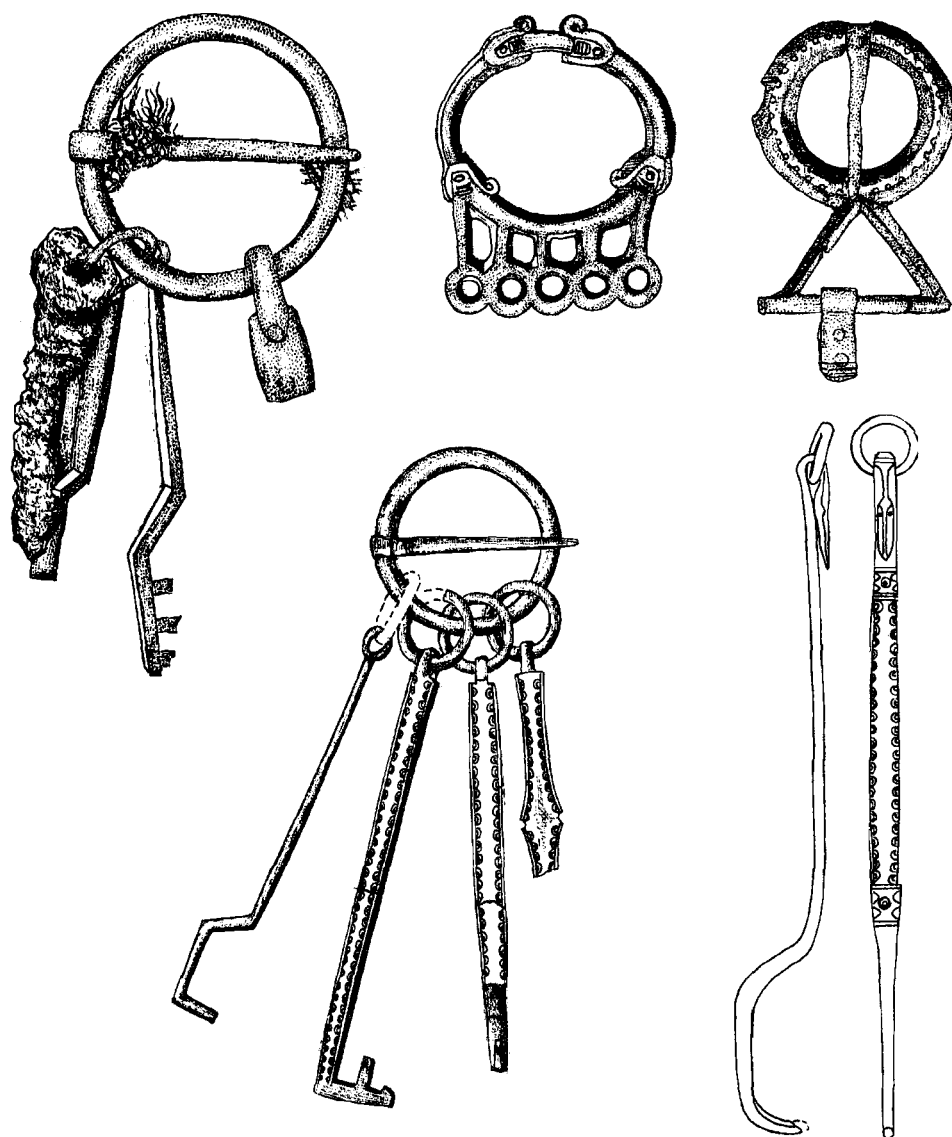


Fig. 3: Bronze keys and key rings. Top: F83, F84 and F17. Bottom: F77 and F17. See numbers on map in fig. 1. Drawings by Ellinor Hoff, Bergen Museum. Scale 3/4.

I studied the archaeological context. In which burials are the decorated objects found, and together with which assemblages?

83 of the finds I deal with are from burials. Most of them are found under mounds, usually large ones, and in the Norwegian context that means up to 30 m across. The majority are inhumation burials in stone cists, although skeletons are rarely preserved. The burials are richly furnished, many with gold and silver objects, and imported glass and bronze vessels. There is, however, variation, especially late in the Migration Period.

Two categories of burials are distinguished: burials with weapon (14) and burials with relief brooches (43). Weapon and relief brooches are never mixed. When these objects occur together in a grave, they seem to have belonged to different individuals. Relief brooches are often combined with smaller brooches and spindlewhorls. Keys and iron weaving battens occur in these assemblages (figs. 3–4), as also the golden bracteates. In seven of the assemblages with weapon, decorated sword equipment occurs, usually pommel, scabbard or buckle. Scales are also found in these graves. This small group consists of often exceptionally rich assemblages. The two categories are, through correlation with osteological sex-assessment, in areas where skeletons are present, often related to different gender defined social identities—males and females.³

Graves represent ritual contexts. As we find them, they are products of burial rites. In terms of theoretical framework, I focus on social aspects of rituals as Turner (1967), Bloch and Parry (1982), and Bourdieu (1977, 1996) discuss them. Rituals are emotionally charged, public situations in which social construction works very well—social categories and relationships become real, because they are presented as real in the ritual and unconsciously agreed upon by those attending.

Social order consists of relations manifested through different social identities. Inequality is fundamental to this order and often draws on categories which can easily be presented as biologically determined—as gender and age:⁴ ‘The power to name, to define a social identity and to ascribe characteristics to that identity is a political power’. The gender categories expressed in the burials referred to above, are therefore to be understood as symbolically and contextually situated—that is, if there is a need to express inequality, difference between the genders is focused upon. More than reflecting lived female and male lives, the images are constructing inequality in social categories.

In defining social identity, the performed aspect is important—what people do, their roles or sets of roles.⁵ Objects, which are visualised in the context of burial

3 For discussion of the assemblages with decorated sword equipment and their relationship with brooches, see Kristoffersen 1999b.

4 Moore 1994:24f, 92f; see also Bourdieu 1996.

rites, often relate to what people do. The objects are through the ritual context in a position to structure opinions of those attending. Expectations to social roles are created, and in this process, the social roles themselves. The objects are, thus, at work in defining social identity. Some of these objects are left for us, as the keys and iron weaving battens, and through which it is possible to learn something about these identities.

To sum up, I see in the burials the construction of social identities. The burials are constructed images of social roles—images that existed in society, but not necessarily described the individual in the burial. And in this construction, objects, left for us in the graves, were important. There is, however, no way to control the associations evoked by objects. The objects are, through their use, coded with different levels of meaning and could be read in various ways. This implies that construction is open to negotiation.

Burial rites, however, also deal with death, and are related to beliefs in an after-world and afterlife. They deal with transformations from one state to another, transformations which concern social identity and the incorporation of this identity among the dead forefathers,⁶ and involve the reassertion of society by the belief that the soul has been incorporated into the society of the dead.⁷ This transfer of the soul from one social order to another is invoked to explain parallels between the symbolism of mortuary, initiation rites and marriages.⁸ The importance of rituals connected to the life cycle of the ruling families are highlighted upon concerning the Germanic society of this period.⁹

In the following I will discuss social construction among the living society, and then relate this to the society of the dead. I will argue that through the occurrence of relief brooches, bundles of bronze keys and iron weaving battens, a group of burials can be related to the construction of the image and role of the Lady of the House. The interpretation of the keys is central to this understanding.¹⁰

Due to their form, lack of use-wear and the way they are carried, the symbolic function of the bronze keys is regarded to be of importance. They are beautifully made and intended to be noticed. The form is changed during the Migration Period, from the simple keys with a hook, that could be made from a hammered band, to more complex forms cast in a mould (fig. 3). It is possible that this change also concerns their meaning, meanings which could have developed through the

5 *Ibid.*

6 Discussion in Oestigård 2000:395f, with reference to Goody 1962.

7 Bloch and Parry 1982:4.

8 *Ibid.*

9 *E.g.* Näsman 1996:59.

10 See also work on this topic in Germany by Steuer 1982, Dübner-Manthey 1987, 1990.

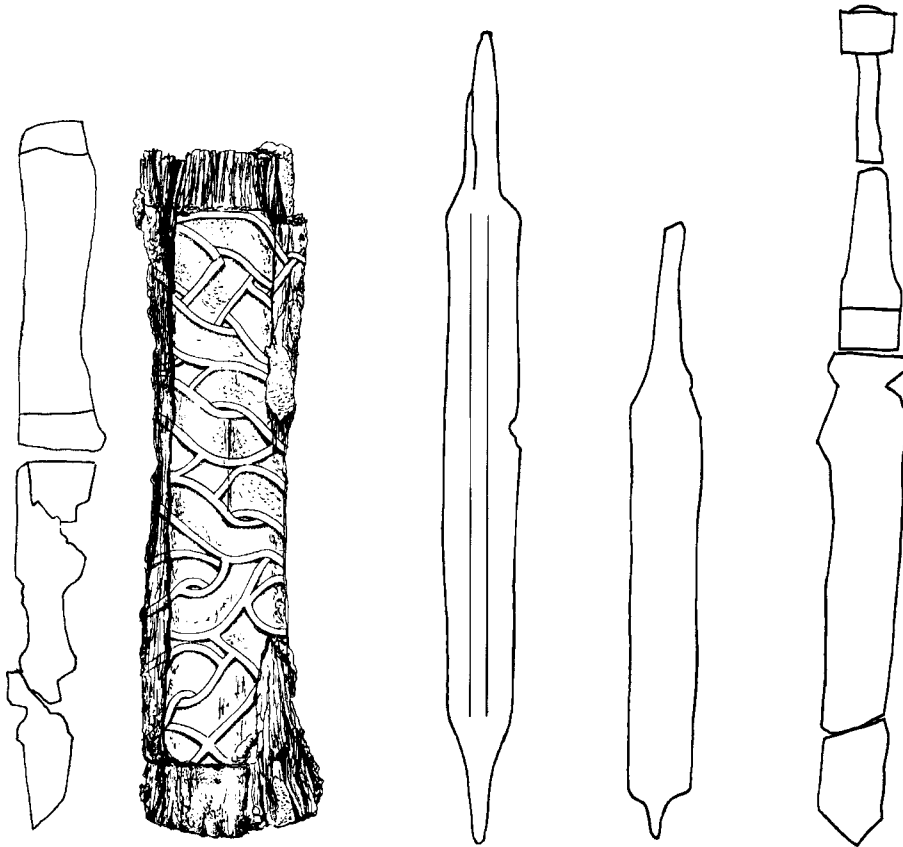


Fig. 4: Iron weaving battens. From left: Beater with decorated wooden handle (F86) and beaters (F83, F84, F25). See numbers on map in fig.1. Drawings by Ellinor Hoff, Bergen Museum (handle), Siv Kristoffersen (beaters). Scale 1/4.

use of the elder forms. With the bundles of cast keys came also the different and individual edges, which are able to function in relation to different kinds of locks. These keys do not give the impression of being used as their sharp edges lack use-wear. Keys in bundles seem to be made as sets, each key representing a variation on a common form, in terms of cross section, proportions and ornamentation. Thus all the keys in a bundle seem to be made simultaneously as a single set. These keys are not being made one by one, according to a growing need for more chests or caskets. They are either made together with a collection of such containers, with different locks, or they are made without any functionality in this aspect. Both possibilities highlight the importance of the bundle with the different edges. The way they are carried seems to support this lack of functionality. The keys are not attached to strings and could not be moved freely. They are attached to the key

ring, which, from the position in the graves and fragments of textiles, seems to have been fastened to a dress or textile belt. The ring might with ease have been loosened and might not have been used frequently. Again, however, practical concerns are not prevailing. It is the social significance of the keys which seems to be of importance.

In later written records¹¹ keys are related to wedding ceremonies. In *The Lay of Thrym* the thundergod Tor is dressed up like Frøya as a bride to get back his hammer:

Bindo vér þór pá brúðar líni !
hafi hann it mikla men Brísinga !
látom und hánom hrynja lukla,
ok kvenváðir um kné falla,

Let a housewife's door keys dangle about him
Let woman's weeds be worn by him
Let him bear on his breast bridal jewels,
On hood his head, as behooves a bride.

In *The Lay of Rígh* a bride is described as she is brought home to her husband:

Heim óku þá hanginluklu, geitakyrtlu,
giptu Karli; Snør heitir sú; settiz undir ripti;
biuggu hión, bauga deildu, breiddu blæiur ok bú gørðu.

A bride they brought him with bunch of keys dangling,
in goatskin kirtle, gave her to Karl.
Snoer was she hight and sate under veil,
a house they reared them and rings bestowed,
their linen they spread, and the larder stocked.

In early medieval legislation from all the Nordic countries keys are related to the social identity of the Lady of the House,¹² where she is assigned the responsibility for valuables that could be locked in chests and caskets. The keys are also mentioned together with the bed, in early medieval wedding ceremony recitements. The woman was given to the man: 'in honour and as wife and to share his bed, to hold his lock and keys'.¹³

11 *The Lay of Thrym* (15–16) and *The Lay of Rígh* (23) in the *Poetic Edda*, edition Helgason 1971, translation by Hollander 1962.

12 References in KLMN XII: 384–388, VII: 133–136.

13 My translation.

The keys are, in the written records, mentioned in plural—as bundles. Above I have argued that the bundles were made as sets. Further, they would probably have been handed over to women as sets, on a special occasion. In analogy with the written sources, I have suggested the possibility that these occasions were wedding ceremonies or other rites of transition. Through these the role of the Lady of the House would have been defined, a definition, which was repeated in the burial ritual, in which we know that the keys played a part. To this identity the responsibility represented by the keys was crucial. The bundles with the different edged keys corresponding with different locks work very well in relation to this responsibility, practically or symbolically. The keys relate the role to the farmstead, and it is important to bear in mind that the farmsteads where these burials are found were the large, central ones that constituted the very core of society. The relation to the farmstead is underlined by the local tradition expressed in the ornamentation of the brooches, which is distinguished from the common Scandinavian tradition generally found in the sword equipment.

The textile equipment found in the discussed assemblages—spindlewhorls, hook-mounts for distaffs (in one of the graves there were nine) and iron weaving battens—adds the aspect of highly developed textile production to the role of the Lady of the House. The spindle whorls often found in pairs (fig. 4) are by far the most common of these tools. Iron weaving battens are more rare. As the bronze keys, the iron weaving battens predominantly occur in rich assemblages with relief brooches. In the Migration Period the battens were fairly short with the characteristic protruding end (fig. 4). They had a long, sometimes decorated, wooden handle which was held with both hands when beating up the weft. Some of the beaters are pattern welded, and some seem to have been made from swords. As in later periods, they probably had their parallels in wood or bone. The iron beaters are believed to have some functional advantages.¹⁴ It is known, at least when working with certain materials, to give more control of the pressure.¹⁵ However, in the different parts of the Germanic area where they occur, their social significance is focused upon, as they are regarded as a symbol of The Lady of the House within higher social circles.¹⁶

The production of textiles was a central activity on the farms and could have constituted an essential part of the life of a Lady of the House, both as an executor and administrator. Textile products were important within the local economy of the farm, but also their role in exchange systems and long distance trade has been discussed.¹⁷ In mountain areas production of wool has always been of importance,

14 Hoffmann 1974:44, Crawford in Chadwick 1959.

15 *Ibid.*

16 Chadwick 1959:35, Werner 1962:34f, Koch 1977:93, Knaut 1993:105.

and is also documented in the Migration Period, as in the county of Vest-Agder and Sogn.¹⁸ These are areas where textile equipment is richly represented in the assemblages from the graves, where also textiles of excellent quality are found.¹⁹ And precisely the production of high quality textiles has been related to the larger, central farms. The iron weaving battens, thus, seem to represent an economically and socially significant production, and probably were of importance in the definition of the role of the Lady of the House.

The weaving battens represent, according to the discussion above, a highly developed craft, that would have taken a long time to learn. This learning may have been a part of the preparation for the discussed role. On the Continent, where skeletal remains are frequent, both keys and iron weaving battens occur in the graves of young girls. Even though the marrying age might well have been low, it is also possible that these objects were given to the girl as she enters her period of learning, as in a transition rite. The weaving battens could thus be seen in relation to a longer process that in the end led to the role of the Lady of the House in practice.

The weaving battens, as textile equipment in general, additionally carry cultic connotations,²⁰ which can be deduced from the relation of such tools to metaphors of prophecy. Important for these interpretations are later written records and the occurrence of related presentations on contemporary gold bracteates.²¹ The process of textile work evokes associations related to the passage of time and to a lifetime: crossing and twining threads produce fabric and thread of different quality and length. The work may be interrupted—the thread may be torn apart—or the work can be brought to an end—as a long-lived life. The gift of prophecy has been related to women, in Germanic culture, as in many Indo-European cultures.²² In the Northern mythology a close connection between women and concepts of time and death is emphasised.²³ Also the golden bracteates, amulets in gold loaded with symbolic images, have been associated with women gifted in

17 Lund Hansen 1987:234, Myhre 1987:184.

18 Hagen 1953, Kristoffersen in Bakka *et al.* 1993 with references.

19 For example Hougen 1935:58ff, Bender Jørgensen 1986:157ff, Nockert 1991.

20 For example Enright 1990, Hjørungdal 1991.

21 Bæksted 1988, Enright 1990, Hauck 1985, Strøm 1985, Wamers 1988; see also the discussion in Kristoffersen 1995.

22 Bæksted 1988:49, 215ff, Clunies-Ross 1998:245f, 297ff, Enright 1991:59ff, Strøm 1985:200ff, Wamers 1988:72f; but see also Holtsmark 1970:85.

23 Clunies Ross 1998:245, with references.

prophecy.²⁴ This category of objects is found in combination with relief brooches in seven of the analysed graves.

The way prophecy is mentioned in the records indicate that it had a predominant relationship with the earlier cult of the Vanir, a cult which is assumed to date back to the Migration Period.²⁵ Furthermore, we know from later written sources that the Lady of the House performed rituals that took place on the farmsteads.²⁶ Women have especially been associated with the cult of the goddess Frøya,²⁷ who is related to prophecy in the myths. This is further underlined by her birdskin/feather, which indicates her shamanistic character. There are also associations to her through the relief brooches and keys. Her keys are mentioned in *The Lay of Trym* above. The relief brooch is of actual importance in the same poem through the interpretation of Brisingamen as a large brooch with a bow.²⁸ Finally Frøya means *frue* as in the Lady of the House.²⁹ One could establish a connection between Frøya and burial assemblages containing the objects discussed here. On the other hand, these connections may also represent a chain of associations related to the female images within groups of higher social levels. This could find expression in various ways, also in the images of the goddesses. All the same, however, it is reasonable to add a cultic aspect to the social identity discussed. It does not mean that all Ladies of the House have had the gift of prophecy. It represents a level of meaning, and a basis for power, to which one could relate.

The keys and the relief brooches underlined the local character of the role of the Lady of the House. However, we have seen that the textile production had implications, which extended beyond the local. The importance beyond the farm and the inter-regional aspects of the role is further indicated through the distribution of the valuables in her care and through marriage alliances.

In the process of weaving a meaning of bringing together and crossing threads is embedded, and through these associations the textile equipment seem to be associated also with another aspect of the role. The Lady of the House is regarded as a weaver of relations. *Gebärfähigkeit* is considered to be central in the evaluation of the Germanic society concerning a woman's social position,³⁰ and she also is responsible for creating relations in which children can grow and prepare for their adult life. Through distribution of food, from breast feeding to the adminis-

24 Hauck 1985:155ff.

25 Clunies Ross 1998:248, 250, Steinsland 1985.

26 Olsen 1926, Olsen 1966, Steinsland 1985.

27 Steinsland *ibid.*

28 Arrhenius 1962, Kühn 1959:50.

29 *Ynglingesaga* 10.

30 von Ohlberg 1990:223ff.

tration of large banquets in the hall, such relations are created.³¹ The discussion has emphasised Germanic women within higher social circles and their role in the attachment between father and son, and leader and the followers of a war band.³² In the hall she would carry around the meadcup, a ritual through which the hierarchic order was established and renewed.³³ Social bonds were created, which became real, because they were presented as real.³⁴ The acceptance of the cup was of juridical and religious importance.³⁵ Her role is possible because she is an outsider, but still connected with the war band through her relationship with the leader. The Lady of the House would also have been in position to establish relationships between families, above all through marriage alliances. Within the Germanic society it would have been important to demonstrate these alliances. One would therefore expect that she carried the dress and jewels of her own family, and that she was buried in it. And there are examples in the burials of women which stand out as strangers, who might well have come through a marriage.

The different aspects of the role of the Lady of the House that have been discussed are elements without any functionalistic interrelationship. These are elements which are combined in different ways and at work in different contexts. And they are, in the burial, not an expression of a lived life in this role, but understandings of and expectations of the role, existing in the Germanic society. These expectations might, as we have seen, also be expressed in transitions rituals where young girls would have started their preparation for the role.

In the tools related to the textile production, there is embedded a plurality of potential meanings that constitute a basis for different interpretations and definitions of the role. The economic and cultic aspects would have had the ability to function in different contexts and would have been able to serve different interests. The economic aspect, with the importance in the exchange systems, of textile production would function in relation to the political system and the social structure, that is, the preservation of the social order. The gift of prophecy was, according to Margaret Clunies Ross,³⁶ regarded as treat to the society, and attempts were made towards its marginalisation in the ritual system. Prophecy also placed one in a position to influence decisions, which in turn formed the future, and was as such a serious basis for power, a power that was in no need of weapons. Further, by focusing on the economic and political associations embedded in the iron weaving

31 Håland 1997.

32 Enright 1988:171, 199ff.

33 *Ibid.*

34 Bourdieu 1996.

35 Enright 1988.

36 Clunies Ross 1998:252.

battens one would be in a position, through rituals, to transform the cultic aspect—and conversely. These different aspects of meaning, then, constitute a foundation for negotiation and freedom from the imposed symbols in the social construction. There is a possibility of the attendees not being convinced by the social construction in the ritual, because the associations evoked may be different.

What about death? Can the discussed elements of the role give meaning to the entering into an afterlife? Can aspects of this social identity give meaning in relation to the society of the dead? In Northern heathen religion the experience of death is given much attention.³⁷ Gro Steinsland underlines two mythical motifs of fundamental importance: marriage and death.³⁸ Not only do these motifs occur in different themes, they melt together and become the *marriage of death*. The poems and sagas give examples where death is describe as an erotic experience, the dead and a representative from one of the kingdoms of the dead joined together in a ritual marriage. In literature reference is often made to dead men. Steinsland argues, however, that there are indications, as in the images on standing stones, that women also could expect a marriage in death. It is also known that she might be reunited with her dead husband.³⁹

The keys were associated with marriage, however the more formal aspect of the union. Nevertheless they take their part in the chain of associations related to the context of marriage, and the connection of the formal and sexual aspect was also expressed in the mentioned marriage formula through keys and bed. All the elements, which are related to the construction of the identity of the Lady of the House, could in fact be related to marriage, because this constitutes a situation where the definition of her role must have been important. Even though some of the elements may have been relevant in an earlier transition rite, still they have a renewed importance in the context of marriage. Could it be that the Lady of the House carried her symbols into a new and final marriage, in death? Through this ritual her social identity, embedded in the keys as well as the textile equipment, relief brooches and golden bracteates, was integrated with the society of the dead in an afterworld. These symbols were given their meaning in life through rituals of transitions and marriage, and are through burial given a meaning in death. We are back to the theory of how burial rites dealt with death, the transitions and the parallels between the symbolism of mortuary practices, initiation rites and marriages.

37 Steinsland 1991:422.

38 *Ibid.*; see also Steinsland 1992.

39 Steinsland 1992:327.

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DISCUSSION

N. Marinatos: I think you will be interested to know that in Greek culture, too, the key is a symbol of the woman's power. I was just discussing with Stella Georgoudi how the priestess of Athena is called the κλειδοῦχος, which means that she carries the keys. Even in domestic contexts, in the *Odyssey* for example, it's either the lady of the house or the matron of the house, that is a kind of senior servant, who had access to the keys. This is a very interesting parallel to what you have said.

S. Georgoudi: We have in Greek context keys related not only to the mistress of the house, and with priestesses and priests, but also with goddesses. This is very important. We have different goddesses defined as holders of keys, such as Athena, Hera *etc.* It is very striking to see that among the gods, the god that possesses keys is Hades. He is the keeper of the keys of the Underworld. Can the key in the Nordic context also have a connection with death? Not only as a sign of the dead person, I mean.

S. Kristoffersen: Keys are present in Nordic graves and it is possible that they could gain such a meaning in relation to the burials.

D. Handelman: To continue the theme of keys, I have been told by Prof. Barbara Klein of Stockholm University that into the first half of the twentieth century in Sweden the wives of farmers prominently displayed the keys to the various buildings of the farmstead on their waist. This strongly suggest control over the life-giving properties of keys and whatever the keys enable access to. And I am deliberately saying it in this obfuscating way but I think that the implications are clear. In that sense, it is interesting. You open up a burial site and all you have are material objects—you are uncovering perhaps a ritual in process, frozen. This is another level from the social, undoubtedly as you argue, influenced by the social, reflecting back onto the social order. What you find in the gravesites, unless you are working in a society which had secondary burial, or removal for example of the skulls of ancestors for use in ongoing life without reburial, people in the world were not expected to see the inside of the grave again. In that sense they were creating a closed phenomenal world for the dead, of the dead, wherever the dead were expected to go. The dead were engaged in some kind of ritual process for which you have various of the artefacts. What kind of ritual process was going on in the cases of these burials?

S. Kristoffersen: There are in the written sources from the Continent and the Anglo-Saxons sphere accounts about such rituals. The members of the upper class concerned by the burial were present as spectators.

D. Handelman: If you only read it the way you read these materials, then you are treating the inside of the grave as a reflection of social order. But what was going on inside the grave apart from whatever reflections of social order were put in there belonged to the world of the dead, the dead moving through various processes, towards the Underworld, towards some kind of afterlife. This also has to be read in order to get the full picture.

S. Kristoffersen: You mean the ritual...?

D. Handelman: I mean the continuation of the ritual. The ritual existed above ground to establish the bases for the ritual below ground. But the ritual below ground then may have gone on without the participation of the living above ground, although in various cases the living above ground still continued to take an active role in helping the deceased succeed in getting to wherever the deceased were supposed to go. So you've got these two levels which should be treated in a complementary manner.

S. Kristoffersen: I will think about that.

M. Khatzigeorgi: I would like to add a small detail: the Eastern iconographical type of the Resurrection, which is Jesus' descent into the Underworld, and the Harrowing of Hell, also contains the very interesting theme of the keys. Jesus is depicted going down into the Underworld in a triumphant manner, following the motif of Herakles' descent into Hades, pulling Adam and Eve out of their graves. At the same time he is triumphantly stepping over the black abyss, the chasm which represents the Underworld. There we see in a black space the keys spread out. These were the main symbol of Hades, of the Underworld's power. This is the way the motif of the keys is used in Byzantium after the ninth century, the Eastern Medieval period equivalent to the period you are dealing with. It continues up to our days.

G. Albers: Were the graves also separated by architecture and placement? Were the graves with swords set apart? Were they marked differently above ground?

S. Kristoffersen: Not really. I can't see any pattern. These graves are not in great cemeteries as in Germany in the same period. They are just a few grave mounds in close relation to the farms.

G. Albers: So each mound would have one sword grave, or how does it work?

S. Kristoffersen: It doesn't work. The material doesn't carry analysis far enough for sustained statistical examination. The graves can have a sword each, but they will not have a decorated sword each, because that item would appear probably only in one grave in the region.

G. Albers: Since there was no visible distinction of elite graves above ground, do you think that there was a display of the offerings before burial?

S. Kristoffersen: If they are to function in the way I suggest, then somebody must have seen the contents—not necessarily a large group, but at least the people of this high social level.